

ORESTES THE *MANTIS*: AESCHYLUS, *CHOEPHOROΕ* 928–30*

ABSTRACT

This article challenges the speaker-distribution currently accepted at Aeschylus, Choephoroe 928–30. All recent editors, following Scaliger, give 928–9 to Clytemnestra and 930 to Orestes, but 929 is better assigned to Orestes on formal, linguistic, drama-internal and intertextual grounds: the reattribution contributes to the description of Orestes as prophet and executor of Clytemnestra's death. The first proponent of this arrangement, it is shown, was Franciscus Portus (1511–81).

Keywords: Aeschylus; Orestes; Clytemnestra; stichomythia; fear; prophetic dream; matricide; Sophocles; Electra; Aegisthus

ΚΛ. οἱ ᾿γώ, τεκούσα τόνδ' ὄφιν ἐθρεψάμην
ἧ κάρτα μάντις οὐξ ὄνειράτων φόβος.
ΟΡ. κάνες τὸν οὐ χρῆν· καὶ τὸ μὴ χρεῶν πάθε.

928–30 paragraphos habet M 929 Clytaemestrae cont. Scaliger 930 κάνες M: ἔκανε
Pauw τὸν Hermann: ὄν Pauw: γ' ὄν M: θ' ὄν dub. West

Thus Aeschylus, *Choephoroe* 928–30 in West's edition, with a simplified apparatus.¹

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¹ Works cited by author's name: F. Asulanus, *Aeschyli tragoediae sex* (Venice, 1518); F. Bamberger, *Aeschyli Choephoroi* (Göttingen, 1840); F. Blass, *Aischylos' Choephoron* (Halle, 1906); C.J. Blomfield, *Aeschyli Choephoroe* (Cambridge, 1824); F.H. Bothe, *Aeschyli tragoediae*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1831); A. Brown, *Aeschylus: Libation Bearers* (Liverpool, 2018); W. Canter, *Aeschyli Tragoediae VII* (Antwerp, 1580); J. Conington, *The Choephoroe of Aeschylus* (London, 1857); W. Dindorf, *Aeschyli tragoediae* (Leipzig, 1827); J. Franz, *Des Aeschylos Oresteia* (Leipzig, 1846); A.F. Garvie, *Aeschylus: Choephoroi* (Oxford, 1986); P. Groeneboom, *Aeschylus' Choephoroi* (Groningen, 1949); W.G. Headlam and G. Thomson, *The Oresteia of Aeschylus*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1966²); J.G.J. Hermann, *Aeschyli tragoediae*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1859²); R.H. Klausen, *Aeschyli quae supersunt*, vol. 1.2 (Gotha and Erfurt, 1835); A.H.J. Lafontaine, *Aischylos: Choephoron* (Halle, 1822); P. Mazon, *Éschyle*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1952⁶); G. Morani and M. Morani, *Tragedie e frammenti di Eschilo* (Torino, 1998²); G. Murray, *Aeschyli septem quae supersunt tragoediae* (Oxford, 1937); F. Nenci and L. Arata, *Eschilo: Le Coefore* (Bologna, 1999); D.L. Page, *Aeschyli septem quae supersunt tragoediae* (Oxford, 1972); F.A. Paley, *The Tragedies of Aeschylus* (London and New York, 1879⁴); J.C. de Pauw, *Aeschyli tragoediae superstites, Graeca in eas scholia, et deperditarum fragmenta*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1745); T.W. Peile, *The Choephoroe of Aeschylus* (London, 1840); R. Porson, *Aeschyli tragoediae* (London, 1806); F. Robortellus, *Aeschyli tragoediae septem* (Venice, 1552); C.G. Schütz, *Aeschyli tragoediae quae supersunt ac deperditarum fragmenta*, vol. 3: *Choëphorae, Eumenides, Supplices* (Halle, 1794); J.K. Schwenck, *Aeschyli Choephoroi* (Utrecht, 1819); A.H. Sommerstein, *Aeschylus*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 2008); T. Stanley, *Aeschyli tragoediae septem* [...] (London, 1663); T.G. Tucker, *The Choephoroi of Aeschylus* (Cambridge, 1901); A. Turnebus, *Αἰσχύλου Προμηθεὺς δεσμώτης, Ἐπὶ ἐπὶ Θήβας, Πέρσαι, Ἀγαμέμνων, Εὐμενίδες, Ἰκέτιδες* (Paris, 1552); M. Untersteiner, *Eschilo: Le Coefore* (Amsterdam, 2002); P. Victorius and H. Stephanus, *Aeschyli tragoediae VII* (Geneva, 1557); N. Wecklein, *Aeschyli fabulae* (Berlin, 1885); H. Weil, *Aeschyli quae supersunt tragoediae*, vol. 1.2 (Giessen, 1860); A. Wellauer, *Aeschyli tragoediae quae supersunt*, vol. 2 (Leipzig, 1824); M.L. West, *Aeschyli tragoediae cum incerti poetae Prometheus* (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1998²); U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Aeschyli tragoediae* (Berlin, 1914).

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The text is sound except for an orthographic issue at 930.² Our main concern here will be the distribution of 928–30. M marks speaker-changes for each line from 908 onwards, with *paragraphi* replacing *notae personarum* at 916–30.³ Sixteenth-century editors—Asulanus, Robortellus, Turnebus, Victorius, Canter—mechanically reproduce the alternation of speakers throughout the stichomythia, giving 928 and 930 to Clytemnestra and 929 to Orestes. Yet while 928 must be spoken by Clytemnestra, 930 doubtlessly belongs to Orestes. If so, 929 must either conclude a couplet spoken by Clytemnestra or initiate Orestes’ two-line reply. Both hypotheses imply incorrect addition of a *paragraphus*. This is not surprising, since M marks *notae personarum* and *paragraphi* sporadically and inconsistently.⁴ In this case the replacement of *notae personarum* with *paragraphi* coincides with transition from folium 145v to 146r: noting that a regular 1:1 sequence was in place from 908, the scribe carelessly added *paragraphi* up to the beginning of the choral ode in 931, failing to notice the two-line utterance at either 928–9 or 929–30.

