

AESCHYLUS *AGAMEMNON* 104–05, HOMER AND THE EPIC TRADITION: A NEW SURVEY

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Abstract: This article is a discussion and analysis of Aeschylus *Agamemnon* 104–05, with special reference to the epic models operating behind the typically Homeric enjambement ἀνδρῶν / ἐκτελέων. The ἄνδρες should be understood as the Argive heroes of the expedition against Troy, and not as the sons of Atreus, Agamemnon and Menelaus. This interpretation is supported by a number of examples taken from Archaic and Hellenistic epic poems.

Keywords: Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, epic tradition, Homeric enjambement

I. The text

Almost half of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (458 BC) is made up of songs. The 218 verses of the *parodos* – including the recitatives followed by the section *in lyricis* – constitute the most extended non-recited passage in all extant tragedy. If we limit these computations to the lyric performance, the song contains an impressive number of lines, 154 to be precise (vv. 104–257). We know that the proportion of choral songs decreases in the two other tragedies, *Libation Bearers* and *Eumenides*, yet at this moment, not long after the beginning, the audience witnesses a ‘gigantic chorus, the longest and richest extant in Greek tragedy’.¹

I shall now provide a brief summary of the song before examining the short passage which is the focus of this article. The elders did not leave Argos for Troy; worthless as they would have been on a battlefield, they narrate past events in which they played a marginal role and during which they were only hypothetically present.² With an explicit temporal marker opening the anapaestic section (v. 40: δέκατον μὲν ἔτος τόδ’ ἐπεὶ κτλ, ‘this is now the tenth year since ...’), the Chorus looks back to the moment when the fleet left the Hellenic shores led by the two sons of Atreus, in order to avenge Helen’s adulterous departure. Like vultures deprived of their chicks, the Argives rushed against Paris and his people. Even now, on the plain of Troy the fight continues, whereas in Argos the old men need a walking stick to move around; they have been left out of the expedition and remain at home, where they are getting older, drying up like barren leaves. And now they question Clytemnestra, for an unexpected event has fuelled their anxiety and they look for an answer to heal it.

The members of the Chorus probably start to sing as they take their places in the orchestra. They evoke the favourable episode of the two eagles devouring a pregnant hare and the interpretation of the portent by the seer Calchas (the destruction of Priam’s city). Then, after their pious

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¹ Fraenkel (1950) 2.57. Schein (2009) 386 states that this ‘lyric narrative presents past events that the chorus have themselves experienced and that are linked by diction, imagery, and ideas to the main dramatic action ... Sophocles and Euripides generally avoid this kind of

“internal” lyric narrative. When such narrative does occur, as in ... the narrative of the sack of Troy in *The Trojan Women* 511–567, it tends to be briefer and less directly related to the main action of the play.’

² According to Fraenkel (1950) 2.141, the elders were eyewitnesses to Iphigenia’s sacrifice, though there is nothing in the text to suggest this. I agree with Rutherford (2007) 14, that in the Aeschylean *parodos* ‘we have a narratological topos, familiar from Pindar: the technique of narrating up to a certain point, but drawing a veil over the rest’ (with examples).

utterance of the so-called *Hymn to Zeus*, they return to the past, resorting once again to a temporal marker, at v. 184: καὶ τόθ' ἡγεμῶν κτλ, 'and then the chief'. What follows is an apprehensive and distressed description of Iphigenia's sacrifice, which is interrupted suddenly just before the song's conclusion; whereas it has so far been omniscient and authoritative (v. 104: κύριός εἰμι θροεῖν, see below), the Chorus now draws the boundaries of its long narrative, ending when it becomes impossible to say more, and finally summing up the dark event in a euphemistic litotes (v. 248: τὰ δ' ἔνθεν οὐτ' εἶδον οὐτ' ἐννέπω, 'I did not see what followed, neither do I tell').³

At vv. 104–07 of the OCT of Aeschylus edited by Denys L. Page in 1972, we read the beginning of the six strophic pairs as follows:

κύριός εἰμι θροεῖν ὄδιον κράτος αἴσιον ἀνδρῶν
ἐκτελέων· ἔτι γὰρ θεόθεν καταπνεῖει
Πειθῶ, † μολπὰν ἀλκὰν † σύμφυτος αἰών·

Despite their weakness and in defiance of their old age, the elders strongly assert their authority to speak by means of their lyric performance about the past as it relates to the Argive expedition,⁴ as well as their ability to exert a form of persuasion via this “triumphant” opening strophe,⁵ since they are impelled by divine inspiration. This is the general interpretation I shall offer of these verses, albeit with some doubts.

II. The meaning

Wading through the mass of scholarly work on Aeschylus, I am aware that the following remarks will barely suffice to cover the long list of explanations suggested for the nouns and adjectives of v. 104 and to unpack the text of vv. 105–07 (with which we are not immediately concerned). To summarize, once we understand ὄδιον as 'regarding the expedition', and αἴσιον as 'boding well' (i.e. 'propitious', 'accompanied by good omens'), we must focus on the obscure connection between κράτος and ἐκτελέων, bearing in mind that the latter has been emended to ἐντελέων since Auratus. Our starting point will be the learned pages of E. Fraenkel ((1950) 2.59–62), with the valuable aid of the commentary provided by E. Medda,⁶ which is as rich as it is judicious. Fraenkel defends Auratus' correction whilst also emphasizing the patent association, at least on a semantic level, between ὄδιον κράτος⁷ and Ἀχαιῶν δίθρονον κράτος at v. 109. However, in its second occurrence the term κράτος clearly refers to the twin-throned rulers of the Achaeans, namely Agamemnon and Menelaus. In a note on the passage ((1950) 2.60), he thus translates as follows: 'it is my office to tell of the command that set on foot the expedition, the command favoured of fortune'.⁸ Hence, according to him, the utterance κράτος ἀνδρῶν indicates 'concisely and effectively the leaders in the action which the Chorus is going to relate'; moreover, 'the repetition of κράτος in 109 makes it very improbable that ἀνδρῶν in 104 should refer to anyone but

³ So Raeburn and Thomas (2011) 95: cf. v. 249: τέχνην δὲ Κάλχαντος οὐκ ἄκραντοι, 'Calchas' prophecies do not fail'.

⁴ Cf. Raeburn and Thomas (2011) 78. Πειθῶ means 'the ability to tell a story in such a way that the hearer believes what he is told' (Fraenkel (1950) 2.64).

⁵ Conacher (1987) 8.

