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THE 'METOIKOS' IN ORESTEA

At the beginning of the first parodos of the *Agamemnon* by Aeschylus (vv. 50-59), the Atrides, who saw themselves deprived of Helen, are compared to vultures that, having returned to their nest, realize that their featherless offsprings have disappeared: *τρόπον αἰγυπιῶν, οἷτ' ἐκπατίοις ἄλγεσι παίδων/†ῦπατοι† λεχέων στροφοδινοῦνται/πτερύγων ἐρετμοῖσιν ἐρεσσόμενοι,/δεμνιοτήρη πόνον ὀρταλίχων ὀλέσαντες/ῦπατος δ' αἴων ἢ τις Ἄπόλλων ἢ Πᾶν ἢ Ζεὺς/οἰωνόθροον γόνον ὄξυβόαν τῶνδε μετοίκων/ὑστερόποινον πέμπει παραβᾶσιν Ἐρινύν*.¹

As I have already highlighted elsewhere² Aeschylus employs all the means of his refined art to convey the terrible despair of those birds, who fly over what was the bedding to themselves and and their offsprings, realizing that it is absolutely impossible to find their offsprings and that they have lost their most precious good, which had costed them so much affectionate effort. Only a divinity will be able to avenge them, sending the Erinyes to punish those who have transgressed the laws they had laid out.

In this context, it cannot but baffle τῶνδε μετοίκων, both for the meaning not immediately perspicuous, and for its location: the connective, indeed, would appear at first sight to be certainly linked directly to οἰωνόθροον/γόνον ὄξυβόαν, but, actually, its position is intermediary between this expression and the following one (ὑστερόποινον ... Ἐρινύν)³, and could also be meant as ἀπὸ κοινῆ between them.

¹ Text and metric division are by West M. L., *Aeschyli Tragoediae cum incerti poetae Prometheo*, Stuttgartiae 1990, 193.

² See *Alcuni esempi di polisemia nell'Agamemnone di Eschilo: esegesi antica e filologia moderna*, 'Lexis' III, 1989, 3-24.

³ It is a 'phrasal ambiguity' according the definition of W. Stanford, *Ambiguity in Greek Style*, Oxford 1939, 56-68.

In fact, interpreters have divided themselves into two groups, albeit with different *nuances*:

a) The majority⁴ linking τῶνδε μετοίκων to what precedes it, has understood the high-pitched cry as being of the vultures, and has seen in τῶνδε μετοίκων an allusion to the Athenian institution of the *metoikos*, inferring that Aeschylus called the birds 'second class citizens, citizens with limited rights', because of their inhabiting the air, whose first citizens and real owners were the gods. The latter, on their part, listening (ἀίων) to the *metoikos*' cry, behaved like their institutional protectors, their προστάται.

b) A minority of scholars (Pauw, Schütz, Ahrens, Dindorf, Blaydes), on the other hand, despite linking τῶνδε μετοίκων to what precedes it, or connecting it to what follows, has suspected that with this expression it was alluded to the kidnapped offsprings. The high-pitched cry would be the one launched for τῶνδε μετοίκων (objective genitive) or, if one links the genitive to the following words, the Erinyes who was late to come, but that still comes,⁵ would be the one avenging the disappeared featherless offsprings. In such case, τῶνδε μετοίκων would have to be explained as both the Medicean translator, and those of Triclinius' codes, which glossed

⁴ See Paley F. A., *The Tragedies of Aeschylus*, London 1870, 336; Schneidewin F. W., *Aischylos. Agamemnon*, Berlin 1883, 10; Groeneboom P., *Aeschylus' Agamemnon*, Groningen 1944, 130; Fraenkel E., *Aeschylus. Agamemnon*, II, Oxford 1950, 36-38; Denniston J. D.-Page D., *Aeschylus. Agamemnon*, Oxford 1957, 73; Citti V., *Eschilo e la lexis tragica*, Amsterdam 1994, 41; Bardollet L.-Deforge B., *Les tragiques grecs*, I, Paris 2001, 300, as well as, in my view, J. Bollack (I 49). The same interpretation is endorsed by most Italian translators, see Pasolini P. P. 'not deaf to those shrieks of humile guests of the sky', Cantarella R. 'heard the high-pitched cry of these pleaders', as well as by others, who link the genitive to ὑπερόπιοιον, like M. Untersteiner 'an help of these shrill birds like of offended foreigners, send against the culprits the Erinyes who late punish', M. Valgimigli 'the revenge of these *metoikos* of the air even if late punisher', Giulia and M. Morani with 'late avenger of those *metoikos* of the sky', E. Medda 'the high-pitched funeral cry from the bird voice of those *metoikos* of the sky', Monica Centanni 'the shrill cry of those cohabiters of the sky'. Enger-Gilbert meant 'Schutzerwandte' of the gods, as beings who nested in their sacred enclosures; in the same direction moves K. Clinton, 'AJPh', XCIV, 1973, 282-288, according to whom the reference is to the north-west wall of the Acropolis where the temples of the various gods were situated and where were not rare caves inhabited by vultures. P. Ubaldi (*Eschilo. Agamemnone*, Torino-Firenze-Roma-Milano 1909, 18), on the other hand, proposes a different interpretation: 'maybe in the poet's mind the idea presented itself as undetermined as the word itself is.'

