3

THE SHIELD OF ETEOCLES

HELEN H. BACON

The climax of *Seven Against Thebes* is Eteocles' decision at the end of the central messenger scene to meet his brother Polyneices in single combat at the seventh gate. The meaning of this decision, for the city and for Eteocles, is the focus of most of the critical discussion about the play.[1] Both Patzer[2] and Lesky[3] have suggested that in the course of the play Eteocles progresses from uncertainty, or blindness, to knowledge about the workings of the family curse, and that in this progress the central messenger scene plays a crucial role. Neither scholar has discussed the way the language and imagery of the play substantiate this view – nor the way these suggest that the knowledge involved is that fundamental kind of knowledge which we associate with all the stories connected with the family of Oedipus – knowledge of our real relation to those who are most close (*philoi*) to us.[4]

In the central scene in which Eteocles makes his decision, the purpose of the impious shouts, the noisy trappings, and above all of the shield devices, of the first five attackers is to terrify the Theban defenders. Eteocles is not terrified. He recognizes the shields as masks of terror, mere appearances, without real power to harm. The shield device of Polyneices is a mask of a more insidious kind. It represents the bearer, not as omnipotent in his defiance of the gods, but as reverently carrying out the behests of Dike. But the seer, Amphiaraus, has made it clear that there is no Dike that will justify an assault on the mother city by one of her own sons (lines 580-6). Amphiaraus, who does not wish to *seem* but to *be aristos* [best, most noble], has no device on his shield. He alone has no mask. Because he can distinguish illusion from reality he is master of himself, though not of his circumstances. He has accepted death in a doomed expedition in which he is participating against his will. He does not need either the mask of terror which would disguise his helplessness, or the mask of virtue which would disguise his desires.

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In this central and crucial scene one of the things the shields do is to focus our attention on the problem of knowing what is *really* to be feared.

To Eteocles what is really to be feared is Polyneices and his mask of virtue. Against the masks of terror of the first five attackers he takes calm and effective measures of defense. Towards Amphiaraus he expresses grief for a just man forced against his will to be part of an impious venture. But when the messenger describes Polyneices and his shield, bearing a figure of Dike leading home a man in armour, Eteocles responds with a cry which reflects his horror both in words and in its broken rhythm (lines 653-5).

> O my sorrowful race, the race of Oedipus, made mad by the gods, and terribly hated by the gods, alas now in truth my father's curses are being fulfilled.

Eteocles' decision to face his brother in single combat, which comes at the end of this speech, is a decision to *know*, at whatever price, the ultimate meaning of Polyneices' so modest appearing shield device (lines 659-61):

> We will soon *know* in what direction the device will fulfill itself, whether the gold inscribed letters, babbling with a wandering of the mind, *will* lead him home.

Near the end of the *kommos* both brothers are described as having achieved knowledge – knowledge of the power of the fury (lines 986-990):

> *Cho.* O grievous Fate, giver of heavy gifts, and lady shade of Oedipus, black Erinys, truly you are *overwhelming.*
> *Ant.* Indeed you *know* her [or *nun*, now] by experiencing [her].
> *Ism.* And *you* have *learned* no later [than he]

The absolutely just division of the wealth of Oedipus, which they have achieved in death, is a kind of knowledge. They are equal in this as in everything else.

In Sophocles' three plays about the house of Laius the central theme of knowing is carried by images of seeing and hearing. In *Seven Against Thebes* too seeing and hearing are crucial. The experiences in which what *seems* must be distinguished from what *is* are transmitted to the mind by the eyes and the ears.

War is presented as visible and audible horror. Perhaps because the chorus can hear more than they can see of the approaching army, sound predominates in their first two songs and in the exchanges with Eteocles

which come between them – the clash of harness, chariots, arms, the thud of hooves, the screams of pain and grief, the shouts of rage and greed, and the wonderful variety of noises in the words themselves. And there are the chorus's own cries of terror.

