THE FIRST FOOT DACTYL IN AESCHYLUS

(1) Out of ca. 4,870 extant complete trimeter lines in Aeschylus (the lyrics being excluded) the dactylic resolution of the first foot occurs only 14 times. Thirteen instances are listed in C.F. Müller. The figures given by J. Descroix (10 instances), and by E.B. Ceadel (only 3 instances: Sept. 653; Choeph. 216 and 986) are not exact. It is to regret that D. Korzeniewski repeats Ceadel’s tables (the first foot dactyl would take 1.07% of all resolutions).

The instances may fall into three groups. (a) Dactyls caused by proper names: Prom. 730 Κιμμερικον ήξε; Sept. 450 Αρτέμιδος εύνο; Agam. 1312 οῦ Σύριον άγλάϊσμα; Choeph. 986 "Ηλιος—ξανγα; frs. 55.13 Μ. Εύβοιδα καμπήν; 193.2 Αιθιοπίδος γῆς; 227.1 'Αντίλυχ', ἀποίμωξον; 485.1 Ευρύμαχος, οὐκ ἔλλος. (b) Resolutions beginning with a monosyllabic interjection or adverb: Sept. 653 ὰ θεμανεῖ τε; frs. 399.1 ὀ θάνατε παϊῶν; 669 ἢ βαρύ φόρημ'. And (c): The rest of caesae. Agam. 7 ἀστέρας, δταν φθίνωσιν: Choeph. 217 καὶ πίνα σύνοισθα; fr. 199 χαλκόν άθερη.

The group (a) needs no comment. The pressure caused by proper names is so often beyond the poets’ control, and can drive them even to anaclasis (as., e. g., in Sept. 488 Ἰππομέδοντος; 547 Παρθενοπαΐος). As for the presence of "Ηλιος in this position, I would rather explain it by the hymnic influence (cf. Soph. Ajax 846=fr. 582 P. "Ηλιε; Eur. Ion 1149 "Ηλιος Ηλιας 3.277 'Ηλίος (voc.): Orpheus 1 B 21 DK "Ηλε). But E. Fraenkel has a different, ‘syntactical’ explanation.

The group (b) too seems to be tolerable enough, judging by Soph. Ajax 854= Philoct. 797 ὀ θάνατε μαρωχος; Antig. 746 ὀ μαρωξ ήθος;

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3 E. B. Ceadel, 'Resolved feet in the trimeters of Euripides and the chronology of the plays', CQ 35 (1941) 84.
4 D. Korzeniewski, Griechische Metrik (Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft Darmstadt 1968) 55.
5 Aeschylus, Agamemnon. Edited with a Commentary by Eduard Frankel (Oxford 1950) II p. 8 n. 2.
It is the atypical group (c) which I shall try to discard here.

(2) Fr. 199 M. reads:

\[\text{γαλακτων άθερη τόν<δ'> άσπίδος <θ'> ύπερτενη,} \]

Now άθερη must be correct, for the line is quoted in order to prove the lemma άθερης. And since άθερη is anapaest its place can be only in the first foot. The remnant τον seems to be a corruption of τε. Thus a simple transposition restores at once meter, sense, and elegance as well:

\[\text{άθερή τε γαλακτων άσπιδος <χ'> ύπερτενη.} \]

As for the supplement χ' cf. Eumen. 1003.

Here too the dactyl in 216 can be easily removed by transposition: τίνα και σύνοισθα..." Evidently καί is that of a question asking for additional information: ‘Now just who of all mortals is the person you know that I was calling for?” The placing of such a καί after the interrogative is both common enough and elegant. Among the numerous examples given by Denniston (Gr. Part. 312—16) cf. Ar. Lys. 836 τις κάτιν ποτε; Eur. Hec. 1201 τίνα δε και σπεύδων φάριν / πρόθυμος ήσθα; Hippol. 1171 πώς καί διώλετ'; Phoen. 1354 πώς καί πέπρακται...; Hec. 515, etc. The original τίνα καί was adjusted by somebody to 218 καί πρός τί: hence the transmitted metrical anomaly: καί τίνα.

(3) That leaves us with the locus vexatus: Agam. 4—7, which in Fraenkel’s edition reads so:

\[\text{άστρων κάτοιδα νυκτέρων όμήγυριν} \]

\[5 \text{ καί τούς φέροντας χείμα καί θέρος βροτοίς} \]

\[\text{λυμπρώς δυνάστας έμπρέποντας αιθέρι.} \]

\[\text{[αστέρας όταν φθίνωσιν άντολάς τών.]} \]

(a) Pauw suspected and Valckenaer rejected line 7, followed by Wilamowitz, Murray and Fraenkel. I think they are right.

(b) But Mazon, Headlam-Thomson and others keep the line as transmitted. This does not seem to be possible, as both Fraenkel (Agam. II, pp. 6—9) and Denniston-Page (Agam., p. 67) have pointed out. For if one takes άστέρες with κάτοιδα (as e.g., Mazon does:

\[\text{[αστέρας όταν φθίνωσιν άντολάς τών.]} \]

Paley’s solution: [μυζ] τίνα σύνοισθα is invalidated by 217 σύνοιδ’.

*The Orestea of Aeschylus.* Edited with Introduction, Translation, and a Commentary in which is included the work of the late Walter G. Headlam by George Thomson (Cambridge 1938) I pp. 100 f.; II pp. 3 f.
'... je sais et les levers et les déclins'). οταν φθίνοσιν cannot stand in an indirect question but can only mean 'whenever they disappear'. And if one takes τοὺς φέροντας as antecedent to αστέρας (as, e.g., Thomson does: 'the shining constellations that bring men summer and winter, as they rise and set'), then the transmitted ἀντώλας to τῶν simply cannot yield the required meaning of καὶ οταν ἀνατέλλοσιν.