⁵ This is a recurrent theme: in tragedy see also Aesch. *Ag.* 155, *Ch.* 382, *Soph. Ant.* 1074; in the Latin field Tib. I 9,4, *Hor. Carm.* III 2,32, the beginning of the *De mortibus persecutorum* by Lactantius (*PL VII* 192a), and especially the *Dii pedes lanatos habent* by Petronius (44,18, see also *Porph. ad Hor. Carm.* III 2,32, *Macr. Sat.* I 8,5).

τῶνδε μετοίκων· ὑπερ τῶν μετοικισθέντων νεοσσῶν. It would thus mean ‘nestlings that have been taken away from their nest’, and the noun μέτοικος would be equivalent to the passive participle aorist of μετοικίζω.

The second exegesis presents the doubtless difficulty of the deictic τῶνδε which in the other case is of easier interpretation. If in fact it is explainable as referred to those the passage just talked about,⁶ it would be more logical for those to be the subject of the previous sentence rather than the ὀρτάλιχοι. Hermann, who, adopting the second exegetic line, linked preferably the genitive to what precedes it (wrote ‘si τῶνδε μετοίκων iungitur cum superioribus, luctus ob amotos pullos est intelligendus’), proposed to read τῶν δέ, and ended up postulating a lacuna after ὄξυβόαν. According to him, in fact, παραβᾶσιν should have referred to the Trojans and μετοίκων to Helen.⁷ This exegesis is imaginative, but does not resolve the difficulty of τῶνδε and consequently the reading τῶν δέ (with a value of δέ not very perspicuous in truth) if one refers the genitive to the disappeared nestlings.

More immediate and easy appears to think – with the great majority of interpreters – that τῶνδε μετοίκων is a subjective genitive, which further specifies the high-pitched and desperate cry. In the usual explanation, nonetheless, would be recalled a real Athenian judicial situation, and, in particular, the subordinate position that the *metoikos* had in the πόλις, and of which we know thanks to the accounts of philosophers and orators (especially those of the fourth century).⁸

⁶ Denniston J. D.-Page D., (Aeschylus. *Agamemnon*, Oxford 1957, 73) rightly quote Hes. *Op.* 80s. and the v. 645 of the same *Agamemnon*.

⁷ The only other modern editor who postulates a lacuna is Fraenkel, but he places it after τῶνδε μετοίκων and so comments: ‘I believe Hermann’s division in two words (τῶν δέ) and the punctuation adopted by him and others (comma in front of τῶν δε μετοίκων) to be certainly right. It also seems to me inevitable to postulate a lacuna. I put it, however, not like Hermann before τῶν δέ μετοίκων but after. What Aeschylus wrote we cannot recover, but about the necessary ideas I have no doubt. *Exempli gratia* we may fill the gap with words which up to point would account for the omission: τῶν δέ μετοίκων <μέγαν οἴκτον ἔχων> ὑστερόποινον κτλ.’ This is an ingenious hypothesis, but in my opinion is not necessary and would dilute the Aeschylean dictation, which owes its dramatic nature also to the remarkable semantic density and concentration.

⁸ See in particular Plat. *Resp.* 563a, Dem. 22,54, 24,166, 52,9, 52,25. For a modern bibliography, see Gauthier P., *Symbola. Les étrangers et la justice dans les cités grecques*, Nancy 1972, 108ss.; Whitehead D., *The Ideology of the Athenian Metic*, Cambridge 1977, 55, 70; Id., *The Ideology of the Athenian Metic: Some Pendants and a Reapprai-*

This being the situation, *Aeschylus*, at the beginning of a work aiming to ethically, politically and religiously unite *polis*, would have made precise reference to one of the many 'structures of subordination' present in Athens, alluding clearly and unequivocally to the pitiful condition of the *metoikos*.

This does not persuade me, all the more as this reference would appear completely gratuitous, certainly not functional to the image. More than supposing an automatic mirroring of the political situation, it would appear appropriate, to comprehend the *Oresteia*, to grasp its ideological value and its relationship with 'official history', especially with the propagandistic *topoi*, among which did not figure the fact that guests were posed on a lower level, but rather the continuous helpfulness and openness of Athens towards foreigners.⁹

It is doubtless, moreover, that this exegesis cannot be supported – as several scholars argue¹⁰ – by *schol. Soph. OC 934* εἰ μὴ μέτοικος τῆσδε ἀντὶ ἔνοικος οὐ γὰρ αὐτὸ τοῦτο τὸ μέτοικος ὡς ἡμεῖς φάμεν εἶρηται, μετοίκους δὲ καλοῦμεν τοὺς ἀπὸ ἐτέρας χώρας οἰκοῦντας, πρὸς δὲ τοὺς μετοικισθέντας ποθέν, τοῦτο δὲ ἔνοικον· κέχρηται δὲ καὶ Αἰσχύλος ἐπὶ τῶν οἰωνῶν ἐν Ἀγαμέμνονι λέγων οὕτω τῶνδε μετοίκων ἀντὶ ἐνοίκων· μετοίκους γὰρ εἶπε τῶν ὑψηλῶν τόπων τοὺς οἰωνοὺς κάκειῖσε ἀντὶ ἐνοίκων· ἀντὶ ἔνοικος, which interprets a Sophoclean passage (εἰ μὴ μέτοικος τῆσδε τῆς χώρας θέλεις/εἶναι βίᾳ τε κοῦχ ἐκόν), where Theseus commanding Creon to return the daughters of Oedipus, menaces him of making him become – willing or unwilling – 'inhabitant of Athens'.