In the central messenger scene the emphasis shifts from the audible to the visible – to the terror-inducing shield devices and to speech made visible in impious slogans inscribed on the shields. But here too the other aspect of the terror of war is noise – the noises that come from the shields themselves, the noises of the horses and their gear, the insolent screams of the warriors, and the same lavish vocabulary of noise that we heard in the first two choral songs. Amphiaraus shows his aloofness from the war and his difference from the other champions, by having no shield device. And equally important, he speaks in the tones of ordinary conversation (*badzō, legō, audaō* ['speak'] as compared with *bremō* (call out), *boaō* (roar), *autō* [shout], *epalaladzō* [battle cry]), and has no noise-making accoutrements.

The messenger who is the means by which the sights and sounds of the war outside the gates are transmitted is called a *katoptēs* (one who sees, lines 41, 369). His function – accurately to convey what comes to him through his eyes and ears – is several times referred to (lines 36-8, 40-1, 66-9, 375, 651-2). In this, as in every other story that has to do with the family of Oedipus, the eyes and ears as vehicles of knowledge have special prominence.

The problem of *knowing* where the danger really is – who is really the stranger, the enemy, the outsider, haunts the play in many forms. Ares, whose statue stands on the stage as one of the seven gods of the city, who is twice the ancestor of all the Thebans – both through his daughter Harmonia and through the Spartoi – is also the *xenos . . . Chalybos Skythōn apoikos* (the stranger, the Chalybian settler from Scythia, lines 727-8), the *pontios xeinos* (the stranger from beyond the sea, lines 941-2), a stranger from a distant land who, as an outsider, can make a just and equal division of the inheritance of the sons of Oedipus. Dike is one of blood (line 415) with the Thebans, but has nothing to do with the birth or nurture of Polyneices (lines 662-671). Although Aeschylus refers to the attackers collectively as Achaeans (lines 28 and 324) and Argives (line 120) his emphasis on the violence and strangeness of their speech and behavior has led some scholars to believe that he wished to present them as non-Greeks. They are *both* strangers and fellow Greeks.[5]

The images of a loud and overwhelming storm at sea, and of an uncontrolled beast, which are repeatedly used to describe the stranger army (lines 62-4, 84-5, 114-15, 213, 229, 362), are used by Eteocles

of the Theban chorus's cries of fear (lines 192, 181, 186, 280). The chorus fears the noise of war *outside* the gates. Eteocles fears the noise of the chorus *inside* the city, as a kind of magic practiced by woman, which can unman the citizens (lines 191-2, 237, 254), and help those *outside* by causing the citizens 'to be sacked by themselves *from within*' (lines 192-4). The 'real' danger is inside the city. It has the overwhelming force and strangeness of a storm at sea or a savage beast. In this scene all Eteocles' strength is organized to keep this force locked up – to keep the women 'inside' where they belong, away from the statues of the gods and the affairs of men (which are 'outside'), and to substitute for their wild outpouring of feeling the impersonal formulae of a victory chant (lines 265-70). By reducing them to silence after repeated attempts (lines 232, 250, 252, 262) he does, perhaps, for the moment, succeed. But the harshness of his language and the intensity of his horror of women (lines 18, 187-90, 194-5, 256) leave one with the feeling that the success is somehow against nature, and therefore unstable.

The attackers themselves, as almost all critics recognize, are destroyed more by the violence within them, which provokes the wrath of the gods, than by the action of the Thebans (lines 444-6 and 508-20).

There is a danger 'outside' which must not be let in, and a danger 'inside' which must not be let out. The same images of an alien and overwhelming force and noise are used of both. The problem is to know who really *is* the stranger, the outsider, the enemy.

This ambiguity about who is really an enemy and an outsider, and about where he is, is the ambiguity of the house of Laius itself. The homeless stranger who slew Laius, solved the riddle of the sphinx, and so won the kingdom of Thebes with the hand of the queen, was in reality the son of the king he slew and the queen he married, and the legitimate heir to the throne, *philos* – a blood relative, and an insider in every sense. At some point in the trilogy, *Laius, Oedipus, Seven Against Thebes*, his sons, who were also his brothers, became his rivals over the land and the city which was the mother of all three. 'They are all too close in blood' (line 940). But they are also, for three generations, enemies and strangers to each other.

