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The Marriage of Cassandra and the *Oresteia*: Text, Image, Performance*

ROBIN MITCHELL-BOYASK

Temple University

SUMMARY: In this paper I seek, first, to re-examine the bridal imagery surrounding Cassandra in Aeschylus's *Agamemnon*, and, second, to suggest how iconography, and its relationship to performance, can connect this scene's concerns more thoroughly with the two successive dramas of the *Oresteia*. Cassandra's language casts her as the bride of Apollo, in contrast to the staging of her entrance as Agamemnon's bride. Other aspects of staging, moreover, cast Cassandra as a surrogate for Iphigenia. Attention to language and performance also suggests that Cassandra's cries to Apollo Agyiates are initiated by her perception not of an aniconic stone block, but of a statue of Apollo. My main concern throughout the argument will be the effect of Cassandra's relationship with Apollo on the action of the *Oresteia* as a whole.

DESPITE WIDESPREAD ADMIRATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of its centrality to Aeschylus's *Agamemnon*, with 259 lines comprising over 14 percent of the whole drama, the Cassandra scene has received less sustained critical attention than warranted, aside from the essential ground-breaking work of scholars such as Karl Reinhardt,¹ who shows the important parallels and divergences

* Early versions of this paper were presented twice in Chicago, first at the conference, "Teaching the *Oresteia*," in 1996 at the University of Chicago and then at the 1997 APA Annual Meeting. For their comments I am grateful to members of those audiences, but, in particular, to Pat Easterling, Laura Slatkin, Peter Meineck and Kirk Ormand. This study then went into hibernation until it woke up finally in the summer of 2005 near the close of an extremely happy time at Cambridge University, where I was a Visiting Fellow at Wolfson College. I am grateful to Pat Easterling (again!) and to Robin Osborne for their help in arranging that sojourn, to Liz Irwin for her lively conversations on Greek literature, and to Julia Shear, for saving me from a particularly wild goose chase. I am, last but not least, thankful to *TAPA* editor Paul Allen Miller and the two anonymous referees for helping to improve the coherence of my argument.

¹ Reinhardt 97–105, especially 102–04. My text is Page's 1972 OCT.

between her situation and Agamemnon's, and Bernard Knox 1972, who elucidates the function of Cassandra as a third actor. In 1982, Seth Schein 11, observing the scholarly preoccupation with other Oresteian issues, commented that critics "give it relatively little attention." Cassandra has figured in some way into most recent studies of the *Oresteia*, with numerous individual insights generated, and we now understand these aspects better than before; however, there has seldom arisen a distinctive total view of this scene and its place in the *Oresteia*.² Thus we should scrutinize this scene more fully for its broader cultural resonances and its integration with the rest of the trilogy. Such a larger view is my project in this article, which seeks, first, to re-examine the bridal imagery surrounding Cassandra and, second, to suggest how iconography, and its relationship to performance, can connect this scene's concerns more thoroughly with the two successive dramas. My main concern throughout the argument will be the effect of Cassandra's relationship with Apollo on the action of the *Oresteia* as a whole.

1. VISION AGAINST LANGUAGE: CASSANDRA, BRIDE OF APOLLO

In a seminal article published in 1987, Richard Seaford 128 argued, "one of the threads of the famous 'Kassandra scene' is a sustained evocation of the

² Scholarship on the Cassandra scene includes Fletcher 23–32; Fontenrose 107–09; Fraenkel 1964: 375–87; Goldhill 1984a: 81–88, 1984b: 174–76, 1986: 25–28; Jones 132–34; Knox 109–21; Lebeck 28–39, 47–56, 61–62, 84–85; Mason 84–86; Mazzoldi 2001, 2002; McClure 92–97; Montiglio 213–16; Neitzel; Rehm 44, 50–52; Roberts 65–66; Seaford 1987; Sider 15–18; Taplin 1972: 77–78, 1977: 304–06, 317–19; Thalmann 228; Vickers 372–81; Whallon 55–59; Wohl 110–14; Zeitlin 1965. Lebeck is one of the very few scholars to give the Cassandra scene a scholarly prominence appropriate to its size. So persistent has been this tendency to take this scene for granted that even works devoted to Apollo in the *Oresteia* neglect it completely, such as Winnington-Ingram 1933, or marginalize commentary to two or three pages in a much longer study, such as Fontenrose and Roberts. Scholars tend to subsume the Cassandra scene somewhat piecemeal under larger themes and subjects, though most often with great insight. Among the more recent studies, Fletcher focuses on the dynamics of spectator and vision through film theory; Zeitlin 1965 does not examine Cassandra per se but weaves throughout her larger reading important comments on the sacrificial language in Cassandra's mantic speeches; Rehm and Seaford study marriage symbolism (on which now also see McNeil and, more generally, Redfield 2003: 136–40); Wohl centers on the exchange of women; McClure, Goldhill 1984a and 1988, and Thalmann focus on communication and language; and Sider and Taplin 1972, 1977 and 1978 (see index for multiple references), of course, discuss the performance of this scene.

negative elements in the situation of a bride.”³ I summarize here Seaford’s bridal scenario: taken from her father’s home, she arrives in chariot with her “husband” Agamemnon to his home; she laments; her capture and death are not metaphors of marriage but reality; and she is welcomed outside the home by the groom’s “mother,” Clytemnestra. I agree with Seaford’s rich analysis, but I think he has missed a very fundamental element to the scene’s subversion of nuptial imagery: her bridegroom is Apollo, and not, as Seaford suggests, Agamemnon.⁴ Or, at the very least, she is depicted, through different means, as the bride of both Apollo and Agamemnon. By presenting Cassandra as Apollo’s bride the dramatist looks forward and prepares his audience for important aspects of the next two parts of the trilogy, including the role of Orestes as a maturing ephebe claiming his patrimony under Apollo’s guidance and Apollo’s extremely problematic (for some) conduct during Orestes’s trial. Moreover, Aeschylus looks further back and recalls the earlier pivotal death of another maiden, Iphigenia. Taking into account recent scholarship on male and female initiatory patterns in Greek drama,⁵ I shall show how the wedding of Cassandra and Apollo further problematizes Apollo’s role in the *Oresteia*. Cassandra’s own contested status as the bride of Apollo will become especially clear as we consider the relationship between the drama’s text and its implied performance in the theater.

“Marriage is for the girl what war is for the boy” (Vernant 34). Vernant’s famous paradigm for the development of the young of ancient Greece suggests a reading of Cassandra as a maiden who, like Io in the *Prometheus Bound*, has unwisely rejected marriage in spurning the desires of Apollo. James Redfield, using Cassandra as a paradigm for how to think about such maidens in Greek myth, observes that the logic of their decisions does not involve their losing their status as *parthenoi* but does call into question their entire bearing towards marriage (2003: 138):

[T]he love of a god does not make a girl unmarriageable. She rather comes under the god’s protection, bears his child, and thus becomes more marriageable than before. To refuse a god is therefore to refuse marriage in general, like an Amazon; the love of the god is an ideal love, and a rejection of the god is a rejection of the idea of love, or marriage, and of fertility.

³ Since Seaford’s article, tragic weddings have been discussed in Foley 2001, McClure, Ormand, Redfield 2003, Rehm and Wohl.

⁴ Whallon 55–59 briefly observes that Cassandra is a bride of Apollo, but his argument becomes lost in more trivial issues, is not sustained beyond the mere observation and is integrated with neither the *Agamemnon* nor the *Oresteia* as a whole.

⁵ For example, Dowden, the essays in Padilla, and in Dodd and Faraone.

Cassandra thus becomes a perfect complement to the broader disruptions of conjugal structures in the House of Atreus; first, the seduction of Atreus's wife by his brother Thyestes, the consequence of which, the latter's unwitting feast on his children, forms the first subject of Cassandra's prophetic visions, and, second, the false marriage of Agamemnon's daughter Iphigenia at Aulis, which, as I shall explore below, is continually evoked throughout the Cassandra scene. The third and fourth disrupted marriages that Cassandra complements are, of course, those of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra and of Helen and Menelaus. Cassandra's own arrival in Argos has been brought about by another problematic marriage, that of Helen and Paris, a wedding Cassandra herself laments near the beginning of her speech (1156). Indeed, the Chorus earlier describes the battles at Troy to regain Helen as *προτελείοις*, "preliminary marriage offerings" (65).⁶ The perverted fulfillment of the disrupted divine marriage of Cassandra closes, as it were, the two open strands of the crisis caused by the dysfunctional marriages of Menelaus and Atreus.

