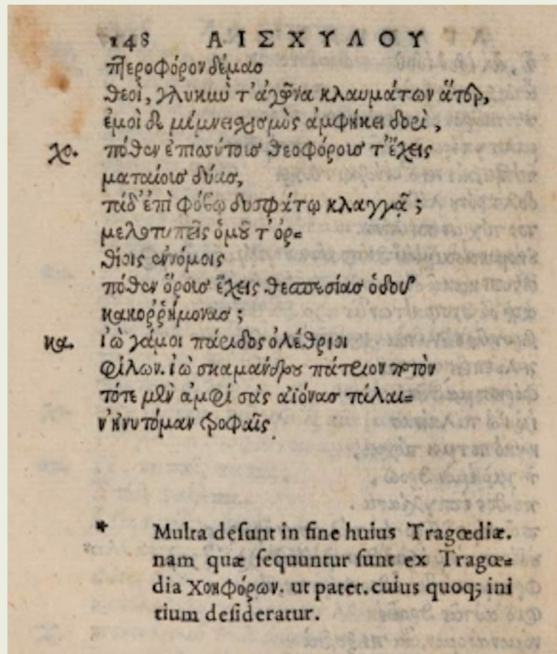


The Length of the Prologue of Aeschylus's *Choephoroi*



TEXTS AND STUDIES

studies II

ANDREW BROWN

The Length of the Prologue
of Aeschylus's *Choephoroi*



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Introduction

As all students of Aeschylus know, the manuscript Laurentianus 32.9, known in its Aeschylean portion as M, is missing one whole quire of 16 pages, which contained much of *Agamemnon* (311-1066), and the 12 inner pages of the next quire, which contained the end of *Agamemnon* (1160-673) and the beginning of *Choephoroi*. Since no copy of which we have any knowledge was made before the loss occurred, and since no independent manuscript contains *Cho.*, the beginning of the play's Prologue is lost except for fragments quoted by other authors.

Scholars have been assiduous in collecting and interpreting those fragments but rather casual in assessing the number of lines missing from M. For instance Turyn (1943: 18-19 n. 22) says that the pages of M average 45 lines and that the lost portion at the end of *Ag.* occupied about 11½ pages, implying that about 22 or 23 lines remain for the beginning of *Cho.* and any prefa-

tory material; Bowen (1986: 26) says that M has 45-6 lines per page so the missing pages had 540-52 lines in total, of which about 513 were taken up with Ag., and “at most about 30” (including the quotation fragments) are lost; and West (1990: 232-3) offers a conjectural reconstruction of the beginning of *Cho.* which (including the quotation fragments) runs to 28 lines but does not say why he rejects Turyn’s calculation.¹

There seemed, then, to be more work to do. In principle it was clear what this was: first use the existing pages of M to estimate the number of lines lost on the missing 12 pages; then estimate the number of lines which Ag. 1160-673 would have occupied; and then make some allowance for other material preceding *Cho.* 1. The task was a little laborious and perhaps thankless, as I could not hope to arrive at a precise and certain figure, but this was not a good reason for not doing what could be done and at least defining the limits of our uncertainty. If M were a newly discovered papyrus, all the necessary observations and calculations would no doubt have been carried out before its first publication.

¹ Tucker (1901: 3) has a sketchy note on the question. Valgimigli (1926: 16 n. 2) says that 514 lines of Ag. took up 11 of the 12 missing pages of M but assigns at most about 30 lines of the 12th page to the text of *Cho.* Garvie (1986: 47), citing Turyn, says that “probably ... under ten lines” (besides eight and a half in quotation fragments) are missing. Other commentators, such as Blass (1906) and Untersteiner (2002), show no interest in the matter.

Sections 2, 3 and 5 of this study correspond to the three stages of investigation described above, while Section 4 is an excursus on the 16 missing pages containing Ag. 311-1066. Section 6 then draws provisional conclusions and Section 7 considers the possible content of the missing passage. Section 8 is an appendix supplementing Section 3 with additional detail on colometry in lyrics.

Lines per page in M

Folios 1-118 of our manuscript¹ are devoted to Sophocles, 119-89 to Aeschylus, and 190-264 to Apollonius Rhodius (in its Sophoclean and Apollonian portions it is known as L). The Aeschylean portion contains the seven plays in the order *Persae Ag. Cho. PV Eum. Septem Supp.*, the *Life of Aeschylus*, assorted notes under the heading ἐκ τῆς μουσικῆς ἱστορίας, and the Catalogue of plays. Palaeographers are agreed that it was written by three men: one, whom I call Scribe A (Rostagno's \mathfrak{M} , Smyth's M¹) wrote the first quire containing *Persae* up

¹ For accounts of M see Allen 1894: 160-83; Rostagno 1896; Wilamowitz 1914: x-xiv; Smyth 1933: 17-19, 44-5; Turyn 1943: 17-19. I have used the facsimile of the Aeschylean portion (Rostagno) and the copy which can be found on line from the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana by searching for "plut. 32.09" at <http://teca.bmlonline.it> (last access 13 February 2015). Merkel (1871) was brought to my attention later and I have used this work to check my figures.

to line 705; the second, Scribe B (Rostagno's *m*, Smyth's *M*²), wrote the rest of the seven plays; and the third was the Corrector (*διορθωτής*, Rostagno's *m*), who, besides correcting the text, wrote the scholia, other *marginalia*, and the *Life* and subsequent material.

I have not counted lines in the Sophoclean portion (originally intended, we are told, as a separate volume) or the Apollonian, as they are of doubtful relevance² and in practice the Aeschylean portion tells us all we need to know. I have, however, included Scribe A's work as well as Scribe B's for the sake of completeness.

Across the central part of each page there is a series of horizontal ruled lines, regularly spaced (only sporadically visible in the facsimile and the on-line copy). The text of Aeschylus is written on these lines, as are play titles, the hypotheses of *Persae*, *PV* and *Eum.*, the *Life*, etc. In the margins, not generally respecting the ruled lines, are written *scholia* and corrections, the hypotheses of *Ag.* and *Septem*, etc. What we need to know is the number of written lines in the main part of each page. Blank lines at the top or bottom of a page are

² The experts, while agreed on the work of Scribes A and B in Aeschylus, are divided on which of them, if either, wrote the other parts of the manuscript. Thus Allen (1894: 166) says that both the Sophocles and the Apollonius were written by Scribe A; Rostagno (1896: 11-12) that the Sophocles was written by another hand (his *M*) and the Apollonius by Scribe A (his *M*); and Smyth (1933: 18) that both were written by Scribe B (his *M*²).

not counted. Blank lines before or after a play title are counted along with the title. Other blank lines in mid-page are excluded from the line count but noted for reference. *Marginalia* are ignored.

Table 2.1 shows: plate numbers in the facsimile; page references in terms of folios; the line count on each page; the contents of each page; and (for reasons that will become apparent) a number assigned to each quire in the Aeschylean portion as it would have been when complete.³ In the Contents column I give line numbers taken from West 1998, which, like those of all modern editors, are derived from Dindorf's⁴ (Rostagno's index uses Wecklein's numbers, which are different). By 'colophon' I mean anything signalling the end of a play (a decorative border, a few words or both).⁵ On titles, hypotheses and *dramatis personae* further definition and information can be found in Section 5 below.

³ Allen (1894: 161-3) numbers the quires continuously from the start of Sophocles, so my Quires 1-11 correspond to his 16-26. My so-called Quire 11 is not a complete quire but a set of five extra folios (189v is blank).

⁴ They are not particularly rational. Dindorf bestowed line numbers on one-line lacunae which he assumed at *Supp.* 297 and 312 and he failed to bestow them on some *extra metrum* exclamations even when they have lines to themselves in the manuscripts.

⁵ The term does not seem very correct but I have borrowed it from Allen.

Table 2.1: Lines per page in M

Pl.	Pg.	Ll.	Contents	Quire
1	119r	47	Hyp. <i>Pers.</i> incl. heading and blank line (13), <i>Pers.</i> title + blanks (3), <i>Pers.</i> 1-31 (31)	1
2	119v	45	<i>Pers.</i> 31-77	
	120r	44	<i>Pers.</i> 78-121	
3	120v	44	<i>Pers.</i> 122-66	
	121r	42	<i>Pers.</i> 167-208	
4	121v	44	<i>Pers.</i> 209-52	
	122r	44	<i>Pers.</i> 253-96	
5	122v	44	<i>Pers.</i> 297-340	
	123r	44	<i>Pers.</i> 341-84	
6	123v	44	<i>Pers.</i> 385-429	
	124r	44	<i>Pers.</i> 430-73	
7	124v	44	<i>Pers.</i> 474-517	
	125r	44	<i>Pers.</i> 518-72	
8	125v	43	<i>Pers.</i> 572-615 (+ blank line after 573)	
	126r	45	<i>Pers.</i> 616-60 (+ blank line after 622)	
9	126v	44	<i>Pers.</i> 660-705 (+ blank line after 702)	
	127r	43	<i>Pers.</i> 706-48	
10	127v	43	<i>Pers.</i> 749-91	2
	128r	43	<i>Pers.</i> 792-834	

Table 2.1: Lines per page in M, cont.

Pl.	Pg.	Ll.	Contents	Quire
11	128v	43	<i>Pers.</i> 835-78	
	129r	42	<i>Pers.</i> 878-920	
12	129v	44	<i>Pers.</i> 921-64	
	130r	43	<i>Pers.</i> 965-1006	
13	130v	43	<i>Pers.</i> 1007-52	
	131r	43	<i>Pers.</i> 1053-77 (24), colophon (1), <i>Ag.</i> title + blank (2), <i>Ag.</i> 1-16 (16)	
14	131v	43	<i>Ag.</i> 17-59	
	132r	44	<i>Ag.</i> 60-103	
15	132v	45	<i>Ag.</i> 104-43	
	133r	43	<i>Ag.</i> 144-83	
16	133v	44	<i>Ag.</i> 183-226	
	134r	43	<i>Ag.</i> 227-67	
17	134v	43	<i>Ag.</i> 268-310	
	135r	47	<i>Ag.</i> 1067-111	
18	135v	47	<i>Ag.</i> 1112-59	
	136r	47	<i>Cho.</i> 10-58	
19	136v	47	<i>Cho.</i> 58-103	
	137r	45	<i>Cho.</i> 104-48	
20	137v	45	<i>Cho.</i> 149-93	
	138r	45	<i>Cho.</i> 194-237	
21	138v	45	<i>Cho.</i> 238-82	
	139r	45	<i>Cho.</i> 283-327	
22	139v	45	<i>Cho.</i> 238-372	

Table 2.1 Lines per page in M, cont.

Pl.	Pg.	Ll.	Contents	Quire
	140r	45	<i>Cho.</i> 373-416	
23	140v	45	<i>Cho.</i> 417-62	
	141r	45	<i>Cho.</i> 463-507	
24	141v	45	<i>Cho.</i> 508-52	
	142r	45	<i>Cho.</i> 553-98	
25	142v	45	<i>Cho.</i> 598-643	
	143r	45	<i>Cho.</i> 644-88	
26	143v	45	<i>Cho.</i> 689-736	
	144r	45	<i>Cho.</i> 737-81	
27	144v	45	<i>Cho.</i> 782-825	
	145r	46	<i>Cho.</i> 826-70	6
28	145v	46	<i>Cho.</i> 871-915	
	146r	46	<i>Cho.</i> 916-61	
29	146v	46	<i>Cho.</i> 962-1007	
	147r	46	<i>Cho.</i> 1008-52	
30	147v	46	<i>Cho.</i> 1053-76 (24), colophon (1), <i>PV</i> title (1), hyp. <i>PV</i> (6), <i>personae</i> (3), <i>PV</i> 1-11 (11)	
	148r	46	<i>PV</i> 12-57	
31	148v	46	<i>PV</i> 58-103	
	149r	46	<i>PV</i> 104-43	
32	149v	46	<i>PV</i> 144-81	
	150r	46	<i>PV</i> 182-223	
33	150v	46	<i>PV</i> 224-69	
	151r	46	<i>PV</i> 270-315	

Table 2.1 Lines per page in M, cont.

Pl.	Pg.	Ll.	Contents	Quire
34	151v	46	<i>PV</i> 316-61	7
	152r	46	<i>PV</i> 362-407	
35	152v	46	<i>PV</i> 408-53	
	153r	48	<i>PV</i> 454-501	
36	153v	48	<i>PV</i> 502-61	
	154r	48	<i>PV</i> 562-610	
37	154v	48	<i>PV</i> 611-58	
	155r	48	<i>PV</i> 659-708	
38	155v	48	<i>PV</i> 709-56	
	156r	48	<i>PV</i> 757-804	
39	156v	48	<i>PV</i> 805-53	
	157r	48	<i>PV</i> 854-903	
40	157v	48	<i>PV</i> 904-51	
	158r	48	<i>PV</i> 952-99	
41	158v	48	<i>PV</i> 1000-48	
	159r	48	<i>PV</i> 1048-93 (39), colophon (1), <i>Eum.</i> title (1), hyp. <i>Eum.</i> (5), <i>personae</i> (2)	
42	159v	50	<i>Eum.</i> title + blank (2), <i>Eum.</i> 1-48 (48)	
	160r	48	<i>Eum.</i> 49-96	
43	160v	47	<i>Eum.</i> 97-146	8
	161r	47	<i>Eum.</i> 147-202	
44	161v	47	<i>Eum.</i> 203-49	
	162r	47	<i>Eum.</i> 250-98	

Table 2.1 Lines per page in M, cont.

Pl.	Pg.	Ll.	Contents	Quire
45	162v	47	<i>Eum.</i> 299-360	
	163r	47	<i>Eum.</i> 361-420	
46	163v	47	<i>Eum.</i> 421-67	
	164r	47	<i>Eum.</i> 468-538	
47	164v	47	<i>Eum.</i> 539-96	
	165r	47	<i>Eum.</i> 597-643	
48	165v	47	<i>Eum.</i> 644-90	
	166r	47	<i>Eum.</i> 691-737	
49	166v	47	<i>Eum.</i> 738-87	
	167r	47	<i>Eum.</i> 788-847	
50	167v	47	<i>Eum.</i> 848-897	
	168r	47	<i>Eum.</i> 898-955	
51	168v	47	<i>Eum.</i> 956-1025	
	169r	46	<i>Eum.</i> 1026-47 (19), colophon (2), heading of hyp. <i>Sept.</i> + blank (2), <i>personae</i> (3), <i>Sept.</i> 1-20 (20)	9
52	169v	46	<i>Sept.</i> 21-66	
	170r	46	<i>Sept.</i> 67-118	
53	170v	46	<i>Sept.</i> 118-94	
	171r	46	<i>Sept.</i> 196-242	
54	171v	46	<i>Sept.</i> 243-87	
	172r	46	<i>Sept.</i> 288-359	
55	172v	46	<i>Sept.</i> 360-408	
	173r	46	<i>Sept.</i> 409-54	

Table 2.1 Lines per page in M, cont.

