

This third category takes up about 5 per cent of the Iliadic text, whereas 50 per cent is focalized and narrated by the narrator and 45 per cent by speaking characters (direct speech). Thus, the fact that 14 of Mr Griffin's ca. 40 exceptions appear in embedded focalization, which is ten times less frequent than 'simple' narrator-text (5 per cent against 50 per cent), points to a significant pattern.

My interpretation of the exceptions as embedded focalization only strengthens Mr Griffin's thesis that the emotional and evaluative elements in Homer are largely restricted to the characters. Does this mean that I agree with him that the Homeric style (in the narrated parts of the poems) is 'objective' (p. 36), 'impersonal' (40), 'uniform and dispassionate' (46)? If one takes 'style' in a restricted sense, *viz.* as pertaining to vocabulary only, I might agree, but not heartily (why is the war so frequently called πολύδακρυς, αἰματοίεις etc. and only seldom κυδιάνειρα and then mostly by characters: does this not imply a personal interpretation by the narrator?). But if one understands 'style' more broadly in the sense of 'mode of presentation' (as Mr Griffin himself does on p. 46), I disagree. To argue this point more substantially lies beyond the scope of this note and I refer to my book mentioned in note 2.

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### Battle Narrative and Politics in Aeschylus' Persae

In *JHS* cvii (1987), I argued that the Festival of the Great Dionysia needed to be seen in the context of fifth-century Athenian culture and that the plays which make up a major part of this festival could be seen as offering a profoundly questioning attitude towards what might be called fifth-century Athenian democratic *polis* ideology. One play which seems to fit uneasily into that description of Athenian tragedy—as indeed it fits uneasily into many general arguments about Athenian theatre—is Aeschylus' *Persae*. In this brief paper I want to suggest some ways in which the social and political context I outlined in my earlier paper may help us to understand certain elements of the *Persae* which have worried critics.

Although the *Persae* is, of course, the only extant tragedy whose plot is concerned with contemporary events,<sup>1</sup> there are elements that make 'history play' a misleading term to apply.<sup>2</sup> It is, like most other

<sup>1</sup> We know little of Phrynichus' *Sack of Miletus*, or of his *Phoenissae*, on which the *Persae* is said to be based (by the Hypothesis). Other 'historical tragedies' (e.g. Moschion's *Themistocles*, Philicus' *Themistocles*) are fourth century or later.

<sup>2</sup> Much criticism has focused on the nature of this 'historical writing'. In general, see e.g. R. Winnington-Ingram, *Studies in Aeschylus* (Cambridge 1983) 1–15; H. Kitto, *Greek tragedy*<sup>2</sup> (London 1961) 33–45, 'Political thought in Aeschylus', *Dioniso* xliii (1969) 160–5 and, in particular, *Poiesis* (Berkeley 1966) 74–115; M. Gagarin, *Aeschylean drama* (Berkeley 1976) 46–50; H. Broadhead, *The Persae of Aeschylus* (Cambridge 1960) xv ff.; D. Conacher, 'Aeschylus' *Persae*: a literary commentary', in *Seria Turyniana* (Urbana, Chicago, London 1974) 143–68; R. Lattimore, 'Aeschylus on the defeat of Xerxes', in

tragedies, set in and largely concerned with a place that is not Athens, and it involves characters who are other than Athenian citizens—females, barbarians, kings etc.<sup>3</sup> The narrative, moreover, as various critics have pointed out, is specifically 'theological', that is, the events of the recent past are seen in terms of divine causation, a divine punishment.<sup>4</sup> The *Persians* provide for the Athenian audience an *exemplum*, so critics have argued, of the need to avoid *hubris*. As often in Athenian culture, the East constitutes a privileged locus of what is different from Athenian society,<sup>5</sup> which is used to articulate concerns and positive values about the Athenians' own selves—the logic of the negative *exemplum*. The extensive *kommos* for such a defeated enemy is less easy to fit into such a description of the play, however, and critics have been led to describe it as 'satire' or even *Schadenfreude*.<sup>6</sup> The sympathy—not to mention 'pity' and 'fear'—that one would normally associate with mourning might be seen rather as part of Aeschylus' turning the narrative away from a simple extolling of Athens' victory over the Persians towards the wider concerns of the theological or moral drama. It is not so much the fact of triumph as the factors that have led to triumph that interest Aeschylus.