The engulfing force which destroys Eteocles and Polyneices is, like the attacking army and the terror-stricken chorus, described in images of storm (lines 689-91, 707-8, 758-61, 769-71, 848-60) and of violent animality. The words with which Eteocles rejects the chorus's entreaty that he propitiate the fury echo those of Tydeus rejecting the advice of Amphiaraus. Both refuse to 'fawn on fate' (lines 383 and 704). Eteocles' echoing of Tydeus at this crisis of the play indicates that his defiance, like that of Tydeus, is insane and self-destructive. The defiance of Eteocles

and Polyneices is also compared by verbal echoes to the defiance of Laius, whose 'defiant, disobedient counsels' (line 842) led him, against the command of the Delphic oracle, to beget a child. Over the bodies of the two brothers the chorus sing 'you did this defiant, disobedient [also incredible?] thing' (line 846), and (lines 876–8) 'Not listening to those who are near to you [*apistoi philōn*], not worn out by misfortune [evil?], having taken by force the house of your father.'

Apistoi philōn can imply defying the ties of blood as well as disregarding the advice of friends. In taking by force the house of their father, they put themselves in the same relation to Oedipus that Oedipus was in to Laius. When the sons are laid beside their father-brother in Theban earth they share their mother with him, as he shared her with his father, Laius. *pēma patri pareunon* (line 1004), disastrous sharing of a father's bed, are the last words of the *kommos*.

The strangers outside the gates of Thebes do not *break in*. But the passion and fury of those who are *philoi* (the word is particularly important in the *kommos*, line 971:

Ant.: You perished at the hands of a *philos*.

Ismene: And you slew a *philos*. (cf. line 940 *homaimoi*, and lines 932-3)) *break out* and sweep the whole race of Laius to destruction (lines 689-92). The Ares inside the house of Laius is more terrible, more insatiable, and more sterile than the Ares that storms outside the gates. Eteocles and Polyneices learn its full power and meaning only at the moment of their mutually inflicted deaths.

The engulfing passion, the danger which breaks out from inside, is incestuous rivalry – of Oedipus with Laius, of Eteocles and Polyneices with Oedipus and with each other – over the city, the land, the woman who is the source of their life ('the mother spring' as Amphiaraus calls Thebes, line 584). For the house of Laius the female is destruction. It was where three ways meet, in the sphere of Hecate, the goddess of the moon, of magic, and of all dark incomprehensible female functions, that Oedipus committed the act of violence against his father that led to his incestuous marriage. The only sizable fragment from the earlier part of the tetralogy *Laius, Oedipus, Seven Against Thebes, Sphinx*, is a description of the place where the three ways meet (Mette, frag. 172 = Nauck, frag. 173). The sphinx also is a female and a destroyer of men, as is the fury, who appears in this play only in her destructive aspect.

Let us now return to the crucial scene, the scene in which Eteocles makes his decision to face his brother in single combat, and consider how this central theme – coming to know what is the real danger for the house of Laius – figures there.

Tydeus sets the tone of violence, defiance, and animality, which

threatens the city. This is elaborated in the next five attackers and negated in the defenders, and above all in Amphiaraus. In Capaneus, Eteoclus, Hippomedon, Parthenopaeus, these qualities are conveyed not only by words, appearance, behavior, but by the shield devices which grow progressively more threatening – a naked man carrying a torch and shouting 'I shall burn the city,' a hoplite carrying a ladder with which to scale the walls, Typhon wreathed in snakes and breathing smoke, the man-eating sphinx with a dead Theban in her claws. The shield of Tydeus, which leads the list, bears a starry night with a full moon. Should not it too threaten the city?

To all the shield devices, including that of Tydeus, and to all the ill-omened words of the attackers, Eteocles responds with the traditional defense against magic. He turns both the words and the visible symbols back on their originators so that they work to the destruction of the bearer.[6] Against the shield of Hippomedon, and perhaps, as Verrall in his edition of the play suggested, against the shields of the others too, he produces an actual shield device, Zeus to overcome Typhon.[7] There is plenty of evidence that shield devices like the ones in this passage were actually used to cause fear in the enemy.[8] I have found no explanation of the nature of the threat on the shield of Tydeus, although the fact that it is the first in a list of threatening shield devices, and the fact that Eteocles takes measures to turn its menace back onto Tydeus, make it clear that Aeschylus meant it to seem threatening.

