

DID SOPHOCLES KNOW THE *PROMETHEUS BOUND*?

By

ROBERT R. CHODKOWSKI

This seemingly naive question whether Sophocles knew the *Prometheus Bound* entails some essential implications with regard to one of the issues most debated among classical scholars, namely, the authenticity of the *Prometheus Bound* as a work of Aeschylus. A positive answer to this question would considerably make the old tragic the author of this drama¹. Working on a translation of Sophocles' *Electra* I analysed this play. My attention then focused on a clear likelihood of its compositional structure to the structure of the *Prometheus Bound* and a likelihood of the scenic status of the titular heroes. Ultimately, I noticed a similarity of the dramatic situations of the two heroes in which the two great tragedians placed them.

Let us begin with a compositional structure. Briefly speaking, we may present it in the following way:

A. The compositional structure of the *Prometheus Bound*:

<i>praxis</i> (1–87): basic action	<i>pathos</i> (88–943): intrusive action	<i>praxis</i> (944–1093): basic action
The beginning of Zeus' action towards Prometheus	The picture of the Titan's sufferings and hesitations	Zeus' completion of his revenge on Prometheus

B. The compositional structure of the *Electra*:

<i>praxis</i> (1–85): basic action	<i>pathos</i> (88–1325): intrusive action	<i>praxis</i> (1325–1509): basic action
The beginning of Orestes' action as the avenger	The picture of Electra's sufferings and hesitations	Orestes' completes his action as the avenger

¹ The case for authenticity is well put by Herington 1970. See also Griffith 1977; Pattoni 1987; West 1990; Zawadzka 1966.