A Wrath That Remembers: A Feminist Companion to Aeschylus' Agamemnon

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A WRATH THAT REMEMBERS:
A FEMINIST COMPANION
TO AESCHYLUS’ AGAMEMNON

by

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SUBMITTED TO SCRIPPS COLLEGE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ANCIENT STUDIES

PROFESSOR DAVID ROSELLI, SCRIPPS COLLEGE
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Thanks to my parents, who did not bat an eye when I said I was going to get a Classics degree from a liberal arts college. Though I haven’t touched Latin since high school, my father’s copy of Amo, Amas, Amat and More opened my eyes to the world of Ancient Studies. Then to my friends and classmates in Senior Seminar for your camaraderie and commiseration; and to Professor Jody Valentine for being in our corner through this entire process. Out of this amazing bunch, my heart goes out especially to Lilly Haave, Annamarie Wire, Graham Olson, and Nam Do. Thanks to Sarah Safford and Isabella Melsheimer for their unwavering friendship and for making Scripps College feel like home. Thanks finally to my partner Logan for supporting my love for a text that is unfriendly to husbands and boyfriends alike, and for making my life beyond this research both joyful and rewarding.

From the start, my relationship with this text has been one of self-exploration and healing. I am indebted most of all to the Aeschylean women, Clytemnestra, Cassandra, and Iphigeneia, for holding within them my own rage, grief, and rebirth.
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I am a goddess in a shower of blood
red twists of spiralled petals rise
corn rustles round my darkening thighs
scream of the swifts
who comes who comes
who makes me
stream of the golden arms and hair
immortal in ascending wind

_Clytemnestra_, John Fowles
Translator’s Note

King Agamemnon is a giant in the *Iliad*, a phantom in the *Odyssey*, and in this eponymous play, something in between. Some four hundred years after these epic poems, Aeschylus the tragedian was compelled to explain this “in between”, writing what we now consider to be the only extant Greek Tragedy. But what is a tragedy? Gorgias in Plutarch’s writings describes tragedy as a lie that reveals the truth: “he who deceives is more honest than he who does not deceive, and he who is deceived is wiser than he who is not deceived” (Plutarch 509). In *Poetics*, Aristotle gives this definition: “tragedy is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and possessing magnitude; in embellished language, each kind of which is used separately in the different parts; in the mode of action and not narrated; and effecting through pity and fear the *katharsis* of such emotions” (9). Good tragedy, Aristotle continues, features complex structure, imitates fearful and pitiful events, and does *not* show good men falling to misfortune. Where, then, does the death of King Agamemnon fall? According to Vernant, tragic conflict falls into two categories: the conflict of one *dikē* with another, and the conflict between heroic representation and reality (26). Aeschylus is remembered for increasing the number of actors in a tragedy from one to two, giving way for intercharacter conflict, and for debate on the tragic stage. Mythmaking, which Aeschylus takes part in via the tragic play, is a communal act, well-suited for the introduction of the twelve-person chorus. Jean-Luc Nancy comments, “Myth arises only from a community and for it: they engender

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1 We might ask, however, is King Agamemnon a good man? Griffith proposes in *Brilliant Dynasts*: “In his behavior at Aulis, at Troy, and before the palace door when confronted by his wife, King Agamemnon represents in many respects the embodiment of the democratically-perceived upper-class wastrel: ever amassing, flaunting, and squandering wealth, indiscriminate in violence, disrespectful of boundaries, sexually inconsiderate, yet easily dominated by a woman (mother or wife) in a way that a well-disciplined and free-minded Greek (especially Athenian) should find disgusting” (84).
one another, infinitely and immediately” (Nancy 50). In Athens, for example, the development of legal systems, the city-state’s conception of justice, was put on the tragic stage via the use of legal vocabulary: “the tragic poets make use of this legal vocabulary, deliberately exploiting its ambiguities, its fluctuations, and its incompleteness. We find an imprecision in the terms used, shifts of meaning, incoherences and contradictions, all which reveal the disagreements within legal thought itself (Vernant 25). Tragedy in its contradictions and complexities captured the dynamic and open-ended political world of Classical Athens. Yet the mythmaking of tragic performance did as much to shape ancient Athens as it did to observe and record it. Then perhaps, tragic theater had a democratizing effect on Athens, giving a voice and a platform for the marginalized, though filtered through the playwright². Prohibited from voting, representing themselves, or acting in the very plays written about them, women in fifth century Athens³ found their voice in religious ceremonies and behind closed doors. Then, Clytemnestra’s speeches and rule over Argos, to some in the audience, may have been a hopeful sight, to members of the audience who for the first time are enabled to identify with a variety of characters spanning social class, gender identity, nationality, etc.⁴ The Agamemnon does not exist on its own, whether in production or reception, and it is prohibitively difficult to classify Aeschylus’ Oresteia as an inherently “feminist” trilogy. The

² In the words of Mark Griffith, “...tragôidia is transparently more ‘democratic’ as an art form, in its audience and occasion, its structures and conventions, even to some degree its language and meters, than both the epic and the various other kinds of choral and individual lyric, or iambic, that we know of. That is to say, Attic tragedy is an art form that, within and beneath its mythological and grandiose trappings, its bizarre stories of gods and Bronze Age royal families, is designed to appeal to a mass citizen audience, and to explore some of their fundamental concerns.” (1995, 62)
³ This is a broad discussion of a complex topic, one that excludes intersections of class, marital status, age, nationality, etc.
⁴ Cf. Wohl, on female audiences of tragedy: “This is problematic, however, not only because the evidence for women’s presence at the dramatic festival is far from conclusive, but also because it is dangerous to assume that women watched in a radically different way from men” (xx).
Oresteia trilogy continues with Libation Bearers and Eumenides, and tragedians Sophocles and Euripides both have their own retellings of the Atreides story. The perspectives of the unnamed characters fizzle out, narrowing in on the opinions of a small but powerful group. As the trilogy progresses, Zeitlin identifies the transition from “matriarchy” to “patriarchy”: “Clytemnestra, the female principle, in the first play is a shrewd intelligent rebel against the masculine regime, but by the last play, through her representatives, the Erinyes, female is now allied with the archaic, primitive, and regressive, while male in the person of the young god Apollo, champions conjugality, society and progress” (151). Libation Bearers takes care to establish Clytemnestra as antagonistic to the men in the play and in the audience: her maternal rage that compelled her to act in Agamemnon is replaced by hostility towards her remaining daughter and son, and in exchange her affair with Aegisthus is emphasized. Both Clytemnestra and the Furies that avenge her are objects of male anxiety–Clytemnestra in her sexual promiscuity, and the Furies in that they can be neither dominated or escaped: they remain perpetually and monstrously virginal. Taken as a whole, the Oresteia centers the grinding down of female resistance. Clytemnestra’s outrage at Iphigeneia’s murder, and the Erinyes’ outrage at the crimes of Thyestes, Orestes, and Atreus are sidelined and subordinated by a man, in service of establishing a patriarchal system of justice. Despite having everything to do with the figure of the woman, in every form: “goddess, queen, wife, mother, daughter, sister, bride, virgin, adulteress, nurse, witch, Fury, priestess” (Zeitlin 149-150), the Oresteia is principally concerned with controlling female behavior and mastering the female.

Tragedy itself, via the lack of female participation, its elite patrons, and its partial roots in the satyr  

5 Griffith notes how surprising this development is: “One might expect, given the movement of action from an ancient, distant, aristocratic-monarchical Argos to the new democratic Athens, that “lower-class” focalization would increase during the trilogy. Paradoxically, however, such perspectives—the view from below—become in fact less prominent (certainly less audible), as the trilogy progresses” (1995, 76).
chorus⁶, is built upon attributes of toxic masculinity. In fact, the Homeric narrative is one predicated on the transactional value and “sins” of a woman, Helen, and one that relies on the trafficking, exploitation, and rape of women as social currency and military strategy⁷. This trafficking in women appears in tragedy with what Victoria Wohl describes as: “almost obsessive regularity” (xiv). Yet, she continues, in most tragedies, the exchange is flawed, creating the twisted circumstances that bring about the play’s plot: “The result of these failed transfers is catastrophe: the relationships between men that should be cemented are instead sundered; the men who should be declared virile and heroic subjects are emasculated and eviscerated; the social order that should be instituted is more often left in ruins” (xiv). But ultimately, this problem is resolved, and the heteropatriarchal business of trafficking brides, daughters, is presumed to resume as normal. Thus the function of a tragic trilogy, pessimistically, affirms patriarchal hegemony through bringing up issues of social tension, often gendered, and squashing them:

Whether we regard this process as one of ‘manipulation’ from above, i.e., a kind of social control, in which the gullible masses are brainwashed into accepting and buying into the dominant ideology of the elite (to the extent of even giving prizes to the poets and producers who manipulate them), or (as I should prefer) as one of mutual mystification by elite and mass, in which the old stories are retold in terms that make the best available sense (given the traditions of mythical narrative and the public context of the Theater) to

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⁶ Take, for example, Silenus’ claim in Euripides’ Cyclops: “Why, when you’re drunk, you stand up stiff down here (Gestures.) and then get yourself a fistful of breast and browse the soft field ready to your hands” (Griffith 19)

⁷ This exchange also characterizes the world at large: “in the broadest sense, the term refers to the movement of a woman from one man to another as a bride, a gift, or, as here, a prize. Whether the exchange is amicable (as in a marriage) or hostile (as in this contest), the transfer of a woman between two men constitutes the social world, generating bonds between the men and defining their social identities” (Wohl xiii).
an author and audience both of whom continue to take for granted the inequalities and privileges to which they are accustomed, in either case both sets of participants are grateful for this opportunity to have familiar values reaffirmed and troubling contradictions smoothed away (Griffith 1995, 111).

Optimistically, however, tragedy’s unstable nature, by virtue of its problematizing tendencies, makes itself open to questioning. Wohl’s tragic exchange is “a foundation that has been shown to be essentially unstable” (xiv), and investigations such as those she conducts in Intimate Commerce have been fruitful.

While the Oresteia is remarkable for being the only extant tragedy, Agamemnon is more than capable of standing on its own—the Greek is far more complicated, the text itself is longer, and the commentaries are much more plentiful. To some degree, reception studies have highlighted this text as a work of its own. What if Agamemnon was the only extant version of this narrative? We expect a lot of the Oresteia, being the only extant tragic trilogy, it is in some ways responsible for upholding our understanding of the tragic tradition. Yet our desire for “wholeness” perhaps excludes certain opportunities for intervention. We are not bound in any real way to translating the Oresteia as a whole, or at least a monolithic whole. Does a translation of the first play alone have to be informed by the rest of the trilogy? Zeitlin’s monumental Dynamics of Misogyny tellingly takes on the entire Oresteia trilogy. Perhaps, without the conclusion of Libation Bearers and Eumenides, there are more chances for empowerment, or at least for questioning the status quo. For these reasons, and the unavoidable time and logistical constraints, my project focuses exclusively on Agamemnon. Is there a question of faithfulness in this choice? Emily Wilson writes in the introduction to her iconic translation of Odyssey, “The gendered metaphor of the ‘faithful’ translation, whose worth is always secondary to that of a male-authored
original, acquires a particular edge in the contexts of a translation by a woman of *Odyssey*, a poem that is deeply invested in female fidelity and male dominance” (Wilson 86). The *Oresteia* is equally concerned with female faithfulness to men. Can any translation of the *Agamemnon* that does not march in step with this program still be a “faithful” translation? Further, can there be any faithful translation at all? I have attempted to retain some connection to the original Greek text, but even this is a fraught endeavor. Despite its “complete” status, there is no lexical consensus on the text. Perhaps any attempt to replicate the Greek original is as much a contemporary choice as the translation work itself. Thus, how can a translator be faithful to something that is unstable? Female-identifying classicists often struggle to tease out sympathetic messages from texts written by and for a system of heteropatriarchy that relied on exploiting the reproductive and social labor of women. This work is as valuable, as necessary, as it is challenging. Our view and understanding of the woman’s experience in antiquity is colored by largely male authors, those both producing the texts and interpreting them throughout history. As Laura McClure aptly concludes, feminist scholars are compelled to “consider the conceptual foundations that inform the literary and mythical representation of women and how they intersect with social and political institutions. Central to this project has been the study of women and gender in Attic drama, a genre that offers a rich array of complex female characters” (4). Feminist and gendered readings of ancient sources reveal both patterns and inconsistencies in the ancient world, and provide tools to those who are marginalized by the original sources, ones that we can use to examine and question our contemporary world. Though some see this problematizing as new, fresh, “woke”, early Greek tragedians, were no strangers to the unstable. The patron deity of the tragic performance, Dionysus, was a representation of the always-changing–paradoxically a dominant and non-dominant religious figure. The worship of the Dionysiac, the participation in the
deindividuation of a tragic chorus, is itself a manifestation of the Nancean “singular plurality”, in which there is no individual existence, solely co-existence. Dionysus is one deity, yet he is simultaneously—in fact by definition—multiple. The art of tragedy itself is imbued with this singular plurality, and this instability is seen in the texts themselves: “This necessary imbrication of power and resistance in tragedy—of reinscribing the exchange and challenging it—is not merely structural, however, but active, practical, and political…we can see tragedy as constituting a discursive framework, a set of problems, issues, and alternatives, that could then be taken up in different modalities and with varying effects in practice. Thus, discourse and practice form a continuum, as the business begun in the theater of Dionysus is finished in the household, the marketplace, the law courts, and the assembly” (Wohl xxi-xxii).

It is with this understanding that I have set to translate Agamemnon. I see this project as a feminist companion to the Agamemnon, one that highlights the gendered aspect to the tragedy, and perhaps reframes the narrative around Clytemnestra, rather than the absent and then dead king. Other characters, though crucial, are not prominent in my translation and discussion, primarily due to this projects’ constraints. Figures such as Cassandra, the Herald, and Aegisthus contribute significantly to a gendered reading of the play. Despite the title, the queen is certainly the play’s protagonist: it is her grief and rage that propels the story. Traditional receptions of the play are often ill-equipped to discuss this “man minded” woman. As such, attention was given to especially those passages that concern Clytemnestra—whether she is present in the scene or discussed. With more time, my translation would be equal in length to the original. This first iteration, however, will focus primarily on Clytemnestra’s relationships with Agamemnon, the

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8 “Being singular plural means the essence of Being is only as coessence. In turn, coessence, or being-with (being-with-many), designates the essence of the co-, or even more so, the co- (the cum) itself in the position or guise of an essence” (Nancy, Being Singular Plural 30).
Chorus, and her children. These relationships coalesce under the umbrella of female rage and justice, “a wrath that remembers”.

My footnotes consist largely of references to other scholarship, helpful definitions and vocabulary suggestions, and open-ended questions. These notes coalesce on themes that I have found pertinent to my own reading of the text, some of which I have elaborated on below:

**Childbirth**

Motherhood, its pains and joys, features heavily in Clytemenstra’s dialogue. Her role as a mother undergirds her justification and defense for murdering Agamemnon. But pregnancy appears earlier in the story, with the ravaging of the hare: the pair of eagles represents the pair of Atreidae, while the hare represents Troy and its children (119 ff.). After this omen, Iphigeneia is slaughtered. When Clytemnestra discusses this event, she emphasizes her maternal connection to Iphigeneia, referring to her as: “the dearest fruit of my/Childbearing pains” (1417-8), evoking the mother slaughtered earlier. Clytemnestra then refers to killing Agamemnon as a kind of rebirth: “Quickly, his wound ejaculated spurts of blood/Splattering me with its dark dewdrops/As I rejoice, no less than if it was god-given/The gleaming of a calyx erupting in child-birth” (1489-92); the sex act that is his murder conceives a new child, perhaps meant to be Iphigeneia herself.

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9 This quote, which is the title of this project, comes adapted in Bakola’s “Seeing the invisible: Interior Spaces and Uncanny Erinyes in Aeschylus’ Oresteia” from Somerstein’s 2008 translation of lines 154-155: “for there awaits, to arise hereafter, a fearsome, guileful oikonomos, a Wrath that remembers and will avenge a child” (Bakola 177)
Δίκη or dikē

Δίκη, or dikē, is the multipurpose Greek phrase that defines and populates the text of the *Agamemnon*. The term itself is a singular plurality, simultaneously and inextricably evoking notions of justice, order, custom, and manner: “the language of dikē—social order, right—is fragmented and split under Aeschylus’ tragic scrutiny” (Goldhill 33). We have no way of comprehending, much less replicating in modern English, what dikē would have meant to the Ancient Greek theatergoer. Characters and systems at work in the trilogy have different encoded ideas of what dikē ought to look like: for Clytemnestra and the furies, dikē is revenge, retribution; Agamemon the Watchman envisions dikē as custom, in his comparison to a faithful guard dog. These conceptions come into conflict, as underneath the battle of wills and plans, dikē battles dikē.

