

Sophocles' *Antigone* and the Biological Imperative to Marry

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*On Diseases of Girls*¹

- A. καὶ κελεύουσιν ἄλλεσθαι καὶ καταπίπτειν ἐς φρέατα ἢ ἄγγεσθαι, ἅτε ἀμείνονά τε ἐόντα καὶ χρείην ἔχοντα παντοίην. ὁκότε δὲ ἄνευ φαντασμάτων, ἡδονὴ τις ἀφ' ἧς ἐρᾷ τοῦ θανάτου ὥσπερ τινὸς ἀγαθοῦ. (8.468.15-9 L) “[visions] urge the women to take a leap and to throw themselves down wells, or to hang themselves, as being better and in every way advantageous. When there are no visions, there is a pleasure from which the woman loves death as some kind of good.”
- B. ὥς τάχιστα ζυνοικῆσαι ἀνδράσιν. (8.468.24 L) “cohabit with men as soon as they can.”
- C. ἦν γὰρ κυήσωσιν, ὑγίεες γίνονται. (8.470.1 L.) “for if they become pregnant, they recover.”

*Antigone*²

- D. νόσων δ' ἀμηχάνων φυγὰς ζυμπέφρασται. (361) “and he has contrived escape from desperate maladies.”
- E. κάτω νυν ἐλθοῦσ', εἰ φιλητέον, φίλει κείνους. (524-5) “Then go below and love those friends, if you must love them!”
- F. μέθεξ τὴν παῖδ' ἐν Αἴδου τήνδε νυμφεύειν τινί. (653-4) “allow her to marry someone in Hades!”
- G. Ἄιδης ὁ παύσων τούσδε τοὺς γάμους ἔφω. (575) “It is Hades who will prevent this marriage for me.”
- H. ταύτην ποτ' οὐκ ἔσθ' ὥς ἔτι ζῶσαν γαμεῖς. (750) “You shall never marry this woman while she is alive!”
- I. καὶ φημι δρᾶσαι κοῦκ ἀπαρνοῦμαι τὸ μή. (443) “I say that I did it and I do not deny it.”
- J. ἦδη: τί δ' οὐκ ἔμελλον; ἐμφανῆ γὰρ ἦν. (448) “I knew it; of course I knew it. It was known to all.”

¹ Hippocrates. *Coan Prenotions. Anatomical and Minor Clinical Writings*. Edited and translated by Paul Potter. Loeb Classical Library 509. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010.

² Sophocles. *Antigone. The Women of Trachis. Philoctetes. Oedipus at Colonus*. Edited and translated by Hugh Lloyd-Jones. Loeb Classical Library 21. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994.

- K. θανουμένη γὰρ ἐξήδη, τί δ' οὐ;
 κεί μὴ σὺ προῦκήρυξας. εἰ δὲ τοῦ χρόνου
 πρόσθεν θανοῦμαι, κέρδος αὐτ' ἐγὼ
 λέγω. (460-2) I knew that I would die, of course I knew,
 even if you had made no proclamation. But if,
 I die before my time, I account that gain.
- L. καὶ νῦν ἄγει με διὰ χερῶν οὕτω λαβῶν
 ἄλεκτρον, ἀνυμέναιον, οὔτε του γάμου
 μέρος λαχοῦσαν οὔτε παιδείου τροφῆς.
 (917-8) And now he leads me thus by the hands,
 without marriage, without bridal, having no share
 in wedlock or in the rearing of children.
- M. ἐν δὲ λοισθίῳ τυμβεύματι
 τὴν μὲν κρεμαστὴν ἀχένος κατείδομεν,
 βρόχῳ μιτώδει σινδόνοσ καθημμένην.
 (1220-2) and at the bottom of the tomb
 we saw her hanging by the neck,
 caught in the woven noose of a piece of linen,
- N. καὶ φυσιῶν ὄξειαν ἐκβάλλει ῥοῆν
 λευκῆ παρειᾷ φοινίου σταλάγματος.
 (1238-9) and shooting forth a sharp jet of blood,
 he stained her white cheek.

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