

Medea's Rage: An Intersectional Analysis

Bonnie Rock-McCutcheon, Wilson College | brock@wilson.edu

Euripides, *Medea*, lines 252-254: Medea to the Chorus

ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ αὐτὸς πρὸς σὲ κάμ' ἦκει λόγος:
σοὶ μὲν πόλις θ' ἦδ' ἐστὶ καὶ πατρὸς δόμοι
βίου τ' ὄνησις καὶ φίλων συνουσία,

The story's not the same, though, for you and me. You have this city and your fathers' houses, the joy of life and company of friends.

Herodotus, *Histories*, 4.33.3-4.33.4

[3] ἀπικνέεσθαι μὲν νῦν οὕτω ταῦτα τὰ ἱορὰ λέγουσι ἐς Δῆλον: πρῶτον δὲ τ
οὺς Ὑπερβορέους πέμψαι φερούσας τὰ ἱορὰ δύο κόρας, τὰς ὀνομάζουσι Δήλ
ιοι εἶναι Ὑπερόχην τε καὶ Λαοδίκην: ἅμα δὲ αὐτῆσι ἀσφαλείης εἵνεκεν πέμ
ψαι τοὺς Ὑπερβορέους τῶν ἀστῶν ἄνδρας πέντε πομπούς, τούτους οἱ νῦν
Περφερέες καλέονται τιμὰς μεγάλας ἐν Δήλῳ ἔχοντες

[4] ἐπεὶ δὲ τοῖσι Ὑπερβορέοισι τοὺς ἀποπεμφθέντας ὀπίσω οὐκ ἀπονοστέε
ιν, δεινὰ ποιευμένους εἰ σφέας αἰεὶ καταλάμψεται ἀποστέλλοντας μὴ ἀπο
δέκεσθαι, οὕτω δὴ φέροντας ἐς τοὺς οὐρούς τὰ ἱορὰ ἐνδεδεμένα ἐν πυρῶν κ
αλάμῃ τοὺς πλησιοχώρους ἐπισκῆπτειν κελεύοντας προπέμπειν σφέα ἀπ
ὸ ἐωυτῶν ἐς ἄλλο ἔθνος.

[3] Thus (they say) these offerings come to Delos. But on the first journey, the Hyperboreans sent two maidens bearing the offerings, to whom the Delians give the names Hyperoche and Laodice, and five men of their people with them as escort for safe conduct, those who are now called Perpherees and greatly honored at Delos.

[4] But when those whom they sent never returned, they took it amiss that they should be condemned always to be sending people and not getting them back, and so they carry the offerings, wrapped in straw, to their borders, and tell their neighbors to send them on from their own country to the next;

Euripides, *Medea*, lines 446-458: Jason to Medea

οὐ νῦν κατειῖδον προῶτον ἀλλὰ πολλάκις
τραχεῖαν ὀργὴν ὡς ἀμήχανον κακόν.
σοὶ γὰρ παρὸν γῆν τήνδε καὶ δόμους ἔχειν
κούφως φερούση κρεισσόνων βουλευμάτα,
450 λόγων ματαίων οὔνεκ' ἐκπεσῆ χθονός.
κάμοι μὲν οὐδὲν προᾶγμα: μὴ παύσῃ ποτέ
λέγουσ' Ἰάσον' ὡς κάκιστός ἐστ' ἀνὴρ.
ἂ δ' ἐς τυράννους ἐστὶ σοι λελεγμένα
πᾶν κέρδος ἡγοῦ ζημιουμένη φυγῆ.
455 κἀγὼ μὲν αἰεὶ βασιλέων θυμουμένων
ὀργὰς ἀφήρουν καὶ σ' ἐβουλόμην μένειν:
σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνίεις μωρίας, λέγουσ' αἰεὶ
κακῶς τυράννους: τοιγὰρ ἐκπεσῆ χθονός.

This is not the first time; often I've seen that a harsh temper's impossible to deal with. You have the choice of living here, having a home, calmly accepting your superiors' will. But no, for the sake of useless talk, you'll leave. For me it's a not a problem. Go on and on calling Jason the very worst of men. But consider exile a small price to pay for what you've said against the rulers here – a profit really. I've tried to soothe their rage, the king's angry spirit: I'd prefer for you to stay. But you can't let your folly go. You keep on slandering the king. And so you'll leave.

Euripides, *Medea*, lines 282-284: Creon to Medea

δέδοικά σ' (οὐδὲν δεῖ παραμπίσχειν λόγους)
μή μοί τι δράσης παῖδ' ἀνήκεστον κακόν.

I fear you. No need to disguise my reasons. I fear that you might do my child fatal harm. And there are many indications I am right.

Euripides, *Medea*, lines 533-536: Jason to Medea

ὄπη γὰρ οὖν ὤνησας οὐ κακῶς ἔχει.
μείζω γε μέντοι τῆς ἐμῆς σωτηρίας
535εἴληφας ἢ δέδωκας, ὡς ἐγὼ φράσω.
πρῶτον μὲν Ἑλλάδ' ἀντὶ βαρβάρου χθονὸς
γαῖαν κατοικεῖς

But, even so, you got more than you gave from my salvation, as I will now lay out. In the first place, you live now in Greece, and not your savage homeland.

Euripides, *Medea*, lines 800-802: Medea to the Chorus

ἤμαρτανον τόθ' ἠνίκ' ἐξελίμπανον
δόμους πατρῶους, ἀνδρὸς Ἑλληνος λόγοις
πεισθεῖς,

I made my mistake when I left my family home, when I listened to the words of a Greek.