Dehumanization

Throughout the text (footnote numbers) varios characters are compared—often using Δίκη—or referred to as animals or objects, often as a way to revoke agency or culpability. Some instances of dehumanization are favorable to the object, such as when Agamemnon compares himself to a lion “lapping up” the blood of his enemies, but often these comparisons merely make explicit the underlying class, gender, and power distinctions between the characters. Iphigeneia, for example, is compared to the “jewel” or agalma of Agamemnon’s household, making her subject to trading and exchange during her sacrifice. During the act, she is compared to a young goat, a typical animal for slaughter, perhaps in an attempt to render the deed more palatable. But, the ultimate objectification is Agamemnon’s own:
“By the end of the play, it is Agamemnon himself whose body is on the scales. The most deeply implicated in the war's bad exchanges, Agamemnon is turned, literally, into an object; he is displayed on stage as a corpse, Clytemnestra's ergon, as she says, her handiwork. He dies in a vessel that recalls the urns bearing the soldiers' ashes "a silver walled tub," 1539–40), and his corpse becomes an agalma that testifies to Clytemnestra's supremacy. Agamemnon's murder enacts before our eyes the catastrophe that results from the dynamic of fetishism: the male subject—moreover a king and a hero—is turned into a mere object” (Wohl 97)

Gender Roles

“It is indeed not for a woman to long for battle”, Agamemnon declares to Clytemnestra in line 940. What is for a woman, we may then ask? Various male characters throughout the play dictate what the women—granted, upper-class women of some political or royal status—ought to do, and how they ought to be treated. The chorus, for example, only honors Clytemnestra’s power because “it is customary to honor the wife of a chieftain man, when the male throne is abandoned”. This deviation from the typical role of a woman and wife, it seems, is only accepted under these extenuating circumstances. Similarly in line 621, the herald excuses Clytemnestra’s speech, though boastful in tone, because it “is full of truth”. Clytemnestra understands these expectations, however, and confidently defies them throughout the play, delivering ironic lines such as: “Where he [Agamemnon], coming, ought to find his obedient wife in the home. The one he left behind, indeed, the dog of the household. Faithful to that man [Agamemnon, or Aegisthus?], poised against an enemy [Agamemnon?]”.
Legal terminology

Goldhill asserts that competition, struggle, or agon, is at the heart of tragedy: “Often character faces character, expresses a position with a set speech, is opposed by a set speech, and the scene turns to passionate line by line disagreement. This formal element— an analogue to the Assembly and law-court— is perhaps the key sign and symptom of what Vernant and Vidal-Naquet call ‘the tragic moment” (15). The Oresteia trilogy, in fact, ends with the creation of the Athenian justice system, the court of the Aeropagus, resolving the intergenerational, elite conflicts of the house of Atreus and the bloodguilt that followed. “Of the three tragic poets whose work survives, it is Aeschylus who seems to address himself the most directly and eloquently to the issues of democracy, to the rule of law and the courts, and to the enduring achievements of his city” (Griffith 1995, 64). Democracy, according to Goldhill and Griffith, was emerging concurrently with the rise of tragic theater. This new system of government, however, bumped shoulders with the oligarchical old forms of governance, in which political power and risk were held by a set noble class (Griffith 1995, 66). J.P. Vernant argues that the conflict played out on stage between the chorus and the protagonist of the tragedy is representative of the 5th century ideological conflict between the masses and the elite, “heroic” individual. Thus it is unsurprising that legal language finds its way into the Agamemnon.

Sex

Wohl: “Just as Iphigeneia’s sacrifice was a rape, Agamemnon’s murder is intercourse” (Wohl 108). Wohl strengthens this affirmation by highlighting that unlike the typical death of a virgin, by suffocation or strangulation, Iphigeneia’s death as a sacrificial animal implies that her throat is cut, and her blood pours to the ground alongside her robes (cf. 239). If we imagine Iphigenia's
murder in this way, as a rape, we are compelled to envision Agamemnon as her rapist: “If the murder is a defloration, then Agamemnon himself penetrates his daughter. The fantasy of incestuous penetration is the erotic counterpart to the failed marriage exchange: the father who fails to give away his daughter must marry her himself” (74).

Textiles

Textiles in the Agamemnon are representations of opulence, wealth, but also constraints, deadly ones. They appear at three crucial moments in the play: the slaughter of Iphigeneia, the homecoming of King Agamemnon, and Clytemnestra’s boastful speech describing her act of mariticide. Woven textiles bring to mind the act of weaving, a craft dominated in the ancient world by women. A connection to Penelope is undeniable. Both women are creating textiles, a mystified act, within the home, without the presence of their husbands. In the conception of Athena, Dionysus, and even in Christian mythology Adam and Eve, masculine anxiety is soothed by the conception of childbirth without women. But Clytemnestra turns this concept on its head with her textiles, as in essence women are birthing something original without the participation of a man, an asexual birth. Though Clytemnestra is not characterized as a proficient weaver of fabrics, she is a “weaver” in her own right—contriving schemes and traps for the returning King.

Without the modern conventions of stage direction, blocking, or any helpful description of what exactly was going on at the theater on some warm Athenian day in 458 BC, we are left to interpret and assume key elements of the play’s reception. But some things are clear: the action in Agamemnon took place outside of the palace. Clytemnestra and other characters are situated pointedly at the doorway, straddling the lines of the women’s space and the public world. This translation is not as focused as others are on grammar, rather, I aim to enrich the reader’s historical and social understanding of the text, creating a resource I would have used
when I encountered the text—in English or Greek—for the first time. I hope my project serves as a reader’s guide through the play, to empower students to engage in dialogue with the translations and commentaries we are provided.
THE AGAMEMNON OF AESCHYLUS

Trans. Mary Iris Allison
Φύλαξ

καὶ θεοὺς μὲν αἰτῶ τῶν ἀπαλλαγῆς πόνων
φρουρᾶς ἐτείας μῆκος, ἣν κοιμώμενος
στέγαις Ατρειδῶν ἄγκαθεν, κυνὸς δίκην,

ἀστέρας, θεοὺς, τοὺς φέροντας χείμα
καὶ τοὺς φέροντας χείμα καὶ θέρος βροτοῖς

laμπροῦς δυνάστας, ἐμπρέποντας αἰθέρι
 ámbéraς, ὅταν φθίνωσιν, ἀντολάς τε τῶν.

καὶ νῦν φυλάσσω λαμπάδος τὸ σύμβολον,
αὐγήν πυρὸς φέρουσαν ἐκ Τροίας φάτιν

ἀλώσιμον τε βάζειν: ὄδε γὰρ κρατεῖ

WATCHMAN

1 I beg of the gods release from this suffering.
As watchman of a years length, who lays
At the house of the Atreides upon the elbows,
custom of a dog,
I came to understand the assembly of the nightly stars,

5 And the ones bringing winter and summer to mortal men–
These bright rulers, conspicuous in heaven
Both when they decay and in their rising.
And now I stand guard for the beacon token
For the light of fire will bring a speech,
The tidings of conquest. For it rules thusly,

10 Who is the watchman? Florence Yoon develops a system of classifying these unnamed characters: personal servants, nurses and tutors, other servants (those attending the household at large), heralds, priests, and children. In some sense, Griffith argues, the watchman and the play’s other unnamed characters are meant to be relatable to the growingly diverse audience: “these minor characters and this chorus are felt to be more like the theater audience, and closer to them, than are their leaders, upon whom so much attention (from both internal and theater audiences) is so fiercely focused” (1995, 73). The Athenian audience, and perhaps a modern reader, can take on the struggles of the Watchman as their own. He links the audience to the context of the play, and is the first to remark upon the beacon token, both signs of importance and relevance, yet he is a mere “dog” on the roof of the palace, not to speak again after this speech. In contrast to Homer’s hired spy, the watchman is loyal to Agamemnon, and resents the new leadership–and the “man-minded” ruler Clytemnestra. Though this play opens with the “every-man”, Aeschylus is perhaps didactic in his intentions.

11 The first of many uses of δίκη; custom of, in the manner of, like. Agamemnon is chiefly concerned with questions of custom, tradition, ritual. This term also introduces metaphors by which characters are compared to animals, as here, and in line 233 when the chorus compares Iphigeneia to a young sacrificial goat. Why animalize these characters?

12 Κυνὸς: Comparisons to dogs are compared to both men and women, in different ways. While the dog is a loyal guardian, female dogs in particular were considered “pre-eminently shameless” (Raeburn and Thomas lxvi). The watchman seems to be lamenting the toils of his work, a role that through his physicality reduces him to an animal. Yet, the audience may hear a sense of pride in this comparison, especially if he continues to expound on his loyalties to the king.
This man-minded\textsuperscript{13} heart\textsuperscript{14} of a hopeful\textsuperscript{15} woman. But when I, driven to wander in the night, hold fast to My dewy bed, not visited upon by dreams For terror instead of sleep stands beside me, Such that my eyelids do not soundly come together in sleep. So, whenever I think to sing or hum a tune, Tapping into a remedy, as a substitute for sleep, I wail instead as the misfortune of this house moans Not managed well, as it was before. But now, luck may come, a deliverance from toil When the fire of darkness reveals good news. O greetings, lamp of night, a day’s Light, showing forth and establishing cause for dances,
πολλῶν ἐν Ἄργει, τῆς δὲ συμφορᾶς χάριν. ἦν ἵος ἵοῦ.
Ἀγαμέμνωνος γυναικὶ σημαίνω τορός εὔνης ἐπανεῖλασαν ὡς τάχος δόμοις
ὅλολυμμὸν εὐφημοῦντα τῆδε λαμπάδι ἐπορθιάζειν, εἴτερ Ἄργειον πόλις
ἐάλωκεν, ὡς ὁ φρυκτὸς ἀγγέλλων πρέπει:

αὐτὸς τ᾽ ἔγωγε φροίμιον χορεύσωμαι.
tὰ δὲ παποτῶν γὰρ εὖ πεσόντα θήσομαι
πλῆθες εἰς βαλούσης τῆδε μοι φρυκτωρίας.
γένοιτο δ᾽ οὖν μολόντος εὐφημή χέρα
ἀνακτὸς οἴκον τῆδε βαστάσαι χερί.
tὰ δ᾽ ἄλλα σιγῶ: βοῦς ἐπὶ γλώσσῃ μέγας
βέβηκεν: οἴκος δ᾽ αὐτός, εἰ φθογγὴν λάβοι,
σαφέστατ᾽ ἄν λέξειν: ὡς ἐκόν ἐγὼ
μαθοῦσιν αὐτῶ καὶ μαθοῦσι λήθομαι.

Χορός
δέκατον μὲν ἔτος τὸδ᾽ ἔπει Πριάμου
μέγας ἀντίδικος,
Μενέλαος ἀναξ ἥδ᾽ Ἀγαμέμνων,

Many in Argive, as thanks for this fortune.

25 Hurrah! Hurrah!
To the wife of Agamemnon I signal distinctly
To rise up from the bed in order to raise up in the household
A great cry of good cheer for this torch
Since indeed the city of Ilia

30 Has been dominated16, as the beacon is announcing
And myself, for my part I will dance a phroimion17
My master’s good throw is mine—let it be so.
Three sixes this signal threw me
Well, may the house’s lord come
That I may lift up his well-loved hand in mine.
But of the other things, I am silent; a great ox takes rest
Upon my tongue; but the house, if it may take a voice,
Would speak very distinctly; as I, by choice. I have messages for those who know,
But to the ignorant, I cannot recall a thing18.

CHORUS19

40 It is now the tenth year since Priam’s
Great prosecutors20
Lord Menelaus, and Agamemnon

---

16 ἔαλωκεν: to be conquered, to fall into an enemy’s hands, in Homer this term can refer to being taken by death (Od 5.312) or caught in a hunt (Il 5.487). I have chosen to translate this term in line with the latter interpretation with the term dominate, one that brings together the imagery of a hunt, and of a rape.
17 Φροίμιον: a hymnic prelude addressed to the gods (Raeburn and Thomas 70)
18 Which category does the audience belong to? Is the audience a knowing or unknowing spectator?
19 Who is the chorus? Is the audience assumed or expected to trust their judgment and narrative? Rader: “Their authority consists in normatively shaping the narrative in one particular and important way: so as to suppress the memory of Iphigeneia and to revise her mother’s justifiable rage” (94)
20 ἀντίδικος: legal term for an opponent. Adversary, match. This is the first occurrence of this word in any extant text (Fraenkel 27)
διθρόνου Διόθεν καὶ δισκήπτρου

τιμῆς όχυρόν ζεῦγος Ἀτρειδᾶν

στόλον Ἀργείων χιλιοναύτην,

tὴσδ’ ἀπὸ χώρας

ήραν, στρατιῶτιν ἀρωγάν,

μέγαν ἐκ θυμοῦ κλάζοντες Ἀρη
tρόπον αἰγυπιῶν, οὗτ’ ἐκπατίοις

ἄλγεσι παίδων ὑπάτοι λεχέων

στροφοδινοῦνται

πτερύγων ἐρετμοῖσιν ἐρεσσόμενοι,

δεμνιοτήρη πόνον ὀρταλίχων ὀλέσαντες:

ὕπατος δ’ ἀτρέως παίδας ὁ κρείσσων

Double-throned and double-sceptered, by will of Zeus

The strong yoke-paired beasts ruling the Atreidae,

With an equipment of a thousand Argive ships

From this land,

Set sail for martial aid

Roaring for violence from the seat of their rage

Just as two vultures who, in excessive

Pain, high above their nest,

Circle round

Rowing their commanding wings

As if suffering the younglings

Their cries heard by, say, Apollo on high,

Or Pan, or Zeus, this calling of birds

This shrill piercing cry of Olympus’ mmetics

The gods send upon their transgressors

Such late avengers as the Erinys.

In this way, the children of mighty Atreus

---

21 The yoke in this text may serve as a stand-in for the “necessary evil” of war.

22 κλάζοντες Ἀρη: Fraenkel posits that rather than directly invoking Ares, or serving as a battle cry, this statement is best interpreted as a call for war, or in this translation, violence, vengeance.

23 ἄλγεσι παίδων often translated as grieving the younglings. However, in the way that Menelaus and Agamemnon are both the vultures and the eagles, they are seen by the chorus as both grieving and causing grief. Fraenkel: “Naturally, it occurs to no one that the Atridae have lost children, but one near and dear has been torn from them, as from the birds” (32). Fraenkel here is referencing Helen, but this metaphor could be easily traced onto Clytemnestra’s loss of Iphigeneia that is to come.

24 Why Apollo, the violator of Cassandra, the avenger of Chryseis? Fraenkel posits: “He may well be moved at the deed of violence, and help the great birds who cry for aid in their distress, just as he helps mortal men” (36). Yet, Apollo is a patron of the Trojans, despite his punishment of Cassandra. Invoking him here brings to mind the many Trojan women who are brutalised in the war.

25 Μετοίκων: mmetics, foreigners in Athens
Were sent upon Alexander by hospitable Zeus; for a manhoarding woman with great grappling and laying down of limbs Knees propped in the dust and The spear shaft, too, in a premarital ceremony, Is grated away in a sacrifice that honors the Danaoi

26 Ξένιος: hospitable, pertaining to the rights of guests. Fraenkel alleges that Zeus is outraged by Paris’ violation of Menelaus’ guest-friendship (39). It should be noted in addition that one pillar of guest-friendship in the ancient Mediterranean was the betrothal and marriage of daughters across allied families. This trafficking of women undergirds the very concept of Xenia that the Greeks are allegedly waging war to defend, one that Aeschylus ascribes divine importance to. Griffith: “The capture of Troy is thus presented as the result of a joint venture by Zeus (King of Gods, Patron-Divinity of guests-and-hosts) and the Atreidai (the aggrieved family-heads, commanders-in-chief, and collectors of the lion’s share of the loot, as well as of Helen herself). This alliance between the Olympian and Argive kings amounts in deed to a virtual “spear-friendship” (doryxenia); and like so many male homosocial alliances in the ancient and modern world, it soon turns out to involve thee infliction of hideous crimes and sufferings. Not only do Agamemnon and the other Greeks (and Zeus) squander hundreds of valuable male lives in the war, but also, in recovering one misplaced female (Helen), each violates the person and/or prerogatives of his own daughter (Iphigeneia and Artemis, respectively), and thus incurs a sure payback upon the return of the expedition” (1995, 85)

27 πολυάνορος ἀμφὶ γυναικὸς: This phrase, which clearly identifies the exchange of one singular woman for many, plural, men, functions on two levels: Helen is both courted and avenged by many. This is typically taken to be taken as a derision of Helen’s sexuality (Fraenkel 40). Manhoarding was chosen in some degree for the fact that “hoarding” sounds similar to the derogatory “whoring”. But who is Helen, and why does the chorus loathe her? Wohl suggests that Helen is at once a fetishized commodity and an agalma: “Helen, like gold, is in constant circulation and facilitates the movement of other commodities—Greek soldiers, glory, Iphigeneia, Cassandra—but herself is beyond possession, like "a vision that slips through the arms and is gone" (424–25). Like a universal equivalent, Helen is the standard of all value, but is herself virtually devoid of value” (85). Thus, she continues, the problem is localized within her as an object: “Her very name shows destruction as imminent within Helen: she is the destruction her exchange causes. Thus the violence perpetrated in the name of Helen is projected onto her” (99), perhaps as a hegemonically codified coping mechanism for her “exchangers”.

