



Troezen and Athens in Euripides' *Hippolytus*: Myth, Politics, and Liminality

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(all translations Kovacs 1995, with adjustments)

1. **Ιπ.** σοὶ τόνδε πλεκτὸν στέφανον ἐξ ἀκηράτου
λειμῶνος, ὃ δέσποινα, κοσμήσας φέρω,
ἔνθ' οὔτε ποιμὴν ἀξιοῖ φέρβειν βοτὰ
οὔτ' ἤλθέ πω σίδηρος, ἀλλ' ἀκήρατον
μέλισσα λειμῶν ἠρινὴ διέρχεται,
Αἰδῶς δὲ ποταμιαῖσι κηπεύει δρόσοις,
ὅσοις διδακτὸν μηδὲν ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ φύσει
τὸ σωφρονεῖν εἴληχεν ἐς τὰ πάντ' ἀεὶ,
τούτοις δρέπεσθαι, τοῖς κακοῖσι δ' οὐ θέμις.
ἀλλ', ὦ φίλη δέσποινα, χρυσέας κόμης
ἀνάδημα δέξαι χειρὸς εὐσεβοῦς ἄπο.
μόνῳ γάρ ἐστι τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ γέρας βροτῶν·
σοὶ καὶ ξύνειμι καὶ λόγοις ἀμείβομαι,
κλύων μὲν αὐδῆς, ὄμμα δ' οὐχ ὄρων τὸ σόν.
τέλος δὲ κάμψαιμ' ὥσπερ ἠρξάμην βίου.
(73-87)

2. **Αρ.** σοὶ δ', ὦ ταλαίπωρ', ἀντὶ τῶνδε τῶν κακῶν
τιμὰς μεγίστας ἐν πόλει Τροζηνίαι
δώσω· κόραι γὰρ ἄζυγες γάμων πάρος
κόμας κεροῦνταί σοι, δι' αἰῶνος μακροῦ
πένθη μέγιστα δακρύων καρπουμένῳ·
ἀεὶ δὲ μουσοποιὸς ἐς σὲ παρθένων
ἔσται μέριμνα, κοῦκ ἀνώνυμος πεσῶν
ἔρωσ ὁ Φαίδρας ἐς σὲ σιγηθήσεται.
(1423-30)

3. **Αφ.** καὶ πρὶν μὲν ἐλθεῖν τήνδε γῆν Τροζηνίαν,
πέτρην παρ' αὐτὴν Παλλάδος, κατόπιον
γῆς τῆσδε, ναδὸν Κύπριδος ἐγκαθείσατο,
ἔρῳσ' ἔρωτ' ἔκδημον, Ἴππολύτῳ δ' ἔπι
τὸ λοιπὸν ὀνομάσουσιν ἰδρῦσθαι θεάν.
(29-33)

HIPPOLYTUS. For you, lady, I bring this plaited
garland I have made, gathered from a virgin meadow, a
place where the shepherd does not dare to pasture his
flocks, where the iron scythe has never come: no,
virgin it is, and the bee makes its way through it in the
springtime. Reverence tends it with streams of river
water, for those to pluck who owe nothing to teaching
but in whose very nature chastity in all things alike has
won its place: the base may not gather. So, dear lady,
take this coronal for your golden hair from a
worshipful hand. I alone of mortals have this privilege:
I spend my days with you and speak with you, I hear
your voice but never see your face. May I end life's
race even as I began it!

ARTEMIS. To you, unhappy man, I shall grant, in
recompense for these sorrows, supreme honors in the
land of Trozen. Unmarried girls before their marriage
will cut their hair for you, and over the length of ages
you will harvest the deep mourning of their tears. The
practiced skill of poetry sung by maidens will for ever
make you its theme, and Phaedra's love for you shall
not fall nameless and unsung.

APHRODITE. Before she came to this land of
Trozen, she built, next to the rock of Pallas, a
temple to Cypris overlooking this land since
she loved a foreign love. After ages shall
name the goddess' shrine for Hippolytus.

Φα. ἡμᾶς γὰρ αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἀποκτείνει, φίλοι,
ὡς μήποτ' ἄνδρα τὸν ἐμὸν αἰσχύνασ' ἄλῶ,
μὴ παῖδας οὖς ἔτικτον· ἀλλ' ἐλεύθεροι
παρρησίαι θάλλοντες οἰκοῖεν πόλιν
κλειῶν Ἀθηνῶν, μητρὸς οὖνεκ' εὐκλεεῖς.
(419-23)

PHAEDRA. My friends, it is this very purpose that is bringing about my death, that I may not be convicted of bringing shame to my husband or to the children I gave birth to but rather that they may live in glorious Athens as free men, free of speech and flourishing, enjoying good repute where their mother is concerned.

4. Χο. ἢ πόσιν, τὸν Ἐρεχθειδᾶν
ἀρχαγόν, τὸν εὐπατρίδαν,
ποιμαίνει τις ἐν οἴκοις
κρυπτᾷ κοίται λεχέων σῶν;
(151-54)

CHORUS. Or is it your husband, the nobly born king of Erechtheus' folk? Does some other woman rule his passion, someone in the palace, making secret love to him apart from your bed?

