

<p>1) Aristotle, <i>Rhetoric</i>, 1385b14-16, 1386a16 ἔστω δὴ ἔλεος λύπη τις ἐπὶ φαινομένῳ κακῷ φθαρτικῷ ἢ λυπηρῷ τοῦ ἀναξίου τυγχάνειν, ὃ κἂν αὐτὸς προσδοκῆσαι ἂν παθεῖν ἢ τῶν αὐτοῦ τινα... ἔλεοῦσι δὲ τοὺς τε γνωρίμους, ἂν μὴ σφόδρα ἐγγὺς ὦσιν οἰκειότητι, περὶ δὲ τούτους ὥσπερ περὶ αὐτοὺς μέλλοντας ἔχουσιν:</p>	<p>Let pity be a kind of pain because of what appears to be a deadly or painful evil which happens to one unworthy of it and that he himself might appear to suffer or someone of those of his own....men pity those who are familiar, if they are not very close with respect to intimacy, for about them they feel just as if they themselves are about to suffer.</p>
<p>2) Aeschylus, <i>Persians</i>, 197-199 πίπτει δ' ἐμὸς παῖς. καὶ πατήρ παρίσταται Δαρεῖος οἰκτίρων σφε· τὸν δ' ὅπως ὄρῃ Ξέρξης, πέπλους ῥήγνυσιν ἀμφὶ σώματι.</p>	<p>My son falls and his father, Darius, stands beside, pitying him. When Xerxes sees him he tears the garments around his body.</p>
<p>3) Sophocles, <i>Ajax</i> 1384 τούτῳ γὰρ ὦν ἐχθιστος Ἀργείων ἀνὴρ μόνος παρέστης χερσίν <i>Iliad</i> 21.230-231 εἰρύσαο Κρονίουνος, ὃ τοι μάλα πόλλ' ἐπέτελλε Τρωσὶ παρεστάμεναι καὶ ἀμύνειν</p>	<p>for being the man most inimical of the Argives to this man you alone stood beside [him] with helping hands you have not kept to the plans of Cronos who demanded you stand beside the Trojans and protect them</p>
<p>4) Aeschylus, <i>Persians</i> 743-744, 749-751, 780-786, 805-808 Δ: νῦν κακῶν ἔοικε πηγὴ πᾶσιν ἠϋρῆσθαι φίλοις. παῖς δ' ἐμὸς τάδ' οὐ κατειδῶς ἦνυσεν νέῳ θράσει: --- θνητὸς ὦν θεῶν τε πάντων ὤετ', οὐκ εὐβουλία, καὶ Ποσειδῶνος κρατήσειν. πῶς τάδ' οὐ νόσος φρενῶν εἶχε παῖδ' ἐμόν; (751) ---- ἀλλ' οὐ κακὸν τοσόνδε προσέβαλον πόλει. Ξέρξης δ' ἐμὸς παῖς ὦν νέος νέα φρονεῖ, κού μνημονεύει τὰς ἐμὰς ἐπιστολάς: εὖ γὰρ σαφῶς τόδ' ἴστ', ἐμοὶ ξυνήλικες, ἅπαντες ἡμεῖς, οἱ κράτη τάδ' ἔσχομεν, (785) οὐκ ἂν φανεῖμεν πῆματ' ἔρξαντες τόσα. ---- μίμνουσι δ' ἔνθα πεδίον Ἀσωπὸς ῥοαῖς (805) ἄρδει, φίλον πιάσμα Βοιωτῶν χθονί: οὗ σφιν κακῶν ὕψιστ' ἐπαμμένει παθεῖν, ὕβρεως ἄποινα κἀθέων φρονημάτων:</p>	<p>Now it seems a fountain of evils has been found for all my loved ones. My child has accomplished these things unwittingly by his youthful rashness. --- Being a mortal, he thought, without good counsel, that he could rule over all the gods and Poseidon. How did this not hold my son as a disease of the mind? --- But I did not inflict such evil on the city. Xerxes, my son, being young, thinks young things, And he does not recall my instructions. For know this plainly, men of my age, We all, who held these powers, Never could we be shown to have enacted such pains. --- They remain where the Asopus waters the plain with its streams, welcome enrichment to the land of the Boiotians. There the highest of evils is in store for them to suffer, punishment for insolence and godless thoughts.</p>
<p>5) Aeschylus, <i>Persians</i>, 725, 731, 733 Δ: φεῦ, μέγας τις ἦλθε δαίμων, ὥστε μὴ φρονεῖν καλῶς. Δ: ὦ πόποι κεδνῆς ἀρωγῆς κάπικουρίας στρατοῦ. Δ: ὦ μέλεος, οἶαν ἄρ' ἦβην ξυμμάχων ἀπώλεσεν.</p>	<p>D: Ah, some great divinity has come so that he does not think rightly. D: O woe, our army, trusted aid and succour. D: Poor wretch, what prime of youth of our allies has he lost.</p>

6) Sophocles, *Electra* 1409

Κλ. ὦ τέκνον τέκνον, οἴκτιρε τὴν τεκοῦσαν

Euripides, *Bacchae* 1119-1121

Αγ. καὶ λέγει, παρηίδος
ψαύων: Ἐγὼ τοι, μήτερ, εἰμί, παῖς σέθεν (1120)
Πενθεύς, ὃν ἔτεκες ἐν δόμοις Ἐχίονος:
οἴκτιρε δ' ὦ μήτέρ με μηδὲ ταῖς ἐμαῖς
ἀμαρτίαισι παῖδα σὸν κατακτάνης.

