6. NARRATIVE

<ΑΣΤΥΟΧΗ> οἰοῖ οἰ[οῖ].
διπλοῦς ἀνεστέναξ[α]φᾳ̣[ ]
<ΧΟΡΟΣ> πατρὸ̣[ς]
ραν· ἐπ[ ]μος ἴδε τέκνων.
<ΑΣ.> τρίτην δ' ἐπ' ἐμ̣[ὲ] <ΧΟ.> κ̣[α]ὶ γὰρ οὖν
προσάγ̣[α]γ' ὠδι̣[ ] ι̣γ̣[ ]υ̣ διαίνεις·
ἐπεὶ κτησίων φρενῶν ἐξέδυς.
<ΑΣ.> ὦ δαῖμον ὦ δύσδαιμον, ὦ κείρας [ἐ]μέ.
<ΧΟ.> ἀγχοῦ προσεῖπας· οὐ γὰρ ἐκτὸς ἑστὼς
σύρει δὴ φύρδαν.
<ΑΣ.> ἐπισπάσει δίκᾳ με.
<ΧΟ.> δίκᾳ ναί.
<ΑΣ.> ἀλλ' ὡς τάχιστ' ἄριστα.
<ΧΟ.> ἐέ·
τί φήσομεν, τί λέξομεν;
<ΑΣ.> τίς οὐχὶ τοὐμὸν ἐν δίκῃ βαλεῖ κάρα;
<ΧΟ.> δαίμων ἔκειρεν ἐν δίκᾳ σε δαίμων.
<ΑΣ.> ἦ κἀμβεβᾶσι το<ῖ>ν [ν]εκρο<ῖ>ν πρὸς τῷ κα[κ]ῷ
γέλωτ' ἔχο̣ντες α[ ]ο̣ν Ἀργεῖοι βίᾳ;
<ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ> οὐκ ἐς τοσοῦτον ἦλθον ὥστ' ἐπεγχαν[ε]ῖν,
ἐπεὶ πάλαισμα κοιν[ὸ]ν ἠγωνι[σ]μέν[ο]ι̣
ἔκειν[τ]ο νεκροὶ τυ̣[τ]θὸν ἀλλήλ̣ῳ̣ν ἄπ̣ο,
ὁ μὲν δ[ ]κητ̣ός, ὁ δὲ [τὸ] πᾶν [ ] [ ]ο̣ς
]υμην Ἀχαι̣ [ ]οση[ ]ν̣ος·
ὡς δ' ἔκ τε πλ̣ [ ]ι̣κο[ ]οτᾳ̣[ ]
[scraps of nine lines]
ἀγ]κυρῶν ἔτι̣
]κ̣[ ] ερ[ἔ]ρρηξεν νότος."
το]ιαῦτα πολλῶ[ν]ν ἐρρ[ό]θει στόμα·
π]ολλὴ δὲ σινδών, [πολ]λὰ δ' Ἰστρ[ι]ανίδων
ὕφη γυναικῶν ἀνδ[ρὸ]ς ἐρριπτ[ά]ζετο
νεκρῷ διδόντες ο[ὐδ]ὲν ὠφελ[ο]υμένῳ.
ὁ δ' ἀμφὶ πλευραῖς καὶ σφαγαῖσι [κ]είμενος,
πατ[ὴρ] μὲν οὔ, πατρῷα δ' ἐξαυδ[ῶ]ν ἔπη,
Πρία[μος] ἔκλαιε τὸν τέκνων ὁμ[αί]μονα,
τὸν [π]ο̣ι̣δ̣ᾳ̣ καὶ γέροντα καὶ νεαν[ί]αν,
τὸν οὔτε Μυσὸν οὔτε Τηλέφου̣ [κα]λ̣ῶν,
ἀλλ' ὡς φυτεύσας αὐτὸς ἐκκαλούμ[εν]ος·
"οἴμοι, τέκνον, πρ[ο]ύδωκά σ' ἐσχάτη[ν ἔ]χων
Φρυξὶν μεγίστην <τ'> ἐλπίδων σωτη[ρία]ν.
χρόνον ξενωθεὶς οὐ μακρὸν π[ολ]λῶν κακῶν
μνήμην παρέξεις τοῖς̣ [ ]οις ἀεί,

https://doi.org/10.1017/S053324511800007X Published online by Cambridge University Press

