

THE WAY OF A GOD WITH A MAID IN AESCHYLUS' *AGAMEMNON*

Κα. μάντις μ' Ἀπόλλων τῷδ' ἐπέστησεν τέλει.	
Χο. μῶν καὶ θεός περ ἰμέρῳ πεπληγμένος;	1204
Κα. πρὸ τοῦ μὲν αἰδῶς ἦν ἔμοι λέγειν τάδε.	1203
Χο. ἀβρύνεται γὰρ πᾶς τις εὖ πράσσων πλέον.	1205
Κα. ἀλλ' ἦν παλαιστής κάρτ' ἔμοι πνέων χάριν.	
Χο. ἦ καὶ τέκνων εἰς ἔργον ἤλθετην ὁμοῦ;	
Κα. ξυναίνεσασα Λοξίαν ἐψευσάμην.	
Χο. ἤδη τέχναισιν ἐνθέοις ἥρημένη;	
Κα. ἤδη πολίταις πάντ' ἐθέσπιζον πάθη.	1210
Χο. πῶς δῆτ' ἄνατος ἦσθα Λοξίου κότῳ;	
Κα. ἔπειθον οὐδέν' οὐδέν, ὥς τάδ' ἤμπλακον.	
1203-4 ordinem versuum restituit Hermann 1207 ἤλθετην	
Elmsley: -τον codd. ὁμοῦ Butler: νόμφ codd.	

What form of the myth of Apollo and Cassandra is Aeschylus alluding to in the lines above?¹ There are puzzling features of his treatment, notably the wrestling mentioned in 1206, that are hard to square with the version we know from Apollodorus, Hyginus, and Servius. Aeschylus' version, as it is generally understood, is also mythically anomalous: in no other story is a young woman, beloved by a god and, indeed, held firmly in his physical embrace, successful in resisting his advances. The passage—both text and interpretation—is in need of further scrutiny.

The problem to be addressed emerges most clearly in 1206. What, in the Aeschylean version, does Apollo do? In Apollodorus (*Bibl.* 3. 12. 5) the story is told thus. Apollo was in love with Cassandra. Cassandra asked for the gift of prophecy as a condition of accepting him as her lover. When she had received it, she did not keep her part of the bargain, and Apollo never became her lover. Since Apollo could not take back his gift, he caused her to be disbelieved. Is this the version Aeschylus presupposes?

That Cassandra does not mention wanting or asking for Apollo's gift is a relatively unimportant omission. More serious are the implications of παλαιστής in 1206. Earlier scholars regarded it as metaphorical.² But Fraenkel argues against this figurative interpretation and in favor of actual wrestling:

The use of παλαίειν and παλαιστής makes it beyond doubt that Apollo did not in a metaphorical sense contend for her heart or her favour, but actually wrestled with her. The god sets himself to overpower the maiden, who feels and acts like a true maiden. Then she agrees, and that brings the physical wrestling to an end; later she breaks her promise. . . . [S]he withdraws before the consummation. How that could be the poet does not reveal.³

1. The lemma is quoted from D. L. Page, ed., *Aeschyli Septem Quae Supersunt Tragoediae* (Oxford, 1972). I shall also cite the following editions below: S. Karsten, *Aeschyli "Agamemnon"* (Utrecht, 1855); F. A. Paley, *The Tragedies of Aeschylus*⁴ (London, 1879); N. Wecklein, *Aeschyli Fabulae*² (Berlin, 1893), whose appendix I cite for other conjectures; E. Fraenkel, *Aeschylus: "Agamemnon,"* 3 vols. (Oxford, 1950); G. Thomson, *The "Oresteia" of Aeschylus*², 2 vols. (Amsterdam and Prague, 1966); and J. D. Denniston and D. Page, *Aeschylus: "Agamemnon"* (Oxford, 1957).

