Antigone in Paris. The civic context of Athenian tragedy

THE CONTRIBUTION OF JEAN-PIERRE VERNANT to an understanding of Athenian tragedy can be understood as two-fold.[1] His books *Myth and society in ancient Greece*, *Myth and thought among the Greeks,* and *Myth and tragedy in ancient Greece* have firstly opened up the study of the way the Greeks conceptualised their place in the order of things. His second contribution is his 'structural approach' to reading. Tragedy, Vernant explains, 'can only be fully understood when account is taken of ... [this] particular [conceptual] context ... [which] comprises verbal and intellectual equipment categories of thought, types of reasoning, the system of representations, beliefs and values, forms of sensibility, and the modalities of action and agent.'[2] Students, colleagues and followers of Vernant have built upon his project. Detienne, Vidal-Naquet and especially Loraux in her works *The invention of Athens*, *The children of Athena* and recently *Les expériences de Tirésias* have shown the existence of a tighter group of stories and ideas which formed a civic or patriotic discourse. This discourse was made up of modified myths of 'democratic' ancestors, definitions of the Athenian character (*ethos*) by a discussion of what they were not – women, barbarians and Thebans – and finally the elaborate praise of the city in the institution of the funeral oration (*epitaphios*).[3] This patriotic discourse stressed the uniqueness of the Athenians, their right to hegemony, their regard for justice and the oppressed, and their ties and obligations to the *polis* (city).[4] 'The city as such,' one can say, '... is constituted in the media of language. Fifth-century Athens is truly the the city of words.'[5] Other scholars including Segal, Zeitlin, Hall and particularly Goldhill in *Reading Greek tragedy* have also shown that the object of tragedy is this civic discourse.

In this paper I want to utilise this scholarship of the so-called Parisian school in order to stress the civic context of Attic tragedy. Tragedy was performed at the city festival of the Great Dionysia held from 9th to 13th Elaphebolion in mid-spring. The people (*demos*) oversaw the running of the festival, the chief magistrates were involved in its administration, and special festival officials were appointed in a manner that mirrored procedures in the government itself. The seating-arrangement of the theatre and the figuration of festive events also stressed the military and administrative subdivisions of the citizen-body – the ten tribes created by the late sixth-century reformer Clisthenes. The ceremonies, furthermore, which took place just before the dramatic performances, were a powerful reiteration of elements of the civic discourse. The tragedies which followed had a complex relationship with this patriotic thought. On one hand, tragedy at times was totally implicated in the maintenance and creation of this civic discourse. Zeitlin and Vidal-Naquet have shown that tragedy elaborated a favourable comparison between Thebes and Athens.[6] More crucially, Hall in *Inventing the barbarian* has illustrated that tragedy was involved in the creation of the far more important pillar of Athenian identity – the comparison between the Hellene and the barbarian.[7] Yet in this paper I am going to highlight the way that tragedy questioned, examined and even subverted the ideology of the city.

There was, of course, a religious background to tragedy. The night before the start of the festival, the advent of Dionysus Eleuthereus was reenacted. This was no doubt

calculated to express the city's acceptance of this travelling deity, whose myths attest to the destruction of those foolish enough to reject him (Euripides *Bacchae*). After sacrifices on the road to the Academy, a statue of the god was escorted by candlelight back to his sanctuary next to the theatre. This representation of Dionysus as a pillar with ivy and mask sat, along with an altar, in the orchestra during the dramatic performances (Aristophanes *Frogs* 809 and *Knights* 536). A carved seat of honour in the front row of the theatre was also reserved for the priest of the god (*Knights* 297). The festival proper started the next day with a grand procession (*pompe*, *AP* 56.4), which paraded the god through the city and ended in sacrifices and a banquet in his precinct. This activity like the revel (*komos*) of that evening saw a certain suspension of social normality typical of the Dionysiac religion. Phalloi were carried, men dressed a women, bawdy songs were sung (*Acharnians* 242ff.), and much wine was consumed.[8] I leave, however, the discussion of the meaning of these cult acts and the specific connection between Dionysus and tragedy in the capable hands of Vernant, Frontisi-Durcroux and others.[9] Instead, I want to highlight the civic nature of these two parades. Notably, several groups of the broader community were differentiated. In the great procession, it was the colonists and allies of Athens who carried the phalluses, the resident aliens (*metoikoi*) wore scarlet robes, and the citizen-producers (*choregoi*) of the dramatic and dithyrambic choruses wore purple, golden or other 'gorgeous' costumes. The ephebes – those young citizens in training – finally may have led the reenactment and the procession through the city.

