A Reconstruction of Sophocles'
Polyxena
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I N REGARD to lost comedy Professor K. J. Dover has insisted upon the urgent task of "interpreting the extant fragments and discovering what the plays themselves were about."[1] There exists an equally urgent need with lost tragedy. Wherever a title, testimonia and fragments have survived, we have inherited a reconstruction usually from F. G. Welcker (1839), partially refined by A. Nauck and A. C. Pearson, and become dogma through the writings of Albrecht von Blumenthal, Wilhelm Schmid and Max Pohlenz—not to speak of scattered and tenacious pronouncements of Wilamowitz. All this must be reëxamined if an historical account of tragedy is to be attained. This essay makes such an attempt for one play, Sophocles' *Polyxena*. Testimonia and fragments are interpreted; earlier scholarship is criticized. An attempt is made to establish dramatic time and place, the cast of characters, the course of action, the importance of the play for the history of Sophoclean tragedy, and finally the date of its performance. The aim is merely an hypothesis consistent with all the extant evidence. A remark of Max Weber affords comfort: "Man muss das Mögliche sehen, um das Wirkliche zu erfassen."

Dramatic Time and Place

The action of the play takes place after the sack of Troy—probably in the summer[2]—just before the Greeks depart for home. So we are told by Pseudo-Longinus (*de Sublimitate* 15.7). Thus the time. The place is Troy. This we learn from a fragment (522.1P: κατ᾽ ᾽Ιδαίαν χθό-να). More specifically the action occurs before the tent of King Aga-

[2] Sheep are on Ida only "vom Juni an": Bürchner, *RE* 9 (1914) 864.10ff.

memnon. Strabo (470) tells us that Sophocles "brings on" (εἰσάγει) Menelaus addressing Agamemnon: that is, Menelaus visits Agamemnon, who reasonably would be at his tent, probably not far from the Trojan captives (Euripides, *Hecuba* 1109). For the stage-setting one may, therefore, compare the prologue of *Ajax*. In *Choephoroe* Aeschylus brought the tomb of Agememnon to the palace and in *Persae* the tomb of Dareius clearly is visible.[3] In *Polyxena* the audience did not see the tomb of Achilles, although probably it was assumed to be nearby.[4] F. G. Welcker[5] in 1839 discerned acutely against Gruppe[6] that because Polyxena was sacrificed at the tomb of Achilles, the tomb could not be visible, for no such scene of violence and murder was enacted in the Greek theatre. The sacrifice would have been reported by a Messenger who had been present.[7] There is no need to move the action and the Greek camp to Sigeion.[8] The necropolis—Patroclus, Protesilaus, and Antilochus also were buried there—was but 14km. from Bali Dağ,[9] some hour's ride and time for an *angelos*.

Thus for the time and place. Next we shall try to establish the dramatis personae.

Dramatis Personae

POLYXENA: The title suggests that she shared in the action. She is not likely to have been a mute as Seneca made her in his *Troades*. Thus Iole did not give her name to *Trachiniae*. Contrast Antigone, a young heroine, murdered during the action, whose name, although she was not the protagonist, subsequently provided the title for her play; and as well one recalls Sophocles' lost dramas, *Andromeda* and *Iphigenia*,

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[3] So the hypothesis; and see H. D. Broadhead, *The Persae of Aeschylus* (Cambridge 1960) xliii–xlvi.

[4] This is assumed from *Od.* 24.82: see Escher, *RE* 1 (1893) 240.10ff.

[5] F. G. Welcker, *Die griechischen Tragödien mit Rücksicht auf den epischen Cyclus* I (Bonn 1839) 180 (henceforth: Welcker, *GrTrag* I).

[6] O. F. Gruppe, *Ariadne: die tragische Kunst der Griechen in ihrer Entwickelung und in ihrem Zusammenhang mit der Volkspoesie* (Berlin 1834) 596 (henceforth: Gruppe, *Ariadne*). Gruppe (593–604) presents the first reasoned attempt to reconstruct *Polyxena*, and much of Welcker becomes clear when one realizes that it is *Polemik* against the unnamed Gruppe.

[7] Cf. E. *Hec.* 518–582, Sen. *Tr.* 1118–1164.

[8] Thus A. C. Pearson, *The Fragments of Sophocles* II (Cambridge 1917) 262 (henceforth: Pearson II).

[9] See Bürchner, *RE* 2A (1923) 2275–76, *s.v.* SIGEION 1.

named after girls demanded as sacrifices.[10] The play is thus one of sixteen Sophoclean tragedies named after their heroines.[11]

AGAMEMNON: The king's presence is attested by Strabo 470.

MENELAUS: Strabo 470. One may note that Strabo's εἰσάγει is since Plato a technical term, "he brings on," *sc.* "Introduco, ut quum in scriptis nostris personas introducimus loquentes."[12] It is useful to recall this when hunting characters in lost plays.

PSYCHE OF ACHILLES: Apollodoros (*FGrHist* 244 F 102a) attests in language curiously reminiscent of Strabo 470[13] that in *Polyxena* Sophocles brought on the Ghost of Achilles speaking (τὴν 'Αχιλλέως ψυχὴν εἰσάγει λέγουσαν). This was an Aeschylean tradition, exemplified by Dareios in *Persai* and Clytemnestra in *Eumenides*. We shall discuss the Ghost of Polydoros later.[14]

MESSENGER: He is required to report the sacrifice of Polyxena.[15] One may again compare *Antigone* (1155ff). In Euripides' *Hecuba* and *Troiades* he is Talthybius, the kind but loyal messenger of Agamemnon.[16] Talthybius may well be found in a preserved Sophoclean tragedy; for is not the Paedagogue of *Electra* he?[17] Nikolaos of Damascus (*FGrHist* 90 F 25) records that Talthybius stole away Orestes and delivered him for safety to Strophius in Phokis. It is by no means improbable[18] that the source is Stesichorus, *Oresteia*. Not only would vases support the suggestion, but such use of the Messenger would be in line with the rationalizing tendency of that poet.[19] Orestes would be over ten at the time of the regicide,[20] a bit old to be handled by his nurse, Laodameia (Stesichorus fr. 218 Page). Talthybius aided in rescuing the boy. This is why at Sophocles, *Electra* 666–667 the Paeda-

[10] See Schmid-Stählin, I.2.472.

[11] The titles are collected at Schmid-Stählin, I.2.472 n.16; contrast Aeschylus' eleven at Schmid-Stählin I.2.281 n.1. However, on the danger of pressing ancient titles too far, see B. A. van Groningen, *La Composition littéraire archaïque grecque* (Amsterdam 1958) 65–66.

[12] Stephanus-Dindorf, IV.303A.

[13] We know that Strabo read Apollodoros: see E. Honigmann, *RE* 4A (1931) 145.20ff. Perhaps he did here too.

[14] See generally R. M. Hickman, *Ghostly Etiquette on the Classical Stage* (Cedar Rapids 1938).

[15] So F. G. Welcker already divined at *GrTrag* I.182.

[16] Talthybius performs a similar function at *IA* 95, 1563, with which compare *Hec.* 530–533.

[17] This was claimed vigorously by Th. Zieliński, *Eos* 31 (1928) 22, but only on the grounds that the spectators would not fail to recognize him as such.

[18] So von Geisau, *RE* 4A (1932) 2089.37ff.

[19] See C. M. Bowra, *Greek Lyric Poetry from Alcman to Simonides*[2] (Oxford 1961) 103.

[20] See Georg Kaibel, *Sophokles Elektra* (Leipzig 1896) 46 with n.1, who survives the criticism of E. Fraenkel, *Ag.* II, 402 n.2.

gogue assumes before addressing her that Clytemnestra will welcome news of her son's death. It is amusing too to note how the Paedagogue's first question (*Electra* 660–661) recalls Talthybius' question on entering at the later[21] Euripides *Hecuba* 484–485. And the Paedagogue admits (Sophocles *Electra* 11–14) that it was he who saved Orestes and bore him off. Sophocles does not name him because such ordinary people were regularly unnamed in tragedy.[22] Yet "ex Homero enim istuc vel pueri cognitum habebant."[23] The Trojan women at *Hecuba* 487 immediately call him by name, though Talthybius has not introduced himself. Hecuba does not (*Hecuba* 501–502), simply because she has collapsed onto the ground and is looking away from him.[24] In short, in *Polyxena* we should have a Messenger, perhaps Talthybius. However, as in Sophocles' *Electra*, he would presumably be unnamed.

CALCHAS?: There is no testimony in the tradition that Calchas appeared in the play. The suggestion, therefore, is speculative and based on assumptions of unprovable relevance. A striking portion of Seneca's *Troades* is the "Fürstenstreit" (203–370) between Agamemnon and Pyrrhus (Neoptolemus). I shall later argue that a similar debate between Agamemnon and another character (probably not Neoptolemus) occurred in *Polyxena*. The bullying and emotional Pyrrhus of Seneca (he even threatens to murder Agamemnon at 307–309) fails to convince the scrupulous king that he should allow a human sacrifice: *Tu me superbum, Priame, tu timidum facis* (270). Indeed, Agamemnon himself is close to dispatching Pyrrhus (349–351) but abruptly stops himself and cries *Calchas vocetur. fata si poscent dabo* (352). By the next line Calchas has entered from the wings. Clearly the action is ridiculously abrupt; and W. H. Friedrich[25] has suggested that Seneca is abbreviating an earlier source. The source is not Euripides. We suspect that elsewhere in *Troades* Seneca has used *Polyxena*.[26]

[21] The entrance of Polymestor in *Hecuba* is modeled on the Aegisthus of S. *El.*: see W. H. Friedrich, "Euripides und Diphilos," *Zetemata* Heft 5 (München 1953) 31 (henceforth: Friedrich, *EuD*).

