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THE VOWS OF ETEOCLES

(Aesch. *ScT* 271-278^a)

[ΛΕΥΚΗ ΣΕΛΙΔΑ]

My intention in this paper* is to examine closely the passage of Eteocles' εὔγμματα in the *Seven against Thebes* of Aeschylus (271-278*) and to show that the problems it presents, puzzling though they may be, could be resolved without resort to emendation; moreover, that it has a considerable significance (hitherto neglected) in regard to the interpretation of the whole play.

I think it is unnecessary to list here the score of suggestions for restoring to health the text of these nine lines; they can easily be found in Wecklein's *Appendix*, where they cover a large part of pages 19-20, and in Dawe's *Repertory*, which adds a good 23 lines to Wecklein's collection. I only give the text and apparatus as they appear in the OCT edition of the late Sir Denys Page and remind the reader that the other editors, when they do not enclose the whole passage or a large part of it between daggers, have recourse to numerous and bold emendations, deletions or transpositions, which usually render the passage entirely unrecognizable.

ἐγὼ δὲ χώρας τοῖς πολισσούχοις θεοῖς,
 πεδιονόμοις τε κάγορᾶς ἐπισκέποις,
 Δίρκης τε πηγαῖς ὕδατί τ' Ἴσμηνοῦ λέγω,
 εὖ ξυντυχόντων καὶ πόλεως σεσωμένης
 ἱμῆλοισιν αἰμάσσοντας ἐστίας θεῶν 275
 ταυροκτονοῦντας θεοῖσιν ὧδ' ἐπεύχομαι
 θῆσειν τροπαῖα πολεμίων δ' ἐσθήμασι
 λάφυρα δαῖτων δουρίπληχθ' ἄγνοῖς δόμοις
 στέψω πρὸ ναῶν πολεμίων δ' ἐσθήματα†. 278^a

273 πηγῆς plerique ὕδατί τ' Geel : οὐδ' ἀπ' codd. 274 σεσωμ- Wac : σεσωμ-
 rell. 275-278^a ita M, sed 277 ἐσθήματα M^s ^{scr} et 278^a τ' supra δ' scr.; locus
 graviter corruptus 277 θύσειν O ἐσθήμασι M12 : -μάτων Υ, -ματα rell. 278
 δουρίπληχθ' Dindorf 278^a alii post ναῶν deficiunt, alii versum totum omittunt.

* I wish to thank my colleagues N. C. Hourmouziades, D. Jakob, G. M. Parás-

273 Virtually all editors (Tucker is a notable exception) adopt Geel's emendation ὕδατί τ' Ἰσμηνοῦ λέγω for the reading οὐδ' ἅπ' Ἰσμηνοῦ λέγω of the Mss. The emendation is attractive and well founded on palaeographic grounds. But (a) it does not explain how a trite phrase like ὕδατί τ' Ἰσμηνοῦ λέγω should have been turned into such an unfamiliar expression as οὐδ' ἅπ' Ἰσμηνοῦ λέγω; (b) it creates additional problems with the whole passage, as it renders ἐπεύχομαι (and with it the entire l. 276) redundant, therefore useless.¹ Abresch's emendation (approved by Tucker) οὐδ' ἅπ' Ἰσμηνὸν λέγω, meaning 'nor do I omit (or except) Ismenus' is, in fact, a variation of the scholiast's rendering: ἀντὶ τοῦ σὺν τῷ Ἰσμηνῷ. But to obtain this sense no emendation whatsoever is necessary. Following Δίρκης τε πηγᾶς, the genitive Ἰσμηνοῦ can be construed with an implied accusative, πηγᾶς, (*iam* Stanley): 'and to the springs of Dirce, nor do I leave those of Ismenus out of my enumeration'. Leaving something out of an enumeration (λέγω in its original sense 'numerare'; see *Italie* s.v.), if done deliberately, is synonymous to 'refuse, decline, renounce', for which the verb ἀπαιπεῖν is commonly used since Homer; so Aesch. fr. 17. 90 M. μὴ ἄπειπε (under ἀπολέγω in LSJ Suppl.).

Why should there be, however, a question of leaving out or renouncing specifically the springs of Ismenus on the part of Eteocles in his enumeration of deities—indeed of deities specially related to Thebes? There is only one god whom Eteocles and the Cadmeans might wish, under the circumstances, to renounce, and this is none other but Ares. He is the god to whom the invaders swore (45 f. Ἄρην, Ἐνὸς καὶ φιλαίματον Φόβον ὥρκωμότησαν); whose stormy blasts threaten the city with destruction (63 f. φάρξαι πόλιν πρὶν καταγίγει πνοᾶς Ἄρεως; 114 f. κύμα περὶ πτόλιν δοχμολόφων ἀνδρῶν καχλάζει πνοαῖς Ἄρεος ὀρόμενον); who is nurtured on human blood (244 τούτῳ γὰρ Ἄρης βόσκεται, φόνω βροτῶν); by whose devastating rage piety is polluted (343 f. μαινόμενος δ' ἐπιπνεῖ λαοδάμας μαιίνων εὐσέβειαν Ἄρης). Yet Ares is one of the πολιοῦχοι of Thebes. The dragon slain by Cadmus was his ward or offspring; the noble families of Thebes claimed their origin from the Spartoi, the warlike men who sprang up from the teeth of this dragon; after

soglou, and G. M. Sifakis for their valuable criticism. It is only fair to point out that not all of my views are shared by all these scholars. The study is dedicated to Bernard Knox, in memory of the days at the Center—deplorably distant now.

1. Accordingly, the line is deleted by Ritschl, Blomfield, Wecklein, Wilamowitz, Groeneboom, and others; see Groeneboom *ad loc.*

an eight-year term of servitude to the god, Cadmus married Harmonia, the daughter of Ares and Aphrodite, the whole royal house of Thebes thus going back to the divine couple. The Chorus in *ScT* are well aware of this descent (104 ff.):

τί ῥέξεις; προδώσεις, παλαίχθων
 Ἄρης, τὰν τεάν;
 ὦ χρυσοπήληξ δαῖμον, ἐπιδ' ἐπιδε πόλιν
 ἄν ποτ' εὐφιλήταν ἔθου.