This exegesis is trivial, because the scholar contrasts the most common usage of the term, namely 'who comes from a different land', with passages where this would simply equal ἔνοικος, meaning 'inhabitant', like the passage in the *Oedipus* (the ancient commentator did not consider the

sal, 'PCPhS' CXXII, 1986, 145-158; Citti V., *The Ideology of Metics in Attic Tragedy*, in *Forms of Control and Subordination in Antiquity*, Tokyo 1988, 456-464.

⁹ Suffice it to recall Thuc. II39,1 τήν τε γὰρ πόλιν κοινὴν παρέχομεν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτε ξηνηλασίαις ἀπειρομέν τινα ἢ μαθήματος ἢ θεάματος, ὃ μὴ κρυφθῆν ἄν τις τῶν πολεμίων ἰδὼν ὠφελῆσει.

¹⁰ See Maria Pia Pattoni (*Eschilo, Coefore 969-971, 'RhM'*, CXLIX, 2006, 1-30: 24; Id., *Su alcune problematiche immagini dal terzo stasimo delle 'Coefore', 'Lexis'*, XXIV, 2006, 177-190; 185) probably on the basis of Medda E., *Sed nullus editorum vidit*, Amsterdam 2006, 166, who states that 'Hermann grasps with precision the hardship of the step, which consists in the deictic and not in the value of the noun illustrated by the skolion to Sophocles'. In fact Hermann (368ss.) quoted our skolion, but to support linking the genitive to what precedes it, and, as seen, interpreted in a radically different and, in my opinion, not sharable way: certainly, on the other hand, he did not understand the skolion erroneously.

fact that, conversely, to Creon, a Theban citizen forced to settle in Athens, the proper usage of the term is as valid as it could be) as well as the passage of the *Agamemnon*, where the term would denote the birds, inhabitants of the air and of high places, with no further connotation.

It is therefore one of the many scholia which trivialize the poetic language: one cannot certainly interpret the Aeschylean passage on this sole basis (it would be extremely reductive to see in μετοίκων a simple equivalent of ἐνοίκων), and much less infer/deduce from this the meaning of τῶνδε μετοίκων as ‘citizens without all rights’. Ancient exegeses of the Aeschylean passage based on the curtailment of the *metoikos*’ rights, in fact, do not exist.¹¹

To better understand the functionality of τῶνδε μετοίκων in the vultures comparison it will be useful, in my opinion, to examine the other evidences of Aeschylean use of the term, which commonly indicates who has left his motherland, and, exiled, has settled elsewhere, with no implications on his – however obvious – subordinate position in regard to the inhabitants of the host city. So, in *Suppl.* 609-612 Danaus, after the decree of Argos, declared with moved exultation ἡμᾶς μετοικεῖν τῆσδε γῆς ἐλευθέρους/κάρρυσιάστους ξύν τ’ ἀσυλίου βροτῶν/καὶ μήτ’ ἐνοίκων μήτ’ ἐπηλύδων τινᾶ/ἄγειν, he announces that the exiled Danaides came to settle in Argos free, with right of asylum, and that therefore they cannot be subjected to harm neither at the hands of citizens nor of foreigners. Later, (vv. 994-997), Danaus himself warns the girls that πᾶς δ’ ἐν μετοίκῳ γλῶσσαν εὐτυκον φέρει/κακῆν, that, namely, everyone is ready to speak ill

¹¹ This function is on the other hand stated in *Ar. Ach.* 508 τοὺς γὰρ μετοίκους ἄχυρα τῶν ἀστῶν λέγω, see the relative scholion (μέρος γάρ ἐστὶ τῶν πολιτῶν οἱ μέτοικοι εὐτελὲς ὡς τὰ ἄχυρα τῶν κριθῶν). The materials of Aristophanes’ and Sophocles’ exegesis are simply conflated by *Suda* μ 820 A. μέτοικοι: μέρος ἐστὶ τῶν πολιτῶν οἱ μέτοικοι εὐτελὲς ὡς τὰ ἄχυρα τῶν κριθῶν. Ἀριστοφάνης (*Ach.* 508): τοὺς γὰρ μετοίκους ἄχυρα τῶν ἀστῶν λέγω. μέτοικοι δὲ οἱ ἀφ’ ἐτέρας πόλεως μεταστάντες καὶ εἰς ἐτέραν οἰκοῦντες. εἴ που δικίδιον εἶπας εἴ κατὰ ξένου μετοίκου, ᾧ δυνατὸς εἶναι λέγειν. παρὰ Σοφοκλεῖ (*OC* 934s.) δὲ μέτοικος ἀντὶ τοῦ ἔνοικος· εἰ μέτοικος τῆσδε τῆς χώρας θέλεις εἶναι ἀντὶ τοῦ ἔνοικος. οὐ γὰρ αὐτὸ τοῦτο τὸ ἔνοικος, ὡς ἡμεῖς φαιμεν, εἴρηται. μετοίκους δὲ καλοῦμεν τοὺς ἀπὸ ἐτέρας χώρας οἰκοῦντας, πρὸς δὲ τοὺς μετοικισθέντας ποθέν. τοῦτο δὲ σημαίνει ἔνοικον. Δισχύλος τοὺς οἰωνοὺς τῶν ὑψηλῶν τόπων, ἀντὶ τοῦ ἔνοικους. Here the function of the Aeschylean passage is less clear, although one can suppose that at the basis was to be a scholion similar to our one (for the debate relative to the exegesis of the *Oedipus Coloneus*, retrievable tanks to the *Suda*, see my *Osservazioni sulla tradizione indiretta dell’Edipo a Colono*, in *Il dramma sofocleo: testo, lingua, interpretazione*, Stuttgart-Weimar 2003, 357-369).

