

Water, Food, Life, and Death in Euripides' *Phoenissae*
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I.A. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 730

Ετ. **βαθύς** γέ τοι **Διρκαῖος** ἀναχωρεῖν πόρος.

Indeed, **Dirce's** crossing is **deep** for a retreat.

I.B. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 819-827

ἔτεκες, ὦ Γαί', ἔτεκές ποτε,
βάρβαρον ὡς ἀκοὰν ἐδάην ἐδάην ποτ' ἐν
οἴκοις,
γένναν ὀδοντοφυᾶ, Θήβαις κάλλιστον
ὄνειδος·
Ἄρμονίας δέ ποτ' εἰς ὑμεναίους
ἤλυθον οὐρανόιδαι, φόρμιγγί τε τείχεα
Θήβας
τᾶς Ἀμφιονίας τε λύρας ὑπο πύργος ἀνέστα
διδύμων ποταμῶν πόρον ἀμφὶ μέσον,
Δίρκα χλοεροτρόφον ἄ πεδίον
πρόπαρ **Ἴσμηνοῦ** καταδεύει,

Earth, I heard, I heard in my home a strange
story
that you bore, you once bore,
a race born from the teeth of a snake with blood-
red crest,
feeding on monsters, as a magnificent reproach
to Thebes;
and once the sons of Ouranos came to the
wedding of Harmonia,
and the walls of Thebes rose to the harp of
Amphion and the tower to his lyre
between the courses of **the twin streams**,
where **Dirce** waters the plain producing green
grass before **Ismenus**...

I.C. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 99-102

ἀλλ' οὔτις ἀστῶν τοῖσδε χοίμπεται δόμοις·
κέδρου παλαιὰν κλίμακ' ἐκπέρα ποδί,
σκόπει δὲ πεδία καὶ παρ' **Ἴσμηνοῦ ῥοᾶς**
Δίρκης τε νᾶμα πολεμίων στράτευμ' ὄσον.

But none of the citizens comes near these halls;
go up the ancient cedar stairs,
look at the plains and how great an enemy host
is beside **the streams of Ismenus and the**
spring of Dirce.

I.D. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 125-131

Θε. οὔτος Μυκηναῖος μὲν αὐδάται γένος,
Λερναία δ' οἰκεῖ νάμαθ', Ἴππομέδων
ἄναξ.

Αν. ἔἴ ὡς γαῦρος, ὡς φοβερός εἰσιδεῖν,
γίγαντι γηγενέται προσόμοιος
ἀστερωπὸς (ὡς) ἐν γραφαῖσιν, οὐχὶ
πρόσ-
φορος ἀμερίωι γένναι.

Θε. τὸν δ' ἐξαιμείβοντ' οὐχ ὄραις **Δίρκης**
ῥόδωρ
λοχαγόν;

Servant: this man claims to be Mycenaean by
lineage,
and lives by Lerna's streams, the lord
Hippomedon.

Antigone: Ah, ah! How haughty, how fearful to
behold,
like an earth-born giant in painting,
dazzling-faced, unlike the human race.

Servant: Do you see the commander crossing
Dirce's water?

II. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 185-189

Αν. ὄδ' ἐστίν, αἰχμαλώτιδας
ὄς δορὶ Θηβαίας Μυκηνησίην
()
Λερναῖαι τε δώσειν τριαίνας,
Ποσειδανίους Ἀμυμωνίους
ῥύδασι δουλείαν περιβαλόν.

186-9 lacunam alicubi latere vid. Hermann, Matthiae

Antigone: This is the man (Capaneus) who
threatened to give
captive women from Thebes to the Mycenaeans
by the spear
and to **the trident of Lerna**;
enveloping them in slavery for the waters of
Amymone,
created by Poseidon.

III. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 573-576

πῶς δ' αὖ κατάρξει θυμάτων, ἔλῶν πάτραν,
καὶ σκύλα γράφεις πῶς ἐπ' Ἰνάχου ῥοαῖς;
Θήβας πυρώσας τάσδε Πολυνείκης θεοῖς
ἀσπίδας ἔθηκε;

How again will you undertake sacrifices, after
seizing your country,
and how will you inscribe your spoils by the
waters of Inachus:
“Having set fire to Thebes, Polyneices dedicated
these shields to the gods?”

IV. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 347-350

ἀνυμέναια δ' Ἴσμηνὸς ἐκηδεύθη
λουτροφόρου χλιδᾶς, ἀνὰ δὲ Θηβαίαν
πόλιν ἐσιγάθη σᾶς ἔσοδοι νύμφας.