⁶ In Medda (2017) 2.79 κράτος ... ἐκτελέων ἀνδρῶν, "'potere", "comando", oppure "forza"' is said to refer 'all'intero esercito e non ai soli Atridi' (he translates as follows: 'è in mio potere narrare la forza di uomini nel fiore degli anni / postasi in strada sotto buoni auspici': Medda (2017) 1.247).

⁷ Fraenkel (1950) 2.60: ὄδιον κράτος is for him – as Gottfried Hermann put it – *vim viatricem*, the strength which started the expedition: cf. Medda (2006) 158 n.24; Hermann's version ((1834) 344) is as follows: 'fas mihi dis carum robur celebrare virorum / ductorum'.

⁸ The translation given at Fraenkel (1950) 1.97 is slightly different: 'I have power to tell of the auspicious command ruling the expedition, the command of men in authority' (followed by Lloyd-Jones (1979) 33–34). V. 104 echoes v. 157 (ὄδιον ~ ὀδίω are in the same metrical position within the sequence of dactyls, the latter with the meaning 'appearing on the way').

the Atridae’, while *Auratus*’ ἐντελέων simply means τῶν ἐν τέλει ὄντων ἤτοι τῶν βασιλέων, as anticipated in an interlinear gloss by Demetrius Triclinius – who, however, read ἐκτελέων, aligning himself with the rest of the manuscript tradition.⁹ Fraenkel is not isolated in this line of reasoning; in more recent times, Sommerstein (2008) 15 and Schein (2009) 382, both accepting ἐντελέων, interpret the text in a similar way, and translate (respectively): ‘I have authority to tell of the auspicious departure of the commanders, / men invested with power’¹⁰ and ‘I have the authority to tell aloud the auspicious power along the way, / the power of men in command’. J.D. Denniston and D. Page ((1957) 77) agree with Fraenkel only in relation to κράτος (although they print ἐκτελέων): ‘κράτος, “command”, here can signify nothing but “the commanders”, the Atridae’. Also in favour of the manuscripts’ *paradosis* (ἐκτελέων) are D. Raeburn and O. Thomas ((2011) 79), who agree with Denniston and Page, and interpret the genitive as ‘probably objective’: ‘command [κράτος] “over men just grown up”, so in their prime; cf. Eur. *Ion* 780 ἐκτελῆ νεανίαν’.¹¹ That is, the military power of the Atridae is exercised on the young Achaean contingent, and κράτος ἀνδρῶν means ‘the same thing as Ἀχαιῶν κράτος and Ἑλλάδος ἦβας ταγάν in the immediate sequel’.¹²

As pointed out by J. Bollack (in Bollack and Judet de La Combe (1981) 123), the indeterminate meaning of κράτος¹³ can affect the interpretation: ‘selon que pour κράτος on choisit l’une ou l’autre de ces deux valeurs [either ‘pouvoir’, or ‘force guerrière’], ἀνδρῶν désigne les chefs ou l’armée entière, et l’adjectif ἐκτελέων convient plus ou moins bien: les jeunes guerriers de la troupe seraient dits “parfaits”, i.e. dans la force de leur âge ..., plus difficilement les chefs’.¹⁴ We may finally add that the *paradosis* of v. 105 is also defended by, among others, P. Groeneboom ((1966) 139), A. Lebeck ((1971) 11) and – ‘after some hesitation’ – by M.L. West ((1990) 175–76, ‘the word has a distinctly positive sense’ and ‘will have the more positive connotation of manhood that has come to flower’).¹⁵ However, West challenges Fraenkel’s interpretation, stating that ‘if 109 Ἀχαιῶν δῖθρονον κράτος corresponds to 104 κράτος ... ἀνδρῶν -τελέων, obviously the ἄνδρες -τελεῖς are the Achaeans, not the Atridae’.¹⁶

III. The models

Is it possible to go further than these relevant and justified hesitations? Can vv. 104–05 be taken as a signal announcing to some extent the expected (i.e. narrative) inflection of the whole passage? And what are the observable models, if indeed there are any?¹⁷

We cannot set aside the literal meaning of the terms involved, and special attention should be paid to the identity of the persons or group concealed behind the ἄνδρες of v. 104. Here, above and beyond a specifically linguistic hint, the possible existence of echoes of the epic genre could

⁹ *Schol. Tricl. ad* 105b, I, p. 104, 14 Smith, with Fraenkel (1950) 2.60–61, n.1.

¹⁰ With Sommerstein (2008) n.23, p. 14: ‘lit. “of the auspicious on-the-road command <consisting> of men in power”’.

¹¹ Similarly Thiel (1993) 19: ‘Ich habe Vollmacht, zu künden den glückverheißenden Befehl beim Auszug über erwachsene Männer.’

¹² Vv. 107–10: Denniston and Page (1957) 78.

¹³ κράτος is unclearly glossed by the scholiast as follows: δυνατός εἰμι εἰπεῖν τὸ συμβᾶν αὐτοῖς σημεῖον ἐξιοῦσιν, ‘I am able to tell of the sign which occurred while they were leaving’ (*Schol. Vet. ad* 104ab, I, p. 5, 25–26 Smith). Fraenkel ((1950) 2.59–60) is rightly doubtful, as is Medda (2017) 2.77–78 *ad loc.*

¹⁴ A different interpretation is offered at Bollack and

Judet de La Combe (1981) 126: κράτος as the elders’ lost strength and ἐκτελέων as a verb, ‘having reached the edge of our capabilities’; F.A. Paley ((1879) 355) already took it as a participle: “accomplishing” for “describing the accomplishment,” “showing the result of”. Judet de La Combe (2004) 34 translates as follows: ‘je suis maître de prononcer le pouvoir, parti sur les routes / sous l’auspice des dieux, qu’exercent des hommes / accomplis’.

¹⁵ Confirmed by West (1998).

¹⁶ The statement seems to contradict West (1979) 2: ‘the formulation of the theme in 104 ... puts in a nutshell the main points of 40–62: the movement of the powerful force, the justice of the cause, the royal authority of the two leaders’.