Recent editors—Page, Garvie, West, Sommerstein and Brown—give 929 to Clytemnestra. Realizing that she reared a snake (928), Clytemnestra would end her part with a desolate observation: ‘A prophet indeed is the fear that comes from dreams.’⁵ The proposal was first advocated by Joseph Justus Scaliger in a marginal note to his copy of Petrus Victorius’s 1557 edition,⁶ and it was subsequently endorsed by many scholars, including Stanley, Pauw, Schütz, Porson, Schwenck, Lafontaine, Blomfield, Bothe, and Dindorf (though he later changed his mind).

An influential defence of Scaliger’s arrangement is offered by Garvie: ‘It is much more likely and effective that Clytemnestra herself should dwell upon the meaning of her dream.’ Garvie compares the Queen’s words at *Pers.* 517–19 οἱ γὰρ τάλαινα διαπεπραγμένον στρατοῦ, | ὧ νυκτὸς ὄψις ἐμφανὴς ἐνυπνίων, | ὥς κάρτα μοι σαφῶς ἐδήλωσας κακά and Eteocles’ utterance at *Sept.* 709–11 ἐξέξεσεν γὰρ Οἰδίπου κατεύγματα: | ἄγαν δ’ ἄληθεῖς ἐνυπνίων φαντασμάτων | ὅψεις, πατρώων χρημάτων δατήριοι. In both passages, the speakers eventually realize the truthfulness of their dreams while being in the company of sympathetic (though not directly involved)

² M’s unaugmented κόνες must be retained to preserve regular iambic scansion, alliterating tone and symmetry: for parallels see L. Bergson, ‘The omitted augment in the messengers’ speeches of Greek tragedy’, *Eranos* 51 (1953), 121–8, at 125, relying on J.G.J. Hermann, *Elementa doctrinae metricae* (Leipzig, 1816), 120–1 (though Hermann dismissed κόνες as a corruption of ἔκονες). But γ’ suspiciously adds agreement, and γ’ ὄν must be a corruption of τόν arising from confusion between Γ and Τ (thus Murray, West and Sommerstein, following a suggestion, once again rejected, by J.G.J. Hermann, *Euripidis Bacchae* [Leipzig, 1823], xx; on articles as relative pronouns in tragedy, see L. Bergson, ‘Episches in den ῥήσεις ἀγγελικαί’, *RhM* 102 [1959], 9–39, at 25). Other restorations, e.g. ἔκονες ὄν (*noluit* Pauw; Hermann) or ἔκονες τόν (*noluit* Hermann), unnecessarily introduce first-foot tribachs or anapaests, whereas θ’ ὄν (F. Heimsoeth, *Die Wiederherstellung der Dramen des Aeschylus* [Bonn, 1861], 93–4, West *in app.*) ruins the logical nexus ‘you killed ... and [i.e. hence] you suffer’.

³ Among M’s apographs, Mb reproduces M, Mc has *notae personarum* throughout 908–30, Ma has no speaker-changes.

⁴ See Garvie lvii–lviii; also H. Friis Johansen and E.W. Whittle, *Aeschylus: The Suppliants*, 3 vols. (Copenhagen, 1980), 1.66.

⁵ First-person markers are unnecessarily added by translators: see e.g. (emphasis added) ‘The dream that terrified me was truly prophetic indeed!’ (Sommerstein); ‘My fear from my dream was truly prophetic’ (C. Collard, *Aeschylus: Oresteia* [Oxford, 2002]); ‘Assuredly a prophet was the terror that came to me from my dreams’ (Garvie); ‘Era davvero indovina la paura che venne dai miei sogni’ (L. Battezzato in V. Di Benedetto et al., *Eschilo: Oresteia* [Milan, 1995]). Brown is an exception: ‘The fear that the dream aroused was a prophet indeed.’

⁶ Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek 756 D 21. Collations in C. Tedeschi, ‘Le fonti di Thomas Stanley, editore di Eschilo’, *Lexis* 28 (2010), 479–504, at 493 n. 66 (with references).

choruses. *Prima facie*, *Pers.* 517–19 comes close to *Cho.* 928–9: both dreamers are women, and *κάρτα* features in both passages.⁷ Yet the situations could not be more different. The Queen of *Persians* freely shares her dream with the Chorus (176–211), but the elders initially remain non-committal about its implications (οὐ σε βουλόμεσθα, μήτε, οὐτ’ ἄγαν φοβεῖν λόγοις | οὔτε θαρσύνειν, 215–16). Having urged prayers and libations (216–23), however, they tell the Queen that they are offering advice ‘as one who prophesies from the heart’ and ‘benevolently’ (ταῦτα θυμόμαντις ὧν σοι πρευμενῶς παρήνεσα, 224), in the belief that everything will turn out well (εὖ δὲ πανταχῇ τελεῖν σοι τῶνδε κρίνομεν πέρι, 225).⁸ Once the Messenger’s report is complete, and the Persian defeat fully disclosed, the Queen addresses her dream as a clear vision (ὄψις ἐμφανής, 518), emphasizing how clearly it foreshadowed disaster (ὥς κάρτα ... σαφῶς, 519; cf. 179), but this is only meant to rebuke the elders for their light-heartedness (ὕμεις δὲ φαύλως αὐτ’ ἄγαν ἐκρίνατε, 520). In the *Choephoroe* passage, 928 already sufficiently conveys Clytemnestra’s awareness and disappointment about her dream, as she calls Orestes ‘this snake’ (τόνδ’ ὄφιν). If Clytemnestra also utters 929, Garvie adds, she repeats roughly the same move she makes at 887, οἱ ’γώ, ξυνήκα τοῦτοπος ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων, reacting to the Servant’s ominous announcement τὸν ζῶντα καίνειν τοὺς τεθνηκότας λέγω (886). Yet a character who makes a certain move at one point need not repeat it in the same way at a later stage. At 886, Clytemnestra’s reply is prompted by the Servant’s warning, and her indirect answer marks her circumspection in talking to a subordinate. After 928, however, no further comment is necessary: Clytemnestra has already expressed full awareness of the situation. Nenci and Arata compare four epic monologues in which the hero realizes something he already thought, but none approaches *Cho.* 928–30, despite the similarity between ἡ κάρτα and Homeric ἡ μάλα.⁹