2. F. H. Bothe, known to me from the citation in Fraenkel, *"Agamemnon,"* 3:555, writes: "παλαιστής figurate dicitur is, qui pugnat ut impetret aliquid."

3. *"Agamemnon,"* 3:555.

Denniston and Page are impressed but not enough to make them literalists. They register puzzlement: "[παλαιστής] is anything but a faded metaphor, and [yet] its apparent meaning is at variance with the conventions of reticence in Tragedy and with the facts of the case."⁴

Determining the facts of the case is the main difficulty in this passage. Fraenkel is surely right to exclude the possibility that 1206 means merely "he contended for me strenuously": it must imply physical grappling. But Denniston and Page are surely right that such grappling seems incompatible both with 1207–8 as they have usually been interpreted and with the myth known to us from later sources, according to which Apollo never has intercourse with Cassandra. There is more to be said to the same effect about 1206 (see below), but for now we may summarize the problem thus: παλαιστής means a physical struggle whose most natural outcome would be Apollo's enjoyment of Cassandra. But 1207–8 and later treatments of the story imply that this never took place.⁵

We must, of course, be prepared to hear that we are asking questions the dramatist never intended us to ask and are committing the documentary fallacy. Denniston and Page speak of the conventions of reticence in tragedy, and Fraenkel says, "How that could be the poet does not reveal." On the usual view the poet is like a painter who paints two figures covered by a blanket and leaves what is concealed to the imagination. But such a painter is surely to be held responsible for what he does show. The excuse that his figures are draped will not save him if his critic points out that three left feet are protruding from under the blanket. There is an analogous disparity both in Fraenkel's view and in Denniston and Page's between what is shown and what they take to be hidden. Is some other interpretation of Aeschylus' words possible?

Page's text, cited above, contains three emendations accepted by numerous editors—Hermann's transposition and the two alterations in 1207—that bear on the question what happens between Apollo and Cassandra. Though all these changes are possible, none seems inevitable, and one is open to serious objection. I propose to see what kind of sense can be made of the passage by declining their aid.

Page, like Murray, Fraenkel, and others before him, adopts Hermann's transposition of 1203 and 1204. This yields, says Fraenkel, "an uninterrupted progress of thought and a close connexion of question and answer."⁶ This is not quite true. The transposition solves the major difficulty—two successive lines belonging to Cassandra and two belonging to the chorus—but it creates other difficulties, at least one of which would cast doubt on Hermann's line-order even if it were the united witness of our manuscripts.

The biggest difficulty is the chorus' statement in 1205, which is hard to understand as a reply to the line that precedes it in Hermann's order. In that line Cassandra says that previously she had been ashamed to speak of the way in

4. "Agamemnon," p. 180.

5. We should also note that either with or without the wrestling match such restrained and tactful wooing of maiden by god is hard to parallel in Greek myth: see P. Maas' note (in German, with modest Latin title), "De deorum cum feminis mortalibus concubitu," *Kleine Schriften* (Munich, 1973), pp. 66–67, originally Sitz. Philol. Verein Berlin (1919), pp. 6–7 (I owe this reference to Hugh Lloyd-Jones)—though where a god meets no resistance (like Apollo in *Pyth.* 9), he can afford to be less peremptory.

6. "Agamemnon," 3:554.

which she had acquired Apollo's gift. "Yes," says the chorus, "for everyone in prosperity gives himself airs (waxes wanton, is fastidious, or enjoys luxury)." The verb describes either the moral fault of pride or the morally innocent enjoyment of luxury; and the chorus' γάρ implies that its generalization is illustrated by what Cassandra has just said: the αἰδώς that prevented her from speaking about Apollo's love for her shows how people in prosperity exhibit the fault of pride or luxuriate in life's good things. But, to take the first case, reticence in speaking about Apollo's love should count as a good quality, nearly the opposite of pride or fastidiousness.⁷ (Had she spoken too easily of Apollo's love such a judgment would have been quite natural.) If αἰδώς is a fault at all, rather than one of the cornerstones of Greek morality,⁸ it is not a fault that one could call ἄβροσύνη, as the chorus is made to do.⁹