[22] See U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Analecta Euripidea* (Berlin 1875) 185.

[23] Wilamowitz, *ibid.*, and *cf.* Johannes Rassow, *Quaestiones Selectae de Euripideorum nuntiorum narrationibus* (Diss. Greifswald 1883) 15.

[24] Talthybius sees only her white head (*Hec.* 500): *cf.* Anna Spitzbarth, *Untersuchungen zur Spieltechnik der griechischen Tragödie* (Zürich 1946) 16–17. On the general problem see Schmid-Stählin, I.2.387 n.1.

[25] See Wolf-Hartmut Friedrich, *Untersuchungen zu Senecas dramatischer Technik* (Leipzig 1933) 102 (henceforth: Friedrich, *Untersuchungen*).

[26] See Friedrich, *Untersuchungen* 103ff.

Perhaps here too he draws again on *Polyxena* for his Calchas.[27] Pro-
phetic figures are Sophoclean, and we see one elsewhere performing
the same function that Calchas does in Seneca, convincing a seemingly
adamant monarch that he must change his mind and admit that his
adversaries are right: Teiresias in *Antigone*.[28] Antigone, Ismene,
Haemon and the chorus have failed to turn Creon from his resolve.
At 988 Teiresias arrives led by a boy. He recites the adverse omens,
threatens the king with the death of his son if he does not behave,
denies the stock charges of bribery and departs. After some brief
indecision and supported by the opinion of the chorus, Creon decides,
in the couplet (1105–6) that forms the climax of the play, to yield, thus
ending the conflict that until then has dominated the plot.

$$\text{οἴμοι· μόλις μέν, καρδίας δ' ἐξίσταμαι}$$
$$\text{τὸ δρᾶν· ἀνάγκῃ δ' οὐχὶ δυσμαχητέον.}$$

Seneca, it seems, has compressed a scene into twenty-one verses
(*Troades* 349–370). Agamemnon does not even reply to Calchas but
exits with the seer and Pyrrhus, leaving the audience to assume from
the subsequent action that the king has changed his mind. The postu-
lated Sophoclean scene may be imagined in the manner of *Antigone*.
Calchas is also known in Sophocles at *Ajax* 750ff, where his words are
reported, and in ῾Ελένης ᾿Απαίτησις (fr. 180 P).[29] Further, F. G.
Welcker,[30] followed by W. H. Friedrich,[31] reasonably refers Sophocles
fr. 34 P (Αἰχμαλωτίδες) to Calchas. In short, because of the Senecan—
perhaps even Stesichorean[32]—Calchas, the parallel character and
action of *Antigone*, the fact that Calchas is found in other Sophoclean
tragedies, and the demands of the proposed plot (see below), Calchas
may have appeared in *Polyxena*.

AGAMEMNON'S INTERLOCUTOR: A character is needed whose rôle
would correspond to the type of Haemon in *Antigone*, a subordinate
character who presents a strong but unsuccessful case to a determined
protagonist. Hecuba, who had been assumed by F. G. Welcker and

[27] For Calchas' part in the Polyxena story see E. Wüst, *RE* 21 (1952) 1842.23ff.
[28] Apparently Sophocles was the first to have brought the blind seer on the stage: see
Schmid-Stählin, I.2.347 n.5.
[29] See Stoll-Immisch, *LexMyth* II.1.922.39ff.
[30] F. G. Welcker, *GrTrag* I.174.
[31] W. H. Friedrich, *Untersuchungen* 102.
[32] See Richard Förster, *Hermes* 17 (1882) 195 and E. Wüst, *RE* 21 (1952) 1842.23ff.

tentatively by A. C. Pearson to be among the dramatis personae,[33] does not fit this rôle for she would be an ally of the king and no antagonist. One might think Neoptolemus suitable. He is the interlocutor of Seneca, *Troades* 203–370, and in the tradition was usually stated to be the murderer of Polyxena.[34] But there are reasons to hesitate. The scholiast on Euripides, *Hecuba* 41 (I.17.4–5 Schwartz) reads: ὑπὸ Νεοπτολέμου φασὶν αὐτὴν σφαγιασθῆναι Εὐριπίδης καὶ Ἴβυκος (fr. 307 Page). Mette[35] rightly holds: "Zwar ob er (N.) schon im alten Epos diese Rolle (the slayer of P.) hatte, ist zweifelhaft, da bei Prokl. 4 (Iliupersis) nur steht ἔπειτα ἐμπρήσαντες τὴν πόλιν Πολυξένην σφαγιάζουσιν ἐπὶ τὸν τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως τάφον; vgl. Apollod. epit. 5, 23 Πολυξένην δὲ ἐπὶ τῷ Ἀχιλλέως τάφῳ κατέσφαξαν." There are only plural verbs without expressed subjects, and Neoptolemus is not named as the slayer.[36] Ibykos, we are told, made him so. Mette assumes, after Hartung, and "wegen der mehrfachen archaischen Darstellungen der Szene," that Stesichorus too had done so. Sounder is Bergk's opinion[37] that such speculation is *citra necessitatem*. Euripides said the same as Ibykos. The fact that the scholiast mentions only Ibykos and Euripides and neglects Sophocles, who had composed the only known earlier dramatic treatment of the story, seems better intended than an omission. Sophocles may have followed the tradition of earlier epic rather than lyric and did not, in spite of Seneca's *Troades*, introduce Neoptolemus as murderer of Polyxena. The conclusion is welcome for another reason. We need not assume that the blameless youth of *Philoctetes* appeared elsewhere in Sophocles as the savage killer of a captive princess.[38]

Not Hecuba. Not necessarily Neoptolemus. Who was the villain who argued against a compassionate king for the death of the heroine? Perhaps Odysseus, the Sophoclean arch-villain of *Philoctetes* as well as some four lost tragedies.[39] Euripides retained Odysseus in the same rôle of hostile interlocutor in *Hecuba*, although there the Trojan

[33] See F. G. Welcker, *GrTrag* I.182 and A. C. Pearson, II.163.

[34] See Weizsäcker, *LexMyth* III.1.168.66ff (where add Ibykos fr. 307 Page) and better H. J. Mette, *RE* 16 (1935) 2446.53ff.

[35] Mette, *loc.cit.*

[36] Perhaps a nameless priest (so Ov. *Met.* 13.475) was the slayer.

[37] See Th. Bergk on Ibykos, fr. 36 B[4].

[38] Contrarily Neoptolemus might have been brutalized by the war's end and consistency in such matters need not be expected of Sophocles: see the good remarks at Schmid-Stählin, I.2.99 n.2.

[39] See Schmid-Stählin, I.2.399 n.3.

queen has replaced Agamemnon. One may recall too that in the *Tabula Iliaca* (*IG* XIV 1284.7) Odysseus with Calchas is witness to the death of Polyxena, admittedly, at the hands of Neoptolemus. Odysseus' implication is certain. The presence of Odysseus as Agamemnon's interlocutor does not mean that he also was the actual murderer; a favorite character (he perhaps appeared in some seven Sophoclean plays) merely argues an unpopular cause. But as in *Philoctetes*, though morally questionable, his cause was politically inevitable. In both plays it was endorsed by the gods (represented by Herakles and the Shade of Achilles) and ultimately prevailed.

CHORUS: One thinks naturally of Sophocles' Αἰχμαλωτίδες, Euripides' *Hecuba* and *Troades* and Seneca's *Troades* and assumes a chorus of captive Trojan women about Polyxena in a play rather like the Euripidean tragedies, although the girl replaces her mother as heroine. It is most unfortunate that no clue to the composition of the chorus is preserved in the tradition. All that could be construed as even possibly relevant evidence is fr. 524 P (Stobaeus 4.299.13 Hense), which Campbell called "Agamemnon's Excuse."[40] It is indeed an apology for his incapacity, and Stobaeus presents it under the general heading Ψόγος Τυραννίδος. Such would be an odd baring of the soul before fifteen female captives.[41] I prefer the chorus of *Philoctetes* or *Ajax*, fifteen Greek sailors, a suggestion first and vigorously advanced by O. F. Gruppe[42] and allowed by F. G. Welcker.[43] Welcker also assigned fr. 887 P, cited without title by the scholiast on Aristophanes' *Nubes* 1163, to the parodos of *Polyxena*. Pearson's text reads:

$$Ζεὺς\ νόστον\ ἄγοι\ τὸν\ νικομάχαν$$
$$καὶ\ παυσανίαν\ κάκ\ 'Ατρειδᾶν.$$

"May Zeus grant a victorious return and surcease for the woes of the Atreidai."[44] Welcker cites no evidence for his attribution, for there is none. The fragment simply fits the situation.[45] If this fragment is in fact from *Polyxena*, then the chorus surely were Achaeans, for no

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[40] See Lewis Campbell, *Sophocles* II (Oxford 1881) p. 527 on fr. 479.

