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ABSTRACT

One of the most distinctive features of Aeschylus' poetic style is the choral odes. The odes can generally be divided into two parts: lyrical narrative and lyrical reflection. The narrative sections motivate the main action of the drama, often relating past events and causes. The lyrical reflection is distinguished from the narrative parts by its overt moralizing that lift the dramatic action from the particular to the universal. Within these sections of the ode, are clusters of moral generalizations or gnomes, dealing with a variety of topics but always of a distinctively moral nature. These gnomes far from being unrelated, in fact, give logic to the dramatic events, explaining the reason for a particular event and presenting that event in universal terms, in terms, let us say, of the justice of Zeus or the working of Fate. In fact, the gnomes move along two directions of the drama. They reflect upon and anticipate its events. The conflicts in, and resolutions to the drama are often worked out at the lyrical level. It is the purpose of this thesis, then, to study the gnomes of the Oresteia and their surrounding gnomic passages, to examine their meaning within their immediate context, and to see how and to what extent the gnomes relate to the dramatic actions.
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NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Due to certain technical difficulties, the Greek contains no terminal sigma, no upper case letters and the omicron appears as ø.
INTRODUCTION

When one reads the *Oresteia*, one is struck by the number of passages within the lyrics that are reflective. The Chorus will narrate a certain event, then pause and reflect upon what they have just said. This pattern is particularly noticeable in *Agamemnon*. In the parodos of that play, the Chorus relate the events of Aulis. They recall the omen that appeared to the Atreidae and the interpretation given by Calchas. However, before the Chorus relate the consequences of Calchas’ prophecy, the death of Iphigenia, they turn their thoughts to Zeus and reflect upon his harsh rule and the law of "learning through suffering." This pattern is repeated for each ode of *Agamemnon* and for several odes of *Choephori* and *Eumenides*. These lyrical sections are marked off from the rest of the ode by their distinctive moralizing. Within these reflective stanzas are clusters of moral generalizations or gnomes.

When it comes to defining a gnome, we can begin by saying that gnomes always moralize. In Aeschylus gnomes always deal with justice, with what is right or wrong, with sin and divine punishment. "The man who kicks over the altar of *Dike* cannot escape punishment," is an Aeschylean gnome; but "the unjust are always punished," is not. Gnomes are distinguished from simple generalizations by certain literary devices which they contain. If we return to the gnome just given, we note the presence of allegory and metaphor. Abstract notions such as justice or ruin are personified as the figures *Dike* and *Ate*. Often the allegory serves as a type of analogy on a concept. What
is justice? It is like a scale upon which Dike measures out sorrow. A glance at the opening strophe-pair of the first stasimon of Agamemnon reveals an abundance of such personifications (382, 383, 385, 386). Closely related to allegory is the use of metaphor. In our gnome, sacrilege is represented by the image of kicking over an altar. The metaphor can be both simple or elaborate. A man’s pride can be described as "blowing wind," where the image is simply captured by the verb pneo (Agm. 76). Or destiny can be compared to a ship foundering in a stormy sea, where the Chorus develop the picture for several lines (Agm. 1005-14). Often metaphor and allegory mix as in "Hybris begets hybris," where the birth-imagery becomes a metaphor for the proliferation of evil.

Two other literary devices, though not formally part of the gnomes, nonetheless are closely associated in that they are related to metaphor and allegory. These are simile and parable. A noteworthy occurrence of the use of simile comes in the opening antistrophe of the first stasimon of Agamemnon (390f). The unjust man is first compared to a bad piece of bronze and then to a boy chasing a bird. The second simile, especially, is comparable to the nature of parables, which draw more on common domestic images than do gnomes. The parable of the lion-cub (Agm. 717-36) begins with the domestic picture of a man nursing a cub. However, the parable soon departs from its simple narrative description. By the conclusion of the parable the cub is personified as the priest of Ate. The cub turns into an "unconquerable grief" and a "great bane." The parable at this point exhibits distinctive gnomic features. The personification and abstraction depart from
the simple narrative style characteristic of parables. The same pattern is evident in the similes. The descriptive image of a boy chasing a bird is not sustained. At 396 the Chorus begin to moralize: "The gods do not listen to the prayers of the unjust man". The simile, at this point, verges on metaphor. No sharp distinction is maintained by Aeschylus between metaphor and simile or between parable and allegory. Just as an allegory often forms an analogy to a concept within a gnome, so a parable can often illustrate descriptively a gnomic concept. The parable of the lion-cub illustrates the idea of "inherited ethos" suggested in the birth-metaphor of the gnomes. Since the parables and similes serve as illustrations of what the gnomes present conceptually, we will discuss them along with the gnomes.

Myth, like similes and parables, also accompanies the gnomes to illustrate their meaning. "Learning through suffering" is seen as a law based on Zeus' experience in Prometheus, where his own violent nature becomes tempered by learning and persuasion. The unnatural passions of women are illustrated in Choephoroi by the myths of Scylla, Althea and the Lemnian women (Cho. 602f.). Like simile, parable and extended metaphor, myth is a literary device often used in the gnomic passages.

As we turn to the actual language of the gnomes, certain features stand out. Noticeable are assonance and word-play. Pathei mathos is typically gnomic. ζαμαχων άδαματων άπαλεμων (Cho. 54; cf. Agm. 768-69) is too elaborate, but it still achieves the assonance common to gnomes. The word-play also can be simple or complex; as simple as παθετων των ἔργων, "the
doer is done in"; or as elaborate as δίκα δ' ἐπὶ ἄλλῳ πρῶτῳ θητεῖαι ἐπίθεος/πρὸς ἄλλῳ θητείας μνήμασ (Agm. 1535-36), where the play on θητεῖαι θητείας and ἄλλα ἄλλαις also suggests the idea of "like for like." Normally a gnome is simply expressed, for example in the words παθὲν ἔν τὰν ἔργανα. However, we cannot overlook the other passage because of what it contributes to our understanding of "like for like." As well, the passage displays certain features of the gnomes, such as personification, metaphor and assonance. The decision whether a passage is gnomic, in the sense of resembling a gnome, depends on whether or not it displays those literary features discussed above.

The discussion is mainly directed to the gnomic sections of the odes, with the exception of the final kommos of Agamemnon and the great kommos of Choephoroi. One chapter is devoted to each of the three plays. For each play, the meaning of the gnomes and their relevance to the dramatic action are examined. Since we are forced to depart from a strict chronological sequence to discuss the wider implications the gnomes have for the action, the reader is asked to follow closely in the Greek text. The Greek is cited with or without a translation. Whenever a translation is given, it is partly the writer's own and partly borrowed from Fraenkel, Denniston-Page and Smyth. The overall purpose of the work, then, is to relate the gnomes to the action of the Oresteia, to see what implications they have for the dramatic action. Often images and patterns developed in the gnomes appear in the drama. "Trampling underfoot," a metaphor for sacrilege in the first stasimon of Agamemnon, latter describes Agamemnon's sacrilege in the carpet-scene.
Through the early scenes of *Eumenides* the Erinyes become closely identified with Orestes, in his sin and suffering. This pattern is confirmed in the gnomes of the first stasimon. The gnomes reflect, then, on what has happen and anticipate what will happen. The conflicts in, and resolutions to, the trilogy are played out at the lyrical level. Even as early as the Hymn to Zeus the resolution to the whole trilogy is foreseen. The gnome "learning through suffering" reveals that balance between violence and knowledge, symbolized in the reconciliation between the Erinyes and Athena.
CHAPTER I - Agamemnon

The gnomes of the parodos, for the most part, are restricted to the "Hymn to Zeus" (160-83), whose tone is distinct from the rest of the lyrics. In the first part of the parodos (104-519), the Chorus describe the portent that appears to the Atreidae on their way to Troy and Calchas' ominous interpretation of it. For some fifty lines, the Chorus narrate these two events. At the conclusion of Calchas's prophecy, the Chorus abruptly break off from their narration and address Zeus in prayer. The break is marked by a change in meter and subject, a change from "rolling iambic-dactyls" to trochees\(^1\), and a change from narrative to reflection. The Hymn to Zeus is couched in highly gnomic language, again emphasizing the departure from the narration with its "luxuriant details."\(^2\) The Hymn becomes more a general theological statement on Zeus' administration than a prayer for actual guidance or help.

Before we direct our attention to the gnomes of the Hymn, we must first look for a moment at one section of the anapaests (67-71). There, the central gnomic thought of the Hymn, "learning through suffering," is clearly anticipated. By way of reflection, the Chorus offer this thought on the character of the Trojan war: \(\varepsilon\varepsilon\tau\iota \delta' \delta'\eta \nu\iota\nu/\varepsilon\varepsilon\tau\iota, \tau\varepsilon\lambda\varepsilon\tau\iota \delta' \; \varepsilon\tau\; \pi\varepsilon\pi\rho\mu\varepsilon\nu\varepsilon\nu \; \vartheta' \; \nu\pi\kappa\alpha\iota\nu \; \vartheta' \; \alpha\pi\alpha\iota\beta\iota\nu/\alpha\nu\rho\mu\nu \; \iota\varepsilon\rho\omicron\upsilon/\delta'\gamma\alpha\omicron \; \delta\tau\varepsilon\nu\varepsilon\nu \; \pi\alpha\rho\omicron\theta\omicron\ell\alpha\xi\epsilon\iota \; 67-71\).\(^3\) What are the events that will be fulfilled according to fate? The fall of Troy, obviously. But the Chorus' words imply more than the obvious. In the preceding simile (49-59), the Atreidae are compared to a
pair of vultures who have been robbed of their nestlings. As Zeus sends an Erinys against the transgressors of the nest, so (ὡς 60) he dispatches the sons of Atreus against Alexander "in order to bring many struggles upon both the Greeks and Trojans" (πάλλα παλαισματα...θήσων Δαναόιν τρωσι θ'μαίωσα 63-67). Here, we see the greater purpose of the war; to bring suffering upon mankind. The thought anticipates the Hymn, where it is said that Zeus has established for mortals, as a rule of life, "learning through suffering." In fact, "παλαισματα θήσων" is simply a variation of what we find in the Hymn to Zeus: τὰν πάθει μοθασ σώτα (177-78). τίθημι is echoed and παλαισματα anticipates the description of Zeus as a wrestler (τριακτηράς 173). Behind the Trojan war operates the law of "learning through suffering."

What is fated (τὰ πεπρωμένων) for mankind is suffering. There seems to be a fusing of Zeus' justice with Fate, here represented in τὰ πεπρωμένων. This thought is confirmed later in the second stasimon. There, the Chorus speak of Τικα as "directing everything to its proper end" (πᾶν δ'έπι τέρμα νωμέν 781). This seems to be a variation of what we have in the parodos, especially if τέρμα can substitute for τέλος. Τικα, the fulfiller (τελείας 1432, a title also ascribed to Zeus and Fate (cf. 973; Cho. 307; Eum. 28), "directs everything to its destined end," and that end implicitly means suffering. This understanding is suggested from the fact that Τικα metaphorically represents the law of "learning through suffering." She holds the balance and "measures out learning to those who have suffered" (άκα δὲ τῶς μὲν παθητικῶν μαθῶν ἐπιρρέει 250-51). What is fated for Troy is the
justice of Zeus, that directs everything to its proper end. Against the "relentless passion" of this fate, no form of sacrifice avails (69-71).

With these preliminary remarks in mind, let us now turn to the Hymn to Zeus and the gnome pathei mathos. The Hymn arises from the Chorus' uncertainty about Calchas' prophecy. The Chorus' anxiety over the events at Aulis prompts them to turn to Zeus in prayer. He alone can remove "the vain burden from one's heart" (165-66). What that burden pertains to is understood from what the Chorus say later in the Hymn: στάξει δ' ἕν γ' οὐνωι πρὸ καρδίας/μνησικήσων πάνα τῆς 179-801). It is "the toil of remembering past pains." In the context of the parodos, this refers to what happened at Aulis. The sorrow and anxiety that come over the Chorus when they recall those events are what they seek to displace from their heart. However, their failure to understand the reason for Iphigenia's death is only accounted for with Zeus. His justice "directs everything to an end" (781). The stress both here and in the gnome from the second stasimon is on panta. Everything, and that includes what happened to Iphigenia, can only be explained in terms of Zeus and his justice. The Chorus can compare the events of Aulis to nothing else except Zeus (δυκ ἔχω προσελκύσαι πλην Διά 63-65). Everything must be measured against Zeus and that implies measurement against his law.

The law established by Zeus to direct the affairs of men is expressed in the familiar gnome pathei mathos. It has been set down as a valid law (στάξει κυρίως ἔρειν 178) to guide men to understanding (τὰν φρένειν βραδύσι δύνασαι 176-77). The validity of that law is confirmed at the mythological level.
In the second stanza of the Hymn (167-75), the Chorus allude to Zeus' succession to the throne. The details of that myth are not given here but are found in Prometheus, where we see Zeus learning through suffering. The connection between the gnome *pathei mathos* and the succession myth become clear in light of Prometheus. Another gnome also illustrated by the myth, and one that also gains thematic importance in Prometheus, is "like for like." In the same way that Uranus was dethroned by Cronus, so was Cronus by Zeus. "Like for like" is a recurring pattern of vengeance in the divine family. This triad of succession prefigures the family of Atreus where vengeance also extends over three generations. Only in the final generation does Orestes escape the fate of his father and grandfather and emerge the victor, as did Zeus.

Exactly why it ends with the third generation is not spelled out in the Hymn, but as we shall see from the events of the Trilogy and especially from Prometheus the reason has to do with "learning through suffering." In Prometheus Bound we find that Zeus himself was once bound to the same fate as his father: he was to be dethroned by his own son as Cronus was before him. At one point in the play, we learn that the Moirae and "the mindful Erinyes" are ultimately in control of things. They are the helmsmen of necessity (αὐγκη 515-16) and even Zeus is subject to their power. Consequently, he cannot escape the necessity fated for him (.addField(name="source", value="τὴν περὶ ὀδηγίαν 518"). Whereas in Agamemnon the will of Zeus and Fate fuse together, in Prometheus Bound they are at odds. Since he is the weaker, Zeus must obey the law of Fate, as much as the men of the Oresteia must obey his fated will. Exactly what is
destined for Zeus Prometheus does not disclose to the Chorus of Oceanids at first. However, later on in the play, they find out that the necessity for Zeus is the same as that which was fated for his father. The curse of Cronus is upon him (910-12). If he persists in his stubborn attitude and goes ahead with his marriage, he will be cast down from the throne just as his father was before him (908-10). Zeus will have a son by Thetis who will prove irresistible (920-22). We see, then, that the necessity to which Zeus is bound is "like for like," a law of Fate and a curse working its way through the family line.11

Throughout Prometheus Bound, Zeus is characterized as a young tyrant, presented to us through his servants Kratos and Bia.12 He is headstrong (ἐχθρὸς Ἡρώδης Ἐρένω 908). He sits upon his throne in arrogance (Θρονεῖν ἡπειρο 916). Hermes, his lackey, is said by Prometheus to be "swollen with pride" (Φανεροῦσα πλέωσ 953) and we can well imagine that Prometheus implies this of Zeus as well. Zeus boasts that he "inhabits a rock beyond the reach of grief" (δέκειται δὴ ναὶ ἡπειρο ἔργαυ 955-56). But the Titan knows differently. He has already seen two tyrants cast down and rightly expects that the same thing will happen to the third (957-59). In contrast to Prometheus, Zeus lacks foresight. "He has power but not intelligence."13 He is characterized by violence and strength, but not by knowledge and wisdom. He needs to learn to balance strength with knowledge, brute force with persuasion. In fact, the Zeus of Prometheus Bound is like the Uranus of the Hymn. There, Uranus is described as a sea "teeming with unconquerable arrogance" (cf. παμμοῦχον Ἐρωστὶ 169). This description compares well
with the Zeus of the *Prometheus Bound*, a Zeus who sits upon his throne swollen with arrogance and pride. In the case of Uranus, his *hybris* led to his downfall. Now, it appears that Zeus will fall for the same reason and will suffer like Cronus and Uranus.

Yet, Zeus is not overthrown. In *Agamemnon*, we see him securely enthroned. Presumably, Zeus at some point relents. He is reconciled to Prometheus and releases him from his imprisonment. What evidence we do have from the sequel, *Prometheus Unbound*, would suggest such a reconciliation. The Chorus consisted of fellow-Titans. Evidently, they were released by Zeus. Their presence on stage would reflect his changing attitude. Their release anticipates the final reconciliation between Zeus and Prometheus. In that event, Zeus gains the necessary knowledge about his intended marriage and prevents his own downfall.

What we see, then, is Zeus learning from experience (*pathos*). Throughout *Prometheus Bound* there are hints that Zeus, in time, will come to the point of understanding through suffering. In several places, Prometheus predicts that Zeus will be humbled (*ταπεινώσε 908*), that he will fall into evil from which he will learn (*πταίσαι ἐν τῷ ἁρετεῖ πρὸς κακῷ μαθῆσαι 926*), and that "ever-aging time" will teach Zeus to say "alas" (*ὡμ ἄλλα ἐκδιασκεῖ πάνθε' ἀ γηράσκων Χράνοις 981-82*). Although Zeus does fall into the exact misfortune Prometheus predicts, we can rightly suspect that part of the prophecy does come true: Zeus does come to the point of understanding. He realizes the folly of stubbornness and learns from his experience that
violence and force alone cannot resolve a conflict. His violence is tempered by knowledge and persuasion. This change prevents the curse of Cronus from being fulfilled and with it the necessity of suffering "like for like." 

None of what has been said in regard to the Prometheus-story is mentioned in the Hymn to Zeus. Yet the audience would have been familiar enough to understand an allusion to the myth here in the Hymn. The connection between the law of "learning through suffering" and the succession myth makes sense in light of the Prometheus-story. Zeus draws from his own experience in establishing this law for men. The gnome \(\tau\alpha\ \pi\alpha\theta\varepsilon\iota\ \mu\alpha\theta\sigma\) reflects that experience, an example of violence tempered by knowledge. As a law, it is valid not only because Zeus has instituted it, but also because it has proven true in his own experience.