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Elsewhere, they invoke the guardian gods of the city, but, although they know Ares' ambiguous attitude, they reserve a special reference for him and Aphrodite (135 ff.):

σύ τ' Ἄρης φεῦ φεῦ πόλιν ἐπώνυμον
 Κάδμου φύλαξον κήδεσαί τ' ἐναργῶς
 καὶ Κύπρις, ἅτ' εἴ γένους προμάτωρ,
 ἄλευσον, σέθεν γὰρ ἐξ αἵματος
 γεγόναμεν.

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The reference to Aphrodite as foremother of the Cadmeans is clear. But the reference to Ares is concealed in one of those puns, so favourite to Aeschylus. 'And you, Ares, watch over this city that bears the name of Cadmus, and manifest your κῆδος'. The last word means not only 'care, concern', but also 'connexion by marriage', viz. the relationship between Ares and Cadmus (see Tucker *ad loc.* and cf. *Ag.* 699, and perhaps *Cho.* 87).

Let us now return to the springs of Ismenus, which Eteocles says he will not renounce. The passage becomes fully intelligible if we consider that Pausanias (ix. 10. 5) places at or by these springs the fountain that was sacred to Ares; it was here that the god had set the dragon to guard the spring.² With this particular reference at l. 273, Aeschylus

2. Euripides (*Phoen.* 657 ff., 931 ff., 1010, 1315, *Bacch.* 519 ff., *Suppl.* 660 ff., *Antiop.* xlviii, 82 ff., 112 ff. (Kamb.)) places the Ἄρεως κρήνη at the springs of Dirce. A. D. Keramopoulos, in a long and very learned discussion of the disagreement, *Θηβαϊκά*, *Arch. Delt.* 3 (1917), 318-324, sides definitely with Pausanias. It is difficult to say who is right, and the two versions may well go back to an ancient dispute. It is clear, however, that there is no question of a mere mistake on the part of Pausanias (e.g. F. Schober, *RE* s.v. Thebai, col. 1426), because his entire description of the site agrees with his placing of the fountain of Ares at the springs of Ismenus. For instance, the spot where the Spartoi sprang up can be reconciled only with a

once more lays stress—in a more concealed manner, it is true—on the situation created by the ambiguous attitude of Ares towards both belligerent parties.³ Eteocles, just like the Chorus, makes his vows to all the gods of Thebes, Ares included.⁴

275 ff. I believe that the passage is adequately elucidated if seen in juxtaposition with ll. 42-51. Eteocles' εὔγματα correspond to and, in fact, are meant to echo the ὅρκοι of the Seven recounted by the Scout early in the play, right after the exit of the crowd of citizens in l. 35.⁵

Ὅρκοι (42-51)

Εὔγματα (271-280)

1

ἄνδρες γὰρ ἑπτὰ, θούριοι λοχαγέται,

1

ἐγὼ δὲ

2

ταυροσφαγοῦντες ἐς μελάνδετον σάκος,

3

χώρας τοῖς πολισσούχοις θεοῖς,

placing of the Ἀρσεως κρήνη east of Cadmea, i.e. on the side of Ismenus; see N. D. Papahatzis, Παιονίου Ἑλλάδος Περιήγησις, V. Βοιωτικά, Φωκικά, 1969, p. 75 n. 2. If my interpretation of *ScT* 273 is correct, Aeschylus corroborates the information provided by Pausanias.

3. On the ambiguous position of Ares in the *ScT*, who, whether the particular deity or the generic notion of war violence, is at the same time one of the guardian gods of the Cadmeans and patron of the invaders, see W. G. Thalmann, *Dramatic Art in Aeschylus's Seven Against Thebes*, Yale Classical Monographs, 1, Yale University Press, 1978, p. 55—a stimulating book which became available to me too late to be fully used in this paper.

4. It should be noted that no equation of Ismenus with Ares is intended here. Ismenus personified is worshipped as a separate river-god. But its springs, like most springs or fountains in antiquity, were attached to the cult of a particular god.

5. Oliver Taplin, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, Oxford 1977, pp. 129 ff., involves himself in a lengthy discussion on whom these citizens of Thebes were played by. After having disposed of the awkward idea expressed by some scholars that no such group appeared on the stage and that the words Κάδμου πολῖται were in fact addressed to the Athenian audience (see also David Bain, *CQ* 25 (1975), 22 n. 1), Taplin concludes that Aeschylus must have employed here a group of silent extras. He adds that he "would guess that there were something between three and a maximum of twelve extras here". I do not know where these figures come from, but I would suggest a minimum of twelve persons. Not only because the crowd of citizens should be represented with a certain degree of likelihood; but also because, in addition to the silent extras employed perhaps in other scenes, Aeschylus has twelve more men available at the opening of the play: the members of the Chorus. They will not be needed before l. 78, when the Parodus starts, and they will have an interval of more than forty lines to prepare themselves for their new role.

καὶ θιγγάνοντες χερσὶ ταυρείου φόνου,

3
"Ἄρην Ἐνυῶ καὶ φιλαίματον Φόβον

4
ῥοκωμότησαν,

5
ἢ πόλει κατασκαφᾶς
θέντες λαπάξειν ἄστυ Καδμείων βίαι,

—
ἢ γῆν θανόντες τήνδε φυράσειν φόνωι

6
μνημεῖά θ' αὐτῶν τοῖς τεκοῦσιν ἐς δόμους
πρὸς ἄρμ' Ἀδράστου χερσὶν ἔστεφον,

7
δάκρυ
λείβοντες, οἷκτος δ' οὔτις ἦν διὰ στόμα.

πεδιονόμοις τε κᾶγορᾶς ἐπισκόποις,
Δίρκης τε πηγαῖς οὐδ' ἀπ' Ἰσμήνου λέγω,

5
εὖ ξυντυχόντων καὶ πόλεως σεσωμένης

2
μήλοισιν αἱμάσσοντας ἐστίας θεῶν
ταυροκτονοῦντας θεοῖσιν

4
ὦδ' ἐπεύχομαι

2
θήσειν τροπαῖα

6
πολεμίων δ' ἐσθήμασι
λάφυρα δαΐων δουρίπληχθ' ἄγνοῖς δόμοις
στέψω πρὸ ναῶν πολεμίων δ' ἐσθήματα.

7
τοιαῦτ' ἐπεύχου μὴ φιλοστόνως θεοῖς,
μηδ' ἐν ματαίοις κᾶγρίοις ποιφύγμασιν.

