

More on Conditions of Production to the Death of Aeschylus

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SEVERAL SCHOLARS have written, and I have formed further views, on this subject since the publication of my earlier article in this journal.¹ We owe our knowledge of the early theatre to various factors: literary testimonia, archaeological discoveries, vase-paintings, plays and fragments of Aeschylus, and our own experience in the production of plays. In order to be convincing, any reconstruction must take all these factors into account, not just one or two of them. In my original article and in the article that W. G. Moon and I published in 1978² I tried to take them all into consideration; but some recent books and articles have concentrated on one or two of the factors to the exclusion sometimes of the others. I consider these recent works under three subject headings.

1. The Physical Form of the Early Theatre at the Acropolis

S. Melchinger³ was unconsciously in agreement with my view, of which he was unaware, that there was no stage building for the production of *Persae*, *Septem*, and *Supplices*. What then served in its stead as the elevated place above the level of the *orchestra*⁴ that the plays demand? His answer was a complicated one. He postulated that at the time of these plays there had been an upstanding rib of rock running along the east side of the (*i.e.*, Dörpfeld's) *orchestra*-circle, diminishing gradually in height and extending perhaps to the middle of the south part of the *orchestra*-circle. He characterised this rib of rock as being undulated and rippled ("gewellte, geriffelte Steinboden") and rising perhaps into a knob. The rib and knob were used, he postulated, as an acting-area, a "Pagos-Bühne" or "rock-stage." If we were dealing with a purely imaginary theatre, such a rib would be

¹ *GRBS* 13 (1972) 387–450.

² "Illustrations of Early Tragedy at Athens," *AJA* 82 (1978) 371–83.

³ *Das Theater der Tragödie* (Munich 1974).

⁴ I use '*orchestra*' to mean the dancing-floor used by the Chorus throughout the history of Greek tragedy. The line references in this article are to the Oxford Classical Text of Aeschylus, ed. D. L. Page (1972).

feasible and could be compared to a similar device in a modern theatre. But we are dealing at Athens not with an imaginary but with an actual theatre, of which the actual features have been revealed by excavation. Such a rib of rock never existed there; for Dörpfeld (and Dinsmoor, whom Melchinger does not mention) found only one place where a rock-outcrop had been cut away, namely at V (see *Figure 1 infra*), where I proposed to put the acting-area. Thus in my opinion Melchinger's rib of rock is not a practical proposition.

O. Taplin⁵ was in agreement with me—and also with Melchinger, whom he did not mention—in his belief that there was no stage-building for the production of the plays of Aeschylus before the time of the *Oresteia*. Where then was the elevated place that the early plays demand? He found my published view, that there was a rock outcrop at V and that this outcrop was used by the actors, to be “attractive,” and regarded my proposal of a rock at V as “extremely useful” for the production of certain scenes in *Septem* (467 B.C.), *Supplices* (ca 463), and *Prometheus Vincetus*.⁶ However, he held that it was not used in *Persae* (472 B.C.) or in *Oresteia*. This extreme usefulness for the three plays that Taplin mentions was in my opinion not accidental. Rather, Aeschylus composed the plays specifically to fit the physical conditions of the contemporary theatre, as any playwright is bound to do. Taplin's view, that Aeschylus constructed for *Persae* a separate mound capable of supporting two actors (and presumably removing it before another competitor began to produce his plays) and did not convert the existing rock into a mound, is to me both illogical and unnecessary. For the rock was there precisely for such a purpose, and was indeed used to serve as an acropolis in *Septem* and as a high point in *Supplices*. We shall discuss *Oresteia* later.

An entirely different picture of the theatre on the side of the Acropolis has been presented by Gebhard and by Pöhlmann.⁷ It has three novel features. They are interrelated, but I shall take them separately.

(1) The playing area, they believe, was rectangular. In my opinion the archaeological evidence for a round *orchestra* is incontrovertible. Dörpfeld, an excellent excavator and reporter of what he discovered, found seven stones *in situ* forming a curve and reported that these were the foundation stones of the curving wall of a circle some 25 m. in diameter (the stones being R in his plan:

⁵ *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus* (Oxford 1977 [hereafter “Taplin”]).

⁶ Taplin 448f: “In the course of an unconventional contribution . . . Hammond has offered an ingenious new theory. . . . This would certainly be extremely useful for the staging of certain scenes. . . . For these plays I find Hammond's theory distinctly attractive.”

⁷ E. Gebhard, “The Form of the Orchestra in Early Greek Theatre,” *Hesperia* 43 (1974) 429–40; E. Pöhlmann, “Die Proedrie des Dionysostheaters im 5. Jahrhundert,” *MusHelv* 38 (1981) 129–46.

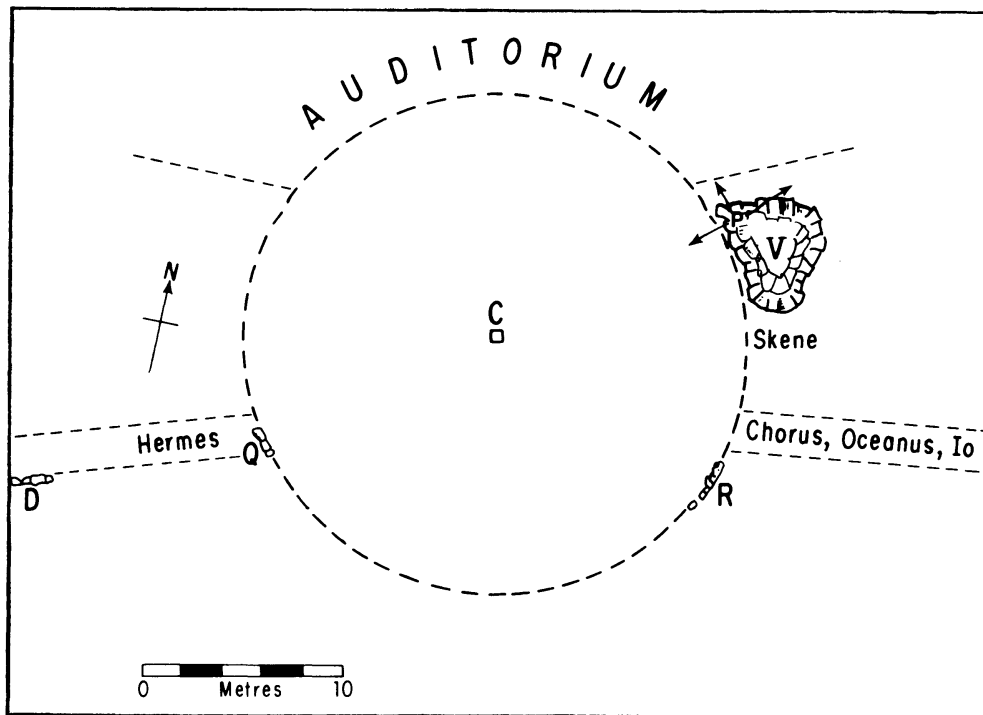


Figure 1. The Set for *Prometheus Vincitus*

P=Prometheus, with arrows indicating his range of vision

V=Rock

Skene=Changing booth

C=*thymele*

D Q R=Dörpfeld's clues to positions of circle and lefthand *parodos*

Orchestra circle=Dinsmoor's size (25.5 m. in diameter) and orientation

see Fig. 1). He reported too that the periphery of such a circle passed through a place (Q in his plan) where three blocks of stone were found, lying under a rectangular stone of later date. He concluded that the stones at R and Q were the only survivors of a wall that elsewhere had been destroyed in antiquity. Dinsmoor, another excellent observer, re-excavated the area some fifty years later. He confirmed the findings of Dörpfeld, except that he proposed a diameter of 25.5 m. Of criticisms of Dörpfeld he wrote, "These two attacks on Dörpfeld's old *orchestra* . . . it would seem . . . are totally devoid of foundation."⁸

⁸ W. B. Dinsmoor, "The Athenian Theater of the Fifth Century," *Studies Presented to D. M. Robinson I* (St Louis 1952) 328.

What new argument have Gebhard and Pöhlmann advanced to overthrow the old *orchestra* and substitute a rectangular one? It turns on R and Q. Now, since Dörpfeld excavated in 1886, 1889, and 1895, others have been at work at R and Q, so that one of the seven stones at R has been lost and the original backing of smaller stones has disappeared. Gebhard and Pöhlmann have noted that the surviving six stones are not now, as Dörpfeld had said, in a regular curve but an irregular one (“eine unregelmässige Kurve”). But this is not surprising, when we remember that the ground has been much re-excavated since the time of Dörpfeld. But they conclude that the six stones are the foundation-stones of an irregularly curving wall. To me such a wall in dry-stone is a non-starter; for such a wall will quickly collapse. It is far wiser to accept the report and the conclusion of the original excavator of what was then an undisturbed site, and to note that they have been confirmed by Dinsmoor, than to build a theory on the present position of the six surviving stones.

(2) The site on the side of the Acropolis was chosen because the hillside was in the form of a *cavea* large enough for a great audience, and Dörpfeld and others have reported that the natural *cavea* was slightly improved by moving soil. Wooden seats, still called *ikria* as in the Agora theatre, were used in this *cavea*. How were they arranged? In 1972 I wrote (405): “These wooden seats were, of course, not curved like their successors in stone but straight, and the pattern of seating on the hillside was probably less compact than in the Periclean or Lycurgan theatre.” Gebhard and Pöhlmann maintain that the seats were “arranged in straight parallel rows” . . . “like the stone seats in the center section at Thorikos,”⁹ where Shear estimates that there had originally been nineteen straight rows of stone seats.¹⁰ Such long straight seats are well placed on a level tilted surface, such as is seen on the side of a gabled roof and indeed is provided on the site at Thorikos. But if they are placed across a *cavea*, they have either to be supported on scaffolding, which will be high at the centre of the *cavea*, or if each half-row is set from the rim of the *cavea* to its centre, the spectators will find themselves slipping downhill towards that centre.

(3) Eleven blocks of stone, used in the late fifth century as seats for dignitaries, have survived. Some or all of them belonged to the front row, the *proedria*. Only two of them fit together. They make a straight edge 1.75 m. long, which is well within the length of a single bench. Dinsmoor regarded these stones as parts of stone benches, and he explained that they had been arranged, like their predecessors the wooden benches, in an extended polygonal pattern, facing the playing area.¹¹

Pöhlmann, however, inferred from the straight edge of the blocks, and especially of the two blocks that fit together, that the front row had been in a

⁹ Gebhard (*supra* n.7) 433f.

¹⁰ I. M. Shear in *PECS* s.v. “Thorikos.” The site is, however, very different from that on the side of the Acropolis.