His learning prevented the fulfillment of "like for like." The succession myth and the gnome to \(\text{pathein mathos}\) anticipate the final resolution to the trilogy, where Orestes is acquitted and the Erinyes are reconciled to Athena. A common antithesis runs through both Eumenides and Prometheus. Learning and suffering, persuasion and force are part of the same antithesis found in the two plays. In fact, Prometheus forms an analogue to Eumenides. Zeus resembles the Furies, who are also characterized by their violence and hot temper. \(\delta\rho\gamma\dot{\eta}\) emerges as a key word in both plays describing their natures. (PV. 80, 190 cf. Eum. 847, 937). Yet in both cases, the conflicts are resolved. The temper of the Furies is softened by
Athena's soothing persuasion. Prometheus predicts that someday Zeus will soften his temper (μαλακώσουσαν 188) and calm his passion (τὴν δ' ἀτέραμον σταρέσσα δραγήν 190). As Zeus forms the analogue of the Furies, so does Prometheus of Athena. Like the goddess, he represents knowledge and wisdom. By being reconciled to Prometheus, Zeus learns. The reconciliation symbolizes the antithesis, expressed in the gnome to pathei mathos, a fusion of knowledge with force. Persuasion again seems to effect the change. Winnington-Ingram observes that at turn after turn the vocabulary of persuasion meets us in पv.18 Persuasion resolves what force could not: "Words are the medicine of temper" (δραγὴ νάσαμες εἰσίν ἀστραγά λάγαι 378), which cannot be overcome by violence (καὶ μὴ σφραγίσαντα θυμῶν ἵσχυνCOPE λίπαι 380).19 This truth is borne out not only in the Prometheus story but also in the Oresteia. The problem of the house of Atreus is not resolved through the continued violence of retribution. At the divine level the solution to the problem is symbolized in Athena's words and the Furies' learning. Apollo's abuse of the Erinyes does not work. Only Peitho and Zeus Agoraios, Zeus of the city-state, the Zeus of reason and persuasion, can prevail (Eum. 970f.). It is perhaps to Zeus Agoraios that the Zeus of Prometheus evolves. In his new aspect he achieves a reconciliation with Prometheus.20 But neither Zeus nor the Erinyes lay aside their force. The Erinyes still continue to punish the wicked. The justice of Zeus is still known for its violence (Χάρις βίαιλα). Force becomes beneficially balanced with knowledge and persuasion. This balance is reflected in the gnome "learning through suffering," which foreshadows the resolution to Oresteia. The violent Erinyes do join hands with wise Athena. The violence of "like for like" does end with Orestes, who also learns from experience.
It is clear from Prometheus that the purpose of the law τὰ μαθᾶς is to guide men to a point of learning so that they can change from their reckless course and so escape the necessity of suffering "like for like." In the Hymn to Zeus, the first reason is clearly expressed: Zeus has established the law in order to direct men along the right path to understanding (τὰν θεοτείνων βραχίον τὰ δώσοντα 176-77). The second reason is alluded to in the myth and also is suggested elsewhere. In the third stasimon, the Chorus compare the destiny of man to a ship that has struck a hidden reef (1005-07). The excessive possessions stored up in the ship will cause it to sink, unless a part of the cargo is tossed overboard (1008-14). The point of the metaphor is that through misfortune and suffering, a man can realize his folly and abandon his dangerous course. In the metaphor, the captain of the ship does come to his senses. He realizes the dangers of excess; he adopts the way of moderation, throwing overboard a part of the cargo. He rescues his foundering ship from a sea of disaster; the suffering he experiences proves to be a god-sent grace.

This interpretation of the third stasimon helps us in our understanding of the Hymn to Zeus, particularly the difficult lines 183-84: δούλην δὲ ἡμέρον ἤδειμα βίως ἔλημα σεμνὰν ήμέροιν. Does charis come from the gods or not? 21 In answer we need only to look at the events of Aulis: the change of wind granted by Artemis in return for the sacrifice of Iphigenia constitutes a "divine favour" in the religious sense of the word. In the context of the Hymn and in light of the third stasimon, "learning through suffering" is a violent grace. That the law of Zeus falls into the
category of divine favour through violence is clear from 180f.: καὶ παρ’ ἀκάντας ἦλθε σωφρονεῖν. Sophronein, however we understand its precise meaning, restates and defines mathos, while παρ’ ἀκάντας restates πάθει. Sophronein, to the Greek mind, is always something positive. So when bestowed upon man by the gods, it would naturally be considered a charis. παρ’ ἀκάντας parallels the passive meaning of βία. The learning of discretion is a divine favour that comes perforce. In addition, two parallel images at the beginning (άδοσσαντα 176) and at the end of the strophe (σέλυα ἁμένων 183) connect the two gnomic thoughts together. Both images carry the idea of guidance. The charis of the gods, as epitomized by the law of Zeus, directs men through a turbulent sea of suffering to the shore of understanding.

What men learn is prudence and obedience. σωφρονεῖν attaches to "learning" a moral aspect that perhaps is not present in either πρεπόνωσ (174) ἤρενω (175) or ἠρενεῖν (176), but whose meanings are shaded by it. In the third stasimon, the man of the ship-metaphor learns moderation; in that case, sophronein would come close to the idea of temperance. In the context of the Hymn, the word translates into something very close to the meaning of "obedience and reverence for the gods." Sophronein, or "discretion," always seems to be closely connected with the idea of reverence for the gods. A contrast seems to be presented between πρεπόνωσ (174) and ἀκάντας (180) and between the expression τεύξεται ἡρενῶν τὸ πᾶν (175) and ἦλθε σωφρονεῖν (181). The one that willingly honours Zeus has sense or "discretion." The other is unwilling, unwilling to hail Zeus as
victor with an open and ready mind (πρασφάνωσ); so "discretion" is brought to bear upon him. The contrast between πρασφάνωσ and ἄκαλπτω suggests that the one who learns "discretion" was once unwilling to revere the gods. 25 He must learn to do so under compulsion. The law of Zeus will guide him to the understanding that men should act prudently and reverently towards the gods, for they govern the lives of men with violence. Through suffering he learns to show deference to their exalted position and to his lowly station.

All the occurrences of sophronein in Agamemnon suggest the meaning of discretion and obedience. In each case (Agm. 1425, 1620; cf. also Eum. 521) the word is connected with the gnomic idea of "learning through suffering." In the first instance Clytemestra tells the Chorus that they will learn the lesson of discretion if they persist with their threats of banishment (γνώσηι διδαξθῇς ἐν το τὸ σοφρονεῖν 1425). She is prepared no less than they to utter threats, but she actually has the power to carry them out. Only the one who conquers her by force will rule her (1423-24). So the Chorus are warned to be discreet and defer to her.

Later Aegisthus also threatens the Chorus with punishment if they do not obey him; they will learn how hard a thing it is for an old man to be taught "discretion": γνώσηι γέρων ἔν ῥα διδάσκεσθαι βαρφὶ τῷ τηλίκητῳ, σοφρονεῖν εἰρημένον (1619-20). This is an obvious echo of what Clytemestra has just said. In both cases γίγνωσκω, διδάσκω and σοφρονέω are repeated. The thought is the same in both: the weaker must recognize the power of the stronger and learn to be discreet and reverent towards them. This is how
σωφρανείν should be understood in the Hymn to Zeus. The gods are in control, and so mortals must show respect and obedience to their power. Aegisthus' words provide an important point of comparison for the Hymn: not only do they echo the gnome *pathei mathos* but they also echo the imagery of the Hymn. Aegisthus compares the Chorus to a crew which is seated on the rowing benches and himself to the helmsman (1617-18). This recalls the image of the Hymn where the gods are said to be seated upon their dreaded benches in violence (182-83). The image defines precisely the relationship between the gods and men, between the stronger and weaker. They are in control of things; men are not. What men learn from their laws is simply obedience and discretion, a recognition of their exalted position and men's lowly station, and a willingness to show due reverence.

Zeus has established the law of "learning through suffering" to lead man to an understanding of his position in relation to the gods. According to Gagarin, "the word sophronein is applied to the ability to know one's place and stay in it." 26 To lead men to a place of discretion and obedience is what the law of Zeus is all about and what proves to be in a mysterious way a violent favour. The Chorus are confident that this law is at work in the events of Aulis. The suffering there is for a purpose. They are also confident that the law will hold true for the future. In the final antistrophe of the parodos, the Chorus assert the certainty of this law in the face of the uncertainties of the future: άικα δὲ τάς μὲν παθήσεων μαθείν ἐπιρρέησε τὸ μέλλον δ' ἐπεὶ γένετ' ἀν κλάδειο (250-53). Here, for the first time, we are introduced to the figure of *Dike*. She metaphorically
represents the law of Zeus. She doles out to some men (τὰ ὁμ. μὲν) learning through suffering. Structurally, τὰ ὁμ. μὲν is balanced by τὰ μέλλαν δὲ. One would expect the Chorus to say that Dike measures out to some one thing and to others something different. Yet, the logic of the μὲν-δὲ contrast breaks down. Instead of the expected contrast, the chorus say, "you shall hear about the future when it happens." On the surface, this gnome implies nothing more than that "you will learn about things soon enough." ("So don't worry about them.") Anticipating the future "is like mourning for it in advance" (ἵστων δὲ τῷ πρὸστένειν 253). The Chorus' remark resembles a gnome commonly expressed in the Iliad: "even the fool or child learns after the fact" (17.32). τὰ μέλλαν γένετ' resembles ἔχεων, while καλός recalls ἔγνω. In Homer, we have the beginnings of the gnome to pathei mathos, but without any moral implications. The Homeric gnome implies no more than we learn from our mistakes. A child learns not to touch the fire once he is burnt. However, in Aeschylus the gnome takes on a moral dimension by becoming the justice of Zeus, a justice that directs every event to a predictable end. The Chorus refuse to think about the future because they know what is in store. Dike is balancing the scale and will soon measure out suffering to those who deserve it. The events of Aulis have already confirmed that learning comes through suffering, that the grace of the gods is violent. In view of this, one can expect the same for the future. With this sad confidence the Chorus conclude the parodos. Now we must wait and see if the events to come prove the truth of their assertion.
The first stasimon arises in response to Clytemestra's report of the fall of Troy. The destruction of Troy confirms the Chorus' belief that Zeus' law directs every event. At Troy, they can say "the blow of Zeus." "This one thing can be fully traced out" (368). The language recalls that of the Hymn to Zeus. In the events of Aulis, the Chorus can count on one thing alone when they weigh out everything; this one thing is Zeus. Here too, having thoroughly (ηξι) traced out the events at Troy, they come to the same conclusion -- Zeus. He has accomplished what he has decreed (ἐποίησεν ὃς ἐκπανεν 369). In the Chorus' mind, he is both the author and finisher of all that goes on in human affairs (cf. 1485-89). What has been decreed and accomplished at Troy is suffering. The valuable lessons learnt from Troy's experience are expressed by the Chorus in a series of gnomic thoughts which extend through the first strophe-pair (367-402) and are taken up again in the final antistrophe of the ode (456-74).

The one thing that the destruction of Troy has taught the Chorus is that the gods do in fact punish those who offend them. The Chorus are mainly concerned with the offences of sacrilege and bloodshed. The theme of sacrilege, taken up in the first strophe, is represented by the image of "trampling down" what is sacred. In the context of the fall of Troy, the image refers particularly to the desecration of the temples and altars of the gods. In the final antistrophe, murder and bloodshed become the topic of the gnomes. In each case, the Chorus affirm that there is no escape from punishment for such wrong-doing. The motif of "no escape" runs throughout the ode in various gnomic formulas, linking up the different themes of the
gnomes. In addition, the theme of excess runs throughout the ode establishing the reason for such wrong-doing. The sacrilege and the bloodshed committed at Troy are only a result of a man's excessive thinking and wealth.

The first strophe is arranged in a clear chiasmus. The image of treading down "the grace of untouchable things" (369-72) is balanced at the end by the image of "kicking the altar of Dike" (383-84). The two images use the same metaphor of "trampling underfoot" to symbolize sacrilege. Occupying the central portion of the strophe (375-80) is a contrast between excess and moderation. "Surfeit" is expressed by two metaphors from nature. The wind imagery (374) represents a man's mental excess, while the sea imagery (377-78) represents material excess. These images are balanced chiastically at lines 379 (ἀπαρκεῖν) and 380 (εὐ προπίσων λαχάντι). The just man is content with very little and has obtained for his lot good sense. By contrast, the unjust man is characterized by his lack of moderation and good sense, which are displayed in his impiety towards the gods.

The image of "trampling underfoot" becomes an important metaphor for sacrilege throughout the trilogy. At this point, the Chorus' words refer only to the irreverence which Paris showed toward Zeus Xenios by abducting Helen. However, the image of "trampling underfoot" more readily suggests Agamemnon's impiety. The odes often begin with a direct condemnation of Paris or Helen, yet, as they proceed, the Chorus' condemnation turns to Agamemnon. The first stasimon is no exception. At the conclusion of it, the
Chorus pray not to be a sacker of cities (μὴς εἰς τὰς πόλεις ἐκβαίνῃς 472). Here then, is a direct reference to Agamemnon, who is addressed by this title throughout the play. Yet, even before this, there are various images in the ode suggesting that the gnomes refer more to Agamemnon than Paris. The motif of "trampling underfoot" is one such image which encourages the audience to think of Agamemnon.

In fact, the image alludes to the sacrilege Agamemnon commits at Troy, and also anticipates the same sacrilege he later symbolically commits when he tramples down the purple tapestries: καὶ τὰ θάνατα μὴ ἐμβαίνων θάλαυρίνων θεῶν μὴ τις πράσωθεν ὁμοἀθροὺς βάλοι θηλάζο (946-47). These verses from the carpet-scene make it clear that Agamemnon is committing something sacrilegious. He acknowledges that he is treading upon things he should not ("the grace of untouchable things"), and his action is precisely the type that the gods watch. He hopes that "no envious eye will strike him from afar" but his prayer amounts to an admission that he is doing something to arouse the gods' suspicion. At the close of that scene, when Agamemnon enters the house, he uses precisely the same image the Chorus uses in the gnomes to describe all forms of sacrilege: ἐμ' ἐστὶ χάμοι μέλαινα παρφύρας πατῶν (957). To emphasize even further the sacrilege involved in his action, Agamemnon's words are perversely echoed by Clytemestra: she would have vowed the trampling of many garments (πάλαξαν πατήσων ἐμ' ἐμ' ἐστὶ χάμοις 963). These echoes clearly link the gnomic thought of the first stasimon to Agamemnon's action in the carpet scene. Stepping upon the tapestries symbolizes, in dramatic gestures, that impiety which the Chorus openly condemn in the first stasimon.
To trample down "the grace of untouchable things" also refers to desecration that occurs at Troy. In the carpet-scene, Agamemnon symbolically displays the same sacrilege he shows at Troy. At Clytemestra's bidding, he steps down from his chariot and enters the house "without setting upon the ground his foot which has sacked Troy" (ἐκβαίνει ἠπόνησι γῆς, μὴ χαμαι τιθείος/τῶν σὲν πᾶς', ἡπατεῖ, ἤλιῳ παρθήναια 906-07). That foot that trampled down Troy is the same one that now tramples down the tapestries. In effect then, Clytemestra's words link the sack of Troy with the imagery of the first stasimon. It is precisely within the context of the fall of Troy, and what that entails, that the motif of "treading underfoot" is introduced in the first place. Consequently, the image comes to stand for the sacrilege involved in the destruction of both the city's temples and its innocent inhabitants. Agamemnon, as we shall see, is guilty of both.

It is likely, then, that when the Chorus introduce the image of sacrilege in the first strophe, they have in mind the destruction of Troy along with its temples and altars. In her speech just before the ode, Clytemestra describes her vision of Troy's downfall and expresses her concern over how the Greeks may act toward the gods of Troy:

εἰ δ' εὐσεβώσας ταῦτα πολισσεύχοις θεοῖς
τοῦτό τῆς ἀλαζώσας γῆς θεῶν ὑἱὸν ἔδρύμασα
ἄν ὅ ταύν ἐλάντεσα ὁμήριον ἀνθαλάλειν ἥν
ἐρωσὶ δὲ μῆν τις πρὸ τετελεῖν ἐμπίπτῃσα στρατῶι
παρθεῖν ὡς μὴ χρή, κέρδεσιν νικωμένῳς

(338-42)
To plunder what one must not is one idea behind the image of "trampling underfoot the grace of untouchable things." Specifically, the Greeks should not plunder temples, and the gnomic image of kicking the altar of Dike, itself a variation of the motif of "trampling underfoot," probably alludes to this (381-84). In view of what Clytemestra has just said, the images of the first strophe more readily apply to Agamemnon and his sacrilege at Troy. This application is soon confirmed by the Herald. He arrives, announcing that Agamemnon has dug up Troy with the mattock of Zeus and has "thoroughly worked the land" with its temples and altars (524-28).

Such sacrilege does not go unpunished. This is the conviction the Chorus express in their next gnomic thought (374-75). The man who claims that the gods show little interest in matters so grave as sacrilege is simply impious (372). Rather, ruin awaits the man who imagines such things, who "breathes with a pride greater than just": πέφανται δ' ἐγγάναις/ατελμήτων ἀρη+)/πνεάντων μεῖζον ἡ δικαίωσ/φλεάντων δωμάτων ὑπέρφευ/ὑπέρ τὸ βέλτιστον (374-77). The perfect tense πέφανται suggests that the Chorus primarily have the destruction of Troy in mind. The fall of Troy confirms that punishment has, and does, come to men like Paris. This much sense at least can be discerned in the corrupt text.