I note also that it would be out of character for the chorus, which elsewhere shows itself entirely sympathetic to Cassandra, to express gratuitous moral disapproval of her, to treat her confession of shame as itself deserving of censure. The most one could concede to defenders of the passage is that Euripides *Iphigenia at Aulis* 1343 and Herodas 6. 45 show that the word can be used of shyness or reticence. But these same passages also show that reticence is being criticized as aloofness, which makes sense in those passages but not in ours. There is simply no reason for the chorus to find fault with Cassandra's perfectly proper sense of shame.

The second possibility is to call αἰδώς the enjoyment of luxury and to say that 1205 means, in effect, "Shame or modesty is a luxury you can no longer afford." But even if one could cite passages showing that αἰδώς was occasionally so regarded (but not, I think, αἰδώς in the sense relevant here), the argument requires that this idea be expressed, not left to be supplied.¹⁰

7. Cf. Karsten, "Agamemnon," p. 265 ad loc.: "Antea, dicit illa, pudor me retinebat quominus hoc dicerem. Ad quod Chorus: non mirum; in magna enim felicitate quivis facile superbiat. In pudore non inest τὸ ἀβρόνεσθαι: haec contraria sibi sunt." Karsten's own suggestion (read ἡδὺς for αἰδώς) strikes me as implausible, though epic words are sometimes to be found attested a single time in tragedy: see R. Renehan, *Studies in Greek Texts*, Hypomnemata 43 (Göttingen, 1976), pp. 27–36.

8. On the unfavorable aspects of αἰδώς, see D. Kovacs, "Shame, Pleasure, and Honor in Phaedra's Great Speech," *AJP* 101 (1980): 287–303. When αἰδώς is spoken of unfavorably, it is because respect for others and self-restraint prevent one from seizing every advantage and put one at the mercy of those who are less scrupulous. The spirit in which people find fault with αἰδώς is roughly the same as our "nice guys finish last."

9. H. Weil, ed., *Aeschyli Quae Supersunt Tragoediae*, vol. 1 (Giessen, 1858), p. 97, alleges that ἀβρόνυμαι here means the same thing as θρύπτομαι, which in one Platonic passage (*Phdr.* 228C) seems to bear the meaning "pretend to be trying to conceal" a thing you in fact want to be known. But ἀβρόνυμαι is unexampled in this sense; and Cassandra had said nothing about the coy pretense of shame or inhibition but rather spoke about shame or inhibition itself.

Another line of approach is that of Denniston and Page, "Agamemnon," p. 180: "'Everyone feels greater delicacy when in prosperity' (Paley); the implication is 'your present position leaves no room for coy reticence.'" On this, several comments deserve to be made. Only the ambiguity of the English word "delicacy," which is used for both "luxuriousness and fastidiousness" and "avoidance of what is indecent," makes this rendering seem plausible. The first of these senses is Greek ("everyone lives a soft life"), but the argument requires the second ("everyone shows a modest reticence"). It would be impossible to render "he spoke with delicacy" using any form of ἀβρόνυμαι. Second, the phrase "coy reticence" adds to the already un-Greek second sense of ἀβρόνυμαι the notion of coyness, though Cassandra has implied nothing about being coy. Third, it is not at all clear why the chorus should say that reticence is out of place in adversity.

10. One critic of an earlier version of this paper paraphrased the passage as follows: "Cassandra is now in effect admitting what she had been unwilling to admit before. In 1205 the chorus offers a natural

It should be noted, moreover, that ἀλλά in 1206 is used in a rather unnatural way. Fraenkel cites Denniston (*GP*, p. 18: "A person asked to speak conveys his readiness to speak by speaking"), but the particle makes sense, as Denniston's discussion (pp. 16–17) and his examples all show, only in reply to an immediately preceding command. There is nothing corresponding to "tell me" anywhere in the lines preceding 1206.