of who comes from a different land, and therefore asks them not to behave so as to provoke him shame (τό τ' εἰπεῖν εὐπετέες μύσαγμα πῶς./ὕμᾱς δ' ἐπαινώ μὴ καταισχύνειν ἐμέ./ὥραν ἐχούσας τήνδ' ἐπίστρεπτον βροτοῖς).

Here the reference to the problems of a foreigner who settled in a new land does not regard juridical issues, such as his subordinate position and the need to have a προστάτης, but rather regards the daily prejudices he has to constantly face in his daily life. In *Pers.* 318s., on the other hand, is mentioned Ἀρτάβης τε Βάκτριος./σκληρᾶς μέτοικος γῆς, ἐκεῖ κατέφθιτο, a combatant originally from Bactria, who later became 'inhabitant' of the land where he lays dead, with an image which is not unique in the Aeschylean theatre.¹² In *Sept.* 547s. is mentioned Παρθενοπαῖος Ἀρκᾶς· ὁ δὲ τοιοῦσδ' ἀνὴρ/μέτοικος, Ἄργει δ' ἐκτίνων καλὰς τροφάς, a man coming from different lands, but who is determined to pay his debt of gratitude to Argos which has fed him. In all those passages no mention is made of the fact that the μέτοικος is a 'second class' citizen. Rather he is a guest, who is grateful to the land that has welcomed him, fed him, and nonetheless he still remains an exile, a foreigner, different: Danaus warns the Danaides not of their lesser rights, but of the prejudices they will be inevitably objects to. Many passages directly refer, through a genitive dependent from μέτοικος, to a land that welcomes the φυγάς, that is the person who for one or another reason has left his motherland, has changed land; when, such as in *Suppl.* 994, this genitive is missing, we have more generally an exile, a *metoikos* in the etymological sense of the term.

Particularly interesting are, in my opinion, the other passages of the *Oresteia* in which appears μέτοικος. In *Choeph.* 680-685 Orestes pretends to be a foreigner, coming to announce the death of Orestes, and reports the words with which a self-claimed Phocaeen Strophius would have revealed such mournful event: ἐπεὶ περ ἄλλως, ὃ ξέν', εἰς Ἄργος κίεις./πρὸς τοὺς τεκόντας πανδίκως μεμνημένος/τεθνεῶτ' Ὀρέστην εἶπέ, μηδαμῶς λάθῃ./εἴτ' οὖν κομίζειν δόξα νικήσει φίλων./εἴτ' οὖν μέτοικον, εἰς τὸ πᾶν ἀεὶ ξένον./δάπτειν. Strophius, having to accomplish the task of burying the exile Orestes, wants to know how the Argives – and his mother in particular – view him: if as a citizen of Argos (and in such case he has to return the mortal remains) or if as μέτοικος, as full foreigner. Aptly, Maria

¹² In *Ag.* 452-455 the enemy ground covers those who have conquered it; famous is also *Sept.* 731ss., where the Chorus, alluding to the future death of the two brothers, states that they compete for the land, while they will have what will be enough to cover them. On the ideological value of the *topos* see V. Di Benedetto, *L'ideologia del potere e la tragedia greca*, Torino 1978, 194s.

Pia Pattoni ('RhM' qtd., 7) observes that the level of *metoikos* does not precisely equate to ξένος, because Aeschylus, to denote who is fully foreigner, has to reemphasize the concept with εἰ τὸ πᾶν ἀεὶ ξένον. Our term, evidently, denoted who had to leave his motherland, and is exiled in a foreign land, and also here the accent is not on the curtailment of rights in the host city, but rather on the *status* of who cannot return to his land, not even to be buried.