One difficulty lies in ἐγγάναις. To whom or what does it refer? How does the fall of Troy confirm that punishment has appeared to the children's children? Is there something of the idea that god visits "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth
generation?" Some such idea as this is probably suggested by \( \varepsilon \gamma \gamma \alpha \nu \alpha \iota \sigma \). There is probably a veiled reference to Agamemnon and the curse of Atreus he bears. As we have already seen, it is not unusual for the gnomes to transcend their immediate context. The idea of inherited guilt is of great importance in understanding Agamemnon's sin and punishment. Although no great stress is placed upon it in the earlier part of the play, there is, as in the case of the succession myth, a probable allusion to it here.\(^3\)

A further textual difficulty lies in ascertaining the exact meaning of the disputed text, \( +\delta \tau \alpha \lambda \mu \eta \tau \nu \omega \ \alpha \rho \eta + \). Does \( \alpha \rho \eta \) stand as the subject of \( \pi \varepsilon \alpha \zeta \tau \zeta \alpha \), or should it be accented as \( \alpha \rho \eta \) and so stand as the direct object of \( \pi \varepsilon \alpha \zeta \tau \zeta \alpha \) in the sense of "breathing forth Ares? A major problem, however, arises from the latter interpretation. We are left without a subject for the sentence and it is impossible to find one in \( \alpha \tau \alpha \lambda \mu \eta \tau \nu \omega \). In fact, \( \alpha \tau \alpha \lambda \mu \eta \tau \nu \omega \) should be retained since it recalls the intolerable thoughts that Agamemnon breathes forth at Aulis (\( \pi \varepsilon \omega \nu \ldots \tau \lambda \ \pi \alpha \nu \tau \alpha \lambda \mu \lambda \nu \ \phi \alpha \alpha \varepsilon \iota \nu \ 219-21 \)). As in the parodos, wind imagery is used in describing a man's arrogant and proud thinking. Consequently, \( \pi \varepsilon \alpha \zeta \tau \zeta \alpha \ \mu \varepsilon \tau \zeta \alpha \nu \) can stand alone in the sense of \( \phi \alpha \alpha \varepsilon \iota \nu \mu \gamma \alpha \), and we can compare Euripides for a similar use: \( \delta \iota \ \gamma \alpha \ \pi \varepsilon \alpha \zeta \tau \zeta \alpha \ \mu \varepsilon \tau \zeta \alpha \nu \) (Andr 189 cf. Bach 640). "Breathing forth Ares" is simply inappropriate to the sense demanded by the imagery. It is best to understand the \( \alpha \rho \eta \) in the sense of "bane" or "harm."\(^3\) There is some evidence within the ode itself to suggest this meaning. The language of lines 374-75 parallels that of lines 387-88. In both places the imagery of light (\( \pi \varepsilon \alpha \zeta \tau \zeta \alpha \ 374 \ cf. \ \pi \varepsilon \varepsilon \pi \zeta \ 389 \)) is used to denote the punishment which openly
and clearly befalls a man: a woe shines forth like a horrid light. \(\delta \rho \nu\) seems to correspond to \(\sigma \iota \nu \alpha \sigma\) in meaning and in imagery. There seems to be a reworking of themes from the strophe in the antistrophe. In the strophe \(\delta \rho \nu\) \(\pi \epsilon \phi \alpha \nu \tau \alpha\) is the positive side of the gnome \(\delta \nu\) \(\varepsilon \sigma \tau \iota \nu\) \(\varepsilon \pi \alpha \lambda \xi \iota \sigma\). To affirm that there is no defence for the unjust is to imply that some harm will befall him. This same coupling of gnomes occurs in the antistrophe. The gnome \(\alpha \kappa \alpha \sigma\) \(\pi \alpha \nu\) \(\mu \alpha \tau \alpha \iota \nu\) which takes up the theme of "no defence" is also expressed positively in \(\pi \rho \epsilon \pi \epsilon \iota \sigma\). A woe shines forth against which "every remedy is vain." This thematic parallelism strongly suggests that \(\delta \rho \nu\) should be retained and understood in the sense in which we take it.

We can find further evidence for retaining \(\delta \rho \nu\) in a parallel passage from Eumenides. The imagery and thematic content of the third antistrophe of the second stasimon (538-49) are very similar, suggesting that it is a conscious reworking of our present passage. There the Furies bid Orestes "to revere the altar of Dike and not to dishonour it with a godless foot; for punishment will follow": \(\varepsilon \sigma\) \(\tau\) \(\pi \alpha \nu\) \(\sigma \varepsilon\) \(\lambda \varepsilon \gamma \nu\) \(\beta \omega \mu \alpha \nu\) \(\alpha \gamma \delta \varepsilon\) \(\alpha\) \(\Delta \kappa \alpha\),/\(\mu \varepsilon \delta\) \(\nu\) \(\kappa \epsilon \rho \delta \sigma\) \(\iota \delta \omega\) \(\alpha \theta \varepsilon\) \(\pi \delta \iota /\lambda \varepsilon\) \(\alpha \tau \iota \sigma \iota \iota \iota /\pi \iota \nu\) \(\gamma \delta \) \(\varepsilon \pi \varepsilon \tau \alpha\) (538-43). The image of "trampling underfoot" is recalled. The point of that passage is also consistent with what the Chorus of Agamemnon have to say: sacrilege does not go unpunished. The Furies specify the forms of impiety which dishonour Dike, namely, dishonour towards parents and strangers (545-49). It is with the latter that the Chorus of elders are chiefly concerned. Although the particular concerns of the two Choruses differ, there is a common belief: offenders of Dike are, or at least should be, punished. Vengeance
and retribution follows such offenders. παίνα, as a description of the Erinyes’ office (cf. Eum. 323), describes the punishment of the curse, an idea also suggested in the first stasimon by ἔγγοναῖς. This consistency in gnomic thought further supports the retention of ἱλογ or a similar word to denote punishment. The gnome therefore translates: “a punishment for deeds not to be dared appears upon the descendants of those who pant with a pride greater than just.”

The continuity of thought between the two passages carries even further. The Erinyes suggest that worldly greed spurs a man on to sacrilege. "He has his eye upon profit" (κέρδας ἵλων 541). Greed, Clytemestra believes, will encourage the Greeks to plunder what they ought not: ἐρωσ δὲ μὴ τις πρότερον ἐμπίπτήν στρατῷ/πάροιτὶ ἐδ. μὴ ἄρη, κέρδεσιν νικώμενα (Agm. 341-42). This same idea is also picked up in the first stasimon of Agamemnon: ἄς γὰρ ἔστιν ἕπαλξε/πλαύστῳ πρὸς κάραν ἀνδρὶ/λακτίσαντι μέγαν δίκαιο/βωμὸν τὸ ἀφάνειαν (381-84). There seems to be a definite causal relationship expressed here between surfeit and sacrilege. The phrase πλαύστῳ πρὸς κάραν can be variously interpreted, but in keeping with the idea that greed leads into sin, it is better to see πρὸς κάραν in an adverbial sense where it parallels κέρδας ἵλων in meaning. It is in a surfeit of wealth that a man kicks against the altar of Dike. Here, as in Eumenides, the Chorus provide a motive for a man’s sin, excess.

Two metaphors from nature express this idea of excess, completing the gnomic thought of lines 374-75: "harm is revealed on the offspring of
those who pant with a pride greater than is just, when their house teems in excess beyond what is best" (374-78). The wind imagery describes the mental excess of an unjust man, his arrogant thinking or ὑβρίσ; the sea imagery describes the excessive wealth stored away in his house. No direct causal relation between the two is expressed by the Chorus. Possibly, we are to see a long genealogy here, where surfeit breeds ὑβρίσ (arrogant thinking), which in turn breeds impiety and then Ate or ruin. All the ingredients are present in the strophe but the Chorus do not set out a precise relationship among them. However, they seem to suggest that sacrilege is a symptom of a man's excess. The one who says that the gods overlook those who trample down what is sacred is impious (369-72). He is "panting with a pride greater than just." He is also the one who kicks over the altar of Dike from a surfeit of wealth (382-84). In each case, the connection between sacrilege and excess is clearly marked. As we shall see, it is excessive wealth and thinking that spurs Agamemnon on to commit sacrilege.

The wind imagery not only recalls the stormy weather at Aulis but also Agamemnon's own stormy frame of mind:34

34 ἐπει δ' ἀνάγκας ἐδὺ λέπαδν ὁδὸς πνεύμον χρήσει θραπαίαν ἄναγμαν ἀνίερον, τάδεν τὰ παντόταλων φθοραῖν μετέγγυς. Βούτος θρασύνει γὰρ αἰσχρόμητος τάλαινα παρακαπα πρωτόπήμων ἐτικ. δ' ἀν φθορ ηγεμον νευσθαὶ θυγατρῶσ... (218-225)
It is clear from these verses that the wind imagery becomes a metaphor vividly describing Agamemnon's turbulent mind and arrogant thinking: "he breathes forth a change of mind which is impious, unholy and impure, and from that moment he changes to think utter recklessness." In contemplating Iphigenia's death, an impious thought, Agamemnon "pants with a pride greater than is just." From his impious thoughts issue an impious deed. From his thoughts of recklessness (τὰ ποντόταλμων) issues a resolve (ἐτλα) to kill his daughter. The repetition of tolma-root words indicates poetically that Agamemnon's action reflects his own thinking. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he" is a maxim true for Agamemnon.

A man's excess also appears in his material wealth. "The house teems in excess of what is best" (377-78). Such a surfeit of wealth leads a man to trample what is sacred (381-84). The sea imagery comes to be specifically identified with the extravagance of the house of Agamemnon. In the carpet-scene, Clytemestra uses this same imagery to describe the abundant wealth within their house. The sea, she says, "produces an ever renewed gush of purple in which the house abounds" (959-62). Their "house knows not how to be poor" (962); the implication is that no one could drain it dry any more than the vast sea. The wasteful extravagance, here represented by the tapestries that are laid on the ground, clearly suggests that Agamemnon's house teems with more wealth than is proper. The themes of sacrilege and excess, closely related in the first stasimon, are here conflated into one visible symbol. The carpet represents the excessive wealth of Agamemnon's house, while the spoiling of it represents the sacrilege which a surfeit of wealth encourages a man to commit.
It is common in gnomic discourse to present a strong polarization: the excess of the unjust is contrasted with the moderation of the just. Such a contrast is seen in the next gnomic thought (378-80). The fact that the Chorus see an inevitable fate befalling an unjust man for his excesses naturally leads them to approve of moderation. They pray for "what is not harmful" and contentment with that portion (ἐστω δ' ἀπημαντῶν, ὡστ' ἀμφότερων εὖ προπίδων λαχάντι 378-80). ἀπημαντῶν is somewhat ambiguous. What does not cause harm? Certainly it is a moderate portion of wealth as opposed to a surfeit of it. This thought is confirmed in the ship-metaphor of the third stasimon. Too much wealth causes the ship to sink. However, through caution and well-measured jettisoning of its possessions, the ship does not sink under the burden of excess (1005-14). The cautious and well-measured jettisonings are metaphors for the moderation and good sense that characterize the just man. He has obtained for his lot good sense (εὖ προπίδων λαχάντι 380), which teaches him to be content with little. In his moderation and sense, he can find defense against misfortune.

But for the unjust man there is no defense (381), and every remedy is in vain (387). The reason is given at lines 385-86: "the irresistible child of Ate is bearing down upon him" (βιδαί τ' ἁ τάλανα πειθώ, πρᾳδόμιλον παῖσιν άφθορτον ἀτασ 385-86). The gnome describes in allegorical terms the senseless mind of the unjust. While the just man is characterized by his good sense and the moderation, the unjust man is characterized by his infatuation and excess.
The gnome of 385f. recalls Agamemnon's infatuation at Aulis. The reason for his own excessive thinking is given by the Chorus in much the same allegorical terms as in the stasimon: "a wretched, ill-counselling infatuation has given him boldness" (Ἀρδακος Θρασύνει γὰρ ἀεὶχράμητισ/τάλαινα παρακάτα πρωτάπημων 222-23). The echoes of αἰχράμητισ and τάλαινα suggest that the gnome is a reworking of the parodos. In each case, the infatuated state of mind is personified and externalized, conceived as a force outside a man's control. The same delusion that takes counsel against the unjust man of the stasimon, takes counsel against Agamemnon. It persuades him to kill his daughter and later to trample down the tapestries. In the carpet-scene, Clytemestra embodies the "irresistible child of Ate." She has long taken counsel for this moment (πραβδαλας cf. 1377). Now, through crafty argument and rhetoric, she forces Agamemnon to acquiesce. At line 943, at the end of her argument, these words come with startling force: "be persuaded" (πιθανο). At these words, Agamemnon gives in and commits the sacrilege of trampling down the tapestries. Agamemnon still seems to be under the power of Ate. The gnome of 385f. proves true for him. The child of Ate is irresistible.

We have already begun our discussion of the antistrophe by looking at Ate and her relationship to the motif of "no escape." There is no defence for the unjust because "the irresistible child of Ate bears down upon him" (385-86), thus forcing him to his doom. This gnomic thought is continued into the antistrophe, where the motif of "no escape" is taken up once again at line 387, now expressed in a medical image: άκακος δὲ πᾶν ματαιάν (387). "Every remedy is vain" because Ate clouds a man's thinking so that he cannot
find any means of escape from disaster. As we have already seen, the motif of "no escape" is also expressed in positive terms: "a woe shines forth" (388). This sequence is repeated again at line 395f. The gods do not listen to the prayer of the unjust, but rather tear him down. The negative side describes the dilemma brought on by a man's own infatuation; the positive side describes the inevitable punishment in store for such a man. In the similes that follow at 390, the Chorus deal with the positive side of the motif, the punishment in store for the unjust.

The unjust man (ϕοιτ θέους 398) is first compared to bad bronze that becomes badly discoloured when battered (κακόν δὲ χαλκόν τραπέν/τρίβωι τε καὶ πρόσβλασισ/μελαμπαγής πέλει 390-92), and then to a young boy who brings destruction upon his city and is then brought to justice (δικαιώθεισ, ἐπεὶ/διώκει παῖς ποταμὸν ὄρνιν,πέλει πρὸστριμμα θεία ἄφεσσιν 393-95). The similes add the important point that punishment is retributive. The unjust man receives "like for like." This idea is suggested by the word play within the simile. τρίβωι (391), which is inflicted upon the man, corresponds to πρὸστριμμα (395), which he inflicts upon the city, while δικαιώθεισ corresponds to διώκει. The juxtaposition of the two verbs mirrors perfectly the word-play contained within the gnome "like for like," the play on the active and passive: παθεῖν τὸν ξέκαντα (1564). "The doer is done in." The prosecutor is prosecuted. In view of this word play, διώκω probably acquires its legal meaning here.
The legal imagery is further reinforced by the fact that the simile alludes to Agamemnon and his punishment of Troy. The proverbial image of a boy chasing a bird is adapted by Aeschylus to recall the expedition to Troy by way of the omen that appears to Agamemnon at Aulis. The ambiguous nature of the word *ἅπαν* facilitates such an allusion. In pursuit of an omen (*ἅπαν*) Agamemnon sets off to punish Troy and bring destruction upon that city. That the boy has brought an affliction upon the city suggests a further allusion to Agamemnon and that the expedition itself is described as a law-suit again reinforces the allusion (cf. 41 and 450).

Although the Chorus insist that the similes refer to Paris, that he is such as they have described the unjust man (*ἄλωσις καὶ Παρθένος*), it is clear from this veiled reference to the Trojan expedition and from the other allusions to Agamemnon that the gnomes of this strophe-pair apply as much to him as to Paris. Certain images contained in the gnomes look back to his actions at Aulis and Troy and forward to the carpet-scene. The impression left with the reader is that Agamemnon falls into this generic class of unjust men for whom there is no escape, only punishment of "like for like." The gods do not listen to one who is conversant with such things as sacrilege and the destruction of cities. Rather, they tear him down just as he has torn down their temples and altars (396-98).

With the mention of Paris (399), the Chorus naturally turn their thoughts to the abduction of Helen. The sorrow that her theft has caused for Menelaus and Argos becomes the subject of the next three stanzas (405-55).
However, the Chorus are mainly concerned with the city, for its sorrows far exceed those of Menelaus (428). As we learn, many men have died on account of one adulterous woman. The cry "for another man's wife" is muttered low throughout the city and there seems to be a growing sense of resentment toward the Atreidae because of the war. This sorrow and resentment naturally lead the Chorus to condemn war. They conclude the ode with a final series of gnomes that warn against the injustices and dangers of war.

The first danger of war is the angry talk of the people (βασιλέως ἀδέσποτως φάντασμα σὺν κόρῳ (456). Within the context of the preceding stanzas, the gnome refers to the resentment growing within the city against the Atreidae: Θεονομον δ' ὶπτ θλησ ἐφεξὶ προδίκαιο ἀτρείδαιο (405-51). The Atreidae are called "advocates," a term that continues the legal imagery of the first antistrophe, where Agamemnon is identified with the unjust man who has brought an affliction upon his city and is then brought to justice. The affliction caused by Agamemnon is twofold: he has brought destruction upon Troy, but has also brought grief upon Argos. In this aspect he can be compared with Paris. The many deaths he has caused are both Trojan and Greek; but it is the anger and resentment over the latter which the Chorus feel are most dangerous. And, in the end, what lies closest to home proves to be the deadliest for Agamemnon.

The weight of the people's talk consists in the the curse they may pronounce upon their leaders: ἡμᾶς ἀκρανές ἀδρας τίνει χρέας (458). It is difficult to understand exactly what the Chorus mean. How can "the voice of
the people pay the debt demanded of a curse?" Certainly their angry
resentment and their increasing call for punishment amount to a curse. There
would be less confusion if τίνειν could carry the sense of "exacting" or
"demanding" the payment of debt. At any rate, there is surely a certain
irony in the Chorus' using the word δημακράντας with its suggestion of
"democracy."\textsuperscript{38} The people may publicly pronounce a curse but they are
powerless to exact its due. In a society dominated by families and
individuals whose morality rests on vendetta and personal vengeance, the
voice of the general public amounts to very little. This point could not be
made more forcefully than when the Chorus feebly try to threaten Clytemestra
with banishment and the heavy hatred of the people (νῦν μὲν δικαίεισι ἐκ
πάλεως φυγῆν ἐμαι καὶ μῷος ἀστῶν δημακράντας τ' ἔχειν ἄρας 1412-13). Their
threats are a series of curses pronounced by the people (δημακράντας ἄρας).
The echoes from the stasimon are unmistakable (δημακράντας ἄρας 1413 cf.
δημακράντας ἄρας 457; μῷος ἀστωμεν ἀστῆς 1411 cf. μᾶρετα ἀστῶν σὺν κότωι
456). The voice of the people, now represented in the Chorus, tries to exact
it due, but fails. The fact that in Choephoroi Clytemestra appears firmly
entrenched in power confirms that the voice of the people is powerless. It
remains for Orestes, the individual, to punish Clytemestra. As Gantz
remarks, "neither the Chorus nor the community at large possesses the power
to impose justice."\textsuperscript{39} The Chorus' impotence in contrast to Clytemestra's
ability to control the events of the drama enforces the point.\textsuperscript{40} At the
critical moment the Chorus fail to act, to respond decisively to Agamemnon's
death cry. Their deliberation about how to react to the cry they hear within
the palace only parodies the deliberation of an actual council. Their
inability to decide what to do contrasts with the decisive (if not unanimous) judgement of the Areopagus. Only in Eumenides, when judicial power has passed to a citizen body, can the voice of the people exact the debt of their curse.  