One of these factors that has been too rarely discussed is the theme of power and its correct use particularly in a political context—a typically Aeschylean concern. The *Oresteia* leads from the question of *dike* in the house of Atreus to its conclusion in the *dike* of the *polis*—the 'just city' of Plato's search. The *Septem* dramatizes the leader of the city, a man who fights for the city, being ruined in part by the curse of his *oikos*. The *Suppliants* not only focuses on the tensions and ambiguities of the terms *κράτος* and *κύριος*, but also has one of the most explicit and most discussed exchanges on political system and power (*Supp.* 365 ff.). The *Prometheus Bound*, if perhaps not by Aeschylus, is Aeschylean at

*Classical Studies in Honor of W. A. Oldfather* (Urbana 1943) 82–93; H. Lloyd-Jones, *The justice of Zeus*<sup>2</sup> (Berkeley 1983) 88–9. For attempts to tie the play closely to a specific political situation, see F. Stoessel, 'Aeschylus as a political thinker', *AJP* lxxiii (1952) 113–39; A. Podlecki, *The political background of Aeschylean tragedy* (Michigan 1966) who both see the play as written expressly to support Themistocles. For more general attempts to relate the play to a political background, see V. di Benedetto, *L'Ideologia del potere e la tragedia Greca* (Turin 1978) 3–43; G. Paduano, *Sui Persiani di Eschilo problemi di focalizzazione drammatica* (Rome 1978) *passim*, especially 1–27, 71–84.

<sup>3</sup> For discussion and bibliography on Athenian self-definition and its importance in tragedy, see S. Goldhill, *Reading Greek tragedy* (Cambridge 1986), especially 57–78, and now F. Zeitlin, 'Playing the Other: theater, theatricality and the feminine in Greek drama', *Representations* xi (1985) 63–94.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Winnington-Ingram (n. 2) 1–15; H. Kitto, *Greek tragedy*<sup>2</sup> (London 1961) 33–45; Paduano (n. 2) 71–84; Benedetto (n. 2) 3–43; Gagarin (n. 2) 46–50; Conacher (n. 2) 163–8; E. Holtsmark, 'Ring composition and the *Persae* of Aeschylus', *SO* xlv (1970) 23; M. Anderson, 'The imagery of the *Persians*', *GR* xix (1972) 166–74.

<sup>5</sup> See in particular F. Hartog, *Le miroir d'Hérodote* (Paris 1980); S. Pembroke, 'Women in charge: the function of alternatives in early Greek tradition and the ancient idea of matriarchy', *Journal of Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* xxx (1967) 1–35.

<sup>6</sup> So, for example, Blomfield, quoted by Broadhead (n. 2) xv; A. Sidgwick, *Aeschylus' Persae* (Oxford 1903) ad 847; A. Prickard, *The Persae of Aeschylus* (London 1928) xxviii. For a more balanced view, see Gagarin (n. 2) 84–6.



luxury of the East is a *topos* of Greek views of the barbarians (cf. the queen's remarks 159–72). But the chorus' response adds a further important point. For the 'spring of silver, treasure of the soil' (240) has been taken at least since the scholia to refer to the mines at Laurium and Thoricus.<sup>18</sup> Herodotus vii 144 states that Themistocles persuaded the Athenians to spend this new wealth on ships rather than themselves.<sup>19</sup> It was, he comments, the saving of Greece to have turned Athens into a maritime power (ἀναγκάσας θαλασσίους γένεσθαι Ἀθηναίους). Before the narrative of the sea-battle which saves Greece, the text hints at the income—and its distribution—which made such a victory possible. The opposition between the personal luxury of the Persians and the common expenditure of the Athenians on their fleet adds another element to the constructed opposition of Athenian and barbarian.

