

SUMMARIES

Two Figures of Ajax

Akiko Kiso

Two artistic representations of Ajax, a painting on an Attic lecythus and a bronze Etruscan statuette, both from the Kaeppli Collection in Basel, suggest that the success of Sophocles' AJAX partly derives from the innovative treatment of the hero's suicide scene.

When viewing the former picture of the solitary hero addressing the heavens with his sword fixed in the ground, pointed upwards, we may have a glimpse of the scene where the famous farewell speech was delivered by the Ajax of Sophocles' tragedy, since the lecythus can be connected most probably with a votive offering dedicated on the occasion of the victorious production of the play.

After the speech, the Ajax-actor must have thrown himself upon the sword in a way somewhat imaginable from the Etruscan bronze statuette. The connection between the statuette and stage action is not so demonstrably close as in the case of the lecythus. However, if we examine the background of the statuette -- the activities of Etruscan artists, the tradition of sword acrobatics, dancing at banquets, and the development of the Ajax-myth -- it gives us an idea as to how the actor acted at the very moment of the hero's suicide, making it clear that the sword entered his body somewhere around his left armpit. The legend that Ajax was invulnerable everywhere except in the armpit was emphatically treated in Aeschylus' THRESSAI. The vulnerability in the armpit, as was most probably first narrated therein, was due to the fact that Heracles had wrapped Ajax in his lion-skin as a child but had left this area exposed because of the bow-case which he wore. The story is

not mentioned in Sophocles' play except by one word. But the death-jump of the actor, with the vulnerable spot right over the point of the sword, would have brought back to the spectator's mind's eye the vivid pictures of the legend and of Aeschylus' play as well.

Just as he added epic dimension to dramatic poetry by means of Homeric allusions, so did Sophocles, by introducing an impressive histrionic performance thus at the climactic moment of the play, add another aesthetic dimension to his tragedy.

The Kommos in Aeschylus' Choephoroi

Yoshinao Sato

This paper expresses appreciation for the kommos in Aeschylus' Choephoroi. Among the many studies of this lyric part, Schadewaldt and Lesky are most highly respected. Schadewaldt argues that it is not Orestes, but the audience who experiences the necessity of matricide and that Orestes' is as resolute at the beginning of the kommos as at the end. For Lesky, on the other hand, the principal function of the kommos is to show Orestes, first anxious and doubting, then deciding on matricide.

Both fail to consider the whole play in these interpretations. Since the kommos is a part of a play, it is essential to consider the stagecraft of Choephoroi and place the kommos within that context. In the elaborate stagecraft, the focus is on the staging of the second confrontation of Clytaemestra and Orestes (892-930). In this climactic scene, Orestes gives reasons for his horrible deed. But, a carefully detailed speech would have weakened the intensity of the scene. It is in the kommos, therefore, that the necessity for matricide is detailed. The

extremely long kommos is preparation for the climactic moment between Clytaemestra and Orestes.

Whether Orestes' will is variable or steadfast makes a difference. His resolution fails him facing the necessity for matricide (899). After considering the relation between the kommos and the climax, we should interpret his depression as anticipated in the kommos, str. VI.

Partly, I agree with Schadewaldt, partly with Lesky, but my view results from considering stage effects which have previously been ignored.

The Simile in the Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius

Satoshi Iwaya

There is fairly general agreement that the similes of the Argonautica are more apposite to the narrative than those of the Homeric poems. The 'appositeness' is, however, not the only characteristic of the simile of the Argonautica. We must draw attention to the rhetorical and compositional devices, which are characteristic of Hellenistic literature.

Take the 'dew on the roses' simile (3.1019ff.) for example. We can find here an elegant chiasmus of vocabulary (ianeto ... tekomenē ... teketai ... iainomenē), which is used to tie the narrative and the simile together.