[41] For just the difficulty I should compare Sen. *Troades* 202, where Talthybius must lead off the chorus of Trojan women before the "Fürstenstreit": see Friedrich, *Untersuchungen* 103.

[42] See O. F. Gruppe, *Ariadne* 594.

[43] See F. G. Welcker, *GrTrag* I.182: "aber auch aus Achäern, in so fern die Abfahrt, die von dem Opfer abhieng, deren Sache war."

[44] See F. G. Welcker, *GrTrag* I.177 and for the syntax Pearson *ad loc.* and Kühner-Gerth, I.296.

[45] The situation could not exist in Αἰχμαλωτίδες, which had a female chorus.

Trojan captive would utter such sentiments. Such a chorus could represent the "sons of the Achaeans" who (*Odyssey* 3.137ff) listened to the quarrel of the Atreidai (see fr. 522 P).

To sum up:

> *Dramatis Personae* (in possible order of appearance)
> ACHILLIS UMBRA
> AGAMEMNO
> MENELAUS
> ULIXES (*fortasse* NEOPTOLEMUS)
> POLYXENA
> CALCHAS
> NUNTIUS
> CHORUS MILITUM GRAECORUM

There would then be seven speaking parts. This is as one would expect. In the preserved tragedies, Sophocles varies from five to eight speaking parts with a distinct preference toward the larger figure.[46]

Five Testimonia for the Action

Apart from the preserved fragments themselves, there are five general remarks in the tradition that are relevant to the action of the play. One has already been discussed above (Scholiast to Euripides, *Hecuba* 41). The others may best be noted here. First, however, it may be salutary to recall that the title implies that the Polyxena incident dominated the action of the play in the manner of *Antigone* or *Alcestis*. Euripides' *Hecuba* is not comparable: that play was called *Hecuba* and not *Polyxena*. There the Polyxena episode serves first, with the Polydoros incident, to increase and emphasize the isolation of Hecuba; and, as well, the gentle, unresisting nature of Polyxena (compare Aulic Iphigenia and "Makaria"[47]) is meant to contrast[48] with the savage, pitiless revenge of Hecuba upon Polymestor.[49]

Let us turn now to the testimonia.

I

Scholiast to Euripides, *Hecuba* 41 (I.17.4–5 Schwartz): ὑπὸ Νεοπτολέμου φασὶν αὐτὴν σφαγιασθῆναι Εὐριπίδης καὶ Ἴβυκος (fr. 307 Page). It

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[46] There are eight in *Aj., OT,* and *OC* and seven in *Trach.*: see Schmid-Stählin, I.2.59 n.2 with my corrections at G(R)BS 1 (1958) 140 n.13.

[47] If that be her name: see Schmid-Stählin, I.3.419 with n.12.

[48] Thus in another way Andromache in E. *Tr.* is meant to contrast with Hecuba.

[49] Yet W. H. Friedrich, *EuD* 32, cautions: "denn der Titel (*sc.* S. *Polyxena*) schlösse eine Nebenhandlung nicht unbedingt aus."

has been argued above that this remark does not entail that in *Poly-xena* the girl was slain by Neoptolemus.[50]

II

Strabo 470 (10.3.14): τήν τε Ἴδην καὶ τὸν Ὄλυμπον συγκεχυμένως πολλάκις ὡς τὸ αὐτὸ ὄρος κτυποῦσιν . . . ὁ δ᾽ οὖν Σοφοκλῆς ποιήσας τὸν Μενέλαον ἐκ τῆς Τροίας ἀπαίρειν σπεύδοντα ἐν τῇ Πολυξένῃ, τὸν δ᾽ Ἀγαμέμνονα μικρὸν ὑπολειφθῆναι βουλόμενον τοῦ ἐξιλάσασθαι τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν χάριν, εἰσάγει λέγοντα τὸν Μενέλαον. There follows fr. 522 P (479N²) which will be discussed later.[51]

The context invites elucidation. The geographer draws attention to a confusion between Ida and Olympos. "Often the poets *indiscriminately*[52] make Ida and Olympos sound like the same mountain." He then provides two reasons for this confusion: (1) "There are four peaks of Ida called Olympoi toward[53] the territory of Antandros" (*sc.* the southern slopes of Ida); (2) "There is also Mysian Olympos, bordering on (ὅμορος) but not the same as Ida." Presumably Sophocles is quoted not as an example of a muddled poet but as an authority for the existence of one of the four Olympian peaks of Ida, which themselves caused confusion in other poets.[54]

A. C. Pearson (on fr. 522.2 P), however, thought Sophocles meant the Mysian Olympos, the modern Keschisch Dagh;[55] but W. M. Calder and G. E. Bean's *A Classical Map of Asia Minor* reveals that this Olympos is some 150 miles east of Ilion. Agamemnon's sheep would not be there, especially shortly before the Greeks' departure. A trek of 150 miles to gather sheep would not be "remaining in the territory of Ida" and would force Menelaus to contradict his own instructions. Further, Strabo cites Sophocles directly after the reasons for the confusion and with δ᾽ οὖν. If Sophocles were himself to be an example of the confusion, he would have been cited directly after the statement of the confusion but before the reasons for it were given. It should be noted that the "Olympian Ridges" are elsewhere attested only by Eustathius.[56] For so obscure a spot Strabo required a testimony. The

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[50] See further U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, "Homerische Untersuchungen," *Philologische Untersuchungen* 7 (Berlin 1884) 181 n.27.

[51] See p. 46 *infra*.

[52] So LSJ and *cf.* Latin *confuse*.

[53] So κατά, not "near" as H. L. Jones.

[54] Thus W. Ruge, *RE* 18 (1939) 314.63ff, *s.v.* OLYMPOS 17, whom I follow.

[55] See *RE* 18 (1939) 314, *s.v.* OLYMPOS 16.

[56] See Ruge, *loc.cit.*

well-known Mysian Olympos needed none; and, *pace* Pearson, received none.

Strabo continues (see above): "So Sophocles in the *Polyxena*, having portrayed Menelaus being in a hurry to sail away from Troy, while Agamemnon wants to be left behind a little while for the sake of propitiating Athene, brings on Menelaus."

The quarrel and parting of the Atreidai are known from Nestor's recital at *Odyssey* 3.141ff, an account perhaps followed by Agias of Troezen in his *Nostoi*.[57] Details of the quarrel are beyond recovery, although Proclus in his digest of Agias (p. 108.16–17 Allen) writes, "Athene sets Agamemnon and Menelaus to quarreling περὶ τοῦ ἔκπλου." From the *Odyssey* we learn that after an assembly Menelaus and half the host deserted Agamemnon and sailed to Tenedos:

> . . . (Agamemnon) βούλετο γάρ ῥα
> λαὸν ἐρυκακέειν ῥέξαι θ᾽ ἱερὰς ἑκατόμβας,
> ὡς τὸν ᾿Αθηναίης δεινὸν χόλον ἐξακέσαιτο . . . [3.143–145]

Odysseus among others (3.162–164) soon returned to join the king and so may be present at the sacrifice of Polyxena. Such is the incident to which Strabo alludes.

III

Apollodorus Atheniensis, Περὶ τῶν θεῶν (*FGrHist* 244 F 102 a [2]): ᾿Αχέρων δὲ καὶ ᾿Αχερουσία λίμνη ταυτόν,[58] ὡς καὶ Σοφοκλῆς ἐν Πολυξένῃ τὴν ᾿Αχιλλέως ψυχὴν εἰσάγει λέγουσαν. Here follows fr. 523 P (480 N²).

Stobaeus (1.418.8ff Wachsmuth) describes the topography of Acheron and quotes Porphyrius, who himself cites Apollodorus, Book XX, where the latter writes περὶ Στυγός. It is Apollodorus, and not Porphyrius (Nauck on 480 N² must be corrected), who ultimately cited Sophocles. The context provides a testimony of first importance for any reconstruction of the action. Sophocles indubitably brought on

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[57] See D. B. Monro, *JHS* 5 (1884) 36ff. A word may be said about ἐξιλάσκομαι. Admittedly the word is relatively common in Hellenistic Greek (Stephanus-Dindorf, IV.1305D–1306A). Yet it is notable that the compound occurs twice in connection with appeasing the anger of Athene after the fall of Troy (*EGF* p. 53, Str. 470: from Agias?) and again in the Salamis oracle (No. 95.1 Parke-Wormell) preserved first in Hdt. 7.141.3 (short iota). The epic coloring of Delphic oracles is known: see H. W. Parke and D. E. W. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle* II (Blackwell, Oxford 1956) xxx, and W. E. McLeod, *TAPA* 92 (1961) 317–325. The verb fits a trimeter and may have occurred in *Polyxena*, from where Strabo took it. I owe this suggestion to Professor Highet.

[58] Professor Huxley glosses this puzzling phrase "depending on whether the Acheron is flooding the Thesprotian plain or not?"

stage (εἰσάγει) the Ghost of Achilles speaking.[59] Two typically intelligent lexicographical notes from Apollodorus on the fragment follow. They are, however, irrelevant to the present purpose.