Of less moment is one other objection. The chorus' μὲν in 1204 is oddly motivated. The interrogative particle suggests that this supposition about Apollo is reluctantly entertained (see Barrett on Eur. *Hipp.* 794); yet it is to this supposition that the chorus turns first, even though nothing in Cassandra's preceding line compels them to do so.¹¹ This is a relatively minor difficulty—after all, we have to reckon not merely with what is natural for the characters but what the poet wants them to talk about—and could be passed over if it were isolated. Still, if Aeschylus wanted his chorus to take the conversation in an unexpected direction, he was under no obligation to point out by the interrogative particle that the chorus' hypothesis was both unwelcome and unlikely. Taken in conjunction with the other two objections, this tends to strengthen suspicion.

There is thus reason to agree with Weil's comment that Hermann's transposition only conceals and does not heal the trouble. If Hermann's order represented the reading of all our manuscripts, there would be grounds for doubting the soundness of the text. As matters stand, it is a conjecture, and we should expect editors to apply standards that are more, not less, strict. In order to heal the text, sterner measures than the transposition of 1203 and 1204 are required. Weil proposed keeping the manuscript order but assuming the loss of single lines after 1202 and 1204. Fraenkel calls this proposal "in the highest degree improbable",¹² but in stichomythy, where each verse is a separate sentence, omission of single lines is quite easy. Examples from Page's text (not all of them indisputable) are *Persae* 235, *Septem* 1050, and *Supplices* 210, 293, 307, 310, 316, the last four showing that several such omissions can occur nonconsecutively in a single passage. Lacunae, to be sure, are a particularly unsatisfying conclusion to a

explanation for her change of attitude. In her present reduced circumstances she can no longer aspire to being a lady." This would mean that in order to understand 1205 in relation to 1204 the audience must make a number of by no means obvious inferences and choices; they must first understand that "In prosperity everyone ἀβρύνεται" means not that people put on airs but that they enjoy luxuries; then they must understand that "being a lady" is one of those luxuries; and finally they must understand that the αἰδώς mentioned by Cassandra is characteristic of a certain class of society rather than being (as I take it to be) expected behavior for any Greek woman who is not utterly shameless. This is a lot to ask of them. To be sure, Aeschylus sometimes makes his characters answer questions obliquely, and Housman's parody (Cho. "Beneath a shining or a rainy Zeus?" Alc. "Mud's sister, not herself, adorns my shoes") is not wholly unfair in this respect. But the obliquity described above goes beyond even that of the parody.

11. Passages such as Aesch. *Supp.* 295 and Eur. *Ion* 339 show a reluctance analogous to that of 1204: couplings of a god and a mortal are unusual and for most people a matter only of hearsay. But in the passage from the *Ion*, Ion's shocked question is prompted only by Creusa's explicit statement that Apollo had lain with a friend of hers and does not arise spontaneously. As for *Supp.* 295, what preceded this line will probably never be known with certainty, as there is a lacuna after 294; but it is unlikely that the King's question was unprompted. Neither of these, therefore, offers a parallel to our passage.

12. "Agamemnon," 3:554.

textual argument, and they spoil the look of one's text. But to mark them is sometimes the path of duty. So it is in this case. Here is Weil's text, with my suppletions *exempli gratia*:

Κα.	μάντις μ' Ἀπόλλων τῷδ' ἐπέστησεν τέλει.	1202
<Χο.	θνητὴν Ἀπόλλων; αἰτίαν ἔχων τίνα;>	1202a
Κα.	πρὸ τοῦ μὲν αἰδῶς ἦν ἔμοι λέγειν τάδε.	1203
Χο.	μῶν καὶ θεός περ ἡμέρῳ πεπληγμένος;	1204
<Κα.	θεὸν περ ὄντα μέγα φρονοῦσ' ἀνηνάμην.>	1204a
Χο.	ἄβρύνεται γὰρ πᾶς τις εὐ πράσσων πλέον.	1205
Κα.	ἀλλ' ἦν παλαιστής κάρτ' ἔμοι πνέων χάριν.	1206