In the morality of Agamemnon, with its stress on vendetta and personal vengeance, the Erinyes play the important role. They avenge the wrongs done to individuals. The Erinyes and not the voice of the people "exact the debt of curses." They "watch for men of bloodshed and in time render them faint and dim" (461-68). The curses raised against the Atreidae are over the dead, and this fact alone explains the mention of the Erinyes at 463, whose vested office is to avenge the dead. Among the many dangers Clytemestra foresees for the Greeks at Troy is the suffering the dead will awaken against them: ἐξοικλάκητος εἰ μόνησε στράτος/ἐγρηγόρεσέ το πῆμα τῶν ἐλωκτῶν/τευνύειαν (345-47). Although the Greeks may arrive home without offending the gods, they may still have to reckon with the dead and the grief those deaths have caused. On both counts, they, or at least Agamemnon, is guilty. They have committed sacrilege against the Olympians by trampling underfoot their altars and have offended the Erinyes by putting many to death. The Chorus have already dealt with the problem of sacrilege in the opening strophe; now they turn to the problem of bloodshed and the inevitable punishment of the guilty at the hands of the Erinyes.

The Erinyes punish the man of blood: τῶν παλυκρόνων γὰρ ἄκι ἄσκοπαι θεῶι, κελαίναι δ᾽ ἔρινυσσα χρόνωι...τὸ θεῖον ἀμαμέλει (461-66). In Agamemnon,
there exists a cooperation between the Olympians (Θεοί) and the Erinyes. The gods take note of bloodshed and the Erinyes punish those guilty. This pattern of cooperation is seen in the vulture-simile. Zeus hears the cry of the vultures and dispatches a "late-avenging Erinys" against the robbers of the nest. In Agamemnon, the Erinyes emerge as the agents of the justice of Zeus, whose own succession was based on retribution and revenge. Even Agamemnon's death is a result of the fact that Zeus and the Erinyes work together (1481-88). The type of punishment they deal out to Agamemnon and all those guilty of bloodshed is "like for like."

As in the similes of the opening antistrophe, there is a clear suggestion in the gnomes of the final antistrophe that justice is retributive. The two gnomic passages are linked in thought through verbal echoes. ἄνευ δίκαιος (464) picks up on ἀδίκαν (398) while τρίθω (465) recalls τρίβωι (391). The word play on τρίθωι and πρόςτριμμα suggests the idea of "like for like." The same thing is inflicted on the unjust man as he has inflicted upon the city. The same thought is felt in the word play on παλιντυχεῖ (465) and τυχήραυ (464). The man who prospers without justice falls into a misfortune that mirrors his former prosperity as its exact reverse. This train of thought continues into lines 466-67, where ἐν δίστασις τελεθαντῶσ balances παλικτάνων. The implication behind the contrast is that those who kill are themselves killed. "To render one faint and dim" (τρέχεισ', ἄναμφοτέρω) is an obvious euphemism for murder and death, a thought which is naturally understood from the next sentence where "the unseen" obviously refers to the dead. Throughout the ode, then, there is the unsettling
feeling that retribution is exactly meted out to the unjust by Zeus and the Erinyes. "No one can boast that what he has done is greater than what he has suffered" (533), a truth later confirmed by the death of Agamemnon (cf. 1560f.)

From these thoughts, the Chorus turn to the theme of "excess", a concern of theirs in the first strophe. The corollary of excessive wealth is excessive praise, which can also be dangerous (468-69). For this reason, the Chorus prefer "prosperity without envy" (κρίνω δ' ἄφθανον ὡλβαν 471). In the concept of ὡλβας more than merely wealth is understood; it includes the honour and praise that go along with wealth and can be just as dangerous when taken to excess: τὸ δ' ὑπερκαμως κλυτιν ἐπὶ βορυ (468-69). Yet "prosperity" (ὡλβας) in itself is no crime. In the next stasimon the Chorus go to great lengths to stress that wealth and prosperity are not the cause of a man's downfall, but rather impiety and ἁγνὴ (758-71). Here they are consistent in their thought. Only the man who prospers without justice (τῷ Χηρὰν ὑντ' ἀντὶ δίκας 464) is punished. Only "when his house teems in excess beyond all decency" or "when praise oversteps all bounds" (ὑπερκαμως) is phthonos provoked. Excessive prosperity always implies wrong-doing, especially since sin is often conceived in terms of "going too far," "overshooting the mark," "exceeding the bounds of what is right and proper." Consequently, excessive prosperity implies wealth and praise that have been acquired unlawfully.

Phthonos is the anger and envy provoked in the gods against a man of excess. Too much praise is dangerous because "a thunderbolt is hurled down
from the eye of Zeus" upon the excessive (469-70). For this reason, the Chorus advise moderation, "prosperity without envy." In addition, phthonos is the indignation that society feels towards such men, the angered resentment felt against the Atreidae for the war (ANNER 450). The connection between the gnomes dealing with excess (468-71) and the earlier sections dealing with the angry talk of the people against such evil, is brought out by means of verbal echoes. In Βαρεία (469) we have an echo of Βαρεία (456) and in ἀθέτων (471) of Θενεῖα ἀλγας (450). Excess, whether in praise, wealth or murder, is dangerous because it provokes the anger of the people, who curse the offenders.

The gnomes are again relevant to Agamemnon. In the carpet-scene, it is Agamemnon's fear of phthonos in both its aspects that causes him momentarily to hesitate when Clytemestra persuades him to walk on the tapestries. With words that echo the opening lines of this antistrophe (456), Agamemnon acknowledges that "the voice of the people is great in power" (Ἀμφικτύνητας γὰ τοι λόγοι μέγα θένει 938; cf. ἄτισι...δημακράντω 456-67). That the idea of phthonos is uppermost in his mind is apparent from Clytemestra's immediate reply: ἄτισι...δημακράντω 456-67). Not only does Agamemnon fear the resentment of the people, but he also fears the envy of the gods. As he steps down onto the tapestries, an honour reserved for the gods, he prays that "no envious eye may strike him": μὴ τις πράσωθεν ἀθένης βολὴ Θέους (947). The envy that Agamemnon fears is conceived as a metaphorical bolt that strikes from afar. His words, then, carry an echo of the lightning bolt, hurled down by Zeus
upon the excessive: ἐλλεται γὰρ ἀνὴρ ἀεικαίσα Διάθεσυν κεραυνάσ (469-70). If we retain ἀσάισ of the manuscripts instead of ἀκαίσ, the parallels between the two passages are even more striking. 43 ἀποκαθαρ γάλα precisely recalls ἐλλεται ἀσάισ. That the Chorus are also concerned with phthonos is apparent from the words immediately following: κρίνω ἀφθάναν ἄλβαν (471). These parallels from the carpet-scene again remind the reader that Agamemnon can be seen as the subject of the gnomes.

The Chorus conclude the final antistrophe with an open condemnation of war (472-74). It is within the context of the war that the gnomes should be understood. 44 In war a man can prosper without justice; he can be carried to excess in committing sacrilege and in shedding blood. The one crime evokes the anger of the gods; the other the anger of the people. The one is punished by the gods directly; the other by the Erinyes responding to the cry of the people. Throughout the ode there is the assurance that such injustices are not overlooked. There is no escape for the guilty; every remedy is vain. The truth of this belief is soon confirmed. The Herald arrives announcing the destruction of the fleet in a storm caused by the wrath of the gods (649). The desecrators of the temples have met their doom. Now we must wait in fearful anticipation for the Erinyes to act through Clytemestra. 45

In the second stasimon, the gnomes are restricted to the final three lyrical sections (750-81), characterized by their overt generalizations, their numerous abstractions and their decidedly moral tone. It is to these
sections that our discussion turns. However, no examination of the gnomes would be complete without some reference to the parable of the lion-cub (717-36). Since the parable also has a didactic purpose, it is closely akin to the nature of the gnomes. Besides this, there is a striking number of parallels between the two sections in thematic context, language and imagery. The echoes suggest that each of the two should be understood in light of the other. The parable descriptively illustrates what the gnomes state metaphorically.

The Chorus begin the gnomic section by introducing an opinion they readily reject: παλαιφαται δ'ἐν βρατίσσα γέρων λάγῳ/τέτυκται,μέγαν τελευθέντα φωτόν ἀλβον/τεκνούσθαι μηδ' ἀπαίδα θυνίσκειν/ἐκ δ' ἄγαθος τύχας γένει/βλαστάνειν ἀκόρεστον ὀλίζων (750-56). The ancient story runs "that prosperity begets children and from good fortune springs an insatiable woe to the race." But the Chorus are of a different mind ( δ' ἕλλων μεν ἀφράων εἰμῖ (757-58). Great prosperity does not beget ruin but impiety (τὰ δοσθέσθ᾽ ἔργαν 758) and hybris (τικτείν ἦμπρισ/μεν παλαιὰ νεώ/ζωσάν ἐν κακότι βρατῶν/οὐβρίν...763-65). Evil, not wealth, provokes divine envy. The thought is consistent with the first stasimon. Only the man who prospers without justice is punished by the Erinyes (464). Only when he "breathes with a pride greater than just" and "when his house teems in excess beyond what is best," does harm appear (374-78). Always the image of excess carries the implication of sin, of going too far or overstepping the bound, an idea that seems originally to be behind the meaning of hybris.46
It is difficult to define *hybris* precisely. Clearly some idea of excess is behind its meaning, and so it forms the opposite of *σωφροσύνη*. As "temperance" is closely tied to reverence and piety, so *hybris* is to impiety. The parallel imagery between the two stanzas suggests such an association. 

The parallel imagery between the two stanzas suggests such an association. 

It is repeated (759 cf. 763), and *σετέρα* έκκατα γένναι (760) of the antistrophe is picked up in είδαμέναι τάκεύσιν (771) of the strophe. Impiety begets many children after it, and one of them may be *hybris*. It is clear from the first stasimon that excess and impiety go hand in hand (376-78; 382-84). The former leads to the latter. At Aulis, Agamemnon's recklessness (τὰ παντάτλων φανεῖν 221) leads him recklessly to murder Iphigenia, an impious deed. Excessive thinking is one aspect of *hybris* and one that encourages impiety. But we do see a precise genealogy here, where *hybris* or excess begets impiety? 47 Probably not. Aeschylus elsewhere states that *hybris* is the child of impiety (cf. Eum. 533-34). This is the order presented in the second stasimon. Impiety begets many children after its kind (758-60), and one of them is *hybris*. All that can be said with certainty is that the two go hand in hand. Together, they lead to a man's ruin.

At line 761f., the Chorus begin a contrast between impiety and justice, which is taken up at a greater length in the next strophe-pair. The contrast consists in the different children each parent produces. The one begets evil offspring, the other good offspring. "The destiny of a house which uses justice aright consists in fair offspring": δίκαιων γὰρ εὐθείας καλλίπασι πότιμοι ἀιεί (761-62). At this point, the Chorus add an important
new element to the genealogical scheme. Not only does Dike produce further deeds of justice, but also a fair destiny. So, conversely, not only does a man's impiety beget further acts of impiety, but also his eventual ruin (πάτμος). The birth-metaphor at this point begins to describe more than just the proliferation of evil, where one impious deed produces many after its kind (758-60), or hybris begets more hybris (763f.). It suggests that a man's destiny, although partly determined by his own actions, is also partly inherited. The fate of a family continues from generation to generation. There seems to be an unusual stress placed upon the house, as opposed to the individual. This is marked by the repeated occurrence of words like δόμος, γένος, ἀκρώτα, μέλαθρα throughout the parable and the gnomes of the ode. In the first stasimon, the Chorus emphasize the differences between the unjust and just man; now they emphasize the different inheritances of each household. For the one, there is destiny that always has fair offspring, for the other, an insatiable woe. ἀκρώτα ὀηδύν expresses the converse of καλλίπαιο πάτμος. The inheritance of an impious house is a woe that is insatiable to a race (755), that extends from one generation to the next and that stretches beyond the death of a particular individual to include the children. This idea of inherited guilt is expressed by the birth metaphor.

The paradox that a man's destiny is both determined by his own actions and inherited from his parents is explained by the fact that a man's propensity to do wrong or good is also inherited. Included, then, in our understanding of πάτμος is the gnome ascribed to Heraclitus: ἰθάλς ἀνθρώπων δοίμων. A man's character, his inherited disposition, is his fate. In
this sense, a man's destiny is inherited and passed on. The fate that befell his parents will also befall him because he too displays their character. This idea is brought out in the parable. The lion-cub, despite its upbringing, eventually displays the θρόσ of its parents by becoming a great bane upon the house. There is an obvious contrast in the parable between the θρόσ the lion has from its parents (θρόσ τ' ή πρόσ τακέων 727-28) and the τράφη it receives from outside. In the end, it is the savage nature inherited by birth that determines the lion's violent behavior.

This idea of inherited ethos is carried over into the gnomic section (763-71) and is expressed by the birth metaphor. "An old hybris begets a younger one like its parents" (εἰδομένας τακέων 771). The sinful nature is passed on by birth. The verbal echoes between the two passages (727-35, cf. 763-71) suggest that the gnomes restate in allegorical terms what the parable presents in descriptive terms. ἐτε τ' κύριαν μάλη θάν (766-67) recalls θρονισθείσα (727) of the parable. εἰδομένας τακέων (771) echoes τ' πρόσ τακέων (728); μελαθραίσαν στασ (770) recalls στασ δάμαισ (735). The relationship between θρόσ and πάτμασ, hereditary sin and guilt, is also expressed genealogically. Not only does hybris beget more hybris, but also Ate, and both offspring are like their parents. That the image of one evil breeding another is something more than just a metaphor for the proliferation of evil is apparent from the family of Atreus where sin literally breeds and passes from generation to generation. Agamemnon, like Atreus before him, kills innocent children. Helen and Clytemestra are both guilty of adultery. Agamemnon and Clytemestra are both killed by close
relations. Even Orestes seems to display that evil propensity of the race by murdering his mother. He is the snake born of Clytemestra, the amphisbaena (Agm. 1233).

Aeschylus is not excusing his characters from their responsibility when he intimates that their evil nature is inherited. Rather, he is presenting a paradox: man voluntarily commits his own wrongs, but at the same time has a predisposition to repeat the wrongs of his parents. This paradox is emphasized throughout the latter part of the play. When the Chorus confront Clytemestra with the murder of Agamemnon, she blames the "ancestral Alastor" that has sprung from Atreus into her form (1495-1504). Although the Chorus do not allow her to deny responsibility for the killing (1505-06), at the same time they do recognize that there is a "spirit of vengeance" within the family, which in time may pass from the father into the form of Orestes (1507). There is a curious mixture of personal responsibility and inherited sin or ethos now represented as a daemon working its way through the family line and assuming the form of its different members.

The same paradox is true for Agamemnon. The parodos and the opening stasimon reveal his own personal guilt for the war and the murder of Iphigenia. Yet, from the second stasimon, on his crime and subsequent punishment are increasingly seen in the context of the sins of the past. In the Cassandra-scene this becomes most explicit. Again, inherited ethos is expressed in terms of some daemonic force that prompts each member of the
family to commit the sin of the past. That the daemon (or Alastor or Erinys) is consistently described as belonging to the race and abiding within the house further suggests that it represents the idea of inherited ethos. At one point in her vision, Cassandra sees a band of "kindred Erinyes" within the house: κόμης ἐν δόματι μένει... συγγάνων ἐρίνυσσι (1189-90). They sing of Ate who began it all (πρώταρχαν ἀτην 1192) "and in turn vent their loathing upon the one who tramples on his brother’s bed" (1192-93). There is a clear association between the past sins and those of Agamemnon’s, whose own mind is deluded by "a madness that began the woe" (παρακάει πρωτάπην 223). His sin in the carpet-scene is of the same character as that of Thyestes, who also tramples down what is sacred (τῷ πατᾶντι 1193). With prophetic clarity, Cassandra sees the sin and fate of Agamemnon in the light of the past. His sin is both of his own choosing and a result of a hereditary ethos.

In the second stasimon, the idea of inherited ethos is represented by the birth-metaphor. Hybris begets hybris. As we examine the genealogical record of hybris in detail, we discover that the text of the strophe (763-71) is considerably corrupt. According to Page’s text, the daemon of line 768 is a separate figure from the "younger hybris." It refers to Ate of line 770. The genealogical development of the passage would be lost if we take δαιμόνια and all that follows in apposition to ὑβρίν (766). It is difficult to imagine how hybris and Ate could be one and the same thing. What we have, rather, is the traditional association between the two, where excess (hybris) leads to "ruin" (ἀτη). Furthermore, we have seen that impiety produces many
children after it. In a sense, then, what we have here is the genealogical record of the abundant offspring of impiety.