Very complex, of uncertain text and of difficult interpretation is *Ch.* 969-971, in which the Medicean offers τύχα δ' εὐπροσώπω κοιταί/τὸ πᾶν ἰδεῖν ἀκοῦσαι θροεμένοις/μετοιχοδόμων πεσοῦνται πάλιν. These are the words with which the Chorus catches a glimpse of hope, announces that the future will be better for the Atrides' dynasty, immediately before Orestes bursts on the scene after having killed Aegisthus and Clytemnestra. Many scholars propose various conjectures, also bizarre,¹³ in the vv. 969s., but we interpret the 971 as a final exclamation: 'The *'metoikos'* [μέτοιχοι] will be once again chased away [πεσοῦνται πάλιν] from the house!', meaning with μέτοιχοι either Aegisthus and Clytemnestra (and translating 'the usurpers', or – much better – 'the intruders'),¹⁴ or the Erinyes, the terrible demons who persecute the house.¹⁵

¹³ H. Weil (*Aeschyli Choephoroi*, Gissae 1860, 108) pieced together our passage in the light of the *topos* according to which 'Fortuna arridente omnia mala sopiuntur', writing τύχα δ' εὐπροσώπω κοιμάται τὸ πᾶν./τρέομεν ἄς δ' ἰδεῖν ἀκοῦσαι. N. Wecklein (*Aeschylus. Orestie*, Leipzig 1888, 227) adopted an ingenious τύχα δ' εὐπροσώπῃ ἄηται τὸ πᾶν/ἰδεῖν {ἀκοῦσαι} θροεμένους, 'der Gang der Dinge weht freundlich durchaus um den Ruf zu vernehmen.' It is important the fact that this was the exegesis of U. v. Wilamowitz-Möllendorff (*Aeschyli Tragoediae*, Berolini 1914, 383), who wrote τύχα δ' εὐπροσώπῳ κείται τὸ πᾶν/ἰδεῖν {ἀκοῦσαι} θροεμένοις: his suggestion was approved by G. Murray (*Aeschyli Septem quae supersunt tragoediae*, Oxonii 1937, ad l.), P. Groeneboom (*Aeschylus' Choephoroi*, Groningen 1949, 89) e O. Werner (*Aeschylus. Tragödien und Fragmente*, München 1959, 174). P. Mazon, wisely, crucifige the incomprehensible vv. 969s., and also M. L. West (o. c. 333) is essentially on the same line (τύχα δ' εὐπρόσωποι ἴκοιται τὸ πᾶν ἰδεῖν/ἀκοῦσαι † προυμενεῖς. For a final exclamation, gives his opinion also V. Citti, *Studi sul testo delle Coefore*, Amsterdam 2006, 249.

¹⁴ See Romagnoli E., *Eschilo. Tragedie*, II, Bologna 1921, 190; Untersteiner M., *Le Coefore*, Amsterdam 2002, 465; Sevieri R., *Eschilo, Coefore*, Venezia 1995, 117.

¹⁵ So, however *dubitantly*, P. Mazon (*Eschyle, II. Agamemnon, Les Choéphores. Les Euménides*, Paris 1972, 118), who quotes *Ag.* 1186-1190, in which is stated that the κῶμος of the Erinyes settles in the house of the Atrides, after having drunk human blood and is δῶςπεμπτος ἔξω. Yet, it seems to me hard to assume that the audience could recall this far passage. A reference to the Erinyes is also maintained by A. F.

As M. Untersteiner rightly states, this second exegesis appears unlikely, because 'the concept of Erinyes would here be too unexpected to be sufficiently clear': I do not see, in fact, how the audience could have grasped such an allusion. The only element that may lead in this direction is that the Erinyes are actually called μέτοιχοι at the end of the *Eumenides*, but, as will be later seen, in a radically different context.

Other scholars, albeit identifying the *metoikos* in Aegisthus and Clytemnestra, seek alternative solutions to the exclamation in v. 971; in particular, W. Headlam, G. Thomson (*The Oresteia of Aeschylus*, I, Amsterdam-Prague 1966, 173; II 182 s.), translates compellingly 'those who have no right in it shall fall back with a fate of fair aspect altogether in the mourners' eyes.'¹⁶

Recently, Maria Pia Pattoni, in two remarkably interesting articles (quoted in note ...), has interpreted the passage in a different way reading τύχαι δ' εὐπροσώπω κοίτᾳ τὸ πᾶν/ιδεῖν {ἀκοῦσαι} θροημένοις/μέτοιχοις δόμων πεσοῦνται πάλιν, and understanding 'for the crying *metoikos* of the house the fate will again fall with a lucky cast (lit. 'with a lying on the favourable side') in all that will be seen'. We would therefore face a reuse of

Garvie, Aeschylus. *Choephoroi*, Oxford 1984, 315 (who adopts the same text as West, with the exception of the dative μετοίχοις).