29 Προτελείοις: “An Athenian understands in the first instance not a preliminary sacrifice in general, but in accordance with what is by far the most frequent use of the word, a sacrifice offered before marriage. For this very reason here and in 227 Aeschylus inverts it and gives it a sinister meaning” (Fraenkel 67).
Τρωσί θ’ ὁμοίως. ἔστι δ’ ὅπει νῦν ἔστι: τελεῖται δ’ ἐς τὸ πεπρωμένον: ὡθ’ ὑποκαίων ὡθ’ ὑπολείβων ὡτε δακρύων ἀπόρων ἱερῶν ὅργὰς ἀτενεῖς παραθέλξει. ἡμεῖς δ’ ἀτίται σαρκὶ παλαιᾷ τῆς τότ’ ἀρωγῆς ὑπολειφθέντες μίμνομεν ἰσχὺν ἱσόπαιδα νέμοντες ἐπὶ σκήπτροις. ὅτε γὰρ νεαρὸς μυελὸς στέρνων ἐντὸς ἀνᾴσσων ἰσόπρεσβυς, Ἄρης δ’ οὐκ ἔνι χώρᾳ, τό θ’ ὑπέργηρων φυλλάδος ἠδὴ κατακαρφομένης τρίποδας μὲν ὀδοὺς στείχει, παιδὸς δ’ οὐδὲν ἀρείων ὃν ἡμερόφαντον ἀλαίνει. σὺ δὲ, Τυνδάρεω And the Trojans the same. Now this is as such, It is to end as it was fated: Not by burnt offering, nor poured libations Nor by the bloodless shedding of tears Will this spirited rage be satisfied. But we, excluded from such vengeance by our aged flesh Are left behind by the aiding force, Staying strong and Holding to our staves like children. For youthful marrow Springs up within the breast Just as it does with an old man, when Ares is not in his place The falling of leaves in old age Withers one away to three feet as along the way He walks, no braver than a child. A dream wanders about in the day. 30 But you, Tyndareus’

30 Where is Clytemnestra? Fraenkel suggests that lines 83ff “are addressed to the queen while she is still inside the house: the excitement of the elders makes it possible to address Clytemnestra as if she were present” (51). It is possible that Clytemnestra has entered the stage here, rather than at the end of the parados when she first speaks. Though she doesn’t reply to the chorus’ line of questioning, according to E. H. Pool, “the verbal evidence for the queen’s presence during 83-103 is overwhelming” (72). If she is in fact on stage for this section, there are several unanswerable questions that follow: what was she doing? How and why does she eventually leave to return some hundred lines later? Perhaps she is within the house and visible, and the chorus is calling to her from outside, as Fraenkel proposes?
What’s the matter? What’s new? What do you perceive
By some message
That persuades you to send men round making offerings?
For all the gods protecting the city
The ones high above, down below,
In the heavens and in the marketplaces
With altars burning offerings;
Here and there, they shoot up smoke to heaven
Keeping the light
Chaste with oils and unguents
Soft, genuine praise,
A godly mixture brought forth from the women’s chambers.
Speaking of these things, those that are possible
And set to be, you become a deliverer
From this care
Which now comes to be malignant in this place,
But from sacrifice graciousness is revealed
Hope wards away insatiable attentions
The heart-eating grief pains my breast.

31 I am deliberately removing the case from this line, rendering Daughter “daughter” to underscore the disrespect put towards Clytemnestra by the chorus. The enjambment between line 84-85 undercuts the weight of her name and title. Though a queen, she is always defined by her relationships with men, either her father, husband, or lover.

32 Κλυταμήστρα: Some authors provide the etymology of her name, Clytemnestra as κλυτή (renowned) and μνηστεύω (romantic pursuing, wooing). Patricia A. Marquardt proposes that this etymology “highlights the fundamental point of contrast between the cunning wives [Penelope and Clytemnestra]–marital fidelity and infidelity” (241). She explains that Homer used the v/n spelling in the Odyssey, and describes Penelope’s virtue rising in contrast with the negative example of Clytemnestra. Fraenkel prefers the spelling Clytemestra (κλυτή, renowned; μήτις, cunning), arguing that the v/n inserted to create “Clytemnestra”, is, as Fraenkel quotes Shulze, “entirely due to the etymologizing fancies of a later period” (52). The insertion of υ thus calls attention to an attribute that Fraenkel claims was never attached to her character. Despite this debate, the spelling Clytemnestra is overwhelmingly popular in modern translations and discussions of the Agamemnon.
κύριός εἰμι θροεῖν ὁδὸν κράτος αἰσιον ἄνδρῶν ἐκτελέων: ἔτι γὰρ θεόθεν καταπνεύει πειθὼ μολὼν ἀλκὰν σύμφυτος αἰῶν:

ὅπως Αχιαίων διήθρον κράτος, Ἕλλαδος ἡβας ἥπας, ξύμφρονα ταχάν, πέμπει σὺν δορὶ καὶ χερὶ πράκτορι θυρίων δρυς Τευκρίδ᾽ ἐπ᾽ αἰῶν, οἰωνὸν βασίλευσι βασίλευσι νε-

όν ὁ κελαινός, ὁ τ᾽ ἐξόπιν ἀργᾶς, φανέντες ἱκταρ μελάθρον χερὸς ἐκ δοριπάλτοι παμπρέπτοις ἐν ἐδρασιν, βοσκόμενοι λαγίναν, ἐρικύμονα φέρματι γένναν, βλαβέντα λοισθίων δρόμων. αἰλινον αἰλινον εἰπέ, τὸ δ᾽ εὖ νικάτω.

I am entitled to cry aloud an omen for the journey of mighty and empowered men

That is brought forth to me: for still pried away from the gods

Comes persuasion, dance, these strengths ageing with me;

How Achea, the two-throned commanders of the youth of Greece,

Single-minded in battle

Sent with exacting spear and right hand

By the sight of a bird set upon the Teucrine earth

Fierce birds appearing to the kings ruling over the ships

Black, and white shining behind,

Appears close to the roof, on the side where the spear flies

Conspicuous in their perch

Ravaging a hare carrying the begotten fruit of its womb

Caught in her last foot-race.

O dread, o dread, I say, but may fortune prevail.

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33 Ἐκτελέων: fully-grown, brought to an end, perfect. Fraenkel proposes that this can be taken to mean “men in power”, or to reference duty, “men in power” (62)

34 Ἀλκὰν: “ἄλκη in its original sense has long deserted the elders, but they still retain the power which can take its place, the power which enables them once again in song to renew the great experience of ten years ago. He who tells a tale that can be trusted, and hands on a true story for all time to come, falls not far short in merit, if short at all, of him who did the deed; this was a widespread view in the time of Aeschylus” (Fraenkel 64). Compare this to the chorus’, and audience’s, reception of Cassandra.

35 What are we to make of the eagle’s feast? Perhaps, as Fraenkel suggests, “the sign indicates what the Atreidae are going to do to Troy and the Trojans, not only the men but also the women and children” (96). Menelaus and Agamemnon, previously compared to vultures, are elevated to eagles, but at the same time, perform a wicked deed in metaphor: consuming the unborn. The destruction of Troy ended bloodlines and destroyed families but its violence was felt by women who were raped, enslaved, and separated from their children. While a soldier’s misery can end on the battlefield, “conquered” women live the consequences of war.
κεδνὸς δὲ στρατόμαντις ἱδὼν δύο λῆμασι
dισσοὺς
Ἀτρείδας μαχίμους ἐδάν λαγοδαίτας
πομποῦς τ᾽ ἄρχας, οὔτω δ᾽ εἶπε τερῆζον:

‘χρόνῳ μὲν ἀγρεῖ Πριάμου πόλιν ἄδε
κέλευθος,
pάντα δὲ πύργων
κτήνη πρὸς τὰ ὀρεγόμενα
Μοῖρ᾽ ἀλαπάξει πρὸς τὸ βίαίον:
οἶον μὴ τις ἄγα θεόθεν κνεφά-
σις προτυπέν στόμιον μέγα Τροίας
στρατωθέν. οίκτῳ γὰρ ἐπίθυμον ᾽Ἀρτεμις
ἀγνὰ
πτανοῖσιν κυσὶ πατρός
αὐτότοκον πρὸ λόχου μογερὰν πτάκα
θυμόνοιον
στυγεῖ δὲ δεῖπνον αἰετῶν.‘
ἀλλινον ἀλλινον εἰπέ, τὸ δ᾽ εὖ νικάτω.
tering ωβρικάλοισι τερπνά,

The noble prophet to this army, beholding the two
sons36,
Of the Atreides, two war-soaked tempers, noted
the hare-ravagers37
The envoys and commanders; and spoke thusly in
interpretation:
“In time it shall take the city of Priam, this path,
And Moira shall lay waste to the towering
Flocks abound with the people’s
Share, then pillaged by violence38
Alone, without some gods’ envy obscuring
The force of the great bit upon Troy,
In the field. For pure Artemis
Bears rage upon her father’s winged hounds
Who sacrifice a wretched animal before them,
laden with young
She despises this eagles’ meal39.
O dread, o dread, I say, but may fortune prevail.
So very gentle is the beautiful one,
To the faint dewdrops of raging lions
These beastlings that love the breast
Any that roam the countryside

36 Fraenkel: “This is the first we hear of Calchas, but of course we are meant to suppose that his
attention was at once called to the eagles, and that he has been carefully observing their first
flight and then their rending of the hare. Now his eye returns to his immediate surroundings; he
sees before him the two Atreidae, and forthwith he understands the meaning of the omen” (75).
What was Calchas’ role in the assembly of men at Aulis? To what extent is the violence that
follows a result of his interpretations? Is he in any way culpable?
37 Ravage here was selected to bring out the sexual layers of the violence enacted on Troy.
Fraenkel proposes “the valiant eaters of the hare”, which is a circuitous and forgiving way to
describe both the eagles and the brothers.
38 Rearranged for clarity
39 This seems to be the only reason Calchas provides for Artemis’ wrath. Rather than as a
response to any previous Atreidae wrongdoing, the prophet deems that Artemis places blame on
Agamemnon for the actions of an eagle. Artemis, not Zeus, sees this eagle’s feast as an omen of
the future slaughter of Troy (see Hammond 46). Aeschylus omits reference to Agamenon’s
killing of a sacred deer, or any insult the king may have committed.
These things the signs do portend
Fortunate on the one hand, twisting monstrously as sparrows
I invoke with a cry the Paean
That she not raise some adverse winds upon the Danaoi, that may detain readied
Ships for a long while, having demanded another sacrifice, an impious one, of which none may eat
An innate crafter of strife, which fears no man\textsuperscript{40}
A lingering fright remains as house-keeper:
Wrath, that treacherous, unforgetting, child-avenger\textsuperscript{41}
Thus proclaimed Calchas\textsuperscript{42}; with great blessings
The things destined from the machinations of birds at the palace of the king
Sharing one voice
O dread, o dread, I say, but may fortune prevail.
Zeus, whoever he be, if this
Summons please him,
I address him thusly.
I am unable to compare him
When pondering all things
Except “Zeus”, if I must cast this fruitless burden
From my mind in truth.
No, the one who was once mighty,
Waging war on everyone in abounding impudence
He will not be called as before;
But rather the one coming next,

\textsuperscript{40} Fraenkel: “This second act of bloodshed, the murder of Iphigenia, builds up strife, and this is brought about without any fear of the man, i.e. the husband, or any sense of respect for him” (92)

\textsuperscript{41} Is this description meant to refer to Clytemnestra? Fraenkel, speaking for the long-dead Aeschylus, argues that “in this passage the poet has no thought of such play with a double meaning” (93). He dismisses the connection to Clytemnestra, claiming that it is the essence of Agamemnon’s vanity and impiety that allows “an evil thing” to take root in the house of Atreides.

\textsuperscript{42} Despite the gravity of his earlier proclamation, Calchas is only named here, perhaps separating the man from the prophecy and its grizzly implications.
κτήρος οίχεται τυχόν. Ζῆνα δὲ τις προφρόνως ἐπινίκια κλάζων
τεῦξεται φρενών τὸ πᾶν:
τὸν φρονεῖν βροτοὺς ὀδώριστα, τὸν πάθει μάθος
θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν.
στάξει δ᾽ ἐν θ’ ὕπνῳ πρὸ καρδίας
μνηστήμων πόνος: καὶ παρ’ ἀ-κοντα ἤλθε σωφρονεῖν.
δαιμόνως δὲ που χάρις
σέλμα σεμνὸν ἡμένων.
καὶ τόθ᾽ ἡγεμὼν ὁ πρέσβυς
Ἀχαιικῶν,
μάντιν οὔτινα ψέγων,
ἐμπαίοις τύχαισι
ἐξεῖν ἀπλοίᾳ κεναγγεῖ
βαρύντ᾽ Ἀργείων:
πνοαὶ δὲ ἀπὸ Στρυμόνος
κακόσχολοι νήστιδες
παλιμμήκη χρόνον
tρίβῃ κατέξαινον Ἀργείων:
ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ πικρὸν
χείματος ἀλλο μήχαρ
βριθύτερον πρόμοισιν
μάντις ἐκλαγέν προφέρων
Ἅρτεμιν, ὡστε χθόνα βάκ-
tροις ἐπικρούσαντας Ἀτρε-
dας δάκρυ μὴ κατασχεῖν:
ἀναξ δ’ ὁ πρέσβυς τότ’ ἐπει σφωνόν:
‘βαρεία μὲν κήρ τὸ μὴ πιθέσθαι,
βαρεία δ’ εἰ
tέκνον δαίξω, δόμων ἁγάλμα,
μιαίνων παρθενοσφάγοισιν
ρείθροις πατρίδος χέρας πέλας βωμοῦ;
tί τώνδ᾽ ἀνευ κακῶν,
πῶς λιπόνυς γένωμαι
ξυμμαχίας ἄμαρτόν;
pαυσανέμου γὰρ θυσίας
παρθενίου θ’ αίματος ὅρ-
γὰ περιόργος ἐπιθυ-

210 Streaming from a father’s hand, near my altar;
What then is without evils?
How do I render a deserting fleet,
Failing allies?
For a wind-ceasing sacrifice
215 And maidenly blood, it is right that they rage,
Angrily lusting after a penalty;

43 Take is an intentional innuendo. Agamemnon’s sacrifice is not only heinous and impious, but it carries sexual connotations: if we are to take up the thread that Iphigeneia arrives on the shores of Aulis under the pretenses that she is to be married, Agamemnon’s betrayal is inserting himself into his daughter’s union, and usurping the ritual that any promised husband (say, Achilles?) would undertake: We might read the sacrifice of Iphigeneia as a sort of failed marriage exchange, then, in which the father, rather than giving his daughter away, destroys her, and thus both loses her (gives up his own rights to her use value) and, paradoxically, keeps her for himself” (Wohl 71).
44 Iphigeneia is never named in this passage—referred here in reference to her father and killer, Agamemnon.
45 Foley’s analysis of Homeric marriage demonstrates the woman’s role as a “precious object”, linking families via exchanges of gifts and brides to secure military security and power (63). Yet Agamemnon’s slaughter of Iphigeneia intercepts this exchange. Thus Agamemnon’s wrongdoing is as societal as it is familial: “Equally central are the tragic tensions that reflect a classical marriage system in which the daughter is, at least potentially, neer fully transferred, as apparently in epic, to her marital family.” (84).
Iphigeneia, in asserting her value, is compared to an object—a jewel. Victoria Wohl examines this objectification through the Marxist lens of commodity fetish: “Iphigeneia, as we are told…is a dōmōn agalma, an invaluable object belonging to the house: the phrase evokes Marx’s commodity fetish, for it implies an inherent value and, by locating the commodity within the house, denies its exchange...When Agamemnon calls his daughter a dōmōn agalma, he evokes her potential exchange value through marriage” (Wohl pp. 67-8).
46 Ὄργᾳ: anger, passion.
47 Ἐ κίς: literally, that which is laid down. Yet, this conception of justice appears to be more geared towards retribution—the men lust after bloodshed as they lusted after Helen. Hammond: “These words are almost blasphemous. They show that passion for war and fear of public opinion are turning Agamemnon into a hypocrite.”(47)
May it go well 48

When he crowned himself with the yoke of necessity 49

His thoughts blowing with an unholy wind,
Debased, wicked;
He audaciously twisted his mind to impiety.
For the root of base desires emboldens mortal men.
This is the first kind. Thus,
he dared then to render his daughter

48 Hammond: “Agamemnon himself is uneasy. He knows he is committing a wrong but he hopes for the best, as he does later when he walks on the purple carpet (944-7)”. (47)