The similarity is striking especially in the meaning of the lines. Some differences in the sequence of the structural elements are due to the dissimilarity of the mode of delivery (narrative account in the ὅρκοι, first-hand oration in the εὐγμματα) and to the different nature of the two rites (the sacrifice is already performed in the ὅρκοι, it is only pledged under conditions in the εὐγμματα). So, although ὅρκοι 5 and εὐγμματα 2 correspond both verbally and syntactically, they yield different meanings: ὅρκοι 5 is about the destruction of the city (πόλει κατασκαφᾶς θέντες λαπάξειν ἄστυ), whereas εὐγμματα 2, as will be shown later, is about a future sacrifice (θήσειν τροπαῖα). Also, the psychological situation in the scene of the εὐγμματα, wherein Eteocles tries desperately to raise the morale of the panic-stricken maidens of the Chorus, rules out the possibility of even the slightest mention of a penalty in case that the promise of Eteocles is not kept: the εὐγμματα, therefore, contain no parallel to l. 48 (ἢ γῆν θανόντες τήνδε φυράσειν φόνωι), although αἱμάσσοντας may well reflect it.

With this juxtaposition in mind, let us now try to face the individual problems of ll. 275 ff.

275 f. αἰμάσσοντας - ταυροκτονοῦντας: For the unexpected number and tense see *infra* on θήσειν τροπαῖα (l. 277).

276 ταυροκτονοῦντας θεοῖσιν: Sacrifices play a very important role in the *ScT*. The Chorus end the parodus singing in despair (174-180),

ἰὼ φίλοι δαίμονες,

 μέλεσθέ θ' ἱερῶν δημίων
 †μελόμενοι δ' ἀρήξατε†
 φιλοθύτων δέ τοι πόλεος ὀργίων
 μνήστερες ἔστε μοι.

Sacrifices are also mentioned by Eteocles a little later (first mentioned at 14-15 among the institutions which the citizens were to defend), but it is important to notice that whereas the maidens pray that the gods remember the sacrifices which the city has offered them in the past and help her now, Eteocles, in a cool and business-like manner, refers to sacrifices he is planning to perform in order to secure the help of the gods. A *do ut des* feeling is clear in what he says, and he excludes the women, with their emotional reactions, from such a matter of exchange policy (230 f.):

ἀνδρῶν τάδ' ἐστί, σφάγια καὶ χρηστήρια
 θεοῖσιν ἔρδειν πολέμιων πειρωμένους.

Elsewhere he is more outspoken. Right after the initial rhesis of the Scout he bursts into a desperate prayer; which ends, however, with a frigid remark to the gods (76 f.):

ξυνὰ δ' ἐλπίζω λέγειν
 πόλις γὰρ εὔπρασσουσα δαίμονας τίει.

Such a remark included in a prayer takes the character of a mutual contract. And a few moments before his final departure to meet his brother and his death, Eteocles, having realized that the contract is broken, rejects abruptly the sacrifices which the Chorus advise (699-704):

Χο. μελάναιγες ἔξ-
 εἰσι δόμων Ἑρινὺς ὅταν ἐκ χερῶν⁶

6. Is ἐκ χερῶν contrasted to the εὐγμᾶτα, the whole passage being an exhortation to Eteocles to proceed with actual sacrifice and not merely vows?

θεοὶ θυσίαν δέχωνται.

Ετ. θεοῖς μὲν ἤδη πως παρημελήμεθα,⁷
 χίρις⁸ δ' ἅφ' ἡμῶν ὀλομένων θαυμάζεται·
 τί οὖν ἔτ' ἄν σαίνοιμεν ὀλέθριον μόρον;

Here (271-278^a) the Scout has told Eteocles of the sacrifice of the Seven: they have already offered one or more bulls to the gods they invoke (43 f.). One would expect that, if Eteocles wanted the contract to be effective, he would make a greater offer to the gods he invokes. One of these gods, Ares, we must remember, is being claimed by both groups.

It was a common practice among Greeks to try to surpass their opponents in the size of the offer, so that they might attract the divine favour. This concept lies behind the enormous vows we hear of, especially before battles; each side tried to surpass the vows they suspected the enemy had made. So great were the vows that sometimes they could not be fulfilled after the successful end of the battle. Aeschylus must have had personal knowledge of at least one such example: Before the battle at Marathon the Athenians εὐξάμενοι τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι (Agrotera) ὀπόσους κατακάνοιεν τῶν πολέμιων τοσαύτας χιμαίρας καταθύσειν τῇ θεῷ, ἐπεὶ οὐκ εἶχον ἱκανὰς εὔρεῖν, ἔδοξεν αὐτοῖς κατ' ἑνιαυτὸν πεντακοσίας θύειν, καὶ ἔτι νῦν ἀποθύουσιν, says Xenophon, *An.* iii. 2. 12; cf. *Arist. Ath. Pol.* 58. 1. It is probably this practice that Aristophanes alludes to at *Eq.* 654 ff.:

ἄνδρες, ἤδη μοι δοκεῖ
 ἐπὶ συμφοραῖς ἀγαθαῖσιν εἰσηγγελμέναις
 εὐαγγέλια θύειν ἑκατὸν βοῦς τῇ θεῷ,⁹
 ἐνέπνευσεν εἰς ἐκεῖνον (the Paphlagonian) ἡ βουλὴ πάλιν.
 κᾶγωγ' (the Sausage-seller) ὅτε δὴ ἔγνω τῷς βολίτοις ἡττημένος,
 διηκοσίοισι βουσὶν ὑπερηκόντισα,
 τῇ δ' Ἀγροτέρῃ κατὰ χιλίων παρήνευσα
 εὐχὴν ποιήσασθαι χιμάρων εἰς αὔριον,
 αἱ τριχίδες εἰ γενοῖαθ' ἑκατὸν τοῦ βολοῦ.⁹

A close parallel is offered by the ancient paroemiographers (Paus. Att.