ὅσ' οὔτε Μέμν[ω]ν οὔτε Σα[ρπηδών ποτε 80
[scraps of five lines]"

[Astyoche]: *Oioi, oioi.*
A twofold...I lament...
[Chorus]: ...of his father...saw...of the children.
[Astyoche]: Against me, the third. [Chorus] Yes indeed,
it brought...you are wetting.
For you have departed from the mind that you possess.
[Astyoche]: O *daimon*, o evil *daimon*, o creature that has destroyed me!
[Chorus]: You speak of something nearby; for it is not standing at a distance as it drags you away in confusion.
[Astyoche]: It will drag me off, with justice!
[Chorus]: Yes, with justice!
[Astyoche]: But fastest is best.
[Chorus]: *Eë.* What shall we speak? What shall we say?
[Astyoche]: Who will strike off my head, with justice?
[Chorus]: The *daimon*, *daimon* has destroyed you, with justice.
[Astyoche]: Did the Argives also trample upon the corpses with violence, mocking them...in addition to the evil?
[Messenger]: They did not go so far as to mock them, since after enduring their shared struggle the corpses lay a little apart from each other, one of them..., the other completely...the Achaeans...As out...[*long gap*] '...still of anchors...the south wind shattered.' Such things the...-mouths of many poured forth. Much linen, many weavings belonging to Istrian women were cast at the man as they made their offerings to a corpse who drew no benefit. But he, lying upon his mangled body, though not his father, but speaking fatherly words, even Priam, lamented his sons' kinsman, at once boy, elder, and young man, calling him not a Mysian nor the son of Telephus, but invoking him as if he himself had fathered him: 'Alas, child, I betrayed you, having you as the last and greatest salvation of the hopes of the Phrygians. Though not our guest for long, you will leave a memory of many sorrows for...for all time, such that neither Memnon not Sarpedon ever...'

(*Eurypylus* fr. 210.30–80 *TrGF*)[1]

The mangled second-century papyrus which preserves this passage from Sophocles' *Eurypylus* is powerful testimony to an extraordinarily passionate scene. Before the passage above comes the opening of a messenger speech, little of which is preserved. It seems to describe the death of Eurypylus, who brought his soldiers to Troy to support Priam, but was slain by Achilles' son Neoptolemus. Eurypylus' father was

[1] Compare Diggle 1998: 37–9; some of whose textual choices I follow.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S053324511800007X Published online by Cambridge University Press

Telephus (mentioned, by a virtually certain restoration, at line 26), king of the Mysians, who was wounded by Achilles' spear when the Greeks mistakenly landed in his country on the way to Troy, and was later cured by the same weapon; his mother was Astyoche, Priam's sister. After the account of Eurypylus' death follows an emotional exchange in song between two speakers; their names are not preserved, but *paragraphoi* indicate speaker change. One speaker suffers a particularly intense reaction to Eurypylus' death, such as would suit only his mother, Astyoche. The other speaker comments on the character's grief, fulfilling the chorus's role. After this lyric exchange or *kommos*, Astyoche, now speaking, asks the Messenger about the treatment of her son's body and (another likely restoration) of a companion of his, perhaps Antenor's son Helicaon.[2] The 'impassioned rhetoric' of the Messenger's reply is clear;[3] in particular, his account of the lamentation over Eurypylus' corpse, especially Priam's, rises to the fraught occasion.