Since the strophe is a development of the antistrophe, the "irresistible daemon" born of hybris is identical to the "insatiate woe" that springs from impiety (756). In this case, Ate acquires the sense of "ruin" and is quite distinct in meaning from hybris. However, as metaphor, Ate resembles her parent in character (ἐξομήνωσι τακζον 771). This resemblance is emphasized by the periphrasis for her name, ἄνίερ ϑρασος μελανος άταο (769-70). It is in her over-weening boldness that the Ate most resembles her parent. Θρασος and ἄθροι are closely linked in meaning. The hybris of Uranus is seen in his swelling boldness (παναθρα abide Θρών 169). The hybris of Agamemnon is displayed in his excessive thinking (τὰ παντάταλην σφονεῖν 221) and bold infatuation: ἑράταυς Θρασύπεντα ὑπ οἰοχρομητις τάλαινα παρακόπα πρωτημήνων (222-23). The language used to describe Agamemnon's infatuation suggests the "unholy boldness" that characterizes Ate. ἄνιερ θρασος (764) clearly recalls ἄνιερ...θρασύνετι of the parodos. His hybris soon turns to a destruction (ἄτη), equally bold. Agamemnon is killed by Clytemestra, who is herself compared to Ate (1229-30). Like Agamemnon, she is bold in character (ταλως τα λαμα 1231), reckless in nature (ἡ παντάταλην 1237) and breathes forth Ares upon her loved ones (ἀρης φίλας πνέουσαν 1235-36 cf. 48). The bold murderer becomes boldly murdered. In genealogical terms, the metaphor expresses this idea of "like for like." hybris begets Ate who resembles her parents.
No gnomic disquisition on *hybris* would be complete without a consideration of the traditional contrast with *Dike*. The final antistrophe is an expansion of the theme of the "just-abiding house" (ἀϊκῶν εὐθείκων 761-62), in the same way as the strophe was a development of the theme of "impiety begetting more impiety" (758-60). What qualifies a household as just is specified, but in a rather unusual and paradoxical way. What we would expect to be a house blessed by *Dike* is not. She frequents the most unlikely places: "she shines within sooty dwellings" (772-73), but departs from mansions glittering with gold (776-78). The paradox is one of outward and inward appearances. "Man looketh upon the outward appearance but God upon the heart." Although a house may outwardly shine, inwardly it may not. There may be filth upon the hands. A man's prosperity is no gauge for measuring his moral integrity. What does count is the just life (ἐναίσιμα πίσι 775-76). It is difficult to determine exactly what ἐναίσιμα means. It is glossed in Tr as τὰν δίκαιαν. The moral sense of the word is understood from the antithesis that follows in σὺν πίνων χειμῶν, a metaphor for impiety and pollution. The fact that *Dike* leaves with her eyes averted and seeks what is holy reinforces the religious overtone. In one sense then, ἐναίσιμα is the opposite of ὑπερβῆσιν. However, ἐναίσιμα may retain some of its traditional meaning of "due measure." It is precisely in this sense that Agamemnon uses the word, when he bids Clytemestra to praise him in a manner that is proper and in due measure (ἐναίσιμα ἀνείθῳ 916), and forbids her to pamper him as a woman (918), to treat him as a barbarian (919), or to spread garments over his pathway (921). All these tokens of praise bear the mark of excess and, as we have learned, excessive praise is
dangerous (468-69). Agamemnon is well aware that such praise incites the envy of Gods (921). What is fitting is praise in moderation. So then, the life that is \( \varepsilon \nu \alpha \iota \varsigma \mu \alpha \sigma \) is one that never exceeds the bounds of what is right and proper. It is this life that Dike honours.

In contrast the theme of "excess" is touched upon in the second half of the antistrophe (776-81). "Dike does not reverence the power of wealth falsely stamped with praise": \( \delta \u039c \nu \alpha \mu \iota \nu \ \delta \u0397 \ \sigma \varepsilon \beta \delta \iota \varsigma \alpha \ \pi \lambda \breve{\alpha} \tau \alpha \u03b5 \pi \alpha \rho \alpha \sigma \mu \alpha \nu \ \alpha \iota \nu \iota \) (779-80). This thought forms the contrast to "Dike honours the life of due measure." In logical contrast, the wealth not honoured by Dike exceeds the bounds of what is right and proper. To be falsely stamped with praise, then, is to receive more praise than one's mortal station and one's real worth deserve. A man's wealth often belies his moral integrity. There is often filth upon hands, pollution within the house. Again the Chorus make the traditional association between excessive wealth, symbolized here by the golden mansions, and wrong-doing, which is symbolized by the soiled hands. In acquiring his wealth, the unjust man steps beyond the bounds of what is proper and right and commits sin.

With these remarks, the Chorus answer what could be an unsettling question: why do the wicked prosper? The answer is, they don't. In fact, the Chorus may be challenging any such morality that would suggest that the just are always rich and prosperous. As we have seen, a man's wealth is no real measure of his righteousness. Justice even resides in the decrepit shambles of the poor. The Chorus are emphatic, though, that the house where
justice abides is blessed with a fair fortune (καλλίταις πάτμος). But in what sense could a man's destiny be fair if he is poor? Real prosperity is not defined in terms of wealth and riches alone. As Herodotus' Solon says, "a very wealthy man is not more blessed (ἀληθετέρας) than the one who has enough for the day" (Hdt. 1.32.5). Misfortune can fall upon the rich and poor alike. What real prosperity is the Chorus do not say. Perhaps they believe with Solon that a blessed man is one who lives and ends his life happily (Hdt. 1.32.7). This is the definition of prosperity Agamemnon ironically gives just before he is led off to his death by Clytemestra ἄλβησι ήξε ξνίθηςανεφ' ἐν ἐπεισετί φύλη (928-29). "Count no man happy until he ends his life in welcome prosperity" seems to be the truth confirmed by Agamemnon's violent death. Presented with the possibility that Agamemnon may be murdered, the Chorus themselves adopt the same attitude. At the end of Cassandra's prophecy, the Chorus finally recognize that Agamemnon's life is in danger (1331-42). Although the gods have granted him Troy and a safe return, there is still the possibility of his dying. The contradiction is unsettling to them. If Agamemnon must pay with his own life for the blood of those who have died beforehand (1338-40), "what man could boast that he is born with a destiny free from harm?" (τίς ὢν ἐξεῖωντα ἐπεισετίςκει δοῖμαν φύλη;1341-42). His death will belie the fact that he was prosperous. "Count no man happy until his death" is the only conclusion they can draw. However, what Herodotus leaves to the whim of chance (τύχη) in determining a man's fate and destiny, Aeschylus assigns to θῆσι. The character a man inherits from his parents decides the road of destiny he chooses.
In the third stasimon, the second strophe (1001-17) forms the main gnomic section of the ode. It is marked off by clear ring-composition. The collocation of words πάλλατε ταί...νάσον is repeated at the end of the strophe in πάλλατε ταί...νάσον. The ταί, which is noticeably absent in other gnomic sections of the play, here signals to the reader that the Chorus is entering a reflective mode. The subject of the gnomes is excess and moderation. This is emphasized by the repetition of words suggesting this idea (μάλα 1001; πάλλατε 1001; ὄκνας 1009; εὐμέτρησα 1010; πλησμόνας γέμων ὧν 1012). Whereas in the previous odes the Chorus emphasized the inescapable punishment which results from excess, now they stress that it is remediable. From the dangers of certain excesses an escape can be found through moderation. As we shall see, this thought forms an important contrast to the second antistrophe where the irredeemable nature of death is emphasized.

The Chorus begin with a medical analogy to express their ideas on the theme of excess. It is common in gnomes to draw on a variety of images and analogies to express a single theme. So here, the Chorus begin with a medical image, then shift to nautical imagery and conclude with an allusion to agriculture. Each suggests something on the theme of excess. However, exactly what is suggested by the medical analogy is not certain. According to Denniston-Page, the text is "incurably corrupt" at lines 1001-22. There is no metrical responsion between the strophe and antistrophe at the beginning. The soundness in the meter and text of the antistrophe suggests that the corruption lies in the strophe. "That good health has its limit and when cultivated to extremes turns to ill-health," seems to be the gist of
what the Chorus is saying: μάλα γάρ τεί να πέλλασ πάντι ταύτισα νάθειαν τέρμαν
άπωμα γάρ/γείτων ὑμάθαιχα ἐρεῖσεν (1001-04). The substance of the image
comes from a common medical theory that "good conditioning at its peak is
dangerous, if it has gone to extremes" (Hippocrates, Aphorisms 1.3).59 The
point being made by the analogy is that excess is harmful. This is consonant
with what is suggested below and elsewhere: too many possessions will lead
to the sinking of the ship (1011-12). Too much praise is dangerous (468-69).

Yet, ἄκρεστῶς (1001) poses some problem to our interpretation,
unless the Chorus is actually suggesting that man cannot have enough of a
good thing. No one can have too much good health because sickness always
presses in (1004). No one can have too much good fortune because of the
constant misfortune of life. This idea anticipates what the Chorus will say
in regard to Agamemnon. Although he has been blessed by the gods with a safe
return (1335-37), still, death threatens. Consequently, the Chorus conclude
that man cannot have enough of good fortune: τὸ μὲν εὖ πρᾶσσειν ἄκρεστῶν
ἐφιλ πᾶσαι ἐρεῖσε (1331-32). No one bars it from the door, saying "don't
come in" (133-35). ἄκρεστῶς is used in precisely the same sense in both
places. The two passages are strikingly parallel in thought. The Chorus
begin the third stasimon by expressing their secret fears for Agamemnon's
safety. "A fright constantly flutters before their prophetic
heart" (975-77). Although they have witnessed with their own eyes the safe
home-coming of their king (988-89), "their heart within sings the unwelcome
dirge of an Erinys" (990-91). This contradiction between what is actually
seen and what is foreboded parallels the conflicting emotions the Chorus feel
after Cassandra’s prophecy. In both places they form the same conclusion: man cannot have enough of good fortune. In the third stasimon good health is a metaphor for good fortune and sickness for misfortune.

At line 1004, the Chorus shift from medical to nautical imagery. In the first part of the image (1005-7), the Chorus describe the uncertainty of human fortune, emphasized by the unseen reef upon which a ship strikes. Even though a man’s destiny (πῶτως) may sail straight on course, it can founder upon the reef of unexpected disaster. πῶτως εὔθυματον recalls πῶτως εὕθυδίκων of the second stasimon. The echo may suggest that the verb εὔθυματον has a distinctively moral meaning and does not simply mean “unswerving.” We can compare Pindar’s seventh Olympian for a similar use of the word and comparable theological ideas. There Pindar states that Diagoras "keeps a straight course along the path that abhors hybris": ἐπὶ θορῶν ἐξορὰν ἀδαν εὔθυματον (91-92). But despite Diagoras’ upright walk, unexpected misfortune can strike. The breezes of calamity shift rapidly from one direction to another: ἐν ἐκ μυῖα μὴ ἔροι τὰ ἄφαιτα ἀλλὰ ἄλλατα διὰ τοῦσθαι αὐτῷ (94-95). In man’s allotted portion of time, fortune changes from good to bad. These parallels confirm that in gnomic discourse εὔθυματον was commonly understood in a moral sense, and that it was commonly believed that calamity struck suddenly and unexpectedly even the just.

Yet such misfortune is not irrevocable. Through well-measured jettisons of a part (τὸ μὲν) of the possessions, the house does not sink under the burden of a surfeit of wealth (1007-12). The image of a crew
cautiously (ἀκνᾶσ) throwing overboard its excess cargo becomes a metaphor for moderation. Through moderation, the sensible man can right the wrongs caused by excess. Disaster teaches him that there is no defense in a surfeit of wealth (cf. 380-84), only in moderation. He willingly parts with some of his possessions in order to save his house. Denniston-Page explain the meaning of εὐμέτρων, because just the right measure, neither more nor less, should be jettisoned. This idea continues the thought from Hippocrates, where not only excessive good-health is considered dangerous but its reduction when taken to extremes (Aphorisms, 1.3). If too much of the cargo is tossed overboard, the ship will capsize. Again the idea of caution and moderation underscores the imagery.

That misfortune can be remedied is emphasized as well in the final gnome of the strophe. Famine can be averted by an ample gift from the hands of Zeus (1015-18). The suggestion that Zeus grants relief from disaster marks a definite departure in attitude from the first stasimon, where the gods do not heed the prayers of the unjust, but tear him down (396-98). The gods respond differently because of the different character displayed by each. The man of the first stasimon is regarded as unjust (ὁδίκαν 398). He is the thrall of surfeit; he is blinded by Ate and has committed sacrilege at the altar of Dike. But here the man is characterized as just. He directs the course of his destiny along a straight path; he exercises caution and moderation, and he recognizes the folly of excess. Consequently, the gods respond to his prayer for help and rescue him from his trouble.
However, there is one excess from which man cannot escape. The unjust man of the first stasimon can find no remedy because of the countless murders he commits. The gods do not overlook those who shed much blood (461-62). Death marks the point of no return; it is the one thing that cannot be remedied. This point is made clear at the beginning of the final antistrophe: τὸ δ’ ἐπὶ γὰν πεσὸν ὀπαξ θανάσιμων πρόπαρ ἀνόρθος μέλαν αἷμα τί σ᾽ ἀν πάλιν ἀγκαλέσαι εἴπαξίδων; “once blood has fallen upon the ground, who can call it up again?” The answer to the question comes in the allusion to the myth of Asclepius. That death is an irrevocable fact is confirmed when Zeus prevents Asclepius from raising the dead (1022-24). By divine will, the limit of excess is fixed at killing (cf. Eum. 647-51). Once a man has stepped beyond these bounds and committed murder, he cannot escape. He cannot call up the dead and right his wrongs. Every remedy proves, at this point, vain.

The Chorus’s question anticipates Choephori, where the theme of bloodshed and the motif of "blood upon the ground" is fully developed. In the parodos, the Chorus of slave girls ask much the same question as the Chorus of elders do: τί γὰρ λύτραν πεσόντα ὀμοιόμορη πέλαι; (Cho. 48). Their question is answered by the events of the drama. The Chorus is dispatched by Clytemestra to offer libations to the dead Agamemnon. Yet the offerings and incantations,62 intended to appease his wrath, have the opposite effect. Orestes is roused to vengeance and the Queen is put to death by her own son. The truth of what the Chorus of elders is saying in Agamemnon is confirmed. No atonement can be found for spilt blood. Incantations (ἐπαξίδων) cannot raise the dead. They can only arouse its wrath.
The dilemma of what atones for blood leads the Chorus of slave-girls to conclude that blood alone atones for blood: 

\[ \text{ὅλλα νόμας μὲν φάνια σταμάνας χυμένας ἐσ πέσαν ὅλλα πρᾶσατεῖν σίμα (Cho. 400-02).} \]

"Once blood has been spilt upon the ground it demands more blood." It demands something equally irredeemable to compensate. It demands more blood. This is the direction in which the elders' thoughts are also leading. Faced with the reality of Agamemnon's death, they too can only conclude "like for like" (1560-64). "Like for like" becomes the driving principle of Choephoroi and Agamemnon. We conclude our discussion with a look at the final kommos of Agamemnon, where the gnome is fully formulated, presented to us in terms of a curse, fate and the justice of Zeus.

Agamemnon's death, which clearly exemplifies the law of "like for like," throughout the kommos is attributed to some evil spirit haunting the house. As we have already seen, the daemon represents in supernatural terms what ethos represents in biological terms. The "Alastor of Atreus," the "kindred Erinyes" and "inherited ethos" are all expressions of the curse. Agamemnon kills Iphigenia because of the evil strain he receives at birth. Clytemestra murders Agamemnon because the "Alastor of Atreus" has assumed her body (1500f.). The two ideas are too closely interwoven to be separated. Like a bad gene, the curse is transmitted through the family line; as an evil spirit, it continues to haunt the house, encouraging each generation to murder. Always underlying the curse is the idea of "like for like." The Alastor that springs from Atreus, "the cruel feaster," repeats the act in each generation. In sacrificing Iphigenia, Agamemnon imitates his father's
sin. But along with sin, Agamemnon inherits the guilt. The daemon of Atreus punishes him by "offering him up as a full-grown sacrifice" (τὸν ἀπέτεις τελεῦν νεαρὸν ἐπιθύμοι 1503-04). Agamemnon receives "like for like."

As a curse, "like for like" is associated with the Erinyes. This association is clearly expressed in Eumenides, where the Erinyes become the chief advocates of the law. The connection is hinted at in Agamemnon by the household Alastor who embodies the curse of Atreus. Another important figure associated with the law of "like for like" and the Erinyes is Moira. There is one place in the kommos where the connection is clearly brought out: Δίκα δὲ ἑπτὰ ἄλλα πρᾶγμα θηγεται βλάβασ πρὸς ἄλλαις θηγάναις μυὴρα (1535-36).

There is some confusion in the manuscripts. It is difficult to decide whether μὴρα of the manuscripts should be retained and Δίκα and θηγεται altered to Δίκαι and θηγάνει accordingly (cf. Fraenkel's text). We can look to a parallel passage in Choephoroi for possible suggestions. There, destiny (Aisa) is seen forging the sword of vengeance on the anvil of justice: Δίκαις δὲ ἐρείδεται πυθανᾶ, πρᾶξαλκεύει δ' Αίσα φαιγανθυργάς (646-47). So here it is more likely that Moira, an equivalent figure to Aisa, actively sharpens Dike, the law of vengeance, "upon different whetstones for different deeds of harm."

The gnomic passage carries a clear suggestion of "like for like." θηγάνη is a rare word in the Oresteia; it only occurs elsewhere in Eumenides, where it is used metaphorically in the sense of "incentive." Athena bids the Furies not to cast incentives for bloodshed upon her citizens (Eum., 858-59).
In view of Agamemnon's murder, the idea of bloodshed is prominent here. With each act of bloodshed, Moira incites Dike to a corresponding deed of harm. Each murder proves an incentive for the next. The ἁλα-ἁλα combination drives home the notion of "like for like" now seen as an eternal principle of fate that has become a law of justice (Dike).

When the gnome is finally formulated (1560-66), it is presented in terms of the curse, fate, and the justice of Zeus. In the case of Agamemnon, the Chorus conclude that "reproach has met reproach;" "the plunderer has been plundered;" the murderer, murdered." "The doer must suffer," is seen as an eternal law irrevocably fixed. "As long as Zeus remains upon the throne, it remains": μὴ μνημεία δὲ μὴ μνηματὰ ἐνθρόνωι Δίας παθεῖν τὰν ἔρξαντα θεσμὸν γὰρ (1563-64). As an "abiding order" (θέσμως), 63 "like for like" supersedes even the justice of Zeus. This is clear from Prometheus, where Zeus himself is bound to fate, the necessity of suffering "like for like." As we hear from the Erinyes; this ordinance, the office of avenging the dead, has been ordained by fate (ἔμπλη κλύουν θεσμῶν τὰν μαθράκραντα Ευμ. 391-92). Yet its association with Zeus is clear. As long as Zeus is on the throne, "like for like" abides as an eternal law. The law of fate is now incorporated into the dispensation of Zeus. Elsewhere in the play, Zeus is seen as the all-encompassing one, responsible for all, doer of all (1485-86). These words are spoken in regard to Agamemnon's death. As in the events of Aulis, the Chorus see Zeus behind what has just happened. The law of "like for like" which Agamemnon's death exemplifies must surely be attributed to Zeus as well. "For what is fulfilled among men without Zeus?" "What is not ordained
by God (1487-88)?  

Agamemnon must suffer the consequences of his actions. Such is the abiding law of fate and Zeus' justice.