In this text the lines that previously were troublesome now function naturally, and we might suspect that the meaning they yield in their new context is the one they were meant to yield. To take the least weighty objection first: with 1203 preceding, the chorus' question in 1204 is now adequately prepared. Cassandra had mentioned shame in connection with receiving Apollo's gift, and the chorus has good reason to suspect that sex may be involved and to turn to the unwelcome theory that Apollo loved her.

The major difficulties have become major reasons for believing in the soundness of Weil's solution. The chorus' comment in 1205, unintelligible in Hermann's text, is now both clear and relevant to the preceding line: "Yes, everyone in prosperity puts on airs," they say, referring to her spurning of Apollo. And the ἀλλά in 1206 is now easy, a real adversative, contrasting Cassandra's reluctance with Apollo's forcible conquest.¹³

If the foregoing is correct, it strengthens the already clear implications of 1206, that Apollo overcame Cassandra's resistance and had his way with her. Both Fraenkel and Denniston and Page leave us with a disturbing disparity between what is being explicitly described, the wrestling, and what, on their view, is being hidden by tragic reticence, an end to the wrestling match that somehow leaves Cassandra still a virgin. As an experiment we might take at face value what we are shown and consider the possibility that the usual view of what is being concealed is wrong.

A number of considerations as yet unmentioned suggest that 1206 should be taken at face value. First, that Fraenkel is correct in thinking that "wrestler" implies a physical struggle should be apparent from the habits of gods elsewhere in Greek myth. They do not bring flowers or write sonnets: Creusa, for example, does not want a divine lover, but Apollo simply overpowers her resistance. There is, however, no known case where such resistance proves effective. If Apollo "wrestled" with Cassandra, the natural implication is that he took her. Any other interpretation is finally ludicrous: can we, as Fraenkel seems to, imagine Apollo wrestling with her as if it were a competitive sport and only so far as to make her own herself beaten? How long would that take? And why does the rest not follow at once? Does the god say "Well, I won. I'll see you tomorrow night then"?

13. For ἀλλά marking a contrast with the speaker's own words two lines earlier, with an assentient choral line intervening, see Eur. *Supp.* 152.

Furthermore, that Apollo's desire was fulfilled is surely suggested by the phrase *κάρτ' ἐμοὶ πνέων χάριν*. It would be most natural to connect "greatly breathing *χάρις*" closely with the wrestling in the same line: "He wrestled with me, greatly breathing his delight or charm upon me"; as Fraenkel points out, *χάρις* can mean both Apollo's delight and the charm he exercises on Cassandra.¹⁴ Expressions joining *πνέω* with *Ἄρη, κότον, μένεα*, or similar internal accusatives refer to the visible manifestation of strong emotion in the *θυμός*. They derive from the observation that when a person is in the grip of such feelings, his breathing is agitated.¹⁵ Apollo grapples with Cassandra, breathing hard like a wrestler. Where a wrestler breathes out his strong desire to defeat his opponent, Apollo breathes his delight in Cassandra and also breathes upon her his charm. There is a suggestion of the climax of love. "He wrestled with me and he breathed delight" is Lattimore's tactful and accurate translation.

Finally, there is also the comparative evidence mentioned by Fraenkel and Thomson for the way mortal women are thought to acquire special powers.¹⁶ Aeschylus (frag. 358M.) brought on Semele pregnant and in a state of possession. Those who touched her belly also became ecstatic. Ecstatic vision was apparently conveyed to her by sexual union. Likewise Oenone (Ov. *Her.* 5. 145) received the gift of healing by union with Apollo. Cassandra seems a likely candidate for inclusion in this group, and W. R. Halliday appears to take it for granted that Apollo was Cassandra's lover: "But here it may be noticed that the wives, equally with the sons or daughters of the god, may receive power conferred in the union of the sexual act; Cassandra and the Sibyl are obvious instances, and the case of Branchos and Apollo Philesios may be recalled."¹⁷ Two studies by K. Latte also show that there were other instances, like the oracle at Patara, where Apollo's prophetess was regarded as the *παλλακή* of the god.¹⁸ These examples make it likely that in some version of the story Apollo had actually been Cassandra's lover, which is the most natural reading of 1206.

