

The point of course is Cynthia's *superbia*, in poetry as in love. Corinna, so the sources say, had matched her poetry against Pindar's, criticizing his work and defeating him in competition, once or five times.<sup>28</sup> But Cynthia's

*superbia* exceeds even Corinna's *superbia*, for Cynthia thinks her poetry superior to any poetry.

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28. Corinna's criticism of Pindar: Plut. *Glor. Ath.* 4. 347; schol. *Ar. Ach.* 720 (= Corinna 688 in D. L. Page's *Poetae*

*Melici Graeci* [Oxford, 1962]). Pindar's defeat: Paus. 9. 22. 3 (once); *Ael. VH* 13. 25 and *Suda*, s.v. *Korinna* (five times).

### XEIPIAN: AJAX 494-95

μή μ' ἀξιώσης βάξιν ἀλγεινὴν λαβεῖν  
τῶν σῶν ὕπ' ἐχθρῶν, χεῖριαν ἀφείς τι.

It is not immediately clear from the context just what "grievous report" or "painful rumor" Tecmessa fears. Yet since *βάξεις* usually have a specific content,<sup>1</sup> one wonders whether she may be hinting at something with her vague words. We learn from the following lines that her dread in Ajax' death is being given over to another man to be taken by force and subjected to servitude: "For . . . the day you die and by your death desert me, that day will see me outraged too, forcibly dragged by the Greeks, together with your boy, to lead a slave's life."<sup>2</sup> Her fears are much the same as those of Andromache in *Iliad* 6, and since Tecmessa's speech to Ajax is modeled upon Andromache's to Hector, perhaps a look at the familiar words of Andromache will help us anticipate how Sophocles' audience would interpret Tecmessa's emotions.

Andromache's central appeal to Hector is to his sense of duty to his φίλοι. Such also is Tecmessa's appeal to Ajax. The difference between the two women is that Tecmessa belongs to Ajax only from having shared his bed and having borne him a son. She is aware of this insecurity and so invokes memory of that bed in her supplication to him (493). A further indication of Tecmessa's insecurity in this regard is in the speech she imagines coming from the mouth of someone in the Greek camp after Ajax' death. She might be referred to mockingly as Ajax'

former bedmate (ὁμεινέτιν); whereas in Hector's imagined scene Andromache's captors would at least refer to her as the wife of Hector.<sup>3</sup>

Andromache's fear has much the same basis as Tecmessa's. Hector's death would leave her a widow and her son an orphan. She begins and ends her speech with these thoughts (*Il.* 6. 407, 432). In both places she uses the word "widow" (χήρη) of herself. Her appeal to Hector's pity is largely based upon her bereavement in case of his death. He is everything to her; losing him is equivalent to her burial (410 ff.). Tecmessa's appeal is largely on the same grounds, giving more weight to the fate of the orphaned son owing, perhaps, to the insecurity of her own relationship with Ajax (469-99; 510-19). Yet, although she fears bereavement as much as Andromache does, nowhere does she use the word "widow." Could it be that since she is not truly Ajax' wife she feels that she cannot use that word of herself? Ajax is more certain of her place in his affections. She has touched him, and in his monologue he reveals how his firm intentions are being ruffled by pity for his family after his suicide: οἰκτίρω δέ νιν / χήραν παρ' ἐχθροῖς παῖδά τ' ὀρφανὸν λιπεῖν (652-53).

If my collation of her emotions with those of Andromache is justified, then Tecmessa's great fear is of news of Ajax' death and of her consequent widowhood; that may well be the unspecified βάξιν ἀλγεινὴν of line

1. At *Aj.* 998 Teucer, upon seeing the dead Ajax, tells how he has hurried home after hearing the δξεία βάξιν which is news of Ajax' death. At *Soph. El.* 637-42, Clytemnestra prays to Apollo that he hear from her the κεκρυμμένην βάξιν about her dream—hidden lest Electra broadcast the βάξιν ματαίαν about the whole city. She is concealing the specific content so that Electra cannot divulge it. At *Trach.* 87,

Hyllus learns the βάξιν θεοφάτων which Jameson correctly translates "contents of the oracle." Compare *Aesch. PV* 663, *Ag.* 10; *Eur. Hel.* 350, etc.