¹⁶ Headlam-Thompson adopt (with the sole minimal variation of θροημένοις instead of θρουμένοις) the text of G. Hermann (Aeschyli Tragoediae, I, Berolini 1869, 260), τύχαι δ' εὐπροσώπω κοίτᾳ τὸ πᾶν/ιδεῖν {ἀκοῦσαι} θρουμένοις: this scholar, nonetheless, strangely interpreted 'prospera ad videndum narrantibus fortuna revertentur restituti aedibus'. C. J. Blomfield (Aeschyli *Choephoroe*, Londini 1834³, 97s., had separated the v. 971 with a full stop, but he had not supposed the direct speech (he thought that in origin, it had been elsewhere and that had to be transposed). Do not interpret v. 971 as direct speech also R. H. Klausen (Aeschyli *quae supersunt*, I, Gothae-Erfordiae 1833, 71, who understands [p. 209] 'in Fortunam laeto vultu gratam omnino spectu, auditu lamentantibus denuo conditioni incident aedium inquilini'; A. W. Verrall (*The Choephoroi* of Aeschylus, London-New York 1893, 138s.), who, recalling E. Bamberger, speculates τύχαι δ' εὐπροσώπω κοίτᾳ τὸ πᾶν/ιδεῖν ἀκοῦσαι θροημένοις/μετοιχοδόμων πεσοῦνται πάλιν, assuming that those characters living in the house as *metoikos* are 'the soldiers introduced by Aegisthus'; T. G. Tucker (*The Choephoroi* of Aeschylus, Cambridge 1901, 214s.), who suggests an unusual τύχαι δ' εὐπροσώπω κοίτᾳ τὸ πᾶν/ιδεῖν ἀκοῦσαι δ' ἐρομένοις, linking μέτοιχοι to τύχαι, translating 'then the face of dice shall change, and there shall fall, to sojourn in our house, fortunes whose aspects is all goodly to behold and for men who ask to hear of'; F. Blass (*Aischylos' Choephoren*, Halle 1906, 68s.) who writes an enigmatic τύχαι δ' εὐπροσώποι † κοίτᾳ τὸ πᾶν/ιδεῖν <ηδ> ἀκοῦσαι θροημένοις, presuming, after θροημένοις a gap coinciding with a dochmius.

the metaphor of dices employed by Aeschylus also elsewhere,¹⁷ *Ἐρεομένους* would be made agree with *μετοίκους* and would allude to the wailing cheep of newborn birds,¹⁸ and finally the *metoikos* would be Electra and Orestes, who – argues Pattoni – would find themselves to be foreigners in their home, deprived of their rights, precisely like the vultures of the *parodos* of the *Agamemnon* – from which our analysis started – are ‘second-class citizens’ of the air.

Despite the fact that *πάλιν* would lose much of its poignancy (when ever did fate fall fortunately for the two unlucky children of Agamemnon, and especially for Orestes?), as already seen and as highlighted by V. Citti

¹⁷ Pattoni recalls in particular Ag. 32s. τὰ δεσποτῶν γὰρ εἶ πεσόντα θήσομαι/τρὶς ἕξ βα-
 λούσης τῆσδέ μοι φροκτορίας. The scholar’s interpretation is actually based on the one
 by C. G. Schütz (Aeschyli Tragoediae quae supersunt ac deperditarum Fragmenta, III,
 Halae 1808, 70) who published a text similar to Pattoni’s (yet, without bracketing
 ἀκούσαι) and understood *μετοίκους* as ‘aedium incolis (Oresti et Electrae)’; an impor-
 tant precedent is in F. A. Paley (The Tragedies of Aeschylus, London 1870, 552) who
 so explained: ‘Dice may be so called when they have a fall or lodgment (κοίτη) in such
 a way as to present a good face, i. e. a lucky number, uppermost. But then it seems to
 follow, almost a matter of course, that *πεσοῦνται* *πάλιν* is said of these same dice
 which bring good luck as they formerly brought bad luck; and again, that the persons
 for whom they so fall are the *μετοικοί*, or new residents, viz. Orestes’. The dative *με-*
τοίκους more recently has been chosen by D. Page (Aeschyli septem quae supersunt
 tragoediae, Oxonii 1972, 240), who so arranges the two previous verses: τύχαι δ’
 εὐπρόσωποι ἰκοῖται ἢ τὸ πᾶν/ἰδεῖν πρηνεμενείς, and on the same wavelength as Page is
 A. Bowen (Aeschylus, *Choephoroi*, London 1986, 23; 161). An allusion to the game of di-
 ces is also seen by M. Valgimigli (Eschilo, *Orestea*, Milano 1980, 262s., but the anno-
 tated translation was printed for the first time in Florence in 1948), who translates ‘E
 sorti novelle, rivasa la faccia in tutto benigno a vedere nella casa saranno gittate, e
 nuove fortune vedrà nella casa abitare chi oggi grida e in lagna’, and the specifies:
 ‘The image, warns the scholion, is from the throwing of dices. But there is a merge of
 images which I had to distinguish’.

¹⁸ Pattoni (‘RhM’ cit. 28) states that *Ἐρεομένους* ‘makes it easier for the audience to iden-
 tify the *metoikos*, thereby excluding other further identifications’: it seems obvious to
 me that it could not be Aegisthus and Clytemnestra crying lamenting, but the schol-
 ar’s assertion is based on the assumption that this verb agrees with *μετοίκους*. More-
 over, totally hypothetical is that ‘in Ag. 55 s. The vultures (namely, the two Atrides)
 are crying in domestic mourning and their cry of distress is being heard by the gods.
 Also Electra and Orestes, progeny of the eagle, are presented for the most part of the
 drama as *Ἐρηνω* *Ἐδοῦντες* and their cries of lament and plea are heard by the gods.
 And Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, like once Paris and all the Priamides (recalled at the
 beginning of the stasimon) have now received the fair punishment’. Beyond the fact
 that no clear reference is made to birds in the *Choephoroi*’s passage, for the passage of
 the *Agamemnon* to confirm Pattoni’s interpretation it would be needed for the *metoikos* in
 the *Agamemnon* to be indisputably ‘second class’ citizens.