The administration of the festival also attests to the status of the Dionysia as a city event. Officials of the democracy were involved in organising it, and the whole enterprise was overseen by the sovereign people (*demos*).[10] One of the first tasks of the chief magistrate (eponymous archon) was to appoint the citizen-producers of the choruses (*AP* 56.3). He was then responsible for the selection of the poets (Aristophanes *Knights* 513). During the preparatory day before the drama started, a scrutiny of the poet and actors (*proagon*) took place. In front of a crowd in the Odeum (Plato *Symposium* 194a ff.), Pickard-Cambridge explains, 'it seems that each poet mounted a temporary platform with his actors and announced the subjects of the plays which he was about to produce.' A fourth-century inscription (*IG* II² 223) also indicates that the Council of 500 – the administrative hub of ancient Athens – was responsible for maintaining good order (*eukosmia*) in the theatre. The procedure for appointing the judges of the dramatic and dithyrambic competitions also bears the mark of democratic organisation (Plutarch *Cimon* 8.7-9; Isocrates 17.33-34; Lysias 4.3; Demosthenes *Against Meidias* 17). The Council of 500 drew up a list of possible judges for each of the ten tribes. These names were placed in ten urns, one for each tribe, and sealed by the presiding officers of the meeting (*prytaneis*) and the citizen-producers. At the beginning of the dramatic contest, the chief magistrate drew a name from each urn, and these men became the judging panel. They swore an oath to give an impartial verdict (Aristophanes *Assembly-women* 1160). 'At the end of the contest each [judge] wrote his order of merit on a tablet; the tablets were placed in an urn, from which the chief magistrate ... drew five at random.' These five tablets determined the outcome of the competition. The three elements of this selection procedure – the list of candidates by tribes, the use of lottery and the swearing of oaths – were typical of the way of appointing magistrates and jurors in the democracy proper (*AP* 43 ff.).[11] The day after the festival, an Assembly was held in the theatre of Dionysus to adjudicate on the organisation of the festival. The conduct of the

supervisory officials was scrutinised, and complaints (*probolai*) were laid against any citizen for misconduct during the festival. The civic community then organised the Dionysia for and by itself, and in a way that involved and reflected the administration of the political and judicial affairs of the city.

Winkler has recently reasserted that the seating arrangement of the theatre also mirrored the 'civic corporation' – the ten tribal divisions, the Council of 500 and the body of ephebes.[12] The first piece of evidence for such an arrangement is Aristophanes' reference to a section set aside for the Council of 500 (*bouleutikos*) in the theatre (*Birds* 764). Scholiasts and lexicographers comment that this section was in the middle, and also note a separate section for the ephebes (*ephebikos*). The placement of the Council in the centre of the theatre is certain for the Hadrianic period. A statue of the emperor has been found with a dedication marking the central wedge as the section for the Council. Three other statues have been found at the bases of other wedges in an order that corresponds to the order of the twelve tribes of the post-Classical period. Yet this evidence concerns an era six hundred years after the performance of Antigone, when, as Pickard-Cambridge notes, the seats 'might be splattered with the blood of gladiators.' Furthermore, there were only ten tribes in the Classical period to sit in the thirteen wedges in the renovated theatre of the late fourth century. Winkler therefore suggests that each tribe had a wedge, the ephebes and the Council sat in the central wedge, and that the two outermost wedges were reserved for non-citizens (which is documented) and citizen wives.[13] The situation is further complicated, however, by the fact that the layout of the theatre before the Lycurgan renovation is unknown. Nonetheless, there are some lead 'theatre tickets' with the names of tribes and the Council of 500, whose letter-forms date to the early fourth century.[14] These tokens may evidence a tribally arranged theatre in the fourth century before and after the Lycurgan rebuilding, and perhaps a similar situation in the fifth century. The Clisthenic division of the people into ten tribes, however, is surely expressed in the competition of the dithyrambic choruses. Each tribe entered two choruses – one of boys and the other of men – who competed in the orchestra after the comedies on the last two days of the Dionysia. The tribal divisions and the Council of 500, one way or another, were differentiated in the festival.

