

Author(s): John Peradotto

Reviewed work(s): Aeschylus Homericus: Untersuchungen zu den Homerismen der aischyleischen Sprache by Alexander Sideras

Source: *The Classical Journal*, Vol. 69, No. 4, (Apr. - May, 1974), pp. 377-379

Published by: The Classical Association of the Middle West and South, Inc.

its origin and nature: between the *agon* . . . and the *syzygy* . . ." (p. 68).

The second study is brief (pp. 73-102). The author, after a scrutiny of available archaeological and literary evidence, affirms that choruses of men dressed as animals, or riding on animals, gave performances in Attica in the sixth century; that they danced and sang to the accompaniment of flute music; that there is some evidence that a non-dancing person may have on occasion appeared with them, either as an antagonist (introducing a kind of *agon*) or as a "friend of the chorus"; and that the choruses played a role in the development of Attic comedy, which proceeded to use animal choruses frequently until the fourth century. He summarizes various theories as to the original nature of the choruses — e.g., that they represented theriomorphic demons, or were begging processions, etc. — but concludes that evidence is too scarce for any valid decision as to their religious or totemistic significance.

The reviewer was particularly interested in the opinion of one scholar (H. Reich) cited by Professor Sifakis — viz., that "the animal choruses danced in the same way as all other choruses of comedy, and did not imitate the movements of animals, for the mimetic animal dance is always a solo dance, never a choral one," and that "a fish or ant dance is unthinkable (even as a solo)" (p. 83). Sifakis remarks cautiously that this statement "is debatable." A more detailed presentation of an opposing view may be found in "Ichthyes Choreutai," *Classical Philology* 36 (1941) 142-155.

In his second study the author has commented upon the fact that the sixth-century choruses, and, later, those in comedy as well, seem often to have appeared before the spectators "wearing enormous cloaks," which they dropped at an appropriate moment. In an appendix entitled "To Strip," he follows up the matter of the "dropping of the himation," and, indeed, of more intimate garments as well. (Incidentally, he makes no reference to, or comparison with, similar "stripping" on the modern stage!) He reviews and discusses the various reasons for the action which have been offered by scholiast and scholars — e.g., "to permit the chorus to dance freely and vigorously"; "to reveal the disguise of the chorus at a very apt moment"; to enable the chorus to fight; to "strip off" the dramatic character of the *choreutai* in the parabasis so that they may "address the spectators as fellow-citizens," etc. He points out that "the only instance in which we find the chorus undressing without apparent reason is in the parabasis of the *Acharnians*" (line 626).

In each of the studies, Professor Sifakis makes a strong case for his interpretation of such evidence as we have. Although the last word on either subject may never be said, students of the Greek drama will certainly find his book thought-provoking and challenging.

LILLIAN B. LAWLER

Hunter College, City University of New York

*Aeschylus Homericus: Untersuchungen zu den Homerismen der aischyleischen Sprache.* ("Hypomnemata 31.") By ALEXANDER SIDERAS. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1971. Pp. 311. DM 78.

This book is a shortened version of the author's Göttingen dissertation, done under the direction of Karl Deichgräber. Based largely on recent editions and commentaries of Aeschylus, especially those of Groeneboom and Fraenkel, it sets itself the task of determining the extent to which Aeschylean diction relies on Homer, and the results which this reliance has on choice of words and phrases as well as syntactical and broader stylistic usage: to determine, in short, how many and how choice are those Aeschylean *τεμάχη* from Homer's great banquets.