Ismenus contracted a marriage without the
nuptial song/unwedded
of the marriage bath, and the arrival of your
bride was kept in silence
through the Theban city.

V. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 203-213

Τύριον οἶδμα λιπούσ' ἔβαν
ἀκροθίνια Λοξίαι
Φοινίσσας ἀπὸ νάσου
Φοίβωι δούλα μελάθρων,
ἴν' ὑπὸ δειράσι νιφοβόλοις
Παρνασοῦ κατενάσθη,
Ἴόνιον κατὰ πόντον ἐλά-
ται πλεύσασα **περιρῶτων**
ὑπὲρ ἀκαρπίστων πεδίων
Σικελίας Ζεφύρου πνοαῖς
ἰπεύσαντος ἐν οὐρανῶι
κάλλιστον κελάδημα.

Leaving the Tyrian swell, I have come
as a first-offering to Loxias
from the Phoenician island,
a temple-slave for Phoebus,
where he has settled under the snow-clad ridges
of Parnassus;
sailing along the Ionian sea with an oar
over Sicily's fruitless plain surrounded with
water, while the Zephyr rode in the heavens
a most lovely rushing sound with its breezes.

VI. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 931-935

δεῖ τόνδε θαλάμαις, οὐ δράκων ὁ γηγενῆς
ἐγένετο **Δίρκης ναμάτων** ἐπίσκοπος,
σφαγέντα φόνιον αἶμα γῆι δοῦναι χοᾶς
Κάδμου, παλαιῶν Ἄρεος ἐκ μηνιμάτων,
ὅς γηγενεὶ δράκοντι τιμωρεῖ φόνον.

It is necessary to sacrifice this (boy) in caves
where the earth-born monster arose, the guardian
of Dirce's streams, to give in libation blood of
murder to the land of Cadmus, the ancient cause
of Ares' wrath, which avenges the death of the
earth-born monster.

VII. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 1026-1031

Χο. **Διρκαίων** ἅ ποτ' ἐκ
τόπων νέους πεδαίρουσ'
ἄλυρον ἀμφὶ μούσαν
ὀλομέναν τ' Ἐρινὺν
ἔφερεις ἔφερεις ἄγεα πατρίδι
φόνια· φόνιος ἐκ θεῶν
ὅς τάδ' ἦν ὁ πράξας.

You who once, lifting up and removing young
men from Dirce's regions,
you brought, you brought with a lyreless sound
and a baneful Erinyswoes of murder to our
country.
Murderous the one of the gods who did this.

VIII. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 222-231

Χο. ἔτι δὲ Κασταλίας ὕδωρ
περιμένει κόμας ἐμάς
δεῦσαι παρθένιον χλιδᾶν
Φοιβείαισι λατρεῖαις.

ὦ λάμπουσα πέτρα πυρὸς
δικόρυφον σέλας ὑπὲρ ἄκρων
βακχείων Διονύσου,
οἶνα θ' ἂ καθαμέριον
στάξεις τὸν **πολύκαρπον οἶ-**
νάνθας ἰεῖσα βότρυν,

Still the water of Castalia waits for me,
to moisten my hair, my maiden glory
in my service to Phoebus.

Oh rock, shining your double-peaked blaze of
fire over the Bacchic-filled heights of Dionysus,
and you, vine, which sending forth let drop your
daily full-fruited grape-cluster from the grape-
bloom...

IX. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 1710-3

Αν. ἴθ' ἐς φυγὰν τάλαιναν· ὄρεγε χέρα
φίλαν,

πάτερ γεραιέ, πομπίμαν
ἔχων ἔμ' ὥστε ναυσίπομπον αὔραν.

Antigone (to Oedipus): Go into wretched exile;
reach out your dear hand,
aged father, having me as escort
like a breeze escorting a ship.

X. Thucydides 6.92.4

καὶ φιλόπολις οὗτος ὀρθῶς, οὐχ ὅς ἂν τὴν
ἑαυτοῦ ἀδίκως ἀπολέσας μὴ ἐπίη, ἀλλ' ὅς ἂν
ἐκ παντὸς τρόπου διὰ τὸ ἐπιθυμεῖν πειραθῆ
αὐτὴν ἀναλαβεῖν.

The true lover of his country is not he who,
having lost it unjustly, does not attack it, but
rather he who, because of desire, will attempt in
every way to recover it.