49 This is a contentious line. Was Agamemnon restrained by prophecy, in what Goldhill terms a “tragic double bind” (26), or did he deliberately choose to slaughter his child? How clear was Calchas, and how inescapable was his prophecy? Many scholars have interpreted this passage without any room for Agamemnon’s personal agency. Hammond argues that any such curse or divine/inherited fate is not the primary reason Iphigeneia is slaughtered, though it may act on other decisions in the play: “Aeschylus believed men to be free in taking some actions and at the same time recognised the limitations which circumscribe the conditions of men” (42). But if free men, kings, are seen as having limited will, does this excuse their actions? If the system of hypermasculinity and misogyny constrains everyone, can anyone be held accountable? Clytemnestra says yes. “From the point of view of Aeschylus it was all-important that nothing but Agamemnon’s deliberate decision should appear as the primary cause of his sufferings” (Rader 99). Thus I have chosen “crowned”, which I feel reflects the voice and agency of the original Greek, while infusing Agamemnon’s lust for power and pomp. This choice exchanges the life of Iphigeneia for Agamemnon’s glory and the glory of his hetaireia. This may connect to the historical moment of epic tradition (which is the setting for this Classical text), as Agamemnon is choosing to forsake his family in favor of his allies: “Agamemnon's conflict is at least in part one between duty to the oikos (household) and military duty, a conflict between his two most important roles as an aristocratic male—as head of his oikos…and as king and general…The decision to sacrifice his daughter, then, would seem to be a reaffirmation of Agamemnon's allegiance to his allies (summakhoi), a reconfirmation of the homosocial bonds of aristocratic, male society, and the sacrifice itself the enabling factor for the war, that greatest of male bonding experiences” (Wohl 70).
An offering\textsuperscript{50}, to facilitate a woman-punishing\textsuperscript{51} war,
With a mere ritual of the ships.
Her prayers and pleadings, “father!”
And her virginity were set to nothing\textsuperscript{52}

By her war-roused\textsuperscript{53} judges;
After a prayer, father instructs the acolytes
As a young goat, above the altar
Ensnared in her robes\textsuperscript{54}, face down on the altar,
with their entire hearts,
To seize her, prone, lifting her up,
Muzzling her fair-prowed mouth
To confine her cries entreating his house,
The bit restrains\textsuperscript{55}, forcing silence;

\textsuperscript{50} Victoria Wohl provides an in depth look at the trafficking and objectification of women highlighting how this sacrifice is especially perverted: “First of all, the usual economics of sacrifice, whereby the gods receive honor and respect and mortals in turn receive a certain insurance against disaster and assurance of future prosperity, are perverted here by the abomination of human sacrifice” (69)

\textsuperscript{51} Γυναικοποίνων: woman punishing, literally the vengeance upon/for a woman. Despite the Greeks claiming they are merely restoring a wife to her husband, and defending their households, the Trojan War grows to be about more than Helen. The disproportionate consequences of the ten-year conflict fall squarely upon the women and children in Troy and those left behind.

\textsuperscript{52} Rader compares the slaughter of Iphigeneia to the feast of Thystes: “She [Iphigeneia] too is a dead child, one killed at the hands of one ‘not a φίλος’—in this case a father who had abdicated his paternal responsibility and treated his daughter like an animal—whose gore presumably stained the hands of all involved in the sacrifice, sating in particular Agamemnon’s taste for blood.”(122)

\textsuperscript{53} Roused here is selected to tie into the “epithumia”, and the soldiers’ lust for violence

\textsuperscript{54} This positioning of Iphigeneia mirrors Agamemnon’s murder—later in the play Clytemnestra throws his own robes around him to render him defenseless. Perhaps, as in other accounts of this story such as later Euripidean plays, Clytemnestra is present, witnessing this murder.

\textsuperscript{55} Wohl suggests there is a sexual layer to this metaphor: “The ‘force of the bridle’ that leads Iphigeneia as a sacrificial animal to the slaughter also evokes the trope familiar from lyric poetry of the young girl as a wild animal captured and tamed by her first sexual encounter” (72)
κρόκου βαφᾶς δ’ ἐς πέδον χέουσα ἔβαλλ᾽ ἐκαστὸν θυτήρων ἄπ’ οἴματος βέλει φιλοίκτῳ, πρέπουσα θ’ ὡς ἐν γραφαῖς, προσεννέπειν θέλουσ’, ἐπεὶ πολλάκις πατρός κατ᾽ ἀνδρόνως εὔτραπέζους ἐμέλυσεν, ἄγνα δ’ ἀταύρωτος αὐδᾶ πατρός 240

Saffron dyed robes heaped on sacred ground

Directing her eyes at each of her slayers

With the shot of a piteous glance

Conspicuous, and as if addressing them in a painting

Willfully so, since many times

In the sumptuous hall of her father’s men

56 The use of crocus and saffron could have many layers. While the rarity of this dye often indicates wealth, much like the deep embroidered textiles that appear later in the play, the act of harvesting saffron from the crocus flower is loaded. Upon blossoming, three stigma are plucked from the open flower and used to dye textiles or flavor food. The beautiful and treasured crocus is grown in order that its virginal products are “taken”, as the sacrificial victim in this case is metaphorically “deflowered”. Wohl comments, “Iphigeneia in the sacrifice scene is right on the cusp of adult sexuality. She is at the point of perfected virginity, just about to cross over into womanhood, and it is this perfect (youth) in part that makes her such an ideal sacrificial victim. The liminal nature of the moment is marked by the imagery of female initiation. The saffron colored robes Iphigeneia wears…are those worn by brides and also by the girl initiates at the festival of Artemis Brauronia” (72). Clytemnestra later compares her emotions surrounding childbirth, motherhood, and grief using a botanical metaphor (1391-2; 1417-8). Is Iphigeneia the crocus flower all along?

57 In what context do Iphigenia's killers know her? The text seems to state that Iphigeneia performed for her father and his allies. “Her father’s men” are an example of the synômosia or hetaireia Griffith describes: “Membership is exclusive, male, and usually upper-class; the group meets in private houses, to feast and drink; it may give itself some peculiar, even silly name; its purpose may be entirely social, or may be determinedly political (usually anti-democratic). Often both purposes are present…Sometimes, it seems, the initiatory oath was followed by some shared outrageous act which served to bind the ‘comrades’ to loyalty and secrecy” (70). Groups such as these would be suspicious in a fledgling democracy; is this group of men merely coincidentally resonant with a synômosia, or is this an attempt to ally Agamemnon with an unsavory and, at the time of performance, unsympathetic holdout of aristocracy? And if we are to feel suspicious of Agamemnon’s men, what is there to stop us from suspecting Agamemnon’s own motivations, when he takes on the “yoke of necessity”? 
She celebrated with song, holy and virgin was her voice.

She honored the beloved third libation—a doctor of good fortune for her father.

The next things I did not see, nor will I tell;
The handiworks of Calchas were not fruitless;
But justice on the one hand weighs out learning to sufferers, but the future, when it comes to be; you may hear whenever it happens. Greet it head on, or, beforehand, rejoice.

It is equal to grieving beforehand.
For it will come plain, dawning along with the rising sun

However that may be, the things coming upon this house, may they be well, as
She wishes, the closest one, alone a defender of the Apian land.

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58 Wohl: The Greek medical texts discuss the thickening of the throat in a young girl as a sign of defloration; the widening of the upper throat in sympathy with the widened lower passage would deepen the girl’s voice and offer proof of her sexual activity. Thus, in these lines, the purity of Iphigeneia’s voice when she sings the paean is associated with the fact that she is still a virgin. If defloration opens the throat and deepens the voice, virginity would mean keeping the throat (upper, as lower) tightly closed; the most extreme and infallible indication of virginity, then, would be total silence” (pp 77-78).

59 Foley remarks that the third libation was always poured by men. So, though Iphigeneia is not delivering such rites, she is observing and honoring them, occupying the position of a respected woman.

60 Rader: “Given their [the chorus’] revealingly inauspicious start we may have reason to consider two possible scenarios: (1) that their authority is suspect and will only amount to a partial (and thus prejudiced) account of the expedition’s history; and/or (2) that, precisely because of their partiality and prejudiced investment in this history, their authority consists in normatively shaping the narrative in one particular and important way: so as to suppress the memory of Iphigeneia and to revise her mother’s justifiable rage” (94). If the chorus is unreliable for either reason, we may be compelled to imagine our own version of the killings that are less sympathetic to the king and his men. Despite the chorus’ investment in the glory of their king and the morality of his decisions, if they are invested at all, they are compelled to share the graphic details of the murder of a young girl, in a narrative that is unequivocally pitiful.
I have come, Clytemnestra, honoring your power. For it is customary to honor the wife of a chieftain man, when the male throne is abandoned. But if you learn of good or bad things, you perform sacrifices hoping for good news, which I would hear cheerfully, bearing no ill-will towards your silence.

Clytemnestra

On the one hand, bringing good news, as is the proverb, may dawn arrive from her mother night. You will learn of a victory surpassing your hope for the city of Priam has been seized by the Argives.

Chorus

What do you mean? Your word escapes my disbelief.

Clytemnestra

Troy belongs to the Acheans. Am I speaking plainly?

Chorus

Delight creeps upon me, enticing my tears.

Clytemnestra

For this is prudent, when your eye speaks against you.

Chorus

What is the proof? Is this your token?

---

61 The chorus praises Clytemnestra’s κράτος: Homeric tradition uses this term in reference to physical power, while alternate translations emphasize political—or perhaps, interpersonal—power.
Κλυταιμήστρα
ἔστιν: τί δ’ οὐχί; μή δολώσαντος θεοῦ.

Χορός
πότερα δ’ οὔσιοιν φάσματ’ εὐπιθῆ σέβεις;

Κλυταιμήστρα
οὐ δόξαν ἂν λάβοιμι βριζούσης φρενός.

Χορός
ἀλλ’ ἦσ’ ἐπίανέν τις ἄπτερος φάτις;

Κλυταιμήστρα
παιδὸς νέας τώδ’ ἐμωμήσω φρένας.

Χορός
ποίου χρόνου δὲ καὶ πεπόρθηται πόλις;

Κλυταιμήστρα
τῆς νῦν τεκούσης φῶς τόδ’ εὐφρόνης λέγω.

Χορός
καὶ τίς τώδ’ ἐξίκοιτ’ ἂν ἄγγέλων τάχος;

Κλυταιμήστρα
"Ἡφαίστος Ἰδῆς λαμπρὸν ἐκπέμπων σέλας.
φρυκτὸς δὲ φρυκτὸν δευρ’ ἀπ’ ἄγγάρου
πυρὸς

CLYTEMNESTRA
What is here: in what way is it not? Lest it is disguised by the gods.

CHORUS
Or, do you believe in the phantoms of dreams?

CLYTEMNESTRA
I would not be led by a sleeping mind\textsuperscript{62}.

CHORUS
Or could you have been seduced\textsuperscript{63} by common rumors?

CLYTEMNESTRA
You criticize my mind as if I were a very young child.

CHORUS
But when, in fact, was the city ravaged?

CLYTEMNESTRA
In that which now brings light–I say, in the nighttime.

CHORUS
And who among messengers could arrive so swiftly?

CLYTEMNESTRA
Hephaestus, sending forth a bright fire from Ida.
From beacon to beacon, from the poster of fire

\textsuperscript{62} Fraenkel 1511: “The sense of Clytemnestra’s answer to the question in 274 must be that she rejects dreams as the source of her conviction…here we may sympathize with her pride in her cleverness and discernment. In her anger she descends to a rather lower level of speech…” How does Fraenkel regard his Clytemnestra? As a (rightfully) angry woman with a level head? And does she lose her credibility to him when expressing outrage?

\textsuperscript{63} Perhaps a judgment of Clytemnestra’s ongoing affair with Aegisthus
It was sent this way. First from Ida, towards the Hermean rock
In Lemnos. Then, a great torch, third on the island,
And it soared high, skimming across the surface of the sea,
This strong flame, traveling joyously.
The golden-beaming pine-torch, as some sun,
Passes her light to the watchtowers of Macistus.

285
He, neither hesitating, nor unaware
Conquered by sleep, did not let his role as
message fall aside.
Far off, the beacons light, upon the river Euripos
The coming light gave a sign to the watchmen of Messapion.

290
And they in turn lit pyres, sending the message forward,

295
Kindling the fire with heaps of old heather.
And this strengthened fire, not yet grown dim,
Leaping over the plain of Asopus, in the custom
Of the shining moon, towards the rock of Kithairon,
It roused another succeeding messenger-flame.
They did not spurn the far-journeying light, rather
The guards made a flame greater than what they
were commanded.

64 Fraenkel 154: “The triad Hephaistos, Hermes, and Zeus would stand significantly at the
beginning and the allusion to the Soter would give the fire-message from the very start an
implication of good omen to take on its way”

65 Here another metaphor using Δίκη, uniquely comparing the subject (the beacon flame) to a
celestial body, the moon. Perhaps this comparison renders the flame more powerful, and
universal. In this example the moon, σελήνης, is gendered feminine, deriving from the goddess
Selene.
λίμνην δ’ ὑπὲρ Γοργόπις ἔσκηψεν φάος:

The light was hurled over the Gorgon-eyed\textsuperscript{66} waters,

ὀρος τ’ ἐπ’ Αἰγίπλαγκτον ἐξικνούμενον

Coming as supplicant upon the Aegiplanctus mountain,

ὠτρυνε θειμόν μὴ χρονίζεσθαι πυρός.

Urging that the ordinance of fire not tarry.

πέμπουσι δ’ ἀνδαίοντες ἀφθόνοι μένει

And they sent it, lighting up with bounteous might,

φλογός μέγαν πώγωνα, καὶ Σαρωνικοῦ

A great beard of fire, to shoot forward over

πορθμοῦ κάτοπτον πρόδ’ ὑπερβάλλειν

the foreland which looks down upon the Saronic

πρόσω φλέγουσαν: ἐστ’ ἔσκηψεν εὐτ’ ἄφικετο

passage”.

Ἀραχναῖον ἀῖπος, ἀστυγείτονας σκοπάς:

Thus this is not bastard\textsuperscript{68} of the flame of Ida.

κάπειτ’ Ατρειδῶν ἐς τόδε σκήπτει στέγος

This is the sort of torchbearer I have set,

φάος τόδ’ οὐκ ἀπαππὸν Ἱδαίου πυρός.

One passing to another they completed this task:

τοιοῦδέ τι μοι λαμπαδηφόροιν νόμοι,

The victor being the one who ran first, and last.

ἄλλος παρ’ ἄλλου διαδοχαῖς πληρούμενοι:

This token is the symbol I give you,

νικά δ’ ὁ πρῶτος καὶ τελευταῖος δραμόν.

Which my husband passed along from Troy to me.\textsuperscript{69}

τέκμαρ τοιοῦτον σύμβολον τέ σοι λέγῳ

\textsuperscript{66} Fraenkel (160) advocates that rather than a proper name, Γοργόπις λίμνη is a colloquial description of the lake: “The story in Hesychius…that Gorgo daughter of Megareus and wife of Korinthos threw herself into the lake, which thereupon came to be called Γοργόπις instead of εσχαπιωτις, does not prove that the name Γοργόπις was ever actually given to the lake in living speech; the shadowy Gorgo…and the trivial story of her suicide may quite easily have been an etymological invention to account for a single reference in some poet, possibly this very passage”. Nevertheless, the connection of a body of water to a woman’s suicide is unique, despite Fraenkels dismissal: “it is impossible to say why the poet uses fancy names to designate lake and mountain; perhaps it is just for the sake of variety” (161). Hesychius’ description, and the story’s attribution by Fraenkel himself to “some poet, possibly this very passage” in fact reveals a moment of ancient reception that cannot be overlooked. Despite its triviality, there is an indication, even if very minor, that someone in the ancient past, and Fraenkel himself allows the possibility that it was Aeschylus himself, was able to view this type of poetry from a gendered perspective.

\textsuperscript{67} 306 and 307 are largely switched to maintain understandable word order

\textsuperscript{68} Ἀπαππὸν: Unfathered, ungrandfathered

\textsuperscript{69} Foley: “She has framed her description to bring the fires of Troy’s destruction metaphorically to rest on the house of Atreus” (208)
Χορός

τοὺς μὲν αὐθίς, ὦ γύναι, προσεύχομαι.
λόγους δ’ ἀκούσας τούτοισι κάποιοι μάταις
dινεκέως θέλομ’ ἄν ὡς λέγοις πάλιν.

Κλυταιμήστρα

Τροίαν Ἀχαιοί τ’ ἐξουσιαστατεῖ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ.
οἶμαι βοὴν ἀθροισμὸν ἐν πώλει πρέπειν.
δόχοι τ’ ἀλειφά τ’ ἐγχέας ταῦτα κύτει
dιχοστατοῦντ’ ἄν, οὐ φίλω, προσευχόμεθα.
καὶ τὸν ἀλόντον καὶ κρατησάντων δίχα
φθογγάς ἀκούειν ἕστι συμφορᾶς διπλῆς.
οἱ διηνεκῶς ἔξις Τροίαν ὀξός
ἐν ἄδηλοις ἀφύλακτον φθογγάς
Ἀἰχμάλωτος,
καὶ
tάσσει,
ἀλλ’ ὡς
τοὺς
φθογγάς
ἦδηστειν παῖδες
πάλον.
τῶν
πάλον.
τοὺς
ἄλειφά
τοὺς
ῆδηστειν
πάλον.