This myth is allusively recounted in the *Odyssey*, where Eurypylus, son of Telephus and the most handsome warrior after Memnon, is said to have been killed at Troy by Neoptolemus, 'because of the gifts given to a woman'.[4] The duel also featured in the *Little Iliad*, and is depicted on a late sixth-century vase.[5] The fifth-century mythographer Acusilaus of Argos gives a fuller account, which seems to underlie that of the *Odyssey*: Astyoche was bribed by Priam through the gift of a golden vine to send her son into conflict.[6] A later source states that Astyoche needed to be bribed because Telephus, in return for being healed, had promised Achilles that neither he nor his offspring would take up arms against him.[7]

The Sophoclean plot seems to have employed the same story as Acusilaus, given Astyoche's lament that she is being punished 'justly' (40), a view endorsed by the chorus (41, 46). The 'justice' in question involves her punishment for having sent her son to war (or permitted him to go) against her better judgement (perhaps because he was so young that his survival was seriously in doubt), or contrary to some prior agreement (as in the version recorded by the scholia to Juvenal), or in defiance of some prophecy that Eurypylus would die if

[2] Lloyd-Jones 1992 = 2005: 106–9.
[3] Lloyd-Jones 1994: 135 = 2005: 121.
[4] γυναίων εἵνεκα δώρων; Hom. *Od.* 11.519–22.
[5] Arg. 3 (cf. fr. 7) *GEF*; *LIMC* Eurypylos no. 1.
[6] Acusilaus fr. 40 *EGM*.
[7] Σ Juvenal 6.655; R. Fowler 2013: 542–3; and cf. Sommerstein 2010: 266.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S053324511800007X Published online by Cambridge University Press

he joined the conflict (as in the myth of Eriphyle, who was bribed by Adrastus with a golden necklace to send her husband Amphiaraus on the expedition against Thebes, even though she knew from Amphiaraus' own prophecies that he would die as a result).[8] There must have been some good reason for Astyoche to ensure that her son did not go to Troy, a reason which she was prepared to overlook thanks to the bribe; the latter two scenarios, in which Astyoche's action is immoral rather than simply thoughtless, cohere better with the evidence. As a result, Eurypylus' death is more than the random slaying of a brave warrior; it is a truly tragic tale in which Astyoche's own choices and moral failings lead to the destruction of her family.

The lyric exchange between Astyoche and the chorus recalls a distinctive passage in Aeschylus' *Persians*, in which a Messenger arrives relatively early to announce the Persian army's annihilation, prompting a short dialogue between the main female character, the Persian Queen, who speaks, and the chorus, who sing (246–89); replying to the Queen's questions, the Messenger then narrates the calamity in detail. But the bisection of the Messenger's narrative in *Eurypylus* is more extraordinary. Here both interrupters, Astyoche and the chorus, sing at least part of their piece, ensuring a more powerful aural impact and more directly emotional tone; and the lengthy interruption takes place not merely after the initial announcement of the news, but some way through the narrative – indeed, immediately after it has reached the death of Eurypylus, intensifying an already painful moment.

It has been suggested that the scene in *Eurypylus*, like that of *Persians*, occurred at an early stage, and that, as in Sophocles' *Ajax*, some problem with the burial of Eurypylus allowed the continuation of forward momentum even after the title character's death.[9] More recently, however, help in placing this narrative has come from an unlikely source. Analysis of the pattern of wormhole distribution can allow us to determine the rough position of a substantial papyrus fragment from a roll: for as the worms burrow their way in, the holes that they leave recur at quite a gap at the start of the text, but towards its end, at the centre of

[8] For the Eriphyle myth see Davies and Finglass 2014: 344–8. The same phrase, γυναίων εἵνεκα δώρων, is used in the *Odyssey* for the fatal bribes given both to Eriphyle and to Astyoche (n. 4 above and, a very valuable discussion of many aspects of the drama *Od.* 15.247); see Lyons 2012: 69–70.