Realizing the truth may not be the actual import of 929. That the dream portends revenge against Agamemnon’s killers is clear to everyone.¹⁰ In the *parodos*, the Chorus describe the dream as a prophecy that caused terror within women’s quarters (τορὸς γὰρ ὀρθόθριξ φόβος | δόμων ὀνειρόμαντις, ἐξ ὕπνου κότον | πνέων, ἀωρόνυκτον ἀμβόαμα | μυχόθεν ἔλακε περὶ φόβω, | γυναικείοισιν ἐν δώμασιν βαρὺς πίτνων, 32–6),¹¹ the

⁷ M.P. Pattoni, ‘Il motivo del sogno profetico nelle *Coefore* di Eschilo: note testuali e interpretative’, *BollClass* 30 (2009), 3–23, at 17–18 objects that the parallel comes from a *rhêsis*, but the argument is not compelling.

⁸ See A.F. Garvie, *Aeschylus: Persae* (Oxford, 2009), ad loc.

⁹ See *Il.* 18.12 (Achilles infers the death of Patroclus, of which he is unsure, from the retreat of the Greeks to the ships), 21.55 (Achilles is surprised to see Lycaon, whom he once sold as a slave), 22.297 (Hector, no longer seeing Deiphobus beside him, realizes that the gods have arranged for his death, contrary to what he had expected after Achilles’ spear missed the mark), *Od.* 5.286 (back from the Ethiopians, Poseidon sees Odysseus approaching Scheria and soon realizes that the gods have changed their mind about his fate). Clytemnestra acquires no new awareness of Orestes’ intentions between 887 and 928.

¹⁰ On Clytemnestra’s dream, see Pattoni (n. 7), 3–16 (with references at 14 n. 20); C. Catenaccio, ‘Dream as image and action in Aeschylus’ *Oresteia*’, *GRBS* 51 (2011), 202–31, at 211–21. The motif was borrowed from Stesichorus fr. 180 Finglass τῷ δὲ δράκων ἐδόκησε μολεῖν κῆρα βεβροτωμένος ἄκρον | ἐκ δ’ ἄρα τοῦ βασιλεὺς Πλεισθενίδας ἐφάνη; see M. Davies and P.J. Finglass, *Stesichorus. The Poems* (Cambridge, 2014), 503–7; C. Brillante, ‘Il sogno di Clitennestra nell’*Orestea* di Stesicoro e nelle *Coefore* di Eschilo’, *QUCC* 119 (2018), 11–39.

¹¹ The text is disputed: M’s colometry here reproduced is basically sound except at 32, τορὸς γὰρ Φοῖβος ὀρθόθριξ, where Φοῖβος incorrectly lengthens the preceding γὰρ and may thus have been wrongly introduced under the influence of prophecy-related terminology. But simply removing it as suggested by Blass (followed by Murray, Page, West, Sommerstein: see K. Sier, *Die lyrischen Partien der Choephoren des Aischylos* [Stuttgart, 1988], 22–5) leaves ὀνειρόμαντις as a dubious subject for the sentence, and it also requires altering the colometry at 32–4 and changing trisyllabic παρήϊς to disyllabic παρής at 25. By contrast, Σ Aesch. *Cho.* 35c ἀναλακεῖν καὶ βοῆσαι τὴν Κλυταμῆστραν

meaning of which had already been decoded by shrewd interpreters (κριταὶ <δέ> τῶνδ' ὀνειράτων | θεόθεν ἔλακον ὑπέγγυοι | μέμφεσθαι τοὺς γὰς νέρθεν περιθύμως | τοῖς κτανοῦσί τ' ἐγκοτεῖν, 38–41). Since fear, recalled at 929, is what leads Clytemnestra to send offerings to Agamemnon's tomb (φοβεῖται δέ τις, 58–9; cf. 32), she must regard her dream as a bad omen from the outset. Though she remains silent about it until 928, her attitude in the rapid dialogue at 885–930 makes clear she fully understood its purport: she says deception will kill her (888), bares her breast as a last resort (896–8; cf. Hecuba at Hom. *Il.* 22.79–80, Callirhoe at Stesichorus, *Geryoneis* fr. 17 Finglass)¹² and speaks of her death as imminent (922), seeking ways to avoid slaughter (908, 910, 912). Late learning, if expressed at 929, would be otiose and anti-climactic.¹³ Nor would the self-exposing vulnerability implied by 929 sit well with Clytemnestra's embittered tone in 928.

The attribution of both 929 and 930 to Orestes was current before Page's OCT, yet the proposal has never been assigned to a specific scholar. The first editor known to print it is Rudolf Heinrich Klausen, who in his 1835 commentary so reacted to Scaliger's reassignment and Wellauer's proposed lacuna after 929 (see below).¹⁴ Wellauer himself had already considered and quickly rejected the hypothesis. Explicit defenders include Bamberger, Franz, Hermann, Conington, Paley, Wilamowitz,¹⁵ Tucker and Blass, whereas many others—Murray, Groeneboom, Untersteiner, Mazon, Headlam and Thomson, G. and M. Morani—endorse it tacitly.¹⁶ All these scholars were anticipated by Franciscus Portus (1511–81) in his *Commentaria in Aeschyli tragoedias*, preserved in MS Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek BPL 180.¹⁷ Portus's *Commentaria*, drafted between 1568 and 1573,¹⁸ have remained, together with his *marginalia* to Victorius's edition (MS Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek 756 D 22), largely unknown until their rediscovery by Monique Mund-Dopchie.¹⁹ West, the first scholar to collate Portus's material, is silent on this specific attribution.²⁰ Portus and Scaliger were colleagues in Geneva between 1572 and 1574: it would be attractive to regard their different solutions for *Cho.* 928–30 as part of their continuing intellectual exchanges.²¹

ἐποίησεν ὁ σαφὴς φόβος δι' ὀνειρῶν μαντευόμενος, the relevance of fear in the *parodos*, and the parallel phrase ὀρθόκερως φρίκη (Soph. fr. 875 *TrGF*) make Heath's ὀρθόθριζ φόβος for transmitted Φοῖβος ὀρθόθριζ highly persuasive (thus e.g. Garvie and Brown: Stanley's φοινίσις for φοίνισσ' at 24 fixes the response).