¹⁷ On clues of genre in the openings of Sophoclean (and Euripidean) choruses, see Rodighiero (2018).

shed light on a small part of the complex and multiple connections enacted by the tragic poets whenever they looked to the Homeric tradition,¹⁸ to hexametric epic and also to the epic forms and themes transposed into lyric discourse.¹⁹

Of course, in the *Agamemnon* the subject of the Trojan War, the heroes and the similes are eminently Homeric and epic,²⁰ and it is well known that the *Cypria* must have been one of the sources for Aeschylus' reframing of the myth's early episodes. Following this lead, we can begin by considering our passage in the light of the *incipit* of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. It is self-evident that the Iliadic goddess and the *Odyssey*'s muse have vanished from our text.²¹ There is no invocation of θεά or Μοῦσα to inspire the aoidos as his *alter ego* and 'ipostasi della sua attività compositrice',²² and they no longer serve to guarantee the required objectivity and truthfulness of the tale. Instead, the audience is faced with a multi-voiced chorus which has clearly developed from the 'bardic I' of Greek choral lyric ('I have the power to tell ...', the 12 Argive elders proudly say). Moreover, it is well established that when a tragic chorus says 'I', this 'I' does not by any means refer to the voice of the poet, but only to the group acting and singing within the dramatic fiction;²³ in other words, the deixis is always internal to the text. Nevertheless, there is some circumstantial evidence to suggest that although the elders begin their tale in an undoubtedly lyric format (they sing and dance), they do resort to an epic paradigm, as if we could detect, behind the choral 'I', the presence of a bard's monodic chant in which the singer asserts his aim to sing of a certain topic (all the tragedians employ the first-person singular when referring to the Chorus as the narrator).

The *verbum dicendi* comes with speech's direct object, which announces the main theme (θροεῖν ... ὄδιον κράτος). In spite of the lyric context, however, the verb – though more powerful than λέγειν – does not convey the idea of a song; the statement thus means 'to utter the strength

¹⁸ A widely investigated topic: see at least, with different approaches, Garner (1990); Seaford (1994); Scodel (2005); Alaux (2007); Ambühl (2010); on Aeschylus, see Lechner (1862); Schmidt (1863); Franklin (1895); Gigli (1928); Kumaniecki (1935) 5-17; Earp (1948) 39-53; Sideras (1971); Judet de La Combe (1995); Marchiori (1999); Zimmermann (2004); Kraias (2011).

¹⁹ Cf. Pretagostini (1995) 164: 'per una sequenza come l'esametro sia l'individuazione del tipo di resa sia il suo stesso riconoscimento dipendono in misura determinante dal contesto in cui la sequenza è inserita'; yet in our case the lyric performance is indubitable (see also p. 171). On 'lyric hexameters' and caesurae, see Lomiento (2001) 33: 'la struttura *kata kolon* degli "esametri lirici" ... non può non porsi in relazione con il canone delle cesure principali enucleato sin dall'antichità in relazione all'esametro recitato'.

²⁰ In addition to the titles quoted at n.18, for specific Homeric hints, see Gigli (1928) fasc. III–IV.38, 46; East-erling (1987); Garner (1990) 28–40 (with 187: 'echoes at the beginning of strophe, antistrophe, or lyric section', and 191); Lynn-George (1993); Heath (1999); Michel (2014) 49–59. On Aeschylus' treatment of the Homeric myth, see also Pace (2013), with thoughtful remarks on the conversion of the material of epic poetry into tragedy (pp. 37–41).

²¹ Cf. Judet de La Combe (2004) 108: 'un "proème", comme dans l'épopée, pose l'autorité de celui qui chante, en soulignant la provenance divine de son chant. Même si

le thème du récit, le pouvoir des Atrides, sera homérique, la divinité n'est pas ici dans son rôle poétique traditionnel.'

²² Giordano (2010) 117; *loci similes* and epic beginnings are analysed by Redfield (1979) 98–99; Kirk (1985) 51; Latacz et al. (2000) 13–14; De Cristofaro (2006); Davies (2014) 43–44 (on *Thebais fr.* 1: Ἄργος ἄειδε, θεά, πολυδίψιον κτλ); Davies and Finglass (2014) 331; Harden and Kelly (2014) 7–11; on the Muse and the *Homeric Hymns*, see Létoublon (2012) 26–27. Collard (2002) 119 associates the first verses of the *parodos*' strophe and antistrophe very generally with Homeric openings; the common elements are the dactylic rhythm, a privileged knowledge and insight, and the appeal to divine inspiration made by the *persona loquens* (at p. 6 he translates as follows: 'I have the power to tell of the command destined on its road, the command / by men in their full prime').

²³ Cf. Schein (2009) 380: 'in any given poem either the collectivity of performers or the poet or both may be the "deictic center" of the poetic discourse. This is not true of a tragic chorus, whose first-person language never refers to the poet, but always to the performers themselves in their assumed *personae*.' On the choral 'I' in tragedy, see also, among others, Fletcher (1999); Rutherford (2007); and Kaimio (1970), especially 82–91 on choral narrations: 'in the other songs of Aeschylus the reference to the narrator does not occur at the beginning [v. 104] or end [v. 248] of the whole song, but at the beginning or end of a strophe in the middle of the song' (p. 83).

of the expedition, and of the ἄνδρες ἐκτελεῖς, or (as we have seen, according to a different interpretation) ‘to utter the command, during the expedition, over young and perfect men’ (ἀνδρῶν ἐκτελέων), while the adjective αἴσιον anticipates the encouraging portent of the two eagles (~ Agamemnon and Menelaus) clutching the hare (~ Troy). Besides noting the strong and implicit contrast between the weak members of the Chorus and the vigorous young men of the Achaean contingent, we cannot offer, for the moment, a more solid interpretation.

What seems to me even more interesting, beyond the complexity of the Aeschylean passage, is the emergence of a non-isolated pattern. We need to return to our well-known exordia, μῆνιν ἄειδε ... οὐλομένην, where the goddess is exhorted to ‘sing the destructive wrath’ (*Il.* 1.1–2),²⁴ and ἄνδρα ἔννεπε ... πολύτροπον, where the muse’s task will be to tell ‘of the man of twists and turns’ (*Od.* 1.1). In the *Agamemnon*, the *verbum dicendi* and the object – though not the first word of the verse – are also in close proximity,²⁵ but the *persona loquens* remains quite far from the form of the two major epics. No matter the number of instances in the *Homeric Hymns* where the singer declares his intention to praise the god in the first person,²⁶ the Aeschylean Chorus find the guarantee of their song’s authenticity and veracity in themselves. Then, when the elders assert that they have ‘the power to tell’, they appear at first sight to free themselves from the inspiring and even necessary breath that traditionally comes from the Muse: the two imperative/impetrative verbs addressed to the deities (μῆνιν ἄειδε and ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε) are replaced in the *Agamemnon* by a declaration of their apparently complete independence in building the tale.