But, my reader will ask with some impatience, what, on this showing, are we to make of 1207-8? If 1206 means or implies that Apollo took Cassandra by a combination of force and charm, how can the chorus ask "Did you also become lovers?" and how can Cassandra reply, in effect, "No"? Even if we take the *καί* as "in fact" and suppose that the chorus is asking Cassandra to spell out what she had already clearly implied ("Did you in fact become lovers?"), 1208 would seem to mean "I cheated him of that."

14. "Agamemnon," 3:555.

15. See R. B. Onians, *The Origins of European Thought* (Cambridge, 1954), pp. 49-61, a reference suggested by an anonymous referee of this journal.

16. Fraenkel, "Agamemnon," 3:554, and Thomson, "Oresteia," 2:94. For further evidence that the relation of Apollo and his prophetesses was regarded as sexual, see A. B. Cook, *Zeus: A Study in Ancient Religion*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, 1925; repr. New York, 1964), pp. 207-9, and E. Fehrle, *Die kultische Keuschheit im Altertum*, Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten 6 (Giessen, 1910), pp. 7-8, on the Pythia as the bride of Apollo, and pp. 87-89, on Cassandra, where Ag. 1206 is connected with the *ἐρωτική ἐπίπνοια* mentioned by Hermias' commentary on Plato's *Phaedrus*. For Christian comment on the conception, see Origen: "Contra Celsum," trans. H. Chadwick (Cambridge, 1965), p. 396. I owe these references to W. Burkert, *Greek Religion*, trans. J. Raffan (Cambridge, Mass., 1985), pp. 117 and 394, n. 84.

17. *Greek Divination* (London, 1913), p. 82.

18. "Orakel (Delphi)," *RE* 18 (1939): 840, and "The Coming of the Pythia," *HTHR* 33 (1940): 9-18.

When we turn for help to the apparatus criticus, it emerges that the text of 1207 contains a pair of well-established but by no mean inevitable conjectures: our manuscripts read ἤλθετον νόμῳ instead of Elmsley's ἤλθέτην and Butler's ὁμοῦ, adopted by Page. There were already reasons, set forth by Fraenkel, to look on these two offerings with suspicion. Elmsley made his conjecture because he was attempting to remove from extant Attic literature by emendation endings that contradicted his theory of the dual, a theory that scholars today regard as mistaken (see Kühner–Blass, *Grammatik*³, 2:69–70). Butler's conjecture is intelligent (*pace* Fraenkel, who calls it “empty”)¹⁹ but does not have the look of inevitability about it. In addition, it presupposes the truth of Elmsley's conjecture, unless we are prepared to accept a γ' that, though originally proposed by Butler, has rightly not appealed to subsequent editors. Now, however, we have an additional reason for rejecting these conjectures, since coherent, if surprising, sense is achieved by following the readings of the manuscripts.

