

## NOTES ON EURIPIDES' *ANDROMACHE*<sup>1</sup>

Professor Stevens's fine edition of *Andromache*,<sup>2</sup> which treats all kinds of problems—linguistic, textual, metrical, theatrical, and interpretative—with great authority in a well-balanced commentary, and in a short introduction deals succinctly with the main 'background' questions, must have prompted many to look anew at the play; so prompted, I here offer some supplementary points, mostly of interpretation.

### 29 τὴν Λάκωναν Ἑρμιόνην

The adjective *Λάκων* is applied by Euripides in *Andromache* to Hermione (here, and in the words of the chorus, ἡ *Λάκων* τοῦ στρατηλάτα Μενέλα, 486) and in other plays to Helen (*Hec.* 441, *Or.* 1438, *Tr.* 34), Klytaimestra (*I.T.* 806, fr. 681 Sn.), and Spartan women in general (*Hec.* 651). It is also used of the place Sparta (*And.* 151, 194, 209, *Hel.* 1473, *Tr.* 1110, fr. 1083.9).<sup>3</sup> In *Andromache*, Orestes refers to Hermione as ἡ Σπαρτιάτις Ἑρμιόνη (889, cf. Σπαρτιάτης of Tyndareus, *Or.* 457); also, Peleus uses Σπαρτιάτιδες of Spartan women in general (596, cf. *Hel.* 115) and Σπαρτιάται of Spartan men (725, cf. *Tr.* 999). Σπαρτιάτις like *Λάκων* is applied to the place (151, cf. *El.* 411, *Or.* 537, 626, 1661).

Is there a difference in nuance between *Λάκων* (applied to Hermione by Andromache and the chorus) and Σπαρτιάτις (used by Orestes, who views Hermione in a very different light)? Possibly the latter is more polite or formal—cf. Σπαρτιάτης of Tyndareus, whose character is less compromised than that of the women of his family. *Λάκων*, on the other hand, may have positively hostile or uncomplimentary overtones.<sup>4</sup> The termination -*ων* denotes the female of many beasts, sometimes in a derogatory way.<sup>5</sup> It is probably no

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to Sir Kenneth Dover for some helpful comments.

<sup>2</sup> P. T. Stevens, *Euripides Andromache* (Oxford, 1971), hereafter referred to as Stevens. Other editions and commentaries cited by author's name alone are: F. A. Paley, *Euripides* (London, 1874), vol. 2; A. R. H. Hyslop, *The Andromache of Euripides* (London, 1900); L. Méridier, *Euripide* (Paris, 1956), vol. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Properly, *Λάκων* should be used only of women and Λακωνική of the place, according to the grammarian Phrynichos, who cites and censures Euripides' usage at *And.* 194: E. Fischer, *Phrynichos, Ekloge* (Berlin, 1974); cf. W. G. Rutherford, *The New Phrynichos* (London, 1881), p. 428. So far from observing this distinction, Euripides never uses Λακωνική at all; Λακεδαιμόνια is used once, of Klytaimestra (*Tr.* 249). None of these adjectives occurs in the masculine form in Euripides.

<sup>4</sup> Such terms would be particularly emotive during the protracted Peloponnesian

War. (On Athens' relations with Sparta as a criterion for dating *Andromache*, see Stevens, Introduction, pp. 15 ff.) Aeschylus' hostility towards Helen and Klytaimestra is never expressed in the ethnic—perhaps because of the earlier time of writing. Sophocles' *Lakainai* (frs. 367–9, Pearson) probably had as chorus Helen's maids at Troy.

<sup>5</sup> Examples are δράκων, ὄων, and κάπρων. The last is addressed, in comic abuse, to immoral women—e.g. ὦ σαπρὰ καὶ πασίπορη καὶ κάπρων, Hermippos fr. 10 K. and Edmonds. Some -*ων* formations are neutral feminines of nouns in -ων (θεράπων), but others are coinages for comic effect (ἀλεκτρυών, Ar. *Nu.* 666, Σκύθων, Ar. *Lys.* 184), or have a positively hostile or derogatory note (μαγείρων and ἰχθυοσώλων, Pherekrates fr. 64 K. and Edmonds). On this question, cf. E. Fraenkel, *Kleine Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie* (Rome, 1964), i. 147 ff. on (rude) κατὰ γυναικα.

accident that Medea is λέαινα (*Med.* 1342, 1407 etc.; cf. Klytaimestra in *A. Ag.* 1258), whereas, when Andromache has been bound brutally, like an animal, the form λέων is used (βοῦν ἢ λέοντ' ἥλπιζες ἐντείνειν βρόχοις, 720).

