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### **James Morwood/Wadham 9xii17**

How many of us can recall the time and place of our first encounter with anyone who was to become a good friend? I can only guess that I first met James at some Classical occasion, probably in London. My earliest definite recollection is of going to Harrow to talk to some of his pupils, and that it was about Sophocles' *Antigone*. The visit to Harrow gave me a memorable introduction to his personality and conviviality. That was probably in the late 1980's, but it was 1995, at the JACT Greek Summer School, before I enjoyed his company for long enough to hope for a lasting friendship. When I took retirement in 1996 and came to Oxford, David Raeburn invited me to do a little language teaching for the Faculty; and that was the year when James took over from David and became the first Grocyn Lecturer. James found me on the list of potential MILC teachers. And so began our Classical collaboration. James gave me the top-ability class in Greek, saying simply, 'Stretch them! Put them on their mettle'. He kept his good temper when he discovered from my handouts that I asked my class to translate into Greek such useful sentences as 'They died with their boots on', which called for an idiomatic perfect middle participle, or 'Double negatives are an absolute No-No' (a quotation from Humphrey Lyttelton's famous radio programme 'I'm sorry, I haven't a clue', in which participants were given silly things to do); this second sentence called for rather more agility in handling idiom and syntax. James however did not forget the former sentence and earlier this year still teased me about it; try it, if your Greek isn't too rusty. I enjoyed the MILC classes enormously; even as a retired professor I learnt more about the language than I expected, so able and interrogative were the students. But why should I say, 'even as a retired professor'? Everybody goes on learning how a language works, ancient Greek no less than English (and I'm old enough to have to learn the new demotic English). It was therefore from the students' questions that I learned unexpected things; so I was grateful that I had long ago learned something else, that a teacher must never feign knowledge in order to conceal uncertainty or ignorance, only promise a clear statement and explanation after doing some homework. Talking with James over a drink or a meal had us regularly discussing such things, both Greek itself and how to teach it.

Our collaboration in the usual academic sense of shared enterprise and authorship was rooted in those always enjoyable and instructive meetings. When anyone recalls the experience of collaboration, one has to talk hardly less about one's own part in it than the other person's; so please forgive that element of what I want to say about working with James. Very soon I was one of many colleagues and friends whom he asked to test-read some of his language text-books, or in my case also his monographs and articles on Tragedy, which came in constant numbers; some of his text-books were in partnership, almost all of those on Tragedy were his work alone. I may have been slow to recognize the amazing concentration of energy, and the speed, with which he worked; but I soon found out that I was reading rather more finished drafts for him than he was reading half-finished drafts for me. For instance, he was a wonderfully purposeful and tactful reader of my Aeschylus translation and commentary, always to the point but also encouraging. I was delighted therefore when he offered to undertake Euripides' *Suppliant Women* for the series of editions with introduction, translation and commentary which I was managing for Aris and Phillips; it was a sign of his confident friendship that he was willing to have his work edited by me, since I had myself produced the only large-scale commentary on the play. From my side, the interval of about thirty years since I had published my book demanded a commentator with a fresh, and sharp, eye. I was sure that James would bring to his commentary a wholly different experience and approach to teaching of both Classical and English drama. Furthermore he had already written notes on the play to accompany Robin Waterfield's translation for Oxford World's Classics, and a chapter in his little monograph on Euripides for Bristol Classical Press. His edition was published in 2007; it is entirely his own book, and it is a good one, better in all ways than if I had tried to rework mine for a new market.

Over some twenty years, I had been busy with the fragmentary plays of Euripides, collaborating in four volumes with Martin Cropp of Canada (University of Calgary and a member of this College); and I then collaborated in work on the fragments of Greek satyr-plays with Patrick O'Sullivan of New Zealand (a graduate of Melbourne). James was always willing to look through my contribution to those volumes, although the treatment of fragments was new to him. He much enjoyed the sheer fun of the satyr-fragments; it is greater and much more diverse than in the sole complete satyr-play, Euripides' *Cyclops* for which James had also supplied notes in the Oxford World's Classics translation. He brought the same willingness to commenting on a variety of other pieces I was writing, including

many prosopographic sketches for the *Dictionary of British Classicists*; I recall with gratitude his calming advice when I fell out with its editor-in-chief; I was one of the sub-editors, and not the only one to have difficulty: such is the risk in collaboration! Then, in 2012, I at last returned to a project I had begun in 1992 but laid aside for the work on fragments and for other things; among them was my succession to Stephen Heyworth in a stint of editing *Classical Quarterly*.

The revived project was an edition with commentary of Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis*, for the Aris and Phillips series I mentioned just now. It was simple prudence, and apprehension that I might not have the steam or time to finish the edition, that decided me to find a long-stop, better still a collaborator: and here in Oxford was James. Who else? Who better? Just consider his range of expertise and experience! He agreed at once. Because I had in ancient draft only a translation of the play-text and a few scratching destined for the commentary, James and I made a new start by splitting up the work as seemed apt to our particular interests and competence. I abandoned my draft translation entirely, and we used as basis the version which James had already published in Oxford World's Classics in 1999. I would edit the Greek text and draft a critical *apparatus*. He would write the Introduction (and this gladdened me, for I've always found it the most difficult part of any book) – but that would be except for the sections on text and metre (where he in turn was glad to stand aside). We divided the drafting of the commentary more or less by quantities, according to dramatic episodes and lyric passages, with myself taking a slightly larger share in order to deal with the textual problems. We would each read the other's drafts as we finished parts – and then read again the revisions which followed; and these ran to three or four for the commentary, including two complete and potentially final versions. The principle of that plan was common sense and is, or should be, common practice for collaborators. The only hazard James and I might face I've already mentioned: as well as being James's collaborator I should also be acting as the publisher's editor; but I was confident that no issue of this kind would arise, and it did not arise. Only once or twice did we have initial disagreements about content and treatment, but they were all soon resolved. The book took four years to complete. There was a delay in publication until this year because the Aris and Phillips series imprint changed ownership during 2016, passing from Oxbowbooks to Liverpool University Press.