¹² See K.N. O'Neill, 'Aeschylus, Homer, and the serpent at the breast', *Phoenix* 52 (1998), 216–29; S. Castellaneta, *Il seno svelato ad misericordiam: esegesi e fortuna di un'immagine omerica* (Bari, 2013); Davies and Finglass (n. 10), 278–80.

¹³ Pace Garvie on 929, *Brillante* (n. 10), 28 n. 1.

¹⁴ Peile is the only editor to mention Klausen's name.

¹⁵ See also U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Aischylos Orestie. Zweites Stück: Das Opfer am Grabe* (Berlin, 1896), 236.

¹⁶ The present discussion qualifies and improves the defence offered by Pattoni (n. 7), 16–23.

¹⁷ See P. Tavonatti, 'Francisci Porti Cretensis Commentaria in Aeschyli Tragoedias' (Diss., Università di Trento, 2010), 606: 'expungendum nomen Clytaemnestrae; est (e)n(im) hoc totum Orestis' (f. 305v, lines 1849–50). Nothing relevant was found in the work of Auratus, the only scholar who could have anticipated Portus: see M. Tauber, *Jean Dorat editeur et interprete di Eschilo* (Amsterdam, 2005), which was kindly checked for me by Enrico Magnelli.

¹⁸ See Tavonatti (n. 17), 171.

¹⁹ M. Mund-Dopchie, *La survie d'Eschyle à la Renaissance: éditions, traductions, commentaires et imitations* (Louvain, 1984), 217–38.

²⁰ See M.L. West, *Studies in Aeschylus* (Stuttgart, 1990), 358–64. I leave for future investigation to determine whether Portus's proposal also occurred in Leiden UB 756 D 22 or in other copies of Victorius's editions (listed by West) known to bear traces of Portus's scholarly activity.

²¹ See Tavonatti (n. 17), 157–61.

Portus offered no supporting argument to his proposal. Later scholars, all ignorant of his work, partly filled the gap, but their arguments can be refined and complemented by the following considerations.

The first reason for giving 929–30 to Orestes relates to the form of the stichomythia. As Garvie (citing Seidensticker's work) admits,²² 'while a single-line stichomythia often begins or ends with two or three lines . . . , there is no certain parallel in Aeschylus for a two-line utterance at other points'.²³ To this, Garvie forcefully objects that 'such purely formal considerations should yield to the obvious advantages of Page's arrangement'. And yet, although M marks speaker-changes inaccurately, the erroneous addition of a *paragraphus* is more likely to have occurred at the end than at the penultimate turn of the sequence. In Garvie's view, Clytemnestra 'is given two lines because this is the climax of the stichomythia, and they are the last lines which she speaks in the play'. But the climax is as powerful as ever—and the formal arrangement better paralleled—if Orestes ends the stichomythia by which he kills his mother with a couplet of his own.²⁴ Moreover, if Clytemnestra's last words are indeed τόνδ' ὄφιν ἐθρεψάμην (928), she echoes her first words in the exchange, ἐγὼ σ' ἔθρεψα (908). 'That Orestes should finish with a single line', Garvie adds, 'is fully in keeping with the brisk tone which he adopts throughout the stichomythia'. Briskness, however, does not prevent Orestes from speaking two lines at 894–5 and five more at 903–7 (Clytemnestra speaks three at 896–8). 929, a lapidary nominal sentence redolent of ancient wisdom, is brisk indeed, and so is 930, recalling the harsh lesson that 'the doer must suffer': cf. 312–14 ἀντί δὲ πληγῆς φονίας φονίαν | πληγὴν τινέτω. δράσαντι παθεῖν, | τριγέρων μῦθος τάδε φωνεῖ, *Ag.* 1563–4 μῖμνει δὲ μῖμνοντος ἐν θρόνῳ Διὸς | παθεῖν τὸν ἔρξαντα, fr. 456 *TrGF* δράσαντι γάρ τοι καὶ παθεῖν ὀφείλεται, *Soph. El.* 582–3, *Eur. Or.* 195, 413, and also *Hes. fr.* 286 M–W.

The second argument favouring the assignment of 929 to Orestes concerns the pragmatic function of ἡ κάρτα. If occurring in dialogue, ἡ (or καὶ) κάρτα regularly features at turn-beginning, marking a speaker's immediate reaction: see *Aesch. Ag.* 1252, *Eum.* 213, *Theoroi* fr. 78a.3 *TrGF* (satyric), *Soph. Aj.* 527, 1359, *El.* 312, 1278, *OC* 65, 301, fr. 341.2 *TrGF*, *Eur. Alc.* 811, *Hipp.* 90 and also *Aesch. Sept.* 886–7 (lyric, bare κάρτα). Three further passages from *rhêseis* obey the same generalization:²⁵

- (1) *Aesch. Pers.* 519 (cited above). Here κάρτα occurs earliest in the Queen's speech, immediately after the vocative addressed to the dream (518).
- (2) *Aesch. Ag.* 590–2 καὶ τίς μ' ἐνίπτων εἶπε "φρυκτωρῶν διαί | πεισθεῖσα Τροίαν νῦν πεπορθῆσθαι δοκεῖς; | ἡ κάρτα πρὸς γυναικὸς αἶρεσθαι κέαρ." Reacting to the Chorus' criticism (268–80) and misbelief (475–87), Clytemnestra quotes a question-and-answer τις-speech, in which ἡ κάρτα aptly introduces the answer.