¹¹ Dinsmoor (*supra* n.8) 328.

straight line and therefore that the playing area had had a straight side in front of the *proedria*. This seems to me an uncertain and most unlikely inference. Moreover, Gebhard and Pöhlmann do not take into account the literary testimonia. For according to Photius (*s.v.* ὀρχήστρα) the “orchestra was first so-called in the Agora, and then in respect to the theatre [*i.e.*, on the side of the Acropolis] it was the semi-circle below, where the choruses used to sing and dance.” The “choruses” here are the *kuklikoi choroi*, in which a chorus of fifty men or boys danced the round dance. This type of dance was originally performed on a round area, such as was provided by Dörpfeld’s *orchestra* of 25 m. diameter. It was only later that the circle was reduced almost to a semicircle when the so-called Periclean stage was made and the *orchestra* was moved northwards and curtailed on its southern side.¹²

Lastly, the three blocks at Q were found by Dörpfeld in a straight line. I explained them as part of the *parodos* foundation, where it joined the *orchestra* periphery. But Gebhard and Pöhlmann propose to join a piece of *parodos* wall at D to R by a line of wall that cannot be straight (for D does not point to R) but has to be “an irregular retaining wall.” In my experience irregular retaining walls of dry stone have a very short life.¹³

To sum up, I see no reason to doubt the correctness of Dörpfeld, supported subsequently by Dinsmoor, in having a circular playing area, a delimiting wall on its southern side which is part of a circle, and a cavea in which wooden benches were arranged in an extended polygonal pattern in the early phase of the theatre on the side of the Acropolis.

2. The Staging and the Date of *Prometheus Vincetus* (Figure 1)

My views expressed in 1972 were as follows. Prometheus was chained on the forward part of the rock and he was able by swinging his head to see the centre and the left part of the *orchestra*. Thus he did not see persons entering from behind him—the Oceanids, Oceanus, and Io—but he did see Hermes approaching and entering through the lefthand *parodos* (941). The description of the scene as an uninhabited desolation was appropriate, since there was no stage building at that time. The proximity of the rock to the *skene* (changing-booth) made it possible for the chorus to move quickly from the rock to the *skene* at the cataclysmic end of the play. As regarded the entry of the Oceanids, I inferred from the words of Prometheus and of the Chorus-leader that the Oceanids “come up the *parodos* into the

¹² See *GRBS* 1972, 415, where Figure 4 shows the two *orchestra*-circles, the Periclean stage, and R and Q.

¹³ Thorikos had a straight retaining wall on the downhill side. Even so it had to be reinforced by two walls set almost at right angles to it on the downhill side. There were no traces of such reinforcing walls at the Acropolis theatre.

orchestra in two or three winged cars, which are said to have competed with one another” (128f, *πτερύγων θοαῖς ἀμίλλαις*). An entry in winged cars, like the entry of Oceanus on his “four-legged bird” and that of “the heifer-horned virgin” (588), is entirely in accord with the reputation of Aeschylus as the inventor of striking and to later taste fantastic effects.¹⁴

In 1978 W. Moon and I discussed two vase-paintings, each on an Attic neck-amphora dated *ca* 510–500. They show Triptolemus on a wingless car, preceded by Hermes, and Dionysus on a winged car, preceded by a satyr. Such vase-paintings with cars of this kind and with satyrs suggestive of parody led H. Patzer to think it very probable that they were inspired by dramatic scenes, “Dramenszenen.”¹⁵ In our article (376ff) Moon and I concluded that the car of Dionysus, being winged for a deity, was a model for the cars of the Oceanids. Indeed the sight of the bare feet of Triptolemus and Dionysus explains the line *PV* 135, “I rushed sandalless on my winged car” (*σύθην δ’ ἀπέδιλος ὄχω πτερωτῶ*),¹⁶ and it is clear that, having started the car off with a foot on the ground, as on a skateboard, the hero and the god are coasting along behind Hermes and the satyr. One can only conjecture whether there were twelve cars, one for each *choreutes* as line 135 suggests, or six two-seaters or four three-seaters.

These views received some support. Taplin, as we have mentioned, found the rock at V “extremely useful” for the production of *Prometheus Vincit*. M. L. West¹⁷ judged my case for a rock at V being used for the production of Aeschylus’ early plays to be a good one, and he believed, as I did and as Taplin did not, that the rock was still there in *Oresteia*. West did not comment on my proposal (*GRBS* 424) that the Oceanids entered through the *parodos* in winged cars, and he did not refer to the vase-paintings I have mentioned. His proposal was that the Oceanids entered overhead, transported two apiece on six cranes. It seems, however, unlikely that the stage-technicians could have provided six “rushing” cranes “competing with each other in speed,” and if so the remark of the leader that she was unsandalled would surely be pointless.¹⁸ He had not, I think, seen the article of Moon and myself in time to take it into consideration. If he had done, he might

¹⁴ *Ar. Ran.* 932, with W. W. Merry (Oxford 1897) *ad loc.* and *V. Aesch.* 7 (Herington [n.33 *infra*] 60): *πρὸς ἔκπληξιν τερατώδη μᾶλλον ἢ πρὸς ἀπάτην.*

¹⁵ H. Patzer, *Die Anfänge der griechischen Tragödie* (Wiesbaden 1962) 128ff.

¹⁶ “Sandalless” because she was barefooted, riding in her car: to arrive sandalless was another sign of haste, reinforcing *σύθην*.

¹⁷ “The Prometheus Trilogy,” *JHS* 99 (1979) 135.

¹⁸ All the more so if, as West supposes, the Oceanids stayed suspended from line 128 to 279, when the cranes lowered the Oceanids to the ground and one crane swung back to fetch and deliver Oceanus. A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Theatre of Dio-*

have judged our proposal both closer to the text and technically more acceptable; for at no period of Attic tragedy do we hear of more than one crane (*geranos*). Griffith¹⁹ rejected my view that Prometheus was chained to a rock at V. He held that there was no such rock but only a stage building at the back of the *orchestra*. This building (used for *Oresteia* but not *PV*, and in my estimate 18 m. long and 3 m. high, in West's 30.89 m. long and some 2 m. high)²⁰ "was decorated to represent a rocky crag." He does not explain how this was done; but as he has Prometheus "chained in centre stage," I take it that only the centrepiece was "decorated" to look like the crag and the rest of the building was disguised to look like a deserted place, as in the opening lines of the play. This means that the stage was not available for acting, and that all action and speaking, except for Prometheus, took place in the *orchestra*. It then becomes difficult, if not impossible, to explain why Prometheus sees Hermes even before Hermes enters the *orchestra* but fails to see the Oceanids when they enter, whether from the eastern *parodos* or overhead suspended on one or more cranes above the *orchestra*. A further difficulty arises when Io and then Hermes speaks to Prometheus; for the alternatives, as I understand it, are that they speak to the audience and turn their back on Prometheus or they speak to Prometheus and turn their backs on the audience, thereby becoming inaudible. These difficulties disappear with the setting I have proposed for the production (see *Fig. 1*).²¹

For the dating of the play the presence of three speaking actors in lines 1–91 gives us a very probable *terminus post quem*, since the introduction of the third such actor, being attributed both to Aeschylus and to Sophocles,²² is most reasonably assigned to the period when both were producing plays, in 468–456 B.C. Since the play, on my

nysus in Athens (Oxford 1946) 39, reviewing earlier suggestions, remarked that "the absurdity [*i.e.*, of a similarly suspended chorus on one crane] would grow in the course of the 160 lines." In his edition M. Griffith kept the Oceanids out of Prometheus' range of vision "perhaps even until 396": *Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound* (Cambridge 1983) 109.

¹⁹ *Supra* n.18: 30 with n.93.

²⁰ West (*supra* n.17) 138 with his Figure 2. I see no support in archaeology or in literary testimonia for this proposed stage and for an *orchestra* of a different size for what he calls "a fairly short transitional period . . . c.445–435 B.C." West followed Taplin (457); and Griffith (*supra* n.18: 30) followed suit. None of them produce any evidence for what must be regarded as an arbitrary reduction of the diameter of the *orchestra* from some 25 m. to 20 m. at a time when the number of the chorus had risen from twelve to fifteen on most scholars' reckoning.

²¹ For my general account of entries, props, and setting of the play see *GRBS* 422–25, 428f, and *AJA* 375f and 382.

²² Arist. *Poet.* 1449a18 and Themist. *Or.* 26.316 (Dindorf), citing Aristotle and associating the introduction of the third actor with Aeschylus' invention of the *okribantes*.

interpretation, was written for and was produced in a theatre without a stage building, my *terminus ante quem* is 458 B.C., the year of *Oresteia*. Thus, if we exclude 468, the year of Sophocles' first victory, 467 when *Septem* was produced, and 463 when *Supplices* was most probably produced, we have any of the years 466–464 and 462–459 available for the first production of *Prometheia*.

West, holding that *Prometheia* was not by Aeschylus, placed the first production in or shortly after 440 B.C. and used for his production the rock at V. We must pause to consider what the history of the rock was after 458 and whether it was still there in 440. My view has been that the rock at V served Sophocles' purpose in *Ajax*, where the hero committed suicide on the audience's side of the rock and the two sections of the chorus on the *orchestra* side of the rock were unable to see his corpse (865–90).²³ Tecmessa found him by going round the rock. The cry she uttered “issued nearby from the glen,” *i.e.*, from the ground at the foot of the rock (892, *βοή παράυλος ἐξέβη νέπους*). We may compare *νέπους* here with *ὀκρίδα φάραγγα* at *PV* 1017. That the rock was used for concealment and discovery in precisely this way in *Choephoroe* is clearly shown on a terracotta relief from Melos, as I demonstrated in *GRBS* 436f and *AJA* 382. We are looking, like spectators in mid-*cavea*, at a rock to our left. We see Pylades and Orestes on our side of the rock, Pylades inattentive and Orestes excited, and we see on the *orchestra* side of the rock Electra, invisible to the two men and herself unaware of them. The urn from which she poured libation (129) is at her feet, and her right arm is extended in grief and prayer. The rock is capped by the funerary headstone. The moment is that of 138f. Because the Melian relief has been dated by Jacobsthal *circa* 450–440 B.C.,²⁴ it portrayed a revival of *Oresteia* and not the original production of 458 B.C.

In *AJA* (382f) Moon and I argued that the rock was no longer there *circa* 440 B.C., because two paintings by the Penelope painter of that date showed this same scene of *Choephoroe* enacted on the flat ground of the *orchestra*. A further reason for supposing that the rock at V had been cut away before the late 440's is that, if it had been there, Sophocles would surely have so written *Antigone* as to use it for the rocky dungeon where the heroine was walled up. *Antigone* was pro-

²³ See Pickard-Cambridge (*supra* n.18) 49 for the difficulties of this scene before I suggested that the rock at V was still there. The scholiast on *Ajax* 866 “seems to assume,” wrote Pickard-Cambridge, “that the Chorus and Tecmessa were on the same level,” as they are on my interpretation.

²⁴ P. Jacobsthal, *Die melischen Reliefs* (Berlin 1931) nos. 104f. The relief is reproduced in *AJA* Figure 12.

duced in 443 or 441 B.C. My conclusion, then, is that the rock was not available for an original production of *Prometheia*, according to West, in or after 440.