However, I also posit here that, at least in tragedy, marriage is a central concern for the ephebic boy as well, and that the presence of Apollo, the eternal unmarried ephebe, as an agent of sexual aggression against young women in tragic drama is clearly a negative paradigm as he disrupts the development of these maidens and shelters the ephebes who commit violence against women, both young and old. Many tragic dramas that present initiatory characters also feature rape, whether as an act, an accusation, or an experience; consider here, for example, Euripides's *Hippolytus* and the *Ion*, and the *Trachiniae* of Sophocles.⁷ Certainly, rape functions on the symbolic level as the violent wrenching entailed in the adolescent's passage from one stage to another, and its frequent occurrence in drama suggests rape was at least a notional feature of its society. But in the Theater of Dionysus sexual violence is not necessarily valorized as a female rite of passage because in virtually every case rape gets the males into trouble when its perpetrator does not restrict his sexual drive to the institution of marriage. The Cassandra scene shows the consequent dissonances when the female rejects marriage and the ephebic suitor is a god. We could alter, for drama at least, Vernant's paradigm: marriage is for the girl what marriage and war is for the boy. To this formula we can add Seaford's 1987: 106 concise thesis, "Wedding ritual in tragedy tends to be subverted." We often think of Cassandra as Clytemnestra's victim, or

⁶ On this language of marriage rites, see Frankel 1950: 40 n65; Zeitlin 1965: 465; Lebeck 465; Seaford 1987: 108–09; Rehm 43; Wohl 72.

⁷ In the *Trachiniae*, this dynamic is split between the sexually aggressive Heracles, the abuser of Iole, and the ephebic, respectful Hyllus. Analogously, in the *Ion* the ephebic deity Apollo is (was) the rapist while the ephebic mortal Ion is fairly asexual.

the unheeded prophet, neglecting what she is first and foremost: an unmarried young woman, a *parthenos*. But Cassandra is, paradoxically, a *parthenos* maritally linked to two separate males (three if we include her rape by Oilean Ajax, an event seemingly excluded by Aeschylus). And to this end we should take into account the implications attendant upon such a figure both in the Theater of Dionysus and in the first part of Aeschylus's trilogy. The Oresteian Apollo is an example of the importance of matrimony for the young of both genders. Whatever one thinks about the function and historical plausibility of Apollo's notorious conduct and language in the *Eumenides*, one must also remember that Aeschylus casts Apollo as the failed suitor, the persecutor and rapist of Cassandra (whether actual or notional) well before he walks on stage, and his invisible assault on her during the *Agamemnon* strongly itself suggests a rape. Cassandra describes his initial approach to her as a "wrestler" (1206 παλαιστής), a decidedly aggressive image that is only partly balanced by the χάρις that he "breathes" over her.⁸ Thus, while he does not consummate his passion for her, Apollo's "courtship" of Cassandra is initiated with a violence which then becomes reified in the denial of Cassandra's self after she refuses him. As many scholars observe, led by Reinhardt, Aeschylus draws Cassandra with tremendous sympathy, underlining her victimization and heroism, and this is especially the case now in the face of her perverted wedding to Agamemnon.

In the presentation of the arrival of Cassandra and Agamemnon, Aeschylus plays on a split between word and action, between script and performance, between expectation and reality. But what, exactly, the expectations of Aeschylus's audience were at the beginning of this scene is unclear, since, while the ghost of Agamemnon in Homer (*Od.* 11.421–22) recalls that Clytemnestra killed Cassandra after attacking him, there is, before Aeschylus, no evidence for the story of her liaison with Apollo; certainly there is none in the *Iliad*, where she only appears briefly and without prophetic powers.⁹ If there was no precedent for the story of her romancing by Apollo, then Aeschylus in this scene really does confound expectation at progressively higher levels of

⁸ Fraenkel 1950: 555 complains, rightly, how "Modern prudishness has been busy weakening the force of this magnificent line . . . Apollo did not in a metaphorical sense contend for her heart or her favour, but actually wrestled with her. The god set himself to overpower the maiden, who feels and acts like a true maiden." Denniston and Page 1206 comment in a similar vein.

⁹ Thus, Redfield 2003: 138 wonders whether Aeschylus might have invented this part of the myth for this scene. If so, then *how* Aeschylus uses this marriage symbolism becomes that much more significant. For a discussion of the sources for the representation of Cassandra before and after Aeschylus, see Gantz 92–93.

intensity. Aeschylus starts with a Greek bridal tableau that seems like a simple extension of Homer's tale that Agamemnon brought her with him from Troy. Arriving on stage as a captive in Agamemnon's chariot and welcomed by an older woman, Cassandra clearly plays the part of the newly married bride journeying to the home of her husband, who seems to be Agamemnon, and this vision holds for the first part of the scene during the *agon* between Clytemnestra and Agamemnon. Clytemnestra herself picks up the cues from the "bridal procession" and uses marital symbolism, as Seaford observes, by playing on language such as *teleios* that evokes completion in terms of both death and marriage, creating a dual "grotesque marriage" of Agamemnon with Clytemnestra and Agamemnon with Cassandra.¹⁰ But, Cassandra is resistant to Clytemnestra's persuasive powers and reshapes Clytemnestra's metaphors to her own purposes, extending them until they assume new associations that resonate forward and backward through the trilogy. Until her antagonist leaves the stage, Cassandra remains silent, seeming to acquiesce to Clytemnestra's polysemantic ironies.¹¹ But she does not remain silent forever.

Her sudden speech, even more surprising in the light of Knox's 1972 argument about Aeschylus's new use of a third actor, changes this dynamic, for Cassandra's cry, "Apollo, Apollo, Agyiates, where have you led me, to what house," suggests that she regards Apollo, not Agamemnon, as the male who has led the maiden from her father's house to his, and her recognition of the house as Apollo's is signified by the twice-spoken title Agyiates, derived from the stone object she has just seen at the house's door; I shall return later to a full discussion of what, exactly, Cassandra sees, or might see, here. For Cassandra this is not initially the house of Atreus but the house of Apollo, since he first marks the entrance to the house, and this designation anticipates, in the *Eumenides*, Apollo's restoration of the House of Atreus through Orestes, of course abetted in no small way by Athena. Aeschylus thus exploits his audience's understanding of their wedding customs by initially misdirecting it to heighten the impact of Cassandra's information about her and Apollo. As long as Clytemnestra and Agamemnon control the stage's metaphorical system with Cassandra remaining silent, she is Agamemnon's bride, but her inception as a speaking character immediately changes her into Apollo's. Language conflicts with appearance, so it is to the drama's words that we must turn first before returning to image and action. As Richard Seaford (1984: 247) observes in his important study of the funereal symbols surrounding

¹⁰ Seaford 1987: 127. On *telos* in general in the *Oresteia*, see Goldhill 1984b.

¹¹ On Cassandra's silence, see Taplin 1972: 77–78 and, most recently, Montiglio 213–16.

Agamemnon's bath, "Most of the work done on tracing persistent themes and images in the *Oresteia* has failed to take account of the associations of the theme or image for the original audience." The associations of the marriage theme for the original Athenian audience, however, only become apparent when one listens to Cassandra.

Cassandra's words pervasively cast her as Apollo's bride. She stresses several times, in echoes of the language typically used for the groom's escorting of the bride, that Apollo has led her from her father's house, but Cassandra never says that Agamemnon has led her anywhere.¹² Moreover, Aeschylus, if he did want to present her solely as Agamemnon's bride, could have had her repeatedly cry to Apollo, "Why have you *sent* me here?" Sending is, after all, quite different from leading even on the most literal level. Aeschylus's reiterated insistence on the verb *agein*, especially with Apollo as its subject, has confused the few previous scholars who have noticed it. Joseph Fontenrose, in his classic article on the relation between men and gods in the *Oresteia*, asks, for him, a rhetorical question, "Yet, we must ask, in what sense can Apollo have brought Cassandra to Argos . . .?" (108), and then Fontenrose further objects, "In 1276 her *apêgag(e)* is hyperbolic, since Apollo obviously did not take her to Argos" (109). Deborah Roberts 66 also expresses perplexity as to why Cassandra says Apollo has led her to the palace of Agamemnon. At the very least, such remarks indicate an awareness that something is strange with Cassandra's language about her movement, but more recent scholarship on the Greek wedding and its representation in tragic drama can help solve this mystery. The vocabulary of leading is a fundamental part of the scene's wedding symbolism, but it is only intelligible if Apollo is seen as Cassandra's bridegroom. This language suggests not just the leading of the bride but her abduction, which itself was part of the symbolism of wedding rituals.¹³ Euripides, in the *Iphigenia in Aulis*, picks up this discourse and twists it, when Clytemnestra, because she has led her daughter from Argos to Aulis, presents herself as Iphigenia's *nymphagogos*, a term traditionally designating a male, most often the bridegroom.¹⁴

Gradually adding words to her reiterated pun on Apollo's name as the Destroyer, Cassandra closes her initial series of laments with urgent questions: ἄ, ποῖ ποτ' ἤγαγές με; πρὸς ποῖαν στέγην; (1087 "To where have you lead me? To what sort of house?"). Were this cry unique, the designation of her

¹² *Agein* is used of escorting brides; e.g. Lys. 1.6, Hyp. 1.5. Vickers 374 notes the "surprise" that her cries have nothing to do with Agamemnon. On bridal processions in general, see Oakley and Sinos 26–34.