μένειν is also used by Aeschylus to describe the abiding consequences of the curse within the race of Atreus. The "kindred Erinyes" remain within the house and cannot be drive out (1189-91). The Chorus do not conclude the passage without some allusion to the curse. "Who can expel the seed of a curse from the house?" (τίς ἄν γὰρ τὸν ἐμαθέν ἐκβάλει ἀδίων; 1565). The obvious answer is no one. "The race is glued to destruction" (κεκάλακται γένεσι πρὸς ἀτασ 1566). Since the law of "like for like" is seen exclusively in terms of the family and the retribution one family member exacts from another, it is natural to see it as a curse. That this curse is carried in the family seed is here suggested by γὰρ τὸν; this recalls the birth-imagery of the second stasimon, a metaphor for inherited sin. The sinful nature that Agamemnon receives by birth from his father he transmits to his son. Orestes murders Clytemestra; she receives her due. The inexorable law of "like for like" is fulfilled by the curse within the family.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER I


2. Ibid.


5. (See Fraenkel's translation, I, p.105.)


It is also possible to speak of fate (τὰ πεπρωμένα) as unbending and unyielding. The Greeks traditionally saw fate as a rigid necessity from which man could not escape. ἀτευνέις appropriately describes the Erinyes as well. In Eumenides they relentlessly pursue Orestes. Their connection with the justice of Zeus is suggested here in the vulture-simile. Zeus dispatches them against Troy in the form of the Atreidae. Their passion for vengeance is not easily pacified. The libations sent by Clytemestra fail to appease the dead Agamemnon and his avenging Erinyes. She is killed by Orestes. It seems that no form of sacrifice can appease their relentless passion.
For the actual placement of the Hymn within the parodos, see R.D. Dawe, "The Place of the Hymn to Zeus in Aeschylus' Agamemnon," Eranos, 64 (1966), 1-21, who rejects the traditional order; cf. Leif Bergson, "The Hymn to Zeus in Aeschylus' Agamemnon," Eranos, 65 (1967), 12-24, who accepts the traditional placement.

Since the accusative object and dative of comparison is left unexpressed for παρετικάσαι, some take the verb to mean "to guess" or "to conjecture." However, its use elsewhere in the play clearly suggests comparison: ἐς κυμάδαις ἄν θεσφάτων γνώμων ἄκραδε/εύναι, κακὼι ἐς τωι παρετικάζω τάδε (1130-31). The Chorus are not experts in prophecy, but they understand that something bad is foreboded by Cassandra. "I liken these words of yours to some evil" is the clear meaning. But, in the parodos, what and to what are the Chorus comparing? Within the context, it is clearly the sacrifice of Iphigenia they are comparing to Zeus. They can only understand what happened at Aulis in reference to him. They cannot compare the death of Iphigenia to anything else but Zeus. πλὴν Δίας serves as the dative to which something is compared. If one truly wants to remove the burden of the heart, compare all to Zeus. For a detailed study of παρετικάζω, see Peter Smith, On the Hymn to Zeus in Aeschylus' Agamemnon, (Ann Arbor: Edwards Brothers, Inc., 1980), pp.7-14. Both Fraenkel, II, pp.101-02 and Denniston-Page, pp.83-84, take αὐδὲν as the understood object of comparison "I cannot compare anything to Zeus."

Zeus balances everything in the scale (πάντ' ἐπισταθμωμένως). πάντα is a key word. That Zeus is the sum of all is too sophistic a thought for Aeschylus. However, the poet is not far from the idea when he says Zeus is responsible for all, the doer of all: διὰ Δίας/παναίτιδα πανεργάζεται/τι γὰρ βρατίζει ζυγεύ Δίας τελείται; τι τὼν, δὲ θεόκρατον ἐστίν; (1485-88). The thoughts in the two passages are parallel. Zeus is responsible for Agamemnon's as well as Iphigenia's death. ζυγεύ Δίας parallels πλὴν Δίας. What is there without Zeus? What is there to compare to except Zeus? Everything is through Zeus (διὰ Δίας). He is the dia. The different prepositions emphasize the all-completeness of Zeus. The pun on Zeus' name (διὰ Δίας), the play on the different prepositions, the repetition of πῶς emphasizing this all-completeness of Zeus are the types of word play in the gnomes of Aeschylus.

For the view that the Hymn does not allude to the succession myth, see A.J. Beattie, "Aeschylus, Agamemnon 160-83," CQ, ns. 5 (1955), 13-28.

"Like for like" is consistently represented in Prometheus and the Oresteia as a rigid principle of fate or necessity, and a law of the Erinyes closely tied to the curse within a family. It predates the dispensation of Zeus and the law of "learning through suffering." That law arose subsequently from Zeus' own experience with the necessity of fate. In Eumenides, the trial of Orestes represents at
the ideological level a conflict between the two laws, between the Erinyes, who rigidly demand "like for like," and Athena, who represents Zeus and his civilizing law.


14. This assumes that the lost Luomenos formed the sequel to Desmotes. There is considerable debate whether the Prometheus story formed a trilogy or "dilogy," or even whether Desmotes should be regarded as just a monodrama. Yet, a play that presents an irreconcilable conflict and hints at final resolution demands a sequel no less than Agamemnon.

15. Winnington-Ingram, p.185.

16. Themis revealed to Prometheus that in battle between the Titans and Zeus, the victor would prevail, not through force, but guile. (ὡς άλη Κάτ' ἵσχυν άληδε πρός τα καρτεράν/Χρείη,άδλωτ δέ ταύτα ἔπερσχάντας κρατεῖν 212-13). It seems that Zeus must relearn this truth that knowledge along with force is needed. Deceit is a form of knowledge that is positively expressed in Peitho. Deceit may have worked on the other Titans but genuine persuasion is needed for Prometheus. This development from deceit to persuasion is paralleled in the Oresteia. Clytemestra uses guile to persuade Agamemnon to trample tapestries and enter to his death. However, her victory does not stop the cycle of bloodshed; it only precipitates it. Only Athena's persuading of the Erinyes stops the violence and resolves the conflict. "Persuasion" is a theme worked out in Prometheus Bound alongside the theme of "learning through suffering."


18. Winnington-Ingram, p.186. This is also true of Oresteia and especially of Eumenides. Athena attributes her victory to persuasion and Zeus Agoraios (Eum. 970f.). The words "be persuaded" ring throughout her appeal to the Erinyes.

19. Shortly after Oceanus says, "Words are the medicine of temper," he says that Prometheus' misfortune is a teacher (ἡ σὴ, Προμηθεΐα, σωφρονὰ διδάσκαλον 391). The connection between "learning through suffering" and persuasion is also made by the Chorus: "Seek wise counsel and be persuaded (ἔρευναν τὴν σαφὴν εὐβολίαν πιθανῷ - 61 -
1037-38; cf. ἐμαθὼν τάδε...πίθων 552-60). This same connection between the two themes emerges in Eumenides, between Athena’s admonitions that the Furies “be persuaded” (ἐμαθείης πίθως 794; σὺ δὲ ἐμαθείης ἐμάθοι 829), and their refrains about their suffering (παθεῖν 837, 870).

20. There is the possibility that the resolution reached in the Prometheus story has a political context paralleling that of the Oresteia. Zeus changes from a tyrant to a patron of the polis like Athena. Like the Furies, Prometheus is invited to take up residency in Athens, where he was actually worshipped.

21. Maurice Pope, “Merciful Heavens? A question in Aeschylus’ Agamemnon,” JHS, 94 (1974), 100-13. Pope argues at length for accenting παθο and understands the question to be rhetorical: an assertion that there is no grace from the gods. However, he fails to realize that within the context of the Hymn, “learning” constitutes a “violent grace.”

22. Denniston-Page, p. 85. θεὰς is not found in the manuscripts, but is Turnerbus’ emendation. Whether we accept the adjective as opposed to the adverb to a large extent depends on whether the word is translated passively or actively. The parallel passages suggest passively (cf. Cho. 549; Eum. 555). The second example is particularly relevant because of the parallel imagery: “The unjust man will lower his sail perforce, against his will” (βιαίω). If the word carries a passive sense, βιαίωs must be amended to βιαιάσ. The gods do not sit upon their benches against their will, but their will and favor is forced on mortals. βιαιάσ readily parallels παρ’ ἄκαντας. “Discretion,” the grace of Zeus, comes perforce. See N.B. Booth, “Zeus Hypsistos Megistos: An argument for enclitic παθο In Aeschylus’ Agamemnon 182,” CQ, ns. 26 (1976), 220-28.

23. φυβάνεω can have a comparatively neutral meaning, “be conscious” or “think” (Pope, JHS, 94, 108-10), but it also can mean “understand” or “be sensible,” and so comes close to the meaning of σωφράνεω; cf. Booth, CQ, ns. 26, 225.


25. That ἁκάντας suggests “unwilling to revere Zeus” does not discount the fact that παρ’ ἁκάντας can also mean “against the will of the learner” and parallels βιαιάς in meaning. The word is working on two levels.


27. Denniston-Page, p. 92.

29. Ibid, p.75.

30. cf. μύνει γὰς θεώρει γαλάζων ἀλκάτεσσας ἀλκάς, μνήμων μὴνίσ τεκνάδαινας (154-55). Calchas is obviously alluding to the curse, to the "kindred band of Erinyes" who always abide within the house (ἐν δому μενει 1189; cf. μύνει...ἀλκατέσσας) and cannot be driven out. Wrath, the wrath of the Erinyes is ever mindful (cf. κακῶν τε μνήμων εσωμαλ Eum. 383). It keeps arising afresh (παλίναρτος) to avenge the slain children of the house. τεκνάδαινας refers not only to Iphigenia but also to the children of Thyestes, whose deaths Agamemnon must also pay for (cf. 1500-04). See Fraenkel, II, pp.93-94.

31. The word occurs elsewhere in Suppl. 84 where it is glossed by the scholia as θλάθη. Denniston-Page, p.102.

32. Even if we retain ἀφη as the direct object of πνέαντων, the gnome still applies to Agamemnon, who is described in such terms in the parados. He "loudly clamours for war" (μεγάλ’ ἐκ θυμοῦ κλαζόντες ἀφη 48). The gnome also anticipates Cassandra’s description of Clytemestra, who, as the mother of Hades, breathes Ares upon her loved-ones. (Ἀφη φίλαις πνέαντων 1235-36).


34. On wind imagery, see William C. Scott, "Wind Imagery in the 'Oresteia'," TAPA, 97 (1966), 459-71.


37. λιτῶν δ’ ἀκαμείται μὲν δύτιος θεών/τῶν δ’ ἐπιστραφαῖ τῶν/φωτ’ αδικῶν καθαριεί. τῶν is somewhat vague. It probably refers to all prior mentions of evil, such as trampling down what is sacred, kicking the altar of Dike, or bringing destruction upon the city.

38. The manuscripts actually give δημακράτας; the voice of "democracy" exacts the debt of a curse. Porson amends the text to δημακράτας, which the metre requires.


40. On the contrast between the Chorus and Clytemestra see Winnington-Ingram, pp.208-216.
41. The transition begins with Orestes, who submits himself to Apollo's jurisdiction. "Thus the individual begins to recognize the need for judgment by a party external to himself." Gantz, HSCPh, 87 (1983), 85.


44. For a full discussion on the effects of war upon Agamemnon, see Winnington-Ingram, pp.78-100.

45. Throughout the trilogy, Clytemestra is repeatedly identified with the Erinyes, both as their agent of vengeance and as an actual incarnation of an Erinys. She describes herself as the Alastor of Atreus (Agm. 1501). The Chorus see her as an Erinys maddened by the bloody murder of Agamemnon (1428). Blood drips from her eyes. (Λίβας ἐπ’ ἀμμάτων ἀμματας ἐμπρέπει 1429). Their description anticipates the Pythia's description of the Furies at the opening of Eumenides. She sees within the temple of Apollo a detestable band of women from whose eyes drip a loathsome pus (ἐκ δ’ ἀμμάτων λείβαςι δυσφιλή λίβα Eum. 54). Like Clytemestra, the Furies have gone mad at the sight of blood. Both suffer the same fate. In the same passage, the Chorus warn Clytemestra that she will suffer dishonor and pay "like for like": ἀτίεταν ἔτι σε χρῆ στεράμεναν φίλων τύμμα τύμματι τείναι (1429-30). ἀτίµωσι also describes the fate of the Erinyes who pursue lots of dishonor (ἀτίμω ἀτίετα διάμεναι λάχη Eum. 385-86). They too suffer for their act of vengeance.

46. Greene, p.18 n 45; 22.


48. ἀκρεπτάσι describes the effect of the curse within the house of Atreus; cf. 1484, where it is connected with the daemon of the race, and 1117, where it is associated with the discord within the race. Both refer to the curse, something closely tied to the idea of inherited destiny. The curse of Atreus forces Agamemnon to commit the sin of past and so to suffer the punishment of the past.

49. For a similar thought, see Pindar Nem 5.40 πάτμῳ δὲ κρίνει συγγενῆς ἔργων πέρι πάντων. It is Pytheas' "inborn destiny" that decides every issue. For Pindar, an athlete's heroic heritage determines his victory in the games. The fame of an uncle or father is continued in the nephew or son. In this sense, an athlete's destiny and fame is inborn, a result of the ethos he has inherited. Pindar and Aeschylus thus share this notion.


52. The genealogy runs as follows: Old ἕβρισ begets a younger ἕβρισ (νεῖματος ἕβριν 764-66) "when the day of delivery comes (ὅτε τὸ κύριον μόλις φάσα τάκνυ 766-67), and "an unconquerable daemon" (δαίμονα τε ταῦ ὥμοραν 768), "the impious arrogance of black Ate" (ἀνίερον θράσος μελαίνας άτας 769-70). Θράσος άτας seems to be in opposition to δαίμονα, where άτας is the genitive singular and εὐδόμενος is the accusative plural in opposition to both ἕβριν and δαίμονα.

53. To the contrary, see Fraenkel, II. p.353.

54. Doyle, p.40.

55. *Ibid*.

56. Page’s text removes δίνα at 775. However, the emphasis within the antistrophe is upon abstract and the personification of "bion" is in keeping with the tone of the stanza. τίπ τίνων parallels δύναμιν ὧ σέβεσσα. The contrast would be less effective if the text were changed.


60. εὐθείαρέω, when it means "to hold a straight course," generally takes a cognate accusative. cf. ἄρμαν εὐθείαρέησαι Pindar I. 5.60. Perhaps 1006 originally contained an accusative to complete the verb: "Fortune sailing straight along the course of the sea."

61. Denniston-Page, p.158.

62. The kommos of Choephori consists of a series of incantations raised by Electra, Orestes and the Chorus over the grave. These incantations accompany the libations poured over the grave to the dead.

63. Fraenkel, III, p.737.

64. The rhetorical questions, in effect, amount to a series of gnomes. Nothing is fulfilled without Zeus. Everything is decreed by God.
Zeus is seen as the ultimate cause, the dia. There is an obvious pun on his name (Δίας Διός). His title παναιτία, closely resembles a title ascribed to fate by the Erinyes (Διαιναια Eum. 334). Fate and Zeus are the dia of all. Their wills converge to determine the outcome of the drama. So when "like for like" is seen as a kind of fate, it is often associated with Zeus. The mighty fates fulfill justice according to the will of Zeus: ἀλλ' ὑ μεγάλαι μοίραι, Δίαθεν τηδε τελευτάν, ἤ το δίκαιαν μεταβάνει (Cho. 306-08). τελευταία picked up here in τελευτάν is as much a title of fate as it is of Zeus (cf. Agm. 973; Eum. 28). The description of Zeus and Moira blend together as one. Zeus is fate. Fate is Zeus. Together they bring about Agamemnon’s death. Together they resolve the dilemma of the trilogy by reconciling the Erinyes (Eum. 1045-46).

We concluded our discussion of Agamemnon with a look at the gnome "like for like," its relationship to the curse of Atreus, to Dike as a divine law of Zeus, and to Moira as a universal principle of fate. In Choephoroi the gnome is associated with all three figures. However, it is less often seen as a necessity of fate or a law of Zeus than as a law of vengeance, inextricably linked to the curse and the Erinyes that embody that curse. Running parallel with this movement from a universal principle to an exclusive law of the Erinyes, is the move to define the gnome within the specific terms of "blood for blood." That bloodshed demands more bloodshed emerges as the central gnomic idea of the play.

Although the gnome is not fully formulated until the kommos, an important question is raised in the parodos whose answer anticipates it: "what can atone for blood once it has fallen to the ground" (τί γὰρ λύτραν πεισόντα αὕματος πέλατι; 48). The Chorus' question introduces two important gnomic motifs, that of "no remedy" and "blood upon the ground." The latter forms an important element in the gnomic formula "blood for blood." Once blood has fallen on the ground it demands more blood (400-2). Already the central gnomic thought of the play is anticipated. The dilemma of what can atone for bloodshed is seemingly resolved in terms of that gnome. Only blood can atone for blood.
This truth is borne out in the events of the first two plays. The libations are the atonement sent out by Clytemestra to appease the dead Agamemnon. They prove useless. Electra and the Chorus turn them against her and invoke the aid of Agamemnon. Only when Clytemestra is slain is his wrath appeased. Clytemestra inherits the dilemma that once faced Agamemnon. The Chorus' question at 48 recalls a similar question raised by the Chorus of elders in the preceding play: *τὰ δὲ ἐπὶ γὰρ πεσόν ὀπαξ θανάτου ἡμῶν/πρὸ ἀνδρὸς μέλαν αἷμα τίς ἅν/πάλιν ἀγκαλέσατ' ἐπαξίδων*; (Agm. 1019-21). This is the first place where the motif of "blood upon the ground" is mentioned in connection with the theme of "no remedy." The Chorus fear that there is no remedy for bloodshed except more bloodshed. No one can call up the dead; Agamemnon is in danger because he cannot change the events at Aulis by raising his daughter back to life. Agamemnon's death confirms their fears. It exemplifies the pattern of "like for like" (Agm. 1560f.). The same conclusion is anticipated in the Chorus' question of Choephoroi 48.