Clearly, we ought always to distinguish between vocabulary that is distinctively Homeric and a generic epic atmosphere. Broadly speaking, due to the very large amount of linguistic material derived from Homer and still easily recognizable in the extant tragedies of Aeschylus as well as in Archaic lyric, it is legitimate to ask how much of this material was intentionally drawn from epic models, to what extent it was part of a shared poetic *langue* and what was really understood as poetic inheritance by the recipients.²⁷ As a matter of fact, however, as noted by M. Griffith,²⁸ in the Aeschylean passage both κύριος and θροεῖν are ‘completely unHomeric, and non-oracular: ... the word κύριος and its derivatives (κῦρος, κυρόω, *ktl.*) are never found anywhere in Homeric or Hesiodic poetry’. Moreover, θροεῖν is a ‘very non-Homeric term’ almost always used to connote collective voices. Nonetheless, the members of the Chorus remain the guarantors of the quality and truthfulness of their account only through the intercession of the gods, who grant them a kind of volutative purpose to sing²⁹ – if not a divine and enthusiastic inspiration, as confirmed by θεόθεν at v. 105.³⁰

²⁴ On the verbs ‘say’/‘sing’ at the beginning of an epos, cf. Redfield (1979) 98, n.9: in *Il.* 1.1 ἄειδε is unexpected, since ‘normally the Muse is asked, not to “sing”, but to “say”’, well represented in Homer by ἔννεπε and ἔσπετε.

²⁵ On the first word of a poem as articulation of the theme that the poet intends to develop, see West (1966) 151.

²⁶ Cf., for example, *Hymn. Hom.* 2.1: Δήμητρ’ ἠῦκομον σεμνήν θεῶν ἄρχομ’ ἀείδειν, ‘of Demeter, the lovely-haired, the august goddess first I sing’ (tr. West (2003a)), with Race (1992) 20.

²⁷ Along with the sensible remarks of Citti (1994) 163, cf. the (perhaps too cautious) comments of Franklin (1895) 35–37 (and 81: ‘were a greater part of the work of the lyric poets extant, and available for comparison, we should probably find that many of these epic phrases and figures had been employed by poets earlier than

Aeschylus, and we should be obliged to admit that Aeschylus might have obtained them from some lyric poet, rather than directly from Homer’).

²⁸ Griffith (2009) 42; nonetheless, as Judet de La Combe asserts in Griffith (2009), ‘la nouveauté se construit dans une relation étroite avec Homère’, since the epithets ὄδιον ... αἴσιον seem to echo ὄδοιπόρον ... αἴσιον, ‘le voyageur de bon augure’, used of Hermes in *Il.* 24.375–76. Kaimio (1970) 86 (and n.2) notes that Aeschylus ‘does not employ words denoting singing at the beginning of a narrative section otherwise than in a strongly emotionally coloured context, which differs from the practice of choral lyrics’; cf. *Supp.* 69, 112; *Sept.* 78, [Aesch.] *PV* 397.

²⁹ On volutative openings in hymns and praise, see Metcalf (2015) 135–37.

³⁰ With Fraenkel (1950) 2.64–65.

If we observe the structure of the two verses, another hint emerges, which has led scholars to note the reverberation of Iliadic echoes and epic tales. In the first strophic pair, the dactylic rhythm solemnly alternates with iambs, with the dactyls remaining predominant particularly at the beginning of the song.

In our modern editions v. 104 (~ 122) is made up of a sequence of six lyric dactyls, and the sixth metron is constituted by two long syllables, as follows:³¹ ———— ————. Outside a lyric context, this pericope corresponds perfectly with an epic hexameter, and has a final cadence perceptible to our gaze (since we are unable to hear it) as a bucolic diaeresis: αἴσιον ἀνδρῶν = ————. Furthermore, the genitive plural ἀνδρῶν, which corresponds to the sixth dactylic metron (—), is located in a very conventional position, as frequently attested by the Homeric poems, Apollonius of Rhodes and hexametric poetry. As is well known, vv. 104ff. were also quoted and parodied in Aristophanes' *Frogs*: the dactylic sequence (from κύριος to the genitive ἀνδρῶν) was inserted by the comic poet at *Ranae* 1276, along with vv. 108–09 (= *Ran.* 1284–85) and 111–12 (= *Ran.* 1287–89). In the comic passage, Euripides is offering a lyric compendium, or, more precisely, a στάσιν μελῶν / ἐκ τῶν κιθαρωδικῶν νόμων εἰργασμένην, a 'set of choral lyrics, made from tunes for the lyre' (*Ran.* 1281–82; tr. Henderson (2002)), as the main evidence of the fact that Aeschylus' poetry owes a lot to the traditional, and lyric, *nomos*.³²

Moving forward, it is highly probable that the Aeschylean verse is shaped in a way which will not appear too different from other epic beginnings. Regardless of the discrepancy of content, period and above all genre, we may start from the narrative and epic exordium of Apollonius of Rhodes' *Argonautica* (1.1–2), where the poet himself – not a Chorus – remembering the κλέα of men of old, begins his hexametric epos with the help of Apollo: ἀρχόμενος σέο Φοῖβε παλαιγενέων κλέα φωτῶν / μνήσομαι, κτλ, 'Beginning with you, O Phoebus, I will recount the famous deeds of men born long ago'. The main subject of the poem is provided by the mention of the deeds of a plurality of heroes from the past, and, as R. Hunter puts it, 'we may wish to see the group of Argonauts taking the place of "the central hero", or prefer to see the poem as the story of an action, the bringing of the Golden Fleece to Greece, but the plurality of Argonauts imposes its own shape upon the generic [*scil.* Homeric] pattern'.³³ It is well known that Apollonius' textual models, which provided him with the almost formulaic κλέα φωτῶν, go back to Archaic epic and the κλέα ἀνδρῶν sung by the inspired Demodocus in *Odyssey* 8.73 (Μοῦσ' ἄρ' αἰοῖδὸν ἀνήκεν ἀειδέμεναι κλέα ἀνδρῶν, 'the Muse inspired the aoidos to sing the famous deeds of men'), as well as the songs of Achilles in *Iliad* 9.189, when, away from the battle, the hero in his tent 'pleasured his heart with the lyre and sang the famous deeds of men' (τῆ ὄ γε θυμὸν ἔτερπεν, ἄειδε δ' ἄρα κλέα ἀνδρῶν). The formula κλέα ἀνδρῶν recurs some verses later as part of the speech addressed by the old

³¹ On the colometry of this passage in the manuscript tradition, see Medda (2008) 57–58 with the *apparato colometrico* in Medda (2017) 1.389; Gentili and Lomiento (2001) 19–20; Gentili (2004) 14–16; Fleming (2007) 99–100. The colometry transmitted by M (Laur. 32.9) is as follows: κύριός εἰμι θροεῖν ὄδιον κράτος / αἴσιον ἀνδρῶν / ἐκτελέων· ἔτι γὰρ = 4 da | 2 da | hem^m. According to Dale (1971) and (1983), there is an analogous 'hexametric' lyric *incipit* (that is, an opening line in which the sixth dactyl is either spondaic or catalectic: —≡) in Aesch. *Supp.* 68 ~ 77 (though in the third strophe), Soph. *OT* 151 ~ 159 (opening of the *parodos*), Eur. *Heracl.* 608 ~ 619 (opening of the second *stasimon*, but see, *contra*, Fileni (2006) 56), *Andr.* 117 ~ 126 (beginning of the *parodos*), *Hipp.* 1102 ~ 1111 (beginning of the third *stasimon*) and 1120 ~ 1131. For other examples of lyric hexameters in Attic drama, see Pretagostini (1995).