The Dionysia not only displayed the formal division of the city, but also elements of civic ideology. Goldhill, in an article which first appeared in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, establishes that the ceremonies in the theatre just before the tragedies reiterated elements of this patriotic discourse.[15] Yet, before discussing the pre-play activities, I want to turn to the annual public funeral of war-dead in order to highlight several aspects of the civic ideology of Athens (Thucydides 2.34).[16] This occasion shows that collectivity was placed above individuality. The remains of the fallen of each tribe were amassed in one coffin, their names were listed together on one monument, and they were only praised as a group in the funeral oration. It is also notable that this oration converts praise of the valorous dead into a glorification of the city. Finally, the funeral speech stresses the obligations and ties of individuals to the city, a topic which figures large in civic discourse.[17] Many examples of the call to patriotism can be found in the famous *epitaphios* delivered by Pericles (Thucydides 2.35-46). Towards the end of his speech, Pericles encourages the assembled throng to do the right thing

by the city (2.43 – the translation is a modification of Warner's):[18]

> 'you should fix your eyes every day on the power of the city (*ten tes poleos dynamin)* as she really is, and should become lovers of her (*erastas gignomenous autes*). When you realise her greatness, then reflect that what made her great was men with a spirit of adventure, men who knew their duty, men who were ashamed to fall below a certain standard. If they ever failed in an enterprise, they made up their minds that at any rate the city should not find their courage lacking to her, and they gave to her the best contribution that they could. They gave her their lives.'

It was more typical, however, to describe the obligations of the citizen to the city not in terms of a love affair but in those relating to the household.[19] In particular, the civic bond was couched in terms of friendship (*philia*). *Philoi* included both friends and members of one's home, and denoted not simply affection but a strong obligation to help the other party. In the late fifth century, the term *philopolis* ('friend of the city') emerged in political debate in order to express one's obligation to the state. The so-called violent demagogue Cleon, for example, is notorious for having called himself *philopolis* and his enemies *misopoleis* ('haters of the city'); and the young Alcibiades perversely argued that his betrayal of Athens actually marked him as the greatest *philopolis* (Thucydides 6.92). The description of the civic bonds in familial terms, in fact, was taken much further (Plato *Crito* and *Menexenus* 249b-c). The city, it could be said, 'nourished'; the citizens were the 'children' of the laws; the city became a 'father', a 'mother'. The term 'fatherland' was extended in its connotations.

The appropriation of familial language by patriotic discourse was possibly a response to the continuing tension between the household (*oikos*) and the city. The preservation of the household in 'both economic stability and generational continuity of children' remained a strong goal in the Classical period. This, however, could be threatened by service to the state – the time-consuming commitment of military and political service, taxation, and the sacrifice of loved ones in war. Obligations to *philoi*, furthermore, could clash with duty to the city. 'The "achievement" of classical Athens', Segal therefore suggests, '... appears less as the crystallisation of a marmoreal harmony than an open equilibrium between the competing values and unresolvable polarities.'[20] The anxiety over these conflicting obligations was intense in the fifth century. The civic community, after all, had only been established by the reforms of Clisthenes in the last decade of the sixth century. The balance between the obligation of the pre-existing households and the new institution, then, was in a process of negotiation. Vernant, in fact, holds that this cohabitation of older and developing systems of values was the necessary condition for the great tragedies of Euripides, Sophocles and Aeschylus:

> 'the institution of tragedy seems to flourish precisely over the period in which the democratic city comes into being. As the city itself lives through the tensions of a changing society, tensions between public and private life, between the old, traditional ways and the new requirements of the new political order, the tragedies produced in the city seem to draw on the vocabulary, issues, and power struggles of that developing civic language. Tragedy's discourse.'[21]

The four pre-play ceremonies could in this context be seen as a timely reassertion of patriotic duty and the glory of the city. The first ceremonial involved the pouring of libations to the deity by the ten generals (Plutarch *Cimon* 8.7-9). The involvement of the full board of the most powerful and important civic officials in a religious duty is very rare. Their participation indicates both the civic status of the Dionysia and the perceived importance of honouring Dionysus lavishly. The second ceremonial act glorified the city, and advertised its power and success. In the presence of the Athenian allies and foreigners, the tribute from the empire was displayed in the orchestra of the theatre (Isocrates *On the peace* 82). The fact that Aristophanes was prosecuted for 'slandering the city in the presence of foreigners' with his comedy *Babylonians* shows that self-praise was the intention of this ceremony (Aristophanes *Acharnians* 496-509). The third pre-play ceremony involved the reading of the names of, and rewards for, those who had been acknowledged as benefactors of the city. Although the *philotimia* ('love of honour') of those whose names were read was momentarily sated, Demosthenes suggests it had another effect: 'the whole vast audience is stimulated to do service to the city, and applauds the exhibition of gratitude rather than the recipient; and that is the reason why the state has enacted this statute' (*On the crown* 120). The praise of benefactors, like the praise of the dead in the funeral oration, was designed to spur others to compete in patriotic service. The final pre-play activity was the parade of the orphans of those who had fallen on behalf of Athens. Aeschines sympathetically recalls (*Against Ctesiphon* 154; note also Plato *Menexenus* 249a):