¹³ On marriage and abduction, see Sourvinou-Inwood 1973 and 1987: 139–40.

¹⁴ See Foley 1982: 161 and 177 n. 6; Seaford 1987: 109.

leader might not bear much weight, but she returns to it several times. First she merely repeats, with slight amplification of her suffering, her lyric lament, ποῖ δὴ με δεῦρο τὴν τάλαιναν ἤγαγες; (1138 “Where indeed is this place you have led wretched me?”). And then she expands on the image of Apollo as her abductor during the subsequent section after she shifts to trimeters. She describes Clytemnestra’s sacrificial murder of Agamemnon as being in exchange for ἐμῆς ἀγωγῆς, “my abduction” (1263), with the insistence on the same language as before indicating that she understands the discrepancy between the referents of the marital symbolism that she and Clytemnestra deploy. In 1263 her abducting spouse seems at first to have shifted to Agamemnon, since Cassandra claims the murder is occurring in response to (ἀντιτείσσεσθαι) her abduction, but Cassandra’s larger frame of lament shifts Clytemnestra’s volition into merely a side-effect of a still larger divine action. Cassandra believes that Apollo has her here for death and that Clytemnestra is merely the vehicle for this last step, even though Clytemnestra believes herself to be a completely self-willed agent in killing her husband.

Aspects of Greek wedding ceremonies cast the bride’s departure from her house as an abduction and then death,¹⁵ both strongly associated with the Persephone myth that this drama evokes elsewhere. In this light it is not surprising that, shortly after naming Apollo as the one who abducted her to her death, ὁ μάντις μάντιν ... ἀπήγαγ’ ἐς τοιάσδε θανάσιμους τύχας (1275–76 “the prophet-god has led the prophetess to such a fatal lot”), Cassandra prepares to enter the house of Atreus, addressing the doors as “The Gates of Hades” (1291). This designation, given Cassandra’s vivid narrative of the house’s bloody history, which she sees as present and not past, casts the area behind the doors as the land of the dead, but taking into account the dominant symbolic system in this scene adds another level of meaning: Cassandra is entering the doors to fulfill her marriage to Apollo in death. Apollo thus becomes not just the Destroyer but Hades himself, and Cassandra his Bride, as a Persephone figure. The entrance into the House of Hades as a bride occurs just after she has unveiled herself (1178–79). Of course, Cassandra follows another Bride of Death in the play’s narrative, and thus we must consider her alongside Iphigenia, a topic I shall postpone briefly. The House of Hades and the House of Apollo become one here.

Another key for the marital symbolism of this scene is the reaction of the Chorus, whose words comprise so much of the narrative and which, for its part, expresses surprise about the union of Cassandra and Apollo. But then

¹⁵ See Seaford 1987: 112, and Sourvinou-Inwood 1987. Jenkins stresses the role of “mock abduction” in Greek wedding practice.

the Chorus recognizes the nature of the relationship of Apollo and Cassandra in its question whether their union produced children “as is custom:” ἦ καὶ τέκνων εἰς ἔργον ἡλθέτην νόμῳ; (1207 “Did you two come into the business of children as is custom?”). In his commentary Fraenkel seems to have intuited the marital symbolism of this scene, because his note on these lines points out that “the combination τέκνων εἰς ἔργον would recall to every Athenian hearer the solemn marriage-formula,” although Fraenkel himself made little visible effort to understand or explain for others why Aeschylus would intend such an effect. No such language accompanies her and Agamemnon, which one might expect more given the appearance of a wedding ceremony there. Again, part of Aeschylus’s art here is in the conflict between text and performance. I would also think that this talk of children resonates in Apollo’s speech in the *Eumenides* against the importance of mothers, and one is thus prompted to ask, perhaps somewhat mischievously, why, if indeed the father is the true parent, Cassandra’s rejection of Apollo left their entanglement so fruitless. The two issues of marriage and children are closely intertwined in the *Oresteia*. The death of Iphigenia cripples the marriage of Clytemnestra and Agamemnon, and Orestes’s absence is a sign, as Clytemnestra herself implies (877–79), that their union has been severed. Moreover, Thyestes pays for his adulterous acts with the slaughter and consumption of his children, the central horror of Cassandra’s vision (1217–22). The question of the Chorus to Cassandra thus becomes synoptic of this larger breakdown of the relationship between child-rearing and marriage.

Cassandra further underscores the role of her wedding and the identity of her husband by beginning the important shift from lyrics to trimeters with her provocative assertion (1178–79): καὶ μὴν ὁ χρησμὸς οὐκέτ’ ἐκ καλυμμάτων/ ἔσται δεδορκὸς νεογάμου νόμῳ δίκην (My oracle will no longer look from underneath the veil/ like a newly married bride).¹⁶ These words are spoken by a maiden whom the staging has depicted as a bride, about whom the Chorus uses a marriage formula, and whose own words earlier about Apollo strongly resemble the language of wedding processions; thus this bridal language, articulated at such a pivotal moment, extends the metaphorical field further by evoking the *anakalypteria*.¹⁷ By casting her true speech as a form of bridal unveiling she contrasts herself with the false speech and improper sexuality of Clytemnestra.¹⁸ This enigmatic promise shows how

¹⁶ On the shift from lyrics to trimeters, see Fraenkel 1964: 382–83.

¹⁷ On the *anakalypteria* in general, see Oakley and Sinos 25–26, 30–32, and in tragedy, see Seaford 1986. Ferrari 2003: 32–35 stresses that the term *anakalypteria* specifically refers to the day of the unveiling, not its event.

¹⁸ On the relationship between Clytemnestra’s speech and her sexuality, see McClure 73–91.

for Cassandra her oracle is identified with her marriage to Apollo, and, by verbally lifting the bride's veil, she begins her self-assertion that culminates in her trampling of her prophetic attire; her progress into clarity here, lifting the veil, stands for her as the consummation of her marriage as it accompanies her accession to death as a Bride of Apollo. Indeed the coincidence of her powers with the disruption of the normal marriage through her earlier rejection of Apollo marks a pivotal overlap between the garb she wears as a *mantis* and traditional Greek wedding dress. The similarities of the vestimental vocabulary (*peploi*, *stephanos*, *kosmos*),¹⁹ as well as the shared ritually marked status of priestess and bride, enable Aeschylus to locate Cassandra in an inverted system of associations that poignantly capture her predicament: a bride who is not a bride, a prophet who is not a prophet, both roles under the control of Apollo. Her discourse, however, is able to shift the meaning of her attire from prophetic to bridal, and back again. These associations then culminate in Cassandra's decision to free her self of the control of the male god who has tormented her in both positions by tearing off her prophetic/marital attire. If Cassandra's renewed distress first at 1214 and then at 1257 (οἶον τὸ πῦρ ἐπέρχεται δέ μοι, "Such a fire comes over me!") indicates a scene re-enacting Apollo's approach to her "as a wrestler," then these lines prepare us for actions that form both her second rejection of Apollo and the god's imagined stripping of her clothing in the final consummation of their marriage in death (1269–70): ἰδοὺ δ', Ἀπόλλων ἀντὸς ἐκδύων ἐμὲ/χρηστηρίαν ἐσθῆτ' (Look: Apollo himself is stripping me of my prophet's clothing!).²⁰ First she unveils herself and then her bridegroom reveals the rest of her body. She reacts to this baring of her self by trampling on the symbols of the one who disrobed her. For all of Clytemnestra's self-assertion against the patriarchal order that confines her to being Agamemnon's wife and that required her daughter's death, Cassandra's rejection of the god Apollo, who shortly later emerges as this order's chief spokesman, reaches a totality unimaginable by her female antagonist; Cassandra enters the house with a heroic self-awareness lacked by Agamemnon, as Reinhardt observed, but also later by Clytemnestra, who is here, not coincidentally, offstage.

¹⁹ Seaford 1987: 110 notes that *peploi* and *stephanos* are traditional wedding gifts and an unmarried bride is buried in them. See also Oakley and Sinos 12–18, 29 and Foley 1982: 161. On Cassandra's clothing as being that of a priestess, see Pickard-Cambridge 202–03 and Fraenkel 1950: iii, 584.

²⁰ A comparable moment would be when another victim of Apollo, Oedipus, bursting into his earlier wedding chamber (*ta numphika lechê*, 1242–43), finds Jocasta's hanging corpse, and, by removing the pins from her dress and thus loosening it (1268–69) before blinding himself with the pins, re-enacts their first incestuous union.