The queen's next question specifies still further the relation between Athenian power and its system: who rules their army?<sup>20</sup> If ποιμάνωρ echoes the Homeric ruler's relation to his men (e.g. ποιμένα λαῶν), the *hapax* ἐπιδουλοῦν slants the enquiry towards a suggestion of a more tyrannical rule (cf. *Eum.* 527, 696, where δουλοῦν is one of the extremes of political system to be avoided). The chorus' stirring response does not merely mean that the Athenians are slaves to no external man (ὑπήκοοι 242 significantly echoes ὑπήκοος 234), but also implies the democratic system of joint decision making, collective authority, as the queen's following remark makes clear. For her assumption that men without a single ruler cannot fight well points to the regular opposition of monarchy (tyranny) and democracy as alternative systems of power (so important also in Herodotus; cf. e.g. Her. vii 103 for the same point that a single ruler is necessary for military and political order—made there by Xerxes).<sup>21</sup> The chorus' final assertion of the sufficiency of the Athenian force and the queen's apt expression of worry add a suitably pessimistic note to herald the arrival of the messenger.

This exchange, then, does not merely praise the Athenians but, more importantly, praises them through

a series of oppositions that relate closely to the sense of Athenian ideology I discussed in *JHS* cvii. It is as a hoplite citizen army and navy, state-funded, and in its collective values essentially linked to the practice and principles of the democratic *polis*, that the Athenians' military sufficiency is discussed here, immediately before the narrative which demonstrates the results of such sufficiency.<sup>22</sup>

The emphasis on the difference between Persians and Greeks has been already prepared for in the development of the scene towards this exchange. Atossa's dream (176 ff.) articulates the disjunction between Greek and Persian, of course, how they cannot be yoked together (an image picked up in the yoking of the Hellespont).<sup>23</sup> But the queen's conclusion puts this difference in interesting terms (211–14):

εὖ γὰρ ἴστε, παῖς ἐμός  
πράξας μὲν εὖ θαυμαστός ἂν γένοιτ' ἄνηρ,  
κακῶς δὲ πράξας οὐχ ὑπεύθυνος πόλει,  
σωθῆεις δ' ὁμοίως τῆσδε κοιρανεῖ χθονός.

Here, too, critics (e.g. Schütz, who is rejected by Broadhead) have suggested that the connection between this conclusion and the queen's earlier remarks is weak. Again, however, her language points to the underlying political dimension of the opposition of Greek and Persian. The Persian king is οὐχ ὑπεύθυνος πόλει. To be ὑπεύθυνος and specifically ὑπεύθυνος πόλει is the mark of the Athenian political system.<sup>24</sup> It is the mark of monarchy to be without such checks (as Herodotus writes, iii 80 μουναρχίῃ τῇ ἕξεται ἀπευθύνω ποιέειν τὰ βούλεται [cf. *Soph. Ant.* 506–7]). If Xerxes survives, the queen concludes, 'he will rule this land in the same way'. It is precisely the nature of Xerxes' rule that is brought to the fore.

Darius emphasizes a different aspect of this rule. On the one hand, he stresses how Persia is ruled (note σκήπτρον εὐθυντήριον 764, echoing 213) by a single man (762–4):

<sup>18</sup> See e.g. Podlecki (n. 2) 15, and Winnington-Ingram, *Gnomon* xxxix (1967) 641–3. Verrall sees a similar reference at *Eum.* 945–6 γόνος . . . πλουτόχθον.

<sup>19</sup> See Labarbe (n. 16) *passim*. Even if evidence for 'Themistocles' law' is not conclusive, it is difficult to account for the rapid and great rise in Athenian naval power without assuming a conscious diversion of state funds.

<sup>20</sup> Broadhead asks pertinently if σπράτω here means 'people' (as at e.g. *Eum.* 569); certainly the overlap of citizen and soldier makes such a rendering easy.

<sup>21</sup> Winnington-Ingram (n. 2) 7 writes 'Herodotus is the best commentator on the first half of the *Persae*, giving us the range of ideas within which the Aeschylean characters are moving.' The opposition of tyranny and democracy is particularly evident in later fifth-century writing, but the early and continued importance of the tyrannies as founders of democracy—a patently untrue assertion—demonstrates the role of tyranny from the earliest days of democracy as the always-to-be-rejected alternative. See M. Taylor, *The Tyrant slayers: the heroic image in fifth-century B.C. Athenian art* (New York 1981), who sees a cult of Aristogiton and Harmodius as stemming from 'a need to reverence the city state' 193. On tyrants and tragedy, see D. Lanza (n. 7) 1–32, 95–159; H. Berve, *Die Tyrannis bei den Griechen* (Munich 1967) 190–4; G. Cerri, 'Antigone, Creonte e l'idea della tirannide nell'Atene del V secolo', *QUCC* x (1982) 137–55; and in particular G. Cerri, *Il linguaggio politico nel Prometeo di Eschilo: Saggio di semantica* (Rome 1975).

