

SHORTER NOTES

A FURTHER ALLUSION IN THE *EUMENIDES* TO THE PANATHENAIA

Allusions to the Panathenaia¹ in the final scene of the *Eumenides* have been pointed out by a number of scholars.² Headlam identified the red robes of the Eumenides (φοινικοβάπτοις ἔνδυτοις ἐσθήμασι, *E.* 1028) with the cloaks worn by the Metics in the Panathenaic procession.³ In Athena's pronouncement at 1030–1:

ὅπως ἂν εὖφρων ᾗδ' ὀμιλία χθονὸς
τὸ λοιπὸν εὐάνδροισι συμφοραῖς πρέπη

that this kindly association with the land may be distinguished henceforth by the good fortune of manly excellence

Headlam found another allusion to the ritual, described by Hesychius, in which the Metics carried bowls in the procession 'so that they might be counted as well-disposed to the city' (ἵνα ὡς εὖνοι ἀριθμῶνται),⁴ and to the contest of the εὐανδρία, in which older men distinguished by their good looks were selected to lead the procession.⁵ Mommsen first,⁶ and then Headlam more confidently,⁷ suggested that the torches, ὀλολυγμός, and singing (1043, 1047) will have evoked the 'night festival' (παννυχίς), generally thought to have immediately preceded the main procession,⁸ which set off at first light.⁹ More recently, A. M. Bowie has observed that the *Oresteia* as a whole reflects an Athenian festival cycle which moves from a period of crisis, inversion, and dissolution at Year's End to a restitution of civic, social, and divine order in the glorious New Year celebration of the Panathenaia.¹⁰ I argue here that the procession dramatized at the end of the *Eumenides* makes yet another reference to the Panathenaia through its temporal coincidence with the trial of Orestes, which recalls a similar coincidence in monthly calendar dating between the Panathenaia and the murder trials conducted on the Areopagus in historical Athens.

¹ Some recent studies of the Panathenaia: W. K. Pritchett, 'The ΠΑΝΝΥΧΙΣ of the Panathenaia', in *Φίλια ξπη εἰς Γεώργιον Ε. Μυλωνᾶν* [Mylonas] διὰ τὰ 60 ἔτη τοῦ ἀνασκαφικοῦ του ἔργου ii. (Athens, 1987), pp. 179–88; N. Robertson, 'The Origin of the Panathenaia', *RhM* 128 (1985), 231–95; N. J. Norman, 'The Panathenaic Ship', *ArchN* 12 (1983), 41–6; D. M. Lewis, 'Athena's Robe', *SCI* 5 (1979–80), 28–9; H. W. Parke, *Festivals of the Athenians* (London, 1977), pp. 33–50; J. D. Mikalson, 'Erechtheus and the Panathenaia', *AJP* 97 (1976), 141–53; idem, *The Sacred and Civil Calendar of the Athenian Year* (Princeton, 1975).

² For a list of principal contributors to this line of inquiry, see A. M. Bowie, 'Religion and Politics in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, *CQ* 43 (1993), 10–31, at p. 27.

³ W. G. Headlam, 'The Last Scene of the *Eumenides*', *JHS* 26 (1906), 268–77. See also G. Thomson and W. G. Headlam, *The Oresteia of Aeschylus* (Cambridge, 1938), pp. 232, 315–19.

⁴ Hsch., s.v. 'Σκαφηφόροι', σ 878 (IV, p. 40 Schmidt).

⁵ [Andoc.] *Alcib.* 42 (Headlam, op. cit. [n. 3], p. 274).

⁶ A. Mommsen, *Heortologie: antiquarische Untersuchungen über die städtischen Feste der Athener* (Leipzig, 1864), p. 171.

⁷ Headlam, op. cit. (n. 3), pp. 274–5.

⁸ See Pritchett, op. cit. (n. 1), pp. 179–88, for a review of the attempts to place the παννυχίς within the sequence of events at the Panathenaia, as well as an argument for the view that the παννυχίς followed the procession.

⁹ Headlam, op. cit. (n. 3), p. 275; Mommsen, op. cit. (n. 6), p. 171; *IG* ii² 334.30.

¹⁰ Bowie, op. cit. (n. 2), pp. 27–30.