The marriage of Cassandra and Apollo will be finally consummated in her death, a Bride of both Apollo and Hades, as, figuratively naked without the clothing that marks her status and identity,²¹ she addresses the doors of the house as the Gates of Hades, uttering a θρήνος, a song of lamentation, as was typical of a Greek bride who saw her wedding as a type of death.²² Cassandra thus becomes drawn into the mythic image of Persephone, a movement which thus opens further comparisons between Cassandra and the other important *parthenos* in this drama. By becoming the husband of the Bride of Hades, Apollo, introduced verbally into this scene as a pun on Destroyer, has become Death itself. The complexity of the two-fold metaphor creates a gesture in which Cassandra, while rejecting Apollo as *mantis*, accedes to him as her husband in death by throwing her ritual garb to the ground, an unveiling that evokes the disrobing of Iphigenia which was narrated earlier in the drama. Iphigenia's robes, whose saffron color suggests bridal veils, become the cloths Agamemnon tramples on his path to these same doors, while the Chorus worries about men who trample on Justice (381–84).²³ At this point, Cassandra simultaneously in her two gestures with her woven garments becomes Iphigenia and Agamemnon in one.²⁴ Last here, one might compare this “offering” of her bridal attire to Apollo as evoking the bride's dedication of her clothing after her wedding and the bath she knows awaits her as a bridal bath.²⁵

Since this is not the first scene in the *Agamemnon* to deploy this metaphorical system of marriage and death, and because the trilogy as a whole makes such extensive use of narrative repetition as a structuring device,²⁶ we

²¹ One might compare here another Aeschylean character who enters a palace with his clothing, previously symbolic of status, compromised, Xerxes at *Pers.* 1002ff.

²² Seaford 1987: 113; Alexiou 220–22. On the symbolic play between wedding and funeral, see Redfield 1982: 188–90 and Redfield 2003: 328, 369–70. On the Bride of Hades in general, see Rose, and in tragedy see Foley 1982 and Seaford 1987.

²³ Scodel 120 suggests an equation of the trampling on the textiles with the sacrifice of Iphigenia. On the effect of Cassandra throwing down her garments and that action's connection with the carpet scene, see Sider 15–18.

²⁴ Both disrobings themselves could further allude to a ritual disrobing by maidens at the *Arkteia*. On the Iphigenia passage, see Lloyd-Jones 1952, Sourvinou-Inwood 1971: 339–42, and Seaford 1987: 125. On the *Arkteia*, see Sourvinou-Inwood 1988, Redfield 2003: 98–110 and Faraone. Macleod 202 also contrasts how Agamemnon and Cassandra each perform actions of destruction and waste with respect to clothing.

²⁵ See Oakley and Sinos 14 on clothing dedication and 15 on the bath. As Seaford 1984 has shown, Agamemnon's bath has funereal associations, which, if they come into play as Cassandra enters the house, would resonate in the metaphor of wedding as funeral.

²⁶ Flinthoff, Lebeck, and Taplin 1977.

inevitably return to Iphigenia for comparisons, and, in fact, there are quite a number of significant correspondences between the two figures, a general similarity that has not gone unnoticed in recent scholarship.²⁷ Here I shall argue that Aeschylus quite deliberately introduces Cassandra as a second, or surrogate, Iphigenia, an introduction made especially significant in the play between language and performance that I have been attempting to show here. A figure that embodies Iphigenia in some sense would be even more meaningful for the trilogy since, as Froma Zeitlin has shown, the memory of her sacrifice permeates the *Oresteia*.²⁸ Various verbal cues and patterns of imagery clearly represent Cassandra's extension and replacement of Iphigenia. To begin with a simple yet extremely important point, both Cassandra and Iphigenia occupy the same social position as a *parthenos*, an unmarried young woman. Cassandra may be "in reality" older than Iphigenia was, but Cassandra's experience with Apollo and her short-circuited marriage to him seem to have left her frozen in time, unaging like Odysseus on Calypso's island, and, indeed, like the eternally ephebic god Apollo himself. Cassandra's temporal inertia then is mirrored in her ability to make time stand still in this scene, and she draws the audience into the suspension of time with her.²⁹ Second, both receive deaths that are in some way sacrificial, as Zeitlin 1965: 466 observes, and that are cast as marriages. The rage of Clytemnestra, which begins with her daughter's death, achieves its fulfillment not just with Agamemnon's end but also with the murder of Cassandra, a sequence not coincidental for Clytemnestra's own demise, since one could argue that Clytemnestra fully crosses the line into groundless murder not when she avenges her daughter's death but when she murders, as her husband had, a young woman, but one who herself evokes the lost daughter, thus fully occupying Agamemnon's place in the vicious circle of revenge.³⁰

²⁷ See Wohl 107, who observes that the murder of Cassandra is equivalent to the sacrifice of Iphigenia and that the two resemble one another as being brides and victims (110–11): "Iphigenia died to buy back Helen, but instead bought Cassandra; and if Iphigenia is the price paid for Cassandra, Cassandra is killed in part to avenge Iphigenia." Rehm 50 also notices Cassandra's resemblance to Iphigenia. Redfield 2003: 97 adds, "In Aeschylus, Iphigenia does not consent to be sacrificed and brings disaster on her slayer—as does Cassandra, another whose death is seen as an unwilling sacrifice. Maidens cannot, after all, be treated as mere commodities or sacrificial victims; because they are 'speaking signs' the settlement only works when they are consenting parties to it." But, even on the most literal level, Cassandra is the only "speaking sign" in Aeschylus.

²⁸ Zeitlin 1965: 466.

²⁹ As Taplin 1977: 292 observes, "the dramatic time is, so to speak, suspended for more than 200 lines." See also Knox 114.

³⁰ On such an effect of revenge, see Zeitlin 1965: 482. Rehm 52 argues that the murder of Cassandra turns the audience definitively against Clytemnestra.

Clytemnestra indeed uses Cassandra's presence to remind her husband of their daughter when she begins to explain Orestes's absence. We must, as we imagine the actor speaking these lines, picture the theatrical setting in which a young woman of exotic appearance stands, unexplained and unacknowledged (strangely so), throughout this entire section of the drama, so soon after we have heard about the death of another young woman. Taplin points out that, despite Cassandra's extended silence, Agamemnon does relatively early order that she be well treated (950–55), and that Aeschylus must thus be drawing his audience's attention to her and piquing their curiosity.³¹ But this curiosity and tension are, I think, aroused already by Aeschylus with Clytemnestra's ambiguous references to their absent child early in her welcoming speech to Agamemnon (877–79):³²

ἐκ τῶνδ' ἐτοιπαῖς ἐνθάδ' οὐ παραστατεῖ,
ἐμῶν τε καὶ σῶν κύριος πιστωμάτων,
ὥς χρῆν, Ὀρέστης·

For these reasons our child is not here,
the surety of your and my pledges,
as is necessary, Orestes.

Fraenkel comments on the extended hyperbaton wherein Clytemnestra, who here speaks to her husband for the first time in the decade since the sacrifice of their daughter, initially makes a non-gender-specific reference to an absent child, παῖς, then casts the child as the surety of their pledges (and with a gender neutral term³³), before she finally names Orestes. But Fraenkel merely suggests that delaying the name adds to the ominous quality of its eventual release since the audience knew the story's later murderous course from Homer's *Odyssey*. However, Aeschylus presents a Clytemnestra who designs her language to keep her audience, and Aeschylus's, on its toes with a constant flow of ironies and double-meanings, and, since Iphigenia's death forms her main motivation, an initial reference to an absent child, not, as in some translations, a boy, surely directs us, initially, to think of Iphigenia; Tony Harrison's translation is not particularly subtle about this shift, and some scholars have

³¹ Taplin 1972: 77. Adds Taplin about the "vague" arousal of audience interest, "This is unusual technique for Greek tragedy." See also Reinhardt 97–98 on the withholding of Cassandra's name.

³² Winnington-Ingram 1983: 105 discusses her allusion to Orestes, but does not bring Cassandra's presence into the picture here. None of the recent critics of this scene have seen Cassandra implied by Clytemnestra.

³³ See Winnington-Ingram 1983: 105, n. 25, on *kyrios* as feminine.

noticed Clytemnestra's suspended referent.³⁴ But this rhetoric becomes even more pointed when we take into account the relation between words and stage action, for her insistence on the absence of one daughter would openly clash with presence of another similar figure who entered the stage visibly in the same chariot as Agamemnon, Cassandra;³⁵ the acknowledgement of the verbal deficit of one girl indicates the physical surplus of another. Clytemnestra is able to bring all three figures, Iphigenia, Orestes and Cassandra, together here in a single multi-referential sequence of words, with Cassandra awkwardly balanced in between Clytemnestra's own two children. If, as I believe, Aeschylus wants his audience to imagine that Agamemnon is partly aware of Clytemnestra's multiple meanings here then his subsequent request for hospitality for Cassandra reacts to Clytemnestra's probes in these lines.