> 'the herald would come forward and place before you the orphans whose fathers had died in battle, young men clad in the panoply of war; and he would utter the proclamation so honourable and such an incentive to valour: "These young men, whose fathers showed themselves brave men and died in war, have been supported by the state until they have come of age; and now clad hus in full armour by their fellow citizens they are sent out with the prayers of the city, to go each his way, and they are invited to seats of honour in the theatre." '

This was clearly a moment when 'the full weight of civic ideology' was felt. The parade reminded the audience of the sacrifice of those who had fallen on behalf of Athens, and the prize of such valour – renown and state support for their families. The city is also presented as a father to the orphans (Lysias *Epitaphios* 75 and Plato *Menexenus* 249a-c). It has educated them and provided a set of hoplite armour. The orphans themselves are shown to be taking their place in the hoplite rank, and hence taking on the full duties of citizenship.[22]

After the orphans took their seats of honour, a trumpet was sounded, and the disturbing world of the tragic spectacle unfolded. Tragedy, far from bolstering patriotic discourse, commonly problematised it. *Antigone* by Sophocles[23] is a famous example of the playing-out of the tensions between duty to the household and ties to the city. It concerns the clash between a young woman, who champions the cause of kin while ignoring the city, and a new king, who supports the city while rejecting bonds with *philoi*. This tragedy, however, does not validate the position of either protagonist. Instead, it both problematises the obligation to loved ones and loyalty to the city.

The opening speech between the two sisters establishes (ll.1-99) the ambiguity of Antigone's stance. The first line stresses her enclosure in the world of the family – 'My own flesh and blood – dear sister, dear Ismene.' Antigone totally ignores the city. Her response to the edict not to bury Polynices is that 'the doom reserved for enemies [*echthroi*] marches on the ones we love the most [*philoi*]'. The treachery of her brother to Thebes does not figure. He is still a *philos*. Indeed, Antigone twists the meaning of civic terminology. She will not be found a 'traitor' to her brother. She refuses to 'dishonour the laws [concerning the burial of kinsmen]', which 'the gods hold in honour.' Antigone, like other Sophoclean figures,[24] behaves like a Homeric hero. The obligations and bonds arising from the household are seen as the only constituents of social life. They must be acknowledged at all costs. This heroic outlook is at odds with the civic life of Athens. Figures as diverse as Pericles, Socrates and Plato agree that the laws must be obeyed (Thucydides 2.37; Xenophon *Hellenica* 1.7.15, 29 and Plato *Crito*). Social life, furthermore, is collective. Citizens fight, judge and debate together. Only in the fantasy of comedy can a character like Dicaeopolis from *Acharnians* disregard the policy of the city and negotiate a separate peace treaty with the Spartans.[25] Antigone, furthermore, is a woman who should know her place and recognise the orders of her male kinsman, Creon. The responses of Ismene highlight the transgressions of Antigone's position. She is shocked at Antigone's plan to defy the city, and explains that she has no strength to follow her:

> 'remember we are women,
> we're not born to contend with men. Then too,
> we're underlings, ruled by much stronger hands,
> so we must submit in this, and things still worse.'

The burial of the dead, however, was a duty to a *philos*, and a task especially for female kin. Although Antigone is thus cast for this duty, her actions, Ismene concludes, are both appropriate *and transgressive*:

> 'Then go if you must, but rest assured,
> wild, irrational as you are, my sister,
> you are truly dear to the ones who love you.'

The first speech of the new king, Creon (ll.163-210) was actually used in the fourth century as a lesson in patriotism. He proclaims:

> 'whoever places a friend
> above the good of his country,
> he is nothing: I have no use from him.
> ... I could never stand by silent, watching destruction
> march against our city, putting safety to rout,
> nor could I ever make that man a friend of mine
> who menaces our country. Remember this:
> our country is our safety. Only while she voyages true on course
> can we establish friendships, truer than blood itself.
> [With such good laws shall I enlarge the state.]'