Χο. ὀλομένους γάρ, οὐκέτ' ὄντας, λέγω,
φεῦ φεῦ, τῶν ἐμῶν τυράννων δόμους.
(869-70)

CHORUS. For I say that the house of my king has perished, ah me, is no more.

Αγ. ποῖ γῆς ἄνακτα τῆσδε Θησέα μολῶν
εὐροίμ' ἄν, ὃ γυναιῆες;
(1153-54)

MESSENGER. Women, where must I go to find Theseus, this land's king?

Θη. τόδε μὲν οὐκέτι στόματος ἐν πύλαις
καθέξω δυσεκπέρατον ὄλοδον
κακόν· ἰὼ πόλις.
(882-84)

THESEUS. No more shall I hold this ruinous bane, hard to utter though it is, within the gates of my mouth! City of Troezen! Hear me!

5. Θη. ἔξερρε γαίας τῆσδ' ὅσον τάχος φυγᾶς,
καὶ μήτ' Ἀθήνας τὰς θεοδμήτους μόλις
μήτ' εἰς ὄρους γῆς ἧς ἐμὸν κρατεῖ δόρυ.
(973-75)

THESEUS. Go forth from this land at once into exile, and come no more either to god-built Athens or to the borders of any land ruled by my spear!

Ιπ. ὦ φιλότατη μοι δαιμόνων Λητοῦς κόρη,
σύνθακε, συγκύναγε, φευξούμεσθα δὴ
κλεινὰς Ἀθήνας. ἀλλὰ χαιρέτω πόλις
καὶ γαῖ' Ἐρεχθέως· ὦ πέδον Τροζήνιον,
ὡς ἐγκαθηβᾶν πόλλ' ἔχεις εὐδαίμονα.
(1092-96)

HIPPOLYTUS. Dearest of gods to me, daughter of Leto, you I have sat with, you I have hunted with, I shall leave glorious Athens as an exile. Now farewell, city and land of Erechtheus! O land of Troezen, how many are the blessings you have for a young man!

Αγ. Θησεῦ, μερίμνης ἄξιον φέρω λόγον
σοὶ καὶ πολίταις οἳ τ' Ἀθηναίων πόλιν
ναίουσι καὶ γῆς τέρμονας Τροζηνίας.
(1157-59)

MESSENGER. Theseus, I bring you news that will cause solicitude to you and all the citizens who dwell in Athens and in the land of Troezen.

- Θη. τί δ' ἔστι; μῶν τις συμφορὰ νεωτέρα
δισσὰς κατείληφ' ἀστυγείτονας πόλεις;
(1160-61)
- Θη. ὦ κλείν' Ἀφαιῆς Παλλάδος θ' ὀρίσματα,
οἴου στερήσεσθ' ἀνδρός.
(1459-60)
6. Θη. ἐπεὶ δὲ Θησεὺς Κεκροπίαν λείπει χθόνα
μίασμα φεύγων αἵματος Παλλαντιδῶν
καὶ τήνδε σὺν δάμαρτι ναυστολεῖ χθόνα
ἐνιαυσίαν ἔκδημον αἰνέσας φυγῆν...
(34-37)
- Αφ. ἐρῶσ' ἔρωτ' ἔκδημον...
(32)
- Αφ. ὁ γάρ με Θησέως παῖς, Ἀμαζόνος τόκος,
Ἴππόλυτος, ἀγνοῦ Πιθθέως παιδύματα,
μόνος πολιτῶν τῆσδε γῆς Τροζηνίας
λέγει κακίστην δαιμόνων πεφυκένας.
(10-13)
- Φα. Τροζήνιαι γυναῖκες, αἱ τόδ' ἔσχατον
οἰκεῖτε χώρας Πελοπίας προνώπιον,
ἤδη ποτ' ἄλλως νυκτὸς ἐν μακρῶι χρόνῳι
θνητῶν ἐφρόντισ' ἧ διεφθάρται βίος.
(373-76)
- THESEUS. What is it? Has some recent
disaster befallen the two neighboring
cities?
- THESEUS. Glorious territory of
Erechtheus and Pallas, what a man you
will be bereft of!
- THESEUS. But Theseus left the land of Cecrops,
fleeing the blood guilt he incurred for the murder of
the Pallantidae, and sailed with his wife to this land,
consenting to a year-long exile from his home.
- APHRODITE. ...since she loved a foreign love...
- APHRODITE. Theseus' son Hippolytus, offspring
of the Amazon woman and ward of holy Pittheus,
alone among the citizens of this land of Trozen,
says that I am the worst of deities.
- PHAEDRA. Women of Trozen, dwellers in this
outermost forecourt to the land of Pelops, I have
pondered before now in other circumstances in the
night's long watches how it is that the lives of
mortals have been ruined.

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