[9] Ozbek 2006, a valuable discussion of the whole play.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S053324511800007X Published online by Cambridge University Press

the roll where the text is most tightly wrapped, there will be a relatively small distance between the holes. So through a paradox of which Sophocles himself would have been proud, the decay of the object has ensured the preservation of key details about its original state. Painstaking calculations have allowed Giulio Iovine to conclude that the fragment above 'was very close to the end of the roll (only a few columns may have followed), and that the facts it recounts might have constituted the final episode of the tragedy'.[10] In other words, the Messenger's plangent words come not in the middle but at the end of the play, as a climax. And since *Eurypylus* may have been the concluding play in a connected Sophoclean trilogy on the Telephus myth (p. 4 above), this speech might even have formed the culmination of a connected series of dramas, with all kinds of poetic associations that cannot now be traced.

This new discovery aligns the play not so much with Aeschylus' *Persians*, but with Sophocles' *Antigone*, which also concludes with a central character, in that case Creon, learning via a messenger that his son Haemon has died as a result of Creon's own foolishness. Creon is at least permitted to hold his son's body, coming on as he does with Haemon's corpse in his arms; whether the dead Eurypylus is returned to Astyoche at the end of this drama remains unknown.[11] There is certainly an emphasis on Eurypylus' relationship with his parents. The fragmentary opening above, with the phrases 'twofold' and 'of his father' (31–2), will refer to how Eurypylus was slain by the same spear which had wounded his father (a weapon already mentioned by the Messenger, with likely or possible references at lines 11, 19, 20, 25, 29); Astyoche then speaks of herself as a 'third (*sc.* victim of the same weapon)' (34). The contrast between the father's fate, in which the wound was temporary and later cured, and the son's, which was all too permanent, is poignant, as is the idea that the same weapon has a third victim whom it never even touched, the wife and mother of the father and son. Yet Astyoche is not simply a victim – she herself in effect gave the spear its second opportunity to strike.

A parent causing the death of a child, with whatever degree of moral culpability, recurs in other tragedies; Euripides' *Ino* is perhaps the most

[10] Iovine 2016: 324.

[11] A further fragment (fr. 212) from after the narration above (Iovine 2016: 325–6) seems to refer to Eurypylus' burial in his father's tomb, though it is not clear whether or not this statement (which must be prospective) is spoken in the presence of Eurypylus' body.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S053324511800007X Published online by Cambridge University Press

striking instance, with fully six children falling through parental action (p. 33 above). Sophocles individualizes the theme through the unusual splitting up of the Messenger's narrative by the sung responses of mother and chorus, and via the particular content of the second half of the speech, which emphasizes Priam's reaction to his nephew's death.[12] Repeatedly he is described as if he were Eurypylus' true father (71, 74–5), an ironic designation given his complicity in his death. That complicity seems to be the subject of another fragment, from after the passage above, in which Astyoche refers to Priam (perhaps cursing him?) and sings of him 'persuading' her 'to commit a senseless act'.[13] Yet Priam's intense sorrow will have mitigated any negative audience reaction; moreover, in persuading Astyoche to allow Eurypylus to come to Troy, he was seeking no personal gain, but the safety of his people. Astyoche, by contrast, commits a far worse offence: accepting a bribe to send her son to a fatal conflict. Priam's fatherly emotion thus primarily contrasts with Astyoche's fatal lack of maternal care – her current emotion, striking though it is, comes too late. The Messenger's speech, while stimulating feelings in its own right, thus allows the audience to explore one of the play's key themes by comparing the presentation of Priam within the narrative with the woman who forms the narrative's primary audience. The recent discovery that the speech came at the end suggests that this culminating narrative and the reaction to it will have been of decisive importance for the audience's reaction to Eurypylus' mother, and thus to the play as a whole.