Pl.	Pg.	Ll.	Contents	Quire
56	173v	46	<i>Sept.</i> 454-500	
	174r	46	<i>Sept.</i> 501-46	
57	174v	46	<i>Sept.</i> 547-92	
	175r	46	<i>Sept.</i> 593-638	
58	175v	46	<i>Sept.</i> 639-84	
	176r	46	<i>Sept.</i> 685-730	
59	176v	46	<i>Sept.</i> 731-96	10
	177r	48	<i>Sept.</i> 797-855	
60	177v	48	<i>Sept.</i> 856-917	
	178r	48	<i>Sept.</i> 918-98	
61	178v	48	<i>Sept.</i> 1000-49	
	179r	48	<i>Sept.</i> 1050-77 (19), colophon (1), <i>Supp.</i> title (1), <i>Supp.</i> 1-35 (27)	
62	179v	48	<i>Supp.</i> 36-115	
	180r	48	<i>Supp.</i> 116-89	
63	180v	48	<i>Supp.</i> 190-237	
	181r	48	<i>Supp.</i> 238-85	
64	181v	48	<i>Supp.</i> 286-337	
	182r	48	<i>Supp.</i> 338-86	
65	182v	48	<i>Supp.</i> 387-441	
	183r	48	<i>Supp.</i> 442-89	
66	183v	47	<i>Supp.</i> 490-539	
	184r	48	<i>Supp.</i> 540-590	

Table 2.1 Lines per page in M, cont.

Pl.	Pg.	Ll.	Contents	Quire
67	184v	48	<i>Supp.</i> 591-641	11
	185r	49	<i>Supp.</i> 642-724	
68	185v	49	<i>Supp.</i> 725-74	
	186r	49	<i>Supp.</i> 775-853	
69	186v	49	<i>Supp.</i> 854-921	
	187r	49	<i>Supp.</i> 922-71	
70	187v	49	<i>Supp.</i> 972-1026	
	188r	41	<i>Supp.</i> 1027-73 (40), colophon (1)	
71	188v	51	<i>Life</i> title + blank (2), <i>Life</i> (46), further notes incl. heading (3)	
	189r	30	Further notes (9), Catalogue incl. heading + blank (21)	

Table 2.1: Lines per page in M, end.

Figure 2.1 shows the number of lines per page in the form of a graph.

From the raw data some outlying values must be excluded for statistical purposes. Pages 188r and 189r are incomplete as they respectively contain the end of *Supp.* and the end of all the Aeschylean material, followed by blank space in each case.⁶ Pages 119r, 159v and 188v have two more lines than their neighbours because each begins with a heading or title (those of

⁶ Blank, that is, apart from the charming verse τέλος δεδωκὸς χριστὲ σοὶ χάριν φέρω [“Having reached the end, Christ, I give you thanks”] at the foot of 188r and a table of contents by a late hand on 189r.

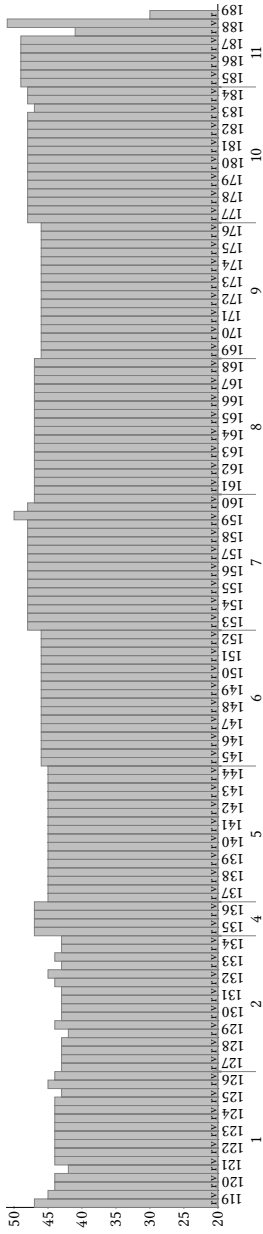


Figure 2.1: Graph of lines per page in M

hyp. *Pers.*, *Eum.* and the *Life*) followed by a blank line and placed higher than normal (encroaching on the upper margin). I could simply subtract 2 from the line count on each of these three pages.⁷ but I might then fall under suspicion of doctoring the statistics and it seems safer to leave the pages out of account completely.

When the outliers are disregarded, Scribe A has an average of 43.9 lines across 15 pages and Scribe B has an average of 46.3 across 121 pages. But these averages are hardly relevant to our purpose, for it is obvious that we are not dealing with a random distribution of values. The four pages nearest to the 12-page gap that interests us all have 47 lines.⁸ and it is clearly relevant that they

⁷ This would be especially justifiable in the case of 159v, where the title (the second provided for *Eum.*) is clearly an addition by another hand.

⁸ According to Rostagno (1896: 12) and Wilamowitz (1914: xi-xii), the first line of 135r (*Ag.* 1067) was initially omitted at a page division and then supplied by the Corrector. If this were true, 135r would initially have had only 46 lines and there would be an impact on my argument. But, while I am no palaeographer, I cannot believe it to be true. If Scribe B had omitted the line by mistake, he could hardly have left space for it; and *Ag.* 1067 occupies a ruled line at the same distance from the top of the page (3.5 cm) as the first line of 135v. The writing is rather large and bold compared with the rest of this page, but there are greater contrasts on e.g. 149v. There it looks as though lines which were hard to read have been inked over for clarity, and the same may have happened in this case. (I am happy to be able to report that Professor Easterling, with her far greater expertise, endorses this note).

occupy the first and last folios of a quire. When we map out the beginnings and ends of the quires, as I have done in Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1 we see that, while the number of lines per page varies slightly between quires, the number *within* each quire from Quire 5 onwards is almost completely constant.

Table 2.2 gives an analysis by quires. ‘Relevant pages’ means the number of surviving pages, other than outliers, in the quire; ‘Standard lines per page’ means the number that occurs most often; and ‘Exceptions’ means the number of relevant pages that do not have the standard number of lines.

Quire	Relevant pages	Lines per page			Exceptions
		Min	Max	Standard	
1	15	42	45	44	4
2	16	42	45	43	5
3	0	?	?	?	?
4	4	47	47	47	0
5	16	45	45	45	0
6	16	46	46	46	0
7	15	47	48	48	1
8	16	47	47	47	0
9	16	46	46	46	0
10	16	47	48	48	1
11	6	49	49	49	0

Table 2.2: Lines per page analysed by quires

This unexpected finding⁹ does not arise from any difference between quires in physical page height, which is always about 30.5 cm, or in line spacing (height of column divided by number-of-lines-minus-one), which stays conveniently close to 0.5 cm. It is therefore the width of the top and bottom margins that varies – in practice mainly the bottom margin. The explanation no doubt lies in the ruled lines. The number within a quire would have been made constant by mechanical means – probably by forcing the prick holes, against which the lines were scored, through more than one sheet at a time¹⁰ – while the number on the first page of a new quire was judged by eye. It is possible, indeed, that the physical page height was not originally constant between quires, as the pages would have been only roughly cut at this stage and would not have been trimmed to their current size until the quires had been bound together. In that case the scribe, or whoever did the pricking and ruling, was going by width of margin rather than height of column.

⁹ Not really surprising, however, when we remember that “[t]he quire was the scribe’s basic writing unit throughout the Middle Ages” (Clemens and Graham 2007: 14); see also Irigoin 1998.

¹⁰ For the pricking and ruling process see Thompson (1988: 57-8) and Clemens and Graham (2007: 15-17); in more detail Irigoin (1958: 213-20). According to Irigoin (214) the perforations were usually made through all eight folios at once, and no doubt that was the process here.

Be this as it may, the statistics tell their own story. Since the four surviving pages of Quire 4 all have the same number of lines, this was clearly the standard for the quire as a whole (the chance that it might not have been is statistically negligible). So the expected number of lines on each page of the quire is 47 and the expected number across the missing 12 pages is 564.

We must now assess the reliability of this figure. We need not reckon with unpredictable blank lines within the text, since these are purely a feature of Scribe A's work (its last three pages for some reason). However, while Quires 5 to 11 are almost completely regular, Quires 1 and 2 are less so. Quire 1 was the work of Scribe A, who may simply have been more easy-going than his colleague, but Quire 2 was the first to be written by Scribe B. If the irregularity here were due simply to the fact that he was new to the task, we might, since we lack Quire 3, need to allow for the possibility that some irregularity persisted into Quire 4.

In fact I think we can set our minds at rest. Even in Quire 2 the scribe achieved the standard length (43 lines) on 11 out of 16 pages, and consistently for the first four. Then something went wrong on the fifth page (129r): he left four lines blank at the top, perhaps to avoid a flaw in the parchment (though none is visible in the facsimile or on line). He partially compensated by extending the column lower than usual at the bottom,

but was still left with only 42 lines on the page; so it may have been deliberate that he compensated further by writing 44 lines on the next page.

But his main problem was that he had not set out to make use of every ruled line. Perhaps he felt that the ruled lines allowed inadequate margins, or perhaps he was seeking uniformity with Quire 1, wrongly reckoning that its standard was 43 lines rather than 44. But it was difficult to remember to leave the right number of ruled lines unused on every page; and perhaps, after the problem on 129r, he no longer tried very hard. So we can easily understand how he twice accidentally found himself writing 44 lines, and once even 45.¹¹

The 47-line standard of Quire 4, however, is within the range found in Quires 5 to 11, and it is clear that by now the scribe had learned his lesson and resolved to employ every ruled line, so there was no longer any danger of writing extra lines by mistake. We can be confident, then, that Quire 4 conformed to the strict standard of the subsequent quires, not to the more relaxed standard of Quires 1 and 2.

Within those subsequent quires we find just two one-line lapses, on pages 160v and 183v. Each seems

¹¹ I cannot establish the number of *ruled* lines in this quire. It may not be constant, but the facsimile and the on-line copy never enable us verify the *absence* of a ruled line. If it is not, there is still good reason to believe that such irregularity had been ironed out by the time that Quire 4 was reached.

to be due to simple accident.¹² Towards the bottom of the page the ruled lines probably became hard to see (they are undetectable in the facsimile and on line) and the scribe strayed from them, writing four lines (*Eum.* 140-3 and *Supp.* 534-7) in the space available for five.

Such an accident could clearly have occurred on any page; and so, perhaps, could the different accident, whatever it was, on 129r. If we take the non-outlying pages from the 'strict' quires (i.e. 135r to 187v excluding 159v) as our dataset, the accident rate is 2 in 105 pages and I understand (see the Acknowledgements) that the probability that our 12 pages were free of accidents is 78%. If we add in the pages of Quire 2 but exclude the four that exceed the standard (on the assumption that no pages in Quire 4 would have done so), this gives us a rate of 3 accidents (129r, 160v, 183v) in 117 pages and the probability of exactly 564 lines in our 12 missing pages falls to 73%. If we take this more cautious calculation but still assume that any deviation would be downward, the probability of exactly 563 lines works out at 23% and the probability of fewer than 563 at 4%.

¹² 160v is the last page of a 48-line quire and I at first thought that the scribe might have deliberately restricted the length for the sake of uniformity with the facing page 161r, which is the first of a 47-line quire. But in that case one would have expected him to leave a line blank at the bottom rather than spread some lines out, and on closer inspection the anomaly seems to be due to the same simple slip as the one on 183v.

This, however, depends on the assumption that all the 12 pages were ‘normal’, i.e. not outliers as defined above. If it should turn out that *Ag.* happened to end near the bottom of a page, we would need to consider the possibility that that particular page had fewer lines than the standard for the quire (like 188r) and that the next page, starting with the title of *Cho.*, had more than the standard (like 119r and 159v).

Lines occupied by Ag. 1160-673

3.1 *Lines of τ*

For the latter part of *Ag.* we depend on three manuscripts: Laurentianus 31.8 (F), Marcianus graecus 616 (663) (G) and Neapolitanus II F 31 (Tr or, as West prefers, T, written by the scholar Demetrius Triclinius).¹ All are considered to be copies (probably indirect in T's case) of a lost manuscript τ .² which was a descendant of a

¹ I have used photostats of F and G (both incomplete for *Ag.*) in the Classics Faculty Library of Cambridge University; the online copy of F available by searching for "plut. 31.08" at <http://teca.bm.unline.it> (last access 13 February 2015); and photostats of G and T (both for *Ag.* only) in the Bodleian Library.

² The siglum τ has been used in more than one way but I use it to refer to a particular lost manuscript, irrespective of the origin of its readings. This manuscript was also the source for E (Salmantic. Bibl. Univ. 233), F, G and T in *Eum.*, for F, G (mostly) and T in *Persae*, and for T in *PV* and *Septem*.

close relative of M. The history of τ 's progeny and of Triclinius's work on the text has been controversial, but the essentials are now well enough established for our purposes.³

What we call Ag. 1160-673 occupies 500 lines in F, 512 in G and 514 in T. Table 3.1 gives a breakdown of these figures by type of verse. I have counted *extra metrum* exclamations in dialogue contexts (1214 $\iota\omicron\upsilon\delta\iota\omicron\upsilon\delta\iota\omicron\upsilon\delta$ $\omega\omega$ $\kappa\alpha\kappa\acute{\alpha}$, 1307 $\varphi\epsilon\upsilon\varphi\epsilon\upsilon$, 1315 $\iota\omega$ $\xi\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\iota$) as a separate category but have included all exclamations in lyric contexts under the heading of Lyric.

Verse type	F	G	T
Iambic trimeter	318	318	318
Trochaic tetrameter	25	25	25
<i>Extra metrum</i> (in dialogue)	3	3	3
Recited anapaests	55	59	58
Lyric	99	107	110
Total	500	512	514

Table 3.1: Lines occupied by Ag. 1160-673 in F, G and T

³ See Turyn 1943: 110-15; Fraenkel 1950: vol. 1, 11-33; Dawe 1959; Helm 1972; Smith 1975; Smith 1981-82: 250-1; West 1990: 352-3; Smith 1992: 198-203, 228-9; Tessier 2001. No one now accepts Fraenkel's view that F and G are free of Triclinian influence and it seems that we are no longer forced into the awkward belief that F, which reflects (with G and E) an early stage in Triclinius's work, was written later than T, which represents its final stage.