<sup>22</sup> Each element of this exchange is picked up, however briefly, in the messenger's words. The number of the Persians before the battle and then dead is repeatedly stressed (e.g. 272, 432, and the repetition of πλῆθος and related words at 272, 334, 337, 342, 352, 429, 432; cf. H. Avery 'Dramatic devices in Aeschylus' *Persians*', *AJP* lxxxv (1964) 174–7); and the contrast in numbers between Greeks and Persians is forcibly made (337 ff., 352). The insufficiency of the bow is declared (278), and the role of wealth is hinted at in the language of 250–2. The single leader apart from his troops is perhaps picked up at 465 ff. in the picture of Xerxes watching the disaster from the high bank (467) near the sea. That the Athenians are called slaves to no man is perhaps echoed in their cry of ἐλευθεροῦτε πατρίδ', ἐλευθεροῦτε . . . (403).

<sup>23</sup> On the imagery of yoking, see O. Taplin, *The stagecraft of Aeschylus* (Oxford 1977) 78; B. Fowler, 'Aeschylus' imagery', *CEM* xxviii (1967) 3–10; Anderson (n. 4) 167–8; Winnington-Ingram (n. 2) 11.

<sup>24</sup> See J. Lembke and C. Herington, *Aeschylus' Persians* (Oxford 1981) ad 343, who rightly note that Zeus, whose justice for many critics determines the narrative, is called εὐθυνος at 828; *n.b.* also εὐθυντήριον 724, discussed below. G. E. M. de Ste-Croix *The class struggle in the ancient Greek world* (London 1981) 285 writes 'It was a fundamental principle of democracy that everyone who exercised any power should be *hypethynos*, subject to *euthyna*, the examination of his conduct (and audit of his accounts) which every official had to undergo, at Athens and most if not all other democracies, at the end of his term of office, normally one year.' He adds in a footnote (601 n. 11) that critics of democracy were not fond of remarking on this aspect of democratic power.

ἔξ οὔτε τιμήν Ζεὺς ἀναξ τήνδ' ὤπασεν,  
 ἔν' ἀνδρ' ἀπάσης Ἀσίδος μηλοτρόφου  
 ταγεῖν ἔχοντα σκήπτρον εὐθυτήριον.

So, the catalogue that follows (765–86) is a named list of individual rulers (such as could never be constructed for the democratic *polis*). On the other hand, he distinguishes between the individual rulers in terms of their behaviour particularly with regard to the gods. So Cyrus is emphasized as a fortunate man whom the gods respect for his good sense (767–72), while Mardos and Artaphernes are distinguished for their disgraceful conduct (774–6). Here Aeschylus is concerned also to place the historical and genealogical narrative within a theological and moral framework. Darius, although a single ruler who too had attacked Greece, acts as a foil to his son. The young man (νέος 782; cf. *P.V.* 35, 309–10, on Zeus as νέος τύραννος) and his recklessness are set in opposition to the now divine father, who is treated by the chorus and queen as a figure of great respect. The contrast between the entrance of the ghost and the entrance of Xerxes is marked.<sup>25</sup>