The dating proposed by West was based on his acceptance of Griffith's conclusion that *PV* was written not by Aeschylus but by an unknown poet who was somehow thought to be Aeschylus and that it was produced first about 440 B.C.²⁵ Griffith's originality lay in his very scholarly stylometric analysis of the diction, metre, style, and composition of *PV* in relation to the same elements in the other extant plays of Aeschylus (these are only six out of his eighty or so plays) and the extant plays of Sophocles and Euripides. While I have no intention of calling that analysis into question, I am concerned here with the deduction to be drawn from it.

We should, in my view, also be guided by the stylistic analysis of another play attributed in antiquity to Aeschylus, *Supplices*. To quote R. P. Winnington-Ingram (*OCD*² 17), "the *Supplices*, in view of certain archaic features, used commonly to be regarded as the earliest extant play." Here "commonly" is an understatement; for the great weight of learned authority over a long period when classical scholarship in linguistic matters was at its height placed *Supplices* within the decade 500–490 B.C. on 'internal grounds'. Moreover, no one has been able to question the stylometric analysis of *Supplices* in relation to the other extant plays of Aeschylus. It is still the case, then, that on stylometric grounds *Supplices* is to be dated considerably earlier than those other plays.²⁶ To continue with Winnington-Ingram, "in 1952 a fragmentary Hypothesis was published (*POxy.* 2256,3) from which it appeared that the Danaid trilogy was produced in competition with Sophocles; there is an indication that 463 may be the date." What we should realise from this is that Aeschylus was an exceptionally origi-native, versatile, and gifted poet, excelling in tragedy and satyric drama alike (Paus. 2.13.6), and that the style of any one play cannot be used by itself to put a date on that play either within the series of his plays or in absolute terms. When we apply this conclusion to *PV*, we should realise that the stylometric criterion is very far from being authoritative in the dating of the play.

²⁵ M. Griffith, *The Authenticity of Prometheus Bound* (Cambridge 1977) 253, and (*supra* n.18) 33.

²⁶ See H. F. Johansen and W. E. Whittle, *Aeschylus, The Suppliants I* (Copenhagen 1980) 25: "the arguments for an early dating have been mainly drawn from considerations of style, dramatic structure and technique, and allusions to contemporary events" and "several stylistic features . . . might appear more readily intelligible if the play is dated to the 490s or the 480s than if it belongs in the 460s."

Let us consider next the corollary, that *PV* was written by an unknown poet who somehow was thought to have been Aeschylus. When could this deception or mistake have occurred? It is obvious that the false attribution could not have been made with any hope of success in the lifetime of Aeschylus, and that is one reason for dating the forgery or blunder to after 456 B.C. What about the rest of the fifth century? When Aeschylus died, the Athenians decreed that anyone could produce plays of Aeschylus (τὰ Αἰσχύλου) in the Dionysiac competition. This makes it certain that there was a list of Aeschylus' plays; nor should that surprise us, since we know that plays in the competition were recorded at the time in production-lists (*didaskaliai*). The same source (*V.Aesch.* 12f) reports that "no few victories" were won after his death by his plays. This statement, says Winnington-Ingram (*OCD*² 18) "may well be true." In any case evidence that plays of Aeschylus were produced after his death is provided by the Melian relief for *Oresteia* in the 440's, by vase-paintings for the *Achilleis* trilogy ca 440–430, and by three vase-paintings for *Prometheus Pyrkaeus* ca 440–420, quite apart from evidence in vase-paintings for later revivals of his plays.²⁷ Commentators on the comedies of Aristophanes have maintained that some plays of Aeschylus were produced in the last quarter of the fifth century, and in particular that the parody of Prometheus' situation in *Birds*, produced in 414 B.C., was inspired by a recent production of *PV*.²⁸ The list of Aeschylus' plays must have been consulted throughout this period in order to check that a play submitted for revival was really by Aeschylus—even as late as 405 B.C., when many plays of Aeschylus were parodied in *Frogs*. It is to me inconceivable that a bogus *PV* could have been accepted by the Athenian public as a play by Aeschylus, or even that a genuine play of that title by Aeschylus could have been replaced by a bogus *PV*, which was then accepted as genuine by the Athenian public. Finally, the plots of Aeschylus' plays were the subject of a special study ca 400 B.C. by Glaucus of Rhegium,²⁹ which presupposes that there was a list of such plays. I do not see how a counterfeit play could have been foisted into either the list of Aeschylus' plays or into acceptance by the Athenian public.

²⁷ See *AJA* 382 and Jacobsthal (*supra* n.24) nos. 104f; J. D. Beazley, "Prometheus Fire-Lighter," *AJA* 43 (1939) 618ff and 44 (1940) 212.

²⁸ *Av.* 1494–1552. Griffith (*supra* n.25: 12) considers that "Aristophanes at least" was familiar with the play, but the significant point is that the audience was familiar with it, in order to appreciate the parodies. The play had probably been re-enacted recently together with "Prometheus Fire-Lighter," *i.e.*, *Prometheus Pyrkaeus*.

²⁹ Cited in the Hypothesis of *Persae*, ἐν τοῖς περὶ Αἰσχύλου μύθοις.

Was a mistake made during the transmission of the *didaskaliai*?³⁰ The definitive edition, which was made by Aristotle, was certainly based on the official records, and in the case of Aeschylus' plays it could have been checked against the list of his plays that was being used to check revivals. The official record of dithyrambic victories at the Dionysia probably went back to 502 B.C. or a few years earlier,³¹ and that of tragedy may be assumed to have gone back equally far, so that it covered the career of Aeschylus as a playwright. It is really not conceivable that Aristotle miscopied a *didaskalia* and attributed to Aeschylus a play called *PV*, which figured under the name of a different poet. The general confidence in the accuracy of Aristotle's list as the source of later examples of *didaskaliai* has been so strong that the mere discovery of a papyrus of the second or third century A.D. led to the re-dating of *Supplices*.

A further complication may be mentioned. Griffith tended to think of *PV* as a "monodrama," falsely attributed to Aeschylus.³² West believed in an unauthentic trilogy, *Prometheia*, the order of the plays in his opinion being *Prometheus Pyrphoros*, *Prometheus Desmotes* (our *PV*), and *Prometheus Lyomenos*.³³ The weakness of Griffith's position is not only the scholiast's remark *ad PV* 511 that "Prometheus is freed in the next play" (*i.e.*, in *Lyomenos*)³⁴ but also the many proleptic statements in *PV* that surely anticipated corresponding developments in the next play.³⁵ Another pointer is the statement, in Supplement (*d*) to the *V. Aeschyli*, that "some of the tragedies" of Aeschylus "are managed with gods alone, as indeed (are) the Prometheus

³⁰ Griffith discusses them (*supra* n.25) 228ff.

³¹ A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, *Dithyramb, Tragedy and Comedy*² (Oxford 1962) 189, and *OCD*² 340.

³² *Supra* n.25: 249f.

³³ *Supra* n.17: 132. My preferred order puts *Pyrphoros* last because in that position Prometheus, becoming reconciled with Zeus, could be given (like the Eumenides) an honoured place in Attica—where in fact he was worshipped as *Pyrphoros*. The trilogy then began with *PV*. If *Pyrphoros* comes first, then men as the recipients of fire must have appeared as characters in the play, which is inconsistent with the statement in *V. Aesch.* Suppl. (*d*), that in the trilogy "all characters were divine" (θεῖα πάντα πρόσωπα: see C. J. Herington, *The Older Scholia on the Prometheus Bound* [= *Mnemosyne* Suppl. 19, Leiden 1972] 65), "characters" referring probably to speaking characters.

³⁴ Cited in *OCT*, ed. G. Murray, p.146, and Herington (*supra* n.33) 151 (511b), ἐν γὰρ τῷ ἐξῆς δράματι λύεται, ὅπερ ἐμφαίνει Αἰσχυλος. Griffith (*supra* n.25: 15 and n.44) refers to this phrase, with the suggestion (*supra* n.19: 281ff, 286f) that the scholiast may have meant the next play in an alphabetical catalogue of plays. This is most unlikely, for the scholiast is commenting on the plays themselves and not on any catalogue.

³⁵ See the remarks of H. Rackham in his edition (Cambridge 1927) xv and his conclusion that *PV* "obviously postulates a sequel to complete it."

plays” (καθάπερ οἱ Προμηθεΐς).³⁶ Here the plural evidently stands for a play on the binding of Prometheus. It would appear, then, that the author of Suppl. (d) had our *PV* in mind as one of a trilogy. Thus West’s belief that *PV* was not a monodrama but one of a trilogy seems to be better based, whether that trilogy was authentic or not.

West’s view is therefore to be preferred. But it seems to me only to heighten the difficulty of believing that a trilogy was written by an unknown author and was produced by him in the Dionysiac theatre in 440 B.C. or shortly after but was accepted then as a trilogy by Aeschylus, and entered the *didaskalia* as such. For we must remember that *ca* 440 plays were written only for performance on the stage and not for a reading public, and that a play was recorded in a *didaskalia* only after being produced in a Dionysiac competition. According to Plato (*Symp.* 192B) the playwright Agathon appeared in person with the actors on the boards, whether in the preliminary display (*proagon*)³⁷ or at the production itself. There is little doubt that this was a traditional practice. If so, how did the writer pass himself off as Aeschylus, dead some sixteen years? Nor was this trilogy a flop. We have seen that there were revivals of plays on the Prometheus theme. And *PV* is by any standards an outstanding play, and *Prometheia* was a famous trilogy in antiquity. Why should the supposed author of these plays have wished to remain anonymous?

3. The Epiphany of Darius in *Persae* (PLATE 1)

The term ‘epiphany’ is used advisedly, because the appearance of Melissa in the form of a ghost from the dead was so described by Herodotus at 5.92.η2 and 4, ἡ Μέλισσα ἐπιφανεῖσα. . . τὸ εἶδωλον τὸ Μελίσσης.³⁸ Such an epiphany was shown on a vase-painting by the Priam painter *ca* 515–500 B.C., representing the ghost of Patroclus risen from his mounded tomb.³⁹ In *Polyxena*, an early play of Sophocles probably in the decade after 467, “Achilles appeared above his tomb” on set in a vivid manner, according to ‘Longinus’ *Subl.* 15.7.

³⁶ See Herington (*supra* n.33) 65. The problem of the satyr-dramas on this theme is best solved by supposing that Aeschylus’ first play on the theme was called simply Προμηθεΐς, being produced in 472 B.C. (Hypothesis to *Persae*), and that Aristotle referred to this play as Προμηθεΐς in *Poet.* 1456a2; and that *Prometheia* ended with a satyr-drama Προμηθεΐς Πυρκαεΐς (Poll. 9.156, 10.64).

³⁷ So Pickard-Cambridge (*supra* n.18) 73.