The differences are due to three factors:

1. The scribe of F sometimes saves paper by writing two lyric or anapaestic cola on the same line with a space between them. This is not the practice of G or T in Ag. (except where one of the ‘cola’ is a brief exclamation) and is clearly a private initiative on the part of the scribe of F.⁴ In our section of Ag. it happens four times in anapaests and eight in lyrics, and in each case the space in F corresponds with a line end in G and T. Indeed, if we count cola rather than lines, F and G coincide not only in their overall total (512) but in their colometry at each point.
2. At four points (1455, 1494, 1513, 1518) F and G incorporate an exclamation (ὶὼ or ὄμοι μοι) in a line with other material, while T gives it a line to itself (but at 1518 T then omits the ensuing line break ἀνελεύθερρον, so the net gain is three lines). This is clearly a private initiative on the part of Triclinius, and the arrangement of F and G will reflect that of τ.
3. T accidentally omits the anapaestic line 1573.

⁴ Spaces in F can be ambiguous, but G and T provide a check on what was intended. Thus at 1165 F has a space after *δυσαλγεῖ τύχα* which could be taken as a colon division, but, as G and T do not end a line at that point, the space is clearly accidental. F’s metrical *scholia* include counts of verses and cola (for Ag. they are transcribed by Smith 1976: 84-9), but I have not attempted to make use of them.

It follows that 512 was the total number of dialogue verses, *extra metrum* exclamations and anapaestic and lyric cola in τ (and presumably also the total number of lines, though, if τ did sometimes double up cola as F does, this would not matter for our purposes as such pairing was left to the discretion of individual scribes⁵ and was not a feature of the paradosis).

3.2 Content of M and τ

To establish how lines in τ relate to lines in M, we must first consider the amount of text that the manuscripts provide *in linea*. The scribes of M have a habit of omitting lines which the Corrector then supplies, usually in the margin: *Pers.* 39 (1 line), 125b (1),⁶ 391 (1), 552-61 (10), 920 (1), 1008 (1), *Cho.* 627 (1), 712-14 (3), *PV* 818 (1), *Eum.* 121-3 (3), 387 (1), *Sept.* 999 (1), *Supp.* 518-20 (3).⁷ In all cases where other manuscripts are available

⁵ In *Persae*, where both F and G have many paired cola, their pairings do not appear to coincide any more often than chance would allow.

⁶ Since the Corrector writes $\pi\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\eta\iota$ $\lambda\alpha\kappa\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ between lines, it was probably a separate line in the exemplar even though there is no line division at the corresponding point in 119.

⁷ I have used the lists of Rostagno (1896: 12) and Wilamowitz (1914: xi-xii), but have added *Pers.* 125b and *Sept.* 999 and removed *Ag.* 1067, for which see n. 8, p. 24. At *Ag.* 252 I do not count $\tau\acute{o}$ $\delta\grave{\epsilon}$ $\pi\rho\omicron\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\epsilon\iota\nu$, which the Corrector supplies to the right of $\tau\acute{o}$ $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\lambda\omicron\nu$, as a colon even though F makes a separate colon out of $\tau\acute{o}$ $\delta\grave{\epsilon}$

those manuscripts have the lines in question in the text.⁸ Also at *Sept.* 195 at the top of a page⁹ M omits a line which the Corrector fails to supply but which is in other manuscripts. Scribe A is a worse offender than B, but B is bad enough, omitting about 15 lines in a total output of about 6,000.¹⁰ On average, then, he would have omitted one line in a 500-line sequence. The lowest number in any preserved 500-line sequence is zero and the highest is 4, so we may take these as the likely limits of omissions in *Ag.* 1160-673, though naturally a number above 4 is not ruled out.

Additional text is not normally inserted in the Byzantine period and the only likely case¹¹ of a spurious line in M not found in other manuscripts seems to be $\tilde{\alpha}$

προκλύειν ἐπεὶ (both manuscripts have quite disturbed colometry here).

⁸ *Pers.* and *Sept.* 999 are partial exceptions as here M^{ac} has some allies: see Dawe 1964: 292-3, 342. This may (but need not) mean that its scribe was not personally to blame.

⁹ Editors call it the bottom of a page, but the line should have been the first on 171r.

¹⁰ In *Cho.* and *Supp.*, where we have no other manuscripts for comparison, he could have been guilty of further omissions not spotted by the Corrector (there may be an instance after *Supp.* 971, where Page (1972) and West (1998) mark a lacuna at a page division), but probably not many in view of the Corrector's high success rate in the other plays.

¹¹ At *Pers.* 6 the intrusive gloss *δαρείου υἱός*, which M shares with some other manuscripts but not with F, G and T, does not affect the line count.

ǎ at Ag. 1090.¹² Whether spurious or not, it represents a difference between M and τ .

As for faults in τ , it had major lacunae at *Eum.* 582-644 and 778-807, but it is clear that no accident on this scale can have occurred in Ag. To the best of my knowledge¹³ the only *minor* lacuna unshared by M (if Ag. 1090 is not one) is *Eum.* 323-4 (2 lyric cola). In the course of Ag. 1160-673 Page (1972) marks just one lacuna, of 3 anapaestic metra (equating here to 1 line), after 1522. West (1998) marks lacunae after 1272 (1 line), after 1522 (2 anapaestic metra), after 1526 (say 1 metron), and within 1658 (1 line), making a total of 4 lines. Sommerstein (2008) accepts the first three of these and adds others after 1422 (1 line), 1497 (1 anapaestic metron but zero lines), and 1594 (1 line), making 5.¹⁴ It is probable that any given lacuna in

¹² Most editors bracket this and it does seem out of place. There is no obvious reason why the scribe of M should have inserted it (ǎ ǎ at 1125 is not much of a reason), but no doubt it could be an earlier interpolation, fortuitously omitted in τ .

¹³ For *PV* and *Septem* our knowledge of τ depends on T. Wilamowitz (1914) reports T (his Tr) more fully than recent editors and I have not found any mention of lacunae unshared with M, but this may not be reliable.

¹⁴ An old notion that the first and third of the Chorus's ephymnia (1455-61, 1537-50) were originally repeated as the second is (1490-6 = 1513-20) is mentioned in properly dismissive terms by Fraenkel (1950: vol. 3, 700, 737).

τ was shared by M.¹⁵ but we can never be sure and it is always possible that M had a line or two that τ lacked. Interpolations have also been postulated (West, for instance, marks 1290 as such), but any spurious line here will certainly be ancient and will have been present in M.

3.3 Colometry

Dialogue metres create no problem for our purposes, as F, G and T present one verse per line throughout this part of Ag. and M always does so elsewhere.¹⁶ At 1256-7, where the true text and colometry are disputed, F, G and T all present two iambic trimeters (the lines are counted as such in Table 3.1), and there is no likelihood that M did otherwise.

Extra metrum exclamations in dialogue create no problem either as τ gave separate lines to all three examples (cited above) and that was Scribe B's normal practice also, at least in this part of his work: see Ag.

¹⁵ The hiatus after 1522 $\gamma\epsilon\nu\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ would perhaps not have been tolerated by an ancient editor, but at most this suggests only that the omission did not occur very early, not that it occurred very late.

¹⁶ G, which has narrow columns, sometimes has difficulty with trochaic tetrameters (it devotes 27 lines to 21 tetrameters at *Pers.* 155-75), but it manages to fit every tetrameter on one line at Ag. 1649-73 and M does so in all the tetrameter passages of *Persae*.

25 $\iota\omicron\ddot{\upsilon}$ $\iota\omicron\ddot{\upsilon}$, *Cho.* 194 $\varphi\epsilon\ddot{\upsilon}$, 881 $\iota\omicron\ddot{\upsilon}$ $\iota\omicron\ddot{\upsilon}$, 1048 $\tilde{\alpha}$ $\tilde{\alpha}$. Indeed he was more reliable in this matter than τ to judge by *Ag.* 25, where F and G place the exclamation on the line of the following trimeter.

*Recited anapaests*¹⁷ should also be straightforward. Like most modern editors (though not West) our scribes present them as dimeters with occasional monometers; and, while the placing of the monometers is not always predictable, the scribes generally agree on it. Thus in the 64 anapaestic lines of the Parodos of *Ag.* (40-103) there is no colometric difference at all between M, F and G, and T has only a trivial disagreement, not affecting the line count, over the placing of a monometer at 41-2. For the possibility of paired anapaestic cola (two to a line) in M see [8.3](#) in the Appendix (where I reject it for this play).

Lyrics are a different matter. τ had 18 lyric cola in the remainder of the Cassandra scene after 1159 and 89 in the Chorus's dialogue with Clytemnestra (1407-566). In general, though the scribes (apart from Triclinius) had no understanding of lyric metre, they had the idea of a colon as a sequence of syllables that needed to be marked off from its neighbours, and as a rule each scribe tried to preserve the colon divisions of

¹⁷ Scribes will certainly not have distinguished between recited and lyric anapaests but I am treating the latter under the heading of Lyrics for convenience.

his exemplar. Thus the colometry of the ancient text is often preserved,¹⁸ and, of the lapses that do occur, many simply shift a word or so from one colon to another and do not affect the line count.

The differences can be more significant, however, and we need to assess what allowance to make for them. A statistical approach, determining the ratio of M's cola to τ 's where comparison can be made (in *Persae*, *Eum.* and part of *Ag.*), must be combined with examination of τ 's practice in *Ag.* 1160-673. Matters are complicated by the possibility of Triclinian influence (as well as corruption) in F and G and by the possibility that M could have had more than one colon per line of text.

To avoid unduly bloating this subsection I have relegated the detailed discussion to an Appendix (Section 8) and here I merely list my conclusions:

1. The number of cola in M and τ is usually equal and, where differences occur, they tend to balance out

¹⁸ The colometry of ancient manuscripts of tragedy has usually been found to correspond with that of medieval ones, and this is commonly held to show that there was only one ancient colometry (generally ascribed to Aristophanes of Byzantium), which the medieval manuscripts reflect when they are not corrupted or under Triclinian influence: see Barrett 1964: 84-5; Zuntz 1965: 31-5; Wartelle 1971: 152-4; Fleming and Kopff 1992; Fleming 2007: iii-iv. This still seems to be broadly accepted despite recent controversy over the origin and purpose of the ancient colometry, with Prauscello (2006) and Lu Hsu (2014: 15-17) citing evidence for some fluidity.

in the long term. A difference can build up in the shorter term but, where no special factors are at work, it never amounts to more than four cola in either direction.

2. The lyric colometry of F and G in Ag. 1160-673 does not exhibit any visible Triclinian influence.
3. There are three exclamations (*ιὼ* at 1455, 1489 and 1513) which did not have lines to themselves in τ but must have done so earlier in the tradition and may well have done so in M.
4. Apart from this and from minor errors not affecting the colon count, the colometry of τ in these lyrics can usually be shown to reflect that of the ancient text; and, even where it cannot, there are no positive grounds for suspicion. An allowance of minus 2 and plus 4 in M's count will cater sufficiently for random colometric differences.
5. The practice of writing two or more cola per line, which is prevalent in M from Quire 7 onwards, is unlikely to have occurred more than once or twice on the missing pages of Quire 4.

3.4 Review

In 3.1 above we established that the number of lines taken up by Ag. 1160-673 in τ (or at least the total of dialogue verses, *extra metrum* exclamations and

anapaestic and lyric cola) was 512. We have now considered the adjustments that have to be made to that figure to arrive at a probable figure for M. These are summarised in Table 3.2

Factor	Minimum probable	Best estimate	Maximum probable
Omissions by scribe of M	-4	-1	0
Unshared lacunae in τ	0	0	+2
$i\acute{o}$ on separate line	0	+3	+3
Other differences in lyric cola	-2	0	+4
Paired cola in M	-2	0	0
Total	-8	+2	+9

Table 3.2: Adjustments to line count of τ

My best estimate for the number of lines in M, then, is 514, and the theoretical range given by the totals of the ‘minimum probable’ and ‘maximum probable’ figures is from 504 to 521. But this 18-line range is not really valid. Across the values of the five adjustment factors there are 1,260 possible combinations ($5 \times 3 \times 4 \times 7 \times 3$). Only one combination (each) will give us the extreme value of minus 8 or plus 9, so these values are highly improbable. Five combinations give -7 or +8, 15 give -6 or +7, 33 (by my reckoning) give -5 or +6. On this very rough basis¹⁹ we might conclude that there is only a 3.3% chance ($2 + 10 + 30 = 42$

¹⁹ A more precise calculation would need to take account of

combinations out of 1,260) that the number of lines in M lay outside the range 507 to 518, an 8.6% chance ($42 + 66 = 108$ combinations out of 1,260) that it lay outside the range 508 to 517. We may use the 12-line range 507 to 518 for practical purposes.

The precise ‘best estimate’ figure of 514 lines need not be taken very seriously as it can only be marginally more probable than neighbouring figures, but a figure close to it is significantly more probable than one near the top or bottom of the range.

3.5 *End of play and end of page*

We saw earlier that the standard number of lines per page in Quire 4, and probably the number on every page, was 47. It follows that the first ten pages of the 12-page gap probably contained 470 lines and that Ag. 1673 probably stood near the bottom of the 11th page: not higher than the 11th line from the bottom of that page or lower than line 1 of the 12th page (or perhaps line 2 if we allow for a 46-line page somewhere earlier in the quire).

Each of the other six plays is followed in M by what I call a colophon marking its end: a few words

the varying probability of the values of each adjustment factor (for instance, Scribe B is more likely to have omitted one line than four) and the fact that values outside the stated range may have a non-zero probability (he could have omitted more than four).

such as τέλ(ος) αἰσχύ(λου) προμη(θέως) or a modestly decorative border or both. That of *Eum.* takes up two lines, each of the others one. The likelihood, then, is that this took up one line after the end of Ag. unless Ag. 1673 actually stood on the last line of the page.²⁰ The space available for *Cho.* material before the end of the 12th missing page is therefore about 44 to 56 lines.