7. Cf. 177 f. μέλεσθέ θ' ἱερῶν δημίων, / †μελόμενοι δ' ἀρήξατε†.

8. In the sense 'offering'.

9. Cf. also Pl. *Alc.* 2 148 e ff.

0 12 Erbse (Eust. 331. 20), Phot., Sud. θ 291; cf. Prov. Bodl. 494, Zen. iv. 29, App. Prov. iii. 20, sch. Eur. *Phoen.* 1408), who explain Θετταλῶν σόφισμα, a proverbial expression, as follows: ... Ἀρατίωι (elsewhere he is called Διότιμος or Μένων or merely Θετταλός) γὰρ κατιόντι ὁ θεὸς ἔφη φυλάξασθαι, μὴ λάθωσιν αὐτὸν οἱ ἐξ ἐναντίας εὐχῇ μείζονι καὶ λαμπροτέραι κατ' αὐτοῦ χρησάμενοι. ὁ δὲ ἑκατόμβην ἀνδρῶν εὗξατο θύσειν τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι. κατορθώσας δὲ ᾧ ἐβούλετο, τὴν θυσίαν διὰ τὸ μὴ ἱεροπρεπῆ εἶναι αἰεὶ ἀνεβάλλετο.¹⁰

I believe that by applying this concept to the lines in question, we may perhaps explain the accumulation of textual singularities in l. 276: the asyndeton of ταυροκτονοῦντας, the repetition of θεοῖσιν, and the unexpected ὦδε. These features render the line—whatever its possible meaning may be—syntactically independent from the preceding ones and somewhat emphatic. I would feel that something stronger than comma would be necessary in order to mark its structure. In other words, whereas we would expect something like 'dyeing the altars of the gods in blood of sheep and bulls, I vow that...' or even 'dyeing the altars of the gods in blood of sheep and slaughtering bulls for them, I vow that...', we read 'dyeing the altars of the gods in blood of sheep—slaughtering bulls for the gods—thus do I vow that...', which is not the same thing. If it were not for ὦδ' ἐπεύχομαι, one might imagine that l. 276 was an attempt by a later hand, say an actor or a scribe, at substituting the former line. But what if the substitution was made deliberately by Aeschylus?

The formulation of speech at l. 276 rules out, I think, the possibility of a combined sacrifice of sheep *and* bulls. What I suggest is that sheep was the king's initial offering. When he suddenly realized that by this sacrifice he was underbidding his opponents, he hastened, before concluding his sentence, to remedy his error. The substitution of the new bid, however, is not made in one of the normal ways the Greeks used to correct a preceding statement made either by another speaker or by the speaker himself, e.g. μήλοισιν λέγω; ταυροκτονοῦντας μὲν οὖν or μάλλον δὲ ταυροκτονοῦντας.¹¹ In my opinion, the reason, as I shall try

10. Perhaps it would not be out of place to point out here that the only time this proverb is found in extant literature is when Eteocles applies a Thessalian σόφισμα during the duel with Polynices in Eur. *Phoen.* 1407 f. But there the expression means no more than a fighting trick.

11. See e.g. Aesch. *Pers.* 1031 f. παπαῖ παπαῖ,—καὶ πλέον ἢ παπαῖ μὲν οὖν, Ag.

to expound later, is that Eteocles must conceal his error from the Chorus. Accordingly, Aeschylus abandons for a while the formal construction and resorts to a common device of natural speech. He makes Eteocles deliver a phrase syntactically equivalent to the objectionable one raising his voice, as if the louder utterance might obliterate the words already spoken:

μήλοισιν αἱμάσσοντας ἐστίας θεῶν—
ταυροκτονοῦντας θεοῖσιν—¹²

'Sacrificing sheep on the altars of gods—(nay!) slaughtering bulls for the gods—'.¹³ In a self-corrective clause like this, it is necessary to repeat the object of the replaced verb. Therefore θεοῖσιν is by no means out of place here, as was claimed by Wilamowitz (*Aeschylus Interpretationen*, Berlin 1914, p. 107) and Groeneboom *ad loc.*

The regular construction, before the addition of ταυροκτονοῦντας θεοῖσιν, would require only the verb and the infinitive governed by it (ἐπεύχομαι θήσιν τροπαῖα). But after the interpolation of the self-correc-

1396 τάδ' ἂν δικάως ἦν, ὑπερδίκως μὲν οὖν, *Cho.* 998 ff. ἄγρευμα θηρός, ἡ νεκροῦ ποδένδυτον / δροῖτης κατασχένωμα; δίχτυον μὲν οὖν / ἄρκυν τ' ἂν εἴποις καὶ ποδιστῆρας πέπλους, *Eum.* 38 δέισασα γὰρ γραῦς οὐδέν, ἀντίπαις μὲν οὖν; cf. *Ag.* 1090, *Cho.* 60, *Eum.* 199 f., 386 ff. Such correcting sentences were treated by rhetoricians as a separate figure termed epidiorthis: Hermog. *Id.* 2. 7 (Rabe 362. 2-6) ἔτι ἐνδιάθετον σχῆμα καὶ ἡ τοιαύτη ἐπιδιόρθωσις, ἡ αὐξήσεως ἔνεκα παραλαμβανομένη, οἷον 'ὁψέ γάρ ποτε—ὁψέ λέγω; χθές μὲν οὖν καὶ πρώην' (*Dem.* xviii. 130), καὶ πάλιν 'ὥς ἔστι τῶν αἰσχυρῶν, μᾶλλον δὲ τῶν αἰσχυρίστων' (*Dem.* ii. 2).

12. In Aeschylus, a few cases of amplifying epidiorthis not accompanied by the words characteristic of this figure (μὲν οὖν, πλέον, μᾶλλον etc.) and obviously recognizable only by means of speech intonation, may perhaps be related with the self-correction discussed here: *Pers.* 986 κακὰ πρόκακα λέγεις, *Ag.* 1456 f. μία τὰς πολλάς, τὰς πάνυ πολλάς ψυχὰς ὀλέσας' ὑπὸ Τροίαι, *Cho.* 875 οἶμοι πανοίμοι δεσπότης (πεπληγμένου), *Eum.* 161 βαρὺ τι περίβαρυ κρύος ἔχειν; cf. Kl. Schinkel, *Die Wortwiederholung bei Aischylos*, Diss. Tübingen 1973, p. 61.