³⁸ At Mesopotamos by the Acheron the ghost rose up from the cave below (the entry to Hades) into a room where the session was held: see S. I. Dakaris, *Cassopaia and the Elean Colonies* (Athens 1971) 81. The discovery of a cogged wheel there suggests that the ghost was raised up on a platform (*cf.* Dakaris in *AntK* 1 [1963] 35).

³⁹ K. P. Stähler, *Grab und Psyche des Patroklos* (Münster 1967) 68; W. G. Moon, in *Ancient Greek Art and Iconography* (Madison 1983) 117 n.23.

The epiphany of Darius was evidently equally vivid. According to the Hypothesis of *Persae* the scene of the drama was “beside the tomb of Darius,” and in the course of the play the Ghost of Darius was to rise through “the built top⁴⁰ of his mounded tomb” (659).

In *GRBS* 1972 (431) I noted a “surprising similarity” to the epiphany of Darius in the fragments of a vase-painting on a red-figure hydria that Beazley dated “in all probability between 470 and 460 or 450,” that is, within a decade or two of the first production of the play in 472 B.C.⁴¹ That the painting shows a scene in a dramatic production is certain, because an *auletes* in Greek dress is portrayed. In 1977 Taplin dismissed the vase-painting as “probably having no bearing on *Persae*”; but in the next year he reproduced the vase-painting with this comment: “Some orientals . . . are busy around a pyre of burning logs: the shoulders and bottom half of the face of a regal figure (Croesus?) are visible above the pyre.”⁴² In this comment he was following Beazley and others. I had already, in 1972, pointed out that you cannot have an actor in the midst of a burning pyre in real life in the theatre. I explained the tiny red flames as flames of incense and accounted for the round hole in fragment *d* of the vase-painting.⁴³ In 1978 Moon and I studied the fragments of the vase-painting and gave our reasons for thinking it “most probable” that the painting represented the epiphany of Darius; and we explained that the board on top of the log-ends represented the built top of Darius’ mounded tomb (*AJA* 372: *Pers.* 659, ἄκρον κόρυμβον ὄχθου).

The identification of the *choreutai* as Persians has been confirmed by A. A. Barrett and M. Vickers, who in 1978 republished a vase-painting on a kylix by the Painter of the Oxford Brygos that showed Persian soldiers carrying a *gerron*, or wicker shield, in an action, probably during the battle of Plataea in 479 B.C. The Persian soldiers wore the same tight-fitting cap with three lappets on the visible side as the *choreutes* on the hydria (*AJA* 374, fragment *c*), except that the latter had a band round the cap; and one of them had the same

⁴⁰ The word κόρυμβα was used of the high stern of a ship in *Pers.* 411, and the phrase ἄκρα κόρυμβα occurs at *Iliad* 9.241.

⁴¹ J. D. Beazley, *Hesperia* 24 (1955) 305–19 with pl. 85; T. B. L. Webster, *Monuments Illustrating Tragedy and Satyr Play*² (=BICS Suppl. 20 [London 1967]) 46, AV13; A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*² (Oxford 1968) 182, with illustrations of the fragments.

⁴² Taplin 118f, and *Greek Tragedy in Action* (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1978) facing p.87. He says that the painting is “based on a tragedy.” Rather, it represents a scene performed in a tragedy at Athens not long before the painting of the vase.

⁴³ *GRBS* 431 and 433. The smoke from the incense, reinforced perhaps from within the mound, was enough to justify the Chorus mentioning “the mist risen from Styx” (*i.e.*, from the underworld) at 667f. Otherwise the remark is unintelligible.

decoration on his tight-fitting trousers as appears on fragment *e*.⁴⁴ The figures on our fragments were certainly Persians, dressed as artists around 470 B.C. supposed them to be. As regards the interpretation of fragment *b* (PLATE 1), the figure rising from inside the built top of the mounded tomb is a king, for he holds a sceptre. Beazley described him as holding two sceptres as he rose, but a Persian king carried only one sceptre: when Darius was praying in Bactria, he is said to have placed “his *kandys* and his tiara on the sceptre” (τῷ σκῆπτρῳ), and a Persian king, usually thought to represent Darius, is shown on a vase dated *ca* 450 with a single tall sceptre. Agamemnon too had but one sceptre.⁴⁵ On my interpretation the divine or deified king in fragment *b* is holding the sceptre on his right. It is a tall sceptre, of which he is holding the upper part with his right hand (outside the fragment); for the raising of his right arm has pushed the stole forward,⁴⁶ covering the end of the second lappet. The left arm is not so raised, as we see from the position of the left stole. Presumably it was hanging at his side, unseen. He is turning his head to the left, in order to look at a figure on his left. The lappets indicate that the heads of the two figures are more or less on a level, though as yet only a part of the king appears above the top of the tomb. Of the other figure there survive only part of a hand, a wrist, and a sleeve-end. As the palm of the hand is open and visible to us, it has to be the right hand. The position of the hand and the shape of the lappet show that the figure is facing the divine or deified king.⁴⁷ It too is royal; for it holds a sceptre, presumably with a raised left arm (outside the fragment). It is extending its right hand towards him.

Now that we know that the figures, apart from the differently dressed *auletes*, are Persians, and with some idea of what is portrayed on fragment *b*, let us turn to the text of *Persae* and see what correspondences there are between it and the vase-painting. In the text Darius

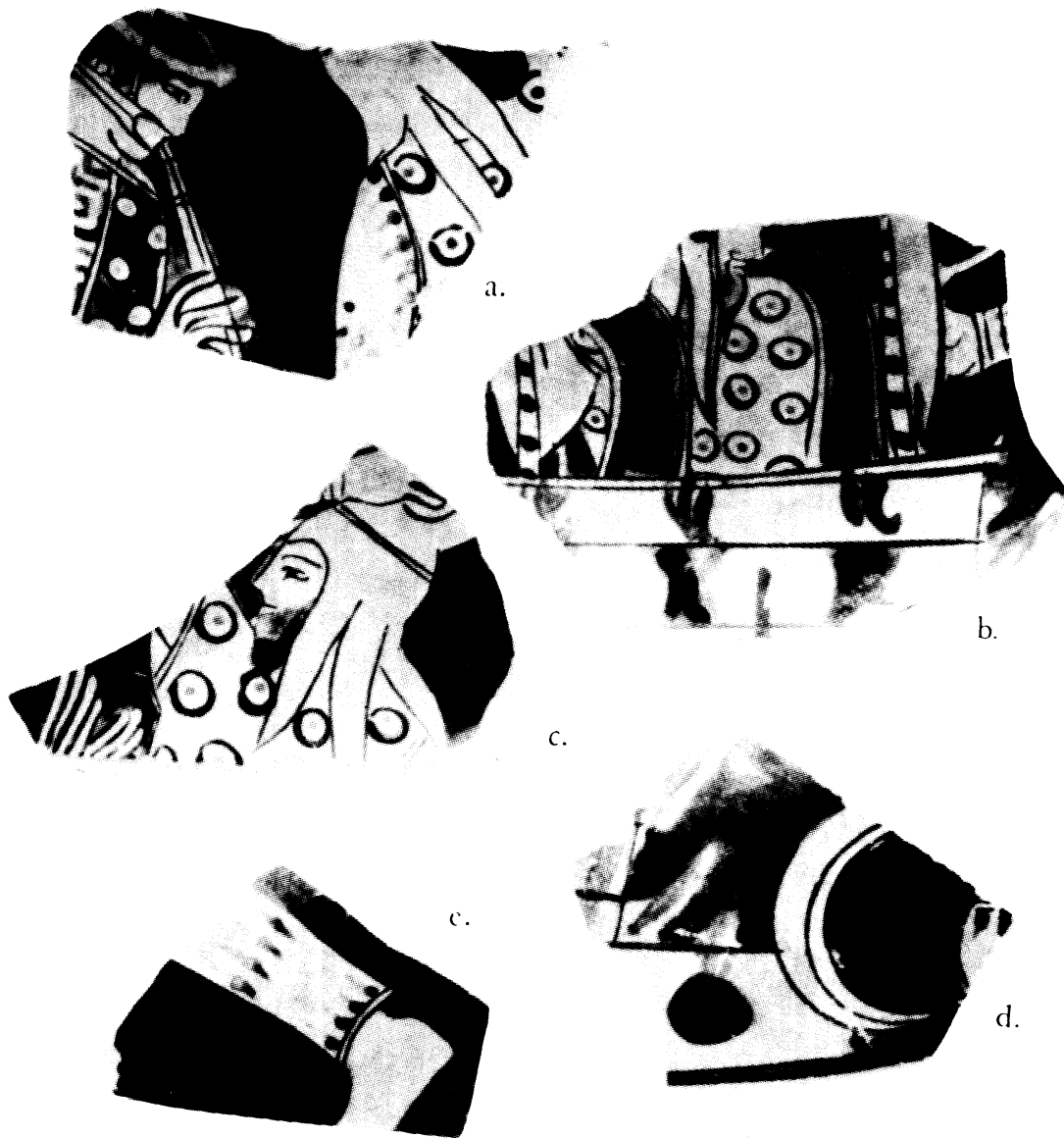
⁴⁴ *JHS* 98 (1978) 17ff with Pl. 1b. A. Bovon, *BCH* 87 (1963) 579-602, had noted the Persian soldier and his wicker shield (595). D. Williams shows a Persian horseman wearing tiara and tight-fitting trouser-legs with the same decoration: *Studien zur Mythologie und Vasenmalerei*, edd. E. Böhr and W. Martini (Mainz 1986) Pl. 12.1.

⁴⁵ Polyæn. 7.12 (Darius); *JHS* 48 (1928) 150 and Fig. 7; *Il.* 2.101-08.

⁴⁶ For the stole we may compare a black stole worn by a Persian soldier on the Edinburgh cup of *ca* 480: Bovon (*supra* n.44) fig. 4. As Ann Geddes of the University of Adelaide has pointed out, a similar brown stole is worn by a noble Persian in the Alexander mosaic (well reproduced in *Macedonia*, ed. M. B. Sakellariou [Athens 1983] 136). The sleeve-end shows behind the sceptre. For a similar sleeve on a Persian soldier see the Tübingen cup in Bovon fig. 5.

⁴⁷ The curving side shows which way the figure is looking. An equally long lappet is seen on the Edinburgh cup (*supra* n.46).