If I have rightly interpreted the play the tranquil starry night with its effulgent full moon is the most comprehensive threat of all for the house of Laius. Night and the moon, as well as magic and all things female, are the sphere of Hecate, who presides over the place where three ways meet, who shares with the fury, the daughter of the night, the attributes of torches, dogs, snakes, and whips. The moon on the shield is *nyktos ophthalmos*, eye of night, and it is as an eye that can cast a spell on whatever it falls on that it sheds its radiant but baneful light over the scene.[9]

The eye is the instrument of knowledge, and the fury knows all. Her unsleeping eye will find the violator of Dike at last, and when he is found he will not escape knowledge of the nature of her power. Tydeus, with the eye of night on his shield, is literally what Amphiaraus calls him, 'summoner of the fury' (line 574).

The shield of Tydeus with its brazen bells which 'shriek fear' (line 386) and its terrible eye which glares fear (cf. lines 53 and 498) sums up the sight and sound imagery of the play. The four shields that follow cannot but be seen as a continuation of this imagery, shouting and glaring the inescapable knowledge which the sons of Oedipus will achieve by mutual slaughter.

The shields, like the shield of Tydeus, all have voices. The slogan on Capaneus' shield *phonei* (shouts) (line 434), the slogan on Eteoclus' shield *boa* (roars) (line 468), and the many references to the metal of which they are made, particularly in this context of metallic noises, accentuate their noisiness. They are also, all of them, like the shield of Tydeus, eyes.

The very large number of references to the circularity of the shields (lines 489, 496, 540, 590, 591, 643) should be understood as indications of their affinity with eyes. The tendency among editors from the earliest times to reduce this number by emendation (lines 590 and 642) overlooks this function.

The roundness of the shields is emphasized in two other ways. The Argive shield, whose distinctive character was that it was round and white, is mentioned in the first choral song (line 89), and suggested again in the double reference to the gate of Proetus (lines 377 and 395) at which Tydeus is stationed. The Argive Proetus with his brother Acrisius, was known to tradition as the 'discoverer' of the Argive shield (Apollodorus, *Bibl.* 2.2). The Argive inventor of the shield is stressed just at the moment when the Argive shield becomes the focus of the action.

The Argive shield appears in *Aeneid* 3 (lines 635–7) in the description of the blinding of the Cyclops:

> et telo lumen terebramus acuto
> ingens quod torva solum sub fronte latebat,
> Argolici clipei aut Phoebeae lampadis instar.
>
> and with a sharp weapon we bore his eye out,
> his lone huge eye lying deep in his savage forehead
> like an Argive shield or the lamp of Phoebus.

Here too the round white Argive shield is associated with a baleful single eye, and the shining disk in the sky – the sun apparently. I wish it were the moon.[10]

The barely human Tydeus has a shield device which, on the surface at least, is not horrible at all. As the champions grow more human and less terrifying the shield devices grow more monstrous. The maiden-faced Parthenopaeus, who ends the sequence, carries the sphinx with a dead Theban in her claws. But also, as we have discovered, the tranquil beauty of Tydeus' shield masks the deadliest threat to the house of Laius. Similarly out of the girlish face of Parthenopaeus stare the eyes of the gorgon (line 537). This is still another expression of the ambiguity about what is really terrible, the confusion between what seems and what is, that haunts the house of Laius in this play.

The descriptions of the warriors with their shields express not only the Ares outside the gates which fails to break in, but also the Ares inside the house of Laius which is about to break out, and make itself known to Eteocles and Polyneices.

Polyneices, appealing to Dike and the ancestral gods of Thebes, is as much a contrast to the other attackers in appearance and behavior as Eteocles himself. But he proclaims his willingness to kill his brother, and Amphiaraus makes it plain that his assault on the city is nothing less than an assault on the mother who gave him life (line 584). The gap between being and seeming is not hard to see in Polyneices.