The opposition of Greek and Persian is strongly evident, of course, in the messenger's description of the battles themselves. The Greeks' well-omened song (388–9) is a holy paian (393) which leads to their famous cry of freedom (402–6). The Persians raise in opposition a ῥόθος of noise (as befits οἱ βάρβαροι according to the usual derivation of the term). The Greeks advance εὐτάκτως . . . κόσμῳ (399–400), the Persians flee ἀκόσμως (421). The Greeks encircle οὐκ ἀφρασμόνως (417), the Persians are unable to assist each other (414).<sup>26</sup> In the following action, the Persians flee ἀκόσμῳ ξὺν φυγῇ (470) and take οὐκ εὐκοσμον . . . φυγῆν (481). The order of the Greeks is stressed, then, whereas the troops under a monarch are in military disarray. But one of the most marked differences in the descriptions of Persian and Greek is in the use of names. At three points in the play, there are lengthy lists of Persian names, both of individuals and of races (see 12–58, 302–29, 950–1001);<sup>27</sup> no individual Greek is named, and only Athens of the Greek cities. This fact has often been remarked on and there have been numerous explanations suggested. Lattimore sees it as part of the emphasis on the enormity of the Persian losses.<sup>28</sup> Kitto regards it as focussing attention on the theological and moral structure of ideas in the play by understressing any Greek's personal involvement.<sup>29</sup> Broadhead, who

regards Aeschylus as quite impartial, writes: 'This reticence was wholly fitting in a play that was to be primarily the presentation of the Persian tragedy as seen through Persian eyes'.<sup>30</sup> Both the exotic sound of the names, and the heroic aspect of such named-filled battle narratives have been commented on. There is, however, a further element here. In talking of Athenian military ideology, I mentioned the values of collectivity, so important for the hoplite phalanx of the democratic *polis*. In particular, the anonymity of the soldiers in the Funeral Oration's eulogy was discussed with regard to Nicole Loraux's research.<sup>31</sup> I argued that it was important for the democratic *polis* in general and for the citizen army as a key element in the democratic *polis* that even in such a fiercely competitive society as fifth-century Athens the individual was seen in an essential way as being defined by his contribution to the *polis*. That is, the subsumption of the individual into the collectivity of the *polis* is a basic factor in fifth-century Athenian democratic ideology. This may provide an interesting light in which to view the anonymity of the Greek soldiers in the *Persae*. It is as if they are being portrayed as a unified, collective body (which can be contrasted with the lists of Persian contingents, Persian dead, and Persian kings). Although the Persian disaster is certainly seen as a disaster for the whole land (cf. e.g. 249–55, 531 ff, especially 548–9),<sup>32</sup> the queen can still talk of the 'great light' and 'day from night' that shines for her house because Xerxes is still alive (300–1); and the catalogue of fallen leaders, where, for example, Syennesis is singled out for praise (325–7), contrasts markedly with the κῦδος (455) that the Greek ships together win. The triumph of the Greek forces is a collective victory, as, indeed, the battle narrative was introduced by a dialogue which stressed such collective values over and against rule by one man. Perhaps, then, the contrast between the name-filled descriptions of the Persians and the anonymous collective view of the Greeks should be seen as part of the wider contrast

<sup>30</sup> (n. 2) xx. For further bibliography and discussion see Paduano (n. 2) 52 n. 3.

<sup>31</sup> *JHS* cvii (1987) 65–7. The connection between the anonymity of the ἐπιτάφιοι and the *Persae* is briefly mentioned by M. Pohlenz, *Die griechische Tragödie* (Leipzig and Berlin 1930) 51. As Loraux remarks, there are exceptions to the general rule of anonymity. In *Lysias* ii 42, and ii 52, Themistocles and then Myronides are mentioned by name. Both, however, are not contemporary military figures being buried, but characters from the past history of Athens (and hence R. Seager [e.g.] *JHS* lxxxvii [1967] may be wrong to see contemporary party political significance in the failure to name Conon in this speech). The later example of Hyperides offers a more interesting case (discussed at length by Loraux, *L'invention d'Athènes* [Paris 1981] esp. 110–13). For Hyperides' speech contains an extensive ἔπαινος of Leosthenes, the general, quite out of keeping with earlier ἐπιτάφιοι. Loraux relates this to a move away from democratic norms towards the cult of the 'great man' (and presumably an early example of what becomes the norm in Hellenistic eulogy). Certainly it is easy to see some unease on Hyperides' part, especially when he writes vi 15: καὶ μηδεὶς ὑπολάβη με τῶν ἄλλων πολιτῶν μηδένα λόγον ποιῆσθαι, [ἀλλά] Λεωσθένη μόνον ἐγκωμιάζειν. συμβαίνει γὰρ τὸν Λεωσθένους ἔπαινον [ἐπι] ταῖς μάχαις ἐγκωμίων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων πολιτῶν εἶναι. The difference between our examples of fifth- and early fourth-century democratic ἐπιτάφιοι and the epic or, say, Herodotean narratives with their concern for individual κλέος remains extremely important, despite these examples.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Gagrin (n. 2) 44.