HAMMOND PLATE 1



HYDRIA (LENINGRAD PAINTER)
Fragments T600, 620, and 1144 from Corinth Excavations
(after *AJA* 82 [1978] 374)

was a god among Persians as king (157, 651, 711), and in death he holds dominion among the gods of the underworld (691). In the painting the central figure, being larger, is represented as divine and as holding a sceptre, the emblem of rule. In the play, since Xerxes is bearded (1056) and a Persian grandee is bearded (315), we may expect Darius and his Councillors to be bearded also. In the painting the central figure and the only *choreutes* whose face is seen are bearded. In the play the Chorus foretell the appearance of Darius (658, ἴθι, ἰκοῦ, ἔλθ’; 666, φάνηθι), when he will show the boss of the royal tiara (τιήρας φάλαρον πιφάύσκων). In the painting the central figure is portrayed in the midst of his appearing, and he is wearing a tiara with lappets, as we see by comparing fragment *b* with fragment *c* (the boss would be the top of the tiara in an upright position appropriate to the Persian king, whereas it is curled on the tiara of the ordinary Persian, as in the Oxford kylix and in fragment *c*).⁴⁸ The apparition will also raise into view (*i.e.*, from the grave inside the mound) the saffron-dyed slipper on his foot (660f). In fragment *e* a *choreutes* is wearing a yellow slipper,⁴⁹ and we may deduce from the similarity of dress between the central figure and the *choreutai* that he too will be wearing a yellow slipper when he emerges fully. In the text the Ghost of Darius is only some way out of the tomb at 684; for at 681 he begins by addressing the Councillors, then at 684 he sees his wife “hard by the grave” (τάφου πέλας) and only at 692 he says “I have come,” ἦκω, which is the normal term for an entry. In the painting the central figure is about a third of the way out of the tomb-top, and he is turning his head to look at the other royal person who also holds a sceptre. If the two royal persons are Darius and Atossa, the painting illustrates line 684 of the play (λεύσσω δ’ ἄκοιτιν τὴν ἐμὴν τάφου πέλας). In the play the Chorus were expecting at lines 661f to see the boss of the royal tiara. In the painting, as restored in *b*, the first things to appear out of the tomb and be seen by the *choreutai* are the sceptre-top, the hand, and the upright boss of the royal tiara.

In the text Atossa has come from the palace bearing libations to placate the dead (609f) and she will carry these tributes to the nether gods formally so as to be drunk up by the earth (621f, γαπότους δ’ ἐγὼ τιμὰς προπέμψω τάσδε νεργέρων θεοῖς, and 624). That she did pour the libations on the grave is clear from the words of the Ghost of Darius, that he received them with favour (685). We are able to visualise Atossa standing some way up the mound with her urn at her feet after

⁴⁸ Ar. Av. 486 with schol., Xen. Anab. 2.5.23, Hesych. s.v. τιάρα.

⁴⁹ This kind of slipper was typically Persian (see Bovon [*supra* n.44] 594). Yellow was the colour of the slippers worn by the Persian bodyguards at Susa.

pouring the libations onto the grave, because we see Electra standing so after the same act in the Melian relief (*supra* n.24). There Electra's head is shown against the lower part of the funerary headstone and her right arm is outstretched over the grave itself. In the painting, the head as restored and the hand of the righthand figure are in the same relation to the top of the grave as the head and the hand of Electra; the figure is indeed "hard by the grave" (684). The stance—leaning forward and extending a hand towards Darius—is appropriate to Atossa, who was not frightened, as the *choreutai* were (703), but was addressed by Darius as his noble wife (704) and in fact answered him at 709ff. In the text, during the absence of Xerxes, she is the ruler of Persia (152, 155, 173 γῆς ἀνασσα τῆσδε), and we may assume that as such she wore the tiara and carried the sceptre. In the painting the righthand figure does both of these things. There is another vase-painting, dated about 450 B.C., which was thought by A. S. F. Gow to represent Darius and Atossa. In it Atossa wears a tiara with lappets and is carrying a libation.⁵⁰

The Chorus in *Persae* are the trusted Councillors of the same generation as Darius (681). In the vase-painting their dress on fragments *a*, *c*, and *e* resembles that of the king in fragment *b*, apart from the stole. They too wear the tiara but probably with a collapsed boss, if I interpret fragment *c* correctly. The band round the tiara of the *choreutes* on fragment *c* may be a sign of high rank. In the play the Chorus were instructed by Atossa to summon up the divine Darius (621f, τὸν τε δαίμονα Δαρεῖον ἀνακαλείσσει) and to sing the appropriate hymns. This they did in 623–80. They were then positioned in the *orchestra*, facing the mounded tomb and addressing it, the nether gods, and the divine king Darius (647 ἦ φίλος ὄχθος, 628, and 651 θεῖον ἀνάκτορα Δαριᾶνα). On seeing Darius emerge from the grave and speak to them they were overcome with horror and awe (696, 700, 701, 703). In the vase-painting one *choreutes* is on the same level as the *auletes* and so in the *orchestra*, and the other *choreutai* were no doubt there also, "close to the grave" of Darius (686, ἐγγὺς ἐστῶτες τάφου).⁵¹ On fragment *c* a *choreutes* is falling back, hand to head, in terror,⁵² and, to the left, a pair of hands express awe or horror.

⁵⁰ A. S. F. Gow, "Notes on the *Persae* of Aeschylus," *JHS* 48 (1928) 150 Fig. 7. Gow dated the vase approximately *ca* 450. It was probably inspired by a revival of the play. He remarked (n.30) that the *kyrbasia* and the *kidaris* seem to be the same as the tiara.

⁵¹ One *choreutes* (on fragment *c*) is rather higher than his neighbour, which shows that one at least was on the rising ground of the rock.

⁵² The gesture of the hand on the head is also made by the man wearing the black stole on the Alexander mosaic, as he sees Darius turn in flight.

In the play the mounded tomb is described as an ὄχθος with a built top (κόρυμβον ὄχθου), up to which Darius is to rise from below (658–60). As the plea is made to Darius, “a Stygian mist hovers over it” (667, Στυγία γάρ τις ἐπ’ ἀχλὺς πεπόταται; cf. *Eum.* 378f); and when he comes out he says that “the ground groans, has been cut and is being torn” (683). It is the sound that comes first in his words; for it is the sound that awakens the dead. What caused the sound and the tearing? The answer is provided by the similar scene in *Choephoroe*, where the Chorus are invoking the spirit of the dead Agamemnon and cry out: “indeed the crash of this double *maragna* arrives,” i.e., reaches its mark (375, ἀλλὰ διπλῆς γὰρ τῆσδε μαράγνης δοῦπος ἰκνεῖται). In the next line “there are already avengers beneath the earth of those things” (τῶν μὲν ἀρωγοὶ κατὰ γῆς ἤδη). The *maragna* is named from the sound it makes, “the crusher.” In the vase-painting on fragment *d* we see a sickle-like implement with a central rib and probably a double blade, one on each side of the rib. This is evidently the “double *maragna*” of *Choephoroe* 375. It has been used here to thump, cut, and tear the ground as part of the ritual for arousing the dead below the ground.⁵³ Finally, we have already referred to the tiny red flames that emerge from apertures below the top plank and in the bottom plank of the mounded tomb. As Moon and I argued in *AJA* 1978 (373f), these apertures were for the emission of smoke (here probably of incense), and similar ones appear in the bottom plank of the mound on a vase-painting that illustrates a scene in Aeschylus’ *Sphinx*, produced in 476 B.C.⁵⁴

In my opinion the correspondences between the text of Aeschylus’ *Persae* and the fragments of the vase-painting are overwhelming evidence that a brilliant painter between “470 and 460 or 450,” according to Beazley, painted the epiphany of the Ghost of Darius as he had seen it in the Dionysiac theatre either in 472 or at a subsequent revival of the play before 450.⁵⁵ If I am correct, the numerous indications of movement, sounds, and properties that occur in the texts of Aeschylus’ plays must be taken literally as indicators of what happened in the actual production. They are not to be explained away as figurative or metaphorical or as mere stimuli to the imagination of a reader of the play. In the next section I describe a production of

⁵³ A similar *maragna* is shown in the painting of a scene from a tragedy ca 420: A. D. Trendall and T. B. L. Webster, *Illustrations of Greek Drama* (London 1971) 117, IV1.

⁵⁴ Beazley, *ARV*² 281.34.

⁵⁵ For such a revival see Gow (*supra* n.50).

Eumenides in which the indications of the text were taken as valid guides.

4. The Production of *Eumenides* (Figure 2)

To imagine the production of an ancient play in one's mind's eye is relatively simple. To put it on the stage is less easy, because physical limitations intervene, but more instructive, because one is operating more or less within the limitations faced by the ancient producer, who was in the case of Aeschylus also the playwright. He wrote his plays with production in mind, more perhaps than Sophocles and Euripides

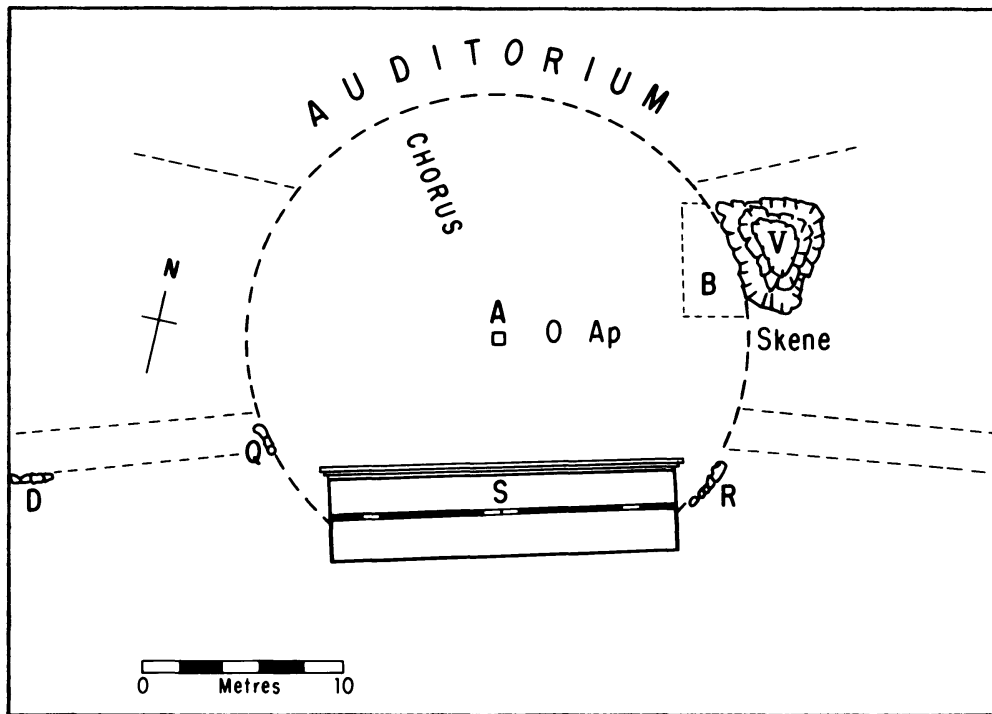


Figure 2. The Trial-scene in *Eumenides*

A=Athena on the *thymele*

O=Orestes

Ap=Apollo

X=urn

B=*Bouleuterion*

V=Rock of Ares

Orchestra Circle=Dinsmoor's size (25.5 m. in diameter) and orientation

S=Aeschylus' stage with continuous steps, three doors in the façade and a roofed backstage area

in that he took a particular pleasure in spectacular effects,⁵⁶ and we should therefore attach full importance to the words in his text that describe what the spectators in the theatre are to see.