How low on the page would Ag. 1673 have had to stand for the scribe to abandon that page and place the title of *Cho.* on the next? We cannot be sure for lack of comparative material. *PV* ends on the 10th line from the end of a page (159r) and is followed on that page (after the colophon) by the title and hypothesis of *Eum. Supp.* also ends on the 10th line from the end of a page (188r) and is followed (after the colophon) by blank space, but this, being the last play, is doubtless a special case (if the Corrector had wanted to begin the *Life* on the same page, Scribe B's thanks to Christ would have been in the way). In the Sophoclean portion of our manuscript *Aj.* ends on the 5th line from the bottom

²⁰ The regrettable verse καὶ νῦν πάρεστιν ἀγαμέμνωνος τέλος [“And now here is the end of *Agamemnon*”], which follows the end of Ag. in F, is presumably copied from τ since G, while sparing us this, does not spare us the ensuing verse ἀρχὴν δὲ λοιπὸν τῶν εὐμενίδων βλέπε [“Finally behold the beginning of the *Eumenides*”]. However, the similar verses which F and G present after the end of *Persae* and *Eum.* are not in M and no doubt all this material was composed at a late stage.

of 16v (by comparison with the previous page), *OT* on the 3rd line from the bottom of 49r and *OC* very low on 117v,²¹ and on each of these pages only a colophon (respectively of three, two and two lines) follows. *Phil.* ends on the 12th line from the bottom of 96r and is followed by a one-line colophon (clearly colophons tend to expand when there is space to fill) and ten lines of *OC* material.

The scribe would not have wanted a title to be the last item on a page, so, allowing for the colophon and a blank line, we may be fairly sure that he would have abandoned the page if *Ag.* 1673 had stood on the fourth line from the bottom (the precise position where our ‘best estimate’ places it) or lower. For any position higher than that we become progressively less sure until, by the time we reach the 10th line from the bottom, we can be fairly sure that the page would *not* have been abandoned. It is worth noting, however, that several of the most likely positions are at least consistent with the possibility that the title of *Cho.* was the first item on the 12th missing page.²²

²¹ I cannot give an exact distance since this page has 47 lines of text, the previous page (117r) only 44.

²² This vindicates the opinion of Valgimigli (see n. 1, p. 10). It is a pity that he gave no details of his calculation (though he must have assumed 47 lines per page) and odd that he then assigned a maximum of about 30 lines of the last missing page to the text of *Cho.*, apparently assuming a very long hypothesis.

On the other hand, if the end of *Ag.* extended beyond the standard 47 lines of the 11th missing page by even one line, the scribe probably placed that line on the 12th rather than encroach on the lower margin for the sake of avoiding a ‘widow’, since elsewhere in the ‘strict’ quires the width of the lower margin is always respected.

Excursus on Ag. 311-1066

There is less to be learned about the completely missing Quire 3 of M since we know that it covered Ag. 311-1066, which is preserved in F and T (though not in G). However, it is worth while to look briefly into this quire as it should provide a check on our methods and results so far and may be of interest for other purposes.

This part of the play occupies 709 lines in F, 745 in T. Table 4.1 gives a breakdown like that of Table 3.1. The differences between F and T are mainly due to F's

Verse type	F	T
Iambic trimeter	433	433
Recited anapaests	38	39
Lyric	238	273
Total	709	745

Table 4.1: Lines occupied by Ag. 311-1066 in F and T

practice of pairing cola on a single line. It does this once in anapaests (360-1), making 39 cola, and in fact these anapaestic cola, like its 433 dialogue verses, are an exact match for T's. By my reckoning it also does this 46 times in lyrics, making 284 lyric cola. Most of its mid-line spaces are shown to mark colon ends by the fact that they correspond with line ends in T, but, as G is not available as a check, there is some potential for error in those which do not.¹ However, I am reasonably confident of my figure.²

The total of dialogue verses and anapaestic and lyric cola in F, then, is 756. Since T is known to incorporate the metrical corrections of Triclinius (in fact it obtains strict correspondence of line count between

¹ For instance, at 737-8 F has παραυτὰ δ' ἐλθεῖν : ἐς ἰλίου πόλιν | λέγοιμ' ἄν φρόνημα μὲν |. The space after ἐλθεῖν, though not corresponding with a line division in T, is certainly a colon division; then there is a smaller space after λέγοιμ' ἄν which could be taken for another colon division, though I do not think it is.

² We might have hoped to find confirmation in the space available in the missing quire of G which contained Ag. 46-1094. G has 16 pages per quire and seems to have had 60 lines on every complete page, so this portion of Ag. occupied 960 lines. It should have comprised 501 dialogue trimeters (if 1082, 1087 and 1092 are lyric), 97 anapaestic cola and, if my reading of F is accurate, 465 lyric cola. If the scribe had always written one colon per line in this quire, as he did in the rest of Ag., the total would have been 1,063 lines – 103 lines too many. I conclude that he sometimes wrote two to a line, as he did in *Persae*. Since we cannot tell how often he did so, this calculation leads nowhere.

each strophe and its antistrophe)³ F's total provides our best guide to the number of lines in τ and thus the number in M. Across 16 pages this gives us an average of 47.25 lines per page. This is within the range that we have observed in Quires 5 to 11 (see Table 2.2) and thus suggests (though it does not prove) that Quire 3 shared the strict standards of those quires, not the relatively relaxed standards of Quires 1 and 2.

If so, more than one scenario is theoretically possible. For instance, Quire 3 had 46 lines per page (like Quires 6 and 9) and τ had 20 more lines than M; or it had 47 (like Quires 4 and 8) and τ had 4 more than M; or it had 48 (like Quires 7 and 10) and M had 12 more than τ . We must beware of circular argument here and sceptics may wish to insist that the 46-line and 48-line scenarios are fully plausible. However, there is no obvious reason why M and τ should have differed by as many as 12 lines, let alone 20. Scribe B is not guilty of omissions on such a scale elsewhere, though once again he could easily have omitted a line or so. A number of lacunae have been claimed for τ ⁴ but most of

³ At 1031 T omits a whole colon of F's ($\theta\upsilon\mu\alpha\lambda\gamma\gamma\acute{\eta}\varsigma \tau\epsilon \kappa\alpha\iota \omicron\upsilon\delta\acute{\epsilon}\nu$) plus the following syllable, leaving the antistrophe with the same number of cola as the strophe (15) though certainly not obtaining correct respension.

⁴ West (1998), for instance, marks them at 346 (1 line), 555 (1), 572 (1), 576 (2), 794 (1), 806 (1), 1006 (1), 1045 (1), 1057 (1): a total of 10 lines.

them are likely, once again, to have been shared by M. There are no exclamations, either in dialogue or in lyrics, which are likely to have caused discrepancies. Finally the lyrics, while far longer than those in 1160-673, are treated in much the same way: F's cola are often those of modern editions and, even when they are not, they are generally intelligible, so there are no passages that look likely to have differed substantially from the archetype.

I feel entitled to claim, then, that the 47-line scenario is considerably the most likely and that the line count of M and τ probably differed over this wide expanse by only 4. So our findings for the 16 missing pages of Quire 3 tend to reinforce those for the 12 of Quire 4.

Prefatory material

There are four items that occur before the text of one or more Aeschylean plays in M: a title; a hypothesis (meaning a preface that always includes a synopsis of the plot and may also include a didascalía and/or other information or comments); a list of *dramatis personae* (regularly treated as separate from the hypothesis and begun on a new line); and (for *Ag.* only) a note on the identity of the prologue speaker.¹

Each of the six plays has a title except, strictly speaking, *Septem*; and *Eum.* has two. For *Septem*, where we expect the play title, we instead find ὑπόθεσις

¹ This note (θεράπων ἀγαμέμνο(νος) ὁ προλογιζόμενος οὐχὶ ὁ ὑπὸ αἰγίσθου ταχθεὶς, “A servant of Agamemnon delivers the Prologue, not the man stationed by Aegisthus”) is inserted by the Corrector on what was meant to be a blank line after the title, but is shown to belong after the *dramatis personae* by the treatment of an abbreviated version in F, G and T and by that of similar notes on e.g. *Eur. Alc.* (though in P. Oxy. 2256 fr. 1 [ὁ προλογί]ζων Λά[ῖος], if rightly restored, precedes the *dramatis personae*).

τῶν ἐπτὰ ἐπὶ θήβας, “Hypothesis of the *Seven against Thebes*”, even though the actual hypothesis does not follow this and was added in the margin; but no doubt the play title is what the scribe meant to write.² The title of *Persae* comes after the hypothesis (which has its own heading on a separate line), that of *PV* before it, that of *Eum.* both before and after (but the second title was added at the top of the page after the text was written, by someone who did not notice, or did not care, that there was already a title on the previous page).

There are three pages in the Aeschylean portion of M that begin with a title or heading, and each of these (heading of hyp. *Pers.* on 119r, title of *Eum.* on 159r, title of *Life* on 188r) stands not in the normal position of line 1 on the page but two line-spaces higher, encroaching on the upper margin. None of them, however, was written by Scribe B, and the second, at least, is an addition which could only be placed in the margin, so we cannot be sure that, if the title of *Cho.* (or the heading of its hypothesis) was the first item on the page, it would

² Wilamowitz (1914: xii) believes that the scribe deliberately wrote the heading of the hypothesis, intending to leave space for the Corrector to supply the hypothesis itself but failing to leave enough. But why deliberately write the heading without the hypothesis, and why write it in preference to the play title? And how could the scribe have thought that the three lines which he left below this would be sufficient for the hypothesis and *dramatis personae*?

have been treated in this way (Soph. *Phil.* on 80r is a clear case of a title placed in, not above, the standard position for line 1 of the page).

The title of *Persae* is both preceded and followed by a blank line; those of *Ag*³ and *Septem* and the second title of *Eum.* are followed by one; and those of *PV* and *Supp.* and the first title of *Eum.* have no blank line. All that we can conclude is that the title of *Cho.* could possibly have taken up zero lines for our purposes (if it stood at the top of the page) but is more likely to have taken up one or two.

Of the other six plays in M, all except *Supp.* have a hypothesis; and all the plays of Sophocles and Euripides have at least one hypothesis in our manuscripts⁴ with the exception of Eur. *Electra* and *IA*⁵. However, before we conclude that *Cho.* is very unlikely, on statistical grounds, to have lacked a hypothesis, we must note that it shares certain characteristics with *Supp.*: these are the only two plays that are preserved in M and its apographs alone and their text has a unique quality,

³ I count the line following ἀγαμέμνων as blank (here and in Table 2.1) as this is clearly what Scribe B intended: see n. 1, p. 51.

⁴ Soph. *Aj.* has no hypothesis in what we here call L, but this is the first play and L also lacks the *Life of Sophocles*, which stands at the beginning of other manuscripts, so no doubt its exemplar had lost its first folio.

⁵ *IA* has *dramatis personae* in L; *Electra* does not (and the list in P is no doubt a very late invention).

being particularly corrupt and particularly prone to nonsensical readings (non-existent words or plainly impossible grammar). If these facts are connected – if, that is, there is any reason other than Sod’s (Murphy’s) Law for the fact that the plays for which we are wholly dependent on M are the ones for which M has the worst text – then the readiest explanation is that the seven-play edition in M was compiled at a late stage from more than one source.⁶ For the other five plays the compiler had access to a relatively good tradition (across one or more manuscripts), which then became the source of other surviving manuscripts besides M, while for *Cho.* and *Supp.* he had to resort to an inferior tradition (perhaps in a single manuscript),⁷ which left us no other descendants.⁸ In that case we cannot be

⁶ It is not the only possible explanation. A canon or syllabus of five plays (a superset of the Byzantine Triad) could have been remembered across the generations and caused the other two (*Cho.* and *Supp.*) to be neglected at two different periods. But I find this less likely.

⁷ Dawe (1973: 98) considers the text of *Supp.* to be different from that of any other play, even *Cho.*, and suggests that it reached M by a different route. Even if this is true, the text of *Cho.* and *Supp.* surely does have something in common which distinguishes it from the rest. Manuscripts of little-read plays of Aeschylus are not to be multiplied unnecessarily, but it is no doubt possible that the compiler found each of these plays in a different manuscript or that they were brought back into the fold at different times.

⁸ A logical puzzle is created here by the doctrine that no text was transcribed from uncial to minuscule more than once. If this is

sure that the inferior tradition included hypotheses. Equally we cannot be sure that it never did, as we cannot generalise from a single case, but the doubt is there.

For the five plays for which M does contain a hypothesis, the content and presentation of the prefatory material is bewilderingly diverse, as Table 5.1 shows.

I have not ventured to say who wrote what, though the experts (see n. 1, p. 13) give us some information. All the writing in the margin was no doubt the work of the Corrector. The experts tell us that hyp. *Pers.* was the work of Scribe A (though my unpractised eye cannot distinguish between this semi-uncial writing and that of the Corrector in the *scholia*).⁹ hyp. *PV* that of Scribe B, and hyp. *Eum.* that of the Corrector (Scribe B having

true, the compiler would have to have found the ‘relatively good’ tradition in one or more minuscule manuscripts (or it could not have had descendants independent of M), the inferior tradition in one or more uncial ones (or any other plays which survive and which those manuscripts also contained would have been transcribed at least twice). If the compiler was more used to reading minuscule than uncial, this might explain the large number of distinctively uncial errors in *Cho.* and *Supp.* But in truth all is speculation here.

⁹ The fact that hyp. *Pers.* as we have it in M fills the available space does not prove who wrote it. As this is the first play, the Corrector could have written it before Scribe A set to work. Alternatively, if Scribe A left space for it, the space may not have been sufficient and this may explain why there is no *dramatis personae* list.

Play	Hypothesis	<i>Dramatis personae</i>	Note on prologue speaker
<i>Pers.</i>	Semi-uncial in text area: 13 lines including heading and blank line	None	None
<i>Ag.</i>	Semi-uncial in margin: long	Semi-uncial in margin	Semi-uncial in space between title and <i>Ag.</i> 1
<i>PV</i>	Minuscule in text area: 6 lines	Semi-uncial in text area: 3 lines including heading	None
<i>Eum.</i>	Minuscule in text area: 5 lines including heading	Semi-uncial in text area: 2 lines	None
<i>Sept.</i>	Semi-uncial in margin: short	Semi-uncial in text area: 3 lines including heading	None

Table 5.1: Hypotheses etc. in M

left space for it). In that case the only hypothesis that Scribe B wrote is that of *PV*.