13. I do not enter the question of the exact meaning of μήλα. Even if sometimes the word denotes more generally 'beasts' (see LSJ s.v.), here μήλοισιν αἱμάσσοντας and ταυροκτονοῦντας placed side by side asyndetically can only distinguish between different kinds of animals. Aristophanes, *Lys.* 186 ff. (—Λυσιστράτη, / τίν' ὄρκον ὀρκώσεις ποθ' ἡμᾶς;—ὄντινα; / εἰς ἀσπίδ', ὥσπερ φάσ' ἐν Αἰσχύλῳ ποτέ, / μηλοσφαγούσας), and 196 f. (μηλοσφαγοῦσαι Θάσιον οἶνου σταμνίον / ὁμόσωμεν), refers to the passage of the ὄρκοι in *ScT*. But the discrepancy ταυροσφαγοῦντες ~ μηλοσφαγοῦσαι, whether an error of memory or a deliberate change, perhaps suggests that Aristophanes recalled to mind that in Aeschylus' play there was a question of bulls and sheep.

tion the poet proceeds with a slight anacolouthon: the change in Eteocles' offer is emphasized by means of a demonstrative resumptive sentence: 'thus do I vow' (i.e. not as you may have heard before). In fact, ὥδε restores the speech regularity after the disorder caused by the interpolation of ταυροκτονοῦντας θεοῖσιν. In other words ὥδε operates similarly to τί λέγω; or to μὲν οὖν, only less clearly.

It is useless to look for exact parallels in such cases of 'anarchical' formulations of speech. But Greek tragedy is full of instances of disorderly construction. Such 'figures' as anacolouthon, aposiopesis, hyperbaton, nominativus pendens etc. are widely used when the poet aims at reproducing an emotionally coloured everyday speech.¹⁴ I shall discuss the dramatic significance of this self-correction later on, but now I should stress the fact that the whole passage of *ScT* which includes the vows of Eteocles (245-286) is a good specimen of 'Affektsprache' (τὸ ἐνδιάθετον in Hermogenes' words). Not only is it marked by haste and excitement, which prompt Aeschylus to employ the conventional stichomythia (245-263), but it also presents, especially in the lines spoken by Eteocles, a lively conversational tone coloured with popular irony (246, 256-257), indignant expressions (252, 254), familiar dialogue (260-261 εἰ δοίης, λέγοις ἄν; 262-263 σίγησον, σιγῶ), harsh colloquialisms (250, 252). The speech of Eteocles which follows the stichomythia (263-286) is less excited, and contains some examples of elevated style, inevitably used on account of the ritual character of the εὐγμᾶτα. But, in general, the speech retains the hasty and conversational tone of the stichomythia, and one or two deviations towards everyday talk are not at all out of tune.

277 θήσειν τροπαῖα: The phrase depending on ἐπεύχομαι (or λέγω, according to those who delete l. 276) is usually understood as 'to set up trophies'. Such a statement might perhaps be expected to be found in the second part of the passage (277 πολεμίων δ' ἐσθ. κτλ.), which does not belong to the formal εὐγμᾶτα,¹⁵ but here it is entirely out of place. As Rose notes *ad loc.*, trophies were supposed to be pieces of war-magic,

14. Cf. Fr. Zucker, 'Formen gesteigert affektischer Rede in Sprechversen der griechischen Tragödie', *Indogermanische Forschungen* 62 (1955), 63-78 (=Fr. Z., *Semantica, Rhetorica, Ethica*, Berlin 1963, pp. 72-84 = *Sophokles, Wege der Forschung*, Band XCV, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt 1967, pp. 252-267); he confines, however, his investigation to Sophocles and Euripides.

15. Εὐγμᾶτα 6 above; similarly, ll. 49-50 (ὄρκοι 6) do not belong to the formal reproduction of the ὄρκοι.

not thank-offerings to gods. Moreover, the regular Greek would be στή-
σειν τροπαῖα.¹⁶

Some editors, among them Wilamowitz and Groeneboom, accepted Weil's emendation θύσειν τροπαῖα, which later proved to be the reading of O (Leid. Voss. gr. Q 4 A); Vat. 1332 has above θήσειν the interlinear note ἀπὸ κοινοῦ τὸ θύειν. Now, ἱερὰ τροπαῖα (cf. σωτήρια, νικητήρια, εὐαγγέλια etc.) are the thank-offerings for assistance in defeating an enemy: Eur. *Heracl.* 399 f. σφάγια θ' ἡτοιμασμένα / ἔστηκεν οἷς χρὴ ταῦτα τέμνεσθαι θεῶν, / τροπαῖά τ' ἐχθρῶν καὶ πόλει σωτήρια.

Yet, although Weil's emendation appears to be necessary, it is not easy to cross out the almost unanimous evidence of the Ms tradition. The same reasoning as Weil's may well have led the scribe of O to the same emendation. Furthermore, a sacrifice of one or more bulls would certainly improve the offer of Eteocles and restore the balance with the sacrifice of the Seven, but would not secure the necessary higher bid. What Eteocles vows is, I think, not to perform one sacrifice but to set up, to establish, periodic sacrificial rites, as was usually done after victories (e.g. after the victory at Marathon; Her. vi. 111. 2). And τίθημι is the proper verb for this sense: *Eum.* 484 θεσμόν, τὸν εἰς ἅπαντ' ἐγὼ θέσω χρόνον, *Ag.* 845 κοινοὺς ἀγῶνας θέντες; see LSJ v. τίθημι A. VI, cf. III, V.

This interpretation accounts both for the accusative plural and for the present tense of the participles αἰμάσσοντας and ταυροκτονοῦντας, which have bothered many scholars. The plural perhaps reflects the natural plural of the participles in ll. 43 f. (ταυροσφαγοῦντες, θιγγάνοντες), where the subject is the Seven. With the constant parallelism between the opposite parties and their members, which marks the whole structure of the *ScT*, the poet may well mean here Eteocles and, as a projection of him, the people of Thebes or the Chorus standing for them (ἡμᾶς: the 'we' used by the sovereign, especially during wars, to denote himself and the people as opposed to 'the enemy'). As Tucker notes, 'the vow is a proclamation or order for the thing to be done, not simply a declaration that he himself will do it (= αἰμάσσων)'. More than that, the tense shows that the object of his vow will have an indeterminate

16. τίθημι (-εμαι) τροπαῖα (-ον) in Eur. *Hel.* 1380 and Ar. *Lys.* 318 may perhaps mean no more than 'put the enemy to flight'; Wilamowitz, *op. cit.* p. 109, Groeneboom *ad loc.*

duration and the citizens who will effectuate it are both of the present and the future generations.