Creon maintains that obligation to the city determines the nature of relations with *philoi*. Enemies of the city are personal enemies regardless of the bonds of friendship. A further contrast with the position of Antigone is his view that the city *not* the family is the precondition for friendship. He therefore passes the law allowing the burying of Eteocles, 'crowned with a hero's honours,' but the body of the treacherous Polynices is to remain on the field of battle.

Creon's position to his dead nephews is also ambiguous. On the one hand, his patriotism is in accord with the message of the pre-play ceremonies, the heroisation of Eteocles is in line with the treatment of the war dead of the democratic city, and the treatment of Polynices is reminiscent of the Greek practice whereby the bones of traitors are expelled beyond the borders of one's land. Yet the audience would have been uneasy about his total rejection of the obligations due to his nephew. The clash between the obligations of the city and the family, as we have seen, is a problematical point for the new democracy. Furthermore, the failure to bury a corpse could result in the whole community's suffering pollution. The ambiguity of Creon's position resurfaces in the famous confrontation between himself and Antigone (ll.440-525). This debate not only underlines the total incommensurability of the two protagonists' positions – each holds a different definition of justice (*dike*), law (*nomos*), friendship (*philia*) and insolence (*hybris*),[26] but also stresses the implications of Creon's uncompromising patriotism. The obligation to *philoi* is described as an 'unwritten law' of the gods by Antigone. This is disregarded by Creon. The king's disturbing disavowal of familial bonds intensifies when it is revealed that Antigone is engaged to his son. He is prepared to sentence Haemon's bride to death.

The dialogue between Antigone and the chorus as she is led to her tomb highlights the contradictions of her stance. Despite her concern for *philoi*, she bemoans the fact that there are no kinsmen to mourn her death. What is more, she dies unwed, the 'bride of Hades.' Goldhill explains, 'although she has constantly depicted herself as supporting the ties of the family ... as bride of death it is Antigone herself who denies for the [household] ... the possibility of its own continuation.'

A significant turning-point of the tragedy is the confrontation between Creon and Haemon (ll.636-765). Creon refuses to allow the possibility of a clash between his civic outlook and that of his family. Haemon must follow the position of his father and reject Antigone. Haemon approaches his father from a different angle. He reports that the whole city mourns for the fate of Antigone. She has done a 'glorious action' in burying her brother, yet she is sentenced to death. He asks Creon not to be so 'single-minded' – an observation that Ismene also makes of Antigone. Creon refuses to change his mind. The dialogue which follows works through the chilling consequences of his intransigence:

> *Haemon*: 'I'd never suggest that you admire treason.'
> *Creon:* '... isn't that just the sickness that's attacked her?'
> *Haemon*: 'The whole of Thebes denies it, to a man.'
> *Creon*: 'And is Thebes about to tell me how to rule?'
> *Haemon*: 'Now, you see? Who's talking like a child?'
> *Creon*: 'Am I to rule this land for others - or myself?'

> *Haemon*: 'It's no city at all, owned by one man alone.'
> *Creon*: 'What? The city's the king's – that's the law!'

Unlike those 'democratic' kings of Argos or Athens found in *Suppliants* by Aeschylus and another Theban tragedy by Sophocles *Oedipus at Colonus*, Creon refuses to acknowledge the wishes of the people of Thebes. In order to maintain his patriotic fervour he has become the antithesis of the city. He has placed himself above the city. As Bernard Knox explains, 'Creon has now displayed all the characteristics of a *tyrant*.' In the final dialogue with Tiresias (ll.989-1090), Creon commits a final hybristic act in order to maintain his misplaced loyalty to the city. Tiresias recounts that the body of Polynices has polluted the city and that the gods refuse to receive sacrifices. The seer begs Creon to change his stance and allow the burial of his nephew. Creon refuses in the most insolent of terms:

> 'You'll never bury that body in the grave,
> not even if Zeus's eagles rip the corpse
> and wing their rotten pickings off to the throne of god!
> Never, not even in fear of defilement
> will I tolerate his burial, that traitor.'

Creon does, of course, change his mind and tries to rectify his denial of the 'established laws'. But he is far too late. Antigone has hung herself. Haemon falls on his sword and dies clinging to his bride. And Eurydice, the king's wife, on hearing of her son's death, kills herself. Creon is left a broken man.