The same observation applies to the simile of the saffron flower (3.851ff.), in which alliteration is effectively used to enhance the exoticism of Medea's magical medicine. This alliteration also ties the narrative and the simile together.

Turning now to the compositional devices. Apollonius attempts to force the subject of the simile into closer parallelism with the narrative than Homer does. As J.F.Carspecken acutely points out, such parallelism opens to the simile a new possibility, that of acting as a hinge or a transitional phase in the narrative construction. In Homer, some similes may be regarded as such a transitional type, but they mark merely a shifting of the poet's interest from one aspect of a scene to another. In the *Argonautica*, however, the transitional similes appear at the climax of episode and mark the shift of the poet's interest from the cause of one action to the effect of that action.

The simile of 'the grieving bride' (3.656ff.) is a typical example. It begins with a description of a young bride grieving for the loss of her husband (Medea's fear for the death of Jason), and continues by describing her shedding tears in secrecy (Medea's reticence about her desire to save Jason).

It should be concluded that the rhetorical and compositional devices are inseparable with the appositeness and are united to bring about the beauty and strength of the simile in the *Argonautica*.

"Pietas" in Seneca's "Thyestes"

Tokuya Miyagi

It is my purpose in this paper to examine the importance of the word, *pietas*, which appears frequently (ten times) in Seneca's tragedy, "Thyestes".

Pietas originally meant religious morality which is based on the relationship of man with the gods. But in the works of Seneca, including prose works, it has three shades of meaning, as follows: (1) piety

towards the gods; (2) respect for parents and ancestors or affection for family; and (3) one of the general virtues. In most cases in his nine tragedies, Seneca uses *pietas* only in its second meaning.

But in *Thy.*, as in the prose works, there are some instances in which *pietas* is used to mean one of the general virtues. At first sight, there seems to be no case in *Thy.* in which *pietas* is used to mean piety towards the gods, as in his other tragedies. But in two cases (510, 717), *pietas*, which seemingly refers to Atreus' affection for his brother and nephews and respect for his grandfather, contains hidden meanings and irony. For example, *sanguis ac pietas* (510), which means affection for blood relatives, reminds us of sacrificial rites of offering victims' blood to the gods. Such a double meaning is also seen at 717.

Atreus killed his nephews after the formal manners of sacrificial rites and showing respect for his ancestor, chose as the first victim the one who had the same name as his grandfather; he committed the taboo of *pietas* in the sense of having affection for his nephews, but at the same time ironically observed the rules of *pietas* in the sense of religious piety and respect for his ancestor. Such irony can be seen many times in *Thy.*, and it is possible to say that such irony of *pietas* is a key point in the interpretation of *Thy.* as a whole.

In the third choral ode, *pietas* is the supreme power which can restore the peace disturbed by the violence of anger (*ira*) of men. The conflict between *pietas* and *ira* and *pietas*' victory over *ira* would remind us of an episode in *De Ira* (II. 33.6) which is similar to the story of *Thy.* in a sense. In the episode, a father whose son was killed by the tyrant's malice patiently endured and accepted the invitation of the tyrant to the banquet given on the day of his son's execution, and drank wine before the tyrant as if he drank the blood of his own son. He bore such humiliation because he had another son; he repressed his anger (*ira*) because of his affection (*pietas*) for the son. His attitude was very different from that of either Atreus or Thyestes. The moral drawn from

the episode is that ira should be repressed with pietas. Such an idea is the same as that expressed by the chorus in Thy.

The chorus in Seneca's tragedies often expresses an idea that seems to reflect Seneca's own thought. In Thy., too, the chorus states that pietas should overcome ira, while in the world where a series of episodes of the tragedy unfolds, cursed brothers act as the antithesis of the chorus' ideal and their abominable deeds cause a tragical result.

Given these considerations, it can be said that the word, pietas, is one of the essential elements in unifying the tragedy, Thy., as a whole and that lack of pietas, which is depicted with skillful use of irony, causes the tragic result in Thy.