Perhaps it is an adjectival offshoot of substantival terminology that λάκαινα is often applied to hunting dogs (κύων, *Xen. Cyn.* 10.4, *S. Aj.* 8; σκυλαξ, *Pl. Prm.* 128 c) for which Sparta was famous, while other adjectives meaning 'Spartan' are not apparently so used. Helen was vilified as 'dog' already in Homer (*Il.* 6.344, 356). Euripides echoes this in the vivid bestial imagery used of the reunion of Helen and Menelaos after the Trojan War (πρόδοτον αἰκάλλων κύνα, 630). Hermione is throughout *Andromache* regarded as daughter of Menelaos and—especially—Helen, rather than wife of Neoptolemos. In view of the imagery at 630, and the common application of Λάκαινα to dogs, it may be tentatively suggested that the adjective at line 29 is not merely generally derogatory, but has the particular connotation 'bitch'. An actor might get over such an innuendo to the audience by a significant pause between adjective and noun.

### 330–333

Lines 330–1—or, rather, a couplet very like this—are cited by Stobaios (104.14) as a quotation from Menander. A scholiast informs us that Didymos censured the lines (though apparently without questioning their authenticity). Modern critics are suspicious of 330–2 on these grounds, and also because, as Stevens puts it, 'It is odd that Euripides should here insert another generalization on the same lines as 319–23.' Andromache is certainly not at her most lucid in this speech. The early antithesis between true and false reputation—ἀληθείας ὕπο and ὑπὸ ψευδῶν, 321–2—is not developed and δόξα, 319, with εὐκλεια, 321 is changed tacitly to φρονεῖν, 323 and εὖ φρονεῖν, 330. However, there are, in my view, insufficient grounds for excision.

Stobaios quotes only two of the three lines suspected, and the third certainly cannot stand alone in our text (nor would it make sense if added to the quotation as it stands in Stobaios). The couplet quoted is not identical with the Euripidean lines, though it might be a garbled version of them, product of a defective memory. There are two differences of substance: the reading εὐτυχεῖν in place of εὖ φρονεῖν and the exclusion of λαμπροί, metrically replaced by εἰσι later in the line—

Ἐξωθέν εἰσιν οἱ δοκοῦντες εὐτυχεῖν,  
τὰ δ' ἔνδον εἰσι πᾶσι ἀνθρώποις ἴσοι.

The reading εὐτυχεῖν changes the sense completely. The lines come in a series of thoughts on misfortune (περὶ κακοδαμονίας) culled from Homer and the dramatists, both Euripides and Menander being represented elsewhere in the series. There is no connection whatever with δόξα, εὐκλεια, or (εὖ) φρονεῖν. It seems possible that Stobaios was mistaken (or was misled by the compilation of an earlier anthologist) on two counts—attribution and sense—and that we have a misquotation from *Andromache* wrongly cited as Menandrian. It is possible that Menander, consciously or unconsciously influenced, expressed himself on fortune in a way reminiscent of Euripides' words on reputation. It seems to me less likely that two lines of Menander were written in the margin and mistakenly added to the Euripidean text. Didymos' judgement here is unimpressive: the

lines are 'too elevated for a barbarian woman in misfortune'—many of Andromache's lines, hitherto unsuspected, might be deleted on similar grounds.

On the question of content, I am puzzled by Stevens's assertion that ἐξωθεν and ἐνδον must here mean 'outwardly' and 'inwardly'. The most common meaning of ἐνδον is 'inside the house', 'at home' (Liddell—Scott—Jones, s.v.); ἐξωθεν may be explicitly opposed to this (A. *Th.* 201). This interpretation fits the context very well. Menelaos is 'glorious' away from home, as leader of the army; at home, however, he is no better than anyone else—he has capitulated to Hermione's λόγοι (326). The lines have a direct personal relevance to Menelaos: in tragedy, taunts are often framed in this oblique generalizing way. Line 322 is then a rather bitter parenthetical aside—in his domestic arrangements generally Menelaos is ordinary; in his possession of wealth he is admittedly different. Wealth does have force: money is important to Menelaos and his daughter, whose first words were a boast about the dowry given her by her father (147–53; cf. Andromache's accusation, πλουτεῖς δ' ἐν οὐ πλουτοῦσι, 211).

Line 333 has fallen under suspicion with the three preceding lines. 'The appeal to Menelaos by name is rather abrupt and the number of resolutions is unparalleled for a play of this period; also φέρε δὴ, mainly colloquial in the fifth century, is not found elsewhere in Tragedy, though this would not in itself carry much weight' (Stevens). For the appeal to Menelaos by name at the beginning of the line, cf. 424 and 550—the latter equally abrupt. φέρε νυν (*Or.* 1281) and φέρε (*Ph.* 276) occur in Euripides; for φέρε δὴ *S. Ant.* 534 (φέρ', εἰπέ δὴ μοι) and *El.* 376 (φέρ' εἰπέ δὴ τὸ δεῶν) provide some justification.<sup>1</sup> Metrically, the line is not intolerable. The anapaest at the beginning is occasioned by the proper name Menelaos. Proper names are peculiarly open to metrical licence and, for this reason, are excluded from the reckoning by some scholars who have analysed the frequency of resolution in Euripidean trimeters.<sup>2</sup> This leaves two resolved feet;<sup>3</sup> and the play does contain one line with two tribrachs (40) and one with two dactyls (1157).