Among so-called "direct" Homerisms the author lists (1) individual words such as *αὐτή, κεῦθος, νέμεσις, πραπίδες, ἄωτος, θυμοβόρος, τρομέω, ἄφαρ* (2) words with Homeric rather than the usual Attic dialectical form, such as *λεικῆς* (Attic *αἰκῆς*), *ἔβαν* (Attic *ἔβησαν*), *ποταμοῦ* (Attic *ποταμοῦ*); (3) words which show a reversion to a Homeric meaning no longer current or usual in the Classical period, e.g., *αἴως* meaning *μῦθος* rather than the usual meaning = *ἔπανος*; (4) whole phrases, for the most part two-word formulas, like *θανάτου τέλος, νυκτός ἀμολγῶ*, and *βροτολογός Ἄρης*. In the section entitled "Indirect Homerisms" we find individual words and phrases which show various kinds of modification of their Homeric original, ranging from the slightest of variants (e.g., *παρήις* for Homeric *παρήιον*, and *πολιπόρθης* for Homeric *πολιπόρθος*) through recombinations of the same semantic units (e.g., *οἰστρόδονος* from Homeric *οἰστρος ἐδόνησεν*) to paraphrases and mere echoes (e.g., *Pv 31 ἡτερπῆ τῆνδε φρουρήσεις πέτρων* ~ *Od. 7.279 πέτρης πρὸς μεγάλῃσι βαλὸν καὶ ἡτερπέει χώρω*, and *Ag. 92f. ἄλλη δ' ἄλλοθεν οὐρανομήκης λαμπὰς ἀνίσχει* ~ *Il. 8.509 καίωμεν πυρὰ πολλὰ, σέλας δ' εἰς οὐρανὸν ἴκη* and *Od. 5.239 ἐλάττη τ' ἦν οὐρανομήκης*). In the short section on "Homeric" syntax, Sideras lists certain archaisms which depart from Attic usage. But most of these are so common in Greek poetry generally that, as

the author himself concedes, they might better be referred to as elements of poetic rather than of Homeric syntax. The section on Homeric style is too selective and undeveloped to be of much use. All we find are a few remarks on similes involving animals, especially birds, and natural forces, brief reference to some poetic tropes (e.g., periphrasis, oxymoron, hyperbaton, *figura etymologica*), lists of examples of tmesis and apocope, less than a page each on unaugmented and uncontracted forms in Aeschylus – both of which were better at home in the section on “Wörter mit homerischer Form” than here. More helpful are the careful and exhaustive *index locorum* and *index verborum*.

Sideras claims not to be dealing with the influence of Homeric narrative or dramatic themes, images, and situations except insofar as they can be in some sense reduced to verbal similarity, but there are times when the verbal analogies become so substantial that we are clearly involved with *Stoff* not *Sprache*, and even then it is not infrequently a matter of some doubt that one can speak of Homeric influence at all, rather than of organic traditions of verbal formulae, images, situations, tropes, etc. The most glaring examples of this methodological imprecision are in the chapter on “Homerische Reminiszenzen” and in the treatment of Homeric similes in the chapter on “Stil”. Is, for example, *Se. 822f. ὦ μεγάλε Ζεῦ καὶ πολιοῦχοι δαίμονες* really a *Nachball* of *Il. 6.476 Ζεῦ ἄλλοι τε θεοί? Or Eu. 756f. καὶ τις Ἑλλήνων ἐρεῖ . . . “Αργείας ἀνὴρ . . .” of Il. 6.459f. καὶ ποτὲ τις εἴπησιν . . . “Ἐκτορος ἦδε γυνή . . .”?* *Or Eu. 566 κήρυσσε, κήρυσ, καὶ στρατὸν κατειργαθοῦ* of *Il. 18.503 κήρυκες δ’ ἄρα λαὸν ἐρήτουν? Are Su 13 κύδιον’ ἰχέων ἐπέκρινεν* and *1069f. τὸ βέλτερον κακοῦ καὶ τὸ δῖμοιρον αὐτῷ* *paraphrases* of *Il. 17.105 κακῶν δέ κε φέρτατον εἶη? Does Pe. 206 φόβω δ’ ἄρθστος ἐστάθην, φίλοι* really *paraphrase Od. 17.463f. ὁ δ’ ἐστάθη ἠύτε πέτρῃ ἔμπεδον?* There is no doubt a *likeness* in thought and situation between *Pv. 685f. νόσημα γὰρ ἀσχιστον εἶναι φημι συνθέτους λόγους* and *Il. 9.312f.*