IV

Pseudo-Longinus, *de Sublimitate* 15.7: ἄκρως δὲ καὶ ὁ Σοφοκλῆς ἐπὶ τοῦ θνῄσκοντος Οἰδίπου καὶ ἑαυτὸν μετὰ διοσημείας τινὸς θάπτοντος πεφάντασται καὶ κατὰ τὸν ἀπόπλουν τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐπὶ τἀχιλλέως προφαινομένου τοῖς ἀναγομένοις ὑπὲρ τοῦ τάφου, ἣν οὐκ οἶδ᾽ εἴ τις ὄψιν ἐναργέστερον εἰδωλοποίησε Σιμωνίδου.[60] One may translate: "And supremely too Sophocles has visualized the scene of Oedipus dying and burying himself with a portent from heaven; and at the embarking of the Greeks the scene of Achilles appearing above his tomb to those setting out, a vision which I do not know if anyone has depicted more distinctly than Simonides."

The soundness of the passage has recently been challenged by Winfried Bühler,[61] who postulates a lacuna "entweder vor ἣν oder . . . nach Σιμωνίδου." Apart from a considered skepticism ("Auch nach mehrmaligen Überdenken . . ."), Bühler's reasons are two: (1) the impropriety of such a "back-handed" compliment to Sophocles with its implied contradiction: can Sophocles write ἄκρως if Simonides does more so? And (2) the avoidance of drawing a direct comparison between two poets in dubious favor of choosing one "aus einer (anonymen) Menge" to pick out the best. If his proposed lacuna is right, Bühler justly concludes that it can no longer be certain that Simonides treated the appearance of Achilles.[62]

But are Bühler's two objections in fact cogent? I think not. The first loses force when one observes that earlier in the same chapter both Aeschylus and Euripides had been cited first for favorable examples of φαντασίαι (15.2–5) but then (15.6) for crude ones. Next (15.7) Sophocles is cited with praise and then shown once to have been excelled. Pseudo-Longinus, in short, throughout the chapter has an open but

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[59] Apollodorus does not show—in spite of A. von Blumenthal, *RE* 3A (1927) 1073.22ff—that in Sophocles the ghost climbed "auf der Szene aus dem Grabe." The grave was not in sight.

[60] I use the text of Winfried Bühler, *Beiträge zur Erklärung der Schrift vom Erhabenen* (Göttingen 1964) 111.

[61] See Bühler, *Beiträge* 111–112.

[62] We should also lose the only instance where Simonides is known to have influenced tragedy: see U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Sappho und Simonides: Untersuchungen über griechische Lyriker* (Berlin 1913) 154 n.2 and *Kleine Schriften* IV.229 n.1.

critical attitude to all three dramatists and the criticism of Sophocles is not at all surprising.

As to the vexed τις, there exists a simple explanation. Throughout the chapter Pseudo-Longinus has discussed only φαντασίαι in the tragedians. When he next turns (15.8) to the orators, it is revealing and fitting that he introduces the new genre with οἱ . . . ῥήτορες, καθάπερ οἱ τραγῳδοί. τις then is a generalizing τις and means "but I do not know if any author, whether lyric, tragic, or whatever, has done the ghost so well as Simonides."

Bühler too, after Ruhnken and in company with e.g., O. F. Gruppe, Rhys Roberts, A. C. Pearson, von Blumenthal and recently D. A. Russell,[63] connects the passage with fr. 523 P. This procedure neglects the most important information gained for Sophocles, Polyxena from Pseudo-Longinus. W. H. Friedrich demonstrated in 1933 that Pseudo-Longinus does not refer to the appearance of the ghost in fr. 523 P but rather to a description of a second appearance of the ghost.[64] He argued from the context in the de Sublimitate (περὶ φαντασίας), where the author discusses "visualization" and not dramatic representation, that reference to a narrative in either a messenger speech or choral lyric was intended. One may contrast Apollodorus' unambiguous εἰσάγει. Thus the ghost appeared in the theater at one point in the play and recited those famous lines which both Euripides in Hecuba and Seneca in Agamemnon used to begin their tragedies.[65] A second appearance was later reported. It is this second appearance that is set below Simonides by Pseudo-Longinus, not the famous earlier appearance that seized the imagination of later tragedians. This lessens a bit Bühler's suggestion of impropriety.

V

Scholiast M on Euripides, Hecuba 1 (I.10.7–8 Schwartz): τὰ περὶ τὴν Πολυξένην ἔστι καὶ παρὰ Σοφοκλεῖ εὑρεῖν. "The story of Polyxena is to be found in Sophocles too."

[63] See Bühler, Beiträge 111 n.4; O. F. Gruppe, Ariadne 594–595; W. Rhys Roberts, Longinus on the Sublime² (Cambridge 1935) 241, where after Nauck he attributes the fragment to Porphyrius rather than Apollodorus; Pearson II.163; A. von Blumenthal, RE 3A (1927) 1073; and D. A. Russell, 'Longinus' on the Sublime (Oxford 1964) 125.

[64] See Friedrich, Untersuchungen 104–107. Here clearly is the means of escape from Pearson's "dilemma" (II.163).

[65] Perhaps Ennius (?) too; see TragRomFrag, IncIncFab 73–75 Ribbeck:
        Adsum atque aduenio Acherunte uix uia alta atque ardua,
        Per speluncas saxis structas asperis pendentibus
        Maxumis, ubi rigida constat crassa caligo inferum.

Wilamowitz[66] reasonably conjectured that the notice is the relic of a lost hypothesis. Its information is too general to be useful. One may simply specify its limitations. Unless we accept Wilamowitz' drastic rewriting (τὰ περὶ Πολυξένην ἔστιν εὑρεῖν παρὰ Σοφοκλεῖ ἐν Πολυξένῃ),[67] Sophocles' *Polyxena* is itself not named. No hint is provided for the priority of either play. To assume that all details of the Euripidean treatment were to be found in Sophocles would be foolish. One does well to recall a similar note of Servius on Vergil, *Aeneid* 4.1: *Apollonius Argonautica scripsit et in tertio inducit amantem Medeam; inde totus hic liber translatus est.*[68]

The Preserved Fragments and a Tentative Reconstruction of the Action

PROLOGUE

"Scilicet in hoc dramate inducebatur Achillis umbra, quodque apud Euripidem narratur initio Hecubae, id Sophocles spectatorum subjecerat oculis." Thus in 1819 R. F. P. Brunck deduced that the ghost of Achilles appeared on the Sophoclean stage.[69] It is ironic that his perception emerged from a misapprehension of Pseudo-Longinus. F. G. Welcker[70] approved Brunck; and his ghost appeared somewhere in the middle of the action. This is because he lacked Friedrich's demonstration that there were two appearances of the ghost, and thus he combined fr. 523 P and the prophetic fragments (526 P, 527 P) into one appearance. This is now unnecessary.

W. H. Friedrich first discerned[71] that the ghost appeared in the prologue. He argued from the close imitations of fr. 523 P at Euripides *Hecuba* 1ff and Seneca, *Agamemnon* 1ff, which are indubitably spoken by ghostly prologists. F. Stoessl has canonized this view by accepting it in the *RE* article, *Prologos*. Stoessl's further contention is questionable. "Wenigstens diese Anfangsrede war ein Monolog, wie wir ihn sonst bei Euripides kennen, dessen Schablonenhaftigkeit Aristophanes

[66] See Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Einleitung in die griechische Tragödie* (Berlin 1907) 146 n.39.

[67] Wilamowitz, *ibid.*

[68] I.459.1–2 Thilo-Hagen. One must correct A. S. Pease, *Publi Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quartus* (Harvard 1935) 13: "Apollonius . . . in tertio inducit amantem Didonem."

[69] R. F. P. Brunck, *Sophoclis quae extant Omnia, etc.* II (London 1819) 218.

[70] F. G. Welcker, *GrTrag* I.177–178.

[71] W. H. Friedrich, *Untersuchungen* 106; *cf. EuD* 34.

verspottete."[72] There is no example of such an introductory mono-
logue in Sophocles and we need not assume one here. A dialogue
would be typical. The scene is in front of the tent of Agamemnon.
Achilles appears there. As Wilamowitz has well observed,[73] he would
not be winged like the shade of Polydoros,[74] for he is a hero. Euripides'
prologist was meant to contrast with the Sophoclean Achilles.[75] One
must rather compare Herakles in *Philoctetes*. As Herakles with his
club or Athena in *Ajax* with aegis and glimmering helmet, so Achilles
would enter onto the theologeion[76] with golden armour and his
shining shield.[77] Euripides, *Hecuba* 110 ($\chi\rho\upsilon\sigma\acute{\epsilon}o\iota\varsigma$ $\acute{\epsilon}\phi\acute{\alpha}\nu\eta$ $\sigma\grave{\upsilon}\nu$ $\acute{o}\pi\lambda o\iota\varsigma$)
perhaps recalls the striking Sophoclean effect. The ghost addresses
Agamemnon. Agamemnon is likely to be there because when an
action is enacted on the Sophoclean stage, it is never retold, and
Agamemnon must know Achilles' message. The Sophoclean tradition
of the ghost appearing to Agamemnon would then be preserved at
Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 13.441ff, where, too, Polyxena is slain not by
Neoptolemus but by a nameless priest.