Theoretical productions of *Eumenides* have been numerous. In this section I shall be referring to three recent ones. In 1972, when I argued that the rock at V was part of the theatre in 458 B.C., I gave a detailed but “tentative” account of the production as I imagined it (*GRBS* 438–41). In 1977 a chapter was devoted to the play by Taplin (362–415). He differed from me in various ways and in particular believed the rock at V to have been removed by 458 B.C. In 1982 and 1983 two articles involving a theoretical production of the play were published by A. L. Brown.⁵⁷ Although he mentioned my article in a note (*JHS* 1982, 31 n.2), he did not deal with the question whether the rock at V was a feature of the theatre in the lifetime of Aeschylus, and his ideas differed from those of Taplin and myself in various respects.

The opportunity for me to produce *Eumenides* came in 1977.⁵⁸ The actors were experienced members of staff and graduate students, and we were able to provide a mock-up of the Dionysiac theatre with an *orchestra* of the correct size, an altar in its centre, a rock at V, a stage with one door, and steps down to the *orchestra*, and two entries as from *parodoi*. As the production faced some of the problems that had been treated theoretically by Taplin, Brown, and myself, and as the production yielded its own answers, it seems best to provide a full account of the production in my text and to make comparison with the views of Taplin and Brown in the footnotes.

In 458 B.C. some changes must have been made in the set during the interval between *Choephoroe* and *Eumenides*. I assumed that these were the removal of the covering that transformed the rock at V into a mounded tomb; the reduction of the stage background to a simple temple façade and one central doorway with its door closed; the placing of some seats and in front of them an urn on the *orchestra* side

⁵⁶ This is obvious from the nature of the surviving plays, and see in general *V. Aesch.* 1, 7, 14.

⁵⁷ “Some Problems in the *Eumenides* of Aeschylus,” *JHS* 102 (1982) 26–32; “The Erinyes in the *Oresteia*,” *JHS* 103 (1983) 13–34.

⁵⁸ At the University of Wisconsin in Madison, where Professor W. Elwood was my co-producer and Professor Judith Miller was chief Fury. The play was performed in an abbreviated version in the Great Hall of the Memorial Union, and we used the translation of G. Thomson, written with production in mind (*The Oresteia of Aeschylus* [Cambridge 1938] I 285ff). My earlier experience was in co-ordinating the production of *Oresteia* in that translation in 1963/4, when Bristol Grammar School, Bristol University Classical Society, and Bristol Cathedral School took one play each of the trilogy in that order. The most stirring then was *Eumenides*.

of the rock at V;⁵⁹ and the placing of a small wooden statue on the central altar (*thymele*). Our set in 1977 incorporated those changes, and the play proceeded as follows.

Lines 1–63:

Priestess enters, wearing the dress customary for a day of prophecy.⁶⁰ She walks from the righthand *parodos* to the central altar, stands on the step of the temple side of the altar, and speaks, facing the spectators. Her opening words reveal that she is the priestess of Apollo at Delphi. The honour she pays to Pallas (Athena) first in precedence (21) reveals the identity of the statue on the altar (in our production she bows to the statue). Her request that if there be any (present) from Greek states they should come “in the customary order of the lot” explains the presence of the seats and the urn.⁶¹ She then turns round and walks into the temple, the door closing behind her.

When the door swings open, she emerges in terror on hands and knees, rises and runs to the altar-step, from which she describes what she has seen within: a suppliant with a blood-dripping sword, a shoot of olive, and a wreath (as we have seen him so in *Cho.* 1034ff, we know she refers to Orestes), seated on a navel-stone, and in front of him a company of terrifying women asleep on seats (having Orestes’ description in *Cho.* 1048ff in mind, we know they are the Furies of Clytemnestra).⁶² “Let what happens next be the care of the lord of this temple in person, mighty Apollo” (60f). She runs away in panic, down the righthand *parodos*.

Lines 64–68:

Suspense grows during a pause. Then the door swings open, and out comes not Apollo but the Furies in disorder, like swarming bees. They run to and fro over the stage and the steps, and then rush in a menacing manner over the *orchestra* towards the first row of seats. As the spectators gaze in horror, Orestes brings the navel-stone through the doorway, places it mid-stage and is already

⁵⁹ The seats will be needed for the Judges to “rise up” (708 ὀρθοῦσθαι) and the urn for the casting of votes (742 τευχέων, where I follow G. Thomson in taking the plural to stand for just one urn; but the point is not material, since two urns are equally feasible). There may have been a canopy over the seats, such as occurred in *Persae* 141, and in a vase-painting (*AJA* 1978, 372 Fig. 1). The text of *Eumenides* does not mention a canopy; but it is and probably was usual to provide shade by erecting a canopy, if only of a trellis and a vine or creeper overhead. In my Figure 2 I have included a canopy, as proposed in *GRBS* 440 n.98.

⁶⁰ Like Cassandra’s dress at *Ag.* 1270, χρηστῆριαν ἐσθήτα.

⁶¹ For the priority given to Greek states and for the drawing of lots see H. W. Parke, *A History of the Delphic Oracle* (Oxford 1939) 29. Seats no doubt were provided for waiting consultants, and lots were shaken out of an urn or such a receptacle (*Septem* 459). These words helped to transport the spectators to Delphi in their imagination.

⁶² The description of them as like Gorgons is resumed at *Eum.* 48, in order to leave us in no doubt. Since they were a mother’s Furies and not a father’s (*Cho.* 924f), so now they continue to be Clytemnestra’s Furies at *Eum.* 94f.

seated on it, when the Furies turn round and see their victim.⁶³ As they rush upon him, Apollo, emerging through the door, is already at the side of Orestes.⁶⁴ With majestic and calming gestures Apollo overcomes them. They sink down onto the steps and the stage, close to Orestes, and fall asleep. Then Apollo speaks to Orestes. “Indeed I shall not betray.⁶⁵ To the end I am your guardian, whether I stand close beside you or be far away, and I shall not be soft to your enemies. Even now you see these rampaging (women) overcome” (64–67).

Every producer has to decide what happens between the exit of Priestess and these first words of Apollo. My interpretation is based on three considerations. Aeschylus tends to describe an impending spectacular event just before it happens (as at *Pers.* 657ff and 681ff; *Supp.* 817ff and 836ff; *PV* 1015ff, 1043ff, and 1080ff); so here the fearsome description of the Furies at 46–59 should be followed by their appearing before our eyes. Then the words of Apollo, καὶ νῦν ἀλούσας τάσδε τὰς μάργους ὄρᾶς (67), are not ambiguous. The Furies were “raving” or “rampaging” (the word was used of horses rampaging; see LJS s.v. and the transferred epithet at *Sept.* 475), and Apollo has “captured” them before the eyes of Orestes.⁶⁶ Third, *V. Aesch.* 9 informs us that “in the production of *Eumenides* some say that Aeschylus brought on the chorus of the Eumenides in a scattered manner (σποράδην) and terrified the public so much that children fainted and pregnant women miscarried.”⁶⁷ The reference

⁶³ This worked splendidly. As the Furies vented their rage and gestured at the spectators, the latter cowered and were spellbound. None of those I asked had seen Orestes move out with the navel-stone, which was quite small, like the one in the Museum at Delphi. That it was on set is clear from 166, πάρεστι γὰς ὀμφαλὸν προσδρακεῖν: “it is (for us, the Furies) to look upon the navel-stone of earth.”

⁶⁴ Apollo is brought onto the roof of the stage-building by Brown (*supra* n.57: 1982, 29). This leaves him too remote from Orestes, beside whom the Furies are lying at line 67; for Apollo says expressly that he is standing close to Orestes at lines 64f. It seems a mistake to introduce a use of the roof as a *theologeion*, that is, as a speaking and acting area for gods, because the Furies too were gods and it is difficult to see how they—and later in the play Athena—could have acted on the roof. In the lifetime of Aeschylus men believed that gods and heroes moved among mankind, as in epic poems and in epic events such as the battle of Marathon, and it was acceptable to have gods and men together in the *orchestra* both in *PV* and in this play. It was later, as disbelief grew, that gods and men acted apart on different levels.

⁶⁵ Taplin (363) says of these words, οὔτοι προδώσω, that “the conjunction implies that some off-stage words have preceded and this is the reply to them.” This is a misunderstanding. For οὔτοι is not a “conjunction” but an asseverative abverb. Apollo is made to echo the words of Orestes at *Cho.* 269, οὔτοι προδώσει, which again are not in reply to any preceding comment. For an abrupt start to a speech see *Eum.* 179 and 397.

⁶⁶ Such translations as “maddened” (H. W. Smyth) and “ravenous” (Thomson) miss the active force of the word. “To be captured,” ἀλίσκεσθαι, is a term used in hunting; it is the second of several images drawn from hunting in this play (the first was at line 26). Brown (*supra* n.57: 1982, 28; 1983, 24) holds that “when they first appear the Furies are asleep and motionless” (he has them on an *ekkuklema*); but that is not the meaning and the force of the aorist in ἀλούσας τάσδε τὰς μάργους ὄρᾶς.

⁶⁷ I see no reason to reject the tradition of the manner of the Furies’ entry. The effect of that entry has been generally disbelieved by scholars. But we must remember

can only be to the first appearance of the Furies, that is, within the time before line 67, in which they are seen “captured” and then asleep.

Some other interpretations seem less dramatic and even impracticable. Taplin (370f) and similarly Verrall in his edition of the play⁶⁸ kept the Furies inside the temple until line 140, when they appear waking one another up *en route* (ἔγειρ', ἔγειρε καὶ σὺ τήνδ', ἐγὼ δὲ σέ). They thereby interpose between the description of the Furies at 46–59 and their first appearance at 140 the horrifying spectacle of the wound-displaying Ghost of Clytemnestra; this interposition can only weaken the effect of the preliminary description of the Furies. It is incompatible with line 67, as I understand it, and with *V. Aesch.* 9. R. Lattimore supposed that between the exit of Priestess and entry of Apollo “the doors of the temple open and show Orestes surrounded by sleeping Furies, Apollo and Hermes beside him”;⁶⁹ but it would not have been possible for spectators sitting at a distance of 300 to 700 feet and at varying heights to see through a doorway into a shaded interior and discern there fifteen people in various attitudes. One has to forget the artificial lighting of interiors in a modern theatre. In the open air and bright sunlight of the Theatre of Dionysus anything in the shaded interior was invisible to the spectators. T. B. L. Webster brought half the chorus out before line 64 on an *ekkekulema*, and Brown brought the entire Chorus of twelve out in the same way, all lying asleep. This is incompatible with line 67 and *Vita Aeschyli*; it requires an exceptionally large *ekkekulema*; and it assumes an earlier date for the use of that small wheeled platform than I think the evidence justifies (see *GRBS* 445). Nor is it at all dramatic.