<sup>25</sup> See Taplin (n. 23) 121–7, especially 126. On Darius and Xerxes, see S. Saïd, 'Darius et Xerxes dans les *Perses*', *KTEMA* vi (1981) 17–38.

<sup>26</sup> Pace J. Quincey in *CQ* xii (1962) 184, who calls this reading of ἀρωγῇ 'landlubberly'.

<sup>27</sup> On the relations between these three catalogues see U. Albin, 'Lettura dei *Persiani* di Eschilo', *PP* xxii (1967) 256; Holtsmark (n. 4) 20; Paduano (n. 2) 72. I have not the space here to discuss the relevant and complex issues of the relations between lists and epic narrative and the claims of κλέος, or of the relations between lists, naming and mourning.

<sup>28</sup> (n. 2) 90.

<sup>29</sup> (n. 4) 33–45. A common view: see e.g. G. Murray, *Aeschylus, the creator of tragedy* (Oxford 1940) 126, who writes 'If one Greek general had been named the play would have become modern and been exposed to all the small, temporary emotions of the immediate present, the gratified vanity, the annoyance, the inevitable criticism.' I hope to be showing how the *Persae* is modern, though without the flaws Murray fears.

between Greeks (or more specifically Athenians) and barbarians in terms of political and military systems. Aeschylus' *Persae* seems to suggest that the Greeks are victorious not only because of the gods, not only because of Persian *hubris*, but also because of the values of democratic *collectivity*, embodied in Athens, as opposed to barbarian tyranny.<sup>33</sup>

If this is true, we see in the *Persae* the first written indications of what will become a major topic of fifth-century rhetoric, namely, the linked oppositions of tyranny and democracy, barbarian and Athenian. And typically enough, this is to be seen in the light of the developing *polis* ideology and the military values with which such ideology is necessarily linked. The narrative of the city's recent triumph may seem at first sight a surprising subject for a tragedy,<sup>34</sup> but in its interests in such a constellation of ideas the *Persae* may seem at least closer to other works written for the Great Dionysia.

To write a *kommos* for a defeated enemy (especially a *kommos* for the Persian invaders to be performed in a public Athenian festival) is in itself a remarkable event, and this is perhaps not sufficiently emphasized by critics.<sup>35</sup> (It is difficult to imagine anything similar in the years following the first or second world war, to take a perhaps tendentious example.) To insist that the fighting itself must be seen within a framework of a divine plan, a moral order and indeed a contrast of social and political systems is further evidence to suggest that the *Persae* is concerned to develop a complex understanding of the recent events of Athenian history, and to raise questions about a response to the victory. The *Persae* may not demonstrate the ironic questioning of a Euripides, but it is not hard to see it investigating attitudes within the *polis* to the recent victory, not least in the tension between the lauding of Athens and the values that led to triumph, and the extensive *mourning* for the enemy victims of that triumph. Nor is it hard to imagine a variety of reactions to its performance, as critics have reacted to it so variously since.<sup>36</sup> As such,

<sup>33</sup> It is interesting to note that the battle's success is preceded by a trick (δόλον 361) by a single Greek man, which is concerning, if not in, the night; cf. P. Vidal-Naquet, *Le chasseur noir* (Paris 1983) 125–74. If the Persians and monarchy provide a contrast by which to understand the democratic, hoplitic collectivity, so perhaps the δόλος of an individual (though still unnamed) Greek provides a different contrast by which the military values of the play are developed.

<sup>34</sup> It was Wilamowitz (*Hermes* xxxiii [1898] 382–98) who first suggested—and then recanted—that it was so surprising, that we should consider the *Persae* to have been written first and foremost for production in Sicily.