³² On this parody, see Di Marco (2011) 41–42; on the lyrical, metrical and narrative aspects of the *Agamemnon parodos* which can be connected to the *nomos* and Stesichorean and citharodic lyric epic, see Fraenkel (1918) 321–23 (metre and *nomos*); Fleming (1977) 227–28 (*nomos*); Gentili in Gentili and Giannini (1977) 36 (metre and Stesichorus); Gostoli (1990) xxviii (*nomos*); Ley (1993) (direct speech; see *infra*, n.57); Ercoles (2012) 11–12 (*nomos* and triadic structure); *cf.* also *infra*, n.62.

³³ In Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 95, and *cf.* pp. 90–91: 'Apollonius himself marks his generic status in the opening verse through the phrase which designates the subject of his song, παλαιγενέων κλέα φωτῶν ... The opening verse of the *Argonautica* therefore announces the genre of the poem, and 1.2–4 describe its subject.' See also Fantuzzi (1988) 22 n.35.

Phoenix to Achilles, in *Iliad* 9.524–25. This is a special case, since ἀνδρῶν is completed by the first element of the following hexameter: οὕτω καὶ τῶν πρόσθεν ἐπευθόμεθα κλέα ἀνδρῶν / ἥρώων, ‘even so, we have heard the famous deeds of men of old / who were heroes’.³⁴ One more example is offered by the first verse of the *Epigoni* (fr. 1 Bernabé), though the genitive plural does not end the hexameter and must be read within the main clause, while ἀρχόμεθα, Μοῦσαι combines the two formulae (‘I shall start to sing ...’ / ‘sing, o Muse ...’): νῦν αὖθ’ ὀπλοτέρων ἀνδρῶν ἀρχόμεθα, Μοῦσαι,³⁵ ‘but now, Muses, let us begin on the younger men’ (tr. West (2003b)).

I believe that the hexadactylic verse which sets in motion the lyric section of the *parodos* of *Agamemnon* takes its shape from similar opening formulae. If we assume that this was the model activated by the tragic poet, the main argument of the song is easily recognizable in κράτος ... ἀνδρῶν, placed in a prominent position before the long (lyric) narrative begins. We may also compare to the preceding examples a partial couplet from the *Homeric Hymn to Helios*; its date is uncertain, but it contains the echo of a traditional style which provided the content of the epic tale after the proem (*Hymn. Hom.* 31.18–19):³⁶ ἐκ σέο δ’ ἀρξάμενος κλήσω μερόπων γένος ἀνδρῶν / ἡμιθέων, ‘after beginning from you, I will celebrate the brood of mortal heroes, / demigods’ (tr. West (2003a), modified). The model is still operative in Apollonius of Rhodes’ exordium, as follows: Ap. Rhod. 1.1 (ἀρχόμενος σέο) ~ *Hymn. Hom.* 31.18 (ἐκ σέο δ’ ἀρξάμενος) ~ *Hymn. Hom.* 32.18 (to Selene: σέο δ’ ἀρχόμενος).

More importantly, one should note the impressive similarity created, in both the drama and the hymn, by the positioning of the genitive ἀνδρῶν at the end of the ‘hexametric’ sequence and the agreement of the adjective at the beginning of the following verse: in *Agamemnon* 104–05: ἀνδρῶν / ἐκτελέων (– / –: six dactyls + five dactyls) and in the hexametric hymn: ἀνδρῶν / ἡμιθέων³⁷ (– / –: six dactyls + five dactyls).

The *loci similes* scrutinized above may now be placed in a table and listed following a decreasing order of resemblance. The genres are different, as well as the performative context and the musical instruments involved (aulos and Chorus *versus* a citharodic, ‘a solo’), but in the first three entries of the table we will observe what M. Parry – acknowledging his debt to the νοῦς ἀπερίοδος in Dion. Hal. *Comp.* 26.12 – labelled an ‘unperiodic enjambement’.³⁸ As is well known, G.S. Kirk later renamed it ‘progressive’; that is, a hexameter in which a potential strong stop is avoided on account of a sentence that ‘could have ended with the verse, but in fact is carried on into the succeeding verse by the addition of further descriptive matter (adverbial or epithetical) ... This

³⁴ Cf. also *Hymn. Hom.* 32.18–19: σέο δ’ ἀρχόμενος κλέα φωτῶν / ἔσομαι ἡμιθέων, ‘beginning from you, I will sing of famous tales of heroes’ (tr. West (2003a)), and Hes. *Theog.* 100–01: Μουσάων θεράπων κλεῖα προτέρων ἀνθρώπων / ὑμνήσει, the aoidos ‘servant of the Muses, sings of the glorious deeds of people of old’ (tr. Most (2006); cf. Pucci (2007) 122).

³⁵ ‘Which might be thought to have had some influence upon Apollonius’ opening παλαιγενέων ... φωτῶν’: R. Hunter in Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 96; on the fragment, see also Davies (2014) 109–10.

³⁶ On the chronology, cf. Càssola (1975) 440, 447 (the hymns to Helios and to Selene are not necessarily to be considered late productions); see also Fantuzzi (1988) 23 n.35: ‘per i vv. 18 sg. dell’*Inno a Selene* [cf. *supra*, n.34], così come per i versi corrispondenti dell’*Inno ad Helios* ... non è necessario cercare una genesi estranea alla tradizione innodica arcaica’. Faulkner (2011b) 193, n.79 does not exclude a link between Apollonius of Rhodes and the hymn to Selene as his model; on the chronology, see also Faulkner (2011a) 16: ‘a fifth-century date seems

reasonable, but an earlier date cannot be ruled out entirely’.