πολεμίων δ' ἐσθήμασι: This is the reading of M, whose scholiast, however, added τα above the ending of ἐσθήμασι; all the other manuscripts present ἐσθήματα.¹⁷ I believe that the original reading was ἐσθήματα and that ἐσθήμασι is an attempt at normalization of the strange—for later Greek ears—construction of στέφω with an accusative that denotes not the person or the thing crowned but the crown itself or the thing that serves as a crown. We have already come across the same syntax in the parallel scene of the ὄρκοι: 49 f. μνημεῖά θ' αὐτῶν... πρὸς ἄρμ' Ἀδράστου... ἔστεφον. Here ἐσθήματα is the object of 278^a στέψω; λάφυρα δάκτων δουρίπληκτα stands in apposition to ἐσθήματα.

δουρίπληκτα is an ill-suited adjective to describe ἐσθήματα, as dresses can hardly be referred to as 'smitten' or 'struck'. Therefore, emendations like those of Porson (δουρίληπτα = won by the spear) or Dindorf (δουρίπηκτα = fixed on spears or wooden pegs) proved very popular. But it has already been noticed that ἐσθήματα is anything one puts on, and ἔννυμι (-μαι) is frequently used of armour (χαλκόν, ἀσπίδας; see LSJ). So it is better to take ἐσθήματα δουρίπληκτα as 'pieces of armour struck (therefore damaged) by the spear'.

278-278^a ἀγνοῖς δόμοις στέψω πρὸ ναῶν: The words ἀγνοῖς δόμοις πρὸ ναῶν correspond to l. 50 πρὸς ἄρμ' Ἀδράστου and certainly designate the place where the spoils would be hung. ἀγνοῖς δόμοις, however, can hardly mean anything but ναοῖς; in which case the expression 'in temples in front of temples' is indeed baffling. Is Eteocles supposed to build new temples in front of the old ones, in order to house the spoils?

The question ceases to exist if we consider the topography of Thebes. Pausanias, ix. 9. 2, says that the hostilities started by the Ismenion, the precinct of Apollon SE of the Cadmea, near the course of Ismenus. Aeschylus does not seem to disagree. He presupposes that some hostilities had already taken place (21 ff.); and he places the camp of the Seven east of the Cadmea and Ismenus (378). It would be very natural for the spoils of the battle to be dedicated and exposed at this particular precinct of Ismenian Apollon.¹⁸ Pausanias, ix. 10. 2, adds that κατὰ τὴν ἔσοδον

17. Only Y has ἐσθημάτων; the scholiast of I notes also the reading ἐσθήμασιν.

18. It should be noted that the differences between Aeschylus' *ScT* and Euripides' *Phoen.* concern mainly the identity of the seven gates and the precise spot of the duel; they do not affect the site of the battlefield.

(most probably of the precinct) two statues were erected, one of Hermes and one of Athena, attributed to Pheidias and Scopas respectively. These gods, says Pausanias, were called *Πρόναοι*. The statues which Pausanias saw were set up later than Aeschylus' play, but the gods must have been worshipped under the same designation much earlier. A bronze phiale found in the area of the Ismenion bears the sixth century inscription *Ἰν ἀνέθηκε τάθάναι τῷ Πρ[ο]ν[αί]α*. Moreover, although Pausanias says nothing about this, the statues may well have been erected inside separate temples: Sophocles speaks of two temples of Athena at Thebes (*OR* 20 f. *πρὸς τε Παλλάδος διπλοῖς ναοῖς*), and the Scholia *ad loc.* explain that these two *ἱερά* were those of Onka and the Ismenian. The latter can hardly be other than the *Ἀθηνᾶ Προναία* mentioned by Pausanias and the inscription.¹⁹ Accordingly, I read at 278 f. *ἄγνοῖς δόμοις..... Προνάων*, 'on the holy temples of the Pronaoi'.²⁰

But perhaps the vicinity of the battlefield to the temples of the Pronaoi cannot adequately account for Eteocles' vow to hang the spoils captured from the enemy on the temples of these particular gods; for one would naturally expect the spoils to be hung on the temples of the gods guarding the gates of the city. But, in fact, if the Pronaoi were, according to the statement of Pausanias, near the entrance of the Ismenion, i.e. west of the precinct, they would, at the same time, be situated in front of the main gate of Thebes, the *Ἡλέκτραι πόλαι*, from which the road to Plataea and Athens started. It is a well known fact that throughout the Greek world, both gods were assigned the task of guarding gates and cities, Hermes being worshipped as *προπόλαιος* or *πυλαῖος*, Athena as *πρόμαχος*.²¹

Despite the fact that their king was killed in the duel, the Cadmeans eventually defeated the invaders. The terms on which Eteocles made his offer (*εὖ ζυντοχόντων καὶ πόλεως σεσωμένης*) were fulfilled. Did the citizens respect the vows of their dead king? The question is not asked gratuitously. For, although no historical evidence survives, it

19. Keramopoulos, *op. cit.* pp. 35-37. He also (pp. 47 f.) doubtfully ascribes a fragment of a triglyph to this temple of Athena Pronaia.

20. This reading occurred independently to me and my colleague John Stefanis. The same conjecture was made early in the nineteenth century by F. H. Bothe, who understood, however, *ἄγνοῖς δόμοις προνάων* = *προναῖς ἄγνων δόμων*, 'in the vestibules of the temples'.

21. I do not go into the problem of the location of the precinct of Athena Onka and her gate; see Keramopoulos, pp. 334 ff., Schober, col. 1451.

seems unlikely that the poet would have made such concrete references, if he had no concordant experience. Therefore, if my previous suggestion be accepted, I should perhaps proceed further and guess that Aeschylus knew of periodic sacrifices at Thebes in commemoration of the victory; also, that in Aeschylus' time Thebans displayed within the temples of the Pronaoi some damaged pieces of armour which they attributed to the defeated army of the Seven.²²