For the staging of the prologue and its theatrical effect, Stoessl well
compared *Ajax*.[78] A divinity appears on the theologeion to address a
Homeric hero who emerges from his tent below.[79] As Polydoros in

[72] See F. Stoessl, *RE* 23 (1959) 2325.10–38. *Trachiniae* is no parallel; for the nurse enters
at verse 1 and not at verse 39 which would provide an intolerable distraction during
Deianeira's speech. Tycho von Wilamowitz ought not to have hesitated ("ob sie [die
Amme] schon von Anfang an auf der Bühne ist, oder erst später, etwa gegen Ende von
Deianeiras Rede, auftritt, lässt sich nicht sagen"): "Die dramatische Technik des So-
phokles," *Philologische Untersuchungen* 22 (Berlin 1917) 117. C. R. Post (*HSCP* 23 [1912] 113)
was simply wrong to hold ". . . Deianeira, in Euripidean fashion, relates her marriage with
Herakles directly to the audience."

[73] See Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Der Glaube der Hellenen* I² (Basel 1956)
365 n.1 and further *KS* IV.229: "Denn wir sehen nun deutlich, dass Euripides den schwarzen
Schatten des Polydoros als Gegenstück zu dem Heroenglanze des sophokleischen Achilleus
eingeführt hat, und seine Abhängigkeit von der Polyxene des Sophokles wird deutlich."
Contrast Gruppe, *Ariadne* 595: ". . . dass der Geist durch bleiche Maske, bleiches Gewand
und geisterhafte Bewegung die Schattennatur ausgedrückt haben werde."

[74] Cf. $\phi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\mu\alpha$ $\mu\epsilon\lambda\alpha\nu\acute{o}\pi\tau\epsilon\rho o\nu$ (E. *Hec.* 705).

[75] See Wilamowitz, *KS* IV.229 (quoted *supra* n.73).

[76] For early use of the *theologeion* or "high platform," see recently T. B. L. Webster,
Greek Theatre Production (Methuen, London 1956) 11ff and W. Ritchie, *The Authenticity of the
Rhesus of Euripides* (Cambridge 1964) 122–123.

[77] Gods and heroes appeared with their attributes: see Albert Müller, *Lehrbuch der
griechischen Bühnenalterthümer* (Freiburg 1886) 236. For the epiphany of Achilles in gleaming
armour, see schol. ad Pl. *Phdr.* 243A (VI.268 Hermann) where the gleam blinds Homer.

[78] See F. Stoessl, *RE* 23 (1959) 2325.19–21: "So wie im Aias eröffnete Sophocles also auch
hier mit grossartigem Theatereffekt."

[79] For the view that in *Ajax* Athene appears on the *theologeion* and not in the orchestra,
see my note at *CP* 60 (1965) 114ff.

Hecuba,[80] the ghost appears above the tent. The ghost could not appear above his tomb, for that is where the sacrifice will take place and so cannot be visible to the audience.[81] The ghost presumably demanded Polyxena[82] and so motivated the subsequent action. A calm (perhaps adverse winds: see Jebb on Sophocles, *Electra* 563f) was preventing the sailing of the Greek ships and only the sacrifice could stop it. Unless the *Tabula Iliaca* implies Stesichorean precedent, it was Sophocles who first transferred this Aulis-motif to the moment of departure (τοῖς ἀναγομένοις: *de Sublimitate* 15.7) and forced the Greeks to act under compulsion.[83] Precisely how the demand of Achilles related to the wrath of Athene and the ocean's calm is unknown. Through Thetis Achilles could control the sea: see *et pontus suum / adesse Achillen sensit ac stravit vada* (Seneca, *Troades* 177–178) and the subsequent report on Achilles' ghost (Seneca, *Troades* 191–202). That much is reasonable; but as to the cause of Achilles' wrath and barbarous demand we can only endorse the verdict of F. Noack: "Sed iniudicatum nobis relinquendum est, qua de causa Achilles ipsam Polyxenam poposcerit aut qui omnino factum sit ut Achilli Polyxena tribueretur."[84] Odysseus' justification on the grounds of "Staatsraison" at Euripides, *Hecuba* 299ff[85]—"we can only incite our soldiers to further glory by honoring Achilles dead"—looks like an Euripidean attempt to rationalize an embarrassing and primitive original.

At the end of the prologue—if *Ajax* is still an analogy—the ghost would withdraw and Agamemnon retire into his tent to await the entrance of the chorus.

PARODOS

The chorus of Achaeans enter. If Welcker is right[86] when he assigns

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[80] See especially E. *Hec.* 53, where Polydoros sees his mother emerge ὑπὸ σκηνῆς "from under the tent," because he is looking down on her from above. The passage is correctly interpreted at Kühner-Gerth, I.522.

[81] See F. G. Welcker, *GrTrag* I.180 and *supra*, p. 32.

[82] See F. Noack, *Iliupersis: de Euripidis et Polygnoti quae ad Troiae excidium spectant fabulis* (Diss. Giessen 1890) 11ff; Escher, *RE* 1 (1893) 241.25ff; Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Griechische Tragoedien* III² (Berlin 1906) 268 n.1: ". . . wir wissen, dass der Geist des Achilleus selbst erschien und die Jungfrau für sich forderte"; and recently F. Stoessl, *RE* 23 (1959) 2325.17ff: ". . . erschien der Schatten Achills . . . und forderte Polyxenas Opferung," clearly from Wilamowitz.

[83] See Max Pohlenz, *Die Griechische Tragödie* II² (Göttingen 1954) 116.

[84] F. Noack, *Iliupersis* 11.

[85] Compare Schmid-Stählin, I.3.466: "Er funktionert als Scherge zur Wegführung der Polyxene."

[86] See F. G. Welcker, *GrTrag* I.177.

fr. 887 P to this context, they pray for a safe return and the end of troubles for the Atreidai. Gruppe's suggestion[87] that they glorify Achilles derives from a misinterpretation of *de Sublimitate* 15.7 and may be discarded.

FIRST EPEISODION

The confrontation of Agamemnon with his brother, the first of the assaults on the king's resolve, is best set here. It would impede the progress of the action if placed in a later epeisodion but cannot be in the prologue.[88] Menelaus enters, perhaps with news of the wrath of Athene (Strabo 470) and informs Agamemnon of his own imminent departure (σὺ δ' of fr. 522.1 P implies an earlier ἐγὼ μέν) while consenting, albeit angrily, to the king's remaining behind to collect sheep for sacrifice.[89]

σὺ δ' αὖθι μίμνων που κατ' Ἰδαίαν χθόνα
ποίμνας Ὀλύμπου συναγαγὼν θυηπόλει. [fr. 522 P]

Menelaus (to Agamemnon): "But you remain here, somewhere in the Idaean land, collect flocks from Olympus, and keep on performing your sacrifices." The difficulties, once we have Xylander's που, have been exaggerated. Pearson convincingly defends Homeric αὖθι, which may even occur elsewhere in tragedy (Aeschylus, *Supplices* 828).[90] Ὀλύμπου is certainly ablatival.[91] The hyperbolic "flocks" and the disdainful continuative present imperative ("keep on performing your interminable sacrifices") reveal the speaker's impatience.[92] The couplet probably terminates an unsuccessful argument.

Here too the longest fragment of the play, "Agamemnon's Excuse," is most easily, although not certainly, assigned.[93]

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[87] See O. F. Gruppe, *Ariadne* 595.

[88] As O. F. Gruppe (*Ariadne* 594) wrongly held.

[89] The obvious difficulty—Menelaus could not sail off to Tenedos if the threatened calm had already begun—must somehow have been averted; perhaps it was adverse winds.

[90] For Homerisms generally in tragedy see O. Hoffmann and A. Debrunner, *Geschichte der griechischen Sprache* I³ (Berlin 1953) 113–115; for Sophocles particularly see Schmid-Stählin I.2,311 n.6; 315 n.2.

[91] Thus Pearson, *ad loc.*, rightly; for examples see Kühner-Gerth I.395. H. L. Jones' "of Olympus" is wrong: see H. L. Jones, *The Geography of Strabo* vol. 5 (Cambridge 1944) 105. For the meaning of Olympus here see p. 39 *supra*.

[92] The present imperative may also mean that the action is going on before the speaker's eyes: see Pi. *O.* 1.18 with Gildersleeve's note.

[93] It is not impossible that the fragment is from the exodus and provides Agamemnon's excuse for his misguided defense of Polyxena throughout the earlier action. Against this, however, one may urge (1) that Agamemnon's reference to his military office suggests a

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οὐ γάρ τις ἂν δύναιτο πρῳράτης στρατοῦ
τοῖς πᾶσιν εἶξαι καὶ προσαρκέσαι χάριν·
ἐπεὶ οὐδ' ὁ κρείσσων Ζεὺς ἐμοῦ τυραννίδι
οὔτ' ἐξεπομβρῶν οὔτ' ἐπαυχμήσας φίλος·
5   βροτοῖς <δ'> ἂν ἐλθὼν ἐς δίκην λόγων ὄφλοι.
πῶς δῆτ' ἔγωγ' ἂν θνητὸς ἐκ θνητῆς τε φὺς
Διὸς γενοίμην εὖ φρονῶν σοφώτερος;   [fr. 524 P]

Agamemnon: "For no captain of a host could yield and grant favor to every one since not even Zeus, greater in his sovereignty than I, either by sending rain or drought, (is) a friend (to all); but if he should enter into a trial of words with mortals, he would lose his case. How really could I, a mortal and from a mortal woman born, if of sound mind, prove to be wiser than Zeus?"