²² B. Seidensticker, 'Die Stichomythie', in W. Jens (ed.), *Die Bauformen der griechischen Tragödie* (Munich, 1971), 183–220, at 186. On the formal features of stichomythia see Hermann (n. 2), 718–20; A. Gross, 'Die Stichomythie in der griechischen Tragödie und Komödie: ihre Anwendung und ihr Ursprung' (Diss., Berlin, 1905); M. Catrambone, 'Tragic conversation: politeness strategies in Sophocles' patterned dialogues' (Diss., Scuola Normale Superiore, 2019), §§1.3–1.4.

²³ Similar observations in Klausen, Franz, Hermann, Conington, Paley, Blass. See also Pattoni (n. 7), 18 and n. 27. Discussion in M. Catrambone, 'Formal variation in the rapid dialogue of Greek tragedy', forthcoming.

²⁴ For 1:2 closure in Aeschylus' stichomythia, cf. *Aesch. Ag.* 1671–3, *Cho.* 180–2, *Eum.* 606–8, but the pattern is found ubiquitously in Sophocles and Euripides: see Catrambone (n. 23).

²⁵ The remaining instances from *rhêseis* are *Eur. Hipp.* 412 (ἡ κάρτα δόξει answers 411 ὅταν . . . δοκῇ) and [*Eur.*] *Rhes.* 476 (ἡ κάρτα answers the if-clause at 474–5).

- (3) Aesch. *Supp.* 450–4 δεῖ κάρτα θύειν καὶ πεσεῖν χρηστήρια | θεοῖσι πολλοῖς πολλά, πημονῆς ἄκη. | ἡ κάρτα νείκους τοῦδ' ἐγὼ παροίχομαι | θέλω δ' ἄιδρις μᾶλλον ἢ σοφὸς κακῶν | εἶναι· γένοιτο δ' εὖ παρὰ γνώμην ἐμήν. The passage comes from Pelasgus' dilemmatic speech (438–54): although war against Egypt is inevitable (438–40) and sacrifices are needed to avoid the shedding of kindred blood (450–1), Pelasgus temporarily shrinks from his responsibility ('I am indeed aside from this dispute' [452]), wishing to be 'ignorant rather than expert of evils' (453) and hoping that all may end well (454). Within his internalized dialogue, ἡ κάρτα ... παροίχομαι (452) answers and corrects 450–1, whereas κάρτα in 450 modifies δεῖ (or perhaps the subject clause θύειν καὶ πεσεῖν ... ἄκη), not θύειν alone.²⁶

Assuming 928–9 to be spoken by one and the same character, ἡ κάρτα at 929 provides no meaningful reaction to 928, since Clytemnestra's thought is already complete at 928. Hermann rightly noted the lack of connection between 928 and 929. Although the asyndeton might be acceptable, 928 and 929 are better suited as reactive moves to a previous speaker's assessment than as two parts of the same utterance. Borrowing terminology from Conversation Analysis,²⁷ 928 resembles the *Oh!*-comments typically occurring in responses to previous speakers' reports (note οἱ ᾧ),²⁸ whereas ἡ κάρτα makes 929 akin to the upgrade responses conveying full agreement with the prior speaker's assessment.²⁹ With no such framework in mind, Macleod astutely suggested that 929 might be an explanatory gloss on 928 and that 930 continues on 927 πατρὸς γὰρ αἴσα τόνδε σοῦρίζει μόρον rather than responding to 928.³⁰ But the hypothesis is superfluous, and 929 is unassailable: cf. Aesch. *Sept.* 808 οἱ ᾧ τάλαινα, μάντις εἰμι τῶν κακῶν, *Cho.* 777, *Soph. Ant.* 1059, *OT* 747, *Eur. Heracl.* 65, *Hipp.* 346, *Hec.* 743, all occurring turn-initially.

If Orestes utters 929–30, ἡ κάρτα (which would now occur turn-initially as in most parallels) aptly introduces a sarcastic retort: while 928 recalls Clytemnestra's dream,

²⁶ Friis Johansen and Whittle (n. 4), ad loc., followed by A.J. Bowen, *Aeschylus: Suppliant Women* (Oxford, 2013), ad loc. and Sommerstein, insist that 'κάρτα qualifies θύειν, not δεῖ', but their supporting generalization, 'in tragedy κάρτα sometimes follows the word it qualifies, but then this word is always an adj., never a verb', is linguistically dubious, and undermined by Hdt. 3.80.5 and *Ar. Av.* 341–2 anyways. As parallels suggest, κάρτα tends to be a wide-scope adverbial (D.M. Goldstein, *Classical Greek Syntax: Wackernagel's Law in Herodotus* [Leiden and Boston, 2015], 110 cites Hdt. 1.189.2). Therefore, unusual second position must be pragmatically motivated, e.g. by left-branch extraction of δεῖ. Alternatively, κάρτα must be the first element in the subject clause. Making κάρτα a modifier of θύειν oddly puts emphasis on the verb, restoring reduplication and chiasmus between κάρτα θύειν and πεσεῖν ... πολλά—a modest advantage compared to the chiasmus already formed by χρηστήρια ... πολλά and θεοῖσι πολλοῖς.

²⁷ See R. Clift, *Conversation Analysis* (Cambridge, 2016) for an introduction. For applications to Greek drama, see E. van Emde Boas, 'Analyzing Agamemnon: conversation analysis and particles in Greek tragic dialogue', *CPh* 112 (2017), 411–34; Catrambone (n. 22), *passim*.

²⁸ See J. Heritage, 'A change-of-state token and aspects of its sequential placement', in J.M. Atkinson and J. Heritage (edd.), *Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis* (Cambridge and Paris, 1984), 299–345, at 301. 20 out of 23 tragic examples of οἱ in iambic conversation occur turn-initially: of the remaining three, at Aesch. *Ag.* 1257 οἱ starts a new self-absorbed sentence by Cassandra after those introduced by turn-initial *παπῶ* (1256) and sentence-initial *ὅτοιοι* (1257), at *Eur. Hel.* 1223 it occurs after the one-word reply *ἄθαρπτον*, and at *Eur. Or.* 1020 it repeats the same speaker's turn-initial οἱ (1018).