"No remedy" is the second motif introduced by the question. It forms the central theme of the gnomes of the parodos, which are restricted to the final three stanzas (55-74). In the parodos the motif finds expression in terms of "no atonement" or "cleansing." Bloodshed is conceived as a pollution that cannot be washed away. This interpretation of bloodshed is an important step towards resolving the dilemma that Orestes inherits from his family. How can he cleanse the stain of blood upon his hands? The answer comes in Eumenides, where Orestes presents himself purified through suffering, and his acquittal confirms his purification.
The Chorus open the second antistrope by saying that "the unconquerable unbending unbeaten reverence of old, sounded in all men's ears, in all hearts has shrunk away" (55-58). The elaborate alliteration on ἀμοσχέον, ἀδάματον, ἀπάλευμα is typical of gnomic statements. Exactly why this traditional reverence has faded away is given in the next gnome: τὰ δ' ἔτυχοι, τὰ δ' ἂν ἁρπάταισθε ταύτα τε καὶ τεσσάρων (59-60). Men have made "good fortune" their god. This gnomic thought is consistent with what is expressed in the first stasimon of Agamemnon: excessive wealth and prosperity lead to sacrilege (Agm. 382-84). Excess is implied here by the fact that good fortune has become more than a god. When success, wealth and anything else connected with the idea of "good fortune" demand a man's loyalty, all sense of reverence for traditional values is laid aside. Clytemestra fears that what will prompt the Greeks to plunder the temples at Troy is greed (Agm. 341-42). The Furies believe that what causes a son to abandon his respect for his parents is greed as well (Eum. 538-42). Both these passages we discussed in connection with the image of "trampling underfoot," a metaphor for sacrilege. In Agamemnon the image signifies the profanation of the temples; in Eumenides the dishonour of parents. It is clear to the Furies that sacrilege means more than impiety towards the gods. The reverence for family is what the the Chorus of slave-girls bewail. No doubt they are thinking of Clytemestra, who has laid aside her respect for her husband. But the gnome is universal; it refers to Agamemnon, who in like fashion has abandoned his natural affection for his loved ones. Agamemnon's decision to kill Iphigenia is determined by his hopes for the success of the expedition. "How can I desert the fleet and fail my allies," is the question
raised by Agamemnon and one that reveals where his loyalties lie. Whenever the wealth and success of "good fortune" possess a man's devotion, all reverence, whether for the gods or family, is laid aside.

Although men may idolize their good fortune, it proves useless against divine punishment. Sorrow awaits such men at every turn of their lives. Justice comes quickly as some stand in full daylight (ταχέα τὰ τοῦ μὲν ἐν φάσι 62); or much later, as they linger at the close of their career (τὰ δ' ἐν μεταξὺ πάκει μὲνεὶ κρανίζεντας ἀχή 63-64). Most men and especially the unjust cannot pass their lives unscathed. The truth of this gnomic thought is realized for both Clytemestra and Agamemnon. After the murder of his mother, Orestes begins to realize the full horror of his deed. It appears only as a pollution (1016-17). He grieves over what has been done (ἔργα) and what has been suffered (παθός) (1016-17). Trying to console him, the Chorus reply that no one "turns unhurt his life's course until the end" (ἀὔτις μεράς ἀσίνη βίατὸν/διὰ πάντ' ἀν ἄτιμος ἀμέησαι 1018-19). Trouble comes today, trouble comes tomorrow (μάχαιρα δ' ἐν οὖτίχ, δ' ἤξει 1020). The Chorus are here expressing the same thought as they did in the parodos. Clytemestra's death proves that no one can pass a life without suffering. The same conclusion is drawn in Agamemnon's case. If he should die for the sins of Atreus, for past murders whether his own or not, "no one could boast that he was born with a fortune free of harm" (Agm. 1337-42). The Chorus of elders are right in their assessment. Agamemnon's death proves that the doer suffers (Agm. 1564). Orestes himself laments over the doing (ἔργα) and suffering (μάθας) of his race in which his mother shares (1015-16). In this
passage, the idea of "like for like" is clearly linked with the gnome used by the Chorus to console Orestes (1018-20). No man is destined to live a life free of harm because he suffers the consequences of his actions. This is an important qualification. Originally the gnome simply expressed the belief in the frailty of human existence: man is bound to suffer throughout his life, so let him be consoled at the fact. However, in Aeschylus the gnome takes on a new emphasis. In the parodos it is clearly applied to the punishment which Dike metes out to the unjust. Aeschylus emphasizes man's frailty in the face of divine punishment. Agamemnon and Clytemestra suffer "like for like" and so prove that the unjust cannot pass their lives without harm.

That a man cannot pass his life without suffering for his actions is a common classical notion; that he suffers in the grave is not so common. Nonetheless some have suggested that something of the idea of "punishment after death" is present at line 65: τὰ ὧν ἀκρατὸς (ἀκρατοτός) ἔχει νῦξ. Justice is conceived as a scale falling "from daylight through twilight to night" and death. Divine punishment is felt even beyond the grave. There is a definite contrast within the passage between light (ἐν φωτί 62) and darkness (νῦξ 65), and between τὰ ὧν μὲν (62) and τὰ ὧν δὲ (65). The scale of justice falls upon some in the light, others in the darkness. This would make good sense of the contrast, if the notion of "punishment after death" could be understood at 65.

The main difficulty lies in whether we should retain akrantos of the manuscripts or substitute akratos instead. To say that "night" meaning
"death" is absolute (akratos) makes sense, but minimizes the force of the
men-de contrast. To say that night is the place where matters are left
unresolved (akrantos), where sorrows do not extend, brings out the full force
of the contrast: some suffer in this life; some do not. ἀκραντός clearly
implies "not to be punished at all." Night comes over some before "the
matter is consummated" with their punishment. The Chorus seem to be
contradicting themselves: "Sorrow comes today; sorrow comes tomorrow; no
mortal passes his life free of harm" (1018-20). Yet these latter remarks are
made after the fact; only after Clytemestra suffers "like for like" is the
truth of the gnome confirmed. Here the Chorus fear (58) that Clytemestra
will continue her ungodly rule and justice will not be fulfilled soon enough.

If Aeschylus is suggesting that some escape their due, he is offering
nothing new, only a sentiment as old as Solon. In fact, the passage
resembles what Solon himself says: ἀλλ' ἢ μὲν αὐτικ' ἔπειταν ὄ θερσερᾶν, ἄν
δὲ φύγωσιν/αὐτὰ, μηδὲ θεῶν µείρ' ἐπιτίθενα κίκηι/κλυθε πάντως αὐτίσι αὐτίσι ἀνατιτίσι
ἐργα τίνὰςιν/ἡ παίδεος τὰτων ἡ γένεις ἐξαπίσο (Diehl, frq. 29). Some are
punished immediately, some later and some never. This is the same train of
thought that runs through the parodos. The possibility that Clytemestra may
escape punishment explains the Chorus' urgency in arousing Orestes to
vengeance. If he does not act now, Agamemnon may never be avenged.
Clytemestra may die before she suffers her due.

In the final strophe-pair, the Chorus return to the question of
bloodshed which prompted their look at justice. They emphasize the
irremediable nature of the shedding of blood through a series of metaphors, comparing it first to a congealed matter, then to lost virginity and finally to an indelible stain. Behind what they say is the persistent question, "what can atone for bloodshed?" The metaphors serve to answer that question.

The strophe opens by recalling the motif of "blood upon the ground," which is introduced at line 48. It is suggested in the blood that the earth has drunk to its fill (δι' αἷματ' ἐκπαθένον ήπά Χαονδας τρεφός 66). The watery gore is compared to a libation, poured out upon the ground and hardened solid. The image of a libation recalls the λυτράν brought out by the Chorus to pour over the grave. The verb λυο from which λυτράν is formed can convey the idea of melting. In that case it forms the antonym of πένηγεν (67). What can dissolve blood that has fallen to the ground and hardened there? The answer is, nothing. Congealed blood cannot melt away (α' διαφήδαν). The blood lies there on the ground crying out for vengeance (τιτας). Vengeance seems the only remedy. Every other atonement intended to dissolve the congealed blood is useless.

The point is exaggerated at the conclusion of the antistrophe (72-74), where the Chorus compare bloodshed to an indelible stain. Not even a flood of water from every known stream (πόροι πάντες) washes away (καθοράντες) the stain of blood (τὰν Χραμπυνή σαν). The Chorus conclude as they began the strophe-pair by stressing how irredeemable blood is. The two gnomes are linked by ring-composition. σαν is repeated at the beginning (67) and at the end (73) and there is some idea of water suggested in both. The thought
is the same in both gnomes, although the images are different. Despite every effort the effects of bloodshed cannot be changed. The pool of blood remains frozen; the hand remains stained. All the cleansing waters flow in vain (μάταιον).  

The final gnome of the parodos is important because it introduces the theme of catharsis. Bloodshed is conceived as a pollution (μοσία) which may or may not be cleansed. Καιότροπας (74) has been challenged for metrical reasons, but its presence reinforces the image of pollution in Χεράμυσι (73). It is more likely that the corruption lies in the corresponding strophe and not here in the antistrophe. The theme of pollution gains increasing importance from here on. It reaches a climax at the point when Orestes recognizes his own act of murder as a pollution (1017). The question of cleansing is again raised when the Chorus suggest to Orestes the possibility of cleansing by Apollo's touch (1059-60). However, he is pursued offstage by the Erinyes, leaving unanswered the question whether he can or cannot be purified. In Eumenides the issue is raised again. Can a man atone for his blood-stained hands by some means other than more bloodshed? In Eumenides Orestes presents himself to Athena as a man "schooled in suffering" (276), "acquainted with many ways of purification" (277). He has been cleansed at Apollo's temple (283). Even Athena recognizes him as καθοριστός (474). His purification is achieved through his suffering. The law of "learning through suffering" effects his change as it did for Zeus. The acquittal of Orestes confirms that a man can be cleansed of blood. Yet in Choephoroi the old morality of "like for like" is not challenged. As yet there is no question of purification but simply of atonement at the price of one's own blood.  

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The two gnomes on the theme of bloodshed (66-67; 72-74) form a type of ring-composition enclosing two further gnomes (68-69; 70-72). The opening of the antistrophe (70-72) introduces the motif of "no remedy" by the quasi-medical term ἀπὸ ἀκασίας. Then the shedding of blood is compared to the loss of virginity, both of which are irremediable. There is no outright comparison; it is only implied. As Rose remarks, "illustration and illustrated are merely put side by side, with no such word as ὄψευς and ἀπὸ τω to help out the comparison". For the one who sheds blood there is no remedy. No one can cleanse the pollution of blood any more than one can restore the loss of virginity.

The other gnome occurs at the end of the strophe (68-69). It is connected with what follows in the opening of the antistrophe by another medical image. The two gnomes should be connected in thought: there is no remedy against the the disease of ruin. Ate is compared to a sickness that infects the body of a man guilty of bloodshed: ἅλσος ἀτα διαφέρει τὰν αἰτίαν πανορκέτασ νόσω τὴν Βρύειν (68-69). The guilty become so completely swollen with the disease of Ate that no remedy is possible. This thought is carried over into the antistrophe where the medical imagery is sustained: because Ate infects so utterly, those guilty of violating the bridal bed can find no cure.

So it is for the man with blood-stained hands; there is little hope of escape. The blood laying frozen on the ground does not dissolve away but insistently calls out for revenge (titas). The conclusion to which the
gnomes of the parodos are drawn is that blood requires blood to atone. "Blood for blood" becomes the central gnomic thought of the kommos, where the call for vengeance acquires intensity and where Orestes gains the resolve to murder Clytemestra.

We turn now to the kommos, where the gnome "blood for blood" is finally formulated. Our discussion centers on those passages that directly pertain to its meaning. The first clear enunciation comes in the opening anapaests (306-315). The gnome is seen, at one level, as a universal principle of fate, at another level as the justice of Zeus. The Chorus begin by invoking "the mighty fates to grant fulfillment through the power of Zeus according to the turn of justice"(306-08). It is clear from the allegory what form justice takes. Dike exacts what is due (ταύτα ἐκλογαίκον πράσωσενοι 311). She calls out "blood for blood." However, the fulfillment of this justice rests with fate and Zeus. For justice to be diothen, to emanate from Zeus, the Chorus must address their prayer for accomplishment to the Fates. They are teleiοι like Zeus (cf. Agm. 973; Eum. 28). There is, no doubt, an intended play on the word in τελευταίοιν. It looks back to Agamemnon where similar words are expressed of Zeus: "What is fulfilled among men without Zeus" (Agm. 1487)? Nothing. Nor is anything fulfilled without fate. ἡνευ Αἰδε πελεῖται resembles what we have here (Ἀλαθεύν τελευταίοιν). Both are "responsible for all" (Agm. 1486). As in Agamemnon, the cooperation between Zeus and Fate is maintained even to the point that their indentities and wills merge as one.
This justice is allegorized in the call of Dike. She cries out for vengeance, demanding "hateful word for hateful word," "bloody blow in place of bloody blow" (309-313). Dike can be seen as the plaintiff who cries out for satisfaction for the wrong done to her. Frequently the image occurs in the gnomes where Dike is violated. Her altar is kicked over (Agm. 381-84; Eum. 539-43); her person is trampled over (Cho. 643). Consequently she cries out for revenge. Aeschylus comes very close to the Hesiodic image of Dike, who sits by Zeus' side complaining of the unjust who have violated her (Op. 256-60). In Aeschylus as in Hesiod the cry raised by Dike is for revenge, "blood for blood." Justice is retributive, the age-old tale that the doer suffers (313-14). The cry of Dike allegorizes this law of "like for like."  

This cry for vengeance echoes throughout the trilogy. It begins early in Agamemnon with the Atreidae who "loudly clamour for war" (μέγαν κλαζόντες ἀπ' Agm. 48). They are vultures that have been robbed of their young, whose cry vengeance Zeus responds to by sending the Erinys (Agm. 56-60). The cry then is taken up by Clytemestra who has lost "the toil of her bed" (Agm. 53-54 cf. 1417-18). She becomes the bereaved vulture, who appeals to Zeus to fulfill her prayer (Agm. 974-75) and she becomes the Erinys who avenges the dead. The Alastor assumes her form and kills Agamemnon (Agm. 1500-04). In Choephoroi Electra and Orestes are the "orphaned children of the eagle" to whom Zeus responds (246f.). The imagery applied to Agamemnon and Clytemestra is now applied to them. In fact the whole kommos is one long lament and cry for vengeance. Both Electra and Orestes call upon
Zeus for help (382-85; 394-95) and the Erinys does come. At the conclusion of the first stasimon, Orestes' impending vengeance is exclusively seen in terms of the Erinys. The Erinys invites him into the house, where he works its deed of blood (649-51). Later, as he exacts his due, Orestes calls out "like for like." He tells his mother that she "has killed whom she should not;" so she "must suffer what she should not" (930). His words virtually echo what Dike says. The cry for vengeance is a recurring motif emphasizing the law of vendetta that dominates this family. Each member of the family understands justice in terms of "blood for blood," and accordingly cries out for it. Here the motif is incorporated into the gnomes to allegorize the law of Dike.

The bloody blow is a symbol of the vengeance inherent in the race of Atreus. Each member deals a blow and is dealt one. Such vengeance is part of the curse inherited by the different members. It refers to the destruction of Troy prompted by Agamemnon's desire for vengeance. It suggests the murder of Agamemnon, prompted by Clytemestra's desire to avenge her daughter. It represents the death of Clytemestra at the hands of Orestes. "The blow" is the word used by the Chorus to describe what happened at Troy: Διας πληγην εχωριω ειπετιν (Agm. 367). It is almost the last word of the dying Agamemnon: ομαι πεπληγμαι καιριον πληγην έσω (Agm. 1343). The word used by Clytemestra to arouse the slumbering Erinies: ορα δε πληγα τασαε καιρια αθέαν (Eum. 103). It summarizes the inherent fate of the family where each member cries "bloody blow for bloody blow" and then deals the blow that soon is dealt them.
It is apparent from the above discussion that the Erinyes figure prominently in the working of justice. The bereaved cry out for vengeance and an Erinys responds. The call for vengeance, which in the opening anapaests allegorizes the justice of "like for like," here in the fourth anapestic section is applied to the Erinys: "it is law that drops of blood spilt on the ground demand more blood. For the Erinys cries for murder" (Ἀλλα νάμος μὲν φάνησα σταγόνας/Χυμένας ἐς πέδαν ἄλλη πρέσασετεῖν/αῖμα θεία γὰρ λέγεται ἔρινυς 400-3). There is some question about who does the calling. Is it a personified bane or murder, or the Erinys? The manuscript presents the latter, but some emendation is necessary for επαγαγόσαν for it to agree with ἔρινυς. Both suggests ἐπαγαγόσαν, consequently making the participial clause conditional or potential. As the cause of recurring murders within the family, it seem more natural for the Erinys, the embodiment of the curse, to do the bidding. Blood demands more blood because (γνω 402) the Erinys, the spirit of vengeance at work within the family, calls for the murder.

A clear distinction emerges between the two passages dealing with the gnome "like for like." In the previous passage the gnome is the fulfillment of fate or the divine justice of Zeus, expressed in the broad terms "like for like." "Blood for blood" is only an extended meaning of ἔρασαντα παθεῖν. Here the gnome is seen as a law of the Erinyes. It is now defined exclusively in terms of "blood for blood" and narrowly applied to the family under the curse. "Blood for blood" is designated as a law in its own right. Aeschylus seems to be making a distinction between nomos and thesmos (cf. Agm. 1563-64). In Agamemnon "like for like" is seen as an
abiding order as enduring as the throne of Zeus itself. The doer suffers because it is so ordained (γὰρ θεόμελεν Agm. 1564). Here the gnome is downgraded into something less than a thesmos, an abiding order of universal scope. Rather, it is narrowly seen as a law of retribution, habitually practiced within the family. Perhaps, then, nomos should retain its traditional meaning of "habitual practice." This habitual, almost compulsive, nature of "blood for blood" is expressed poetically in the allo- allo combination implied at 401. The idea is further emphasized in the next gnome (402-04). The Erinys leads one ruin in the train of another. "Blood for blood" has become the custom of the family, incited by the Erinys who resides within the house and who embodies the curse to which each member of the house is subject.