³⁷ On ἡμιθέων, see Wilkinson (2013) 129–30 (note at S176 *PMGF* = *POxy* 2735 fr. 11.1: ἡμιθέων ὄθ[ι]), with further lyrical examples (Simonides and Pindar); it occurs only once in Homer (*Il.* 12.23: ἡμιθέων γένος ἀνδρῶν) and in the two hymns it refers (cf. *Hymn. Hom.* 32.18–19, *supra* n.34) ‘to men who have performed actions worthy of song, presumably epic heroes. Hesiod uses the term more specifically, applying it at *Op.* 160 to the race of heroes who follow the race of bronze and at fr. 204.100 MW to children born from the union of mortals and gods.’

³⁸ Parry (1929) 201. He explains (p. 203): ‘the verse can end with a word group in such a way that the sentence, at the verse end, already gives a complete thought, although it goes on in the next verse, adding free ideas by new word groups’. The best-known example is *Il.* 1.1–2, μῆνιν ... / οὐλομένην, analysed at Parry (1929) 206; see also Redfield (1979) 100; Clark (1997) 26–28. For noun-epithet formulae divided by the line-end, cf. Hainsworth (1968) 105–09.

kind of progressive extension of the sentence is typical of what Parry called the “adding style” used by singers.³⁹ Although ‘unperiodic’ or ‘progressive’ enjambement has played an important role in discussions on the oral origins of Greek epic,⁴⁰ in what follows I shall not claim that the Aeschylean passage is an example – or a relic – of oral composition. Nevertheless, at v. 104 the sense of the hexameter is completed and then immediately reopened, as it were, by the first word which follows.⁴¹ This resumption is made possible by the addition of an adjective (or a noun) ‘deferred’ – which happens quite often in epic poetry, although the frequency and the corresponding percentage have been matters of heated debate.⁴² In cases of progressive enjambement, if the adjective does not suggest any essential qualification, it becomes unnecessary to the syntactical completeness of the clause (without necessarily being a vapid metrical filler), and its role is not particularly emphatic.⁴³ In fact, the formula κλέα ἀνδρῶν (= κλέα φωτῶν) is not necessarily followed by an additional genitive: see examples 5 and 7 *versus* example 3 in the table below. When present, the runover adjective specifies the preceding noun and creates a formulaic couplet where the second term can vary while still maintaining its role of increased emphasis on the main concept. To summarize, considering almost exclusively the cases where the term ἀνδρῶν (or a synonym) occupies the last position in the hexameter (all but one), the following scheme is obtained:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Aesch. <i>Ag.</i> 104–05: | κύριός εἰμι θροεῖν ὄδιον κράτος αἴσιον ἀνδρῶν / ἐκτελέων· |
| 2. <i>Hymn. Hom.</i> 31.18–19: | ἐκ σέο δ’ ἀρξάμενος κλήσω μερόπων γένος ἀνδρῶν / ἡμιθέων, ⁴⁴ |
| 3. <i>Il.</i> 9.524–25: | οὕτω καὶ τῶν πρόσθεν ἐπευθόμεθα κλέα ἀνδρῶν / ἠρώων, ⁴⁵ |
| 4. <i>Hymn. Hom.</i> 32.18–19: | σέο δ’ ἀρχόμενος κλέα φωτῶν / ἄσομαι ἡμιθέων, |
| 5. <i>Il.</i> 9.189: | τῇ ὃ γε θυμὸν ἔτερπεν, ἄειδε δ’ ἄρα κλέα ἀνδρῶν. |
| 6. <i>Od.</i> 8.73–74: | Μοῦσ’ ἄρ’ αἰοδὸν ἀνήκεν ἀειδέμεναι κλέα ἀνδρῶν, / οἴμησ’ ⁴⁶ |
| 7. <i>Ap. Rhod.</i> 1.1–2: | ἀρχόμενος σέο Φοῖβε παλαιγενέων κλέα φωτῶν / μνήσομαι |
| 8. <i>Hes. Theog.</i> 100–01 | Μουσάων θεράπων κλεῖα προτέρων ἀνθρώπων / ὑμνήσει |
| 9. <i>Epigoni fr.</i> 1 Bernabé: | νῦν αὐθ’ ὀπλοτέρων ἀνδρῶν ἀρχόμεθα, Μοῦσαι |

³⁹ Kirk (1966) 106–07; see also the important contribution of Edwards (1966) especially 137–48. There is a brief history of the scholarship in Higbie (1990) 4–27. Following Higbie (1990) 29, Clark (1997) 26 defines this typology of runover (a common and easy ‘internal expansion’, cf. pp. 40–42) as ‘adding’ ‘a verse which could be complete in itself, but which in fact is continued in the next line’; slightly different are the labels proposed by Schein (1979) 31 n.42: ‘I call “necessary” enjambement *essential* enjambement, and “unperiodic” enjambement *non-essential* enjambement.’

⁴⁰ In addition to Parry (1929), see, for instance, Bakker (1990) (strongly criticized by Friedrich (2000) 10–15); Dukat (1991); and in particular the comprehensive analysis of Cantilena (1980).

⁴¹ After which a break is inserted between the two clauses, with full-stop punctuation; at vv. 105–06 there is a change of subject: ἔτι ... Πειθῶ.

⁴² Cf. Clayman and van Nortwick (1977) (contrast Barnes (1979)); Janko (1982) 30–33; Friedrich (2000) 6–10.

⁴³ See Prescott (1912); and on the idea of the preponderance of unemphatic/progressive runovers, see Bassett (1926) 128–29 in particular; contrast Cantilena (1980) 18, n.33 and the balanced arguments of Bergson (1956) 40–43, 46–47 with Edwards (1966) 138–40. The ‘autonomy’ of the Aeschylean verse (v. 104) from the following ἐκτελέων is confirmed by the incomplete

quotation at *Ar. Ran.* 1276, where the adjective is omitted. For ἀνδρῶν at the end of a hexameter followed by the agreement of an adjective in the next verse (not always with a consequent emphatic isolation/punctuation), cf. *Il.* 4.447–48 = 8.61–62, 4.450–51 = 8.64–65, 5.746–47 (= 8.390–91, 9.524–25, *Od.* 1.100–01), 17.505–06 and *Od.* 8.57–58 (*dubie*). Stesichorus does not help: cf. *PMGF fr.* 266 = *fr.* 308 Davies and Finglass, *incertae sedis*: ὑπερθυμέστατον ἀνδρῶν (reasonably without any following runover). On enjambement in Aeschylean iambic trimeters, see Filippo and Guido (1977–1980).

