

AESCHYLUS, *CHOEPHORI* 225–230

- 225 αὐτὸν μὲν οὖν ὄρωσα δυσμαθεῖς ἐμέ,
 226 κοῦράν δ' ἰδοῦσα τήνδε κηδεῖον τριχῶς
 227 ἀνεπερώθης κἀδόκεις ὄραν ἐμέ.
 228 ἰγροσκοποῦσά τ' ἐν στίβοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς
 229 σαντῆς ἀδελφοῦ συμμέτρον τῷ σῶ κάρα
 230 σκέψαι τομῆ προσθεῖσα βόστρυχον τριχῶς
 231 ἰδοῦ δ' ὕφασμα τοῦτο κτλ.
 225 οὖν Turnebus: νῦν M 230 σκέψαιτο μὴ M: corr. Turnebus

That *Cho.* 225–230 cannot be left in the form given above has been generally recognized since the turn of the century. Against this form of vv. 228 ff., with its sentence construction of participial qualification of the subject, main clause, further participial qualification of the subject, see most recently H. Lloyd-Jones¹). To his observations I should only add that the sole parallel given²), *Ag.* 239 χέουσα ἔβαλλε...πρόπευσά θ' ὡς ἐν γραφαῖς, is not a suitable one. The two participles here do not express actions different from that of the main verb: they are rather of a purely descriptive character and are not to be compared with those in *Cho.* 226 and 228. Verse 228, therefore, hangs in midair in the texts of Klausen, Peile, Verrall, *et all.*

The problem of how to restore these lines has been complicated by more general interpretative questions. The most radical of these questions, that of athetesis of the footprints in vv. 205–211 and 228–229³), I shall take as answered by Lloyd-Jones' defense of the footprints in both Aeschylus and Euripides⁴). Even given the footprints, however, there seems to be uncertainty among the commentators as to what Orestes ought to be saying here.

1) H. Lloyd-Jones, "Some Alleged Interpolations in Aeschylus' *Choephoroi* and Euripides' *Electra*. *CQ* 55 N.S. XI (1961), 174.

2) R. H. Klausen, *Aeschyli quae supersunt*. Vol. I, Sect. II. (Gotha, 1835), *ad loc.*

3) Cf. Ch. G. Schütz, *Aeschylus* (London, 1823), ad vv. 230 sqq., 224 sqq. and E. Fraenkel, *Aeschylus, Agamemnon* (Oxford, 1950), vol. III, App. D, pp. 815–826.

4) *Op. cit.*, pp. 171–181.

The idea that v. 227 describes Electra's reaction to the footprints as well as her reaction to the lock has led to a desire not to allow vv. 226 and 228 to be separated, as they are in the *paradosis*. The transposition of v. 228 before v. 227, which brings in the footprints as another cause of Electra's reaction in v. 227, was first made by Robortello. Probably contributing to satisfaction with this move was the interpretation of *κάρα* (v. 229). Of the two possibilities, 'person, form' and 'head' (for 'head of hair'), the second seems to have had more supporters. Against the interpretation 'person' or 'form', otherwise quite acceptable, as in Soph., *Ant.* 1, it has been scornfully remarked that *κάρα* is a most unlikely word to apply to a resemblance in the feet⁵). Removing v. 228 from the vicinity of course allows *κάρα* to mean 'head' without any difficulty. Next, once v. 229 stands after v. 227, the asyndeton in v. 229, the oddity of sentence structure in vv. 229–230, and the problem of construing *σαντῆς ἀδελφοῦ συμμετρων* (v. 229) when it is no longer immediately preceded by *τοῖς ἐμοῖς* (v. 228) cause the transposition of v. 230 before v. 229 (Bothe) and the alteration of *συμμετρων* to *σύμμετρον* (Pauw). These three alterations together produce the text of most recent editions, including D. L. Page's Oxford text.

This text now reads fairly smoothly, but it does not fit the logic of what Orestes must be saying here. Electra recognized the lock as that of Orestes, but resolved to think it had been sent by a messenger. She has also recognized the footprints as those of Orestes. Since the footprints could not have been brought by a messenger, Electra ought to realize that Orestes has indeed come. Instead she is thrown into confusion. To still this confusion it should only be necessary for Orestes to step forward. He does so and is not recognized. Orestes remarks (vv. 225 ff.) that it is strange that Electra could recognize him from the token, but not from his own person, now that he stands before her. Continuing his ironic observation about the token, Orestes says Electra should convince herself that the token of Orestes comes from this very man standing before her and that he is therefore Orestes.

It should be noted that in v. 226 Orestes says only *κοῦράν τήνδε*. From this follows the contrast: 'When you see me, you do not believe that you see me. But when you saw this lock, you

⁵) Cf. A. Sidgwick, *Aeschylus, Choephoroi* (Oxford, 1884), *ad loc.* and A. W. Verrall, *The 'Choephoroi' of Aeschylus* (London, 1893), *ad loc.*

thought you saw me.’ That is exactly the irony to which Orestes wants to point. If v. 228, with the words *στίβοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς*, stood before v. 227, this irony would be lost: it has not yet been shown that these were the footprints of the man who now stands before Electra. No more has the lock yet been shown to be his. That the footprints as well as the lock, both of which Electra has already recognized as those of Orestes, belong to the speaker is exactly what is needed to prove that the speaker is Orestes. Therefore I propose to leave v. 228 after v. 227 and to heal the syntax of the passage by transposing v. 230 before v. 228 (not before v. 229):

225 αὐτὸν μὲν οὖν ὄρωσα δυσμαθεῖς ἐμέ,
 226 κουρὰν δ’ ἰδοῦσα τήγδε κηδείον τριχὸς
 227 ἀνεπτέρωθης κἀδόκεις ὄρᾶν ἐμέ.
 230 σκέψαι τομῆ προσθεῖσα βόστρυχον τριχὸς
 228 ἰχνοσκοποῦσά τ’ ἐν στίβοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς
 229 σαντῆς ἀδελφοῦ συμμέτρον τῷ σῶ κάρᾳ.