This tragedy is a profoundly disturbing treatment of patriotic discourse and the obligations of friendship. The champion of the city has first become a tyrant, and then is left destroyed. The upholder of the family dies and so threatens the continuity of the household. Goldhill concludes that Sophocles' *Antigone* puts at risk 'the possibility of the secure positioning of the individual within the conflicting claims of [city] ... [and family] ideology.' Yet I think there is one message in *Antigone* which would have been of particular benefit to those young men training to be citizens – the ephebes. This is the advice given by Ismene, Haemon and Tiresias: it is dangerous to hold an exclusive position. One must compromise and be prepared to change in a world of competing values. Vernant holds this to be the essence of tragedy:

> 'the civic message gets across to him only provided he makes the discovery that words, values, men themselves, are ambiguous, that the universe is one of conflict, only if he relinquishes his earlier convictions, accepts a problematic vision of the world and, through the dramatic spectacle, himself acquires a tragic consciousness.'[27]

Notes

[1] This paper was a lecture given to theatre studies students at the University of Sydney on 7 May 1993. I want to thank the Centre of Performance Studies and particularly Dr. Christopher Allen for the invitation.

[2] J.-P. Vernant 'Tensions and Ambiguities in Greek Tragedy' in J.-P. Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet (eds.) *Myth and tragedy in ancient Greece* New York 1988 29-48, 30. This article was first published in 1969.

[3] I concur with N. Loraux (*The invention of Athens* Cambridge and London 1986, p.329) that all strands of Athenian self-identity are brought together in the *epitaphioi.* She writes: 'but for whoever, beyond visual effects, is interested in the mental operation, in the discursive constitution of an exemplary polis, the funeral oration is the locus par excellence of this invention of Athens'. D. Castriota *Myth, ethos and actuality* Madison 1992 has recently discussed the art of the public buildings of Classical Athens as expressions of this patriotic discourse.

[4] These ideas are discussed in Loraux (*supra* n. 3), chapter 3. The theme of regard for justice and the oppressed is most evident in Lysias' *epitaphios.* It is also prominent in Plato's pastiche of the funeral oration (*Menexenus* 244e), and is succintly stated by Hyperides (*Epitaphios* 5): 'for so our city never fails to punish the wicked, help the just. mete out to all men fairness in place of wrong.'

[5] S. Goldhill *Reading Greek tragedy* Cambridge 1986, p.75. He also acknowledges the uneasy relationship between the imaginary and the real: 'in the light of my focus on the ideological projection of what it is to be an Athenian citizen – I am not forgetting ... that like most ideological projections it works hard to assimilate its paradoxes and difficulties. and sometimes far from the actual social circumstances' (p.66). On the use of the feminine to service male-citizen identity see the very interesting paper by D.M. Halperin, 'Why is Diotima a woman? Platonic *Eros* and the figuration of gender' in D.M. Halperin, J.J. Winkler and F.I. Zeitlin (eds.) *Before sexuality* Princeton 1990, pp.257-308.

[6] F.I Zeitlin 'Thebes: theater of self and society in Athenian drama' in J.J. Winkler and F.I. Zeitlin (eds.) *Nothing to do with Dionysus?* Princeton 1990 pp.130-167; and P. Vidal-Naquet, 'Oedipus between two cities: an essay on *Oedipus at Colonus*' in. J.-P. Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet (eds.) *Myth and tragedy in ancient Greece* New York 1988 pp.329-360.

[7] E. Hall *Inventing the barbarian* Oxford, 1989. The finest example of such an elaboration is *Persians* by Aeschylus. In 'Battle narrative and politics in Aeschylus' Persae' *JHS* 108 (1988) 189-195 Goldhill tries to accommodate this play in his characterisation of tragedy as a problematization of patriotic thought. He is not successful.

[8] These preliminary cult acts are discussed by A. Pickard-Cambridge *The dramatic festivals of Athens* Oxford 1968, pp.60-65. S.S. Goldhill 'The Great Dionysia and civic ideology' in J.J. Winkler and F.I. Zeitlin (eds.) *Nothing to do with Dionysus?* Princeton 1990, pp.97-129, 98-100 stresses, nonetheless, that it is 'incautious' of Pickard-Cambridge to assume that the reenactment of the advent of the god and the prominence of the ephebes in the *pompe* were a part of the fifth-century activity, since they are first attested in inscriptions from the late second century BC.