Verse 3, as Gruppe saw,[94] shows Agamemnon to be the speaker. He states his incapacity to please every man and draws an analogy with Zeus.[95] A captain is to his army as Zeus is to all mortals. The captain in giving commands cannot please every soldier; nor in giving weather (rain or drought is a polar expression covering whatever kind of weather he may give) can Zeus please the whole of mankind. If he should enter into a trial of words with mortals,[96] he would lose the case. That is: if he should try to please every mortal, he would certainly fail. In litigation on the matter Zeus would be the defendant; the charge "guilty of not being able to please all mortals" with all mortals as the jurors. Unless the jurors' verdict were unanimous, the defendant would be guilty. The absurdity of such a demand is clear even with Zeus. How less capable a mortal would be to meet it! Pearson's φρονῶν (cf. ἐλθὼν) is right and may be construed as εἰ εὖ φρονοίην. The whole is a reasoned acknowledgement of incapacity and a pious plea for leniency that might well have been said to the chorus

military rather than a theological context; (2) that τοῖς πᾶσιν with its article more easily is "the entire host," sc. before Menelaus split it (see Ellendt-Genthe, p. 610A, s.v. πᾶς IV for the usage), than either "those that were left behind" or "the chorus"; and (3) that Zeus is not cited as one who made a mistake but as one who acts naturally, and therefore the analogy to Agamemnon in the exodos after his anagnorisis would not hold.

[94] See O. F. Gruppe, Ariadne 595: "Dass wir hier Worte Agamemnons haben, ist klar, weil der Sprechende sich als Herrscher mit Zeus vergleicht."

[95] For the device of justification through analogy with Zeus see Pl. Rep. 377E with Adam and esp. E. Troad. 948–950, where Helen justifies her mastery by Aphrodite on the analogy of Aphrodite's mastery of Zeus.

[96] For the dative of the person concerned (βροτοῖς) in Sophocles, see L. Campbell, Sophocles I² (Oxford 1879) 19–20.

of loyal soldiers after the decision of Menelaus and part of the army to set sail for Tenedos.

First Stasimon

The subject matter is unknown.

Second Epeisodion

One may conjecture a scene similar to the Haimon-Kreon encounter of *Antigone* 631–730. Odysseus (Neoptolemus?) implores Agamemnon to sacrifice Polyxena in accordance with the demand of Achilles. The girl herself, who would be quartered in Agamemnon's tent (Euripides, *Hecuba* 53–54, 174), presumably is present. The scene influenced the Odysseus-Hecuba debate at Euripides, *Hecuba* 218–443. Its violence is reflected in the *Fürstenstreit* at Seneca, *Troades* 203–348. It perhaps concluded, as the Haimon-Kreon encounter did, with the protagonist shaken but still determined to have his way.

Second Stasimon

The subject matter is unknown but may be imagined. A conservative chorus counsels temperance.

Third Epeisodion

The resolve of the king must be broken. He is impervious to mortal argument but as a pious man (fr. 524 P) or at least a realistic one, he will not persevere against the divine will. Calchas enters, as Teiresias at *Antigone* 988, and convinces Agamemnon that it is the will of heaven that he relent and sacrifice Polyxena. The scene is preserved in abbreviated form at Seneca, *Troades* 349–370.

Third Stasimon

The subject matter is unknown.

Fourth Epeisodion

Presumably this would contain the piteous exit of Polyxena, possibly dressed as a bride (*thalami more*, Seneca, *Troades* 1132; *cf.* 202, 362–364, Euripides *Hecuba* 612). One compares *Antigone* 806–943 (for the *Hadesbraut* see Schmid-Stählin, I.2.354 n.4). There would have been similar scenes in Sophocles, *Andromeda* and *Iphigenia*.

FOURTH STASIMON

The subject matter is unknown. A dirge suggests itself. The situation would be similar to *Antigone* 944–987, also the fourth stasimon.

EXODOS

A Messenger, perhaps Talthybius, returns from the tomb to relate the sacrifice of Polyxena in a speech that influenced Euripides, *Hecuba* 518–582 and Seneca, *Troades* 1118–1164. The position of Seneca's narrative in his exodos further suggests Sophoclean influence. Fragments 525 P, 526 P and more dubiously 527 P presumably derive from this speech. In his description of the second epiphany of Achilles, following the sacrifice (here is the description that won the approval of Longinus but was not quite as good as Simonides'), Talthybius reports the prophecies of the hero. Sophocles took the incident from Agias of Troizen's *Nostoi*, of which we learn:[97] τῶν δὲ περὶ τὸν ᾿Αγαμέμνονα ἀποπλεόντων ᾿Αχιλλέως εἴδωλον ἐπιφανὲν πειρᾶται διακωλύειν προλέγον τὰ συμβησόμενα.

Achilles has been appeased (and Athene too?) and in gratitude seeks to dissuade Agamemnon from returning home by revealing to him his dreadful future. Fr. 525 P (first set here by Hartung)[98] is apparently "a reference to the storm which scattered the Greek fleet on their homeward voyage."[99] Fr. 526 P (χιτών σ᾿ ἄπειρος ἐνδυτήριος κακῶν), F. G. Welcker argued,[100] referred to the murder of Agamemnon and was spoken by the ghost. Less convincingly Welcker assigned fr. 527 P to this speech (παράρρυμα ποδός: "a covering for the foot").[101]

The sacrifice has ended the calm (*cf.* Seneca, *Troades* 1177–1178). Temporarily at least the wrath of Athene seems to have subsided. With the ending that provided the model for the moving close of Euripides' *Troades*, Agamemnon and the chorus make their exit to the ships. One recalls the similar end of *Philoctetes*.

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[97] See Proclus, *Chrest.* 108.24–26 Allen.

[98] See J. A. Hartung, *Sophokles' Werke* VIII, *Fragmente* (Leipzig 1851) 49, who is approved by Pearson (on fr. 525 P) and von Blumenthal, *RE* 3A (1927) 1073.30–31. Hartung's view that this and fr. 526 P are delivered by Cassandra is untenable.

[99] Thus Pearson on fr. 525 P; *cf.* Sen. *Ag.* 462

[100] See F. G. Welcker, *GrTrag* I.178, who is followed by von Blumenthal, *RE* 3A (1927) 1073 and hesitantly by Pearson on fr. 526 P. See further Fraenkel, *Agamemnon* III.649–650 and P. Groeneboom, *Aeschylus' Agamemnon* (Groningen 1944) p. 331 with n.3.

[101] F. G. Welcker, *ibid.* and see Pearson *ad loc.*

Doubtful Fragments

Two details remain concerning the reconstruction.

1. Fr. 528 P: Harpocration's remark on mutilation need simply refer to a verse or two and be wholly lexicographical. There is no need to attribute an epeisodion to this subject nor to assume, with Pearson *ad loc.*, mutilation of Deiphobus. Pearson's citation of Vergil, *Aeneid* 6.494ff, the earliest authority for the mutilation of Deiphobus, loses much of its force if the Vergilian passage was composed merely as a doublet to the mutilation of Agamemnon and thus does not draw upon an earlier Greek mutilation of Deiphobus.[102] Indeed one may do worse than emend Harpocration's ὡς καὶ Σοφοκλῆς Πολυξένη to Τρωίλῳ. Mutilation occurred in Sophocles' *Troilus* (see fr. 623 P) and there are a number of examples of a character in a play being wrongly cited as the title of the play.[103]

2. In 1936 E. Lobel published a tragic fragment from a papyrus roll of the first century A.D.[104] We may be certain only that "It is a part of a tragedy relating to events immediately following the fall of Troy."[105] A female captive (probably Hecuba) perhaps Andromache, laments that she must depart with her new master. The author is unknown, but Lobel remarks:[106] "Aeschylus and Sophocles can hardly come into question; Euripides could perhaps not be decisively ruled out, if a suitable play were known to which this fragment could be assigned." For "lexical reasons," however, Lobel supposed post-Euripidean authorship. This view was endorsed by D. L. Page, in his standard edition of the fragment.[107] In 1942, however, Albrecht von Blumenthal[108] confidently published the fragment under the heading Πολυξένη. He interprets the fragment as a lament between Andromache, accompanied by Astyanax, and the chorus who are "vermutlich die Dienerinnen der Andromache." The action takes place

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[102] See the strong case of G. N. Knauer, "Die Aeneis und Homer: Studien zur poetischen Technik Vergils mit Listen der Homerzitate in der Aeneis," *Hypomnemata* VII (Göttingen 1964) 114–117. *Cf.* Sen. *Ag.* 748–749 (from Vergil).

[103] See F. G. Welcker, *GrTrag* I.108 on S. fr. 334 P; *ibid.* 113–114 on S. fr. 125 P; and Pearson on S. fr. 161 P, 731 P.