(*Studi* qtd. 249), μέτοικος is actually he who has left his land to settle elsewhere, and it seems to me unlikely that the foreigners inhabiting the royal palace are in fact the two young brothers, crown princes of the Atrides' royal house.

It is not, on the other hand, straightforward to think that the term alludes ultimately to Orestes – the *metoikos* par excellence – because δόμων can only depend from μετόικους and, as in the other passages, the term cannot therefore generally characterize exiles, but rather foreigners who have settled in the Atrides' royal palace (and – to be kept in mind – at this stage of the episode Orestes does not live in the royal palace).

In support of her exegesis, Pattoni recalls Soph. *El.* 189, in which Electra describes herself as ἔποικος ἀναξία, meaning an outsider deprived of rights in her own home. True, Pattoni herself has highlighted many elements linking the *Electra* of Sophocles to the *Choephoroi*, but this conclusion cannot be brought to the extreme of establishing a perfect parallel between the two tragedies. So, the presence of Electra in the 'house' is a central theme in Sophocles, but it appears to me to be marginal in Aeschylus.¹⁹ If therefore one excludes this comparison, the only real support remains our passage of the *Agamemnon*, assuming that it is in fact about 'second-class citizens'.

In my opinion the simplest and most immediate exegesis for this complicated passage is the one that sees in the μετόικος, people who do not properly belong to the house and who inhabit it: that Aegisthus could be such is apparent. But also Clytemnestra is, *in primis* as a bride extrinsic to the γένος²⁰, and also – foremost – because, having been presented at the beginning of the *Agamemnon* as the bulwark of the land of Argos (vv. 256 s.), by killing her husband, she lost with him her own children and her deep relationship with the house and became essentially a stranger. C. Neri, moreover, in a work currently in print, supporting the exegesis of G. Thompson as accurate, rightly highlights how, in the economy of the whole antistrophe, μέτοικοι δόμων πεσοῦνται πάλιν clarifies darkly the

¹⁹ That in the passage of the *Electra* ἔποικος means 'stranger that here lives' is doubtless: I do not see why Pattoni ('RhM' qtd. 14) places so much emphasis on *Suda* α 1983 and to 2877 A., from where it can be extrapolated that an ancient commentator trivially explained in the Sophoclean passage ἔποικος con μέτοικος, but this provides neither a proof nor a hint that Aeschylus in the passage of the *Choephoroi* meant to designate as *metoikos* those who in Sophocles are ἔποικοι.

²⁰ Exemplary is the case of Euripides' *Alcestis*, characterized by the term ὀθνεῖος 'not belonging to the γένος' (cf. vv. 532 s., 644 s., 860 s., as well as my *Eur. Alc. 810s.*, 'GFF' V, 1982, 79-82).

preceding ἀφ' ἐστίας/μύσος ἅπαν ἐλάση /καθαρμοῖσιν ἅτ' ἐλατήριον, identifying in the μέτοικοι δόμων the μύσος that will have to be chased away through the violent purification of the ἅται. If so understood, the passage will not be different from the other Aeschylean ones we have examined: emphasis will be placed on the being 'foreigner' and not on the juridical implications of such a condition.

If in the *Agamemnon* 'metoikos' are the vultures of the parodos, to whom the Atrides are compared, and if in the *Coephori* are the other characters of the tragedy - in particular Orestes, but probably also Aegisthus and Clytemnestra (rather, one could say that the Greek tragedy is played precisely on the duplicity between who is *metoikos* outside the house, who has to regain possession of it, and who is *metoikos* inside the house and from there has to be chased away), in the *Eumenides* the term refers to the Erinyes, goddesses who persecute, hunt down, chase away from the motherland and force to exile those who perpetrate crimes of blood. Yet, so acting, the Erinyes are forced to a constant painful wandering, to be in a perpetual condition of *metoikos*.

In the closing of the tragedy, they find, like Danaus in the *Supplices*, a place where to settle, in which they will be 'metoikos', but not citizens without rights. Rather, they will be an essential element for social and political stability (it is worth recalling that they do not become 'good' goddesses, but they put their being terrible at the service of the Athenian πόλις). Our term returns to highlight with absolute clarity this situation. In vv. 1010-1013 Athena introduces the Eumenides in the πόλις with an explicit appeal to the mothers of the city (ἡγεῖσθε, πολισσοῦχοι/παῖδες Κραναοῦ, παῖσδε μετοίκους./εἴη δ' ἀγαθῶν/ἀγαθῆ διάνοια πολίταις) and in vv. 1014-1020 it is the Chorus of the Erinyes themselves (χαίρετε, χαίρετε, δ' αἴθρις, ἐπανδιπλοῖζω,/πάντες οἱ καταὰ πόλιν,/δαίμονές τε καὶ βροτοί./Παλλάδος πόλιν νέμοντες, μετοικίαν τ' ἐμὴν/εὔσεβοῦντες οὔτι μέμψεσθε συμφορὰς βίου) that praises the Athenian πόλις which has welcomed them not treating them as second class citizens, but with εὐσέβεια, with religious respect and awe.