A more important question for our purposes – but one to which I can find no answer – is why the scribe omitted hyp. *Ag.* and hyp. *Sept.* He cannot have thought that hypotheses were surplus to requirements or that that of *Ag.* could easily be accommodated in the margin. I would readily believe that his exemplar contained no hypotheses for these plays and that the Corrector had to import them from elsewhere if it were not for the words ὑπόθεσις τῶν ἑπτὰ ἐπὶ θήβας, presumably written by Scribe B – no doubt a mistake but one that would not have occurred if the scribe could not see those words somewhere. It is possible that the exemplar too sited these two hypotheses in the margin, but this merely moves the problem one generation back.

In any case the treatment of these two hypotheses is an anomaly by the standards of other manuscripts and it may be wrong to generalise from it. The fact that it occurred twice need not mean that it was very likely to occur a third time. All the same, our confidence that a hypothesis of *Cho.* occupied some space in the text area has received another dent.

If it did, how much space did it occupy? The hypothesis that occupies most in *M* is that of *Persae* with 11 lines, or 13 including the heading. That of *Ag.*, however, is longer and would have occupied 16 lines if written in the same style as that of *PV*. Then in theory up to

two lines could have been occupied by a heading, up to three by the *dramatis personae* and one more by the note on the prologue speaker, making a maximum of 22.

But it is unlikely that the prefatory material for *Cho.* was anywhere near as long as this. Scribe B, who is less lavish with space than Scribe A, might have placed a heading on a separate line (like that of hyp. *Eum.*) but would probably not have left a blank line after it. Then the actual synopsis of *Ag.* is unusually detailed and discursive, and *Cho.* is anyway a much shorter play. It is also not very likely that hyp. *Cho.* included a didascalia, since this would merely have repeated information already given in hyp. *Ag.*¹⁰ Finally the note on the prologue speaker is a rare item which *Cho.* no doubt lacked.¹¹ There can be no certainty (we could hardly have predicted all the miscellaneous items that

¹⁰ The fact that *Eum.* lacks a didascalia proves nothing in itself, but it is clear that, when selected plays of Aeschylus were first collected in codices, *Ag.*, *Cho.* and *Eum.* were placed together in sequence (the order of plays in M, though irrational, preserves a memory of that) and, given that didascaliae were always vulnerable items, those of *Cho.* and *Eum.* would surely have seemed particularly dispensable.

¹¹ Presumably the note on the Watchman of *Ag.* was preserved for the scrap of learning that it contains (although it contradicts the hypothesis), but a similar note for *Cho.* could not easily have said more than Ὀρέστης ὁ προλογίζων [“Orestes delivers the Prologue”]. For *Persae* similar information (ἐνταῦθα δὲ προλογίζει

have found their way into hyp. *Pers.*), but it is not really probable that more than ten lines (like the nine of *PV* but with a heading) stood between the play title (or blank line below it) and *Cho.* 1; and seven (like the seven of *Eum.*) seems a more plausible figure.

At the other extreme, since it is possible for space to be taken up by a hypothesis without *dramatis personae* (*Persae*) or *vice versa* (*Septem*), we cannot rule out material as short as three lines or perhaps even two.

χορὸς πρεσβυτέρων, “but here the chorus of old men delivers the Prologue”) is given in passing within the hypothesis.

Interim conclusions

From the data considered above we are finally in a position to give a provisional answer – or rather a range of answers – to the question posed by this study.

We have seen (Section 3.5) that at maximum about 56 lines are plausibly available for *Cho.* material on the missing pages of M. We have also seen (Section 5) that at minimum no more than one line (for the title, on the analogy of *Supp.*) need be assigned to material other than the poetic text. So the maximum number of textual lines before what we call *Cho.* 10 can be set at 55.

That particular figure is not highly probable, but the probability increases steeply as the number of lines decreases from that point, and a figure as high as 53 lines is likely enough. Below that figure we start to have the possibility of *dramatis personae* or a very brief hypothesis. A figure of 49 lines is compatible with the

presence of a hypothesis or *dramatis personae* or both or neither.

A figure of exactly 48 lines is much less likely as it makes *Cho.* 1 an orphaned line at the bottom of the page, but 47 lines, making this the first line of a new page (like *Eum.* 1 on 159v), is very plausible, as also is 46 or 45, allowing the first line to be occupied by the title. Below about 42 lines we become dependent on the presence of a hypothesis and/or *dramatis personae*. Below about 36 lines we are nearing the top end of the plausible length of both *Ag.* 1160-673 and the hypothesis, and the probability starts to decline. A length of 32 lines is consistent with placing *Ag.* 1673 on the second line of the page, placing a blank line after the title of *Cho.*, and giving ten lines to the hypothesis and *dramatis personae*; and that combination of high-end factors is fairly improbable. We may take 32 lines, then, as our lower limit.

To summarise: the number of lines before *Cho.* 10 is likely to have been in the range 36 to 53 (excluding 48), though a figure down to 32 or up to 55 is not to be ruled out. Within the range 36 to 53 the probabilities are fairly even, but figures consistent with a fairly short hypothesis and *dramatis personae* (like those of *Eum.*), placed at the top of the last missing page or overlapping the preceding one – i.e. figures from about 38 to 44 lines – may be thought to have the edge.

The news that we have lost more of *Cho.* than we thought may seem a disappointment, but it gives us

greater scope for imaginative reconstruction. If Turyn's calculation had been correct, we would have been forced into some very unwelcome choices.

The content of the Prologue

I have tunnelled as far and as accurately as I can from one side of the hill. Others have tunnelled from the other side, working from the quotation fragments and the requirements of the drama. It is time to join them on their side and determine what adjustments have to be made if the tunnels are to meet. West remarks that “Aeschylus does not babble on at random”, implying that a reconstruction significantly longer than 28 lines would convict him of doing so, and we need to determine whether that is a serious issue. In any case West’s elegant reconstruction (1990: 232-3) will serve as an excellent basis for discussion.

There are four undisputed quotation fragments, giving us what we call *Cho.* 1-3, 4-5, 6-7 and 8-9. The first two come from Aristophanes’ *Frogs* (1126-8, 1138, 1152-3, 1172-3), and West, among others, notes that at *Frogs* 1141-3, in the discussion of *Cho.* 1, there is some

tragic diction which doubtless also comes from this play. In his edition he prints this as a further fragment, in the form

. . βιαίως ἐκ γυναικείας χερρός	3b
δόλοισι λαθραίοις . . ἀπώλετο ¹	3c

Others have preferred to place line 4 directly after line 3 and there is a case for this: the Aristophanic Aeschylus twice breaks off after 3 (1128, 1153) as though this were the end of a sentence, and, when instructed *πέραινε τοίνυν ἕτερον* (1170) [“Carry on then with another”], he has no logical reason to skip a few lines rather than continue from the same point. The tragic language from 1141-3 could then be placed later in the Prologue.² West’s arrangement, however, is very attractive. The effect of the tautology in 3, of which the Aristophanic Euripides complains (1154-7), can be mitigated if the sentence continues; and we would expect the language used in reference to line 1 to be drawn from the immediate context. The points at which the Aristophanic Aeschylus breaks off and resumes need no justification beyond the requirements of Aristophanes’ jokes.

¹ “ ... died violently at a woman’s hand through hidden treachery ... ”. All translations are mine.

² So Griffith (1987) places it after 9 (without the third person verb *ἀπώλετο*, which would be out of place there but could equally well be Aristophanic language); see also Winnington-Ingram 1983: 136 n. 12.

West (1990: 231-2) has no difficulty in disposing of two fragments tentatively suggested by Conington but suggests another of his own (fr. 6 = l. 7a): the phrase ἐν κραταιλέωι πέδωι, “on stony ground”, from Eur. *El.* 534, to follow soon after *Cho.* 7. His arguments are: (a) the passage in *Electra* is a criticism of the recognition tokens in *Cho.* and the complaint at 534-5 – that there could be no footprints on stony ground – would have no point unless Aeschylus had said that the ground was stony; (b) the word κραταίλεως occurs twice in Aeschylus but not elsewhere in Euripides or Sophocles. I am unconvinced. The lock should be placed on the mound of earth, where Electra will find it (168). Anyway the audience of *Electra* could hardly be expected to remember a phrase from the Prologue of *Cho.*, over 200 lines away from the mention of footprints (205-10); and, if the assumption of stony ground is an arbitrary one in the world of *Cho.*, so too is the assumption that Electra was too young to have done any weaving before Orestes’ exile (*El.* 541-2).

For the rest we are dependent on conjectural reconstruction. Our best guide, no doubt, is Electra’s prayer at 165 + 124-48 (26 lines), as this too is addressed first to Hermes Chthonios and then to Agamemnon. Her purpose in invoking Hermes is to open up a channel of communication to the other powers below,³ and

³ It is a little odd that she asks Hermes to make proclamation to

Orestes' overt purpose, at least, was surely the same.⁴ Her prayer to him occupies six lines (165 + 124-8) and West's version of Orestes' similar prayer occupies ten. It could not comfortably be made much shorter if it is to include mention of Agamemnon's death, and there is no obvious need for it to be longer.

Just like Electra at 129-30, Orestes makes the transition to his prayer to Agamemnon by means of a line and a half invoking him in the third person (4-5). What follows needs to be a complete prayer, for I do not believe, with Sommerstein,⁵ that it could have been interrupted by the sight of the approaching Chorus. For one thing it serves an important ritual purpose and must be properly concluded – like all the other numerous prayers in the first half of the play – if the audience is to be confident that it will be effective. For another I am unable to think of any utterance elsewhere in

the nether gods and to Earth herself (124-8) without mentioning Agamemnon, whom she is about to address. Is this a device to avoid mechanical repetition of what Orestes said?

⁴ Garvie (1970: 84-8) discusses a number of ways in which Hermes could be relevant but does not seek to argue that all or any of these were made explicit in the lost lines of the Prologue. No doubt Orestes, like Electra, invoked him for a single specific purpose, and any other significant roles were implicit in the name of the god.

⁵ Sommerstein (2008: vol. 2, 212-13 n. 6) suggests that there might be no lines at all lost between the last fragment (8-9) and the *ἐξα* provoked by the sight of the chorus.

Aeschylus that is interrupted in this way.⁶ Events can be sudden and unexpected, but always, I think, occur when a speech or song has reached its natural conclusion. Cases very much in point are at *Ag.* 22 and *Eum.* 34. In each case a sudden apparition (the beacon fire, the sight of Orestes and the Erinyes) provokes a new utterance, but only when the opening prayer, with the thoughts that arise from it, has run its course and been rounded off. Each of the ‘prologue speeches’ of the trilogy, then, is constructed in the same way – in fact each is really two speeches – and we should expect Orestes to deliver a prayer just as complete as those of the Watchman and the Pythia.⁷

Orestes must first tell Agamemnon who he is, no doubt stating his name, and West gives him two and a half lines for this. Then at some stage he declares that he has dedicated a lock of hair to Inachus (evidently on the journey to Argos)⁸ and he now dedicates another

⁶ The case is different at 1017, where Orestes pauses after the first half of an antithesis while the Chorus sings a brief antistrophe (1018-20) and then delivers a long parenthesis (1021-5) before reaching the second half. After 1043 there is certainly no interruption: see Garvie (1986) on 1042-3.

⁷ In *Ag.* and *Eum.* the speech following the apparition (18 lines and 30 respectively) is almost as long as the one preceding it (21 and 33), but the proportion cannot have been the same in *Cho.*

⁸ Garvie (1986) on 6 thinks it possible that he intends to dedicate it in future, but then the lock for Agamemnon would not be “this

to Agamemnon. The cutting of the second lock⁹ is a significant ritual act, as the Exeter Pelike assures us,¹⁰ but it probably came quite early in the speech, for the climax has to be an actual appeal for help. West (1990: 233) achieves the transition to the two locks in a very simple and natural way:

κλυεῖν, ἀκοῦσαι· <σὸς δὲ παῖς πάρειμ' ὄδε,	5
τλήμων Ὀρέστης, χρόνιος ἐκ φυγῆς μολῶν	
αὔθις πρὸς Ἄργους τήνδε φιλτάτην χθόνα.	
καὶ τὸν μὲν ἄρτι, γῆς ὑπερβαλῶν ὄρους,	
ἔδωκα) πλόκαμον Ἰνάχῳ θρεπτήριον,	6
τὸν δεύτερον δὲ τόνδε πενθητήριον	
<τίθημι ...> ¹¹	

second”. In reality a traveller would have to cross the Inachus to reach the city from the north.

⁹ Some critics strangely suppose that he has come on stage with the lock ready-cut. Even if the vase painting (see n. 10 below) could be dismissed as evidence, it would be unclear why he should do so in preference to cutting it as part of the ritual at the tomb. Teucer, Tecmessa and Eurysaces all cut off locks on stage at Soph. *Aj.* 1173-9. It is possible that the performers in each case mimed the action, but, since theatrical masks did have hair, there is no reason why they should not have physically carried it out.

¹⁰ ARV² 1516.80 = LIMC Elektra I A.1.1; see Taplin 2007: 50-1; Coo 2013. As Coo stresses (72-4), the vase is not a straightforward illustration of the Prologue of *Cho.* (for one thing Electra is present), but it would be idle to deny that its central action is inspired by this scene.

¹¹ “... to hear, to hearken. <I am here, your son, unhappy Orestes, having at last come back from exile to Argos, this dearest of lands.

It would be possible to insert additional lines here, but there is no obvious need for them. We might then expect the cutting of the second lock to be elaborated in words, but its pairing with the lock for Inachus limits the opportunity for this. The verb governing τὸν δεύτερον τόνδε in 7 could be “I cut”, followed a little later by “and now I dedicate it”, but the word πενθητήριον perhaps goes better with the act of dedicating than with that of cutting, and Orestes could effectively perform the latter while speaking line 7 or immediately before it. West continues with the subject of the lock for three lines after 7, and this is not too much (even if we must dispense with the stony ground) but probably sufficient to give the dedication the weight that it needs.

The γάρ of line 8 (“For I was not present to lament your death ...”) does not necessarily refer back to the dedication of the lock (there could have been a reference to weeping, for instance) but can very suitably do so. If it does, all our quotation fragments appear to come from the first few lines of the play, and this was evidently its most famous passage. True, both 6-7 and 8-9 are valid parallels cited by intelligent commentators (on Pindar and Euripides), so in principle they could

Just now, after crossing the border of the country, I gave one> lock of hair to Inachus in return for my nurture; and this second lock in token of mourning <I place ...>”.

have been taken from somewhere less familiar, but in practice for the rest of the play (10-1076) testimonia other than glosses are very infrequent. The absence of fragments between 9 and 10, then, tells us nothing about the number of missing lines here.