Euripides, *Phoenician Women*

Αγ. Απωλόμεσθα, μήτερ· οἰκτίρω δέ σε
καὶ τήνδ' ἀδελφὴν καὶ κασίγνητον νεκρόν· (1445)
φίλος γὰρ ἐχθρὸς ἐγένετ', ἀλλ' ὅμως φίλος.

Euripides, *Iphigenia at Aulis* 477-484, 489-492

Με. ἐγὼ σ' ἀπ' ὄσσων ἐκβαλόντ' ἰδὼν δάκρυ
ὠικτιρα καὐτὸς ἀνταφῆκά σοι πάλιν
καὶ τῶν παλαιῶν ἐξαφίσταμαι λόγων,
οὐκ ἐς σε δεινός, εἰμί δ' οὔπερ εἶ σὺ νῦν. (480)
καί σοι παραινῶ μήτ' ἀποκτείνειν τέκνον
μήτ' ἀνθελέσθαι τοῦμόν· οὐ γὰρ ἔνδικον
σὲ μὲν στενάζειν, τὰμὰ δ' ἠδέως ἔχειν,
θνήσκειν τε τοὺς σοῦς, τοὺς δ' ἐμοὺς ὄρᾶν φάος

ἄφρων νέος τ' ἦ, πρὶν τὰ πράγματ' ἐγγύθεν
σκοπῶν ἐσεῖδον οἶον ἦν κτείνειν τέκνα. (490)
ἄλλως τέ μ' ἔλεος τῆς ταλαιπώρου κόρης
ἐσῆλθε, συγγένειαν ἐννοουμένωι,

Cl. Oh child, child, pity the one who bore you!

Mess: and he said, touching her cheek:
It is I, mother, your child
Pentheus, whom you bore in the house of Echion.
Pity me, mother, and don't because of my
sins kill your child.

Mess. We are undone, mother. I pity you
and my sister here and my dead brother,
for beloved, he became hated, nevertheless he is beloved.

Men. Upon seeing a tear fall from your eyes
I pitied you and I myself let loose one in return for you and
I withdraw from my old arguments,
not a terror to you, but I am of the very sort that you are
now. And I exhort you not to kill your child
nor to prefer my interests for your own. For it is not just
that you weep while my affairs are sweet
and that your children die while mine see the light of day.

I was foolish and raw until, looking at matters from close
up, I saw what kind of thing it was to kill a child. Besides,
pity for the distressed maiden has come upon me when I
consider kinship.

7) Aeschylus, *Persians* 734-737, 832-836

A: μονάδα δὲ Ξέρξην ἔρημόν φασιν οὐ πολλῶν μέτα—
Δ: πῶς τε δὴ καὶ ποῖ τελευτᾶν; ἔστι τις σωτηρία; (735)
A: ἄσμενον μολεῖν γέφυραν γαῖν δυοῖν ζευκτηρίαν.
Δ: καὶ πρὸς ἡπειρον σεσῶσθαι τήνδε, τοῦτ' ἐτήτυμον;

Δ: σὺ δ' ὦ γεραῖα μήτερ ἢ Ξέρξου φίλη,
ἐλθοῦς ἐς οἶκους κόσμον ὅστις εὐπρεπῆς
λαβοῦς ὑπαντίαζε παιδί. πάντα γὰρ
κακῶν ὑπ' ἄλγους λακίδες ἀμφὶ σώματι (835)
στημορραγοῦσι ποικίλων ἐσθημάτων.

A: But solitary, Xerxes alone they say with not many –
D: In truth, how and where [do they say] did he end up? Is
there any means of safety [for him]?
A: To come to the bridge yoking two lands was a joy.
D: and [he] was safe on this land, is this true?

You, beloved, aged mother of Xerxes,
Go into the house and taking whatever garment is
decent, meet the child. For due to the grief
At his evils the embroidered clothing
Around his body has been torn to complete shreds.

Pitying Xerxes in Aeschylus' *Persians*
Dr. Teresa Danze, University of Dallas

CAMWS 116th Annual Meeting
May 28, 2020

Abstract: <https://camws.org/sites/default/files/meeting2020/abstracts/2335PityingXerxes.pdf>

Bibliography:

Garvie, A. F. 2009. *Aeschylus: Persae*. New York.

Johnson, James F. 2016. *Acts of Compassion in Greek Tragic Drama*. Norman.

Konstan, David. 2006. *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks: Studies in Aristotle and Classical Literature*.
Toronto.

Sternberg, Rachel Hall. 2005. *Pity and Power in Ancient Athens*. New York.