ἔχθρὸς γὰρ μοι κείνος ὁμῶς Ἄϊδαο πύλησιν,  
ὅς χ’ ἕτερον μὲν κεύθη ἐνὶ φρεσίν, ἄλλο δὲ εἶπη,

but are we permitted here and in the other instances to say “es scheint sogar so, als ob Aischylos gewisse homerische Sätze bewusst paraphrasiert”? Everyone will doubtless be convinced that the Aeschylean vultures of *Ag. 48ff.* have been influenced by the Homeric vultures in *Il. 16.428f.* and *Od. 16.216ff.*; it is not so clear, though Sideras considers it “ohne Zweifel,” that the commonplace lions of *Il. 5.136ff., 161f., 10.485f.* had any part in the breeding of that monster of *Ag. 827f.* who vaults towers and laps kings’ blood. It must be said in Sideras’ defense that he is not unaware of the problems involved in the question of literary sources. But it is curious that he alludes to it only when he finds some disagreement among the commentators, in which case, he says, he considers silence a greater scholarly error than at least calling attention to the *likeness* between different texts. In this regard, Sideras has done his homework quite well. He cites, for example, appearances of words like *δυοφερὸς* in other authors, especially those between Homer and Aeschylus, something which permits the reader to make his own judgment, if he wishes, about presumed Homeric influence. Sometimes he could have taken a firmer stand where the evidence seems to warrant it, e.g. page 176, where Mimnermus fr. 13.6 *δρυμὸν μένος κραδίης* seems to have influenced (always presuming it is worthwhile to speak of influence) *Cho. 391f. δρυμὸς κραδίας θυμὸς* more than *Il. 18.322 δρυμὸς χόλος*. On the other hand, what are we to decide about *Se. 121 ἄρεια ἀρήια*: Can we really decide between Homeric *ἀρήια τεύχεα* or *ἔντεα ὄπλα*: and the more contemporary Bacchylidean *πολεμῆια ὄπλα*? Where Sideras does venture comment, it is generally either singularly inane or a duplication of what one will find in the commentaries. Commenting on the relationship between *Ag. 62 πολυάνορος ἀμφοῖ γυναικὸς* and *Od. 14.69 πολλῶν ἀνδρῶν ὑπὸ γούνατ’ ἔλυσεν* [sc. Ἐλένη], he refers us to Fraenkel’s commentary on *πολυάνωρ* but misses the possibility of *double-entendre* in the Homeric passage (Compare *Od. 18.212 τῶν δ’ αὐτοῦ λύτο γούνατ’, ἔρω δ’ ἄρα θυμὸν ἔθελχθεν*); instead, we are diverted with the worst kind of biographical criticism of the Aeschylean passage (*Ag. 60ff.*): “Bei Schlachtschilderung weilt der Marathonkämpfer Aischylos selbstverständlich länger und weidet sich am Detail.”

Some other details:

p. 19: “Pophyrios” should read “Porphyrios”.

p. 100: It is not altogether clear that *αἶα* is a Homeric form of *γῆ-γαῖα* rather than an altogether different word.

p. 127: Is it really proper to speak of *κακός* meaning *δειλός* as an archaic or Homeric meaning in the fifth century?

p. 130: Sideras confuses *ὅς* the relative pronoun with *ὅς (=ἐός)* the possessive adjective of the third person singular.

p. 139: Sideras translates *δμωή* as “Kriegsgefangene”, as if presumably from *δάμνημα*, a deri-

vation which according to Chantraine, Frisk, Fraenkel, and Benveniste is less likely than the still by no means certain hypothesis δόμος ("Hausgenosse"). Better merely to have said "Sklavin" and steered clear of roily etymological waters.

p. 173: κῆρα μέλαινα should read κῆρ μέλαινα.

p. 190: References to *Eu.* 26, 111, and 246f. are botched by the author's mistaken notion that a νέβρος is a hare. The mistake is repeated on p. 250.

p. 194: Hes. *Op.* 465 . . . Δημήτερι θ' ἀγνή should read Δημήτερι θ' ἀγνή.

p. 204: The quote from *Il.* 2.40 should read Τρωσί . . . δια rather than τρωσί . . . δια.

p. 268: For "Homeric Hymnes" read "Homeric Hymns".