[104] E. Lobel, in *Greek Poetry and Life: Essays Presented to Gilbert Murray on his Seventieth Birthday January 2, 1936* (Oxford 1936) 295–298. (= Pack² 1710).

[105] Lobel, 296.

[106] Lobel, 298.

[107] D. L. Page, *Select Papyri: III Literary Papyri, Poetry* (London 1950) no. 30, p. 162.

[108] See A. von Blumenthal, *JAW* 272 (1942) 62–64. This reference should be added to H. Friis Johansen, "Sophocles 1939–1959," *Lustrum* 7 (1962) 285.

before the grave of Hector (23–24 v.B.: ἐπὶ τ[οῖς γὰρ] τύμβοισί μο[ι] ἦν |
τὰς σὰς θρηνεῖν . . . τύχας; σὰς is determinative). His grounds for
assigning it to *Polyxena* are two:[109] (1) *de Sublim.* 15.7 proves that the
play was still read in the first century A.D.; (2) The subject matter fits
("die Polyxena . . . stofflich passt.")

His first reason is a *petitio principii* and need not detain us. His second
is untrue. Neither Andromache nor Hecuba can be shown to have
appeared in *Polyxena*. The scene is not set before the tomb of Hector.
The chorus is not composed of captive Trojan servants. Von Blu-
menthal's alternative suggestion of Sophocles, *Andromache*, is equally
infelicitous. The only evidence that such a play existed is *Etymologicum
Magnum* 652.13–14 Gaisford. There F. G. Welcker[110] perceived that
the lexicon erroneously referred to a play (Ποιμένες) by the name of a
character in it. This view has been accepted by A. C. Pearson rightly.[111]
The Ποιμένες treated the Protesilaos story and took place at the start
of the Trojan War with a chorus of male shepherds,[112] and thus is not
consistent with Lobel's papyrus. At the moment, as to the authorship
of the fragment, we must be satisfied with a *non liquet*.[113]

Polyxena and Antigone

The tragedy seems to have been an earlier *Antigone*.[114] Agamemnon
was protagonist, just as Kreon.[115] The fate of a girl posed for him a

[109] See von Blumenthal, *JAW* 272 (1942) 64.

[110] See F. G. Welcker, *GrTrag* I.113–114.

[111] See A. C. Pearson, I.78.

[112] See A. C. Pearson, II.147ff, not to speak of von Blumenthal, *RE* 3A (1927) 1072–1073.

[113] The fashionable attribution to Antiphon Tragicus—see A. Körte, *APF* 13 (1938) 100;
Schmid-Stählin, I.3.405 n.10; T. B. L. Webster, *Art and Literature in Fourth Century Athens*
(London 1956) 32; F. Stoessl, *Der Kleine Pauly* I (1964) 398.5ff—is wishful thinking. We know
only that Antiphon wrote a play entitled *Andromache*, in which Andromache may have
allowed another woman to adopt her son (Aristotle, *EthEud* 1239a37–38 with *EthNic*
1159a28ff: *cf.* Nauck², p. 792), and not a verse of which survives.

[114] It is interesting that Gruppe (*Ariadne* 598) argued perversely that E. *Hec.* originated
from an imitation of S. *Ant.* I should say rather from S. *Polyxena*, which itself prefigured
Antigone.

[115] For Kreon as protagonist see Sir Arthur Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals
of Athens* (Oxford 1953) 142, apparently after Frey, *Fleck. Jahrbuch* 117 (1878) 460ff, which I
have not seen. The old view that Kreon was tritagonist (*e.g.*, Jebb, *Antigone* p. 7) grew from
a misinterpretation of Dem. 19.246–247: see Kelley Rees, *The So-called Rule of Three Actors
in the Classical Greek Drama* (Diss. Chicago 1908) 38 with n.1. Besides the facts that Kreon is
longest on stage and delivers most verses, we are now done with the anomaly of a male
chorus for a female protagonist. Wilamowitz' suggestion at *Herakles* I² (Berlin 1895) 150 n.60
that Kreon was deuteragonist is not tenable.

similar moral problem. Several persons sought to sway his resolve but in vain. Only a seer by revealing the divine will succeeded. The girl was led out of the theater to her death. Her end was reported in a messenger speech. These are the formal similarities; the differences are revealing.

The tragic dilemma of Agamemnon is not as satisfying as Kreon's. The death—be it suicide or murder[116]—of Antigone results from an edict promulgated by Kreon himself and because of pride or obduracy not rescinded, although Kreon could himself rescind it if he wished. Agamemnon's dilemma is imposed on him through no apparent fault of his own by the gods who, through the shade of Achilles, demand a sacrifice. Agamemnon's paradox is that through humility and piety[117] he hesitates to fulfil the command of a god, but to resist it he must become a θεομάχος. Nor is the dramatic situation as satisfactory. Kreon intended the heroine of his play to die and she opposed him. Each assault on his resolve, whether by Antigone herself, Ismene, or Haemon, would receive the approbation of sympathetic spectators. Agamemnon, on the contrary, intends to save a heroine who is allied to him.[118] The minor characters of *Polyxena* must all[119] be *advocati diaboli*, whose devices elicit distrust, not encouragement, from the audience. The situation of Polyxena herself was the weakest link in the play. She provided an ineffectual, even embarrassing, victim. Her inclinations were those of the king. There could be no confrontation of a Kreon and an Antigone in *Polyxena*. Nor was she in a reasonable position to plead her case before *e.g.*, Odysseus; for she was a captive slave, not a royal relative. Agamemnon provided the forceful advocate. Euripides redeemed Polyxena by turning her into a willing martyr in the manner of Aulic Iphigenia, Makaria, or even Alcestis.[120]

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[116] For the ambiguity in Sophocles see *GRBS* 3 (1960) 31–35.

[117] See Sen. *Troad.* 270: *tu me superbum, Priame, tu timidum facis*, and for his piety, frg. 524 P.

[118] *Cf.* W. Jaeger, *Paideia* III (New York 1944) 97 on Isocr. 2.15: "The ruler must be both patriot . . . and philanthropist: he must love both mankind and the state. He is, as it were, to be both Creon and Antigone." This appears to have been the plight of Agamemnon in *Polyxena*.

[119] Menelaus may have been an exception and not have discussed Polyxena with his brother.

[120] For the type see Johanna Schmitt, *Freiwilliger Opfertod bei Euripides* (Giessen 1921) and H. Schreiber, *Iphigenies Opfertod: Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis des Tragikers Euripides* (Diss. Frankfurt 1963); for Alcestis in particular see further the unexcelled interpretation of C. R. Beye, "Alcestis and her Critics," *GRBS* 2 (1959) 124–127.

Even this was denied the Sophoclean heroine, whose reluctance to die may well be echoed at Seneca, *Troades* 1157ff:

> nec tamen moriens adhuc
> deponit animos; cecidit, ut Achilli gravem
> factura terram, prona et irato impetu.[121]

Indeed, the fact that in Seneca Polyxena is a *persona muta* is the best indicator that she is Sophoclean.

The tragedy *Polyxena* in sum contained two great passages: a splendidly theatrical prologue that Sophocles approved enough to repeat in *Ajax* and a vivid messenger speech that was still admired five hundred years later. But fundamentally the play failed. Sophocles saw why, and its importance for the history of literature is that its failure made his *Antigone* a masterpiece.

Chronology

Regularly the date of *Polyxena* is argued from the problem of its chronological relation to Euripides' *Hecuba*. O. F. Gruppe,[122] evasively approved by R. Förster,[123] proposed that *Polyxena* was written as polemic against an earlier *Hecuba* and must be dated "nach der Hecuba und vor die Troerinnen."[124] The view entails three highly

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[121] Seneca has composed an amusing parody of *sit tibi terra levis*, a trope first at E. *Alc.* 463–464: see R. Lattimore, *Themes in Greek and Latin Epitaphs* (Urbana 1962) 65–74 where the Senecan passage is omitted. Of especial interest is *ut . . . factura* (= ὡς ποιήσουσα). The future participle of purpose in Latin is rare and post-classical; for examples from prose see Kühner-Stegmann, I.769, where add Corippus, *Iohannis* 1.127–128, 4.505–506. R. Westman, "Das Futurpartizip als Ausdrucksmittel bei Seneca," *Societas Scientiarum Fennica: Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum* 27.3 (1961) 188 interprets: "Ut . . . factura beschreibt den Eindruck, den ihr Fallen auf die Zuschauer machte; das Futurpartizip steht deutlich kausal." I agree that the participle is causal in that it gives the motivation of the act but to contend that it describes the impression that her falling made on the spectators is wrongly to equate *ut* with *tamquam* as presenting the apparent rather than the actual motivation, *as though to* rather than *with the intent of*. *Ut* is precisely ὡς, a Graecism unique in Seneca (perhaps in Latin?). On the Greek construction Kühner-Gerth 2.92 well observe: "Oft bei dem eine Absicht ausdrückenden *Partic. Futuri*, indem die Absicht aus der Seele der handelnden Person ausgesprochen wird." The rarity of the usage in Latin encourages the opinion that Seneca translated a Greek, perhaps Sophoclean, original. In any case one should render: "She fell intending to make the earth heavy for Achilles, downward and with wrathful fury."

[122] See O. F. Gruppe, *Ariadne* 593ff.