The hatred and violence masked by Eteocles' reverent and controlled manner breaks out only at the end of his response to the messenger's description of Polyneices and his shield (lines 672-5).

> I shall go and face him in battle *myself*. Who has *more right*? ruler to ruler, brother to brother, *hater* to *hater* I shall stand.

He then immediately demands his greaves. Schadewaldt has suggested that this is the signal for bringing his battle equipment, which he then assumes in the traditional order – greaves, breastplate, sword, helmet, shield, and spear.[11] This arming on stage is a visual enactment of the hardening of Eteocles' deadly purpose. With the assumption of each item in the traditional list his opposition to the chorus grows more frenzied, until at last he stands before them fully armed and ready to kill. As Schadewaldt points out, there are numerous precedents in other plays of Aeschylus for such concretizations and externalizations of inner experience. To Schadewaldt's already compelling list of arguments for this proposal I would like to add the following, which help to round out the interpretation of the play which I have been presenting here.

When Eteocles proclaims his hatred and calls for his greaves the chorus beg him not to become 'like in passion (*orgē*) to him who is most evilly spoken of (or evilly named?, lines 677–8),' that is, Polyneices. In the exchange with the chorus which follows he reveals for the first time the animal passions which make him in fact *orgēn homoios*, equal in passion, to his brother who is preparing to assault the mother city. I share Lesky's belief that this is the only way to understand Eteocles' assent to the chorus's description of him as mad (line 686), carried away by *atē* (line 687), full of *kakos erōs* evil love (line 688) and 'fierce biting desire' (line 692).[12]

If, as this indicates, Eteocles becomes in this scene Polyneices' equal in passion, is it not appropriate, almost necessary, that he should at the same time assume arms which will be the counterpart of the arms of Polyneices? At the end of the scene the contrast of the first part of the

play should be eliminated. He should be the mirror image of his brother – transformed from what he *seems* to what he *is*, from a man in control of himself and his people to a man possessed by the fury. If he is not, the absolute equality of rights and wrongs so often proclaimed in the last two songs of the chorus has little real connection with the action.

As Schadewaldt points out, the six well defined sections of the exchange between Eteocles and the chorus correspond in number to the six items of equipment that are called for in a traditional arming scene. I believe that the moments when Eteocles receives the two last, and most significant, items are also indicated verbally in the text.

The chorus urge Eteocles not to provoke the fury while she still seethes (*eti zei* line 708). It is the metaphor of the storm. Eteocles replies (lines 709-11), 'The curses of Oedipus have boiled up' (*exezesen*. I cannot find one English root to cover the implications of *zeō* and *ekzeō*). 'All too true were the visions of appearances in sleep, which apportioned the wealth of my father.' He sees this as the moment when the fury fulfills the curse. At this point the traditional order of arming demands that he be handed his shield. And if he is handed a shield, can the shield device be hidden or absent? I think not. So what will it be? What, if not the fury whom he is saluting as he takes the shield in hand? It is under her sign that he launches the war when he hears the first report of the oath taking and lot drawing in the prologue (lines 69-72). To the defense of Thebes he summons not only Zeus, Earth, and the gods of the city, but also (line 70) 'the *overwhelming* Curse and Fury of my father.'

The fury is properly invoked here. As the enforcer of the Dike of kindred she should protect the city against the assault of the impious son, Polyneices. But in calling her up to defend the city Eteocles calls her up to destroy himself. It is equally her obligation to punish Eteocles' crime against the source of life (whatever it was that makes him, equally with Polyneices, one who 'has taken by force his father's house,' lines 877-8, must have been presented in the preceding play). It is as *megasthenēs*, overwhelming, that Eteocles and Polyneices come to know her in the *kommos* (line 988). Eteocles, who summons her as protector, must also come to know her as destroyer. She has here the same terrible duality which characterizes everything female throughout the play.