[9] On the nature of Dionysus and his link with tragedy, see J.-P. Vernant 'The god of tragic fiction', 'The masked Dionysus of Euripides' *Bacchae*', and J.-P. Vernant and F. Frontisi-Durcroux 'Features of the mask in ancient Greece' in J.-P. Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet (eds.) *Myth and tragedy in ancient Greece* New York 1988, pp.181-188, 381-414 and 189-206 respectively, and Goldhill (*supra* n.7) 126-129. The function of Dionysian religion is ably discussed by R.J. Hoffman 'Ritual license and the cult of Dionysus' *Athenaeum* 67 (1989) 91-115.

[10] My discussion of the administration of the festival follows Pickard-Cambridge (*supra* n.7) pp.67-70, 95-98.

[11] The procedures of appointment are more securely known for the fourth-century. See M.H. Hansen *The Athenian democracy in the age of Demosthenes* Oxford 1991, pp.125-139 and 229- 236.

[12] The evidence is discussed by Pickard-Cambridge (*supra* n.7) pp.269-272 and expanded upon by J.J. Winkler 'The Ephebes song: *tragoidia* and the polis' in J.J. Winkler and F.I. Zeitlin (eds.) *Nothing to do with Dionysos?* Princeton 1990 pp.20-26, 33-40. See also A. Pickard-Cambridge *The Theatre of Dionysus* Oxford 1946, especially pp.265-271.

[13] The evidence for the presence of women is notoriously ambiguous. See Pickard-Cambridge (*supra* n.7) pp.264-265 and A.J. Podlecki, 'Could women attend the theatre in Classical Athens? A collection of testimonia' *Ancient World* 21 (1990) 27-43.

[14] The nature of these tokens is discussed in M. Crosby *The Athenian Agora* 10, especially pp.76-82.

[15] His article first appeared in *JHS* 107 (1987) 58-76 and is reprinted and slightly revised in the collection *Nothing to do with Dionysus?*. On the discussion of the civic ideology and pre-play ceremonies which follows I am indebted to this revised edition, particularly Goldhill (*supra* n.7) 100-114. Goldhill (*supra* n. 4) chapter 3, 'The city of words', also has a good summary on civic discourse. Goldhill has important comments on the nature of ritual and its relationship with patriotic speech: 'the ceremonies I am discussing were not merely organisational relics from an earlier era ... The development of civic ideology is seen in the development of ritual' (*supra* n.7) 104). Other scholars have a similar understanding of the symbolic function of ritual. P. Schmitt-Pantel 'Collective activities and the political in the Greek city' in O. Murray and S. Price (eds.) *The Greek city - from Homer to Alexander* Oxford 1990 pp.199-213 explains that 'collective activities are one means among others for expressing social reality' (p.199). B.S. Strauss 'Ritual, social drama and politics in Classical Athens' *AJAH* 101 (1985) 67-83 adds that 'the nature of the Athenian state was expressed through rituals - standardized, repeated events of symbolic character' (p.76).

[16] The significance of the *epitaphios* and funeral ceremony are discussed in the exhausting tome by Loraux (*supra* n. 3). On the ceremony see Chapter I of Loraux. On the casualty lists see D.W. Bradeen 'The Athenian Casualty Lists' *CQ* 19 (1969) 145-159. Goldhill (*supra* n.7) 111-112) explains that these lists 'show how the democratic egalitarian ethos attempted to 'intégrer les valeurs aristocratiques de la gloire' in that each man was offered a degree of immortal *kleos*, but at the same time the values of democratic collectivity and the primacy of the city were stressed in a new form of memorial .'

[17] The funeral oration played an important part in enforcing civic ideology. Loraux explains (*supra n.* 3) p.144 'the funeral oration has its place in Athenian paideia [(Lysias *Epitaphios* 3, Plato *Menexenus* 236e, 246ff, 248e)], that vast educative complex comprising institutions and cultural models, that from childhood to death took charge of the citizen, molding him and constantly reminding him of civic values [(Plato *Pratagoras* 325c6-7)].' Hyperides (*Epitaphios* 8) holds that the installation of civic values was the main aim of education: 'none of us, I think, is unaware that our aim in training children is to convert them into valiant men (*andres agathoi*).' See also Plato *Protagoras* 325-326.

[18] For an original translation and good discussion of this passage see W.R. Connor *Thucydides* Princeton 1984 pp.68-69. See also S. Hornblower *A commentary on Thucydides* Vol. I , Oxford 1991, p.311.