(c) That is why Denniston and Page have adopted Margoliouth's and Lobel's change of the transmitted ἀντώλας into ἀντώλαϊς, while keeping the line and reading:

λαμπροὺς δυνάστας, ἐμπρεπόντας αἰθέρι
ἀστέρας, οταν φθίνοσιν ἄντωλαίς τε τῶν.

'I know the assembly of the stars at night, and those which bring, winter and summer to mortals — bright potentates, stars conspicuous in the sky — whenever they set and by their risings' (p. 67).8

Against the genuineness of line 7 the following can be said.

(a) If we have succeeded in eliminating the dactyls from fr. 199 and Choeph. 216, then Agam. 7 remains as the only extant example of a metrical irregularity unparalleled both in Aeschylus and Sophocles. In fact, αστέρας is the only one-common-noun-dactyl in the first foot in both tragedians, so that Fraenkel's indictment of line 7 only gains in weight: 'Is it really necessary, in order to save for Aeschylus a line open to serious objections on grounds of language, to swallow a metrical phenomenon entirely without parallel in the thousands of trimeters of the older tragedians that have come down to us?' (II, p. 8). In view of the numerous one-word-dactyls in the first foot in Euripides (89 examples are listed in Müller, o.c., pp. 93 f.), such as Phoen. 756 ἀσπίδας; IA 609 = Or. 52 ἐλπίδα; HF 1090 αἰθέρα; EL 15 ἡράς, etc., it seems safer to assume that line 7 is post-Euripidean in origin.

It is of no avail to refer to Semonides fr. 7.78 D.:

δήνεα δὲ πάντα καὶ τρόπους ἐπίσταται.9

For, first, Aeschylus was not actually an iambographer. And second, δήνεα is an epic relic: Iliad 4.361 = Hes. Th. 236 δήνεα δήνεα αἰθέρα.

(b) G. Pasquali10 and W. Headlam11 have argued that the clause ἐμπρεπόντας αἰθέρι αστέρας etc. standing in apposition to τοὺς φέροντας ... λαμπροὺς δυνάστας, goes well with Aeschylus' fondness for placing side by side a metaphorical expression and its explanation in plain language; or, as Pasquali put it, first the riddle, then its solution. However, such concrete explanations are always short: Pers.

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8 Hugh Lloyd-Jones too adopts Margoliouth's emendation, judging by his translation (Agamemnon, Prentice-Hall Greek Drama Series, 1970, pp. 15 f.): '... the bright potentates, shining in the sky, the stars, when they set and at their rising.'

9 The other remnant first-foot dactyl in early iambographers is Archiloch. fr. 18.4 D. οὐδ' ἐρατός, οἷος Άμφι Σίριος ροάς.


11 In The Orestæa, ed. G. Thomson, II pp. 3 f.
(c) 'The bright potentates, conspicuous in the sky' are told to 'bring (τοὺς φέροντας) winter and summer to mortals.' No monarch brings anything to his subjects (consisting of both the assembly of starlets and the community of men) when he disappears, only when he arrives. So here too: when the rulers Pleiads rise, early in May, they bring θέρος to mortals (Hes. Op. 383 f. Πλησιάδων Ἀπλαγενέων ἐπιτελλομενάων / ἀφεθεὶς ἀμήτω). Likewise, the heliacal rising of the ruler Arcturus, in the middle of September, brings χείμα to mortals (cf. Soph. OR 1137 ἔξ ἥρος εἰς Ἀρκτοῦρον). For the mission of the kingly superstar as δωτήρες έάων the words of line 7 ἀντολαίς τε τῶν would do: the words άντολαίς τε τῶν seem to be in disaccord with τοὺς φέροντας. Of course, Aeschylus knew well that winter comes with the setting of the Pleiads (cf. Prom. 457 f. ἐστε δὴ σφι ἀντολαίς ἐγὼ / ἀστήρων ἐδείξα τάς τε δυσκρίτους δύσεις). But the point is that the image of the mighty stars bringing blessings to mortals required only their divine παρουσία, not their waning or setting as well.12

In conclusion. I think Valckenaer was right when he wrote (on Eur. Phoen. 506): „adscripsen quis ad hunc versum (Agam. 6) διάτερος; hinc orsus, ut suspicor, ineptum nescio quis nobis senarium tornavit“, followed by Wilamowitz (Preface to his edition of 1914, p. XXVIII): „Ag. 7 glossа διάτερος ansam dedit versus procundam.“ Cf. also Fraenkel (II, p. 9). Incidentally, with the line 7 dropped the opening speech of the Watchman makes a logical unity consisting of 20 lines (cf. 1 ἀπαλλαγὴ πόνων and 20 ἀπαλλαγὴ πόνων as do the opening speech of the Prophetess in the Eumenides 1—20 (cf. 1 θεῶν and 20 θεῶς and that of Eteocles in Septem 1—20.

E. B. Ceadel13 wrote: „There seems no reason for suspecting Aeschylus' use of the first-foot dactyl, in spite of the doubts of Yorke.“14 I agree with him as far as the likely groups of dactyls (a) and (b), quoted above, are concerned. But I do not think that Aeschylus could be held responsible for the unlikely dactyls of group (c).

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12 In the same way the evil ruler, the bright superstar Dog of Orion, brings (φέρει) much fever to mortals when he comes forth at harvest-time (ἄπωρης εὗσιν): Iliad 22.26—31.
13 CQ 35 (1941) 86 n. 2.
14 E. C. Yorke, 'Trisyllabic feet in the dialogue of Aeschylus', CQ 30 (1936) 117.