The fury is certainly the proper counterpart to Dike on the shield of Polyneices. To appeal to Dike is to appeal to the fury that will enforce Dike – his own Dike, but also his brother's Dike, for they are equal in this as in everything else. Each brother is subject to the law he invokes against the other. This is the inescapable knowledge which the shields express.

It is with the receiving of the spear that the transformation of Eteocles from seeming to being is complete. I would put this action not where Schadewaldt puts it at the last line of the scene, but five lines earlier when Eteocles, rejecting the chorus's plea that he not go to the seventh gate says (line 715), 'Now that I am *whetted* you will not blunt me with speech'. The moment in which he imagines himself as a spear is the right moment for him to take the spear in hand. In the *kommos* 'god's sayings (the Delphic prophecy to Laius) are not blunted' (line 844) and Ares, 'the equal apportioner of wealth, the fulfiller of the father's curse' (lines 944-6), 'the stranger from over the sea' (lines 941-2) is called 'whetted steel' (line 944). With the assuming of the spear Eteocles too becomes 'whetted steel,' in fact the *xenos Chalybos Skythōn apoikos*, Ares, the bitter but just resolver of strife, the visible expression of the sharp point of Apollo's word to Laius. There is one more step in his transformation. Rejecting the last appeal of the chorus he says (line 717), 'A man in *full armor* must not assent to this word'. He is now the exact counterpart of the *anēr teuchēstēs* on the shield of Polyneices (line 644), no longer a man, but from head to foot the noisy, glaring, rending metal that will make the absolutely just division of the wealth of Oedipus.

below); his interpretation corresponds in many cases with that developed here and in *Hermes* 66 (1931), 190.

6. *Sitzb. Akad. Wien. Phil. hist. Kl.* 221.3 (1943).

7. Op. cit. 101.

8. This paper was delivered to the Joint Meeting of Greek and Roman Societies at Cambridge in August 1965. The author wishes to thank Prof. R. P. Winnington-Ingram and Mr F. H. Sandbach most warmly for their help with the English of the text.

Helen H. Bacon: The Shield of Eteocles (pp. 24–33)

1. The following authors, not referred to elsewhere in the text or notes, have greatly helped me, in some cases to conclusions quite different from theirs – E. Fraenkel, 'Die sieben Redepaare im Thebanerdrama des Aeschylus', *Sitz. Bay. Akad. phil.-hist. Klasse* (1957, 3). B. Snell, 'Aischylos und das Handeln im Drama', *Philologus*, suppl. 20 (1928), 1–64. F. Solmsen, 'The Erinys in Aischylos' *Septem*' *Trans. Amer. Philol. Ass.* 68 (1937), 197–211, and *Hesiod and Aeschylus* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1949). E. Wolf, 'Die Entscheidung des Eteokles in den *Sieben gegen Theben*', *Harv. Stud. Class. Philol.* 63 (1958), 89–95.

The translations are mine. I regret the necessity of making them so ruthlessly literal.

Since lines 1004 to the end do not enter into my discussion the question of their authenticity is of no direct importance for this paper. I am strongly swayed by the arguments of H. Lloyd-Jones ('The End of the *Seven Against Thebes*', *Class. Quart.* n.s. 9 (1959), 80–115) to regard them as authentic. Their discontinuity in tone and imagery with the rest of the play is perhaps to be explained by the fact that they are the conclusion not of this play alone, but of the whole trilogy.

2. H. Patzer, 'Die Dramatische Handlung der *Sieben gegen Theben*', *Harv. Stud. Class. Philol.* 63 (1958), 97–119.

3. A. Lesky, 'Eteokles in dem Sieben gegen Theben', *Wiener Studien*, 73 (1960), 5–17. B. Otis, 'The Unity of *Seven Against Thebes*' (*Gk. Rom. Byz. Stud.* 3 (1960), 153–74) came to my attention when this essay had already gone to the printer. My analysis parallels his in making Eteocles' achievement of insight into his relation to the Erinyes the unifying fact of the play. I reach very different conclusions about what it is that Eteocles comes to understand.

4. Eteocles and Polyneices are referred to as *philoi* (i.e. related by blood) to each other, just as Laius, whom Oedipus met only as he murdered him, is included among those who are *philtatoi* in *O.T.* (line 366).