2. John Moore's translation in *The Complete Greek Tragedies*, ed. David Grene, II (Chicago, 1957).

3. See W. B. Stanford (ed.), *Ajax* (London, 1963), on lines 501-503.

494. Or is it unspecified? The sensitive girl would not use “widow” of herself, but she does allude to it in a bit of Sophoclean word play. In addition to fearing a painful report, Tecmessa is pained at the possibility of being sent away subject (*χειρίαν*) to another man. The first use of this adjective for the older *ὑποχείριος* comes in a context in which, one suspects, homophony with *χήραν* has suggested the clipped form to Sophocles. It is not so odd, therefore, that this clipped form

of the adjective is used thereafter only in the feminine.<sup>4</sup> Sophocles made the word noteworthy by its judicious use in Tecmessa’s sensitive speech; Euripides, adopting the word, remained true to its original context by using it only of the subjugation of women.

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4. See Stanford’s note on line 495.

# ARISTOTLE *ATH. POL.* 26. 1 ON CIMON

At *Ath. Pol.* 26. 1, Aristotle disparages Cimon’s value as a leader, describing him as *νεώτερον ὄντα καὶ πρὸς τὴν πόλιν ὀψὲ προσελθόντα*. Both parts of the description have been considered inept. Some defense is in order.

First *νεώτερον*. The passage has a context of about 462 when Cimon was probably at least 48 and so not guilty of excessive youth. Scholars have sought a solution in emendation: *ἐνέωτερον* or *νωθέστερον* (Weil), *νωθρότερον* (Kaibel and Wilamowitz), *ἀνούστερον* (Van Herwerden), *ἀβέλετερον* (Sandys). All a little unfair to “le grand héros de la lutte nationale,” as G. Radet pointed out (*REG*, XXXII [1919], 429–32), and, more pertinently, quite inappropriate for a skillful politician, who was capable of exploiting archeology for political ends (Plut. *Cim.* 8. 6), and whose approach to vote-catching served, as Aristotle himself noted, as a model for Pericles (*Ath. Pol.* 27. 4). Nor yet is Radet’s defense of the reading, with the meaning “assez novice,” consistent with Cimon’s already long career by 462.

The context here requires a word that signifies a quality unsuitable in a conservative leader. This in itself appears to make the problem more difficult, since Cimon is generally held to be reactionary rather than progressive. Nevertheless, some of the ancient evidence, if it does not belie the label, at least suggests that Cimon was tainted with innovatory ideas. One (admittedly dubious) source goes so far as to make him leader of the democrats (scholion BD on Aelius Aristides, p. 446 Dindorf; cf. W. R. Connor, *Theopompus and*

*Fifth-century Athens* [Cambridge, Mass., 1968], pp. 32–38), but even the *Ath. Pol.* does mention Cimon’s liberality and significantly sees in this a prototype for Pericles’ demagogic techniques (27. 4). So *νεώτερον* may possibly be defended as meaning “too revolutionary” or “too fond of innovation.” However, as only the neuter is attested with this meaning (*νεώτερόν τι ποιεῖν*), it is more likely that for *νεώτερον ὄντα* we should read *νεωτερίζοντα* or *νεωτεροποιούντα*. This notion aptly explains *συνέβαιεν ἀνίσθαι μᾶλλον τὴν πολιτείαν* (26. 1) and also perhaps tells us why the conservative Spartans decided they could do without Cimon’s aid. Support, or at least an interesting coincidence, is to be found in Thucydides (1. 102. 3), who makes the Spartans refer to Cimon’s force of conservative hoplites with the words *νεωτεροποιία* and *νεωτερίζειν* (which troubled A. W. Gomme, *ad. loc.*); likewise Plutarch (*Cim.* 17. 2) uses *νεωτερισταί* in the same context. Was it perhaps their leader who, against expectation, proved to be the trouble-maker?

The usual rendering of *πρὸς τὴν πόλιν ὀψὲ προσελθόντα* is “entered politics late,” which gains support from Plutarch (*Cim.* 4. 3). But, as the passage implies a context of 462, by which stage Cimon had already managed a lengthy public career, the statement, even if true, is irrelevant. Aristotle’s context is important. He is explaining the success of Ephialtes’ reforms, for which he gives two reasons. The first, the lack of a worthwhile conservative leader, is supported by two points: that the leader was an innovator and *πρὸς τὴν*