Our rare good fortune in being able to perceive Sophocles' innovative handling of the *Eurypylus* messenger speech is counterpoised by the crushing loss of the enormous majority of these Sophoclean narratives. The number has recently been augmented by the new *Tereus* fragment, which reveals that a speech by the title character's wife, Procne, about the sorrows of marriage, part of which was already known from a quotation fragment, is followed by the entrance of a shepherd, who after a brief portion of stichomythia begins (in lieu of a messenger) to deliver a narrative; that narrative will probably cause Procne great grief, and put into a new, appalling context the general remarks about marriage which she had only just been uttering (pp. 73–7 below). Again, it is not just the narrative itself but its place and purpose

[12] The importance of Priam's status as Eurypylus' uncle, and in particular as his mother's brother, is well brought out by Cowan 2019.

[13] Fr. 211; Iovine 2016: 325–6.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S053324511800007X Published online by Cambridge University Press

which distinguish Sophocles' handling of the form, here casting an altogether different light on remarks made by the main character before the messenger had come on stage.

The topic of messenger speeches in Sophocles may not have attracted its own monograph, as Euripidean messenger speeches have in the form of Irene de Jong's *Narrative in Drama. The Art of the Euripidean Messenger-Speech* (1991), but they have nevertheless received scholarly interest, sometimes in the context of monographs devoted to such speeches in tragedy as a whole.[14] De Jong herself has produced several papers on Sophoclean narrative, as has Christina Kraus on storytelling in *Trachiniae*;[15] the application by De Jong and others of narratological analysis to the plays of Sophocles has been well documented by Andreas Markantonatos, who himself has produced an account of *Oedipus at Colonus* that focuses on the role of narrative, particular on how Oedipus exerts control over events by means of his retelling of events from the past.[16]

Most messengers are not attempting to control events with their narratives; nameless figures of no interest in themselves, they aim to give an account of what they have experienced, delineating the extent of their familiarity with events to ensure as accurate and objective a report as possible. An exception is the Paedagogus' narrative of the death of Orestes in *Electra*, perhaps the best-known and most striking messenger speech in Sophocles.[17] Although the Paedagogus is not named, we have met him before, in the play's prologue, where he urges Orestes to begin his plan of vengeance. Orestes tells him to announce to the royal household Orestes' death in a chariot race at the Pythian games (47–50); the Paedagogus turns a four-line instruction into a speech of over eighty (680–763), whose vivid description of the contest (the most detailed such account which has survived from antiquity, and thus of historical as well as literary significance) is all the more powerful because the audience knows that it is founded on a lie. Just as significant as the narrative itself, in which Orestes seems certain of victory before dashing his chariot against the turning-post (pp. 71–2 below), is the reaction which the Paedagogus' initial announcement provokes in the women who hear it:

Πα. τέθνηκ' Ὀρέστης· ἐν βραχεῖ ξυνθεὶς λέγω.
Ηλ. οἳ 'γὼ τάλαιν', ὄλωλα τῆδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ.
Κλ. τί φῄς, τί φῄς, ὦ ξεῖνε; μὴ ταύτης κλύε. 675

[14] Goward 1999; J. Barrett 2002; also Gould 2001: 319–34.
[15] De Jong 2004, 2006, 2007a, 2007b; Kraus 1991.
[16] Markantonatos 2002, 2012b.
[17] Marshall 2006.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S053324511800007X Published online by Cambridge University Press

Πα. θανόντ' Ὀρέστην νῦν τε καὶ πάλαι λέγω.
Ηλ. ἀπωλόμην δύστηνος, οὐδέν εἰμ' ἔτι.
Κλ. σὺ μὲν τὰ σαυτῆς πρᾶσσ', ἐμοὶ δὲ σύ, ξένε,
τἀληθὲς εἰπέ, τῷ τρόπῳ διόλλυται;

Paedagogus: Orestes is dead; I speak compressing my words in a brief speech.
Electra: Alas, I am wretched: I have perished on this day.
Clytemnestra: What are you saying, what are you saying, stranger? Don't listen to her.
Paedagogus: I say now, and before, that Orestes is dead.
Electra: I am destroyed, wretch that I am; I am no longer alive.
Clytemnestra: You deal with your own business, but you, stranger, tell me the truth: how did he die? (*Electra* 673–9)