This simultaneous entrance of Agamemnon and Cassandra is one of the many unusual aspects of this arrival which have been analyzed by Oliver Taplin, and the presence of Agamemnon with a young woman so soon after the choral narrative of his sacrifice of his daughter would thus additionally connect the two *parthenoi*. The choral memory is that he left with Iphigenia and returned with Cassandra.³⁶ Such a connection would also further motivate Cassandra's protracted silence, since, for the first half of the extended scene, Cassandra is mute, standing there, like Iphigenia at Aulis before the Achaean army, only to be seen by the crowd of men around her, gagged by the playwright like Iphigenia by her father. This parallel casts Cassandra as the unwanted substitute for Clytemnestra's lost daughter. For the audience and, I believe, for the Chorus, the silent Cassandra, waiting to be led to the slaughter, initially appears like another Iphigenia, but she eventually confounds this expectation, of course, by speaking when she regains the voice that Iphigenia had lost. In the light of the larger systems of associations between the two maidens, Clytemnestra's implicit recognition of this substitution seems quite important.

A number of key verbal resonances underscore the connection between the two as *parthenoi* who marry death. While each of them independently could

³⁴ Harrison, immediately before the naming of Orestes, writes, "the he-child." In the Greek, moreover, παῖς, without an immediately adjacent article, designates Peithō as the daughter of Atē shortly later (386). Winnington-Ingram 1983: 105 observes that Clytemnestra does not refer openly to Iphigenia, "but when she speaks of a child who should have been present, Iphigenia, as well as Orestes, is in her mind."

³⁵ On the simultaneous entrance, see Taplin 1977: 302–06.

³⁶ This image assumes that Aeschylus does not intend his audience to think of the tradition preserved (invented?) by Euripides in his *Iphigenia at Aulis*, that Clytemnestra brought Iphigenia. Even if Aeschylus does, the image of the succession of maidens would remain.

seem insignificant, taken together they create strong resonances between the parodos and Cassandra scene. Scholars have long recognized that the color of Iphigenia's robes, "saffron-dyed" (239), suggests the appearance of the Greek bridal veil,³⁷ but this color returns later during the Cassandra scene, when the Chorus describes the effect of her frenzy on them: ἐπὶ δὲ καρδίαν ἔδραμε κροκοβαφῆς/σταγών (1121–22 "A drop of saffron-dyed blood has run to my heart"). Why use this color for this emotion here? Yellow is the color of fear, as Denniston and Page note on this line, but I suggest the presence of this color in this passage has more to do with textual memory, with the Chorus articulating both passages, as the language and imagery of Iphigenia's sacrifice suddenly return and they return for very specific reasons. First, Cassandra has just for the first time used the word "sacrifice" (1118 θύματος) to describe the main and most urgent subject of her vision, and the Chorus's language thus mnemonically races back to the sacrifice it narrated earlier. Κροκοβαφῆς, not at all a particularly common word, here describes the blood rushing to the Chorus's heart, which it sees as the color of the blood of men fallen by the spear in battle. They directly recall the hue of Iphigenia's robes which are also falling to the earth (239): κρόκου βαφὰς δ' ἔς πέδον χέουσα.³⁸ Anne Lebeck 84 thus observes, "The Cassandra scene joins the flow of saffron dye at Aulis to the drip of fear upon the heart which memory of that sacrifice evokes." But that fear is now of another sacrifice, another offering of a *parthenos*. Iphigenia's clothing and then blood fall so that men may enter battle so that their blood may fall in turn, and these words return to describe the emotions of the Chorus faced with another young woman about to be slaughtered; even if they do not understand this intuition, their fear, once articulated, speaks volumes. I do not think that such correspondences are coincidental, especially as the Chorus is so confused,³⁹ so utterly in the dark, so reluctant to consider the truth here that Aeschylus guides us to these connections by presenting links in the language of the Chorus that the Chorus itself cannot understand. The text speaks through the Chorus. Language, action and outcome are virtually identical. The Chorus may further indicate their language's realization of the connection between the two maidens by denouncing, just a few lines later, the activity of prophets in general (1132–35); but, aside from Calchas, they have mentioned no other prophet, so surely their displeasure with seers alludes

³⁷ See Lloyd-Jones 1952, Armstrong and Ratchford, and then Seaford 1987: 124, with bibliography.

³⁸ Zeitlin 1966: 649 n.12 argues that 1121–22 is a "deliberate echo" of 239. The word βαφὰς recurs at 960 in Clytemnestra's description of the dye of the cloths, which are connected thematically with Iphigenia's robes.

³⁹ On the Chorus's cognitive processes, see Winnington-Ingram 1983: 212–13.

to the events at Aulis, which they sense, even if unintelligibly, are returning here. Last, Cassandra's vision, a few lines later (1172), of her blood pouring onto the ground "curiously recalls," to quote Froma Zeitlin,⁴⁰ the language of Iphigenia's sacrifice. I hope this recalling is now no longer so curious.

As part of the nuptial imagery, Iphigenia and Cassandra are designated both as wild animals and sacrificial, hence, domestic, animals, corresponding to Greek thinking of women as savage beasts that need to be tamed in marriage.⁴¹ Iphigenia is lifted on to the altar like a goat (232) and needs her voice restrained by a bridle (238), while Cassandra approaches another altar (1298) "like a god-driven cow," after the Chorus and Clytemnestra repeatedly call her a wild, freshly caught animal;⁴² Iphigenia's mother even says the feral Cassandra needs the same type of restraint, *χαλινὸν* (1066), as the Chorus designated for Iphigenia (238) to prevent her from cursing her father's house.

Even Apollo comes into play here, for not only does Apollo essentially oversee Cassandra's death by abduction and neglect, but he has indirect connections with Iphigenia's as well, and his involvement, or the acknowledged lack thereof, in each death is accompanied by a recurring concern with the propriety or absence of certain forms of music that are associated with Apollo. Calchas, upon realizing the meaning of the omen at Aulis, calls not on Artemis directly for help, but to her brother Apollo Paian (146), who, of course, does nothing; unlike Athena in the *Eumenides*, Apollo does not come when called. The Chorus, moreover, sings this in front of some form of stone religious artifact that represents Apollo's presence and that will initiate Cassandra's wild cries; whether this prop marks Apollo iconically or aniconically is the subject of the next section of this essay. As before, the one instance of connections to Apollo in itself could be insignificant, but it forms part of a larger signifying structure, especially as the Chorus already, as I have suggested, reacts to Cassandra's sacrificial language by remembering the death of Iphigenia. Replying to the Chorus's request that she say something "more auspicious and healthy-sounding" (1247 εὐφημον) than the death of Agamemnon, Cassandra asserts that (1248), "the Healer (Παῖὼν) does not preside over this speech,"⁴³ which recalls how the Chorus earlier remembers that Iphigenia used to sing

⁴⁰ Zeitlin 1965: 501, who makes other perceptive remarks on the evocations of Iphigenia throughout the trilogy.

⁴¹ For references see Seaford 1987: 111, 125. Sourvinou-Inwood 1987 discusses the representation of brides as wild animals.

⁴² 1048, 1063, 1066, 1071. Thus, as the reality of the imminent sacrifice comes into clear focus, Cassandra moves from being a wild to a domestic animal, and hence an animal suitable for ritual slaughter. But she is also thus tamed, like a bride.

⁴³ See Winnington-Ingram 1983: 214 n. 68 on these references.

paean at her father's feasts, while the impending sacrifice at Aulis is to be one with a feast that is, "without music" (151 ἄνομον).⁴⁴ The Chorus immediately responds to Cassandra's first cries by warning her not to chant inappropriate threnodies and lamentations about Apollo (1076, 1078). Further, the Chorus regards her cries of deaths past and future as a "songless song" (1142 νόμον ἄνομον), in which they repeat themselves from line 151. Her cries are not melodious paeans sung at her father's house, yet remain (1152–53) "fearful things, with unintelligible sound and in loud notes." But, as Cassandra herself says, there is no Paian for her story, just as there was none for Iphigenia. Thus we now see how the Cassandra scene reaches back to early moments of the play, and next we can examine, but after a detour, how, through the activities of Apollo, she affects the last play of the trilogy.