H. A. Coxen (*CQ* 52 [1958]) has noted that "too little heed is usually paid to Aeschylus' allusions to Homer, which presupposes the closest knowledge of the text, and are of great subtlety." That kind of work will call for a subtlety equal to its subject, and a sharp re-appraisal of traditional methodology. Sideras' book is nowhere near performing that Herculean job, nor does it pretend to do so. But whoever dares it will find Sideras just adequate enough to be an indispensable tool.

JOHN PERADOTTO

State University of New York at Buffalo and  
The Center for Hellenic Studies, Washington D.C.

*Athenian propertied families 600-300 B.C.* By J. K. DAVIES. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971. Pp.xxxi+656.

Davies explains the *raison d'être* of his admirable work in his Introduction. The influence exerted upon public affairs in Athens by the use of personal wealth is amply attested. How may those with "property-power" be confidently identified and what will the isolation of this influential group of individuals and families reveal? A preliminary and important attempt to define the powerful and rich within the Athenian administrative class from 360 to 322 B.C. was made by Johannes Sundwall in 1906 (*Epigraphische Beiträge zur sozial-politischen Geschichte Athens*, *Klio*, Beiheft 4). Davies with due respect for his predecessor applies more explicit criteria in his selection and brings the record up-to-date. His first criterion is the performance of liturgies, festival, military and political, that ancient equivalent of the modern income tax whereby wealthy citizens were obliged to pay for dramatic or choral performances (choregia) or finance a worship (trierarchy), to mention only two main types that persisted from c.500 to c.300 B.C. Since liturgies were expensive, those responsible, the liturgical class, may be equated, by and large, with the wealthy families of the upper class. Further bases for selection are: the expensive breeding and training of horses for Panhellenic festivals; the possession of significant property; and the involvement in substantial business transactions. The identification of wealthy treasurers of Athena of pentacosiomedimnal status adds to the list for the sixth century, whereas in the fourth certain inscriptions recording transactions (*diadikasiai*) help isolate later members of the liturgical class.

For the period c. 600 to c. 300 B.C., 779 recognizably distinct Athenians may be identified as the wealthy, representatives of those families who owned large scale property and thus possessed property-power in Athens. Many were important generals and politicians but many others remained *privati*, political nonentities. I see Themistocles as an excellent example of an Athenian from a wealthy and respectable family without previous political experience who emerges as a *novus homo*.

Only 779 names represent a woefully inadequate representation of a large and powerful class, as Davies realizes. Disconcerting too is the disparity in the chronological distribution of numbers; for example, 2 Athenians appear for the period 600 to 566; while 334 can be identified within the years 366-333. But this is the best that can be done with the evidence and in the last analysis, it is really very much indeed.

Davies' work then is a prosopographical Register of these 779 listed alphabetically. Each family is treated as an entity under the name of its most prominent member with appropriate cross-reference. For convenience, entries are listed with the same numbers as given by Kirchner in *Prosopographia Attica*. Stemmata appear in pertinent articles: tables 1-6 at the end provide more complex genealogies for six larger families. Discussion centres about the tracing of family relationship with dates of births, marriages, and deaths, and the establishment of financial standing. A section on "Broken and lost names," Addenda of the most recent evidence and omissions, three Indexes (a "Check-list, arranged by deme," an "Index locorum", and a "General index") add to the usefulness of this work.