278^a πολέμιων δ' ἐσθήματα: The second hemistich repeats verbally the end of l. 277. In such a manifest case of extended dittography we must give up any attempt at restoring the original reading. We can only guess that the repetition may be due either to homoiocatacrton or to homoioteleuton. As for the sense required, the parallel scene of the ὄρκοι may perhaps be of some assistance. There, the Seven hung personal objects round the chariot of Adrastus, as μνημεῖα ἑαυτῶν τοῖς τεκοῦσιν ἐς δόμους. Similarly, Eteocles may be boasting here that he shall hang the spoils of the Seven round the temples as remembrances of the victory for the generations to come. I would venture, for mere play, something like: πᾶσι μαρτυρήματα (testimonies for everyone), πᾶσιν ὠφελήματα (for everyone to profit by seeing them), πᾶσιν ἐνθυμήματα (things for everyone to ponder on), ὑστέροισι δαίματα, ὑστέροισι φοβήματα (objects of fear for the posterity), *vel sim.*²³

The passage serves, however, a dramatic purpose as well. We have seen that the ἐσθήματα of the opponents are related to the corresponding μνημεῖα which the Seven had hung on the chariot of Adrastus (ll. 49 f.). But they also anticipate the central scene of the *ScT* with the seven 'Redepaare', where the armature of the Seven, especially their shields

22. The only evidence I was able to find on a ceremony in commemoration of the battle is the description made by Pausanias (ix. 18. 3) of the ἐναγίσματα which the Thebans offered on the graves of Eteocles and Polynices. As for exhibits related with this legend, Herodotus (v. 59-61) describes three tripods he saw in the temple of Ismenian Apollon believed to date from the time of Laius, Oedipus, and Laodamas, son of Eteocles (cf. Paus. ix. 10. 4). It would be superfluous to stress the political significance of this kind of activities. Suffice it to remind the political exploitation of the legend made by the Argives, who erected statues of the Seven in Delphi after the joint forces of Argos and Athens had defeated the Spartan army at Oenoe in 460 or 456 B.C. (Paus. x. 10. 3-4). A group of the Seven had also been erected in Argos at some uncertain time (Paus. ii. 20. 5).

23. Cf. *Cho.* 875, where an obvious dittography at the end of the line (τελου- μένου repeated from the end of l. 872) is also attributed to homoioteleuton (emended to πεπληγμένου by Schütz).

and helmets, plays a leading part. And the boastful reference to the pieces of armour of the foes at the end of the εὐγματα scene, that same armour which in the next scene will constitute the basic element of their κόμπος, is strongly emphasized by its position in a separate sentence, independent from ἐπεύχομαι and ostensibly distinguished from the εὐγματα. So, the proud pledge πολεμίων δ' ἐσθήματα ... ἀγνοῖς δόμοις στέψω, which is the only reference Eteocles makes to an act exclusively of his own projected to take place after the war is over, assumes now a vivid shade of tragic irony; which is greatly intensified by the ensuing words with which Eteocles addresses the Chorus (279-281): 'Such prayers you should make, without useless and excited wailings'

οὐ γάρ τι μᾶλλον μὴ φύγῃς τὸ μόρσιμον.

To sum up, I would propose the following text and translation:

ἐγὼ δέ χώρας τοῖς πολισσούχοις θεοῖς,	
πεδιονόμοις τε κάγορᾶς ἐπισκόποις,	
Δίρκης τε πηγαῖς, οὐδ' ἀπ' Ἰσμηνοῦ λέγω,	
εὖ ξυντυχόντων καὶ πόλεως σεσωμένης,	
μήλοισιν αἰμάσσοντας ἐστίας θεῶν—	275
τυροκτονοῦντας θεοῖσιν—ὧδ' ἐπεύχομαι	
θήσειν τροπαῖα πολεμίων δ' ἐσθήματα,	
λάφυρα δάμων δουρίπληχθ', ἀγνοῖς δόμοις	
στέψω Προνάων †πολεμίων δ' ἐσθήματα†.	278 ^a

'And now myself, to the guardian gods of the city, both those who rule the fields and those who watch over the market-place, and to the springs of Dirce, nor do I leave out those of Ismenus, should things go well and the city be saved, dyeing the hearths of the gods in blood of sheep—*(louder)* slaying bulls for the gods!—thus do I vow that we shall institute victorious sacrifices. And the pieces of armour of our opponents, the spear-smitten spoils of the foes, shall I hang round the holy temples of the Pronaoi gods †...†'.

It must have been clear by now to the reader that in the notorious controversy over the nature of this play of Aeschylus, namely whether Eteocles chose his fate by free decision or his actions were dictated by the omnipotence of his father's curse, I side with the second view, the one of E. Wolff and his followers.²⁴ Seen in this light, the interpretation

24. The debate, based on the timing of the assignment of the seven Theban

I propose of the εὔματα scene contributes to the approach of the play along the same lines as Wolff's.

The old view that the play is made up of two irreconcilable and, therefore, paratactically connected components, one in each half of the play, is no longer accepted by most students of Greek drama. But it cannot be dismissed without explaining how this impression arose. It is true that the play has a double texture. Two colours prevail, one in each half. But a skilled eye can clearly discern, under the surface of the first half, the shade prevailing in the second. The skilled eye is, of course, the eye of the spectator. And Aeschylus has woven his work in an admirable, from a dramatic point of view, way, which allows the spectators realize more than what some characters of the play can grasp.

The opening lines of *ScT* spoken by Eteocles seemingly repeat a commonplace maxim; in fact, however, they warn the audience that the king has to hide some truths from his people (1-2):

Κάδμου πολῖται, χρὴ λέγειν τὰ καίρια
ὅστις φυλάσσει πρᾶγος ἐν πρόμνηι πόλεως.²⁵

champions to each gate of the city, started with E. Wolff (*HSCP* 63 (1958), 89-95), who, after demonstrating that Eteocles made the postings right after his exit in l. 286 (and not during the scene of the seven 'Redepaare'), explored the implications this detail has on the interpretation of the whole play. Wolff's paper provoked a volley of counter-arguments (see literature in R. P. Winnington-Ingram, *YCLS* 25 (1977), 1 n. 1, and add, for the sake of completeness, F. Ferrari, *Studi class. or.* 19/20 (1970/1), 140-145, idem, *Quad. Urb.* 29 (1978), 39-48, F. Maltomini, *Quad. Urb.* 21 (1976), 65-80). The matter is discussed in full (but unconvincingly, to my mind) by O. Taplin, *op. cit.* pp. 152-158. A very sound discussion of the problem is made in Appendix 3 of Thalmann, *op. cit.* pp. 146-149.