2. WHAT CASSANDRA SEES

Here I return to a topic that I postponed earlier because there was no way to handle it fully then without disrupting the argument: what, exactly and literally, does Cassandra see just before she launches her wild cries? Cassandra presumably moves from the chariot and towards the house, where she suddenly sees some kind of a statue of Apollo Agyiates, as she indicates in her third cry (1081).⁴⁵ The nature of the stone statue is particularly important, I shall suggest, because it integrates this scene with the second half of the *Eumenides*. When the silent Cassandra approaches the doorway of the house, she suddenly erupts into mournful song (1072–73) at the sight of a stone object that has something to do with Apollo. She repeats her mysterious initial cry (1076–77), and, as the Chorus signals each time that it understands, though with objections, her references to Apollo, she builds the lament by taking the second line of the couplet, adds the epithet, *Agyiates*, and then extends the pun on his name as *apollôn*, "Destroyer." Now, what precisely, she sees there to provoke this reaction is a question commentators seem to have sensed needs be asked, but until now discussion has centered around what might have been visible to the audience in quite general terms. Although we cannot be absolutely sure of the specific means Aeschylus actually employed for staging any scene, we still can use what signs the text gives us, as well as broader cultural evidence, in order to construct a reasonable hypothesis about this more contestable moment. While Taplin is surely right in his arguments that the ancient, but post-fifth-century, insistence on Aeschylean spectacle was

⁴⁴ The translation of *anomon* as "without music," not "lawless," follows Lloyd-Jones 1953, Lebeck, Denniston and Page, and most recently, Pucci 517.

⁴⁵ See Fraenkel's long note *ad loc.* On Cassandra's initial approach and her first lines, see Taplin 1977: 318–20.

wrong, we should still keep in mind the more modest, and thus more credible, attribution in the *Vita* that it was Aeschylus who first organized the *skênê*,⁴⁶ and what represents Apollo here must have been part of the visual field of the *skênê*; this is hence a part of the staging to which Aeschylus would have devoted much care. Aeschylus needed to have an object that was instantly recognizable to his large theater audience as marking the presence of Apollo, and I thus contend here that the only image that could have conveyed this would have been an actual statue or Herm of Apollo.⁴⁷ We need to keep in mind in this discussion my earlier points about the element of surprise in this scene, mainly that the speaking Cassandra is the bride of Apollo, not Agamemnon, since this revelation plays off against what the audience sees. On the relatively bare Attic stage, the image of Apollo would itself pique audience curiosity as much as the presence of the silent Cassandra.

Scholarship on this stage prop, starting with the commentaries both of Fraenkel and of Denniston and Page, has regularly commenced (and, for the most part, finished) with a range of citations of other dramas where this image might be present, accompanied by a description of Apollo Agyiates, "Apollo of the Street," along with a survey of some ancient evidence. Thus it becomes useful to consult commentaries on other dramas that require the same prop: Aristophanes *Wasps* 870 and *Thesmophoriazousae* 488–89; Sophocles fragment 370, *Electra* 1376, *Oedipus Tyrannus* 919–20; and Euripides *Phoenissae* 631 and *Ion* 185–87.⁴⁸ There is very little variation among the commentators, who agree that this representation was aniconic, a block of stone, either conical or round on top, or, perhaps, an altar with a flat surface.⁴⁹ But those options represent unacknowledged, substantial differences, which raise, first, the question of whether Apollo could have been represented by something more iconic because we simply do not know what Aeschylus actually used. Thus, Mastronarde 328, commenting on *Phoenissae* 631 notes, "it is unclear whether in classical Athens (and in the theatrical representations) the pillar and altar

⁴⁶ Taplin 1977 discusses Aeschylean spectacle. See Hammond 413–14 on Aeschylus and the organization of the *skênê*.

⁴⁷ Thus argues Poe 135: "It is hard to believe that this Agyieus, to which Aeschylus deliberately calls our attention, was not something distinctive and immediately recognizable to the audience."

⁴⁸ See Poe 131 n.67 on the list of tragedies needing an Agyieus. Taplin 1977: 319 claims that most houses had cult statues of Apollo Agyiates at their door. In general on Apollo Agyiates, see also Farnell 1909 iv, 148–50.

⁴⁹ E.g. Lee on *Ion* 185–87: "The image took the aneikonic form of a pillar with a conical top, but Apollo's presence may also have been indicated by an altar with a flat surface" Most of these commentary entries are quite similar.

regularly coexisted or were alternative representations of Apollo's presence." I believe that Mastronarde is right to suspect that the theatrical representation might have differed from what was practiced on the streets of Athens (or at least what our relatively late evidence suggests was practiced). Mastronarde then continues (citing *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* II 1.327–32) with a more important recognition that all of the evidence for an aniconic marker for Apollo Agyiates is non-Attic and post-Classical, and thus he wonders whether the stage prop, especially in a prominent position such as the front of a palace, might have been an actual image of Apollo. Fraenkel, at the end of his long note on 1081, confessed that Kaibel's old hypothesis of "image and altar together" is "worth considering." Still earlier, Reinhardt 100 had, unnoticed by subsequent critics, allowed Apollo to be represented by a Herm: "In der Gestalt der Herme, steht der Gott selbst auf der Bühne. Er ist bei den Klagen seiner Priesterin präsent. Sie schauen einander gleichsam in die Augen."⁵⁰ Reinhardt's last sentence, "They look into each other's eyes simultaneously", suggests a particularly potent staging of a recognition scene like no other in extant Greek tragedy, both figures gazing silently at one another until Cassandra erupts. Other evidence might help us at this point, and one vase painting does depict a tall Herm (though not Apollo) standing to the left of a doorway as a bridal procession approaches, an image that might have been part of Aeschylus's visual grammar here.⁵¹ The text perhaps even suggests something like a Herm, since Cassandra cries that Apollo is (or was) watching her, (1270 ἐποπτεύσας δέ με). Cassandra herself does not just see Apollo Agyiates here, for, once she begins to speak in trimeters she speaks of him in other cult names, namely Loxias (1208) and Lykian Apollo (1257), which further indicates some kind of broader icon for an Apollo shrine than just an Agyiates marker (whatever that might have been). Thus, the evidence for a non-representational image of Apollo is shaky, there are reasons for

⁵⁰ Knox 111 also sees Cassandra addressing a "statue" here. But it is further interesting to observe how much the nature of the statue changes the way scholars read this scene. Fletcher 26n81 accepts the traditional reading of an aniconic pillar and subordinates it as part of her argument on "the gaze": "Apollo, she claims, is watching her (*epopteusas de me*, 1270), but of course she cannot meet his gaze." But can a mere pillar watch? The syntax of this passage, however, does not guarantee that the participle refers to Apollo watching her *during this scene*, but rather is perhaps restricted to the period of her previous humiliations at Troy. Fraenkel's note on 1270 fully explores the possibilities, imaginatively granting that Cassandra's agitation could be disrupting the more normal Aeschylean sentence construction, and leaves a much more open range of readings than his own translation allows.

⁵¹ Oakley and Sinos present the vase on 61 and discuss it on 16.

considering an iconic statue, and Aeschylus certainly needed a prop that could signal Apollo's presence quickly and easily to a large theater audience. I thus propose that Aeschylus had placed near the house an unmistakable image of Apollo, and that image is what produces such a terrified reaction in Cassandra. Now, *why* Aeschylus would have done so is my next subject.

3. APOLLO, CASSANDRA AND ATHENA IN THE *EUMENIDES*: TEXT AND IMAGE (WHAT AND HOW THE AUDIENCE SEES)

In this section I show how, in the *Eumenides*, Aeschylus extends and reverses the imagery, both verbal and physical, of the Cassandra scene; marriage, Apollo and even, albeit indirectly, Cassandra, return. The failed wedding of Apollo and Cassandra has driven much of the action of the *Oresteia*. Without Apollo's stage presence in the *Agamemnon*, there would be no revelation of the true, ultimate causes of its catastrophe, for there would be nothing to initiate Cassandra's speech, nothing to project the trilogy forwards, and nothing to project it backwards for understanding. That modest piece of statuary, which we cannot see when we read, is the key to the Chorus's enlightenment and to ours. As the action moves from the first through to the third drama, the statue of Apollo is succeeded by a statue of Athena, and both gods then in the same sequence become embodied as moving beings on stage. Apollo's counterpart in the *Eumenides* is, of course, Athena, who herself has important mythic associations with Cassandra that were prevalent in contemporary iconography and to which Aeschylus might even allude, namely, the rape of Cassandra by Ajax in the Trojan temple of Athena.⁵² I shall thus tentatively suggest that Cassandra is somehow present during the *Eumenides*. As David Sider 13 has argued, visual elements can unify the construction of the *Oresteia* as much

⁵² Aeschylus's audience, during the *Eumenides*, seeing a young, terrified person, Orestes, suppliant at the feet of Athena (235–442), might be reminded of a very similar image that was quite popular on Attic vase paintings throughout the archaic period and into the classical, and especially in the two decades before the *Oresteia*: Cassandra's suppliance at the statue of Athena against the rape by Oilean Ajax in the Trojan sanctuary of Athena. On Cassandra and the *xoanon* of Athena, see Mazzoldi 1997. See Carpenter 209 and Mazzoldi 1997: 14–18 on the representation of Cassandra in vase paintings. Redfield 2003: 135 discusses the general frequency of the depiction of Cassandra and Ajax, including its likely fixture on the northern metopes of the Parthenon where it formed a diptych with the seizure of Helen by Paris. A famous Iliupersis vase, dating from around 480 BCE, with a prominent Cassandra scene is the one by the Kleophrades painter at the Naples Archaeological Museum; see Lissarrague 106. Of course, the depiction of Orestes at Athena's feet could simply be a typical suppliance theme, but the nexus of myths around the characters in this trilogy raise the possibility of further significant resonances.

as verbal themes, plot or images; therefore, the visible shift from the statue of Apollo in Argos to the statue of Athena in Athens forms a further unifying structure in the *Oresteia*.