320
On this day the Acheans hold Troy.
I suppose a noise is emerging loud in the city.
Pouring sour-wine and oil into one jar,
They will stand apart, called, perhaps, unloving.
And such is the lot of conquered and conquerors
The voices are to be heard, fortunes double fold
For the ones fallen round the bodies
Of husbands, brothers, and upon parents
Children, old men who never again from free
Throat bewail loudly the fate of their dearest

325
While these, on the contrary, wander at night from
the pain of battle
Causes hunger before breakfast, when they take
the town
In marshal order, not in proven turns
But as each drew a fortune's lot.
In the spear-stripped70 homes of Troy
They are already dwelling, from public founts
And dew they are delivered, as the fortunate;
Unguarded they sleep well through the kind night.
And if the much revered structures of the gods
Those of the conquered earth, supported by
divinities,

330
The conquerors will not be conquered again in

335

70 Αἰχμάλωτος, translated “taken by the spear” of course refers to the violence by which Troy
was conquered. But referring specifically to the homes, the domus, which are often classified as
feminine/female spaces, αἰχμάλωτος takes on a new, sexual layer. This translation,
“spear-stripped” attempts to bring out the gendered connotations that come along with
conquering, relying on the modern connotations of “strip” to evoke not just the notion of taking
something from the household, but similar themes of sexual violence as, say, ravage, despoil,
even rape.
ἔρως δὲ μὴ τις πρότερον ἐμπίπτῃ στρατῷ
πορθεῖν ἃ μὴ χρή, κέρδεσιν νικομένους.

But may no prior lust fall upon the army
To ravage things they ought not, conquered by desire.
For it is necessary for their safe return homewards
To turn back and repeat their course.

345
459

δεῖ γὰρ πρῶς οἰκους νοστίμου σωτηρίας
κάμμια διαύλου θάτερον κώλον πάλιν:
θεοῖς δ᾽ ἀναμπλάκητος εἰ μόλοι στρατὸς,
ἐγγρηγορὸς τὸ πῆμα τῶν ὀλωλότων
γένοιτ᾽ ἃν, εἰ πρόσπαια μὴ τύχοι κακά.

But if, not offending the gods, the army comes,
They might awaken the misery of those destroyed
Should no sudden evil come to be.

You hear these words from me, a woman:71
May we see the strong not waver.

350

Χορός
γόναι, κατ᾽ ἄνδρα σώφρον’ εὐφρόνως
λέγεις.

CHORUS
Woman, in the way of a soundminded man you
speak cheerfully.
And I, having heard your believable token,
The gods, to whom we address well, prepare me
For grace which is not dishonored performs our labor.

(355-582)

Χορός
νικόμενος λόγοισιν οὐκ ἀναίνομαι:
ἀεὶ γὰρ ἡβη τοῖς γέρουσιν εὗ μαθεῖν.

CHORUS
Being conquered by your words, I do not disagree:
For, always, the elderly learn well from the youth.
But these things shall interest the household, and
Clytemnestra
Very much, and enrich me as well.

585

Κλυταιμήστρα
ἀνωλόλυξα μὲν πάλαι χαρᾶς ὑπό,
ὀτ’ ἡθ’ ὁ πρῶτος νύχιος ἄγγελος πυρός,
φράζων ἁλοσιν ἰλίου τ’ ἀνάστασιν.

CLYTEMNESTRA
I raised up a cry long before,
When the first messenger-flame arrived by night
Announcing that Ilium was captured and razed.

71 Fraenkel: “Clymenestra is probably calling attention to her superior, man-like insight into the
nature of human affairs, including her knowledge of the reverence due to the gods, and also her
experience of what life is like in the midst of the turmoil of war. This latter is particularly
remarkable in a woman” (178)
καὶ τίς μ᾽ ἐνίπτων εἶπε, Ὄρκυτορῶν διὰ πεισθεῖσα Τροίαν νῦν πεπορθήσθαι δοκεῖς;

ἡ κάρτα πρὸς γυναικὸς ἀρέσσθαι κέαρ,'
lόγοι τοιοῦτοι πλαγκτός οὖσ᾿ ἐφαινόμην.
δόμως δ´ ἐθυνοῦ, καὶ γυναικεῖον νόμῳ

ολολυγμὸν ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν κατὰ πτόλιν
ἐλασκὸν εὐφημοῦντες ἐν θεῶν ἑδραις
καὶ νῦν τὰ μάσσω μὲν τί δεῖ σέ μοι λέγειν;

ἄνακτος αὐτοῦ πάντα πεύσομαι λόγον.
ὅπως δ˝ ἄριστα τὸν ἐμὸν αἰδοῖον πόσιν
σπεύσω πάλιν μολὼν οἵαν περ
καὶ νῦν τὰ μάσσω μὲν τί δεῖ σέ μοι λέγειν;

καὶ νῦν τὰ μάσσω μὲν τί δεῖ σέ μοι λέγειν;

γυναικί τούτω φέγγος ἥδιον δρακεῖν,
网约 στρατείας ἄνδρι σώσαντος θεοῦ
πύλας ἀνοίξαι;
ἀπὸ στρατείας ἄνδρι σώσαντος θεοῦ
πύλας ἀνοίξαι;
ταῦτ᾽ ἀπάγγειλον πόσει:

ἡκεὶν ὅπως τάχιστ᾽ ἐράσμιον πόλει:
γυναῖκα πιστὴν δ˝ ἐν δόμοις εὖροι μολὼν
οἵαν περ οὖν ἔλειπε, δωμάτων κύνα

ἔσθλην ἐκεῖνῳ, πολεμίαν τοῖς δύσφροσιν,
καὶ τάλλῳ ὁμοίαν πάντα, σιμμαντήριον
οὐδὲν διαφθείρασαν ἐν μήκει χρόνου.
οὐδ˝ ὁδα τέρψιν οὐδ˝ ἐπίψογον ψάτιν

And some scolded me, saying, are fire-signals so compelling to you, that you now think Troy has been ravaged?
It is womanly for one’s heart to be raised
By such words I was made to appear daft.
But nevertheless I made offerings, and, following the woman’s tradition,

There was ululating across the city,
Cries of good fortune in the shrines of the gods,
Who devoured offerings, lulled to rest by the fragrant flame.

So, why now do you need to tell me the long story?
From the master himself I will learn everything.
As best as possible, I will have
My revered husband, coming back to take—for what

To a woman is more welcome than to see the torchfire?
This man is spared by the god from perilous battle
To open the gates? Report these things to my husband:

Come as swiftly as possible to the beloved city,
Where he, coming, ought to find his obedient wife in the home.
The one he left behind, indeed, the dog of the household

Faithful to that man, poised against an enemy
And similar in all other things, a sealing mark

Not once miscarried, in this time.
I know neither delight, nor implicating talk

72 Clytemnestra is speaking deceptively here, exploiting the chorus’ expectations of gender roles to speak ironically of her wishes. She manipulates their idea of an obedient wife, the “dog of the household”, to describe herself on multiple levels. Though this statement is true, she is in fact overjoyed at the beacon light, her expectations are not to shower him with praise, but to slaughter him.
With another man, any more than I know the dipping of bronze.\textsuperscript{73}

\textbf{Herald}\textsuperscript{620} Such a boast, full of the truth
Is not shameful for a noble woman to proclaim.

\textbf{Chorus}\textsuperscript{74} Come now, o king, ravager of Troy
Offspring of Atreus
How shall I speak to you, how shall I honor you?
Neither overshooting nor underestimating

\textsuperscript{73} Rader: “It is as if Clytemnestra is flaunting her transgressions, acknowledging and simultaneously scoffing at the likelihood that everyone knows what has been happening in Agamemnon’s absence. For a woman as savvy as her it seems odd that she’d be unaware of the confessions echoing behind her obstreperous denials, the defensiveness behind her declarations. I suspect Clytemenestra is playing the chorus—and us, too, who think we know better than she does what she’s saying and thinking. How can we be so sure that, for a while at least, her claims to fidelity and to solicitude for her husband weren’t genuine? Presumably she didn’t immediately take up with Aegisthus after Agamemnon’s departure, which would imply an affair concurrent with her marriage. That seems unlikely. How unlikely is it, though, that the murder of her daughter didn’t change her opinion permanently, that after Agamemnon went there she could no longer suffer the thought of being his wife? If he was willing, she might be thinking, to sacrifice a blood relation so callously, what’s to say he wouldn’t just as readily find an excuse to sacrifice a non-blood relation such as his wife the next time a dubious case (like another war) arises? All of this is to say simply: We cannot assume that Clytemenestra’s eventual affair with Aegisthus happened terribly quickly and we certainly cannot write it back into her relationship with Agamemnon retrospectively as if she were preternaturally disposed to cheat and kill” (112-113)

\textsuperscript{74} Fraenkel 293: “Agamemnon is visible only during one long scene. The play called after him is well advanced when at last he enters, and he disappears long before the end. But that one scene is the centre of the tragedy: not only is it placed in the middle of the whole fabric but it is also as it were the centre of gravity. Its density is enormous. The more we study it, the more we realize that here the poet has concentrated all his creative power on one objective. Nothing was to be admitted that would not accentuate some essential feature of the great central figure, the king, and have a bearing upon his tragic fate”. A perversion of the longing for Odysseus in Ithaca, every aspect of the scene at the palace gates has been specifically set up for this very homecoming.
καίρων χάριτος; 
πολλοὶ δὲ βροτοῖ τὸ δόκειν εἶναι
προτίσσω δίκην παραβάντες.
τῷ δυσπραγοῦντι δ᾽ ἐπιστεναχείν
πᾶς τις ἔτοιμος; δήγμα δὲ λύπης
οὐδὲν ἔρῃ ὡς ἀποσκινεῖται:
καὶ ξυγχαίρουσιν ὁμοιοπρεπεῖς
ἀγέλαστα πρόσωπα βιαζόμενοι.

790 Your deserved grace?
It seems that many mortal men
Honor appearance before what is just
And the unlucky are to groan in answer
To all that is at hand, but the bite of grief
Does not reach the liver
And assuming the appearance of congratulation
They contort their grave countenance.

795 But to the one who is a good judge of character
It does not escape his eye that
Though appearing to be well-wishers
They beguile with watery affections.
But you to me, marshaling an army
On account of Helen, ay I will not conceal it
I depicted you as uneducated 75,
Not controlling your rudder with sound mind,
Deriving a boldness from sacrifice
For the benefit of dying men.

800 805 But now, from deeper in my spirit and not lacking
affection,
Those who fulfill their duties do so cheerfully
In time you will come to know through inquiry
Those who have acted customarily, and those who
were ill-suited to stay home and guard the
people. 76

75 This is a rare moment in which the chorus disapproves of Agamemnon. Here they show a
distaste for Helen, supported in their earlier screed against her. Why only this concern, and not
the rape of Troy, or the murder of Iphigeneia? Or, any number of events for which the gods have
punished the Atreides. But Rader proposes, “the others’ forgetfulness of Iphigeneia is deliberate;
for this reason her [ Clytemnestra’s] memory is deliberate. This raises the question of whether in
fact the chorus is here suppressing any mention of Iphigeneia. Because they were just meditating
about lions in houses and violence breeding violence—unless they’re daft or sociopathic (either of
which is certainly possible), how could they not be thinking of her when they mention the very
beginning of the war?” (115)

76 Rader: “Are we to imagine that all Argives will be as (superficially and non-offensively)
honest as the chorus of elders? What about the women and mothers in the city? Would
Agamemnon particularly care?” (114)
Πρότων μὲν Ἀργος καὶ θεοὺς ἐγχορίους
dίκη προσεκείν, τοὺς ἐμοὶ μετατίθους
νόστου δικαίων θ᾽ ὄν ἐπραξάμην πόλιν
Πριάμου: δίκας γὰρ οὐκ ἀπὸ γλώσσης θεοί

κλώντες ἀνδροθνήτας Ἡλίουφθοράς
ἐξ αἰματηρών τεῦχος οὐ διχορρόπως
ψήφους θέντο: τῷ δ᾽ ἐναντίω κόπτει

ἔλπις προσῆμες χείρὸς οὐ πληρωμένη.
κατεύο δ᾽ ἀλοῦσα νῦν ἐτέ εὐσήμως πόλις.

ἀτίς θύελλαι ζῶσα: συνθνήσκουσα δὲ

σπεδὸς προπέμπει πίονας πλούτου πνοάς.
tούτων θεοὶς χρῆ πολυμνηστὸν χάριν
tίνειν, ἐπείπερ καὶ πάγας ὑπερκότους
ἐφραξάμεσθα καὶ γυναῖκος ὧδε

πόλιν διημάθυνεν Ἀργεῖον δάκος,
ἵππου νεοσσός, ἀσπιδηφόρος λεώς,
πόλις νῦν ἐπείπερ ἐς ἀμφὶ ἐκπολύστης λέων
ἀδήν ἐξεπίσταμαι τυραννικοῦ.

διχορρόπως ἐγχωρίους μ᾽ οὕνεκα
νόσον, κλύων, στένει.

And for your mind, I recall hearing
And I say these things, and your advocate has me.
Since few men innately have this,
To honor, without ill-will, their prosperous friend.
For a sorrowful poison rests on the heart

The burden doubling for he who acquires this sickness
He weighs himself down with his own grief
And seeing the happiness outside his doors, he moans.
From knowledge I speak, since I know well
The company of mirrors, shadow phantoms, appearing to be very gracious to me. But only Odysseus, he who unwillingly sailed. He was the readied yoke-animal to me whether dead or alive, I speak of him thusly. As for anything else concerning other cities and gods, After setting common assembly courts we shall deliberate it. Also, for the beautiful things we must plan so that their beauty perseveres in time, but when a healing drug is necessary indeed, with fire or the kind knife we shall endeavor to divert the plague of misery. But now, in the halls and by the fireside of my home I am going, first paying greeting to the gods who sent me forward brought me back again. And victory, following after, remains firmly set.

Andromachus

Men, citizens, and Argive elders here, I will not be ashamed of my man-loving turn, to lay it before you, in time it dies away, the anxiety among men. Uncoached by others, I may tell of my burdensome life as long as this man was beneath Ilia

Agamemnon here reassumes his role as ruler of Argos swiftly, through these commands to the chorus. Though the chorus is reassured, the audience knows what is to come, and know that Agamemnon’s promises will remain unfulfilled. Additionally, the king promises to conduct this work as a group “we shall deliberate”, rather than acting alone, perhaps a favorable nod to democracy. Mark Griffith proposes a view of “Athenian tragedy in general as an exercise, on the part of rulers and ruled, in mutual mystification and reassurance about the exercise of ‘democratic’ power” (65). To some degree, the audience must be convinced that Agamemnon, and thus Orestes, are the rightful rulers of Argos, regardless of their ancestry. Perhaps then, including this moment of level headed political planning serves to justify Agamemnon’s unforgivable crimes at Aulis?
καὶ πολλὰς ὡς Clytemnestra Στρόφιος καὶ ἥσθαι φάτις, χρῆν, εμῶν τὸ τοιῶνδ᾽ ἅπαξ τρισώματός μὲν ἀνὴρ (274) τρίμοιρον μὲν κλύουσαν ἥκειν, ὥς ὁδ᾽, Φωκεύς, παῖς αὐτὸν ὡς σῶν ἔρημον τὸν χλαῖναν πρὸς ἐνθάδ᾽ κατθανὼν λασκόνας πρὸς δικτύου πρῶτον 210). κύριος εἰ τόδε. χρηείς τὴν ἐπεσφέρειν ὑπὸ δεύτερος πημάτα δεύτερος πλέον λέγειν. παλιγκότων ἐμῆς οἶκον ἐξηύχει ὑπ᾽ θ᾽ τόσων ἔκπαγλον λέγει. τῆς ἀπεικόνισεν δὲις ἀνὴρ ὁδ᾽ ὧς πρὸς οἴκων ὑχετεύετο φάτις, τέτρηται δικτύου πλέον λέγειν. εἰ δ᾽ ἦν τεθνηκός, ὡς ἐπλῆθυνον λόγοι, τρισώματός τὰν Γηρυών ὁ δεύτερος πολλὴν ἄνωθεν, τὴν κάτω γὰρ οὐ λέγω, χθονὸς τρίμοιρον χλαῖναν ἐξήξει λαβείν, ἀπαξ ἐκάστῳ κατθανῶν μορφώματι. τοιὸν᾽ ἐκατ᾽ κληδόνας παλιγκότων πολλὰς ἄνωθεν ἀρτάνας ἐμῆς δέρης ἐλυσαν ἄλλοι πρὸς βίαιν λελημένης. ἐκ τῶν δὲ τοι παῖς ἐνθάδ᾽ οὐ παραστατεῖ, ἐμοὶ τε καὶ σῶν κύριος πιστωμάτων, ὡς χρῆ, Ὀρέστης: μηδὲ δαυμάσης τὸδε. τρέφει γὰρ αὐτὸν εὐμενῆς δορύξενος Στρόφιος ὁ Φωκεύς, ἀμφίελκτα πήματα ἐμοὶ προφιονών, τὸν θ᾽ ὑπ᾽ Ἰλίῳ σέθεν First, with a woman torn away from a man To sit lonely in the home is a violent evil Hearing so many festering rumors
And for it to come, to bring in another evil A pain besides this pain, howling amidst the household.
And if as many traumas chanced upon This man as the rumors conveyed to our house from The heavens, he would be pierced through more than any net to speak of. Yet if he were dying, as the rumors were multiplied
Then perhaps three bodies, a second Geryon—
Many on high, of the things below I do not speak—He boasted of taking a three-fold earthly cloak One for each dying shape For the sake of these malignant omens Nooses above my neck Have been loosened by many others’ strong grips. It is for this reason that our child does not stand here,
The possessor of mastery, yours and mine, As needed, Orestes: do not wonder at this.
For he is being reared by our kindly ally Strophius the Phocian, double-ended calamities
Were declared to me, of you under Ilia,

78 Clytemnestra is feminizing herself in this opening address: “she pretends to be vulnerable to rumors and dreams in typical female fashion, having earlier denied any such weakness to the chorus (274)” (Foley 210). She is playing the part that Agamemnon and the chorus have expected.
κίνδυνον, εἰ τε δημόθρους ἀναρχία
βουλήν καταρρίψειν, ὡστε σύγγονον
βροτοῖς τὸν πεσόντα λακτίσαι πλέον.
τοιάδε μέντοι σκήψις οὐ δόλον φέρει.