⁴⁴ ‘Runovers with the meter – – – or – – – [as in the examples 1, 3 and 8] are quite common throughout the epics ... Among these runovers one group stands out: adjectives, participles for the most part’: Clark (1997) 92, with examples at n.16 and *passim*; see also Gostoli (2008) 37: ‘in Omero la pausa funzionale all’*enjambement* è per lo più la cosiddetta “cesura tritemimere”’, although this is not attested in the ancient sources: see Gentili and Lomiento (2003) 269.

⁴⁵ ἀνδρῶν ἠρώων appears 8× in the two main poems: 4× within the same hexameter and 4× with the two terms split by the line-end; Hesiod and Apollonius of Rhodes know only the non-split formula at the beginning of the line: see Clark (1997) 95–96.

⁴⁶ A peculiar progressive enjambement also occurs in *Od.* 8.73–74 (κλέα ἀνδρῶν, / οἴμησ’ κτλ., ‘the famous

IV. On the men's identity (and other narrative features)

As highlighted by B.A. van Groningen, an epic proem is the announcement of an intention, and in the first words it offers a 'sample' of the entire subject, as the poet focuses his attention on a precise term which functions as a synthesis of the main topic.⁴⁷ To return to Aeschylus, in this tragic remoulding of an epic proem,⁴⁸ reduced in fact to a single verse plus a *rejet*, the Chorus betray a confidence in the κράτος and the ἄνδρες which is destined to fade away during the lyrical narrative. What immediately follows is a statement of the facts, an "Episierung" des Dramas' which can be only partly connected to a traditional epic narration; yet this kind of seal of 'epic authenticity' helps Aeschylus to emphasize the uniqueness of the *parodos* and enables the Chorus to be at once 'Mitspieler' and 'Erzähler'.⁴⁹

If we read κράτος ... ἀνδρῶν / ἐκτελέων as a refraction of the celebrated κλέα ἀνδρῶν (= κλέα φρωτῶν), we cannot agree with the idea that the ἄνδρες are not to be identified as the whole group of heroes who left Argos. As we have seen, for some critics the utterance singles out Menelaus and Agamemnon⁵⁰ (even though in Homeric epic the latter is designated with the formulaic ἀναξ ἀνδρῶν). Conversely, we cannot rule out the opposite assumption: 'the story that follows is marked as the story of the work of men, ἀνδρῶν, men with *kratos* ... the ὄδιον κράτος is that of the men of military age',⁵¹ whilst κράτος at v. 109 refers to the two Atridae. At v. 104 we are dealing with *all* the men who moved towards the northeast in an expedition full of omens: the ἄνθος Ἀργείων (v. 197), men endowed with physical and military ἀλκή of which the elders have long been deprived. These ἄνδρες do not differ from the group of the Argonauts, the heroes sung by Demodocus, the men of old celebrated by Achilles as he sings in his tent and later on mentioned by Phoenix; all of them have been ἄνδρες – and φῶτες – either ἡμίθεοι, ἥρωες, παλαιγενεῖς, πρότεροι or ὀπλότεροι, and for the tragic poet they are now ἄνδρες ἐκτελεῖς. All in all, if the pattern(s) we have detected functioned as an achievable model in Aeschylus' mind, then the ἄνδρες in the generic resumption should be understood as the active subject of the heroic and mighty κράτος glorified in epic terms by the Chorus; they neither designate the two leaders nor the passive target of the Atridae's authority (reading ἀνδρῶν as an objective genitive).

The dactyls undoubtedly give the passage an epic quality,⁵² and after this opening the poet will seamlessly merge mimesis and narration by inserting Calchas' speech, the most composite direct speech to be preserved in a section of tragic lyric. In so doing, he imitates a narrative model regularly employed in epic and in Archaic lyric. At v. 125 the Chorus introduces the *persona loquens*

deeds of men / from a song'), where οἴμηξ introduces the subject of the narrative, i.e. the quarrel between Achilles and Odysseus.

⁴⁷ van Groningen (1958) 63: 'seul le premier mot est entièrement précis: μῆνιν et ἄνδρα offrent une synthèse, brève au possible mais foncièrement exacte, du sujet traité'; further bibliography in Latacz et al. (2000) 12.

⁴⁸ Which reminds me very distantly of the solemn opening of *Beowulf* 1–3: 'Hwæt, wē Gār-Dena in ġeārdagum, / þēodcýninga þrym ġefrūnon, / hū dā æþelingas ellen fremedon', 'Lo! the glory of the kings of the people of the Spear-Danes in days of old we have heard tell, how those princes did deeds of valour' (in J.R.R. Tolkien's translation (2014)).

⁴⁹ See Käppel (1998) 75. So rightly E. Medda (personal communication): 'trovo che Eschilo abbia costruito intenzionalmente una tensione fra approccio epico e approccio lirico alla narrazione; il primo viene proposto per essere subito "eroso" da scelte che vanno in direzione contraria; anche la trattazione dei livelli temporali non è di tipo prettamente epico (l'atto stesso del

narrare causa angoscia ai Vecchi che si rifugiano nell'Inno a Zeus'); the Chorus 'non può essere narratore epico perché non è in grado di maneggiare col distacco necessario a tale scopo il materiale incandescente della vicenda di Aulide'. Cf. also Gianvittorio (2012) 102; on the elders' shifting from an authoritative condition of clairvoyance into a status of total blindness, fear, hesitation and 'head-in-the-sand ignorance', cf. Griffith (2009) 42.

⁵⁰ G. Thomson's explanation seems exaggerated: 'ἐκτελέων means, not "men of prime", as Headlam rendered it [cf. Headlam and Pearson (1910) 182], but rather "men of perfection", the highest type of humanity, i.e. kings' (Thomson and Headlam (1938) 2.15; a *locus similis* would be Aesch. *Supp.* 524–26; this idea of 'highness' is already in Sidgwick (1881) 11).

⁵¹ Goldhill (1984) 18. According to J. Bollack in Bollack and Judet de La Combe (1981) 125–26, 'ἀνδρῶν indique bien qu'il s'agit de toute l'armée' (see already Ahrens (1860) 272: 'das ganze heer').