First, I must address the question a skeptic might raise here: namely, why should we think of art and its use in the theater when we read the *Oresteia*? We should because Aeschylus directs us to think about visual arts by referring with regularity to painting and moreover, because these passages often invite their audience to construct a mental image of a scene.⁵³ The bound and gagged Iphigenia beseeches her killers with her eyes, like in a painting (242), and her father is said to call her an ἄγαλμα, a statue (208). The Chorus wonders about the visual depiction of Helen (801), whose departure, the Chorus earlier worries (416), harms Menelaus's capacity for enjoying beautiful statues. Cassandra herself, about to exit finally the acting area and the world of the living, laments how human life is wiped out like a painting by a wet sponge (1329). Last, in the *Eumenides*, the Pythia, struggling to describe the horror on display inside the temple of Apollo, compares the Furies to Gorgonic monsters she has seen in paintings (50–51), monsters who carry off the food of Phineus, the Harpies (though she does not name them). Taking together these passages which involve the visual arts, I am struck that all involve females, which suggests some kind of connection among them, even if unintended by Aeschylus; perhaps as a group they form a model for the commemoration of the feminine in Aeschylus, since so many, if not most of, the enduring theatrical images are when women dominate the stage, whether Clytemnestra (in all three parts), Cassandra, or, at the end, when Athena and the Furies have completely displaced all the male characters in the *Eumenides*. Nonetheless, painting and sculpture are clearly part of Aeschylus's semantic grammar, and they could thus provide a structure of perception for Aeschylus and his audience, even if a specific image, such as Cassandra and Oilean Ajax, does not fit squarely with Oresteian myth. The gap between received image

⁵³ On references to painting in the *Oresteia*, see Kranz 778–79. Ferrari 1997 discusses how Aeschylus deploys mental pictures in his narrative. Aeschylus's connections with painting also extend to the more monumental works of Polygnotus, whose paintings in the Stoa Poikile in Athens and the *lesche* at Delphi both included the aftermath of the rape of Cassandra. While it is now fairly certain that the Stoa Poikile was constructed around 460 BCE, it is unlikely that the Athenian paintings appeared before the production of the *Oresteia* in 458, but it is entirely possible that the prominence of Cassandra in Aeschylus's trilogy made her story newly popular and relevant, especially since both sets of paintings seem to have depicted a sort of trial for Ajax after the rape, an event mirroring the last part of the *Oresteia*. On the Stoa Poikile and its art, see Shear, Castriota, Stansbury-O'Donnell, and Wycherley. Stansbury-O'Donnell 217–18 comments on the similar themes in the works of Aeschylus and Polygnotus, as does Méautis.

and stage action becomes thus a site of engagement between Aeschylus and his audience. Now we can return to Cassandra.

One of the more perplexing elements of the role of the Cassandra scene in the *Oresteia* is why, given the sheer amount of space and emotional weight Aeschylus devotes to it, does the dramatist then seem to drop Cassandra from all subsequent discussion. Cassandra's last sequence of prophecy begins that the foretold return of Orestes will be part of a vengeance not just of Agamemnon, but of herself (1280–88); Clytemnestra will die in return for Cassandra's death and Aegisthus for Agamemnon's (1317–20, 1325–26). But the *Oresteia* never explicitly returns to this idea. Does the subsequent silence mean that her experience and her death are not important to the trilogy, and that her final wish is deluded? I do not think so, for several reasons. First, Orestes has no reason to act, consciously or unconsciously on Cassandra's behalf, but his actions form part of a larger movement, much of which he is unaware, to the point where his own words (*Cho.* 1042) about his exile echo Cassandra's prophecy (*Ag.* 1282); to ascribe to, or expect other motivations of, Orestes is to impose a psychology inappropriate to Aeschylean drama. Second, as vengeance for Cassandra, Clytemnestra's murder raises no extraordinary moral problems that require debate or provoke crisis; Cassandra as an agent and victim stands outside of the revenge cycle of the House of Atreus. Third, as many have observed, Cassandra and Orestes are linked by their shared status as young victims of Apollo. Fourth, in order to justify the murder of Clytemnestra in the *Choephoroe*, Aeschylus needs to suppress the memory of Iphigenia as much as possible, and Cassandra has become, we have seen here, too intimately connected with the language and imagery used to narrate Iphigenia's death. Fifth, our habitual appreciation of the importance and resonance of certain scenes in the first play later in the trilogy has been substantially affected by our experience of the *Oresteia* as a text read slowly, and not a drama performed with a forward-hurling momentum that makes scenes in the theater to the audience much more connected which can seem unconnected to its readers; here, I am standing on its head one of the central tenets of performance criticism to argue that one notices more, not less, about a drama's language and structure during performance.⁵⁴ Just as an audience in the theater does not forget Iphigenia when watching Cassandra, it also does not forget Cassandra in the *Eumenides* once Apollo bestrides the stage threatening every female in his presence. Moreover, the echoes of Cassandra's

⁵⁴ One might compare the experiences of listening to the individual movements of a symphony in sequence over time at home to listening to the whole in one sitting in a concert hall; the larger structures are more readily apparent during a live performance of the whole work.

prophecy of vengeance (Ag. 1282) in Orestes's own words (*Cho.* 1042) project her forwards through him.⁵⁵ Thus, the textual memory of Iphigenia might be at times strategically repressed, but Apollo's embodiment in the theater brings the experience of Cassandra back into play.⁵⁶

Further, the words and stage actions of Athena reconnect her with Troy, and with the characters, events and metaphors of the *Agamemnon*. In her first words in the *Eumenides*, she announces that she has just returned from the "land of Scamander," following the division of spoils among the Achaean leaders (*Eum.* 397–402).⁵⁷ Cassandra herself had been part of an earlier division of loot there, and the *Oresteia* connects those two moments by having Athena describe the spoils as ἐξαίρετον δῶρημα ("the choicest gift" *Eum.* 402), the exact same language, though slightly further embellished, that Agamemnon used of Cassandra when he arrived in Argos (Ag. 954–55). The symmetry of these words is underscored by their pronouncement by figures who have arrived into the acting area in chariots.⁵⁸ Athena's arrival in the style

⁵⁵ This echo thus forms a bridge to the *Eumenides*. See Taplin 1978: 36.

⁵⁶ I wonder also whether the omens and prophecies in the parodos of the *Agamemnon*, which really do not receive, within the drama itself, explicit explanation or confirmation of their meanings, establish a paradigm for the projection of problems and themes from the first part of the trilogy into the last. Thus, if the omen of the pregnant hare is not explained within the text, nor the references to "remembering anger," why should we expect or demand completely explicit connections for other aspects of the first play that are clearly echoed in the last?

⁵⁷ Athena's identification of Troy as the "land of Scamander" might echo first the Herald's reference to it (511) and then Cassandra's lament for her "ancestral river of Scamander" (1157). In the *Choephoroe*, Electra remembers the other warriors who died by the Scamander (366). The Scamander thus seems not just a geographical reference but also a source of pain inextricably bound up with the Trojan War. Athena now transforms the Scamander and Troy into a site of productive cooperation among Greek leaders. The harnessing of Troy's wealth for the god of the descendants of Theseus thus mirrors the larger use of the Trojan War myth in the *Oresteia* as part of the foundational myth of justice in Athens.

⁵⁸ How Athena enters has long been a subject of dispute because lines 404 and 405 seem to conflict with each other. Line 405 implies a horse-drawn carriage, while 404 implies she has come from Troy without such assistance. Taplin 1977: 75–78, 200–02, 388–90 dismisses the arrival by chariot, and the reference to it in 405, as being the invention of later Hellenistic producers who loved spectacular entries; 405 would thus be an interpolation based upon the later staging. Taplin is then supported by Sommerstein in his notes on these lines. But merely evoking the love of spectacle in later performance tradition is not in itself sufficient to eliminate the chariot, and Taplin further does not make the same objection to Agamemnon's identical entry, and does not consider the strong structural parallels between the two scenes that are an important component

of Agamemnon, with a pronouncement of the choicest gift from Troy, thus signals a reversal of the Argive king's destructive, hybristic homecoming, a large part of which involved the final annihilation of Cassandra, who is thus not forgotten here. Moreover, as Leah Himmelhoch 294, who demonstrates the strong echoes of Athena's entrance from Agamemnon's, observes, "this parallel's implicit equation of Cassandra with Trojan territory suggests that the marriage imagery invoked by Agamemnon's chariot entrance might also inform Athena's chariot-borne announcement of Trojan lands freely given."