Did we take overlong, with our four years? I think not, given the nature of the task, about which I'll say more in a minute or two; and if we did, it was due to me, wishing always

for greater evidential detail, and often critical discussion, and persuading James to agree. What he wrote initially was always a solid base for any expansion I could offer. His gift was to see the heart of any matter; his *forte* was to approach aspects of plot, dramaturgy, theatre and poetic language with suggestive criticism. Here his *savoir faire* as teacher of literature ancient and modern, and as a constant attender of live performances dramatic and operatic, was invaluable. It was an important complement, and sometimes a beneficial counter, to my own interest in Greek dramatic form and dramatic language, which has been mostly desk-based; I have written quite a bit about formal elements of Tragedy like dialogue, in particular stichomythic exchanges, rhetoricized argument, and lyric choral or solo; this latter is emotive while paradoxically both regulated and loose in structure. And James made two exceptional contributions that I could myself no longer offer. First, while a visiting academic and teacher in Australia he was able to sort out a vast, dismembered and unfinished commentary on the play written by hand over almost forty years: it was the *Nachlass* or legacy of Bill Ritchie, former Professor of Greek at the University of Sydney; his literary executor gave us access to it and permission for James to photocopy as much as we might find useful. It saved us much tedious searching of elderly scholarship, and we were able to acknowledge its occasional great help in drafting our own commentary. Second, James made a holiday-visit to Sicily in 2015 which included attending a performance of the *Iphigenia* during that year's Syracuse Festival, performed in the city's surviving Greek theatre; James's experience and account were helpful to us both in qualifying our memories of the Oxford Greek Play production of the play in 2000 – particularly memorable to me because I had taught the young woman who made a powerful Clytemnestra and so started her successful career as an actress of stage and television, Catharine Parkinson.

I need to say something about the play itself as a particular challenge to editors and commentators; for so it is. I can't do this better than by reading what James and I said about it in the Preface to our edition. "The play was left unfinished at Euripides' death and first produced in haste, and its text is uniquely problematic, because very many parts large and small are in consequence of disputed authenticity: only two hundred or so of its sixteen hundred and twenty nine lines have not been suspected or deleted by somebody. This problem often aggravates discussion of the already numerous difficult or corrupt passages. Furthermore, the play is at heart thoroughly good poetic drama. So it is simultaneously unsurprising because of the play's problems but astonishing in the light of its qualities that the only general commentaries in English remain three of the late nineteenth century." Those qualities come out strongly only in performance. You will know the plot: Agamemnon

is leading the Greek expedition to Troy to recover Helen, the wife of his brother Menelaus, who has been willingly abducted by Paris; but he is told by the famous seer Calchas that the gods will only allow the ships to sail from Aulis, and give the Greeks victory, if he first sacrifices his daughter Iphigenia. The brothers' intrigue brings Iphigenia from home into the fleet's camp at Aulis; it is done on the false promise of marriage to the great Iliadic hero Achilles; she comes, but accompanied by her mother Clytemnestra. It is among the two brothers, among the father, wife and daughter, and finally also Achilles, that the action and the emotions work themselves through; there are many changes of heart and mind among all five of them, but especially by Iphigenia herself. She shifts from piteous pleading for her life to voluntary sacrifice in the Greek cause, a shift which Aristotle notoriously described as an anomaly in characterization. James was in his element here, above all when writing the book's introduction. Its content was largely his conception, and was marked out as admirable by the first reviewer. James and I were as satisfied with our work as one ever is directly after finishing a book, and I am very pleased that the first review and its praise reached us before his death. I have seen another review in draft; while it is confessedly little more than a descriptive notice, it is commendatory, and has significance. It is by the only other commentator on the play at similar length, now some twenty-five years ago; the reviewer, an Austrian scholar and a traditional philologist and textual critic, recognizes generously what James and I were trying to do for a very much wider readership, especially those with little or no Greek. More important to us both, however, has been to hear and read personal congratulations from English scholars of standing. As I think about that, I cope with one minor consequence of James's death: I lose his comments I should have valued on two chapters in particular of a book I have just finished on colloquial language in Greek Tragedy; they attempt an assessment of its significance in the dramaturgy, a subject suiting and deserving James's candid judgement.

To mark the publication of the *Iphigenia* James gave a party in this College in May; it was typical of his kindness. I am comforted that I was able there to thank him not just for the party but for much else he had done out of friendship, and not only as academic collaborator. Indeed published obituaries as well as innumerable private tributes put first among his personal qualities the extraordinary range of his friendships. I shall always count him among the very best of my friends, so generous of himself in so many ways. It had been easy for me in my frequent visits to Wadham to sense what he brought to the College, and how much he was appreciated and liked, and now to imagine how much he is missed.