²⁹ See A. Pomerantz, 'Agreeing and disagreeing with assessments: some features of preferred/dispreferred turn shapes', in J.M. Atkinson and J. Heritage (edd.), *Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis* (Cambridge and Paris, 1984), 57–101, at 65–7.

³⁰ C. Macleod *apud* O. Taplin, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus: The Dramatic Use of Exits and Entrances in Greek Tragedy* (Oxford, 1977), 356 n. 2.

929–30 reveal Orestes' clairvoyance as shown in the earlier exchange with the Chorus (514–52).³¹ The connection between 514–52 and 928–30 has been largely ignored, perhaps not accidentally, by scholars who assign 928–9 to Clytemnestra,³² but it is also surprisingly underexplored by scholars who give 929–30 to Orestes.³³ In this earlier scene, Orestes takes the initiative, asking information about Clytemnestra's offerings (514–16, 522). The Chorus of enslaved women, based on their autopsy (οἶδ', ὦ τέκνον, παρῇ γάρ, 523), connect Clytemnestra's surprising decision with her fearful nocturnal dream (ἐκ τ' ὄνειράτων | καὶ νυκτιπλάγκτων δειμάτων πεπαλμένη | χοῶς ἔπεμψε, 523–5). The snake is then introduced (526–34, a stichomythia), first its birth (τεκεῖν δράκοντ' ἔδοξεν, ὡς αὐτὴ λέγει, 527; ἐν σπαργάνοις παιδὸς ὀρμίσαι δίκην, 529), then Clytemnestra's blood-stained breastfeeding (αὐτὴ προσέσχε μαστὸν ἐν τῶνείρατι, 531; ὥστ' ἐν γάλακτι θρόμβον αἵματος σπάσαι, 533). Both the birth and the rearing of the snake are precisely recapitulated by Clytemnestra at 928, where note τεκοῦσα and ἐθρεψάμην.

On hearing the Chorus' piecemeal report, Orestes immediately expresses the wish that the dream might come true (οὔτοι μάταιον ἂν τόδ' ὄψανον πέλοι, 534). The Chorus' insistence on Clytemnestra's fear (535–9, especially 535 ἡ δ' ἐξ ὕπνου κέκλαγεν ἐπτομένη) spurs his extended interpretation of the dream (540–50):³⁴

Op.	ἀλλ' εὐχομαι γῇ τῇδε καὶ πατρός τάφω τοῦνειρον εἶναι τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ τελεσφόρον· κρίνω δέ τοι νιν ὥστε συγκόλλως ἔχειν. εἰ γὰρ τὸν αὐτὸν χώρον ἐκλιπὼν ἐμοὶ οὐφίς †επάσσασπαργανηπλείζετο† καὶ μαστὸν ἀμφέχασκ' ἐμὸν θρεπτήριον, θρόμβω δ' ἔμειξεν αἵματος φίλον γάλα, ἡ δ' ἀμφὶ ἀρβει τῷδ' ἐπώμωξεν πάθει, δεῖ τοι νιν, ὡς ἔθρεψεν ἔκπαγλον τέρας, θανεῖν βιαίως· ἐκδρακοντωθεὶς δ' ἐγὼ κτείνω νιν, ὡς τοῦνειρον ἐννέπει τόδε.	540 545 550
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ORESTES: But I pray to the earth beneath us and to my father's tomb that this dream may be fulfilled in me. See, I shall interpret it so that it fits exactly. If the snake came out of the same place as I did, and found a welcoming home in my swaddling-clothes, and opened its mouth around the breast that nurtured me, and made a clot of blood mingle with the loving milk, and she screamed out in fear at the experience—then, you can see, as she nursed this monstrous portent, so she is destined to die by violence. I become the serpent and kill her: so this dream declares.³⁵

Orestes meticulously picks up words from the Chorus' previous utterances. Yet despite his cautious rhetoric (note the three if-clauses at 543–7), he eagerly accepts the fulfilment of the dream: having been turned into a snake (549), he will become his mother's killer (550). Critical to the fulfilment of the dream is Clytemnestra's fearful reaction to the event (547), and Orestes is the only one to forge a direct link between his mother's dream, fear and death. The Chorus gladly appoint him as the lawful interpreter and fulfiller of the

³¹ On Orestes as interpreter of Clytemnestra's dream, see D.H. Roberts, 'Orestes as fulfillment, τερασκόπος, and τέρας in the *Oresteia*', *AJPh* 106 (1985), 283–97.

³² Garvie and Brown only refer to 32–3, which Clytemnestra did not hear.

³³ Cursory mentions are found in Wellauer, Klausen, Paley, Blass. Pattoni (n. 7), 12–16 offers a good discussion of 514–52 but does not specify its relation to 928–30.

³⁴ West's text (at 540 I print γῇ, not Γῇ).

³⁵ Transl. Sommerstein, adapted.

omen: τερασκόπον δὴ τῶνδ' σ' αἰροῦμαι πέρι, | γένοιτο δ' οὕτως (551–2). If Orestes speaks 929, as here suggested, he lays claim to this role even before Clytemnestra.

Wellauer (followed by Dindorf, Weil, Wecklein and Taplin) complains about the lack of connection between 929 and 930, assuming the omission of one line originally spoken by Clytemnestra.³⁶ But 930 provides an explanation to 929, and 929–30, taken together, reproduce the line of reasoning presented by Orestes to the Chorus. Clytemnestra's recognition of her son as the snake of the dream (928: cf. 543–6), Orestes suggests, indicates that her fear was indeed prophetic (929: cf. 547) and that, as a result, she must die to pay for the murder of Agamemnon (930: cf. 548–50). The proposed line distribution ensures an effective division of labour between the speakers and a compelling conclusion for the scene: Clytemnestra scornfully blames Orestes' snaky nature (928), whereas Orestes violently imposes his interpretation of the dream (929–30), clarifying the allusive explanation supplied by the seers (38–41). He both acts as *mantis* and carries out the corresponding *manteia*.