XI. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 174

σφάγια δ' ἄμ' αὐτῷ, γῆς φιλαιμάτου ῥοαί

Sacrificial victims with him (Amphiarus),
streams of the bloodthirsty earth

XII. Thucydides 8.46.1 and 8.46.3 (411 BCE)

[1] παρήνει δὲ καὶ τῷ Τισσαφέρνει μὴ ἄγαν
ἐπείγεσθαι τὸν πόλεμον διαλύσαι, μηδὲ
βουληθῆναι κομίσαντα ἢ ναῦς Φοινίσσας ἄσπερ
παρεσκευάζετο ἢ Ἑλλησι πλέοσι μισθὸν
πορίζοντα τοῖς αὐτοῖς τῆς τε γῆς καὶ τῆς
θαλάσσης τὸ κράτος δοῦναι...

[1] Alcibiades also advised Tissaphernes not to
be in a hurry to put an end to the war, and not to
be willing to either bring up the Phoenician
ships which he was intending or to give more
pay to the Greek sailors, putting power into the
same people on land and sea...

[1] ἐπιτηδειοτέρους τε ἔφη τοὺς Ἀθηναίους
εἶναι κοινωνοὺς αὐτῷ τῆς ἀρχῆς: ἦσσαν γὰρ
τῶν κατὰ γῆν ἐφίεσθαι, τὸν λόγον τε
ξυμφορώτατον καὶ τὸ ἔργον ἔχοντας
πολεμεῖν...

[3] Alcibiades also said that the Athenians were
more suitable partners in empire; they were less
likely to attack by land, and their way of waging
war was both in principle and practice was most
expedient (i.e., to the king)...

XIII. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 1604-1607

Οἱ. οὐ σῶιζόμεσθα — Ταρτάρου γὰρ
ἴφελεν

ἔλθειν Κιθαιρὸν εἰς ἄβυσσα χάσματα,
ὅς μ' οὐ διώλεσ', ἀλλὰ δουλεύσαι †τε μοι
δαίμων ἔδωκε Πόλυβον ἀμφὶ δεσπότην.†

1604-7 del. Hartung (1606-7 Apitz)

1604 ταρτάρω B δ' ἄρ' Heimsoeth 1606-7
locus desperatus 1606 ὡς μ' M οὐκ ὤλεσ' r
lacunam post ἀλλὰ stat. Murray δουλεύσαι τε μοι
fere ω +: δουλ. τε με Or: δουλεύσοντά με post
Valck. Porson, alii alia 1607 δαίμων ἔδωκε
πόλυβον ἔδωκεν fere ω + (δέδωκε A, ἔθηκε
Lenting, ἔσωιζε Wecklein): δαίμων πόλυβον
ἔδωκε AaZb: πόλ. ἐξέδωκεν χ: πρὸς πόλ.
ἐξέδωκεν T

From that (fate) I was saved — if only Cithaeron
had gone to the bottomless chasm of Tartarus,
which did not destroy me, but
<possible lacuna of one line>
gave me as a deity to be a slave
around Polybus as master.

XIV. Hesiod, *Theogony* 736-741

ἔνθα δὲ γῆς δνοφερῆς καὶ Ταρτάρου
ἠερόεντος
πόντου τ' ἀτρυγέτιο καὶ οὐρανοῦ
ἀστερόεντος
ἐξείης πάντων πηγῶν καὶ πείρατ' ἔασιν
ἀργαλέ' εὐρώεντα, τά τε στυγέουσι θεοὶ περ,
χάσμα μέγ', οὐδέ κε πάντα τελεσφόρον εἰς
ἐνιαυτὸν
οὐδας ἵκοιτ', εἰ πρῶτα πυλέων ἐντοσθε
γένοιτο,

And there, in order, are the springs (sources) and
limits of the gloomy earth and misty Tartarus,
and of the fruitless sea and starry heaven,
loathsome and dank, which even the gods hate, a
great gulf (chasm), and once one was inside its
gates, he would not get to the ground until a year
had reached its end...

XV. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 1753-7

Av. Καδμείαν ὦι
νεβρίδα στολιδωσαμένα ποτ' ἐγὼ
Σεμέλας θίασον
ιερόν ὄρεσιν ἀνεχόρευσα,
χάριν ἀχάριτον εἰς θεοὺς διδοῦσα;

Antigone: Do you mean how I once danced a sacred Bacchic revel of Semele to him (Dionysus) in the mountains, dressed in a Cadmean fawnskin, rendering a serviceless service to the gods?

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