So far we have seen little reason to take issue with West. After line 9, however, there is more scope for the imagination. At 130-48 Electra's prayer to Agamemnon takes up 18½ lines. We might expect Orestes' prayer to him (of which, according to West, we have dealt with 11½ lines so far) to be no shorter than hers and perhaps (like his prayer to Hermes) longer. Much of what she says is specific to her situation, but there is plenty that Orestes could say on his own part. For one thing, if I were Orestes, I would not think it prudent to tell my father that I did not attend his funeral without giving a reason. He has indeed hinted at exile with *κατέρχομαι* (3) and may have mentioned it explicitly, as West makes him do; and Agamemnon will know the circumstances if he remembers *Ag.* 877-86. But it is generally advisable to spell matters out fully when dealing with the dead (compare *Cho.* 134), and, more important, this would be an excellent opportunity to give the audience some background information: e.g. "I had been sent away to Phocis, where our ally Strophius gave me shelter while I grew to manhood – though the shame of your death and the loss of my patrimony were never far from my thoughts –

and his son Pylades, who stands with me now, has become my loyal friend”¹². Admittedly we cannot be sure that such information is essential if we remember the *Septem*, in which crucial stages in the story – the brothers’ quarrel, the exile and marriage of Polyneices, the raising of the Argive army – seem to be taken as read. There is surely some point, however, in ensuring that all the audience fully understands the situation.¹³

A clue is possibly to be found at *Cho.* 562, Πυλάδῃ ξένος τε καὶ δορύξενος δόμῳ. The line seems to me indefensible¹⁴ and looks, as Fraenkel and others observe,

¹² I offer no reconstructions in Greek, having no faith that any trimeters of mine would bear comparison with those of Aeschylus, let alone those of West.

¹³ Pylades was mentioned in the epic *Nostoi* (according to Proclus), Pylades and Strophius by Asius (fr. 5 Davies), Pindar (*Pyth.* 11.15, 35) and perhaps Stesichorus, though we lack direct evidence for this. The Athenian audience in 458 probably had some knowledge of this version of the myth (as well as Homer’s different version), but this does not mean that they were all fully familiar with it or that there was no point in recalling the details.

¹⁴ The deletion proposed by Schmidt (1886: 73) is accepted by Murray (1937); Headlam and Thomson (1938); Fraenkel (1950: vol. 3, 564); Quincey (1977: 140). If the nominatives refer to Orestes in his assumed role (ξένῳι ... εἰκώς, “in the guise of a foreigner”) and mean “as a foreigner and a military ally of the house”, there can be no excuse for such a belated, otiose and repetitious afterthought (anyway Aegisthus might be expected to know his own allies). If we are to adopt Meineke’s δὲ and take the words as a parenthesis

like a case where a name has been inserted for explanation and padded out to make a trimeter – except that this is very odd padding, inexplicable as scribal invention. I suggest, then, that it is a scribal reminiscence of the Prologue, where the phrase would have referred not to Pylades (a mere youth who could not be anyone’s military ally) but to his father: *Στροφίος, ξένος τε καὶ δορούξενος δόμων* [“Strophius, a guest-friend and military ally of the house”] (compare *Ag.* 880-1).

Another figure who could usefully have been mentioned is Menelaus. In the first half of *Ag.* he is prominent, sharing a palace with Agamemnon and being expected to return there if he has survived the storm (674-9). In the second half he seems to be forgotten and the task of avenging Agamemnon devolves entirely on Orestes (1280-4, 1646-8, 1667). We might suppose that he had been forgotten for the rest of the trilogy, much as Electra remains unmentioned after *Cho.* 584, if it were not for *Cho.* 1041, which, despite severe corruption, is generally taken as looking forward to his return in the future.¹⁵ Logically, then, Orestes must have

describing Pylades, “he is a guest-friend and military ally of the house”, the repetition of *ξένος* in a different sense after *ξένωι* is an implausible accident and the description is neither relevant nor true. To forgo the pun *πύλας | Πυλάδῃ* is no loss as it would be pointless if intentional.

¹⁵ Some editors have sought to remove the name, but it is scarcely credible that it could have entered the text by mech-

some reason to believe that he is still alive, though still absent; but more important than any gap in the character's knowledge is the fact that, if *Cho.* 1041 is the first mention of Menelaus since *Ag.* 674-9, distracting questions will occur to the audience ("Well, yes, come to think – what ever became of him?"), which will receive no answer until the satyr play is performed. So in the Prologue there would be much point in e.g. "For a long time I waited in the hope that Menelaus would return with his men and aid me in my revenge. Finally I heard a rumour that he was being detained indefinitely on the Island of Pharos¹⁶ and I knew then that I must rely on my own resources. So I betook myself to Delphi ..."¹⁷

If this is speculative, mention of Delphi brings us, I think, to firmer ground. The first reference to the oracle in our text of the play comes at 269ff.: "There will be no betrayal by the mighty oracle of Loxias, who commanded me to undergo this peril ...". There Orestes launches into an account of the oracular response without mentioning the consultation, very much as though it has been mentioned already. True, he is ad-

anical corruption and, if it had entered from a gloss or scholion, it would not have taken the poetic form *Μενέλεως*.

¹⁶ Or in Egypt; but *Proteus* must be provided for and Egypt is perhaps an incongruous environment for satyrs.

¹⁷ If anything like this is correct, *Μενέλεως* (ἐάν μοῶλητι) (Croiset 1928: 231, n. 1) must be preferred to (ἔταν μοῶλητι) (Wilamowitz: 1896) at 1041.

dressing Electra and the Chorus, who were not present during the Prologue, but this point can no doubt go unnoticed provided that the consultation has been mentioned in the hearing of the audience.¹⁸ In fact, if it has not, the audience will never learn the occasion for it or the question that was asked. These matters may not be beyond guessing and the oracle was probably an established feature of the myth,¹⁹ but, in a matter of such vital importance to Orestes' justification and motivation, should the audience have to resort to guesswork or to memories of earlier treatments?

Garvie (1986: 47) thinks that the oracle would not have been mentioned because “[a]t the beginning of the play it is the chthonic powers with which we are concerned”²⁰ I cannot see much force in this. The fact that Orestes is *addressing* chthonic powers does not debar him from mentioning others, and in fact he mentions Inachus.²¹ Apollo and the dead are ca-

¹⁸ Similarly Electra and the Chorus are not introduced to Pylades until 561-2 – and not even there if 562 is spurious. It is sufficient that the audience know who he is (from line 20 at least).

¹⁹ Apollo protected Orestes in Stesichorus (*PMGF* 217) and the proximity of Delphi is the most obvious reason for locating his exile in Phocis.

²⁰ See also Garvie 1970: 82; for a contrary view Groeneboom 1949: 8; Winnington-Ingram 1983: 136.

²¹ Apollo is not mentioned in the *Kommos*, but, whatever the reason for this may be, it is not that the *Kommos* concentrates

pable of working to the same end, as they will do in the event, and the news that Orestes' mission has received the sanction of Delphi will surely be particularly encouraging for Agamemnon and well calculated to make him bestir himself on his son's behalf. So it would be odd for Orestes *not* to mention the oracle; and moreover the reference to it could have been used, much as at Soph. *El.* 32-7, to explain the fact that Orestes has come to Argos in secret (otherwise this will not be explained until 554-9, and then obliquely).²²

A brief reference to the oracle, "at Apollo's command", could have come after 3 (see Tucker 1901 *ad loc.*), but we need more than this. The ritual observance at Delphi could have been mentioned before those at the Inachus and the tomb (between 5 and 6), but it will not have the weight that it requires if it is merely the first in a series of three. So I would expect something like this, coming somewhere after line 9: "I went to Delphi and made proper sacrifice there before asking the god how, with the meagre resources of an exile, I might avenge the vile murder of my father, restore justice to my house and regain my patrimony. The god

exclusively on chthonic powers, since it also mentions Zeus (382, 395, 409).

²² Different portions or aspects of the oracle are revealed at intervals as occasion arises (269-96, 556-9, 1029-39), and this would be a further instance.

replied that I must return to Argos at once, not with an armed band but in secret, and, with my own hand, return bloodshed for bloodshed”. That is a bald summary, but we might expect some further elaboration around the sanctity of the site, the correct performance of the ritual, and the solemn authority of the oracular utterance.

“And now ...” West devotes just five lines to the direct appeal for Agamemnon’s help and in little more than one line he neatly provides three reasons why that help should be given: εἴπερ μέλει σοι παιδὸς εὐκλείας τε σῆς | καὶ δωμάτων [“if you have any concern for your son, your reputation and your house”]. I wonder, though, whether Aeschylus was really so terse. Electra devotes six lines (132-7) to reasons seen from her point of view, and Orestes could say at least as much. He is running the gravest of risks on his father’s behalf and, if he should be caught, he will certainly meet a cruel and untimely death. Then Agamemnon’s male line will die out and he, the mighty king of Argos and conqueror of Troy, will be remembered not with the reverence that he deserves but only in the mockery of his enemies, while the house and city that belong to his heirs remain in the hands of tyrannical usurpers. If Orestes succeeds, however, he will restore justice and due order to his house and can hope to father a long line of legitimate kings at Argos, all of whom, with their contented subjects, will honour Agamemnon’s

memory and bring regular offerings to his tomb. Was none of this spelt out here?²³

With the direct appeal, Orestes' prayer is at an end. If he said anything after this and before catching sight of the Chorus, it could only have been addressed to Pylades: e.g. "So much for my prayer. Friend Pylades, I thank you for your loyalty. The time is at hand when your friendship will be put to the test". There is no need for anything of the sort and it would spoil the simple two-part structure of the Prologue. It is even less likely that Pylades spoke in return; his power of speech is best reserved for 900-2.

We must finally consider whether *Cho.* 10 marks the exact moment when the Chorus is spotted. Several editors besides West precede it with ἔα (Dindorf), and we have seen that M's Scribe B is not averse to devoting a line to a brief exclamation. If this were Euripides, ἔα would be a no brainer:²⁴ but ἔα· τί χρῆμα; or the like does not occur in Sophocles and the distribution in

²³ I assume that any mention of matricide as such was avoided, as it is everywhere else before the Kommos. Equally there was probably no mention of the glory that Orestes might hope to win, as that is a motif of the Homeric treatment of the myth (*Od.* 1.298-300, 3.196-8) rather than the Aeschylean.

²⁴ ἔα· τί χρῆμα (...); *Hipp.* 905, *Andr.* 896, *Supp.* 92, *HF* 525, *Or.* 277, 1573, *TrGF* 1 43 Critias F 1.1 (if Eur. wrote *Pirithous*); ἔα· τί λέουσσω; *Bacch.* 1280; ἔα with similar questions *Med.* 1004, *Hec.* 733, 1116, *Supp.* 395, *El.* 341, 558, *HF* 514, 1172, *Tro.* 298, *IT* 1157, *Ion* 1549, *Hel.* 71, 541, *IA* 317. With the disputed exception of *Or.*

the Aeschylean corpus – *PV* 298 and the satyric fr. 46a.8 – is not very encouraging²⁵ It may be, then, that this sequence of words was a colloquialism beneath the register of Aeschylean tragedy; and there is no similar exclamation at *Ag.* 22 or (off stage) at *Eum.* 34 (ὦ and ἦ not being similar). So ἔα, while still possible, cannot be restored with great confidence. We could alternatively consider supplying a whole trimeter to soften the abruptness of τί χρῆμα λένω; “What is this that I see?”, and remove the asyndeton, e.g. “But, as I step away from my father’s tomb”; but the effect is flat and we are better off without it.

We have seen that the first part of the Prologue, to the end of the quotation fragments, may well have been close to the 20 lines that West assigns to it, and that there was probably a line at most between the end of Orestes’ prayer and our line 10; but we have also seen that there is a good deal of material that could with advantage be added to the prayer after line 9. Aeschylus is the least predictable of authors and there can be no

277 (see Willink 1986 *ad loc.*) τί χρῆμα; is always elliptical, but the other questions have an expressed verb.

²⁵ The only other instances of ἔα in undisputed Aeschylus are at *Cho.* 870 ἔα ἔα μάλα. Double ἔα, as also at *PV* 114, 687, *Soph. OC* 1477 (the only instances of ἔα in Sophocles) and several times in Euripides, seems slightly different from single, expressing excitement rather than surprise, as a cry of surprise would hardly be repeated.

certainty that he included any one of the elements that I have proposed (detail on Orestes' exile, Menelaus, the oracle, expanded grounds for the prayer), let alone all of them. I have merely sought to show that there is much that he could have included without incurring a charge of 'rambling on at random' (though indeed I am uncertain of the criteria by which we might identify random rambling if it ever occurred). Equally he could have included material which we would never have guessed. The longer we make the missing portion, the more speculative any reconstruction must be, but that is not a good argument for making it short.

Assessing the length of any additional elements is even more hazardous. At a pure guess we might assign 4 or 5 lines to the exile, 4 or 5 to Menelaus, 8 or 10 to Delphi (Soph. *El.* 32-7 occupies 6, but I would expect more here) and a further 7 or 8 (besides West's 5) to the appeal for Agamemnon's help. But any of these elements could have been treated more expansively. There would thus be no difficulty in using up the maximum allowance which our study of the manuscripts has provided. I see no reason for us to restrict our imagination to the lower end of the range of lengths and some reason (subjective, to be sure) to favour the upper end; I would not be surprised to learn that the number of lines preceding *Cho.* 10 was over 50.²⁶ But

²⁶ The Prologue as a whole (to *Cho.* 21) would then occupy over

readers may prefer to be more conservative and selective, and there can be no objection to a figure around 40 lines, allowing a convenient amount of room for a hypothesis of modest length (entirely on this page of M or beginning on the previous page) and *dramatis personae*.

It is a pity that we have not been able to pin down the length of the Prologue more precisely (mainly owing to uncertainties surrounding the hypothesis). Still, we know more than we did.

62 lines. For comparison that of *Septem* occupies 77, of which Eteocles' 'prologue speech' takes 38; that of *Ag.* 39; that of *Eum.* 142 (counting the moans and groans of 117-29 as lines), of which the Pythia's 'prologue speech' takes 63.