The version of 1207 produced by Elmsley and Butler might have been the truth if the line had meant merely “And did you make love?” But there is more to τέκνων εἰς ἔργον than making love; and for “Went you then to the business of children?” the proper parallel is not πρὸς ἔργον ἀφροδίσιον or φιλοτήσια ἔργα but, as Fraenkel suggests, the marriage formula, γνησίων παιδων ἐπ' ἀρότῳ (ἐπὶ σπορῇ).²⁰ It is the function of νόμῳ to make this implication plain to the play's first audience. “Did you in fact come to the business of children lawfully?” ask the old men of Argos according to our manuscripts. This is, naturalistically speaking, no obvious question for the chorus to ask. There is no commonly observed νόμος by which women marry gods. But it is a natural question for Aeschylus to make them ask, if he wants to bring to the attention of his audience the kind of relation between a god and a woman that is known in contemporary religious practice and may be presupposed by the story of Cassandra. The evidence of Halliday and Latte shows that there was a religious conception according to which some women were joined to a god as the only husband they had. These women were filled with his prophetic spirit and were great with his children.²¹ “Did you in fact enter into lawful child-bearing union with Apollo?” asks the chorus. “I gave my consent, but then I played Loxias false,” she replies.²²

There is now no contradiction between what the poet explicitly tells us and what he is veiling in decent silence. Aeschylus mentioned wrestling and adverted to Apollo's breathing, and what he meant in so doing can be spelled out by his interpreters, though it need not be by the poet himself. Apollo approached Cassandra. She at first refused him. Then he took her by force, though, as Fraenkel points out, χάρις implies that Cassandra felt the god's charm as well as

19. “*Agamemnon*,” 3:555.

20. *Ibid.*

21. Cf. also the regular relation between Zeus and Europa, who gave birth three times to Zeus' sons, as described in Aesch. frag. 50 Smyth. Whether we read Blass' ξυνάουι, as Smyth prefers, or Weil's ξυνωνίῳ, it is clear that this is no irregular liaison but something comparable to marriage. This should modify Maas' generalization (above, n. 5) that gods limit themselves to single encounters with mortal women.

22. Of all the editors and commentators I have read, only Paley, *Tragedies*, p. 441, sees that Cassandra is Apollo's bride.

his compulsion. She gave her consent to become his παλλακή, to bear him children and to take no other husband or lover. But then she broke her promise and deceived Loxias.

In just what way she deceived him is left unclear. The details were irrelevant to Aeschylus' purpose here. But there are at least possibilities compatible with what we are told. It may be that in the myth Aeschylus knew, Cassandra was another Coronis, who failed to remain faithful to the god and took a lover secretly (cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 3). Or it may be that the correct suppletion for Λοξίαν ἐψευσάμην is τέκνων, and that Cassandra somehow frustrated Apollo's expectation of children. It must be admitted that either supposition would be mythically unique. In the first case Apollo's and Cassandra's relations, unlike those of Apollo and Coronis, would have to be unfruitful (it is hard, at any rate, to imagine a living child anywhere in the story), whereas Poseidon says at *Odyssey* 11. 249 that the embraces of a god are never in vain. In the second case we would have to suppose a motif unknown to Greek myth, that a woman prevented the conception of a divine child, aborted it when conceived, or killed it when born. Of these two possibilities, being unfaithful or depriving Apollo of children, the first seems the less problematic, since Coronis provides a partial parallel. As for the anomaly, "Poseidon's law," if we may call it that, may have admitted some exceptions in myths where there could be no question of a continuing race of kings or priests. (In real life the Greeks presumably did not expect the prophetesses of Patara to produce children every year.) Still, in view of τέκνων in the chorus' question, the second cannot be wholly ruled out. It seems in any case unwise to be dogmatic about what is possible in Greek myth or to conclude from this pair of mythical anomalies that 1206 cannot mean what it clearly does.

Understanding the passage in this way eliminates a further difficulty in the usual view. Here are 1208–10:

Κα. ξυναινέσασα Λοξίαν ἐψευσάμην.

Χο. ἤδη τέχναισιν ἐνθέοις ἡρημένῃ;

Κα. ἤδη πολίταις πάντ' ἐθέσπιζον πάθη.