In this opening part of the play Aeschylus used visual repetitions in his wonted manner.⁷⁰ The Orestes of *Cho.* 1034–36 is described again at *Eum.* 46ff. At *Cho.* 22 the Chorus entered from the palace and walked down into the *orchestra*, and after *Eum.* 63 the Chorus entered from the temple and rushed into the *orchestra*; here the repetition gains by contrast. At *Cho.* 900 Pylades appeared in a timely manner as the spokesman of Apollo beside Orestes; at *Eum.* 64 the god himself does so.⁷¹ At *Cho.* 296 Orestes declared: “Indeed the mighty oracle of Loxias will not betray” (οὗτοι προδώσει Λοξίου μεγασθενῆς χρησμός). Apollo’s first words at *Eum.* 64 are “Indeed I shall not betray” and his last words at this appearance are of the resentment that will be felt “if I betray him of my own will” (234).

the effect that seeing the Furies asleep—not in action—had on Priestess, and the strength of religious belief in the time of Aeschylus, as at the time of the mediaeval Passion Plays. As regards women and children seeing the play, we know nothing of Athenian practice in 458 B.C.

⁶⁸ A. W. Verrall, *Αἰσχύλου Εὐμενίδες* (London 1908) liii and 140.

⁶⁹ *Aeschylus I: Oresteia* (Chicago 1953) 137.

⁷⁰ I prefer this term to the “mirror-scene” of Taplin, who writes well of such scenes in Aeschylus’ plays.

⁷¹ Such timely appearances are manifestations of divine power. Thus at 398 Aeschylus had no intrinsic need to bring Athena from Troy on hearing the cry of Orestes at Athens; he did it to convey the scale of divine power, as did Homer in describing the stride of the heavenly horses (*Il.* 5.770–72, quoted by Ps.-Longinus at *Subl.* 9.5).

Lines 69–234:

We return to Apollo's words about the Furies and then to his instructions to Orestes, who is to go to Athens and embrace the statue of Athena there (80). Orestes accepts the wisdom and the power of Apollo, and as he turns to depart Hermes appears in front of the doorway beside Apollo. He is addressed by Apollo and told to escort "this suppliant" (89–92). Hermes and Orestes now depart by the lefthand *parodos*, and Apollo withdraws inside his temple. The door of the temple closes.

A slight pause ensues. Then from among the sleeping Furies a ghostly figure arises, the head appearing first and then the body (as in the epiphany of Darius), castigates the Furies for lying asleep, and calls upon them: "see these wounds here . . . inflicted by her dearest one." We know at once that she is the Ghost of Clytemnestra, as she affirms later at 116. She departs at 139, leaving them to rouse one another, and they are about to pursue Orestes when the door opens, Apollo appears and orders them off his sacred ground.⁷² Finally Chorus exit by the lefthand *parodos* (231), Apollo goes inside the temple, and the door closes behind him.

In our production there was no difficulty in the entry of Hermes. Taplin (364f) maintained that Hermes did not appear at all; but, if so, I see no point in Aeschylus making Apollo address the empty air with his $\sigma\upsilon\delta\epsilon$. . . Ἑρμῆ or indeed mentioning Hermes at all. How does the Ghost come on? In our production the actor who was to play the Ghost entered with Orestes, lay down among the Furies, and rose up as the Ghost. In 458 B.C. it is probable that the Ghost came up through a trap-door in the wooden stage, as there are examples of such entries.⁷³ West proposed to have the Ghost enter from the rock at V; but I see no connection between the rock and the underworld in this play.⁷⁴ Verrall, who, like Taplin, has the Furies still inside the temple, supposed that the Ghost walked out of the door onto the stage, turned round, looked through the door, saw the Furies lying within, and conducted her dialogue with them. This is undramatic, and the Ghost speaking into the temple space and the Furies replying within the temple space could not have made themselves audible to the spectators. Verrall had the Ghost walk back into the temple, and Furies come out of the temple. The trap-door entry and exit is certainly less complicated and more dramatic.⁷⁵

Lines 235–582:

In our production there was a brief silence while the set was empty. Then

⁷² For $\tau\acute{\omega}\nu\delta\epsilon$ $\delta\omega\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\omega\nu$ meaning the sacred precinct see Taplin 373 n.1, citing *Theo-roi or Isthmiastai* F78c.43f Radt.

⁷³ See Webster (*supra* n.41) AV18 for an example of about 450 B.C.; Beazley (*supra* n.41) 311 pl. 88b; R. G. Ussher, *Hermathena* 118 (1974) 134; Trendall and Webster (*supra* n.53) 118.

⁷⁴ West (*supra* n.17) 135. For West's purpose the rock would have been made up to represent a mounded tomb for Clytemnestra. However, a mounded tomb on set would have been understood at first as being still the tomb of Agamemnon, as in *Choephoroe*. In addition I think that the rock at V stood for the rock of Ares later in this play.

⁷⁵ See also my comment at *GRBS* 439 n.96.

Orestes enters from the lefthand *parodos*, running jerkily and looking back over his shoulder as if listening. He sees the statue on the altar; he goes up the steps of the altar and lies on its top,⁷⁶ embracing the statue, as Apollo had told him to do (80, ἴζου παλαιὸν ἄγκαθεν λαβὼν βρέτας; see 259, περὶ βρέτει). His first words at 235 greet Queen Athena, and at 242 he mentions the statue. Chorus enter by the same *parodos* at 244, scatter like a pack of hunting dogs, and then see Orestes and swoop down on him. Circling round the altar as they dance, they cast the spell of madness on him and end with great leaps at line 376. In our production Orestes uttered a piercing shriek and collapsed; and it was this loud appeal that Athena heard, far away at Troy (397, πρόσωθεν ἐξήκουσα κληδόνος βοήν).⁷⁷ She enters through the lefthand *parodos* probably in a horse-drawn chariot,⁷⁸ moves to the left forward part of the *orchestra*, and speaks from her chariot to the Furies who are clustering in the right forward part of the *orchestra*. Orestes is between them, on top of the altar (409). Both parties, the Furies and Orestes, agree to entrust the case to Athena. She wishes to associate some Athenian citizens with herself as judges, and she exits in her chariot through the righthand *parodos*. The transition from Delphi at 234 to Athens at 235 was entirely natural in our production, because it had been foreshadowed for Orestes at 79–80 and 224 and for the Furies at 226 and 231, and because we knew that the statue to be embraced by Orestes was that of Athena on the altar. It is often supposed, e.g. by Taplin (377), that a stagehand entered between line 234 and 235, placed a statue of Athena on the altar and then made his exit; but such an inartistic intervention is not to be found in any other extant play of Greek drama.

During the absence of Athena the Furies dance in a calmer mood and resume themes that had been expressed by Chorus in *Agamemnon*. Athena, now on foot, re-enters from the righthand *parodos*, and she is followed by Herald, a number of Judges, and a Crowd of Athenians.⁷⁹ The trumpet's ringing note commands silence for the manning of the court (568–70). This was represented in our production by the seats and the urn that had been there since the start of the play. Taplin (391) and others would have stagehands bring in the seats and the urn and remove the statue of Athena from the altar. This seems unnecessary and inartistic. While the Judges are taking their

⁷⁶ For a suppliant sitting on an altar and speaking to Chorus see the vase-painting in *AJA* 1978 Fig. 10; and for one in real life Hdt. 6.108.4; cf. Ar. *Lys.* 1139f.

⁷⁷ Opinions will differ on this. Athena's words could refer back to Orestes' words at 287, εὐφήμως καλῶ χάρας ἀνασσαν τῆσδε, or to the driving mad of Orestes between 376 and 377. I prefer the latter, because κληδόνος βοήν, like the trumpet's ὑπέτρονον γήρυμα at 569, means an exceedingly loud cry, which is less appropriate at line 287, ἀφ' ἄγνοῦ στόματος εὐφήμως. For the importance of sound in Aeschylus' plays see *PV* 133–35; and in a modern play we may cite *Equus*.

⁷⁸ *Eum.* 404f gives alternative methods of transit. For the original production I prefer the chariot, because Agamemnon had entered on a carriage and Aeschylus liked to provide visual repetition. For a summary of divergent views see Taplin 388f.

⁷⁹ There were perhaps eleven Judges, and thirty people to make the Crowd (*στρατόν*, 566). Thus some sixty people were on set for the singing and the spectacle of the grand finale.

seats and the Furies are adopting a position from which to face the Judges, Apollo enters through the lefthand *parodos*;⁸⁰ but he is not seen by most of the spectators until he appears to the right of the altar. Orestes now leaves the altar and stands between it and Apollo. Athena mounts the altar and stands on top of it, in order to preside. Chorus address Apollo at 574. Athena starts the hearing at 582.

Lines 583–1047:

In our production the participants in the trial were positioned as in *Figure 2*. The Furies moved to and fro in the forward part of the *orchestra* to the left front of Athena as they put their points; the others remained stationary but used gestures. The positioning is important because the participants have to be able to see and address one another, Athena has to preside, and all speakers have to be audible and visible to the spectators. On the other hand, if Athena and the Judges are positioned on the stage and the Furies, Apollo, and Orestes speak from the *orchestra*, as has been suggested, the spectators will see only the backs of the Furies, Apollo, and Orestes and will have difficulty in hearing their words. While the Judges are considering their vote, Athena addresses them as the Athenian people, trying the first case of bloodshed (682f), and tells them of the future of this court, named the Areopagus. In our production Athena pointed to the rock at V and beyond it (in our imagination) to the Acropolis, the reason being that she employs the deictic pronoun in each case: “this rock” and “this high-towered polis” (685, 688).⁸¹ It may be that Aeschylus was expecting the audience to take the conjunction of the court and the rock as symbolic of the actual Areopagus rock, which is not visible from the theatre of Dionysus. But this will always be a matter of dispute. Athena ends her speech in asking the Judges to rise and cast their votes, *i.e.*, into the urn. While they are doing so, the Furies and Apollo engage in disputation. Then Athena casts her vote, expressly in favour of Orestes. It is this vote that produces a tie,⁸² and in accordance with Athena’s previous ruling that a tie means acquittal Orestes and Apollo depart through the lefthand *parodos*.

⁸⁰ He has come from Olympus. His coming is due to his divine prescience. I do not share the difficulties that Taplin (395ff) has expressed.