By sealing the stichomythia with a couplet, Orestes establishes rhetorical and physical dominance over Clytemnestra. The confrontation ends on a note of sheer hostility: 919 μὴ ἔλεγε τὸν πονοῦντ' ἔσω καθημένη, 923 σύ τοι σεαυτὴν, οὐκ ἐγώ, κατακτενεῖς, 927 πατρὸς γὰρ αἴσα τόνδε σοῦρίζει μορον. By a last-minute *coup de théâtre*, Clytemnestra is informed that Orestes has been plotting her death long since, and with the assistance of the Chorus, the sole eyewitness to Clytemnestra's dreadful nightmare. Clytemnestra's insult, 'This is the snake I bore and bred' (928),³⁷ is thus effectively rebutted, in accordance with the cry of Dike: 309–11 ἀντὶ μὲν ἐχθρᾶς γλώσσης ἐχθρὰ γλώσσα τελείσθω | τοῦφειλόμενον πρᾶσσουσα Δίκη μέγ' αὐτεῖ.

Orestes' 'mantic skills' resonate in Sophocles' *Electra* as part of the play's multiple allusions to Aeschylus' *Choephoroe*. The encounter between Orestes and Aegisthus (Soph. *El.* 1466–507) variously recalls the mother-son confrontation at Aesch. *Cho.* 885–930. Aegisthus and Orestes stand at the doorway, with Clytemnestra's corpse lying nearby. As soon as Aegisthus unveils the corpse (1475, 1476–7), Orestes asks him biting questions about his fear and imperfect knowledge (1475 τίνα φοβῆ; τίν' ἄγνοεῖς;), describing Aegisthus as one who has long been conversing with the dead: οὐ γὰρ αἰσθάνη πάλοι | ζῶν τοῖς θανοῦσιν οὐνεκ' ἀνταυδᾶς ἴσα; (1477–8). Orestes' jeer alludes to the Servant's ominous prediction τὸν ζῶντα καίειν τοὺς τεθνηκότας λέγων (*Cho.* 886). But it also subtly refers to Clytemnestra's εἶκος θρηνεῖν ζῶσα πρὸς τύμβον μάτην (*Cho.* 926). While in *Choephoroe* Orestes is the deaf tomb to which Clytemnestra futilely addresses her dirges, in *Electra* he is the unresponsive dead whom Aegisthus has been talking to all along, and from whom he will vainly beg for mercy. Moreover, like Clytemnestra, who, while still alive (ζῶσα, Aesch. *Cho.* 926), laments her death in advance, Aegisthus, though still alive (ζῶν, Soph. *El.* 1478), speaks as if he were dead.

Aegisthus' reply, οἴμοι, ξυνῆκα τοῦπος (Soph. *El.* 1479), followed by a begrudging identification of Orestes (1479–80), mirrors in turn Clytemnestra's answer at *Cho.* 887 οἱ γὰρ, ξυνῆκα τοῦπος ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων.³⁸ Aegisthus' wording, like Clytemnestra's, implies that Orestes spoke allusively, in the very manner of a *mantis*: his language both pointed to Aegisthus' doom and to Aeschylus' different version. As a knowledgeable seer, Orestes readily mocks Aegisthus' poor prophetic skills: καὶ μάντις ὢν ἄριστος ἐσφάλλου

³⁶ Taplin (n. 30), 356 n. 2 erroneously includes Wilamowitz in the list (he gives 929–30 to Orestes).

³⁷ See Pattoni (n. 7), 20.

³⁸ On Soph. *El.* 1477–9 as alluding to Aesch. *Cho.* 886–7, see F.W. Schneidewin, *Sophokles: Elektra* (Leipzig, 1853), ad loc.; R.C. Jebb, *Sophocles. The Plays and Fragments. Part VI: The Electra* (Cambridge, 1894), ad loc.; P.J. Finglass, *Sophocles: Electra* (Cambridge, 2007), ad loc.

πόλαι; (Soph. *El.* 1481). This leads to Aegisthus' attempt to postpone his death (1482–3), but his efforts are thwarted by both Electra (1483–90) and Orestes, who finally urges him to go inside (1491–2 χωροῖς ἄν εἴσω, etc.), echoing the order given to Clytemnestra at *Cho.* 904 (ἔπου). Faced with a further objection (1493–4), Orestes repeats his command, foretelling that Aegisthus will die in the very place where he killed Agamemnon (1495–6; at *Cho.* 894–5 and 904–7, Orestes threatens to murder Clytemnestra beside Aegisthus).

Aegisthus now desperately appeals to 'the woes of the Pelopids' (1497–500):

- Αἰ. ἦ πᾶσ' ἀνάγκη τήνδε τὴν στέγην ἰδεῖν
τά τ' ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα Πελοπιδῶν κακά;
Ορ. τὰ γοῦν σ' ἐγὼ σοι μάντις εἰμὶ τῶνδ' ἄκρος.
Αἰ. ἄλλ' οὐ πατρώαν τὴν τέχνην ἐκόμπασας.

AEGISTHUS: Is it needful that this house should witness the present and the future woes of the Pelopids?

ORESTES: It shall witness yours, at least; I am a good prophet in this matter.

AEGISTHUS: Why, your father lacked the skill you boast of!³⁹

Scholars endlessly debate whether an allusion to the Erinyes' pursuit of Orestes is to be found here.⁴⁰ Although Aegisthus' threat is undermined by self-interest, the scope of 1497–8 cannot be restricted to his or Clytemnestra's death, and τὰ τ' ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα transparently evokes prophetic language.⁴¹ If anything, Aegisthus' words will have activated, rather than displaced, collective memory of the *Oresteia*: compare Clytemnestra's warning at *Cho.* 924, ὄρα, φύλαξαι μητρὸς ἐγκότους κύνας, which, unlike Aegisthus' threat, foreshadows the end of the play and the trajectory of *Eumenides*. As this and other allusions demonstrate, it was Sophocles' intention to engage in a full-scale competition with Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, and the removal of the Erinyes from the storyline will have been part of this strategy.⁴²

For present purposes, however, what matters most is Orestes' harsh reply, τὰ γοῦν σ' (1499), which drastically restricts the scope of 1497–8 to Aegisthus' own κακά. As a death warrant, Soph. *El.* 1499 closely parallels *Cho.* 930, despite the difference in wording. In the *Electra* passage, Orestes claims to be 'a first-rate prophet' of Aegisthus' fate: ἐγὼ σοι μάντις εἰμὶ τῶνδ' ἄκρος. On the one hand, this statement plainly recalls the mantic skills of the Aeschylean Orestes (*Cho.* 540–2). On the other hand, it assimilates Aegisthus' forebodings to Clytemnestra's oneiric premonitions: in both cases, Orestes is there to turn fear into reality.⁴³ Aegisthus replies bitterly, voicing a caustic comment

³⁹ Transl. H. Lloyd-Jones, *Sophocles. Vol. I* (Cambridge, MA, 1994).