<sup>35</sup> Though see the sensible comments of Gagarin (n. 2) 84–6. A complex model of weeping with (though not precisely for) an enemy is provided by the end of the *Iliad* in Achilles' tears for his father and Patroclus, shared with Priam's tears for Hector (*Il.* xxiv 471 ff., esp. 507–12). The *communitas*—and individualism—of mourning in Homer's scene in the tent and at night between two enemy warriors seems importantly different, however, from the public festival's representation of a *kommos* for a defeated invader and sacker of the (still ruined?) Athens. If sympathy for others is part of the 'tragic experience', it is none the less part of what I see as Aeschylus' boldness in this play to place an audience in the position of discovering tragic sympathy for such an 'other' as the Persian invaders. It is in the variety of possible reactions to such boldness—and what such variations imply for the self-definition of the Athenian audience—that a major part of the 'questioning' of the *Persae* lies.

<sup>36</sup> Winnington-Ingram (n. 2) 15 seems to me to show less than his usual awareness when he writes 'The interpretation of the East–West

relations . . . does not seem to go much further than might be expected from an intelligent Greek of the time. Morally, it is a study in black and white, and so lacks subtlety.' For a somewhat simplistic view of a possible audience reaction to the play, see Gagarin (n. 2) 51–6.

the *Persae* may be more easily appreciable as a tragedy for the Great Dionysia than has sometimes been suggested.<sup>37</sup>

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relations . . . does not seem to go much further than might be expected from an intelligent Greek of the time. Morally, it is a study in black and white, and so lacks subtlety.' For a somewhat simplistic view of a possible audience reaction to the play, see Gagarin (n. 2) 51–6.

<sup>37</sup> Thanks to Robin Osborne for all his help.

### A Monument from Sinope (PLATE VIa)

In the course of investigating the Pontic region under Byzantium, Anthony Bryer and David Winfield have rescued from oblivion a monument from Sinope of much earlier date.<sup>1</sup> 'Excavations for a gas pump not far west of the walls . . . brought to light an altar made of a stumpy fluted Doric column. A clean-cut inscription carved on two successive flutings reads:

ΔΕΛΦΙΝΙΟΣ

ΟΡΓΙΑΛΕΟΣ

The splayed sigmas suggest a late classical date. The inscription is not otherwise published and the whereabouts of the altar is now unknown.<sup>2</sup>

The object was evidently not very large (the authors elsewhere call it a 'pedestal'). Several indications show that it was not primarily an altar, though it may have been used for modest sacrifices, but a columnar funerary monument. These objects are best known from Hellenistic Athens, where they came into use after Demetrius of Phaleron's sumptuary legislation.<sup>3</sup> At Sinope in 1950 Peter Fraser and the late George Bean saw eighteen funerary monuments of early date. Eleven were columnar, the tallest being 68 cm high and 49 cm in diameter, the smallest 44 cm and 22 cm. Five were fluted with the names inscribed along the fluting, as here. This is the series to which the new stone belongs, and perhaps all come from the same early cemetery west of the city.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to several helpers. Anthony Bryer and David Winfield informed me about the circumstances of discovery of the stone to be discussed, and the latter also supplied the photograph shown here as Plate VIa. Peter Fraser generously gave me a full record of similar stones which he saw in Sinope in 1950 and discussed the names on this one. Homer Thompson guided me on some archaeological points.

<sup>2</sup> Anthony Bryer and David Winfield, *The Byzantine monuments and topography of the Pontos*, *Dumbarton Oaks Studies* xx (Washington, D.C. 1985), 87 with Pl. 25b (identical to Pl. VIa here).

<sup>3</sup> J. Kirchner, 'Αρχ. Έφ. (1937) 338–40.

<sup>4</sup> Information and several photographs kindly supplied by Peter Fraser; however, David Winfield tells me that he could find no other stones on the site. Of the eighteen stones, the earliest was published by E. Akurgal, *Zwei Grabstelen vorklassischer Zeit aus Sinope*, (*Winckelmannsprogramm des Arch. Ges. zu Berlin* cxi [1955]) 10–13, cf. H. Hiller, *Ionische Grabreliefs, Ist. Mitt. Beih.* xii (1975) 60, with Pl. 12.2; on the inscription, J. and L. Robert, *Bull. épigr.* (1956) 308, (1959) 430. A second, a plain column with the names again inscribed vertically, was illustrated by Bean in *Türk Tarih Kurumu Belleten* xxix (1965) 594 fig. 3 (*Bull. épigr.* [1968] 532).