⁸¹ The text at 686 is corrupt both on grounds of metre and in sense, because Aeschylus was leading up to the conferment of the name at lines 689f. It may be that a verb is missing, such as *ὄρατε*. But in any event the deictic pronoun *τόνδε* gives the meaning that is important for my interpretation. Lines 686–88, of which the subject is the Amazons, seem to me to refer to the Acropolis of Athens: *ὅτ’ ἦλθον Θησέως κατὰ φθόνον στρατηλατοῦσαι καὶ νεόπολιν τήνδ’ ὑψίπυργον ἀντεπύργωσαν τότε*. I take *ὑψίπυργον*, as in *Supp.* 97, to mean “towering” and not to reduplicate *ἀντεπύργωσαν*, and I translate thus: “when they came campaigning in their ill-will against Theseus and equipped this towering polis, newly-founded, with towers against him then.” The only “towering polis” visible from the Dionysiac theatre is the Acropolis, which was itself the newly-founded polis of Theseus as we know from Thuc. 2.15.2f (*ἡ ἀκρόπολις ἡ νῦν οὖσα πόλις ἦν*). The usual interpretation, that the Amazons fortified the Areopagus hill as their newly-founded city, seems to me less probable.

⁸² This is not the place to discuss the number of votes, which is much disputed.

Athena and the Furies had foreshadowed the poisoning of the land by the Furies if they should suffer defeat (476–79 and 719f). Now the Furies intend to blight Attica and ruin the citizens. They circle round Athena standing on the altar, as they had circled round Orestes, and the Judges, the Crowd, and the citizens in the theatre shrink back in terror, for the survival of their country is at stake. Athena remains calm. She gestures as Apollo had gestured, and in a voice of purity and power she offers them a new home and honour in Attica. In the end they are persuaded. Women in the Crowd are summoned by Athena to place red robes over the black garments of the Furies, and Athena confers on them a new name, *Eumenides*, “the Kindly Ones.”⁸³ They are to be escorted to their new home. A procession with lit torches is led by Athena, after whom come the Eumenides and their attendant women and then the Judges and the Crowd, singing alleluias, as they proclaim the reconciliation of the older gods and the younger gods and their unanimity in goodwill towards the citizens of Athens. The procession makes its exit through the righthand *parodos*.

Our production made us reflect on Aeschylus’ use of space. The stage platform, used perhaps for the first time in 458 B.C.,⁸⁴ was dominated by Apollo in the exercise of his authority, even as it had been dominated by Clytemnestra in *Agamemnon*. It was not employed at all after line 234. The façade of the stage-building represented the front of a temple, first of Apollo and then of Athena, with a central door and a quasi-stylobate of continuous steps. The temple was the symbol of the power of the Olympian gods throughout the play. The action after line 234 was all in the *orchestra*. The visual centre of the *orchestra* was the altar, at which Priestess prayed, Orestes found sanctuary, Athena presided and saved Athens from the wrath of the Furies.⁸⁵ The statue of Athena on the altar and then Athena in person kept us aware of the presence of Athena as the protecting deity of Athens throughout the play. The great space of the *orchestra* was ideal for the violent, rampaging movements of the

⁸³ The Furies are being welcomed to their adopted residence (1018, *μετοικίαν δ’ ἐμήν*), even as the metics were welcomed in the Panathenaic procession; for the metics wore red garments (Phot. *s.v.* *σκάφας*) and were numbered within the body politic “as of good will” (*Anecd.Bekk.* 214.3, *ὡς εὖνοι*, so translated by Thomson [*supra* n.58] 318, who drew the parallel between the Furies and the metics). It is appropriate that the Furies should now be proclaimed “Well-wishers” (*Eumenides*), even as the metics were greeted as “of good will.” This parallel supports the belief of Page, following Hermann, that the naming of the Furies occurred in the lacuna that follows line 1027. The naming is reported in Harp. *s.v.* *Εὐμενίδες*, the Hyp. of *Eum.*, and Σ *ad* Aeschin. 1.188, *κληθῆναι δὲ Εὐμενίδας ἐπ’ Ὀρέστου, πρότερον Ἐρινύας καλομένης*. A. L. Brown, *CQ* n.s. 34 (1984) 269–75, expresses some doubts.

⁸⁴ I gave my reasons for this view in *GRBS* 411f.

⁸⁵ The importance of the altar as a place from which an actor spoke is stressed by G. Ley and M. Ewans, *Ramus* 14 (1985) 78.

Furies, and their ring dance round the altar suggested that the victim would never escape. There was ample room for the trial and finally for the procession. The rock too stood as a symbol of incorruptible justice: "On it reverence and its kinsman, fear, will restrain the citizens from infringing justice day and night alike" (690).

5. Some Conclusions

In this article I have attempted to show that the archaeological data as given by Dörpfeld and Dinsmoor for the measurements and the shape of the early theatre on the side of the Acropolis hill are the fundamental basis for any reconstruction we may make. Thus when I advanced the novel suggestion that the rock or mound that is so often mentioned in all the extant plays except *Agamemnon* had been in fact a real outcrop of rock, analogous to the *bema* on the Pnyx, it was essential to check that such a rock might have existed, according to the findings of Dörpfeld and Dinsmoor, and to see for myself on the site that Dörpfeld's shaven base or rock at V was in fact still there.⁸⁶

While this outcrop at V was archaeologically possible, its use in production had to be justified from a close study of the plays themselves, which provide the crucial form of evidence. In 1972 (416–30 and 436f) and in this article, I have tried to show that at V or close to it a rock was essential to the production of *Prometheus Vincetus*, and that in five other plays (not *Agamemnon*) such a rock was used to represent a mounded tomb, an acropolis, a lookout place, and the rock of Ares. It is rational to suppose that the rock at V was used for these purposes, and that an alternative artificial rock was not constructed on each occasion.

The importance of vase-paintings has often been overlooked.⁸⁷ I hope to have shown that the fragments of the hydria by the Painter of the Oxford Brygos give a portrait of the epiphany of Darius that corresponds in precise details with the text of *Persae*. This is significant: it demonstrates that what Aeschylus wrote in his text was for visual performance and not for that sort of imaginative fantasy we create for ourselves in reading the text of a play. We must never forget that Aes-

⁸⁶ See my report at *GRBS* 409. When Dinsmoor re-assessed the orientation of the early *orchestra*-circle, he found that it was clear of the rock at V.

⁸⁷ For instance, Taplin in his *Stagecraft* made little use of vase-painting and underestimated the extent to which Aeschylus provided spectacular effects. This was partly because Taplin dismissed the evidence of *V. Aesch.* 16, which gave as examples "altars, tombs, trumpets, ghosts, Furies, actors wearing sleeves, and long garments." All of these are familiar not only from the extant plays but also from many vase-paintings, of which most were inspired by scenes from drama. See, for instance, *AJA* 1978 Figs. 1–7 and 10–12.

chylus was writing for the theatre, appealing to the eye and to the ear⁸⁸ in a period when there was no such thing as a circulation of books. If he referred frequently to a rock or a mound in his text, he did so because there was a rock or mound in the theatre and he intended to make use of it in production. In consequence it seems most probable that the Prometheus plays, for instance, were written for a theatre in which there was a rock at V and an open vista and so no stage building.

These conclusions led to the problem of the dating and the authenticity of *Prometheus Vincitus*. Here we had to deal also with another kind of evidence, namely the Greek tradition about this period of the Attic theatre and in particular the records of production. Here we rely not only on such items as *didaskaliai* and the Medicean Catalogue but also on vase-paintings and reliefs and on those plays of Aristophanes that show that some of Aeschylus' plays were re-enacted in the Athenian theatre after his death. It becomes very difficult, if not impossible, to believe that an unauthentic *Prometheus Vincitus* could have been foisted into the list of authentic plays of Aeschylus in the classical period.

The last form of evidence is a re-enactment of a play of Aeschylus under conditions that simulate those of the ancient theatre on the side of the Acropolis. To select *Eumenides* for this purpose may seem rash, because textual and dramatic critics have seen innumerable difficulties and made widely varying proposals. My object was partly to show that the rock at V could play an important part in the staging of *Eumenides* and partly to understand from a study of the text how the play evolved, without the intervention of any stage-hands. In practice the problems seemed to solve themselves, provided that one visualised Aeschylus writing for a specific theatre and including in his text what would be visual items in the theatre.⁸⁹ Thus in writing of the shrine at Delphi he gave special prominence to Athena (21) and he

⁸⁸ In the text of *PV* Prometheus is pinioned erect and straight-legged (32), his arms rivetted to the rock (55f, 60f), his chest pierced by a wedge (64), and his legs clamped with manacles (74). This was not written for us to imagine. As spectators in the theatre we were to see it done (if only in illusion as regards the piercing of the chest). That is why Hephaestus says to Kratos, "You see a spectacle hard for one's eyes to contemplate," and Kratos replies, "I see him there (the deictic *τόνδε*) getting what he deserves." The sound of hammering at 56 was confirmed in line 132.

⁸⁹ Thus when Aeschylus wrote for the Ghost of Darius the line "I shall depart into the darkness of earth downwards" (839 *κάτω*), his words were chosen to fit the descent of the Ghost through the built top of the mounded tomb, and not to let the Ghost climb down and walk off through the *orchestra* or even stay around on set until the arrival of Xerxes. See these and other ideas listed by Taplin (116).

mentioned the enquirers waiting to draw lots (31). It was easy to suppose that he did so because he wanted to identify a statue as that of Athena, which is important later in the play, and to suggest why seats were on set. Again, Aeschylus described the Furies (as yet unseen by the spectators) in horrific terms (46–59) in order to raise our fears just before they appeared in the theatre.

The importance of religious belief, in the structure of the plays and in the feelings of the audience at the religious festival known as the Dionysia, is something that modern scholars are apt to underestimate or overlook. The epiphany of Darius was not included in the play merely as a spooky and titillating spectacle; for its purpose was to reveal through a divine pronouncement the will of the Olympian gods and the principles on which they governed the outcome of human actions. The same was true of Cassandra's revelations, when the god was speaking through her lips, and she foretold the punishment of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus in accordance with a great oath sworn by the gods (*Ag.* 1284f). Thereafter it was inconceivable for anyone of religious faith to suppose that the murderers would escape. The same was true of the climax of *PV*. Wherever one's human sympathies might lie, the power of Zeus was to be demonstrated in the punishment of Prometheus as proclaimed by his divine messenger, Hermes, sent down from Olympus. The cataclysm was bound to occur, and to occur in a visible and spectacular manner.⁹⁰

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⁹⁰ Like many other scholars, Griffith (*supra* n.18: 277) expressed the view that to create the effect of a cataclysm was "beyond the capabilities of the ancient theatre." At the time of the Persian wars fire-signals were used in real life as well as in the beacon-speech of *Agamemnon*. What was needed at the end of *PV* was the emission of a sufficient quantity of smoke to conceal the move of Prometheus and the Oceanids into the adjacent *skene* on the stage side of the rock; enormous claps of thunder from the drum or cymbals or whatever went under the name *βουρρέϊν* (Poll. 4.130); and intermittent flashes of light, achieved by opening and closing a shutter over a brightly burning substance.

I was fortunate in being able to discuss some of the issues of this paper with Mr Martin Holt and Professor R. G. Ussher in the University of Adelaide, to whom I am most grateful.