⁴⁰ See Finglass (n. 38), on Soph. *El.* 1442–504, with references. Although Finglass is surely correct about the indeterminacy of the closure, sustained allusion to and competitive distancing from *Choephoree* and *Eumenides* were clearly observable and, to some extent, unavoidable.

⁴¹ Cf. e.g. Hom. *Il.* 1.70, Hes. *Theog.* 38, Eur. *Ion* 7, *Hel.* 13–14: see E. Fraenkel, *Aeschylus: Agamemnon*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1950), on 1185 n. 1; M.L. West, *Hesiod: Theogony* (Oxford, 1966), on 32.

⁴² Cf. e.g. Soph. *El.* 77–85, alluding to (and rejecting) the recognition-scene of *Choephoree* (see E. Fraenkel, *Beobachtungen zu Aristophanes* [Rome, 1962], 22).

⁴³ Scholars frequently compare the elders' hesitant reply to Cassandra at Aesch. *Ag.* 1130–1, οὐ κομπάσαιμ' ἂν θεσφάτων γνώμων ἄκρος | εἶναι, κακῷ δέ τῳ προσεικάζω τάδε: Dunn (in F. Dunn, L. Lomiento and B. Gentili, *Sofocle: Elettra* [Milan, 2019], ad loc.) contrasts their confusion (in fact, cautious pessimism) with Orestes' confidence. The intertextual relation may be extended to *Choephoree*, as the elders equally assert the connection between prophecy and fear (Aesch. *Ag.* 1132–6). It is fear that the *mantis* Orestes seeks to instil in his victims, both in *Choephoree* and in *Electra*.

about Agamemnon's flawed prophetic skills (1500), which only confirms Orestes' mantic control over the future. As in the *Oresteia*, Orestes fulfils the revenge fantasies and optimistic predictions expressed by the Chorus, most notably in the first stasimon: see Soph. *El.* 472–6 εἰ μὴ ᾿γὼ παράφρων μάντις ἔφυν καὶ | γνώμας λειπομένα σοφᾶς, | εἶσιν ἅ πρόμαντις | Δίκαια, δίκαια φερομένα χερσὶν κράτη and 498–501 ἦ|τοι μαντεῖαι βροτῶν | οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐν δεινοῖς ὀνειρῶσι οὐδ' ἐν θεσφάτοις, | εἰ μὴ τόδε φάσμα νυκτὸς | εὖ κατασχίσει, for which cf. Aesch. *Cho.* 61–5, 340–4, 386–93, 464–5, 471–5, 646–52, 819–37. Assigning *Cho.* 929 (along with 930) to Orestes not only strengthens his role as *mantis* and master of Clytemnestra's fate but also reinforces the intertextual relations between Aeschylus' *Choephoroe* and Sophocles' *Electra*.

Below is a revised text with apparatus of Aesch. *Cho.* 928–30 as it should appear in future editions:

ΚΛ. οἱ ᾿γὼ, τεκοῦσα τόνδ' ὄφιν ἐθρεψάμην.
 OP. ἦ κάρτα μάντις οὐξ ὀνειράτων φόβος·
 κάνες τὸν οὐ χρῆν καὶ τὸ μὴ χρεῶν πάθε.

928–30 paragraphos habet M 930 Orestae cont. Portus κάνες M: ἔκανες Pauw τὸν Hermann: ὄν Pauw: γ' ὄν M.

The asyndeton between 929, a gnomic statement, and 930, a directive preceded by a second-person assertion, is no more problematic than the one that scholars who assign 928–9 to Clytemnestra must posit between 928, an exclamatory first-person complaint, and 929. To limit the search to the *Oresteia*,⁴⁴ cf. *Ag.* 636–7 + 637 (*gnôêmê* + assessment; mid-line asyndeton), 857–8 + 858–60 (*gnôêmê* + first-person declaration of intent; mid-line asyndeton), *Cho.* 61–5 + 66–7 (*gnôêmê* + assessment; asyndeton occurs in the transition from antistrophe 2 to strophe 3), 104–5 + 106 (*gnôêmê* + request), 505–7 + 508–9 (*gnôêmê* + directive, addressed by Orestes to the dead Agamemnon), 663–6 + 666–7 (directive with *gnôêmê* + third-person assessment; mid-line asyndeton), *Eum.* 261–2 + 263 (*gnôêmê* + assessment), 448–50 + 451–2 (*gnôêmê* + first-person assessment).

Scuola Normale Superiore

MARCO CATRAMBONE
marco.catrambone@sns.it

⁴⁴ Gnomic utterances of *Oresteia* are listed in E. Ahrens, *Gnomen in griechischer Dichtung* (Homer, Hesiod, Aeschylus) (Halle, 1937), 138–42 (on *Choephoroe* and other Orestes-plays, see G.W. Most, 'Euripide ὁ γνωμολογικώτατος', in M.S. Funghi [ed.], *Aspetti di letteratura gnomica nel mondo antico*, vol. 1 [Firenze, 2003], 141–66, at 163–5). Useful references on tragic *gnômai* are collected in R.B. Rutherford, *Greek Tragic Style: Form, Language, and Interpretation* (Cambridge, 2012), 365 n. 3, E. van Emde Boas, *Language and Character in Euripides' Electra* (Oxford, 2017), 41 n. 73, to which add A. Boscà Cuquerella, *La gnome en Eurípides: estudio formal* (Lausanne, 2023).