25. Amphiaraus, the seer, is a character in many ways akin to Eteocles, therefore aptly posted by Aeschylus, in order to predispose the audience, in the last but one 'Redepaar'. He foreknows the fatal outcome of the expedition, yet he cannot escape his personal doom (617-8):

ἀλλ' οἶδεν ὥς σφε χρὴ τελευτῆσαι μάχηι,
εἰ καρπὸς ἔσται θεσφάτοισι Λοξίου.

And it is not purposeless that, as a chieftain, he acts identically with Eteocles (619):

φιλεῖ δὲ σιγᾶν ἢ λέγειν τὰ καίρια.

Still more, it is not purposeless that this description of Amphiaraus is not made, as in the other 'Redepaare', by the Scout, but by the character who understands him best, i.e. Eteocles himself. It is surprising, however, to find that most scholars take these words as referring to Loxias, and that Page, after I. Pearson, deletes the line.

He has no difficulty in speaking out the truth and referring to the curse, and even calling it *μεγασθενής*, when he is alone on the stage. Such is the case with the prayer of ll. 69-77, which he delivers when the crowd of the citizens and the Scout have left after ll. 35 and 68 respectively, whereas the Chorus enter at l. 78.²⁶ But in the presence of his people, whether it is the citizens of Thebes or the Scout or the maidens of the Chorus, he must speak only what is opportune (*καίριον*) to the situation. Still, he lets some utterances escape him, which act as insinuations aimed only at the audience's understanding. Such is the case with the error which Eteocles commits in l. 276, when he proclaims his vows.

If Aeschylus makes his hero commit an error, it is because this trick is one of the most effective ways to emphasize the parallelism with the passage of the *ἔρχοι*, without making this link obvious to the Chorus. But this oxymoron requires some explanation.

Just like the entire first half of the play, this parallelism also operates on two levels. The first one is the level conspicuous to the Chorus. On this one Eteocles realizes that his offering should not be inferior to the sacrifice performed by the enemy. Had this been the only level of parallelism, Aeschylus would have made Eteocles actually announce a greater vow and openly explain why he does so. The underlying level, however, must remain hidden from the Chorus in the first part of the play: it is visible only to the audience. On this level Eteocles begins to realize that he is enchained to his brother by a common fate. The Seven, Polynices among them, by slaying bulls have made the greatest possible offering. Eteocles cannot outdo them, at least not in the greatness of the victims.²⁷ The most he can do is to offer an equal sacrifice, thus retaining a balance of divine favours, but, at the same time, stressing the tragic impasse in which he finds himself, unable to turn the fate to his advantage.²⁸ On the other hand, Eteocles' vow to establish periodic

26. G. Murray, *Aeschylus: the Creator of Tragedy*, Oxford 1940, p. 138. The king's solitude would have been made more poignant, if he were not accompanied even by the attendants appropriate to his status, *pace* Taplin, *op. cit.* pp. 79-80, 129.

27. Of course, he could surpass them in the number of the victims. But there is no question of numbers in *ScT*, for obvious, I guess, reasons. That bulls constitute greater offerings than sheep needs not specifying. But calculating who killed more animals would amount to a comic auction, like the one at Ar. *Eq.* 654 ff. mentioned above.

28. Thalmann, *op. cit.* p. 55, mentions also the much-discussed third aspect in Ares' position in the *ScT*, that of the final arbiter in the brothers' dispute. What

sacrifices is indeed an outbidding; since, however, it is going to be fulfilled by his people, it can function favourably only towards them. He will be killed, together with his brother, but the Cadmeans will defeat the enemy.

Now these thoughts must only be hinted at to the audience; the Chorus must not perceive any of them until the news about Polynices and the fulfilment of the curse be brought to light in the seventh 'Redepaar', and so the two levels coalesce.²⁹

In similar situations, when it was necessary that the words of a character should be concealed from other characters on stage, a later poet would perhaps resort to the technique of 'aside'. He would have made Eteocles turn away from the Chorus and say καθ' ἑαυτόν something like: 'Our offering must not be inferior to that of my brother and his allies. But, alas, I cannot surpass them. We are bound to have equal shares in the favour and the hostility of the gods. Now, I must do my best to secure the divine help for my people; they are innocent of my family sin'. But the convention of aside does not seem to have been developed by the time of Aeschylus,³⁰ and, in any case, is admittedly impotent from a dramatic point of view.

should be added is that this role, which the god assumes at the end of the play, is a natural projection of the god's double aspect manifested in the first part. This double aspect is so much stressed not because Aeschylus was in any way bound by the myth or the facts (so far as I know, Ares had nothing to do with Argos), but because he wanted to emphasize the notion of balance on both sides with regard to the supernatural forces. So, with no side favoured by the gods, the arbitration of the dispute falls on the ἀρά and its instrument, Ares.

29. I quote from Thalmann, *op. cit.* p. 181 (n. 5), in his critical assessment of H. Patzer's theory of stages in Eteocles' understanding of the curse (*HSCP* 63 (1958), 97-119): "The crucial point is not what *Eteocles* may or may not know, but how much of the true situation the *spectators* are allowed to see". Having in mind that what we are dealing with is a drama, I would add that equally crucial is how much of the true situation Eteocles allows the other characters (and the Chorus) to see.

30. D. Bain, *Actors and Audiences*, Oxford 1977, pp. 67-70. Another expedient which could have been employed in a similar situation is the μετάστας, or the temporary withdrawal of the Chorus. But (a) this would require radical changes in the plot to account for this exit, and, certainly, the cancellation of the εἰγμῶνα scene, which cannot operate without the presence of the Chorus; (b) the few instances of μετάστας known from pre-Euripidean plays (Aesch. *Eum.* 231, Soph. *Aj.* 814) are combined with a necessary change of scene from one place to another, and especially in Aeschylus the stage is not left empty either.

So, the poet uses the trick of self-correction as a covert signal of his hero to the spectators. By smoothing it away scholars suppose that Eteocles had said no more than: 'Should the gods help and the city be saved, I promise to offer bulls (or 'sheep and bulls') to them'. If this were so, however, the reason for the choice of this particular sacrifice would have been lost and its tragic significance would have passed unnoticed. Were it not for this error (and in default of the possibility to employ an aside) it is difficult to imagine what other dramatic device Aeschylus might have used in order to display the inner agony of the king who is aware of his destiny, yet desperately strives to win for his city the favour of the gods in this bargain of sacrifices.