AESCHYLUS AGAMEMNON 511-512

άλις παρὰ Σκάμανδρου ἦσθ' ἀνάρσιος· νῦν δ' αὖτε σωτὴρ ἴσθι καὶ παιώνιος.

In my review¹ of M. L. West's Teubner *Aeschylus*, I rejected his proposed deletion² of the particle δ ' in the above passage. I did so on the ground that the lines represent an inversion of the familiar prayer-pattern 'you were favourable to me in the past, be favourable to me now', which therefore required the paradosis' strongly adversative $\delta \hat{\epsilon}$ to ram home the inversion³. I would now argue that in reality a different prayer-pattern is more directly reflected in the simple-seeming word $\tilde{\alpha}\lambda\iota\varsigma$, and that this pattern makes the deletion more likely than I – or, for that matter, even West himself – stated.

The pattern in question is the one helpfully identified and discussed by Nisbet and Hubbard on Horace *Odes* 1.2.37 ⁴ and Tarrant on Seneca *Agamemnon* 519 ff.⁵, whereby the deity invoked is requested *to be sated* with inflicting woes and to adopt a more benign attitude (the antiquity of the formula is proved by the first part of the appeal featuring in the famous Hymn of the Arval brethren v. 3 *satur fu, fere Mars*). Note in particular the Senecan passage just referred to *quisquis es nondum malis / satiate tantis caelitum: tandem tuum / numen serena*. Note also from Seneca, *Medea* 668-9 (the chorus alluding to Jason) *iam satis, divi, mare vindicastis: / parcite iusso*. In both passages, as in the Aeschylean passage, the deity or deities addressed are said to have done enough and more than enough⁶ harm in the past. And, as in the Aeschylean text as emended by West, the contrast⁷ between past infliction of suffering and hoped for future respite is conveyed by asyndeton.

Fraenkel's book *Horace*⁸ quotes other instances of the formula *iam satis*, *satis iam* etc., and, although these do not directly represent the relevant prayer pattern, it is significant that some of them also involve asyndeton.

^{1 &}quot;Cl Rev" 42, 1992, 258.

² Advanced in Studies in Aeschylus (Stuttgart 1990) p. 191 f.

³ E. Medda too, in his recent edition with commentary (*Eschilo. Agamennone*, Introduzione, testo critico, traduzione e commento, Roma 2017), maintains δέ and quotes my reasons (pp. 306-307).

⁴ Oxford 1970, p. 32.

⁵ Cambridge 1976, p. 274.

 $^{^6}$ See Fraenkel on Aesch. *Agam*. 1659, Nisbet and Hubbard on Horace *Odes* 1.2.1 for this nuance of \ddot{a} λις, *satis* etc.

⁷ The connection between the two parts of the statement is not seen by, for instance, S. Pulleyn, *Prayers in Greek Religion* (Oxford 1997), p. 9, who quotes 519 f. as if it were the start of a prayer, unrelated to the previous verse.

⁸ *Horace* (Oxford 1956) p. 243 f.

46 M. DAVIES

Plautus *Stichus* 734 is a good example: *ohe iam satis, nolo obtaedescat: alium ludum nunc volo* (with the penultimate word compare vvv in the lines from the *Agamemnon*). It may seem odd to illuminate Aeschylus from Plautus⁹, but given the low social standing of the Herald, the Latin passage is not so far removed from the tragic. Fraenkel's commentary on v. 511 characterises it as part of "a personal outburst, with a tinge of naïve familiarity".

A very subtle adaptation of the idiom is to be found near the end of Vergil's *First Georgic* (vv. 498-504):

Di patrii Indigetes et Romule Vestaque mater, quae Tuscum Tiberim et Romana Palatia servas, hunc saltem everso iuvenem succurere saeclo 500 ne prohibete! satis iam pridem sanguine nostro Laomedonteae luimus periuria Troiae; iam pridem nobis caeli te regia, Caesar, invidet...

Here we encounter the idiomatic initial address to the god(s), but the *satis* clause has been, as it were, transposed or displaced, and comes after rather than before the appeal for a better future. If the normal sequence could be restored, we would again have asyndeton (v. 501).

Faint but discernible, then, are the indications that it would be positively idiomatic for the Herald's words to move asyndetically from the past actions of Apollo to his future attitude. And we are reminded how fine was West's intuition regarding the Greek language.

St John's College, Oxford

MALCOLM DAVIES

ABSTRACT:

In Aesch. Agam. 512, an emendation by M. L. West is supported by a new consideration involving the idiom in which a deity is requested to be sated with former infliction of harm and adopt a more benign attitude.

KEYWORDS:

Aeschylus, Agamemnon, emendation, prayer, sated, asyndeton, colloquial.

⁹ Though see "Prometheus" 31, 2005, 156.

¹⁰ See further West's study of *Colloquialism and naïve style in Aeschylus*, his contribution to the K. J. Dover Festschrift *Owls to Athens* (Oxford 1990) p. 3 f.