*Appendix: Colometry of τ and M
in lyrics*

8.1 *Comparative statistics*

M's lyric colometry can be compared with τ 's throughout *Persae* and *Eum.* (except *Eum.* 778-93, which τ omitted) and in the Parodos of *Ag.* (104-257) and most of the Cassandra scene (1072-159). In *PV* and *Septem*, where F and G were copied from other manuscripts, our only witness to τ is T¹ and, as it is a very imperfect witness, I have not attempted to obtain a copy of it for these plays. I have consulted M, F, G (where available) and T for *Ag.*, M, F and G for *Persae* and *Eum.*²

¹ In *Septem* it is said that F, though copied from another manuscript (West's ξ), was corrected by reference to τ . I have not investigated whether this enables us to reconstruct τ 's colometry since *Persae*, *Ag.* and *Eum.* give us enough material to work from.

² If I had had access to T for *Persae* and *Eum.* or to E for *Eum.*, I doubt whether they would have made any difference.

In the Parodos of *Persae* (65-154) G's colometry is very different from F's or M's (it has only about 57 cola to F's 77), and this is in line with West's finding (1990: 347-9) that at the beginning of the play G still uses the same exemplar as in *PV* and *Septem* (West's μ), not turning to τ until about line 176. For this ode, therefore, I treat F's colometry as τ 's.³ Elsewhere, as long as G is present, its close agreement with F allows us to provide a count of τ 's cola which, if not guaranteed to be exact at all points, should be reliable enough for practical purposes.⁴ In the Parodos of *Ag.* the uncertainties are slightly greater (owing to the absence of G and ambiguous mid-line spaces in F) but still do not cause serious problems.

Cola are one thing, lines of text (sometimes) another, since M, like F and G, does not always have just one colon per line. As we are concerned ultimately with its lines, I have provided a count of both its lines

³ In fact this colometry too is quite eccentric from *Pers.* 108 to the end of the ode. Smith (1975: 202-5) sees it as "proto-Triclinian" and gives an account of Triclinius's proceedings (though for statistical purposes the provenance of the colometry – whether Triclinian or inherited – does not matter). He believes that τ had a colon break, neglected in F, after $\sigma\upsilon\upsilon\sigma\iota\delta\omicron\varsigma$ at 119; if so, its count across the ode as a whole was the same as M's (78 cola).

⁴ I am naturally referring to τ 's colometry at the time when F and G were written, whether or not this had been subject to alteration.

and its cola (except in the Cassandra scene, where I leave the number of cola open for the moment).

Since the subject of this Appendix is colometry, not content (for which see Section 3.2), I have adjusted the line and colon counts to exclude M's additional line at *Ag.* 1090a (ἄ ἄ) and to include M's omitted lines at *Pers.* 125b (πέσσηι λακίς), 552-61, 1008 and *Eum.* 387 and τ's omitted lines at *Eum.* 323-4.

For each ode or epirrhematic exchange Table 8.1 shows: the number of presumed lyric cola in τ; the number of cola in M and this number as a percentage of τ's cola (except for the Cassandra scene); and the number of lyric lines in M and this number as a percentage of τ's cola.

If we leave M's lines out of account for the moment, we can see that the number of its cola is always a good match, and often a perfect match, to τ's. There is no consistent bias either way, so, when differences do occur, they balance out in the long run. The greatest difference (6 cola more in τ) comes in the First Stasimon of *Persae* (548-97), and for this there is a special reason: the *extra metrum* exclamations φεῦ, ῥέ and ὀἶ at 568-70 / 576-8 are separated off by clear spaces in F and G,⁵ so that I have had to call them distinct 'cola', but are not so

⁵ F is inconsistent in the positioning of these exclamations, placing the first two (568 φεῦ, 569 ῥέ) on the line of the following colon instead of the preceding one, so they may each have occupied a separate line in τ.

Reference	τ 's cola	Cola of M		Lines of M	
		No.	%	No.	%
<i>Pers.</i> 65-139	77	78	101	75	97
<i>Pers.</i> 256-89	24	24	100	24	100
<i>Pers.</i> 548-97	56	50	89	49	88
<i>Pers.</i> 633-80	46	47	102	47	102
<i>Pers.</i> 694-703	6	6	100	6	100
<i>Pers.</i> 852-907	57	57	100	57	100
<i>Pers.</i> 922-77	154	154	100	154	100
<i>Ag.</i> 105-257	168	165	98	165	98
<i>Ag.</i> 1072-159	72	*	—	72	100
<i>Eum.</i> 143-78	36	36	100	27	75
<i>Eum.</i> 254-75	22	22	100	20	91
<i>Eum.</i> 322-96	78	77	99	50	64
<i>Eum.</i> 490-565	72	76	106	41	57
<i>Eum.</i> 808-80	38	38	100	25	66
<i>Eum.</i> 916-1020	61	60	98	33	54
<i>Eum.</i> 1033-47	16	16	100	13	81
Total	983	—	—	858	87
Total without <i>Ag.</i> 1072-159	911	906	99	786	86

* See [8.3](#) below

Table 8.1: Colometry of τ and M in lyrics

in M.⁶ The second greatest (4 cola more in M) comes in the Second Stasimon of *Eum.* (490-565), and this seems to be due merely to accumulation of accidents: the ode had many short cola and τ or its ancestors sometimes lost patience with them, merging two into one or three into two.

In the Parodos of *Ag.* (105-257) the similarity of the overall figures (165 cola in M, about 168 in F, 162 in T) conceals some short-term variation. If we isolated (arbitrarily) the last two strophic pairs (218-57), F would there have a surplus of about four cola over M's 42, but the number of short and unmetrical cola in F would be striking even if no other manuscript were available. At the beginning of the first strophe, however (104-7), F and T have four cola for M's six⁷ and, since the four are metrically uniform, this colometry is seen, no doubt correctly, as "proto-Triclinian" (Smith 1975: 234).⁸

⁶ At *Pers.* 116 / 122, on the other hand, M marks off the *extra metrum* $\delta\alpha$ as a 'colon' in both instances while F seems to do so in the second instance only. In such details some divergence and ambiguity is only to be expected.

⁷ M, F and T all divide at $\kappa\rho\acute{\alpha}\tau\omicron\varsigma$ | but then M has $\alpha\acute{\iota}\sigma\iota\omicron\nu$ $\acute{\alpha}\nu\delta\rho\omega\acute{\nu}$ | $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\tau\epsilon\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu$ $\xi\tau\iota$ $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ | $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\theta\epsilon\nu$ $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\pi\nu\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\epsilon\iota$ | $\pi\epsilon\iota\theta\acute{\omega}$ $\mu\omicron\lambda\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu$ | $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\acute{\alpha}\nu$ $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\mu\phi\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma$ $\alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$ | where F and T have $\alpha\acute{\iota}\sigma\iota\omicron\nu$ $\acute{\alpha}\nu\delta\rho\omega\acute{\nu}$ $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\tau\epsilon\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu$ $\xi\tau\iota$ | $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\theta\epsilon\nu$ $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\pi\nu\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\epsilon\iota$ $\pi\epsilon\iota\theta\acute{\omega}$ | $\mu\omicron\lambda\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu$ $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\acute{\alpha}\nu$ $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\mu\phi\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma$ $\alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$ |, giving a sequence of four dactylic tetrameters. In the antistrophe (122-25), however, F's colometry coincides with M's (except that it seems to have an extra colon division at $\lambda\alpha\gamma\omicron\delta\alpha\acute{\iota}\tau\alpha\varsigma$:), while T's gives exact responsion with the strophe.

⁸ At this point, then, F reflects a stage at which Triclinius fa-

8.2 Lyric colometry in τ from *Ag.* 1160 onwards

In the light of this material we can now consider the qualities of lyric cola in the part of *Ag.* that interests us. Four of them (1167-70) are in strophic responsion with the last four lines preserved in *M* (1156-9), and, since τ 's colometry observes this responsion, there is a strong presumption that *M*'s observed it also. In the remainder of the strophe (1160-66) and antistrophe (1171-7), which takes us to the end of the lyrics of this scene, *F*, *G* and *T* continue to observe strophic responsion and present no colometric issues, so here too there is a fair presumption (if not quite such a strong one) that *M* had the same number of cola, i.e. 14.

In the epirrhematic exchange with Clytemnestra (1407-566) the Chorus has four strophic pairs and three ephymnia (of which the second is repeated). Each of the ephymnia begins with $\iota\acute{\omega}$ and in three places this exclamation precedes a complete anapaestic dimeter: $\mu\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ Ἐλένα, μία τὰς πολλὰς at 1455 and βασιλεῦ βασιλεῦ, πῶς σε δακρύσω; at 1489 and 1513. In *F* and *G*, however, the first two $\iota\acute{\omega}$ s stand at the end of the

voured uniformity between adjacent cola but had no reliable awareness of strophic responsion. His experiment here seems to have been brief and isolated: Helm (1972: 584-8) discusses places in *Ag.* and *Eum.* where he believes that τ , as reflected in EFG, shows Triclinian influence, but in none of these is the colon count affected.

previous line and only the third stands in front of the anapaests.⁹ This irrational arrangement could not have arisen unless at an earlier stage each *ιὼ* (at least the first two and presumably the third also) had had a line of its own. It is likely enough, though not certain,¹⁰ that these additional lines stood in the archetype of M and τ and that M preserved them; so, when we estimate the number of cola in M, 3 must be tentatively added to τ 's count.

The other exclamations in our lyrics do not present the same problem. The *ιὼ*s at 1167-8 are in responsion with those at 1165-67 and would have been given the same treatment. At 1448 $\varphi\epsilon\ddot{\upsilon}$ is part of a dochmiac dimeter and, if τ could treat it as such, so could M. At 1494=1518 T (unlike F and G) gives a separate line to $\ddot{\omega}\mu\omicron\iota\ \mu\omicron\iota$ (Triclinius did not usually recognise dochmiacs and clearly did not see – – – – as a likely metron) but there is no reason to suppose that M did so. At 1537 *ιὼ γᾶ γᾶ* is treated as a colon in F, G and T

⁹ T's arrangement is a little more rational, though still not consistent: *ιὼ* on a separate line at 1455, *ιὼ ιὼ* in front of the anapaests at 1489, *ιὼ ιὼ* on a separate line at 1513. I take the "proto-Triclinian" schol. FG on 1448, $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\ \delta\grave{\epsilon}\ \tau\omicron\ \zeta'\ \kappa\tilde{\omega}\lambda\omicron\nu\ \kappa\tilde{\omega}\lambda\omicron\nu\ \tau\mu\tilde{\eta}\mu\alpha\ \tau\omicron\ \iota\tilde{\omega}$, to mean that Triclinius already recognised that there should be a colon division before *ιὼ* at 1454, but it is notable that he did not yet alter the text accordingly.

¹⁰ I note that M has *ιὼ* on the line of an anapaestic dimeter at *Pers.* 908; also $\varphi\epsilon\ddot{\upsilon}\ \varphi\epsilon\ddot{\upsilon}$ at *Sept.* 1054, though by that stage the scribe was in general more sparing of parchment.

(I included it as such in Table 3.1) and I assume it was so treated in M.

In fact across most of these lyrics τ 's colometry is very good. Throughout the second, third and fourth strophic pair and the second ephymnium it matches that of Page, West or both with only trivial exceptions.¹¹ We may be sure that these virtues are not owed to Triclinius, firstly because, at the stage of his work that F and G reflect, he had little idea of strophic respension,¹² and secondly because, if he had modified the inherited colometry here at all, he would no doubt have removed the obvious errors ($\iota\acute{\omega}$ misplaced at 1454 and 1489, ἀνελεύθερον at 1518), as indeed he did in T.¹³

¹¹ We have already noted the appending of $\iota\acute{\omega}$ to the end of a strophe at 1454 and 1488. At 1468 τ , instead of dividing διφύλοισι, placed the division before the word, and at 1518 F and G oddly divide ἀνελεύθερον instead of ἀνελεύθερον | (which they get right at 1494), but in these two cases the colon count is unaffected.

¹² Schol. FG on 1560 says that 1560-6 'seems to be' the antistrophe to the strophe 1530-6, ὁμοια γὰρ ἔχει τὰ κῶλα. Smith (1975: 64) notes that this represents a dawning awareness of strophic respension, contradicting schol. FG on 1448, which declares the ensuing lyrics to be 'monostrophic'. Clearly it is not the language of a scholar capable of restoring respension where it was not apparent in his source. Helm (1972: 588, n. 17) lists the few passages in *Ag.* and *Eum.* where strophic respension is recognised in these *scholia*.

¹³ To be sure, he was not systematic in his work and could conceivably have restored the easy anapaests of the second ephymnium (and the third) even while leaving some obvious

This colometry, then, must reflect that of the ancient text, transmitted by way of the archetype of τ and M.

In strophe and antistrophe 1 (1407-11 / 1426-30) τ 's arrangement is:

τί κακὸν ὦ γόναί χθονοτρεφῆς	1407	μεγαλόμητις εἶ περίφρονα	1426
ἔδανόν ἦ ποτὸν πασαμένα ῥυτᾶς		δ' ἔλακες ὥσπερ οὖν φονολιβεῖ τύχα	
ἔξ ἀλὸς ὀρώμενον τὸδ' ἐπέθου θύος		φρῆν ἐπιμαίνεται λιπὸς ἐπ' ὀμμάτων	
δημοθρόους τ' ἀράς ἀπέδικες ἀπέταμες		αἵματος εὖ πρέπει ἀντίστον ἔτι σὲ χρῆ	
ἄπολις δ' ἔση μῖσος ὄβριμον ἀστοῖς		στερομένην φίλων τύμμα τύμμα τίσαι	

While there are plenty of surface corruptions, the colometry is that of a text where responsion was observed and the cola were mostly metrical. The colometry of modern editors looks different because they move the sequence *χθονοτρεφῆς / περίφρονα* (hard to scan in τ 's arrangement) from the end of the first colon to the beginning of the next and proceed with iambic and dochmiac dimeters from there, but it was obviously an ancient editor, not a Byzantine scribe (nor Triclinius), who made three dochmiac dimeters of lines 2-4.¹⁴

errors uncorrected. But they are unlikely to have needed restoration since for practical purposes they might as well be recited anapaests, which, as we have seen, our scribes, including those of M, generally divide correctly at the ends of metra.

¹⁴ Schol. FG on 1426 recognises the strophic responsion, but here again this must mean that it was already present in the inherited text.