I proceed from Mommsen's generally overlooked observation that both the dramatized procession of the Eumenides and the historical Panathenaic procession appear to have been conducted at approximately the same time in the Greek lunar month as were murder trials on the Areopagus.¹¹ In the *Eumenides*, the procession of the Furies immediately follows the trial of Orestes. In historical Athens, the Panathenaic procession, although it never would have fallen on exactly the same day as a murder trial,¹² was probably held during the same three-day period of the lunar month—the twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth, and twenty-ninth days—as that in which murder trials were tried by the Areopagus council.¹³

What makes this coincidence of the calendar particularly compelling, and what was overlooked by Mommsen, is that the Panathenaia appears to have been unusual among Athenian festivals in being held at the same time in the lunar month as the murder trials. Besides the Panathenaia, only one other festival in the course of the year, the Theogamia in the month of Gamelion, is known to have been held during this three-day period—from the twenty-seventh to the twenty-ninth—so late in the Greek lunar month.¹⁴ Most of the attested Athenian festivals were held in the first two weeks of their respective months.¹⁵ Therefore, by the criterion of traditional festival dates, the chances are reasonably good that the procession of the Furies in the *Eumenides* is meant to evoke the Panathenaic procession, if it is meant to evoke any historical festival at all.¹⁶

We can now more clearly imagine the significance of the Panathenaia and, accordingly, of the final scene of the *Eumenides*. In all but two of the twelve months of the Athenian year, the twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth, and twenty-ninth days of the month were *ἡμέραι ἀποφράδες* ('accursed days')¹⁷ devoted to trials of especially violent crimes. During these sombre days, the *Σεμναί* played an active role of the kind

¹¹ Mommsen, op. cit. (n. 6), pp. 18, 171.

¹² The Areopagus council tried homicide cases only on 'accursed days' (*ἡμέραι ἀποφράδες*). The Panathenaia, because it was a festival celebrating renewal and restoration, would not have been held on a day that was *ἀποφράς*. Greek cultic practice took care to draw boundaries between the two institutions which are coincident in the myth of foundation dramatized in the *Oresteia*. See D. Mikalson, op. cit. (n. 1), p. 23; idem, "*ΗΜΕΡΑ ΑΠΟΦΡΑΣ*", *AJP* 96 (1975), 19–27.

¹³ The main events of the Panathenaia, including the major procession from the Kerameikos, probably took place on the twenty-eighth day of the month of Hecatombion (Poll. 8.117; see Mommsen, op. cit. (n. 6), pp. 18, 171; L. Deubner, *Attische Feste*, ed. B. Doer, 2nd ed. [Berlin, 1966], pp. 24–5). On the scheduling of the homicide trials, see Mommsen, op. cit. (n. 6), pp. 18, 171.

¹⁴ Mikalson, op. cit. (n. 1), pp. 106–7, 188. W. F. Rink, *Die Religion der Hellenen* (Zurich, 1855), pp. 233–4, had observed correctly that festivals were generally not held during the twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth, and twenty-ninth days of the month, but recognized that the Panathenaia would constitute an exception to this general rule. Concluding that Proclus or his sources had made a mistake in his statement that the main events of the Panathenaia occurred on the 28th of the month (*τὰ γὰρ μεγάλα τοῦ Ἑκατομβαιῶνος ἐγένετο τρίτῃ ἀπινόντος* *In Ti.* 1.26), Rink suggested emending *ἀπινόντος* to *μεσοῦντος*, a remedy which is surely too drastic and has not been accepted.

¹⁵ Mikalson, op. cit. (n. 1), p. 188.

¹⁶ The dramatized procession and the historical procession seem to show certain other parallel associations with the Areopagus. The historical procession, like its dramatized counterpart, may have originated on or near the Areopagus. Mommsen, op. cit. (n. 6), pp. 18, 171, argued that the all night festival generally thought to precede immediately the main procession of the Panathenaia, the *παννυχίς* [though see Pritchett, op. cit. (n. 1), 179–88], took place on the Areopagus. Pausanias (1.29.1) mentions that the cart which bore the *πέπλος* in the historical procession was stored near the Areopagus for tourists to see.