A positive argument for the retention of line 333 is that it forms a transition, in this quasi-forensic exchange, from Andromache's 'prologue' to the main part of her speech; from general invective to argument about the particular situation. (The resumptive character of the line would be clearer if 330–2 were transposed to follow 323; but this is not imperative.)

### 395–405

Lines 397–8 are generally felt to be intrusive; excision and various transpositions have been suggested, as Murray's apparatus shows.<sup>4</sup> A simple expedient, not previously canvassed, would be to place 397–8 after 403; this eliminates the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles* (Oxford, 1954), p. 217 on φέρε δὴ with 2nd or 3rd person imperative or (as here) with jussive subjunctive.

<sup>2</sup> T. Zielinski, *De Trimetri Euripidei Evolutione* (Cracow, 1925) included proper names; later refinements of his work, as E. B. Ceadel, 'Tragic Trimeters in Euripides', *CQ* 35 (1941), 66 ff. excluded them. But cf. Stevens, Introduction, p. 18 n. 2 on whether exclusion is an over-simplification.

<sup>3</sup> Or one, if the first two syllables of

διαπεράνωμεν might be treated as one long by synizesis: might δια on occasion be 'felt' as monosyllabic? (Cf. P. Maas, *Greek Metre*, tr. H. Lloyd-Jones (Oxford, 1962), p. 73.)

<sup>4</sup> The precise meaning of ἐξικμάζω is uncertain, but it may be taken, with Stevens, as parallel to λογίζομαι. The contrast is surely between ταῦτα and τὰ ἐν πόσῳ, pace J. C. Kamerbeek, 'L'Andromaque d'Euripide', *Mnemosyne* 11 (1943), 47 ff., who finds, p. 59, an antithesis between the verbs δύρομαι and ἐξικμάζω καὶ λογίζομαι.

jerky transitions from present to past and back again. The transition from 396 to 399 is very smooth, if the reference in 396 is taken to be not—as generally supposed—to Andromache's son by Neoptolemos, but to Astyanax. The ἥτις clause (399) follows very logically on this, continuing Andromache's lament for events at Troy. Alternatively, the reference might be to Andromache's *two* sons: ἄχθος διπλῶν, 'a trouble with two facets' (the birth of two children) and ἄχθει τῷδε 'my trouble' (as an individual),<sup>1</sup> with the passage then cohering even more closely as a wide-ranging lament by Andromache on her lot in life. With the suggested transposition, τί δῆτα following introduces a second rhetorical question.<sup>2</sup>

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'even if the victim chance to be an alien' (Hyslop); 'unconnected by blood' (Paley); 'même étrangère' (Mérider). Perhaps, rather, 'outside the situation', i.e. uninvolved. Commonplaces on whether the outsider is affected by others' suffering occur elsewhere (cf. *A. P. V.* 263–5; *E. Alc.* 778).

#### 830–832

Stevens and other commentators follow the scholiast who takes φάρος to be equivalent to κρήδεμνον, 'veil'. However, the Nurse's reaction (of a piece with her attitude, 877–8) clearly implies that Hermione's action in discarding the φάρος from her hair had the additional effect of baring her bosom. The word πέπλοι in 832 and 834 refers to the same garment as φάρος above. (There may be a deliberate reminiscence here of 629, where the effect on Menelaos of Helen's décolletage is described by Peleus.) In Homer, the φάρος is a length of material which is generally draped to form a 'unisex' garment, but may also be used for other purposes: a shroud (*Od.* 2.97) or an improvised sail for a boat (*Od.* 5.258). Usage in the tragedians is similar: generally a garment, the φάρος may become a bedspread (*S. Tr.* 916). Two Euripidean passages suggest that the φάρος was draped with one end left loose, worn, perhaps, like an Indian sari, with the end draped over the head or the shoulder; λεπτά φάρη shade an invalid's head (*Hipp.* 132) and cover the eyes of a weeping woman (*Supp.* 286–7). Of course, the actor playing Hermione is not to be envisaged as a pantomime dame: token movements and gestures would give the effect. As often in Greek tragedy, an action is described, rather than realistically represented.

*The University of St. Andrews*

ELIZABETH M. CRAIK

<sup>1</sup> For a somewhat similar use of ὅδε, cf. *S. Ant.* 43, *O. C.* 450.

<sup>2</sup> For τί δῆτα introducing the second of

two rhetorical questions, cf. *Hec.* 311 ff.

<sup>3</sup> H. L. Lorimer, *Homer and the Monuments* (London, 1950), pp. 373, 377.