In ephymnium 1 (1455-61) τ was less successful:

παρὰ νόμους ἑλένα μία τὰς πολλὰς	1455
τὰς πᾶνυ πολλὰς ψυχὰς	
ὀλέσασ' ὑπὸ τροία	
νῦν δὲ τελείαν πολύμναστον	
ἐπηγνίσω δι' αἴμ' ἄνιπτον	
ἦτις ἦν τότ' ἐν δόμοις	1460
ἔρις ἐρίδματος ἀνδρὸς οἰζύς.	

Here again, however, the lapses are understandable. No doubt the ancient text had correct anapaests in the first three lines and ψυχὰς has been accidentally attached to the wrong line at a later stage (perhaps after the rhythm had been obscured by corruption of παρὰ νόμους to παρὰ νόμους). The next two lines are corrupt and may well have been so when the ancient colometry was worked out, so, if West and others are right to follow Wilamowitz in reading νῦν {δὲ} τελείαν πολύμναστον ἐπηγνίσω as a dochmiac dimeter, the ancient editor can be excused for not seeing it as such. There is at any rate no particular reason to think that the ancient text had a different number of cola.

Finally ephymnium 3 (1537-50) consists mostly of straightforward anapaests (to 1546) and here τ was entirely successful in dividing cola at the ends of metra. It differed from modern editions in the placing of monometers, but in this matter, as we have seen, τ and M are generally in agreement. It then made two short

cola out of τίς δ' ἐπιτύμβιος | αἴνος ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ θείῳ | – a dactylic dimeter followed by an aristophanean like the following σὺν δακρύοις ἰάπτων. This could, no doubt, be Triclinian, but equally it is just what we might expect from an ancient editor.

In these lyrics, then, τ's colometry is generally rational. Apart from the case of the three ἰώς, there are not many places where the number of cola could plausibly have been different in the ancient text and none where we have positive grounds for suspecting that it was. That need not mean that the number was the same in M, which can have errors of its own¹⁵ but the statistical data gathered above (8.1) should give us confidence here.¹⁶ To allow for random and unpredictable splitting of cola, it will be quite sufficient to grant M a possible surplus of four (as in *Eum.* 490-565). It is less likely to have had a deficit since these lyrics provide few parallels for the irregular sequences of short cola that we find in F at *Ag.* 218-57, so it will be sufficient to grant it a possible deficit of one or two (allowing it to have run two of τ's cola into one at e.g. 1548).

¹⁵ For example, the reason why M has one colon fewer than τ (when allowance is made for a lacuna) in the Parodos of *Eum.* (322-96) is that, having correctly left a space after ὕμνοις ἐξ ἐρινύων at 331, it fails to do so at 344 when the ephymnium is repeated.

¹⁶ So too should the fact that Fleming (2007) seems to have found few differences between M's colometry in the Triad and that of the other pre-Triclinian manuscripts that he used.

8.3 Cola and lines in *M*

We still have to consider the relation of *M*'s cola to its lines. From Table 8.1 it can be seen that it is generally one-to-one in *Persae* and the Parodos of *Ag.* but very different in *Eum.*, where the scribe frequently places more than one colon on the same line with a space between them.

Accordingly I have surveyed the whole territory for mid-line spaces. In Quire 1 (Scribe A's work) there is only a handful¹⁷ in Quire 2 (end of *Persae* and beginning of *Ag.*) none at all. In the Cassandra scene (beginning of Quire 4) there are 12, to which we shall return. Throughout *Cho.* (end of Quire 4 to beginning of Quire 6) and the first half of *PV* (rest of Quire 6) there are none. Then in the Second Stasimon of *PV* (526-60, the first lyrics of Quire 7) the practice suddenly becomes prevalent, with most of the cola presented in pairs. This continues in *Io*'s ensuing anapaests (561-5) and in most of the remaining lyrics and anapaests of the play. In *Eum.* the practice is very much the rule,

¹⁷ The scribe resorts to colon pairing to avoid devoting a line to the unusually short anapaestic monometer *φαρανδάκης* at 31 and the extremely short lyric colon *-σμάσι λα-* at 113. At 116 and 122 there is a space after *extra metrum* *ὀᾶ*. At 571 *βαρὺ δ' ἀμβόασον οὐ* and *ράνι' ἄχρη ὀᾶ* are on the same line and separated by a space but then a blank line follows, so something clearly went wrong there.

not the exception (by the end we even find occasional three-colon lines); and it continues to prevail through *Septem* and *Supp.*

Now, if Scribe B indulged freely in colon pairing at the beginning of Quire 4 (the Cassandra scene)¹⁸ and strictly abstained from it at the end (the Parodos of *Cho.*), there is a problem for our calculation, since there can be no telling what he did in between. The 12 lines that we have noted in the Cassandra scene, however, will repay examination. I give them below as M presents them, with | representing end of line and : representing mid-line space. To the right I give the equivalent text in the colometry of τ.¹⁹

L	M	τ
1111	προτεινεί δὲ χεῖρ ἔκ : χειρὸς ὀρεγόμενα	προτεινεί δὲ χεῖρ ἔκ χειρὸς ὀρεγόμενα
1123	ξυνανυτεῖ βίου : δόντος αἰγαῖς	ξυνανυτεῖ βίου δόντος αἰγαῖς
1124-5	ταχεῖα δ' ἄτα πέλει : ἄ ἄ ἰδοῦ ἰδοῦ	ταχεῖα δ' ἄτα πέλει ἄ ἄ : ἰδοῦ ἰδοῦ
1125-6	ἄπεχε τῆς βοῆς : τὸν ταῦρον ἐν πέπλοισιν	ἄπεχε τῆς βοῆς τὸν ταῦρον ἐν πέπλοισιν
1129	δολοφόνου λέβη : τος τύχαν σοι λέγω	δολοφόνου λέβητος τύχαν σοι λέγω
1134	πολυεπεῖς τέχνη : θεσπιωιδὸν φόβον	πολυεπεῖς τέχνη θεσπιωιδὸν φόβον
1136	ἰὼ ἰὼ ταλαίνας : κακόποτμοι τύχαι	ἰὼ ἰὼ : ταλαίνας κακόποτμοι τύχαι
1137	τὸ γὰρ ἐμὸν θρωῶ : πάθος ἐπεγγέασα	τὸ γὰρ ἐμὸν θρωῶ πάθος ἐπαγγέασα
1143	ἀκρέστος βοᾶς φεῦ : ταλαίνας φρεσίν	ἀκρέστος βοᾶς φιλοίκοις ταλαίνας φρεσίν
1146	ἰὼ ἰὼ λιγείας : ἀηδόνος μῦρον	ἰὼ ἰὼ : λιγείας ἀηδόνος μῦρον
1147	περεβάλλοντο γὰρ οἱ : πτεροφόρον δέμας	περιβαλόντες γὰρ οἱ πτεροφόρον δέμας
1153	μελοτυπεῖς ὁμοῦ τ' ὄρ : θίους ἐν νόμοις	μελοτυπεῖς ὁμοῦ τ' ὄρθιους ἐν νόμοις

¹⁸ This is what Wecklein (1885) implies, since this edition aims to reproduce M's colometry (wherever M is available) but treats its line ends and its mid-line spaces indifferently as marking ends of cola. It is followed in this by Fleming (2007: 116-20).

¹⁹ This can be reliably determined from F, G and T. The text that I quote is F's, but G and T have no material differences except that T has φιλοίκοισι without ταλαίνας at 1143 (where in West's apparatus for 'φεῦ om. T' read 'φεῦ om. τ').

What M presents here differs in several respects from the space-saving doubling up of cola that we find in the second half of the corpus. Firstly, while the great majority of M's line endings in this area correspond with colon endings in τ , only three out of the 12 mid-line spaces do so. In other words, three quarters of the spaces serve not to separate cola as presented in τ but to split them. Secondly there is a tendency, too strong for coincidence, for the spaces to observe strophic respension: 1123, 1136, 1137 and 1143 stand in respension with 1134, 1146, 1147 and 1153 respectively. Thirdly in every case the sequence to the right or left of the space consists of a dochmiac metron.²⁰ As the text stands in M, 1146 is an exception, but the strophic respension shows that a dochmiac originally stood in place of ἀηδόνης μόνον.²¹ True, there is no shortage of

²⁰ At 1143 / 1153 M's space does not conform with the metrical analysis of modern editors, who scan $\cup \cup \cup - \cup - - \cup - - \cup -$ as do. cr. cr., but it still gives us a dochmiac. An analysis as cr. ba. do. would seem entirely plausible to an editor who was able to recognise an ithyphallic as a common sequence but was not sensitive to the clausular effect of catalexis.

²¹ Editors read ἀηδοῦς μόνον (Dobree), μόνον ἀηδόνης (Hermann), μόνος ἀηδόνης (West) or βίος ἀηδόνης (Page). There are textual issues also at 1111, where, however, M's χειρὸς ὀρεγόμενα will scan as a dochmiac (with *brevis in longo*) whatever the correct reading may be; and at 1137 and 1147, in each of which we already have one dochmiac but the editors, generally reading ἐπεγχύδα (Headlam) and περέβαλον (Wieseler), provide another.

dochmiacs in this neighbourhood, but there are also purely iambic lines (1115-6, 1126-7, 1142, 1152 besides dialogue-style trimeters), and here the mid-line spaces are lacking.

If our scribe had inherited a number of short lines (dochmiac monometers and similar lengths) and had chosen to pair them together, we might expect his pairings by chance to have anticipated *some* of τ 's cola and to have *sometimes* stood in responson to one another; but the hit rate is too high for such an explanation to be plausible. It is also unclear why all the inherited short lines should have been dochmiac monometers or sequences adjacent to them. We must conclude that M inherited the pattern of lines and spaces (however imperfectly) from the archetype of M and τ and that τ generally preserved the lines while closing up the spaces. Indeed, if we disregard 1090 $\tilde{\alpha} \tilde{\alpha}$ (as an issue of content, not colometry), there is close correspondence in these lyrics (from 1072 to 1159) between the lines of M and the (presumed) lines of τ .²²

In fact the pattern shows a grasp of lyric metre that goes beyond the capacity of any Byzantine scribe and must be derived (remarkably enough) from an ancient source. The ancient editor had an interest in metrical

²² The total is the same (72), since each of the three cases where a space in M corresponds with a line division in τ (1111, 1124-5, 1125-6) is balanced out by an additional line division in M (1110 $\tau\acute{\alpha}\lambda\omicron\varsigma \gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho \tau\acute{o}\delta\acute{\iota} \acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\alpha\iota$ |, 1114 $\acute{\epsilon}\acute{\epsilon} \pi\alpha\pi\alpha\acute{\iota} \pi\alpha\pi\alpha\acute{\iota}$ |, 1125 $\tilde{\alpha} \tilde{\alpha} \dot{\iota}\delta\omicron\upsilon \dot{\iota}\delta\omicron\upsilon$ |).

analysis (or at least in dochmiacs) and an understanding of strophic respension; and he either knew the correct text of 1146 or was able to work out that a dochmiac was needed there. The purpose of his mid-line spaces (which may originally have been more numerous than they are in M) was not to separate cola but to identify dochmiac metra within them.²³

Since we lack M's folios before and after 135, we cannot tell how far this interesting use of spaces extended (or whether it was really confined to dochmiac contexts). For our current purpose, however, this hardly matters for, if the spaces do not serve to separate cola, they have no bearing on questions of line count. True, we still have three lines (1111, 1124-5, 1125-6) in which the mid-line spaces do correspond with colon ends in τ , and these dictate caution;²⁴ but there is little danger that our scribe, in the last part of Ag., plunged into any-

²³ The line divisions, then, reflect the original colometry attributed to Aristophanes of Byzantium (and the colon lengths that they give us are typical of this), while the mid-line spaces were probably introduced later, possibly in connection with performance.

²⁴ At 1111 and 1125-6 it may be that M again inherited the space from the archetype and that τ or an ancestor, instead of simply closing the space, made it into a line division. At 1124-5, however, we have a mid-line space at a change of singer, and this must be classed as a real case of colon pairing – though a random and perhaps barely deliberate one, no doubt encouraged by the other mid-line spaces in the neighbourhood.

thing like the promiscuous pairing that we find from Quire 7 onwards, only to revert to strict (but temporary) abstinence in *Cho*. Nor need we fear that pairing in *Ag.* might have extended to recited anapaests.

In addition, then, to the margin of error that we have already allowed, it will be sufficient to grant a further possible deficit of a line or two in *M*.

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Abbreviations

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- LIMC *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (1981-99), Zürich: Artemis.
- PMGF Davies, Malcolm (1991), *Poetarum Melicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, vol. 1.
- TrGF Snell, Bruno, Richard Kannicht and Stefan Lorenz Radt (1971-2004), *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 5 vols. in 6.

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studies II

1. Andrew Brown, *The Length of the Prologue of Aeschylus's Choephoroi*, 2015
2. Alessandro Serpieri, *Shakespeare's Drama in Poetry*, 2015

A sequence of 12 pages was torn at an early date from the one medieval manuscript (known as M) on which our knowledge of Aeschylus's *Choephoroi* (*Libation Bearers*) depends. This sequence contained the end of the previous play *Agamemnon*, which is preserved in three later manuscripts, and the beginning of the Prologue of *Choephoroi*. The current study seeks to determine as accurately as possible the number of missing lines, taking into account the length of the pages in a particular quire of M and the space that would have been occupied by the last part of *Agamemnon* and by any material occurring between the texts of the two plays. From all this it is calculated that the number of lines of *Choephoroi* missing from M was probably in the range 36 to 53 and very probably in the range 32 to 55. Even the lowest of these figures is higher than previous estimates. The study concludes by considering what the missing portion could have contained. Some fragments are quoted by other authors and these may have been clustered at the beginning of the Prologue, but it is possible to imagine plenty of material that could have occupied the gap between the last of these fragments and the first surviving line in M.

Andrew Brown has a Cambridge PhD in Classics and held temporary lectureships in Classics in the UK and Canada before turning to a non-academic career. His publications include: *A New Companion to Greek Tragedy* (Croom Helm, London 1983); Sophocles: *Antigone* (Aris & Phillips, Warminster 1987); a number of articles on Greek tragedy in classical journals; entries in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd and 4th editions) and the *Cambridge Guide to Theatre*.

Cover:

Francesco Robortello's Aeschylus Edition (Venice 1552), p. 148: *Agamemnon*'s line 1159, the last one in codex M, with Robortello's annotation: "Multa desunt in fine huius Tragoediae. nam quae sequuntur sunt ex Tragoedia Χοηφόρων. ut patet. cuius quoque initium desideratur".