Athena, in whose temple Cassandra was raped, could not save Cassandra from Ajax, but she can save the killer of her murderer and does so by allowing the avenger not just of Agamemnon, but of Cassandra as well, to go free, and she does so by embodying anew important themes and language from the Cassandra scene. Please note that I am not arguing that this is the primary thrust of the *Eumenides*'s program, but an aspect that needs to be considered. True, Cassandra is not remembered by name, but Apollo's activities in the trilogy's last play are vivid reminders of all she embodies, and Apollo is not the only reminder of Cassandra here. One central tenet of thinking about the *Eumenides* is that *Peithô*, persuasion, is a negative, female force throughout the *Oresteia*, embodied by Clytemnestra until the asexual Athena employs it to soothe the Furies, thus transforming it into a force for the social good. Athena, a dominating female, thus becomes a positive, more effectual version of Clytemnestra. But Athena also thus becomes a more effective version of Cassandra. Apollo first responds to Cassandra's rejection of him by denying her prophecies will be believed by her fellow Trojans, and thus, faced with the knowledge of Troy's fate, she becomes no longer able to persuade them of the truth (1212): ἐπειθὸν οὐδέν' οὐδέν ("I could persuade nobody at all"). But

of Athena's intervention. Taplin ignores that the long delay in Athena's appearance, a delay that creates great tension, repeats, and reverses in a meaningful way, the similar lengthy delay in Agamemnon's appearance in the first part of the *Oresteia*. Thus, line 405 is, to me, preferable to 404. Podlecki 1989: 164 similarly opts to keep 405 but delete 404 because "Athena's use of her aegis as a sail seems misconceived and her appearance in a horse-drawn chariot would have been iconographically appropriate." The unity of the image of Athena with chariot is so strong that it is fundamental to Herodotus's story (1.60) of the ruse of Pisistratus to regain authority in Athens when he rode into Athens in a chariot along side a tall woman dressed in armor, just like Athena, to show he had the support of their city's deity. Thus, once again, the consideration of traditional iconography becomes an important factor in how we read the *Oresteia*. Himmelhoch now shows, conclusively I think, that the doubts about line 405 are not based on a sound reading of the manuscripts and that Athena's chariot is an extremely important component of the imagery of the *Eumenides*.

the successful outcome of the *Oresteia*'s final and greatest crisis completely depends on the persuasive abilities of another *parthenos*, for, as Buxton 110 observes, "The final resolution in *Eumenides* is not the trial of Orestes but the subsequent argument between Athena and the Furies."⁵⁹ Apollo, the eternal epebe, guarantees his protégé, and doublet, Orestes the magical power of persuasion, the exact power that he has denied to Cassandra, but Athena in turn subsumes this power once Apollo leaves the stage. Athena's first words to the Furies after the vote are a plea to be willing to be persuaded (794 π(θεσθε), and, as her promises of new honors begin to soothe the Furies, she evokes the holy reverence of *Peithô* to them (885–86, 970). Apollo left Cassandra unable to help the Trojans from their disastrous decisions or to move the Argive elders from their paralysis, but now only his departure from Athena allows the goddess maneuvering room to stop the Furies from laying waste to Athens. There may be a significant balance first in the movement from the mortal who could not save Troy to the goddess who can rescue Athens through persuasion and then in the status of the two figures as females, especially as *parthenoi*, who are not controlled by Apollo. The rejection of marriage, as Himmelhoch 296 notes, returns in Athena's vote for Orestes since she claims to cast it because, "I approve the male principle in all things and with all my heart—except in the matter of marriage" (735–89). Indeed in both the first and third plays of the trilogy enlightenment only occurs once a female figure is freed from Apollo's presence; Cassandra achieves her deepest insight after she tramples on the prophetic regalia of Apollo, and Athena cannot achieve her great synthesis until Apollo has left the stage. Athena's role should thus be set against not just Clytemnestra but Cassandra as well. Cassandra marries Death, while Athena makes healthy marriage possible through her negotiations with the Furies.

Cassandra understands clearly what will happen next to her and to Agamemnon, yet she senses that the ultimate outcome of the house's ordeal will depend on a struggle between two invisible forces that she sees with her prophetic eye: the Furies and Apollo. I have already shown Apollo's agency, or at least how Cassandra imagines it, in the *Agamemnon*, but it is also important to connect the Furies here. In the *Oresteia*, both Apollo and Athena move from being statues to embodied agents, and so too do both Apollo and the Furies change from invisible malefactors to visible contestants in the trial of the man Cassandra prophesies will be her avenger. After Agamemnon enters the house, first the Chorus senses the nearness of the Furies (990–92), and then Cassandra, just after she "unveils" herself, identifies them as a "chorus"

⁵⁹ On Peitho further, see Rechenauer 66–71, 83–89.

which never leaves the house (1186). Fraenkel 1964: 376 thus observes of these lines, "It is clear that both passages point outwards over the single drama to the whole of the trilogy."⁶⁰ According to what Cassandra sees, this house thus belongs to both Apollo (in front) and to the Furies (above).⁶¹ Cassandra thus with her words first initiates the role of Apollo, and then she sees as present and projects the Furies into the rest of the *Oresteia*. Indeed, to a certain extent, she *becomes* the Furies, since, like the Furies, she is an outsider, a *parthenos*, she tracks down the blood of the house like a dog (Ag. 1092–3, 1184–85, 1309), violently rejects Apollo, and then restarts the cycle of vengeance by invoking Orestes as an avenger. Helen Bacon 53 thus writes, "Apollo, the god of purifications, has no place in the world of the Furies to which Cassandra is now dedicated."⁶² But, at the end of the *Eumenides*, after the fulfillment of Cassandra's desires for vengeance, it is Apollo who still lacks a place, as Athena seals her pact with the Furies. As she does so, Athena reminds all of the centrality of the *Oresteia*'s concern with the proper functioning of marriage and childbirth, two events denied to Cassandra because of her experience with Apollo. Her initial and most substantial promise to the enraged Furies is to receive the first fruits of sacrifice before childbirth and marriage rites (*Eum.* 835 γαμηλίου τέλους).⁶³ Marriage will now be restored. There will not be another Cassandra, nor another Iphigenia.

Despite this movement, nothing can change the destruction wrought by Apollo in Cassandra's life, which now stands in glaring contrast to Orestes's final victory. Orestes leaves for his ancestral (literally "paternal", 755, 758, 760) home, with the promise that his descendants, and thus children, will remain gratefully loyal to Athens. Both under the watchful eye of Apollo, Cassandra only completes in death her rite of passage while Orestes survives to full male adulthood as a warrior. This discrepancy corresponds to the transitional pattern in the Theater of Dionysus whereby Apollo oversees *epheboi* but persecutes *parthenoi*. The Theater thus dramatizes the dissonances implicit and inevitable in having the development of the young males overseen by an eternal ephebe who never enters into marriage himself and whose relations

⁶⁰ "Dass beide Stellen über das Einzeldrama hinaus in das Ganze der Trilogie, ist deutlich." Fraenkel 1964: 376.

⁶¹ If Apollo, as is possible, were on top of the *skênê* during the trial scene, then the positions of Apollo and the Furies during Cassandra's visions would be reversed.

⁶² Bacon insightfully traces out how Cassandra is carried thematically into the next two parts by resembling both the Furies and the chorus of the *Choephoroe*.

⁶³ Sommerstein observes on these lines that the phrasing *proteleous* suggests the premarriage rites of the *proteleia* and thus echoes Ag. 65, 227, 720. On these lines, see Goldhill 1984b: 174–75.

with females tend to consist of rapes or acts strongly suggesting rapes. How the Theater of Dionysus negotiates Apollo, the young, and sexuality is a fascinating subject, but one that will have to wait for a much longer study. We tend to think of Artemis as the child of Leto who shuns marriage, but perhaps we should amend that conception to include Apollo, who never achieves it either, no matter how actively his sexuality might run. What one makes of Apollo's role in the cases of Cassandra and Orestes depends on one's view of the whole trilogy, but, no matter how I look at it, Apollo's relation to the maturation of Cassandra and Orestes often seems the inverse of what one might expect, based on Greek cultural norms. His marriage to Cassandra is disrupted, so he disrupts in turn the course of her life. And it is Athena, not Apollo, who enables the final transition of Orestes to adulthood and thus, presumably, marriage.

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