At this stage, it will be appropriate to come back to the passage we started from. From the analysis of the other Aeschylean passages, it emerged that the μέτοικος is first and foremost he who has lost his own οἶκος, has had to leave, has had to ask for hospitality in other places, where he will be treated more or less well, but he will never be at home.

It seems appropriate to me to interpret in this sense also the τῶνδε μετοίκων of the *Agamemnon*'s parodos: the vultures are μέτοικοι not so

much because of their being 'second class citizens' of a space mainly inhabited by the gods, but rather for their intimate desperate situation. It could indeed be said that the birds, who have a nest but always fly in the air, are by their nature constantly μέτοιχοι as well as that in popular imagination, they are the beings of no fixed abode par excellence. Yet, in my opinion here the term is much more poignant: the vultures have come back to their nest, to their home, and have found it empty, they are distressed because of their completely disappeared offsprings (ἐκπατίοις ἄλγεσι παίδων), they roam above what was their bedding with absolute desperation (το ὕπατοι λεχέων στροφοδινοῦνται/πτερύγων ἐρετμοῖσιν ἐρεσσόμενοι), they are conscious of having lost their reason for life, what they have been lovingly caring for (δεμνιοτήρη/πόνον ὀρταλίχων ὀλέσαται)²¹, they have lost everything, have become 'metoikos'.

So understood, the term would add a further note of drama το ὕπατοι λεχέων στροφοδινοῦνται and would thus be functional to the image and feeling of helpless, desperate, absolute pain it conveys. The comparison with the Atrides, moreover, would appear even more apt: also Agamemnon is losing his home and his motherland, not only and not as much for the kidnapping of Helen, but rather because he will be forced, to lead the army, to lose his loved daughter, and in the most dreadful way, namely, killing her. He will leave, to fight in a foreign land, and when he will want to return to his motherland he will appear changed, not arrogant anymore but rather conscious of his limits. Yet, he will realize at his own expenses, bitterly, that his not having a motherland anymore, his being 'metoikos' will be irreversible. He will not act as the character of the *Persians* who settles in a foreign land because it is here that he dies fighting, but, even more bitterly, he will go to die in a house that is not his own anymore.

Thus, on close inspection, if we distill the many ideas highlighted above, it is possible to say that the whole trilogy is a tragic story of 'metoikos': of Agamemnos we just said; the son Orestes is the 'metoikos' par excellence, he who is forced to go exile and that probably could not come back even after death; and the *Choephoroi* are - as previously said - based on the return, on the return of the 'metoikos' who wants and must take back the house, chasing away who, killing Agamemnos, became 'metoikos' in his own home, having lost any relationship with it. But the revenge of

²¹ I am inclined to understand this phrase as Hermann ('cubiliprema cura pullorum') and Fraenkel do, and not as interpreted by those (for example Dindorf, Passow, Pearson) who, on the basis of the interpretation of Hesych. δ 617L., mean δεμνιοτήρη πόνον as the action of the nestlings which remain in the nest.

Agamemnon's son is such that he will not find peace, he will have to once again run away from home, return to be 'metoikos', followed by Erinyes that do not leave respite because they themselves have no respite, Erinyes which force one to be permanently 'metoikos' because they themselves are preys to an endless and distressing wandering.

Only the Athenian πόλις - with the crucial help of Athena - will bring all this to an end, positively transforming the condition of 'metoikos', even institutionalizing such condition, so as to, as stated in one of the most common clichés in Athenian propaganda, help those who are weak and in trouble²². That the *Oresteia* exalts Athens for having overcome the archaic laws based on blood revenge appears to be clear to me; less apparent, but equally important, is the fact that it sees in this πόλις a fundamental progress in regard to other distressing problems. Coherent with this ideological assumption, which has been analyzed in a particularly apt way by Vincenzo Di Benedetto (in the volume quoted in Hn. 12), Aeschylus - as a great theatre author - sows in the tragedy several ideas, that, in the end, he coherently retrieves: the war, for example, seen since the parodos of the *Agamemnon* as a negative fact (see vv. 63 ss., but also 433-436), at the end is understood in the Athenian dimension, where the common hate of the πόλις for the enemy contrasts with the internal civil harmony (see *Eum.* 980-985).²³

Being 'metoikos', what throughout the tragedy is a condition of distressing instability and that finds a happy institutionalization and solution in the final words of the *Eumenides*, is, in my opinion, yet another brick of this ideological construction, which also contributes the constituting one of the highest theatrical works in our culture.

²² The propaganda *topos* is examined by Nicole Loraux, *L'invention d'Athènes*, Paris 1981, 67-69. See also Leahy D. M., *The Representation of the Trojan War in Aeschylus' Agamemnon*, 'AJPh', XCV, 1974, 1-23.

²³ See Di Benedetto, o. c. 192-204.