έμοιγε μὲν δὴ κλαμμάτων ἐπίσυντοι
πηγαὶ κατασβήκασιν, οὐδ᾽ ἐνι σταγών.
ἐν νυκτίοις δ᾽ ὀμμασίν βλάβας ἐχω
τὰς ἀμφὶ σοι κλαίωνσα λαμπτηρούχας
ἀπενθήτῳ ἄσωτοσ σοι, ἵνα τοῖς τῶν θυμάσιν
δὲ ἀγῶνεον τὸν ἄγαν ὀμμασίν ἔρθησιν
καταρρίψειν, ὡστε σύγγονον
885
To mortal men: to kick the fallen more.
But indeed, such an excuse does not carry any
cunning.

But for me at least, my violent weepings
Have run out of water, not one last drop.
In my late-watching eyes I have damage

Lamenting the beacon-lights beside you,
Ever unnoticed. In dreams,
I am awoken by the faint noise of
Buzzing gnats, in which your experiences
That I saw overflowed the length of sleep.

890
Now having suffered all these things, my mind is
free from grief
I would speak of my husband here as the dog of
the house
The salvation of the ship’s mast, of these lofty
halls,
Their pillars down to the feet, the only son of his
father,

And land appearing to men at sea beyond hope,
A beautiful day to see after the winter,
The stream from a spring to a thirsty traveler,
The pleasure of escaping a prison.
In these ways he is worthy of address.

900

79 Griffith: “δήμο- words in Agamemnon occur frequently of ‘the people’s feelings’ (458, 883,
938, 1409, 1616)...and often this perspective is differentiated (at least implicitly) from that of the
Chorus, and presented as if this is the view of ‘the masses,’ ‘the rabble.’ Particularly striking is
the usage of δήμο- words for semi-articulate complaint or approval: ‘murmurs,’ ‘uproar,’
‘groans,’ and ‘curses’...Overall, the play conveys a vivid, though vague and indeterminate, sense
of Argos as an unstable community torn by dissension and fear: just as the ruling elite are bitterly
divided amongst themselves, so too the men and women of Argos, with their muttered,
half-suppressed dissatisfactions with the royal family, represent an important ingredient in the
building of anxiety throughout this first play of the trilogy” (1995, 76-77). Is it that
Clytemnestra, though a woman, and therefore unfit, ruler of Argos, understands and expertly
exploits this undercurrent of popular dissatisfaction, one that perhaps predates her usurping of
power, to entrap her husband?
φθόνος δ᾽ ἀπέστω: πολλὰ γὰρ τὰ πρὶν κακὰ

ἄνειχόμεσθα. νῦν δὲ μοι, φίλε, τάρα,

ἐκβαίν᾽ ἀπήνῃς τῆςδὲ, μὴ χαμαί τιθεῖς

τὸν σὸν πόδ᾽, ὄναξ, Ἱλίου πορθήτορα.

δημιοί, τὶ μέλλεθ᾽, αἰς ἐπέσταλται τέλος

πέδον κελεύθου στρωννύναι πετάσμασιν;

νῦν δέ μοι, φίλον κάρα,

ἔκβαιν᾽ ἀπήνῃς τῆσδε, μὴ χαμαὶ τιθεὶς

τὸν σὸν πόδ᾽, ὄναξ, Ἱλίου πορθήτορα.

dημιοί, τὶ μέλλεθ᾽, αἰς ἐπέσταλται τέλος

πέδον κελεύθου στρωννύναι πετάσμασιν;

νῦν δέ μοι, φίλον κάρα,

ἔκβαιν᾽ ἀπήνῃς τῆσδε, μὴ χαμαὶ τιθεὶς

τὸν σὸν πόδ᾽, ὄναξ, Ἱλίου πορθήτορα.

δημιοί, τὶ μέλλεθ᾽, αἰς ἐπέσταλται τέλος

πέδον κελεύθου στρωννύναι πετάσμασιν;

νῦν δέ μοι, φίλον κάρα,

ἔκβαιν᾽ ἀπήνῃς τῆσδε, μὴ χαμαὶ τιθεὶς

τὸν σὸν πόδ᾽, ὄναξ, Ἱλίου πορθήτορα.

δημιοί, τὶ μέλλεθ᾽, αἰς ἐπέσταλται τέλος

πέδον κελεύθου στρωννύναι πετάσμασιν;
μηδ’ εἶμαι στρώσας’ ἐπίφθονον πόρον
tίθει: θεοῖς τοι τοίσδε τιμαλφεῖν χρεών:

ἐν ποικίλοις δὲ θνητὸν ὀντα κάλλεσιν
βαίνειν ἐν τού τοίσδε τιμαλφεῖν χρεών:

λέγω κατ᾽ ἄνδρα, μὴ θεόν, σέβειν ἐμέ.

χωρὶς ποδοψήστρων τε καὶ τῶν ποικίλων
cληδῶν ἐμέ.

ưởξοι θεοῖς δείσας ἂν ὀδόν ἔρδειν τάδε.

εἰ πάντα δ᾽ ὡς πράσσομι ἂν, εὐθαρσῆς ἐγὼ.

εἰ πάντα δ᾽ ὡς πράσσομι ἂν, εὐθαρσῆς ἐγὼ.

CL YTEMNESTRA
καὶ μὴν τόδ᾽ εἰπὲ μὴ παρὰ γνώμην ἐμοί.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΟΝ
γνώμην μὲν ἴσθι μὴ διαφθειροῦντ᾽ ἐμέ.

CL YTEMNESTRA
ηὔξω θεοῖς ἄν δοκεῖ, ἂν ὀδόν ἔρδειν τάδε.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΟΝ
εἰπὲ τις, εἰδὼς γ᾽ εὗ τόδ᾽ ἐξεῖπον τέλος.

CL YTEMNESTRA
τί δ᾽ ἂν δοκεῖ σοι Πρίαμος, εἰ τάδ᾽ Ἰγνυσεν;

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΟΝ
ἐν ποικίλοις ἂν κάρτα μοι βῆναι δοκεῖ.

Nor throwing garments set my path liable to envy
It is necessary to worship the guards with such things;

Nor throwing garments set my path liable to envy
It is necessary to worship the guards with such things;

To tread on beautiful embroidery as a mortal
To me is in no way without fear;

To tread on beautiful embroidery as a mortal
To me is in no way without fear;

I say as a man, not a god, to worship me.

I say as a man, not a god, to worship me.

Distinctly foot-cloths and embroidery
Cry aloud in omens: to not think of evil

Distinctly foot-cloths and embroidery
Cry aloud in omens: to not think of evil

Is the best gift of god, but it is necessary to deem
one happy when in lovely well being his life comes to an end.

Is the best gift of god, but it is necessary to deem
one happy when in lovely well being his life comes to an end.

If in all ways I should act thusly, I may be safe.

If in all ways I should act thusly, I may be safe.

CL YTEMNESTRA
And verily, speak to me not apart from your mind.

CL YTEMNESTRA
And verily, speak to me not apart from your mind.

AGAMEMNON
But know that I will not corrupt my mind.

AGAMEMNON
But know that I will not corrupt my mind.

CL YTEMNESTRA
Would you, fearing, pray to the gods to do these things?

CL YTEMNESTRA
Would you, fearing, pray to the gods to do these things?

AGAMEMNON
Yes, if some knowledgeable man had declared this fate good.

AGAMEMNON
Yes, if some knowledgeable man had declared this fate good.

CL YTEMNESTRA
And what would you expect Priam to do, if he had accomplished these feats?  

CL YTEMNESTRA
And what would you expect Priam to do, if he had accomplished these feats?  

AGAMEMNON
Surely, it seems to me he would step on the embroidery.

AGAMEMNON
Surely, it seems to me he would step on the embroidery.

82 Clytemnestra taunts, or tempts, Agamemnon with the idea of Priam, who though defeated exists within Agamemnon’s ego. Despite refusing to be greeted in the manner of foreigners (919), Agamemnon seems to capitulate to this tactic, desiring to define himself in relation to the revered Trojan king.
Κλυταιμήστρα
μή νυν τὸν ἀνθρώπειον αἰδεσθῇς ψήγον.

Ἀγαμέμνων
φήμη γε μέντοι δημόθρους μέγα σθένει.

Κλυταιμήστρα
ὁ δ᾽ ἀφθόνητός γ᾽ οὐκ ἑπίζηλος πέλει.

Ἀγαμέμνων
φήμη γε μέντοι δημόθρους μέγα σθένει.

Κλυταιμήστρα
τοῖς δ᾽ ὀλβίοις γε καὶ τὸ νικᾶσθαι πρέπει.

Ἀγαμέμνων
οὔτοι γυναικὸς ἐστιν ἱμείρειν μάχης.

Κλυταιμήστρα
τοῖς δ᾽ ὀλβίοις γε καὶ τὸ νικᾶσθαι πρέπει.

Ἀγαμέμνων
ἐλλάν έι δοκεῖ σοι ταῦθ’ ὑπά τις ἀρβύλας

καὶ τοῖσδέ μ’ ἐμβαϊνονθ’ ἀλουργέσιν θεῶν

μή τις πρόσωθεν δίμματος βάλοι φθόνος.

83 This is one of the crucial moments of the play. Clytemnestra, a woman, has defeated her husband in an argument. At this moment she plainly reveals her desire for his submission. Agamemnon’s decision to give way and tread on the tapestries is the catalyst for his undoing.
πολλὴ γὰρ αἰδώς δωματοφθορεῖν ποσὶν φθείροντα πλούτον ἀγρυφῶν ἤτον τοῦ ὑψίως.

τούτων μὲν οὔτω: τὴν ξένην δὲ πρευμενώς
tήν δ᾽ ἔσκομιζε: τὸν κρατοῦντα μαλθακῶς
θεὸς πρόσωθεν εὐμενῶς προσδέρκεται.
ἐκὼν γὰρ οὐδὲις δουλιώ χρῆται ζυγῷ.

αὕτη δὲ πολλῶν χρημάτων ἐξαίρετος ἀνθὸς,
στρατοῦ δώρημ᾽, ἐμοὶ ξυνέσπετο.

τούτων μὲν οὕτω: τὴν ξένην δὲ πρευμενῶς
tήν δ᾽ ἐσκόμιζε:

τὸν κρατοῦντα μαλθακῶς θεὸς πρόσωθεν εὐμενῶς προσδέρκεται.
ἐκὼν γὰρ οὐδὲις δουλιώ χρῆται ζυγῷ.

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός,
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός,
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός,
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός,
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός,
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός,
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός,
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός,
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός,
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός,
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός,
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός,
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός,
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,

καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός,
καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματίτιν ἑστίαν,
Wine, then at that moment there is cool in the house
The perfect man to occupy\textsuperscript{85} this house.
O Zeus, Zeus, perfecter, fulfill my prayers to thee!
May you take care of that which you are destined to fulfill\textsuperscript{86}.

\textbf{975-1034}

\textbf{Clytemnestra}

\textbf{1035} I say, take care to go inside as well, Cassandra, Since Zeus, has placed you within this house without further animus
As a companion in the cleansing of hands, amongst the many Slaves stood within the property, near his altar.\textsuperscript{87}
Come down from this procession, do not look down upon it.

\textbf{1040} For even the child of Alcmene\textsuperscript{88} once Suffered being sold off, befalling the barley-bread of slaves.
If, then, necessity allots this fate to any, Masters of generational wealth are of great grace
For those who, not ever hoping to, reaped greatly, Treat their slaves harshly by any measure.
You have, with us, that which is customary.

\textbf{Cassandra}

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\textsuperscript{85} Alternate translation: haunt

\textsuperscript{86} Rader: “Like everyone else in the play, it seems, Clytemnestra is no stranger to opportunistically writing her malicious machinations into the cosmos”(118). What is the nature of Clytemnestra’s connection to Zeus, the father of her sister Helen?

\textsuperscript{87} This is the first and only conversation between the two women of the play. Fraenkel 467: “Condescending she certainly is, but she begins by using persuasive, if not gentle language; it is not until later that she loses control of herself”. Commentaries are concerned especially in this section with Clytemnestra’s manners and her treatment of Cassandra.

\textsuperscript{88} Heracles, identified here through his mother Alcmene. Zeitlin further clarifies that Heracles is enslaved to a \textit{queen}, Omphale of Lydia (154).
Χορός
σοί τοι λέγουσα πάντα παρή λόγον.
ἔντος δ᾽ ἂν οὖσα μορσίμων ἀγρευμάτων
πείθοι᾽ ἂν, εἰ πείθοι᾽: ἀπειθοίης δ᾽ ίσως.

Κλυταιμήστρα
ἀλλ᾽ εἴπερ ἐστὶ μὴ χελίδόνος δίκην
ἄγνωτα φονήν βάρβαρον κεκτημένη,
ἐσω φρενῶν λέγουσα πείθω νιν λόγῳ.

Χορός
ἐπο. τὰ λῷστα τῶν παρεστώτων λέγει.
πιθοῦ λιποῦσα τόνδ᾽ ἀμαξήρηθον θρόνον.

CHORUS
To you she has paused her clear speech.
Ensnares in the foredoomed net,
Comply, please, if you do comply…but perhaps
you will not.

CASSANDRA
(silent)

CASSANDRA
(silent)

CLYTEMNESTRA
Why if she really is not, in the custom of a
swallow, Possessed by unknown and foreign voice
I shall speak from a persuasive mind.

CASSANDRA
(silent)

CHORUS
Follow! She speaks to the more desirable
circumstance.
Obey, leaving this high carriage.

CASSANDRA
(silent)

89 Rather than simply implying Cassandra’s presence, I have left space for her (lack of) dialogue.
The chorus and Clytemnestra interpret this as barbarism, perhaps disrespect, but silence was praised in women. McClure writes: “both Athenian and non-Athenian literary texts universally praise female silence and verbal submission while equating women’s talk with promiscuity and adultery” (20)

90 Does this line carry, as Fraenkel sees, “true sympathy” for Cassandra (476)?

91 Another example of a δίκην animal metaphor. Clytemnestra compares her husband’s foreign mistress to a bird. Perhaps her voice and her language is supposed to sound like a bird’s, and this comparison serves to characterize the barbarian tongue that she would be speaking in (if she were not speaking Greek onstage). Comparisons to birds often evoke fragility, omens, and freedom as well.
Κλυταιμήστρα
οὔτοι θυραία τῇδ᾽ ἐμοὶ σχολὴ πάρα
tρίβειν: τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἑστίας μεσομφάλου
ἐστηκεν ἥδη μῆλα τῇ δ᾽ ἐμοὶ σχολὴ
πάρα τρίβειν:
τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἑστίας μεσομφάλου
ἕστηκεν ἤδη μῆλα πρὸς σφαγὰς
πῦρ
ὡς οὔποτ᾽ ἔλπισας τήδ᾽ ἕξειν χάριν.
sὺ δ᾽ εἰ τι δράσεις τῶνδε, μὴ σχολὴν τίθει.
εἰ δ᾽ ἀξυνήμων οὖσα μὴ δέχῃ λόγον,
sὺ δ᾽ ἀντὶ φωνῆς φράζε καρβάνῳ χερί.
Χορός
ἐρμηνέως ἐοικεν ἡ ξένη τοροῦ
dεῖσθαι:
τρόπος δὲ θηρὸς ὡς νεαιρέτου.
Κλυταιμήστρα
ἦ μαίνεταί γε καὶ κακῶν κλύει
φρενῶν,
ἥτις λιποῦσα μὲν πόλιν νεαιρέτον
ἥκει,
χαλινὸν δ᾽ οὐκ ἐπίσταται φέρειν,
πρὶν αἰματηρὸν ἐξαφρίζεσθαι μένος,
οὐ μὴν πλέω ρίγασ᾽ ἀτιμασθήσομαι.