The narrative that follows is contextualized by that fallout – the audience react not just in their own right (a necessarily complex reaction, given that they know that the narrative is fictional within the already fictional world of a play, and thus requiring a double suspension of disbelief), but are invited to imagine the effect which the Paedagogus' words have on Electra, who has been destroyed by the news, and on Clytemnestra, eager as she is to hear the message in full. Her words to Electra 'You deal with your own business', as if the death of her brother had nothing to do with her, are a candidate for the play's most heart-wrenching phrase. We can only imagine how the interaction was physically performed (did Electra collapse? Was Clytemnestra's triumph visible in her posture?) as the Paedagogus told his tale.

Sophoclean narratives can also be conveyed via dialogue, through stichomythia, or even in lyric. The narratives told by the chorus in the fourth stasimon of *Antigone*, for example, formally intended to console Antigone as she goes to her death by citing mythological examples of suffering, have an importance beyond that purpose: they evoke themes from the play as a whole, with significance for Creon as much as for Antigone, especially in view of the disaster about to enfold him.[18] Such narratives can embrace not just the mythological past but the immediate future, as in the chorus's description in *Ajax* of the likely behaviour of Ajax's mother once she hears of his death:

[18] Sourvinou-Inwood 1989b. See also Davies 2001 on mythological narrative in the stasimon of *Philoctetes*.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S053324511800007X Published online by Cambridge University Press

ἦ που παλαιᾷ μὲν ἔντροφος ἀμέρᾳ 622/3
λευκά τε γήρᾳ μάτηρ νιν ὅταν νοσοῦν–
τα φρενοβόρως ἀκούσῃ, 624/5 625/6
αἴλινον αἴλινον 627
οὐδ' οἰκτρᾶς γόον ὄρνιθος ἀηδοῦς
ἥσει δύσμορος, ἀλλ' ὀξυτόνους μὲν ᾠδὰς 629/30
θρηνήσει, χερόπληκτοι δ' 631
ἐν στέρνοισι πεσοῦνται
δοῦποι καὶ πολιᾶς ἄμυγμα χαίτας.

Perhaps his mother, living with her long years, and white with old age, when she hears that he suffers from a sickness which consumes his mind in her wretchedness she will utter no Linus-song, nor the lament of the piteous bird, the nightingale – no, she will sound forth piercing cries, and blows struck by the hand will fall on her chest, and there will be rending of her grey hair. (*Ajax* 622/3–633)

The chorus's picture of Ajax's mother stirs the audience thanks to its detail, specifying as they do the type of lamentation which she will utter and rejecting alternative possibilities as insufficient for the tragic occasion. The lavish scene-painting suits the plangent world of lyric; when Ajax himself describes the same woman's reaction to the same event, even beginning with the same particle combination, his words are briefer:

ἦ που τάλαινα, τήνδ' ὅταν κλύῃ φάτιν, 850
ἥσει μέγαν κωκυτὸν ἐν πάσῃ πόλῃ.

Wretched woman, I suppose that when she hears this message, she will raise a great lamentation in the whole city. (*Ajax* 850–1)

Ajax's stark expression might scarcely qualify as a narrative at all; but the picture that he draws is no less powerful than the chorus's, thanks to the archaic simplicity and brevity of the phrasing. It would not be in keeping with Ajax's character to describe the lamentation in detail; but it is entirely like him to show such imaginative sympathy, even now, as he appreciates the sorrow which his action will cause a woman far away whom he will never see again. Sophocles' returning to the same topic in such different ways across a brief expanse of the drama not only lends unity to the play, but demonstrates his extraordinary versatility, sophistication, and restraint as a teller of narratives.[19]

[19] Finglass 2012a.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S053324511800007X Published online by Cambridge University Press