[123] See R. Förster, *Hermes* 17 (1882) 196 n.2.

[124] See O. F. Gruppe, *Ariadne* 599. The three following assumptions are from *Ariadne* 593, 595, and 596 respectively. Gruppe's ultimate judgment (597) deserves recall: "also bei ihm (*sc.* Sophocles) war Gegenwart, Energie, Drama, bei Euripides nur ein flach von oben abgenommener Schaum davon."

dubious assumptions: (1) that *Hecuba* is one of Euripides' earliest plays; (2) that Hecuba was a prominent character in *Polyxena*; and (3) that Polyxena in Sophocles was sacrificed on stage. Further the imagined defects in *Hecuba* that *Polyxena* set out to remedy require *a priori* assumptions that read naively today. Gruppe's case will not stand.

In 1906 Wilamowitz declared the alternative and convincing view, that *Polyxena* was the older drama.[125] In 1909 he repeated his suggestion, stating: [126] "Denn wir sehen nun deutlich, dass Euripides den schwarzen Schatten des Polydoros als Gegenstück zu dem Heroenglanze des sophokleischen Achilleus eingeführt hat . . ." He retained this opinion in the posthumous *Der Glaube der Hellenen*,[127] but added no further arguments. It is found again without argument in Schmid-Stählin and *RE*.[128] Pohlenz writes emphatically:[129] "Jedenfalls ist kein Zweifel, dass Sophokles' Polyxene vor der Hekabe liegt" but continues merely to cite the 1906 view of Wilamowitz. An unproven assertion has become dogma. Can in fact specific arguments be adduced? There are two.

First, W. H. Friedrich has argued persuasively[130] that as Polymestor is derived from Oedipus, just so the Ghost of Polydoros is derivative because it did not exist in tradition but was invented by Euripides on the model of the Sophoclean Ghost of Achilles. This is partly an elaboration of Wilamowitz.

Second, two parallel passages exist from the two plays. I believe that scrutiny of them indicates that Sophocles is earlier. The two texts are as follows. (1) Sophocles, fr. 523 P (480 N²):[131]

> ἀκτὰς ἀπαίωνάς τε καὶ μελαμβαθεῖς
> λιποῦσα λίμνης ἦλθον, ἄρσενας χοὰς
> Ἀχέροντος ὀξυπλῆγας ἠχούσας γόους.

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[125] Wilamowitz, *GrTr* III².268 n.1.

[126] Wilamowitz, *KS* IV.229.

[127] Wilamowitz, *Der Glaube der Hellenen* I² (Basel 1956) 365 n.1.

[128] See Schmid-Stählin, I.3.465; 467 n.4 and A. Dieterich, *RE* 6 (1907) 1256.30–33, who wrongly cites Schol. *ad* E. *Hec.* 3 as evidence for Sophoclean priority.

[129] M. Pohlenz, *GrTr* II².116.

[130] W. H. Friedrich, *EuD* 34.

[131] The corrections of Jacobs, Canter, and Grotius (see Pearson and Nauck² *ad loc.*) are certain; and the transposition of Heyne, approved by Pearson and Nauck², more economical than that of Grotius.

W. G. Headlam renders:[132]

> "From those unanthem'd and abysmal shores
> I come, the birthless floods of Acheron,
> Still echoing to the sound of rending groans."

(2) Euripides, *Hecuba* 1–3:

> "Ἥκω νεκρῶν κευθμῶνα καὶ σκότου πύλας
> λιπών, ἵν᾽ Ἅιδης χωρὶς ᾤκισται θεῶν,
> Πολύδωρος . . .

ἦλθον becomes the more prosaic ἥκω. λιπών is retained in just the same position but changed into the more natural masculine gender. The imaginative ἀπαίωνάς, "unanthemed,"[133] degenerates into χωρὶς θεῶν, almost a scholiast's paraphrase. Sophocles' rich, baroque exuberance has become a prosaic travel narrative. "I Polydoros (a) left the pit of the dead, (b) passed through the gates of darkness and (c) have arrived at this Thracian Chersonese." One may compare Euripides, *Alcestis* 124–126 for the same uninteresting route and vocabulary:[134]

> . . . προλιποῦσ᾽
> ἦλθεν ἕδρας σκοτίους
> Ἅιδά τε πύλας.

It is clear which passage is derivative.

The production of *Hecuba*, therefore, provides the *terminus ante quem* for *Polyxena*. Regrettably there exists no certain date for the Euripidean play,[135] and the whole question is in need of new investigation.[136] *Hecuba* 172–175 is certainly parodied at Aristophanes, *Nubes* 1165–1166. *Nubes* was first produced in 423 (hypothesis); but a second edition was published, surely with a new parabasis, and is dated between 421–417 B.C.[137] *Hecuba* must precede 417 and probably precedes 423 B.C.

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[132] See Pearson, II p. 166.

[133] Compare A. *Ag.* 152 ἄνομόν, "without song": see H. Lloyd-Jones, *CQ* NS 3 (1953) 96.

[134] See further Barrett on E. *Hipp.* 893–898. Perhaps the *varia lectio* of M at E. *Hec.* 1 shows the influence of E. *Alc.* 125.

[135] For the dating of E. *Hec.* see especially: Schmid-Stählin, I.3.463 n.2 (417 B.C.); M. Pohlenz, *GrTr* I².277 ("wohl noch vor 423"), *cf.* II².116–117; and A. Lesky, *Die tragische Dichtung der Hellenen* (Göttingen 1956) 170 n.2 (twenties).

[136] Thus Lesky, *loc.cit.*: "Die ganze Frage bedarf einer neuen Untersuchung."

[137] See Schmid-Stählin I.4.247 n.5. Eupolis, *Marikas* (Lenaea 421) is parodied at *Nubes* 553 and the ostracism of Hyperbolus (spring 417) is not mentioned although Hyperbolus is vilified.

If μελαμβαθεῖς (Sophocles, fr. 523.1 P) is in fact from Aeschylus, *Prometheus* 219, the *terminus post quem* for *Polyxena* must be 456 B.C., the latest possible date for *Prometheus*.[138] On the assumption that a dramatist improves with experience, I have in my earlier discussion placed *Polyxena* before *Antigone*. Sophocles would not have written a poorer play on the same theme later. The *Antigone* most likely was performed in 443 B.C.[139] In 443–2, a critical financial year, Sophocles was chairman of the Hellenotamiai[140] and would have had no time for writing and producing four plays. In spring 441, as the most astute critics often forget,[141] Euripides indubitably won first prize;[142] and the tradition (surely a *post hoc* became a *propter hoc*)[143] preserved in the hypothesis that Sophocles in 441–440 was awarded a generalship for his play implies a victory.

The Aeschylean coloring in the language of *Polyxena*[144] further supports an early date.[145] One may also observe that if Welcker is right to have assigned fr. 887 P to *Polyxena*, the play then had an anapaestic parodos and may be compared with *Ajax* and *Inachus*, both early tragedies.[146] A date of *ca.* 450 B.C. for *Polyxena* would accord with what evidence exists.[147]

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[138] For the late dating see E. C. Yorke, *CQ* 30 (1936) 153ff and H. J. Rose, *A Commentary on the Surviving Plays of Aeschylus* I (Amsterdam 1957) 9–10.

[139] The fundamental treatment of the chronological problem is still U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Aristoteles und Athen* II (Berlin 1893) 298 n.14.

[140] See *IG* I² 202.36 and Victor Ehrenberg, *Sophocles and Pericles* (Blackwell, Oxford 1954) 120–136.

[141] See *e.g.*, H. T. Wade-Gery, *Essays in Greek History* (Blackwell, Oxford 1958) 258 n.1 and my note at *CP* 55 (1960) 215 n.4.

[142] See *FGrHist* 239 F A60 (*Marmor Parium*).

[143] Thus Ehrenberg, *op.cit.* 119–120; contrast Wade-Gery, *loc.cit.*: "The Athenian people saw statesmanship in the play, and deemed its author a proper man for the highest Executive."

[144] I have not attempted an exhaustive study; besides μελαμβαθεῖς *cf.* θνηπόλει (fr. 522.2 P and A. *Ag.* 262); ἄπειρος, "without egress" (Page) of Agamemnon's fatal garment (fr. 526 P and A. *Ag.* 1382, *cf.* E. *Or.* 25); and ἐνδυτήριος (fr. 526 P) with which G. Highet compares ἐνδυτοῖς at A. *Eum.* 1028. Other Aeschylean echoes are found from the notes of Pearson.

[145] For the Aeschylean language of early Sophocles see Schmid-Stählin, I.2.486ff and A. Lesky, *Tragische Dichtung* 140.

[146] See S. *Ajax* 134–171 and *Inachus* fr. 270–271 P. For recent treatments of the chronology of *Ajax* see W. B. Stanford, *Sophocles Ajax* (London 1963) 294–296 ("the later 440's") and A. Lesky, *A History of Greek Literature* (New York 1966) 276 ("probably . . . between 460 and 450"). For *Inachus* see *G(R)BS* 1 (1958) 145–146 with n.29.

[147] Schmid-Stählin, I.2.448 n.3 report: "E. Bethe, Homer 2, 266, 6 hält ohne zureichenden Grund Pol. für eines der ältesten sophokl. Stücke."