1055
Indeed, with such a thing at my door, there is no leisure
To spend up time, for at the central hearth
The sheep have already been set for slaughter
By those who never hoped to have such luck.
As for you, if you wish to participate in the sacrifice, make no haste.\textsuperscript{92}
If, not comprehending, you accept no word,
You may point instead with some foreign gesture.

CASSANDRA
(silent)

CHORUS
This woman needs an interpreter,
A plain one. She is in the manner of a newly taken beast.

CASSANDRA
(silent)

1065
Why she is maddened indeed, hearing cruel voices
She, leaving a newly sacked town,
Arrives here, not knowing how to bear the vicious bit,
Before she has exhausted her rage in blood.
But I will not shame myself by hurling insults at her.

CASSANDRA
(silent)

\textsuperscript{92} This line ironically anticipates Cassandra’s “sacrificial” death at Clytemnestra’s hands. Though she has no direct hand in the murder of her daughter, Wohl proposes that their fates are in some way, linked via exchange: “Iphigeneia died to buy back Helen, but instead bought Cassandra; and if Iphigeneia is the price paid for Cassandra, Cassandra is killed in part to avenge Iphigeneia” (pp. 100-111)
Χορός

ἐγὼ δ’, ἐποικίτρω γάρ, οὐ θυμώσομαι.

ὡ’, ὦ τάλαινα, τόνδ’ ἐρημόσασ’ ὄχον, εἶκουσ’ ἀνάγκη τῇ δε καίνισον ζυγόν.

1070 Χορός

σίγα: τίς πληγήν άντεὶ καιρίως οὔτασμένος;

Αγαμέμνων

ὁμοί, πέπληγμα καιρίαν πληγήν ἐσω

Χορός

τοῦργον εἰργάσθαι δοκεῖ μοι βασιλέως ἐποικίσωσιν.

Ἀγαμέμνων

ομοί μάλ’ αὖθις, δευτέραν πεπληγμένος.

Χορός

πολλῶν πάροιθεν καιρίως εἰρημένων τάναντι’ εἶπεῖν οὐκ ἐπαισχυνθήσομαι.

Κλυταιμήστρα

πολλῶν πάροιθεν καιρίως εἰρημένων τάναντι’ εἶπεῖν οὐκ ἐπαισχυνθήσομαι.

CHORUS

Well, I, taking pity, will not take my anger out upon her.

Come, wretched, and abandon your carriage.

Yield to the necessity of this new yoke\(^{93}\).

(1072-1342)

AGAMEMNON

O! I have been speared deep by a firm blow!

O, and again more! For a second time I’ve been struck!

O! I have been speared deep by a firm blow!

The deed has been performed, it seems to me, by the king’s wailings.

But let us convene on how we may reach a sound resolution.

(1348-1371)

CLYTEMNESTRA

I have said many things before for a purpose

But I am not ashamed now to say the opposite\(^{94}\)

\(^{93}\) This is the second time necessity’s yoke appears in the play. Does their common circumstance in any way unite Cassandra and her enslaver, her rapist?

\(^{94}\) Clytemnestra’s admission is relatable to women on multiple levels: “Women, as a muted group, must learn the dominant discourse in order to speak and yet, at the same time, they generate specific, alternate codes that they may use among themselves. As a result, women can be considered “bilingual” in that they understand both their own discursive strategies and those of the dominant group, engaging in ‘code-switching’ in order to function in societies in which they are subordinated” (McClure 27). See also W.E.B DuBois, The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches, pp. 3-4, for the formative use of this concept.
For else how could I, preparing enmity for an enemy, one appearing

Friendly, fence him round with hostile
Nets of a higher height than he can leap?
For me this old contest is not heedless
An old contest came with time, for me indeed.
I stand where I struck him. An accomplishment.

And I have acted thusly; I will not deny it.
To neither flee nor defend was his fate,
An inescapable net that works round, just as a fish,
I threw all around him, so rich was the malady,
I struck him twice. And with two cries aloud
He gave up his limbs and to the fallen
I gave a third blow, from chthonic
Zeus, deliverer of the dead—a votive favor.
In this way, his spirit eagerly falls.
Quickly, his wound ejaculated spurs of blood
Splattering me with its dark dewdrops.
As I rejoice, no less than if it was god-given
The gleaming of a calyx erupting in child-birth
This is the way the matter was brought about,
revered Argives
Take pleasure then, if you do take pleasure, while
I am reveling.

If it had been fitting to pour libations upon his corpse,
Then I, ever observant of custom, would have
done so, justly.
The house’s cup of evils is sufficient,
πλήσας ἀραίων αὐτὸς ἐκπίνει μολὼν.

Χορός
θαυμάζομεν σοι γλῶσσαν, ὡς θρασύστομος,
1400ήτις τοιόνδ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἀνδρὶ κομπάζεις λόγον.

Κλυταιμήστρα
πειρᾶσθέ μου γυναικός ὡς ἀφράσμονος:
ἐγὼ δ᾽ ἄτρέστῳ καρδίᾳ πρὸς εἰδότας
λέγω: σὺ δ᾽ αἰνεῖν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐπὶ με ψέγειν θέλεις

1405δόμοιον, οὗτός ἐστιν Ἀγαμέμνων, ἐμὸς
πόσις, νεκρὸς δὲ, τήσδε δεξιὰς χερῶς

Having been filled with his curses, he now comes to drink from it.99

CHORUS
We marvel at your mouth, how insolent you are
To speak over your husband, such boastful phrases100.

CLYTEMNESTRA
You go at me as if I were a senseless woman
But I with my steady heart to you “knowers”101
Proclaim, and whether you wish to praise or blame me is all the
Same: this is Agamemnon, my
1405 Husband, dead, the work of my own right hand102

99 Foley: “This perverted banquet is also a perverted fertility ritual-birth-sexual climax as well as a (from this perspective legitimate) claim to cosmic justice, in which the avenging Clytemnestra symbolically becomes the earth’s crops ecstatically renewed by the moisture of the king’s blood” (211)

100 The chorus takes umbrage, not at the murder of Agamemnon, but with her duplicity and boasting. In this moment, Agamemnon is not the slain king, but a betrayed husband, and Clytemnestra an unfaithful wife. Why is this concern the priority of the elder statesmen? McClure proposes that particularly given the citizenship laws of 451/50, male resentment of women grew on the grounds that she alone could know the truth of paternity, and were thus able to conceal it from their partners (27). Thus, a well-spoken woman threatened the sanctity of the oikos as well as the demos.

101 Clytemnestra is a woman, but certainly not a senseless one. Foley: “Clytemnestra repeatedly undercuts the chorus’ attempts to reflect on and comprehend the crime by envisioning and formulating the issues from a different perspective that is clearly conditioned by her social role as a woman, albeit an unusually androgynous one. At the same time, she uses her ability to mimic and appropriate masculine and public language to serve what from the choral perspective would be a regime that entirely undercuts the status quo” (203-4).

102 The right hand is perceived as masculine (Foley 212)
The craftwork of justice. So these matters stand.

CHORUS

What evils, you woman,

Have been bred from the deep earth, food or drink,

Or sent flowing to you from the sea

That you brought upon yourself a sacrifice, and

the bane of the mobs?

You have thrown him down, you have torn him out. You will be tossed out of this land

By the immense hatred of its people.

CLYTEMNESTRA

Ah, now you sentence me to flee from the city

And to bear the hatred of the people, and the uttered curses,

But you brought nothing against this man here,

Who, caring no more than if it were the fate of a beast

In an abundant flock of fleecy sheep,

Slaughtered his own child, the dearest fruit of my

[103] Hammond: “Thus the Agamemnon ends with the triumph of Justice, daughter of Zeus, in the punishment of Paris, Troy, Agamemnon and the Greeks for the unjust war in which they all engaged; of Paris especially for his breach of hospitality which offended Zeus Xenios; of Agamemnon especially for his lawless sacrifice of his own daughter…At the same time the punishment of Agamemnon coincides with the desire of the Erinyes to avenge the killing of Thyestes’ children by Atreus through the killing of Agamemnon, the son of Atreus, by the agency of Aegisthus. They acted as they did for their own personal reasons, which were in each case sinful.” (50)

[104] Rather than say her name, or her title, the chorus simply refers to Clytemnestra as “woman”. 
οὐ τοῦτον ἐκ γῆς τήσδε χρῆν σ᾽ ἀνδρηλατεῖν, μιασμάτων ἄποιν᾽; ἐπίκοος δ᾽ ἐμῶν ἐργόν δικαστῆς τραχύς εἰ. λέγω δὲ σοι τοιαῦτ᾽ ἀπειλεῖν, ὡς παρεσκευασμένης ἐκ τοῦ ὀμοίων χειρὶ νικήσαν ἐμοῦ ἄρχειν: ἔαν δὲ τοῦμαλιν κραίνειν τῆσδε γνώσῃ διδαχθεὶς ὡς γοῦν τῷ σοφρονεῖν.

Χορός

μεγαλόμητις εἰ.

περίφρονα δ᾽ ἐλακείς. ὠσπερ οὖν φονολιβεῖ τύχα φρήν ἐπιμαίνεται,

λίπος ἐπ᾽ ὀμοίων αἵματος ἐμπρέπει:

ἄτιετον ἔτι σὲ χρῆ στερομέναν φιλόν

Childbearing pains\textsuperscript{105}, to charm the Thracian winds\textsuperscript{106}

Isn’t it this man you should banish from the land,

Having gone unpunished for his defilement? But hearing of my

Work, you are harsh judges. But I say to you,

To threaten me in this way, as I have prepared myself,

Under the same circumstances, your hand conquering me,

To rule. If god rules contrarily,

You will learn, though taught late, to exercise restraint.

CHORUS

You are ambitious\textsuperscript{107}

Your utterances are haughty. Since just as

Your bloodsoaked deed attacks your mind,

A spattering of blood obscures your eyes.

Without honor, without friends, it is necessary still

\textsuperscript{105} Clytemnestra and Iphigeneia’s close bond is emphasized in this botanical metaphor. Zeitlin notes that “it is significant that the maternal role should be exemplified in the first place by the mother-daughter dyad, for that is the relationship from which the male is excluded, a closed circle in which his interference can only be construed as an invasion as the myth of Kore and Demeter demonstrates so well” (158).

\textsuperscript{106} Rader: “In her role as the binding song of the winds Iphigeneia was treated not as a human—and not just as an animal—but purely as a means, a concatenation of verbs and direct objects…her [Clytemnestra’s] choice of ἐπῳδὸν reveals the calculus of human desire, blindness and bloodlust that hides behind seemingly deterministic causes.” (125)

\textsuperscript{107} What are the connotations of μεγαλόμητις? Is the chorus’ true objection to Clytemnestra simply her ambition? Or does the term mean “boldness” as Foley translates? Odysseus is famed for his μητις, cunning and craftiness. Even Penelope, his wife, exhibits μητις in her plan to deceive the suitors who threaten her household. Yet in the case of Clytemnestra, this epithet is used negatively. Clearly, there is a fine line to be drawn between acceptable and unacceptable cleverness in women. Though Penelope’s “correct” use of μητις enabled Odysseus to return home and reestablish control over his household and Ithaca, Clytemnestra’s “incorrect” μητις disrupted Agamemnon’s reassumption of power upon his homecoming. Cf. Lafrentz, Weaving a Way to Nostos: Odysseus and Feminine Mētis in the Odyssey.
τόμμα τόμματι τείσαι.  

That you pay a price, blow for blow.¹⁰⁸

 Clytemnestra

Kλυταιμήστρα
καὶ τήνδὲ ἀκούεις ὥρκιον ἐμὸν θέμιν:
μὰ τὴν τέλειον τῆς ἐμῆς παιδὸς Δίκην,
Ἅτην Ἐρινύν θ’, αἰσίς τονδ’ ἔσφαξ’ ἐγώ,
οὗ μοι φόβου μέλαθρον ἐλπίς ἐμπατεῖ,
ἐὼς ἄν αἰθῇ πῦρ ἐρ’ ἐστίας ἐμῆς

1435

Hope does not walk in my halls of fear
As long as a fire is kindled upon my hearth¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ The chorus does not respond in any way to Clytemnestra’s outrage. Rader: “Either they are too sociopathically insensitive to her maternal concerns to acknowledge them or they are too savvy to acknowledge (and thus potentially justify) her aggressive self-defense. We know the chorus is capable of revealing criticism, but they never really own up to the injustice of Agamemnon’s decisions. They’ve fully internalized the story about Agamemnon, Iphigeneia and Artemis—the story they invented and have been peddling to themselves…Better ultimately to persist in the fantasy that “it is what it is’ and simply claim that Clytemnestra is a woman subject to fits of irrational passion” (125-126).

Rader: “They simply refuse to acknowledge her justification, a fact that is symptomatic of a generic male unwillingness to listen to a woman in this story (the Greeks’ failure to understand Helen’s departure with Patis, Agamemnon and his men’s refusal to heed Iphigeneia’s cries and curses, the chorus’ initial hesitation to believe in Clytemnestra’s dreams and their subsequent inability to hear Cassandra’s warnings).” (127)

¹⁰⁹ Clytemnestra compels the chorus to listen with the present indicative ἀκούεις, which to Raeburn and Thomas is “even more assertive than an imperative would be” (219-220). The chorus’ earlier description of Iphigeneia’s death in the parodos ends with a compartmentalization; they refuse to recount the rest of the gruesome story. But here, Clytemnestra forces them to take in her story.

¹¹⁰ Who are the Erinyes, and why do they demand this kind of justice? Hammond: “The Erinyes are primaeval goddesses, daughters of Night, who carry out the laws of the natural world mercilessly and automatically…The gods of Olympus, on the other hand, came into existence later than the Erinyes. Zeus was born later still, being the grandson of the first ruler of the sky.” (45)

¹¹¹ Foley indicates that “lighting one’s hearth” has sexual connotations, as it is used in Choephoroi 629-30 (214). Pulleyn clarifies that there is, perhaps, a connection to be drawn between the shape and seclusion of the hearth and the vagina (567). In which case, is this phrase an indication that the affair between Clytemnestra and Aegisthus was more than practical? In her affair with Aegisthus Clytemnestra does something rather bold: she selects and courts her own sexual partner.
By Aegisthus, as before, understanding to me. Since to me he is a shield; not small, but bold. But the woman-destroyer lies here, The darling of the Chriseids at Ilia, And his prisoner, prophetess, And paramour. Ah, prophet, Faithful bedfellow, pressing the sailors’ row-bench Meeting no unhonorable fate. For he is thus, and she, in the manner of a swan Wailing her final, deadly, song, Lies by her lover: but she brought

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112 Foley, on the union of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra in Euripides’ Electra: “Aegisthus, by marrying the higher-status Clytemnestra, has become her man and of less account, rather than the reverse (931, 937)” (66). Zeitlin compares Aegisthus to the exoticised and despised figure Paris: “the subordinate male, the strengthless lion” (154). Is the disempowerment of Aegisthus necessary to the empowerment of Clytemnestra? This interpretation resonates with more contemporary perceptions of women who enter male-dominated spaces as “emasculating” their husbands or partners. Contempt towards fathers who stay at home with children, heterosexual couples in which the woman contributes more economically, or in current social media, the “simp”, are all modern manifestations of the strengthless lion. Yet the Athenian audience might have seen this union, as Griffith puts forward, as “...a sickening perversion, not only of legitimate marriage-vows (cf. Ag. 877-78), but also of the traditional “loyalty oath” sworn between hetairoi…Neither a properly married couple, nor a band of comrades united for conventional political ends, the pair of usurpers constantly misuses the language and procedures of sacrifice, hospitality, and feasting, as they attempt to legitimize, stabilize, and ritualize their rule” (1995, 85).

113 Clytemenstra, again, compares Cassandra to a type of bird using Δίκη
εὐνής παροπώνημα τῆς ἐμῆς χλιδῆς.

Χορός

φεῦ, τίς ἀν ἐν τἄχει, μὴ περιώδυνος, μὴ δὲ δεμνοτήρης,
μόλις τὸν αἰεὶ φέρουσ᾿ ἐν ἣμῖν
Μοὴρ’ ἀτέλευτον ὑπὸν, δαμέντος
φύλακος εὐμενεστάτου

πολλὰ τλάντος γυναικὸς διαί:
πρὸς γυναικὸς δ᾿ ἀπέφθισεν βίον.
ιὼ ἢ παράνους Ἐλένα
μία τὰς πολλὰς, τὰς πάνυ πολλὰς
ψυχὰς ὀλέσασ᾿ ὑπὸ Τροία.
νῦν δὲ τελέαν πολύμναστον ἐπηνύθισι
δι᾽ αἰμί ἁνυπτόν. Ἡ τίς ἢν τότ′ ἐν ὅμοις

ἔρις ἐρίδματος ἀνδρός οἰζύς.