[19] In the discussion that follows I am indebted to W.R. Connor *The new politicians of fifth-century Athens* Princeton 1971, pp.40ff. and Goldhill (*supra* n.5) pp.79-83.

[20] C. Segal, 'Greek tragedy and society: a structuralist perspective' in J.P. Euben (ed.) *Greek tragedy and political theory* Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 1986 p.45

[21] These words are actually from Goldhill (*supra* n.5) pp.77-78, but they follow the insights of J.-P. Vernant 'The historical moment of tragedy in Greece: some of the social and psychological conditions' in J.-P. Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet (eds.) *Myth and tragedy in ancient Greece* New York 1988, pp.23-28. The ideological tensions of this period are discussed by Vernant (*supra* n. 2).

[22] Goldhill (*supra* n.7) p.113 writes that 'not only do the boys at the point of becoming men reaffirm their ties to the city, but also these ties are constructed markedly in a military sense.' One might add that they are also constructed in a hoplite manner as well. The response of Goldhill in the gap between these hoplitic evocations and the naval realities of the fifth-century is perhaps not sufficient: 'the more the Athenians depend on naval power, the more the constant appeals to the values of the hoplite seem tinged with an ideological import, even a nostalgia for days when military and political success was more easily assimilable to earlier ideals' (p.109 n.37).

[23] My discussion of *Antigone* is indebted to Goldhill (*supra* n.5) chapter 4, 'Relations and Relationships'. I am using the new Penguin translation by Fagles. I am unable to give precise line numbers to the Greek text as Fagles' lines do not correspond to it.

[24] See the discussion in Goldhill (*supra* n.7) 115-124.
[25] The many functions of comedy are well discussed by J. Henderson 'The demos and comic competition' in J.J. Winkler and F.I. Zeitlin (eds.) *Nothing to do with Dionysus?* Princeton 1990 pp.271-313.
[26] Vernant (*supra* n.2) pp.41-42.
[27] *Ibid.* p.43

Caesarea: the life and death of a harbour*

> 'The city [Caesarea] lies midway between Dora and Jappa [on the east Mediterranean coast], and hitherto the whole of that shore had been harbourless, so that anyone sailing along the Phoenician coast towards Egypt had to ride the open sea when threatened by the south-west wind; even when this is far from strong, such huge waves are dashed against the rocks that the backwash makes the sea boil up a long way out. But the king [Herod] by lavish expenditure and unshakeable determination won the battle against nature and constructed a harbour bigger than the Piraeus'.[1]

SO WROTE THE JEWISH HISTORIAN JOSEPHUS at the end of the first century CE about the grandiose building program which a century or so earlier had seen the creation of the city Caesarea and its harbour 'Sebastos', both named by King Herod in honour of the Emperor Augustus. The city of Caesarea continued to flourish first as the administrative capital of Roman Palestine, and later as an important pilgrim centre of Byzantine Palestine until its conquest by the Arabs in 640 CE. A final building program occurred when Crusaders transformed a small part of Caesarea into their citadel which they held intermittently from 1100 to the 1260s.

The various fortunes of the city are well documented from literary sources and also from archaeological investigations which started with a preliminary survey in 1882 and commenced in earnest in the late 1950s and continue to the present day.[2] A central part of the most recent excavations has been the underwater investigation of the harbour[3] and this paper will focus on the fate of the harbour in Byzantine times. In particular, coin evidence both from finds made underwater as well as from the surrounding area, will be used to suggest what became of Herod's harbour.

Caesarea, the first 300 years

Turning again to Josephus we read that Herod wrestled with the difficulties of an awkward site so successfully that the sea was powerless to make an impression on the tranquillity of the harbour. A solid breakwater was constructed from huge blocks of stone mostly 50 feet long, 9 deep and 10 broad, which were lowered into 60 feet of water. Upon these foundations a mole 200 feet wide was built to encircle the harbour.[4] This description by Josephus was for a long time considered to be greatly exaggerated, or, as W.M. Thomson wrote in 1861, constituted a 'grandiloquent hyperbole'.[5]

This opinion was to be drastically changed thanks to the emerging new science of underwater archaeology based on the pioneering work of George Bass and his marine excavations off the coast of Turkey in 1960. In the same year Edwin A. Link's expedition using the latest underwater technology established the precise location of Caesarea harbour.[6] Link's SCUBA divers, operating from his specially equipped 91-