5. H. Lloyd-Jones (op. cit. p. 85 n.3) makes a strong case against the view of Wilamowitz and others that Aeschylus presents the Argives as barbarians who do not even speak Greek. See also H. Bacon, *Barbarians in Greek Tragedy* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1961), 17.

6. This is one of the commonest ways of warding off an evil spell (see Kuhnert in Pauly-Wissowa s.v. *fascinum*). For each Argive (except Amphiaraus, who casts no spell) Eteocles has a word or a symbol, or both, whose purpose is just this (see below for the magic and counter-magic employed by the brothers against each other). From this we must conclude that Eteocles relies on magic no less than the attackers do. T. Rosenmeyer in his chapter on *Seven* (*The Masks of Tragedy* (University of Texas Press, Austin, 1963), 5–48) is the first critic to discuss the pervasive importance of the shields and the fear magic associated with them. He argues, however, that there is no appeal to magic in the shield device of Polyneices or the speeches in which Eteocles calls up the Theban champions. His interpretation of the play depends to a large extent on the implications of the contrast he finds here.

7. R. Lattimore (*The Poetry of Greek Tragedy* (The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1958), 39–45) argues that the fact that Thebes has seven gates is a crucial element in the fate of Eteocles. If so, it is likely that the symmetries suggested verbally were also indicated in the staging. As the seven gates have seven attackers with seven shield devices we can expect to *see* on stage the seven defenders with their seven shields, each one claiming the protection of one of the seven gods whose statues stand on the stage.

8. See G. H. Chase, 'The Shield Devices of the Greeks', *Harv. Stud. Class. Philol.* 13 (1902), 61–127.

9. Though this, and related phrases, sometimes refer to the night rather than the moon (Aesch. *Pers.* 428 and Eur. *I.T.* 110, *Phoen.* 543), in context in this passage it can only refer to the moon. So also Pindar *Ol.* 3.20. For eyes as shield devices see Chase, ibid. 105.

10. In *Aeneid* 4.6 *Phoebea lampade* is definitely the sun.

11. W. Schadewaldt, 'Die Wappnung des Eteokles', *Eranion, Festschrift für H. Hommel* (*Tübingen*, 1961), 105–116.

12. Op. cit. 13.

S. M. Adams: Salamis Symphony: The Persae of Aeschylus (pp. 34–41)

1. This point Aeschylus, because his design so requires, leaves vague until the time for explanation comes; Herodotus naturally makes it perfectly clear, with his account of chains and proclamation.

2. The discarding of Atossa when her functions have been performed has often been noted; later drama would have required the projected meeting with her son.

3. Incidentally, if the question arises in their minds, this passage serves to inform the audience that the Persians know about *Apate* and *Ate* and so will be able to understand the lesson when it comes; the word *hybris* is withheld until Darius's final explanation.

4. The stasimon may thus, I think, be read with 93–100 in their manuscript position. With O. Müller's transposition of these verses to follow 114 (accepted by Smyth and Murray) the effect of the metaphor (87–90) is not lost. Foreboding emerges in the metaphor; the old men seek to overcome it by dwelling on Persia's might and valour and divine mission to wage wars; this leads to the thought of the Sea, and the foreboding reappears in the *double entendre* (112–14); then comes the *Apate* passage, which leads directly to foreboding unrestrained.

5. With 252 cf. 59–60.

6. The extraordinary expression 'they are mangled by the voiceless children of the deep' (577–8) is not arbitrary grotesquery: the Sea is undefilable; its own 'children' devour its offenders and prevent its pollution.

7. To the standard Hellenic milk, water, honey, and wine are added, for foreign flavour, olives and garlands of flowers. The stilted language in which all these are described appears to be the language of ritual, based on the principle that you make a thing more potent if you describe it in magnifying terms.

8. It seems to have been very well known. In the *Agamemnon*, when Aeschylus is setting forth the *hybris* shown by the Greeks in captured Troy, he drives home the point by repeating, almost exactly, a verse from it: *Ag.* 527 = *Pers.* 811.