An additional delicacy to my bed.\textsuperscript{114}

CHORUS

Alas, that something comes quickly, not exceedingly painful, nor lingering,
Should come bringing to us eternal
And, fated, endless sleep,
As our well-disposed guardian has been overpowered,
Undergoing great suffering through a woman
And by a woman his life was wasted away.
O! O desperate\textsuperscript{115} Helen
Who alone destroyed many, many
Souls in violence at Troy.\textsuperscript{116}
And now the final, well remembered adornment
Of insoluble blood. For something that was in the house
An unconquerable strife, the affliction of a man.

\textsuperscript{114} Clytemnestra refers to Cassandra rather harshly in these lines. Does Aeschylus set up a contrast of this nature between the play’s two (living) women? Foley: “Over the course of the play, she [Cassandra] gradually fills the structural role of the proper “wife” abandoned by Clytemnestra. Clytemnestra herself exulting over the entwined bodies of the dead Agamemnon and Cassandra, mocks her rival not only as the sharer of his bed…but as his faithful bedmate…She clearly means to imply that Cassandra has threatened to double or replace her” (Foley 92). Is this interpretation just? Simon Pullyen proposes four interpretations of 1446-7: “I (a) Agamemnon brought in over my head a side-dish to the luxury of my bed [i.e. \textit{He hoped to enjoy Cassandra’s favours as mistress in addition to my own}]. I (b) Cassandra brought in a side-dish to the luxury of my bed [i.e. \textit{she was herself the dish and she intended herself as an extra treat for Agamemnon}]. II (a) Agamemnon brought a side dish to the luxury of my bed [i.e. \textit{he intended to enjoy Cassandra as a mistress but I killed Cassandra and I enjoyed it}]. II (b) Cassandra brought in a side-dish to the luxury of my bed [i.e. \textit{although she had the audacity to think she could rival me, I killed her and I enjoyed it}]” (565). He continues to describe how sexual pleasure was often described metaphorically by the enjoyment of food. Though Agamemnon does not get to “enjoy” Cassandra, perhaps Clytemnestra does. This interpretation does more to tarnish Clytemnestra’s character than Agamemnon’s or Cassandra’s. To the modern reader, there is more that unites this pair than divides them. We are left to wonder why Clytemnestra killed Cassandra, a fellow victim of Agamemnon’s callousness and lust.

\textsuperscript{115} παράνους

\textsuperscript{116} The chorus is miraculously able to trace even this situation back to the hated Helen.
Clytemnestra

μηδὲν θανάτου μοίραν ἐπεύχου τοίσδε βαρονθείες: μηδ’ εἰς Ἐλένην κότον ἐκτρέψης, ως ἀνδρόλετειρ’, ως μία πολλῶν ἀνδρόν νυχάς Δαναῶν ὀλέσσα’ ἀξύστατον ἄλγος ἐπραξὲν.

Χορός

dαίμον, ὅς ἐμπίτνεις δόμαι καὶ δυνώσι καὶ δυνώσι καὶ δυνώσι

Tantaliδαισιν, κράτος τ’ ἴσσυνυχον ὡς γυναῖκον καρδιόδηκτον ἐμοὶ κρατήνεις. ἐπὶ δὲ σώματος δίκαν κόρακος ἐχθροῦ σταθεῖσ’ ἐκνόμως ὦρος, ὃς δῷμασι

Klytemnestra

νῦν δ’ ὄρθωσας στόματος γνώμην, τὸν τριπάχυντον δαίμωνα γέννης τῆς δε πιλέκισκον. ἐκ τοῦ γὰρ ἐρως αἵματολοιχὸς νείρα τρέφεται, πρὶν καταλήξαι τὸ παλαιὸν ἄρχος, νέος ἰχώρ.

Clytemnestra

Do not pray as if the part of death
Burdens you with such things

Nor upon Helen shall you turn your rage
As some man-destroyer, as one alone
Destroying many Danoi spirits,
Bringing to pass an incurable sorrow.

Chorus

Ο δαίμον, ὃς ἐμπίτνεις δόμαι καὶ δυνώσι καὶ δυνώσι καὶ δυνώσι

Tantaliδαισιν, κράτος τ’ ἴσσυνυχον ὡς γυναῖκον καρδιόδηκτον ἐμοὶ κρατήνεις. ἐπὶ δὲ σώματος δίκαν κόρακος ἐχθροῦ σταθεῖσ’ ἐκνόμως ὦρος, ὃς δῷμασι

Klytemnestra

νῦν δ’ ὄρθωσας στόματος γνώμην, τὸν τριπάχυντον δαίμωνα γέννης τῆς δε πιλέκισκον. ἐκ τοῦ γὰρ ἐρως αἵματολοιχὸς νείρα τρέφεται, πρὶν καταλήξαι τὸ παλαιὸν ἄρχος, νέος ἰχώρ.

Clytemnestra

Now you have set straight your mouths’ judgment
The thrice-gorged

Demon of this race is who you call upon.
From it the lust, the bloodthirst
Increases down low, before it ends

The ancient wound, there is young blood.

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117 Clytemnestra rejects the chorus’ blame of Helen: “she refuses to allow them to rely on the traditional poetic cliché they have been bandying about, especially in the second stasimon, which finds the root of all evils in women and their adultery” (Foley 216)

118 Foley: “Clytemnestra’s term man destroyer…implicitly assimilates Helen to the Amazons. It literalizes and makes absurd the chorus’ claim that Helen could actually kill many men (perhaps in unspoken contrast to the deed of the heroic, androgynous Clytemnestra herself).” (216)

119 Foley: “The participle describing the crowlike figure [σταθεῖσ’]…might be either male (the [δαίμον]), or female (Clytemnestra), but the visual image evokes Clytemnestra’s posture on stage.” (216)

120 Foley: “By calling the [δαίμονα] thrice-fattened…she paves the way for making a connection between the current crime against Agamemnon and two earlier ones. In her mind, the two earlier crimes would logically be the death of Thyestes’ children and Iphigeneia; if so, Clytemnestra’s guilt evokes the image of the raven. Her decision to paves the way for making a connection between the current crime against Agamemnon and two earlier ones. In her mind, the two earlier crimes would logically be the death of Thyestes’ children and Iphigeneia; if so, Clytemnestra’s guilt evokes the image of the raven. Her decision to...” (216)
Χορός

 hospitality 
 δαίμονα καὶ βαρώμην αἰνεῖς, 
 φεῦ φεῦ, κακών αἰνον ἀτη-
 ράς τύχας ἀκορέστων:
 Ἦ ἦ, ἦ, διὰ Διὸς 
 πανατίου πανερέτα:
 τί γὰρ βροτοῖς ἄνευ Διὸς τελείται; 
 τί τῶνδ᾽ οὐ θεόκραντον ἐστιν;
 ἵδι ἱδι βασιλεῦ βασιλεῦ,
 πῶς σε δικρύσω;
 φρενὸς ἐκ φιλίας τί ποτ᾽ εἶπο;
 κεῖσαι δ᾽ ἀράχνης ἐν ὑφάσματι τῶδ᾽
 ἀσεβεῖ θανάτω βίον ἐκκόπνεον.
 ὅμοι μοι κοίταν τάνδ᾽ ἀνελεύθερον
 δολὼ βροτοῖς δάμαρτος ἔκ χερός ἀμφιτόμῳ βελέμνω.

Κλιταιμήστρα

 αὖχεῖς εἶναι τόδε τοῦργον ἐμόν;
 μηδ᾽ ἐπιλεχθῆς
 Ἀγαμεμνονίαν εἶναι μ᾽ ἄλογον.
 φανταξόμενος δὲ γυναικείν νεκροῦ
 τοῦδ᾽ ὁ παλαιὸς ὀριμὸς ἀλάστωρ
 Ἀτρέως χαλεποῦ θοινατήρος

CHORUS

You speak of the great homeminding 
Demon, the wrathful one, 
Woe, woe, an evil tale of 
Fate, unceasing woes.

1485

Ah! Ah! Through Zeus,
All-creating, all-doing,
What do mortal men accomplish without the god?
What is not wrought by the gods?\(^{121}\)
O, O, king, king,

1490

How shall I weep for you?
Out of my loving spirit, how will I speak of you?
You who lie dead in the spider’s web of woven robes 
Breathing away your life in an impious death.
O me, me! I am not free from the lair

1495

Of a miserable fate, brought low by your wife, 
From her hand a two-edged dart.

CLYTENESTRA

Do you proclaim that this deed is mine?
Do not place this upon me,\(^{122}\)
I am not Agamemnon’s wife
Appearing a phantom of the wife of a corpse
Did the ancient, fierce avenging spirit
Of the Atreides, lord of a cruel feast

\(^{121}\) Rader: “In a curious about-face the chorus claims that the death of Agamemnon is the product of Zeus’ will...a rather self-defeating charge if, as they averred earlier, Zeus was responsible for Agamemnon’s expedition to Troy and subsequently his victory” (127).

\(^{122}\) Why does Clytemnestra deny personal responsibility, after proudly claiming it upon her entrance? And are we meant to believe her? Foley writes, “Indeed, depending on how we interpret the notoriously difficult passage, _Agamemnon_ 1497-1504, it could be argued that Clytemnestra is not an autonomous moral agent at all” (203). On page 220 Foley seems to argue that the Alastor is “a daimonic incarnation of Clytemnestra’s relation to Aegisthus”.

Alternatively, scholars such as Matt Neuberger argue that both dramatically and philosophically (38), Clytemnestra shifting agency to the ἀλάστωρ makes no sense with what he determines to be a logical reading of the _Oresteia_. She does not deny responsibility later in _Libation Bearers_, where Neuberger claims she would be most served to do so.
τόνδ᾽ ἀπέτεισεν,
tέλεον νεαροῖς ἐπιθύσασ.

Χορός

ㄛς μὲν ἀναίτιος εἶ
τοῦτο φόνου τίς ὁ μαρτυρήσον;
πῶς πῶς; πατρόθεν δὲ συλλήπτωρ γένοιτ᾽ ἂν
ἀλάστωρ.

βιάζεται δ᾽ ὀμοσπόροις
ἐπιρροαῖσιν αἷμας
Ἄρης, ὅποι δίκαν προβαίνω
πάχνᾳ κουροβόρῳ 
παρέξει.

ἰὼ ἰὼ βασιλεῦ
πῶς σε δακρύσω?

φρενὸς ἐκ φιλίας τί ποτ᾽ εἴπω;
κεῖσαι δ᾽ ἀράχνη ἐν ὑφάσματι
τῷδ᾽ ἀσεβεῖ 
θανάτῳ βίον ἐκπνέων.

ὤμοι μοι κοίταν τάνδ᾽ ἀνελεύθερον δολίῳ
δαμεὶς ἐκ χερὸς ἀμφιτόμῳ βελέμνῳ.

Κλυταιμήστρα

οὔτ᾽ ἀνελεύθερον οἶμαι 
θάνατον τῷδε γενέσθαι.

οὔδὲ γὰρ οὔτος δολίαν ἀτιν
οἴκοισιν ἐθηκ᾽;

alsexἐμὸν ἐκ 
τῆς πολυκλαύτην

1505

Take this man in vengeance
A grown man for a young woman’s sacrifice.

CHORUS

If then you are innocent,
Of this slaughter, who will bear witness?
And how, how? But the father’s curse might be the avenging spirit, your accomplice.123

Forced amid kindred

1510

Rivers of blood

Dark Ares, advancing to where he ought
Offer the clotted blood of sacrificed children.
O, O, king, king

How shall I weep for you?

1515

From a loving spirit, how will I speak of you?
You who lie dead in the spider’s web of woven robes
Breathing away your great life in impious death.
O me, me! I am not free from the lair

1520

Of a miserable fate, brought low by your wife,
From her hand a two-edged dart.

CLYTEMNESTRA

I do not think his death was shameful
In the way it occurred

For did this one not set pain and ruin
Upon himself and his household?

1525

But for myself, I raised his offspring,
The much grieved

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123 Does the chorus “buy” Clytemnestra’s story? Hammond posits that “the chorus places the responsibility fairly and squarely on the shoulders of Clytemnestra” (43). And why shouldn’t they, given her earlier confession? Yet, if the chorus has been willing to excuse Agamemnon’s own slaughter through blaming the gods’ and their “yokes”, why is Clytemnestra’s story so unbelievable to them?

Rader: “Apparently, the only way they’ll [the chorus] ever hear Clytemnestra is when she ventriloquizes (or is ventriloquized by) the δαίμων” (127)
Ἰφιγενείαν, ἀναξία δράσας
ἄξια πάσχων μηδὲν ἐν Ἄιδου
Μεγαλαυχείτω, ξιφοδηλήτῳ,
θανάτῳ τείσας ἄπερ ἦρξεν.

Χορός
ἀμηχανῶ φροντίδος στερηθεὶς
εὐπάλαμον μέριμναν
δῶν αἵματηρόν: ψακὰς δὲ
δέδοικα δ᾽ ὀμβροῦ κτύπον
tὸν αἱματηρόν: πίτνοντος
οἴκου.

δέδοικα δ᾽ ὀμβροῦ κτύπον
tὸν αἵματηρόν: ψακὰς δὲ
λήγει.

δίκην δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἄλλο πρᾶγμα
θηγάνει βλάβης πρὸς
ἄλλαις θηγάναισι
μοῖρα.

ιὼ γᾶ γᾶ, εἴθ᾽ ἐδέξω,
πρὶν τόνδ᾽ ἐπιδεῖν ἀργυροτοίχου
dροῖτης κατέχοντα χάμευναν.

τίς οὐ σὲ προσήκει τὸ μέλημ᾽ ἀλέγειν

124 This is Iphigeneia’s first mention by name in the entire play. Despite the graphic parodos, the chorus willfully forgets her role, perhaps in an attempt to undercut Clytemnestra’s justifications for her actions. Yet, her death has irrevocably changed her mother: “As much as the play—or at least the men in it—wants us to forget her role as a forcibly bereaved mother, we cannot take that away from her. To do so would be to take the side of the very chorus, and also Agamemnon, who desperately want to believe the war’s preludes and ramifications have found peaceful resolution. In this world of tragedy, and in the world of this tragedy in particular, that cannot and will not happen” (Rader 116).
By our\textsuperscript{125} hands
He fell, down to his death, and down below he will be buried
Not beneath the tears of his household
But Iphigeneia shall gladly welcome him,
As is due a daughter to
Her father\textsuperscript{126}, face to face at the swift-flowing Rivers of sorrow,
And shall throw her arms around him in affection.

\textbf{CHORUS}

This reproach comes in place of reproach.
It is difficult to distinguish the two.
He carries who is carried; the killer pays the price
Remain as Zeus remains enthroned
The actor comes to suffer: for this is fixed.

Who may throw out of the house its own offspring?
The bloodline is inlaid with suffering.

\textbf{CLYTEMNESTRA}

You venture in truth
Into this prophecy. But I
Am willing to, with the demon of the Pleisthenidai
Swear by a set oath, to be content with what has occurred,
As hard to bear as they are. For the rest, going Out from this house and to another bloodline,
May he lay waste to them through murder.
I shall keep portion of my property

\textsuperscript{125} Who is Clytemnestra referring to? Her alliance with the \textit{δαίμων}, or with Aegisthus?

\textsuperscript{126} In this last twist of the blade, Clytemnestra flips the gendered expectations of Iphigeneia’s duties to her father. Is this consistent with our idea of Iphigeneia? Why would Clytemnestra say this? Is it, as Hammond argues, a means to show that Clytemnestra does not grieve Iphigeneia nearly as much as she hates Agamemnon (44)? How do we imagine Iphigeneia’s implication in the murder of her father, based on this information and the chorus’ parodos? If we are to believe she was an \textit{un}willing sacrifice, as evidenced by her being restrained and silenced, then can she be considered as a posthumous conspirator? Is this assumption fair to her?
And though small, it will be enough for me if I have taken away from this house the madness of murderous frenzy.

(1577-end)\(^{127}\)

\(^{127}\) Foley “Even when Aegisthus appears, they do not accept the act as his because he planned it. In their view a woman did it, and in so doing, brought pollution to the land and the gods…Aegisthus is in their eyes a “woman,” and hence the deed is now doubly a woman’s” (224). Though Clytemnestra stepped into the masculine role in her work, Foley cautions us against classifying Clytemnestra’s relationship with Aegisthus as merely a heteronormative one flipped on its head, due to the way that they interact: “Later in the scene with Aegisthus, Clytemnestra’s behavior further suggests a process of refeminization, although playing the wife remains more role than reality for Clytemnestra to the end, and she certainly maintains authority more effectively than Aegisthus in this scene” (229).
Bibliography