If Cassandra cheated Apollo by refusing him her favors, it is hard to make sense of the verb tenses in 1209 and 1210. "Were you possessed by the mantic arts already [at the time you cheated Apollo]?" asks the chorus. "Yes, and already at that time I was [repeatedly] prophesying all their disasters to my fellow-citizens," she replies. Both πάντα and the tense of ἐθέσπιζον imply an extensive career as prophetess, and if "I cheated Apollo" means "I broke my assignation with him," it is hard to fit such a career in between the promise of her favors and the breaking of her word. If, by contrast, it means that Cassandra was unfaithful or did away with his child, a reference to her prophetic activity in the interval before her sin or its discovery poses no difficulty.²³

23. I would not press this last point too hard. Tragic poets do not always work out details of time with absolute consistency, especially when there is some good reason not to. The double time-scheme of *Othello* is a striking instance. More germane is the *Oedipus Rex*, where it is impossible to give a realistic and noncontradictory chronology of the murder of Laius, the destruction of the Sphinx, the accession of Oedipus, and the arrival of the sole survivor of Laius' party; see R. D. Dawe, ed.,

I know of no other treatment of the myth that says explicitly that Apollo and Cassandra were lovers, nor any that accuse her of infidelity or of depriving Apollo of the child he would naturally expect. But it is quite possible that a version known to Aeschylus and to his first audience has perished without a trace.²⁴ I have noted above that the version I have argued for would apparently be mythically unique in its sequel, and it may be thought that we have merely exchanged one mythical anomaly (a girl's successful resistance to the desire of a god) for another. But the exchange is much better than even, for it is not merely the regularities of myth but the text of the play that implies that Cassandra was ravished by Apollo, and the new version allows us to explain the text we have without recourse to the hypothesis that Aeschylus was merely being vague. Add that it vindicates the manuscript readings in 1207, readings usually rejected by editors on the grounds of sense but which offer no other indication of corruption, and the evidence in its favor is strong.

If the foregoing is correct, it will, of course, make some difference to the interpretation of the play. Cassandra is one of the play's most sympathetic characters, but she is a Priamid, like Paris. In its meditative stasima the chorus has repeatedly spoken of Trojan guilt and related it convincingly to the corrupting power of Trojan wealth. Now Cassandra's confession shows that she was not exempt from its effects; for if the suppletion offered *exempli gratia* at 1204a represents the sense of the original, as 1205 suggests, Cassandra's treatment of Apollo is shown to be the result of pride. Her initial rejection of the god is regarded, somewhat surprisingly, as the contempt of someone grown proud in prosperity. But presumably a similar attitude of carelessness where the gods are concerned, also born of wealth, lies behind the breaking of her word to Apollo, an act more obviously reprehensible and one that comes naturally to a descendant of Laomedon. More tentatively we may suggest that if Cassandra did away with her child by Apollo, the theme of children as victims of dynastic luxury and ambition, notably the sacrifice of Iphigenia and the murder of Thyestes' children, receives one further exemplification.²⁵

DAVID KOVACS
University of Virginia

Sophocles: "Oedipus Rex" (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 6–24. In our passage, however, the contradiction seems gratuitous, since Aeschylus could easily have written, e.g.:

Χο. ἤδη τέχναισιν ἐνθέοις ἡρημένῃ;
Κα. ἤδη τὰ μέλλοντ' ὥς παρόντ' εἶδον σαφῶς.

24. Cf. the nearly complete disappearance from extant myth of the figure of Pleisthenes, twice alluded to in the *Agamemnon*: see Fraenkel, "*Agamemnon*," 3:740.

25. I would like to thank J. S. Clay, H. Lloyd-Jones, and W. C. Scott for their helpful suggestions. Their agreement with my contentions is, of course, not to be assumed. I am also grateful to this journal's anonymous referees for salutary criticisms.

THE ODE AND ANTODE IN THE PARABASIS OF *CLOUDS*

K. J. Dover comments on the invocation with which, as in other Aristophanic parabases, the chorus of *Clouds* invites the gods to join its dance, that "it is notable that the Chorus resumes its role as clouds (Aither is 'our father,' 569),