⁵² So Raeburn and Thomas (2011) 78.

via an ordinary procedure, although it is unusual within the lyric verses of a tragedy. The wording οὕτω δ' εἶπε τεράζων⁵³ ('and thus he spoke interpreting the portent')⁵⁴ does not reveal any intertextual link with epic, yet it allows Aeschylus to insert a speech lasting from v. 126 to v. 155. Further, Calchas' long statement ends with an utterance which also closes the mimetic section; as far as I know, there are no cases comparable to Κάλχας ... ἀπέκλαγξεν κτλ ('Calchas cried ...') in tragic lyric.⁵⁵ Instances of direct speech *in lyricis* are actually relatively infrequent in tragedy, and two of them occur in the *parodos* of *Agamemnon*.⁵⁶ At vv. 205–17, Agamemnon is torn between two conflicting choices: either obey the seer and sacrifice his daughter or betray the military alliance and save her. His speech act is again triggered by the familiar narrative device of a *verbum dicendi* followed by a participle: ἄναξ δ' ὁ πρέσβυς τόδ' εἶπε φωνῶν ('then the elder chief spoke and said').⁵⁷ What follows cannot be a part of an epic poem, but merely the lyrical account of the events which took place at Aulis;⁵⁸ however, the presence of certain narrative features throughout the song seems partly to be warranted, as it were, by the initial epic and narrative seal.

V. A conclusion

We are not in fact able to identify a precise Homeric reference (i.e. an allusion to a specific passage, or a recognizable borrowing, such as a direct quotation) in the opening verses of the Chorus' song. In traditional terms, we are perhaps dealing with more slices from the great banquets of Homer;⁵⁹ yet, as W.B. Stanford points out, 'the question now arises – what parts of Greek literature may Aeschylus be presumed to have known? According to tradition he acknowledged his debt to Homer ... By "Homer" he probably meant most of the early epic poetry'⁶⁰ (since 'Homer' was considered not only as the author of the two major poems). In the tragic poet's mind, the Ὀμήρου μεγάλα δειπνα are a corpus bigger than ours.

In this song, in which the narrative mood plays a major role, some isolated hints alluding to different forms of performance and to other genres facilitate a formally unconventional arrangement of the mythic material.⁶¹ Of course, the evidence from the entire corpus is scanty, but at vv.

⁵³ A *verbum dicendi* + agreeing participle is found at the end of Jocasta's speech in Stesich. *PMGF fr.* 222(b), 232 = *fr.* 97.232 Davies and Finglass: ὡς φάτο δῖα γυνὰ μύθοις ἀγανοῖς ἐνέποισα, 'so said the noble lady, speaking with gentle words' (tr. Campbell (1991)). See also Timoth. *Pers.*, *PMG* 791.177: φάτο δὲ κυμαίνων τύχαισιν, 'and said as he tossed in the billows of his misfortune' (tr. Campbell (1993)); unusually, [ὡς] φάτο introduces Xerxes' direct speech, while elsewhere it is used to provide closure: cf. Hordern (2002) 173–74). Other examples of *verbum dicendi* + participle are quoted by Davies and Finglass (2014) 383 and partly by Lobeck (1866) 282 (on Soph. *Aj.* 757: ὡς ἔφη λέγων): in particular cases 'unum verbum altero gravius ornatus est'. See Aesch. *Cho.* 279: πρῶτος ἔπει – Apollo is speaking in trimeters – and *Ag.* 201–02: μάντις ἐκλαγξεν προφῆρων Ἄρτεμιν, 'the prophet cried out revealing Artemis' (*scil.* as cause). On direct speech in Greek drama, see Bers (1997); concisely Rutherford (2007) 17; occurrences in Pindar and Bacchylides are listed at Hornblower (2004) 325–26.

⁵⁴ Cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 4.11: εἶπε δ' οὕτως in the *introitus* of Medea's speech to the Argonauts, 'come nell'epica' (P. Giannini in Gentili et al. (1995) 431), but 'οὕτω(ς) used to introduce a speech in place of the ὃδε, etc. commonly found in Homer ... is rare. Cf., however, Hippon. 35 W., *A. Ag.* 125 (lyr.), *E. Hel.* 1578' (Braswell

(1988) 77). In Aesch. *Ag.* 615 οὕτως is employed as a closing utterance.

⁵⁵ Vv. 156–57 are composed of six dactyls each. ἀποκλάζω is 'a rare word found only here in classical Greek, used of articulated human speech' (Schein (2009) 391; and see v. 201: μάντις ἐκλαγξεν, 'the prophet cried out').

⁵⁶ The third is in the first *stasimon*, vv. 410–26: cf. Schein (2009) 394–95; tragic examples in Fletcher (1999) 32 n.11.

⁵⁷ V. 205; on the juxtaposition of direct, quoted speech and third-person narrative as an element in common with Stesichorus (in *PMGF fr.* 222[b] = *fr.* 97 Davies and Finglass), see Ley (1993) 114–15. Agamemnon's speech lacks a closing utterance.

⁵⁸ As A.W. Verrall points out, the elders 'turn for relief to certainties, and to that which is still within their power, the narration of the past': Verrall (1889) 10; on the recollection of past events in Calchas' prophecy, see also Kyriakou (2011) 105–12; Grethlein (2013) 79–85.

⁵⁹ Ath. 8.347e = *TrGF* III T 112a: ... Αἰσχύλου, ὃς τὰς αὐτοῦ τραγωδίας τεμάχη εἶναι ἔλεγεν τῶν Ὀμήρου μεγάλων δειπνῶν.

⁶⁰ Stanford (1942) 16, and 17–27 on Homer; see also Gigli (1928) 43.

⁶¹ Gianvittorio (2012) 99–106 rightly considers this hypothesis, though with different nuances.

104–05 Aeschylus provides the Chorus with a syntactical and rhythmical apparatus that is suggestive of an epic *Stimmung*, thus directing his audience towards the (Trojan) tales and the (epic) forms he will refer to, at least partially, in the course of the song.

Since we are unable to perceive more than faded refractions of the missing *epē* (notably the lyric ones), we are forced to turn to the extant hexametric models: in the *parodos* of *Agamemnon* Aeschylus signals his affiliation to epic narrative and almost certainly to some lost citharodic lyric epic⁶² in which myths and stories are segmented and pieced together, as in the Chorus' narrative of Iphigenia's sacrifice. Here comes into (the) play a composite and emulative process of re-appropriation, as well as the re-establishment of Archaic forms of narration perceived as traditional and productive.

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⁶² On Stesichorean echoes, see also Coward (2018). As for traces of other poetic genres in the *parodos*, mostly paeanic hints, see Gruber (2009) 293–94 (the hymn to Zeus as a paean), the invocation at v. 146 and

the paean Iphigenia used to sing at home, mentioned at vv. 246–47 (with Swift (2010) 65); vv. 173–75 add an epinician flavour. See also *supra*, n.32.

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