Lloyd-Jones⁶) unfortunately does not argue extensively in favor of his own solution, which assumes a lacuna of one verse after v. 229, containing the main verb of the clause and linked to the preceding clause by means of τ’ in v. 228. This may be right, but, with Solmsen⁷), I cannot quite imagine what would have come in the missing verse. It is also somewhat disturbing to have to wait two verses for the cause of the *τε* which practically begins the sentence. I should much rather retain the forcefulness of the asyndeton, explaining it with Kühner-Gerth II, p. 342 Nr. 4: introduction of a contrasting phrase or Kühner-Gerth II, p. 346 e (middle): sudden alteration of the form of the speech, e.g. when the speech changes to an arousal.

This arrangement does not leave the other problems of the passage unsolved either. When the stranger says *στίβοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς* (v. 228), these words apply most naturally not to the footprints which Electra has recognized as belonging to Orestes, but to those made by the stranger’s own feet where he is standing. He is therefore asking Electra to compare Orestes’ footprints with his own. This process has probably been made easy, in that the stranger (as shown by the deictic *τήγδε* in v. 226) has

6) *Op. cit.*, p. 174.

7) F. Solmsen, “Electra und Orestes: Drei Wiedererkennungsszenen in der griechischen Tragödie.” in: *Wege zu Aischylos*, ed. H. Hommel (Darmstadt, 1974), Bd. II, pp. 278–279 Anm. 8.

probably walked up to the grave and picked up the lock. His last footprints are therefore right near the footprints left by Orestes as he put the lock atop the grave. The tenses of the participles *προσθεῖσα* and *ιχνοσκοποῦσα*, against the latter of which Wilamowitz⁸⁾ took offence, may be explained by the difference of verbal aspect associated with the two different actions: instantaneous for 'by matching-up' and durative for 'while looking for clues'⁹⁾. This is of course not peculiar to my arrangement, but must be assumed by anyone who neither athetizes v. 228 nor prints *ιχνοσκοπήσασ' τ' ἐν*. Verse 227 describes Electra's reaction after recognizing only the lock just as well as her reaction after recognizing the footprints too. Further, vv. 228–229 read more naturally when *σαντῆς ἀδελφοῦ* is allowed to follow the genitive implicit in *τοῖς ἐμοῖς*¹⁰⁾, while *συμμέτρον* need not be altered. The force of the change from *τοῖς ἐμοῖς*, where this only means 'mine, the stranger's', to the assertion *σαντῆς ἀδελφοῦ* is quite effective at the end of this wry little speech. This may even be taken as an example of the emphatic indication of the reflexive possessive by the adjectival personal pronoun and the genitive of *αὐτός*, only with *σαντῆς ἀδελφοῦ* substituted where one expects *αὐτοῦ*¹¹⁾. Finally, all the scorn of previous commentators has produced no good reason why *κἀρα* should not refer to the whole person here¹²⁾.

Postscript:

In his review (*Gnomon* 37, 1965, 657) of R.D.Dawe's *Repertory of Conjectures on Aeschylus* (Leiden, 1965), Lloyd-Jones wrote that he meant to posit a lacuna, not after v. 229, but after v. 228 (as Dawe providentially reported). This arrangement no longer asks the reader to wait two lines for the verb bound by the *τε* of v. 288, but it now separates *σαντῆς ἀδελφοῦ*

8) U. von Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, *Aischylos Orestie II, Das Opfer am Grabe* (Berlin, 1896), *ad loc.*

9) Cf. Ed. Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik*. Zweiter Band, vervollständigt und herausgegeben von A. Debrunner (München, 1950), pp. 300–301, 4e β 3.

10) Cf. Lloyd-Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 174 with note 1.

11) Cf. Kühner-Gerth I, p. 569 c and the examples cited there, for instance Soph. *O.T.* 416: *λέληθας ἐχθρός ὦν τοῖς σοῖσι αὐτοῦ*. I owe this reference to Professor H. Erbse (Bonn), to whom I am very grateful for advice and encouragement in the writing of this paper. I alone am responsible for the final contents.

12) *Ibid.*, 174. And see the theory of sculptural *symmetria* of the whole body described by W. Burkert, "A Note on Aeschylus *Choephoroi* 205 ff." *CQ* 57 N.S. XIII (1963), 177.

(v. 229) from τοῖς ἐμοῖς (v. 228), which is difficult (cf. the examples cited by Lloyd-Jones, *op. cit.*, 174 n. 1). The juxtaposition of one-line commands (i.e. vv. 230 and 231) also seems rather harsh. Either of Lloyd-Jones' arrangements is, of course, subject to the same logical objections as the solution adopted by Page.

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