¹⁷ See note 12 above.

that Aeschylus has given the Furies in the play.¹⁸ The *Σεμναί* were traditionally offered sacrifices by those who had been acquitted of charges of murder.¹⁹ In the traditional symbolism and even in the scheduling of the historical murder trials, the goddesses assumed a status of fundamental importance. A scholiast to Aeschines (1.188) tells us that

οἱ Ἀρεοπαγῖται τρεῖς πού τοῦ μηνὸς ἡμέρας τὰς φονικὰς δίκας ἐδίκάζον, ἐκάστη τῶν θεῶν μίαν ἡμέραν ἀπονέμοντες.

The Areopagites apparently tried cases of murder on three days of the month, allotting one day to each of the goddesses.

Not only, according to the scholiast's account, was each trial day allocated to one of the Furies; but also the total number of trial days seems to have been based upon the traditional number of their band: three.²⁰ Insofar as it was one of only two festivals to interrupt the proceedings of these murder trials, the Panathenaia would have been welcomed as a rare and pleasant diversion that filled these unusually sorrowful days of the month with joyful and optimistic celebration.

Thus, the final scene of the *Eumenides* reflects a pattern of custom and festival that would have been familiar to Athenians: at the end of Aeschylus' trilogy, as at the end of the month of Hecatombion in historical Athens, the trial of murder attended by angry spirits of vengeance gives way to a joyful celebration of civic unity.²¹

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¹⁸ A. H. Sommerstein, *Aeschylus: Eumenides* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 11, points out that Aeschylus is probably innovating here in linking Furies with *Σεμναί*.

¹⁹ ἐνταῦθα θύουσι μὲν ὅσοις ἐν Ἀρείῳ πάγῳ τὴν αἰτίαν ἐξεγένετο ἀπολύσασθαι, θύουσι δὲ καὶ ἄλλως ξένοι τε ὁμοίως καὶ ἄστοί (Paus. 1.28.6). See Sommerstein, pp. 10–11.

²⁰ Three as the traditional number of the Furies: Schol. in Aeschin. 1.188 ταῖς Σέμναις] τρεῖς ἦσαν, ὧν τὰς μὲν δύο τὰς ἐκατέρωθεν Σκόπας ὁ Πάριος πεποίηκεν ἐκ τῆς λυκνίτου λίθου, τὴν δὲ μέσσην Κάλυμνος; Pol. Fr. 41 (K. Muller, *FHG* iii. 108); see Preller–Robert i. 837.

²¹ I would like to thank Heinrich von Staden, A. Thomas Cole, John Dugan, and Brian Fuchs for their helpful suggestions and criticisms.

HISTORY AS LUNCH: ARISTOPHANES, *KNIGHTS* 810–19

- Πα. οὐκουν δεινὸν ταυτί σε λέγειν δῆτ' ἔστ' ἐμὲ καὶ διαβάλλειν 810
 πρὸς Ἀθηναίους καὶ τὸν δῆμον, πεποιηκότα πλείονα χρηστά,
 νῆ τὴν Δήμητρα, Θεμιστοκλέους πολλῶ περὶ τὴν πόλιν ἤδη;
 Αλ. ὦ πόλις Ἄργους, κλύεθ' οἷα λέγει. σὺ Θεμιστοκλεῖ ἀντιφερίζεις;
 ὃς ἐποίησεν τὴν πόλιν ἡμῶν μεστὴν εὐρῶν ἐπιχειλῆ, 815
 καὶ πρὸς τούτοις ἀριστώσῃ τὸν Πειραιᾶ προσέμαξεν,
 ἀφελὼν τ' οὐδὲν τῶν ἀρχαίων ἰχθύς καινοὺς παρέθηκεν.
 σὺ δ' Ἀθηναίους ἐζήτησας μικροπολίτας ἀποφῆναι
 διατειχίζων καὶ χρησιμῶδαν, ὃ Θεμιστοκλεῖ ἀντιφερίζων.
 κἀκείνος μὲν φεύγει τὴν γῆν, σὺ δ' Ἀχιλλείων ἀπομάττει.

In this passage the Sausage-Seller is commenting disparagingly on the boast of Paphlagon/Cleon that he has done far more good for Athens ('the city') than Themistocles ever did. In lines 814–16 the Sausage-Seller seems to allude to certain laudable actions on the part of Themistocles, which greatly benefitted the city, and in 817–18, by contrast, he sets against these an allegedly deleterious recent proposal/activity of Paphlagon/Cleon.

The allusions, however, are not made in a simple, straightforward fashion. As happens so often in *Knights*, they are set in the context of a metaphor, the terminology