The curse is important to our understanding of "like for like." After the murder of his mother, Orestes recognizes his mother's death as an example of "like for like." He grieves over the doing and suffering that plague the race: ἀλγῷ μὲν ἐργὰ καὶ πάθῳ γένεσ τε πᾶν (1016). Orestes' words form a variation of the gnome παθεῖν τὰν ἔργα μα. Clytemestra has suffered as she acted; but so will Orestes, whose own deed resembles his mother's. The Chorus mourn with Orestes, over his "woeful doing" that ended his mother's life miserably: αἰαι αἰαι μελέων ἐργῶν/εὐγεργῶι θανάτῳ διεπράχθη (1007-08). They also mourn for the suffering in store for Orestes: μίμναντι δὲ καὶ πάθῳ ἄνθετι (1009). There is a strong sense that "like for like" is inherited, a result of the curse once at work in Clytemestra but now at work in Orestes.
In the kommos the curse, which results in the habitual practise of "blood for blood," is represented by the Erinys and "inherited ethos." "Blood for blood" is law because the Erinys leads one ruin in after another (400-04). That the Erinys refers to the curse is clear in Agamemnon from its intimate association with the race of Atreus. It resides within the house; it is kindred to the race; it invites Orestes into the house (648-51). Also it is clear from the Erinys' association with the sins of the three generations. "The thrice-gorged daemon," which arises from the sin of Atreus and passes through Agamemnon to Orestes (Agm. 1500-08), reappears in Choephoroi in connection with the revenge of Agamemnon. By killing Aegisthus and Clytemestra Orestes feels that the Erinys will take its third and final drink of blood: Ἐπικαταλέγειν τῷ μακραῖον αἷμα πίεσαι τρίτην πόσιν (577-78). The motif of three suggests the operation of the curse through three generations. The Erinys embodies that curse and the three libations poured out to it represent the murder and vengeance extending through the three generations. The libation-imagery is invoked at lines 400f. in connection with the gnome "blood for blood." The motif of "blood upon the ground" recalls 48, where the atonement brought out by the Chorus is in the form of a libation. However, the libation demanded by the Erinys is mixed with blood. It is the law of the Erinys that blood once poured out as a libation demands more blood. Yet the Erinys of Atreus demands only three such drink-offerings to quench its thirst. That the doer must suffer is only a "thrice-told tale," a tale that the curse lasts for only three generations.
This curse expresses itself in two ways, in terms of the Erinys and also in terms of "inherited ethos." Orestes kills his mother and so satisfies the law of "blood for blood" either because his father's Erinys invites him into the house to do her bloody business, or because he inherits from his father the evil nature to kill. The idea of ethos dominates the kommos. It is particularly expressed in the first strophe (324-31). The strophe is a response to Orestes' question regarding what he should say or do to reach his father (314-18). The Chorus' answer is set in a series of gnomic statements. Orestes can reach his father because the consciousness of the dead is not quelled by fire: φάνημα ταύτα θανάτου δυναίτει πυρά ματαρα γνάθος (324-25). Rather it reveals its temper at a later time: φάνει δ' ὁστέραν ὁργάσ (326). At one level the Chorus are simply stating that death does not destroy the mind and feelings of a person but that these live on after him. Orestes can call upon his father for help and expect him to respond. But how will he respond? How can the consciousness of Agamemnon reveal its temper? The answer is, "through his son." So, at a different level, there is a possible suggestion of "inherited ethos." φάνει ὁστέραν ὁργάσ closely resembles the language of the lion-cub parable, where the cub "reveals in time the nature of its parents" (χρονισθεὶς δ' ἀπέαξεν θάνατος τα πρόσεν τακίων Αγμ. 726-27). Orge should be understood in its traditional sense of "disposition," and comes very close in meaning to ethos. The temperament of the father is revealed in the son who shares his nature.

The lion-imagery, invoked here from the parable, is important within the trilogy because it identifies father, son and mother together. Each share a
common nature inherited through the family line. The lion-cub parable allegorizes the idea of "inherited ethos," so prominent in the first two plays. It is of central importance in associative the lion-imagery on the whole with the theme of inherited guilt and sin.

Agamemnon is the "noble lion" of Cassandra's vision, plotted against by the "two-footed lioness" (Agm. 1258-59). He leads the host of Greeks against Troy. Like a savage lion (Ἀμνὴς λέων) they leap over her walls and lap their fill of royal blood (Agm. 827-28). Orestes reveals the same lion-like nature when he kills Clytemestra. Immediately after he forces his mother off stage to her death, the Chorus begin their final ode (Cho. 931-71). In the first strophe (935-41) they compare the retribution which came to Priam and his sons to that which came to Clytemestra and Aegisthus. "As justice came at last to the Priamidae, so has a double lion come to the house of Agamemnon: ἀμελεὶς μὲν δίκαις προσφέρασις χρόνωι, ἀφοῦ δικαίως παίρνης/ἐμοί δ' ἐστιν ἀμυντὸν τῶν Ἀγαμέμνονον ἀδίπλοθεν λέων, διπλὸσ ἁρπής (935-38). Here, Orestes' crime is identified with his father's. Both men exact vengeance. As a ravenous lion, Agamemnon mounts the walls of Troy to take his fill of blood. Now as a full-grown cub, Orestes mounts the peak of bloodshed (πάλλων ἀμέτων ἐπηκρίσεις 932). He merits the title of τιθέμεν (932), a title appropriate to Agamemnon, who dares to sacrifice his own daughter (cf. Agm. 224-25). The mind and temperament of the father live on in the son who shares the same savage nature.
"Inherited ethos" is the prominent idea presented in the first strophe. The temperament of the father is not consumed by the fire because it lives on in the son. In different terms, the father's Erinys arises from the grave to assume Orestes' form. The incantation and the lamentation of the kommos arouses the Erinys from dormancy. In the kommos the alastor whom the Chorus of Agamemnon predict would arise from the father to lend a helping hand (Agm. 1507-08) is summoned to the son's side. The Erinys then invites the son into the house to exact vengeance on Clytemestra. But whether we see the curse in terms of an evil spirit that prompts each member of the family to murder and be murdered, or whether we see it as an evil heredity within the family, "blood for blood" is seen as a result of that curse. By murdering his mother Orestes shows that he possesses the nature of his parents. At that point Clytemestra receives her due, "blood for blood." We can see how closely this law of vengeance is tied to the curse of the family.

As we pass from the kommos to the first stasimon, the curse continues to be the underlying thought of the gnomes. At first glance the stasimon appears as a simple condemnation of Clytemestra. Her bold character is illustrated by three myths about women of like nature. However, the implication broadens to include the whole family, Agamemnon and Orestes, both of whom commit the same sin as Clytemestra. The curse is first suggested by Clytemestra's dream. The content of the opening strophe suggests itself from the dream: "many are the terrible sorrows, full of fear, which the earth breeds" (585-86). It is from this quarter that Clytemestra's dream comes, full of frightening import (ἐκ τ' ἀνειράτων/καὶ νυκτιπλάγκτων δειμάτων

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Like the teeming sea she gives birth to a hateful monster (527; cf. 587-88). The common imagery between the strophe and the dream suggests that what the dream portends underlies the stasimon. Like all the animal-similes of the trilogy, the dream emphasizes the idea of "inherited ethos." In her dream, Clytemestra gives birth to a snake, which then draws blood from her breast (533). By accepting its omen, Orestes becomes the snake born of Clytemestra. Orestes shares the serpentine nature of his mother, who is repeatedly characterized as a snake (Agm. 1233; Cho. 248-9; 1047). Like his mother, he will murder by deceit. He will enter the palace in disguise, where he will sacrifice his victim to the household Erinys (577-78; cf. Agm. 1433). The crimes of mother and son appear identical. Clearly, Orestes has inherited the evil nature of the house. He is subject to the same curse and will commit its sin, the murder of a loved-one. The blood drawn from the breast signifies bloodshed at the hands of a kinsman. Indeed, Orestes turns serpent when he kills his mother (549-50). That the curse, the evil heredity of the race, is propagated through birth is the meaning portended by the dream. This same idea underlies the first stasimon. Each member shares the same nature, and consequently commits the same sin and suffers the same fate. When a race is under such a curse it perishes (635-36).

With the curse firmly fixed in their minds the Chorus begin to sing the first ode. "Many are the terrible sorrows, full of fear that the earth breeds" (585-86). Yet even more frightening than the terrors of the earth like Clytemestra’s dream, or the monsters of the deep, or even the brilliant
comets and the stormy whirlwinds of the sky (589-93), are the inordinate passions of mankind that such a dream portends. The first strophe contains a triad of earth, sea and air. It forms a priamel which reaches a climax in the antistrophe (594-601). The worst of things is the temperament and passions of humankind. \( \phi \rho \alpha \sigma \alpha \) of line 592 of the strophe is picked up in \( \Lambda \gamma \alpha \) of line 595 of the antistrophe. Whereas one can speak of such natural phenomena as the "stormy wrath of whirlwinds," it is impossible to speak of the passions of mankind. The opening question of the antistrophe (594-98), like many rhetorical questions, forms a gnomic thought: indescribable are the daring thoughts of men and the reckless passions of women.

The antistrophe itself is climactic. The daring temperament of a man is one thing, but the reckless passions of women are another, especially those of a loveless nature (\( \alpha \pi \epsilon \rho \omega \tau \alpha \sigma \ \varepsilon \rho \omega \sigma \ 600 \)). This play on words is characteristic of the gnomes. But what is a "loveless love?" It is that which prevails upon a woman (\( \Theta \eta \lambda \kappa \rho \alpha \tau \iota \sigma \ 600 \)) to destroy the wedlock of men and beasts alike. The final gnome specifies what womanly passion the Chorus have in mind. In fact, the second half of the question (596-98) and the final gnome should not be distinguished in thought, but go together. In each case \( \varepsilon \rho \omega \sigma \) is repeated with definite sexual overtones. \( \zeta \upsilon \zeta \gamma \lambda \delta \upsilon \sigma \) (599) picks up \( \sigma \chi \nu \nu \nu \theta \rho \alpha \upsilon \sigma \) of the previous line. The latter can carry sexual connotations as well. \( \varepsilon \rho \omega \sigma \) can mean more than just sexual desire. The first two myths (603-11; 612-22) show women driven by passions other than sexual. Althea desires revenge, while Scylla is overcome with greed. However, as we shall see, these myths prove to be paradigms of the \( \text{tolma} \) of men, whereas the
story of Clytemestra (623-30) and the Lemnian women prove to be examples of "loveless passion." In view of this, ἐρωτασ ἡμια retains its primarily sexual meaning.

Some understand the first antistrophe to be a priamel itself, which then is illustrated by three mythical paradigms. The reference to the Lemnian crimes corresponds to the final gnome about the "loveless passion" of women.¹⁹ For this triad of mythical paradigms to exist, the third strophe and antistrophe need to be transposed. As the text stands, an allusion to Clytemestra occupies the strophe, ²⁰ while the Lemnian myth follows in the antistrophe. Such a transposition may commend itself for rhetorical reasons but not for anything else. It is more likely that the pattern is not a triad but a simple contrast, where the ὑπερταλμὰ ὑπονυμα of men is contrasted with the πανταλμὰ ἐρωτασ of women. "Indescribable" may be the spirit of men but even more indescribable are the passions of women, especially those that destroy the sanctity of marriage. There is a definite crescendo on the tolmα-root words: ὑπερταλμα is succeeded by τημανων πανταλμα. Because of the sexual overtones in both συναμωσ and ξυζογαυσ the thought is continuous from 596 to 601: the completely reckless passion that even succeeds the bold nature of men is the "loveless love" of women that destroys marriage.

πανταλμα, as an epithet, appropriately describes the character of Clytemestra whose own reckless passion destroyed her own marriage. She is addressed by this title elsewhere in Choephoroi and Agamemnon. In the kommos Electra calls her the "all-daring mother" (πανταλμε ματρ) who had the
boldness ($
\tau\lambda\nu\gamma\eta$) to bury Agamemnon as she did (Cho. 430f.). With prophetic insight, Cassandra sees Clytemestra for what she really is, bold ($
\tau\lambda\omega\gamma\tau\nu\tau\omega$ $\text{Agm. 1231}$) and completely reckless ($\chi$ $\pi$ $\nu$ $\tau\alpha$ $\tau\alpha$ $\tau\lambda$ $\lambda\mu$ $\alpha$ $\sigma$ $\text{Agm. 1237}$). This passage is important to our present discussion because it delineates the character of Clytemestra in precisely the terms that describe "bold women" in general ($\chi$ $\nu$ $\nu$ $\alpha$ $\kappa$ $\omega$ $\nu$ $\tau\iota$ $\lambda$ $\mu$ $\alpha$ $\nu$ $\nu$ $596$). She is compared to treacherous Ate ($\delta$ $\iota$ $\kappa$ $\eta$ $\chi$ $\alpha$ $\tau$ $\iota$ $\theta$ $\rho$ $\alpha$ $\iota$ $\delta$ $\omega$ $\mu$ $\gamma$ $\alpha$ $\mu$ $\eta$ $\omega$ $\text{Agm. 1229-30}$). It is because Clytemestra lives with Agamemnon that she proves to be his Ate (cf. $\chi$ $\alpha$ $\tau$ $\alpha$ $\iota$ $\iota$ $\iota$ $\sigma$ $\nu$ $\nu$ $\gamma$ $\alpha$ $\mu$ $\nu$ $\sigma$ $\beta$ $\rho$ $\alpha$ $\iota$ $\omega$ $\nu$ $597-98$). Tálmá $\theta$ $\eta$ $\lambda$ $\mu$ $\sigma$ (Agm. 1231) echoes γυνακών $\tau$ $\lambda$ $\mu$ $\alpha$ $\nu$ $\nu$ of Choephori, while $\chi$ $\pi$ $\nu$ $\tau\alpha$ $\tau\alpha$ $\tau\lambda$ $\lambda$ $\mu$ $\alpha$ $\sigma$ $\text{Agm. 1237}$ resumes παντάλμως. In both places Clytemestra is compared to the Scylla. Although they are different figures, there is some confusion in their identity and description. Both Scyllas are compared to dogs. In Agamemnon she bears "the tongue of a hateful hound" (Agm. 1228), while in the Choephori she bears the heart of a dog (K$\nu$νάρφων 621). In both places, Clytemestra is described as something δυσφιλες (cf. Agm. 1232; Cho. 624, 637). She, like all of her kind, is something loveless and hateful because of the husband she murdered and the marriage she destroyed. The παντάλμως ἔρως belongs to her. The account of her treachery in the third strophe and the Lemnian story that parallels it perfectly illustrate the "loveless passion" that destroys marriage, whereas the first two mythical paradigms, although indirectly, illustrate the bold temperament of men.

Although each of the myths exemplifies the unnatural passions of women, and each refers to the tolma of Clytemestra, this by no means exhausts their significance. The first two myths also refer to the crimes of Agamemnon and
Orestes which are a result of their like natures. Φράνημα can mean both the spirit and temperament of a man, as well as the thoughts that issue from that temperament. It should be understood in both its senses. Υπέρταλμαν Φράνημα should recall Agamemnon's frame of mind when he contemplated Iphigenia's murder. He breathed forth an impious change of mind and began to conceive thoughts of utter recklessness (τὸ παντὸταλμαν Φρανεῖν Αγμ. 221). So horrible is the sacrifice that follows that the Chorus of Agamemnon break off from describing it. "Who can speak of the reckless spirit of a man?," is the sense we feel in the parodos. Certainly the Chorus of elders could not. This same bold temperament is inherited by Orestes. He shares the same determination to violate the ties between kinsmen. Φράνημα looks back to the kommos, where we learn that the consciousness (Φράνημα), or rather the temperament, of Agamemnon does not perish in death but lives on in his son (cf. 323). By the end of the kommos Orestes assumes the spirit of his father. The Erinys, the evil nature or spirit of Atreus, takes control of him and promotes its vengeance through Orestes. By murdering his mother, Orestes reveals that same temperament that led his father to murder. In fact, their crimes are strikingly similar. Each is faced with a difficult choice between two evils. Each chooses to murder a loved one. The situations are parallel. But at the same time they are different. On the one hand, Agamemnon is compared to a vulture bereft of its young who cries to Zeus for vengeance (Αγμ. 47-60). On the other hand, Orestes and Electra are compared to "orphaned nestlings of an eagle" calling upon Zeus to avenge them (246-63). The imagery is now reversed. Instead of parents mourning for their young, it is the young who mourn for their parents. 23 In the one case,
Agamemnon returns home and is deceitfully murdered. In the other, Orestes returns home and deceitfully murders. Their situations are exactly reversed. The similarities between father and son are inversely expressed, whereby the situation of Choephoroi reverses the situation of Agamemnon. So, in Agamemnon parent kills child, while in Choephoroi child kills parent. This pattern of inversion is adopted in the two myths that follow in the second strophic system.

Both are paradigms of the ἐνεργείαν φύσημα shared by father and son. They suggest the same inverted relationship between their crimes as we have seen above. In the first myth (603-11), Althaea kills her son. This suggests the crime of Agamemnon, where parent kills child, and, as the reverse of it, the crime of Orestes where son kills mother. In the second myth (613-22) Scylla kills her father. The relationship of the previous paradigm is now reversed. The second paradigm suggests the crime of Orestes, where child murders parent, and, as its inverse, the crime of Agamemnon where father murders daughter. The pattern of the plays is brilliantly maintained in the mythical paradigms.

The situations of father and son appear as "mirror images" of one another. The pattern emphasizes the common heredity shared by father and son. Let us return to the eagle-imagery, where this pattern of inversion is adopted. Orestes is now the nestling eagle robbed of its parent (246-50), whereas in the previous play Agamemnon is the eagle robbed of its young. As we have said, the situations are reversed but parallel. Orestes prays to

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Zeus to save "the nestlings of their father, the sacrificer" (ταγα ἀνιψιασ 255). This recalls the crime of Agamemnon, who "dared to become the sacrificer of his daughter" (Agm. 224). If Zeus saves them, Orestes implies, he can continue to expect the same tokens "from a like hand": πατρὸς νεκροτυφθηκερος πάθεν/ξεις δομδος χειρος κουθλουν γέρας; (256-57). As Winnington-Ingram observes, "the young eagles will bring home to the nest prey such as their father brought, that the hand that prepares the sacrifice will be homoia."25 The son has inherited the temperament of the father; the mirror imagery suggests the similarity between their natures and their crimes.

In the final myth (631-38), the same pattern of inversion is adopted to suggest the idea of inherited sin, where the crime of one generation is mirrored in the next. However, the "Lemnian story" becomes something more than just a mythical paradigm. It is regarded as a by-word of inherited guilt and sin. The previous two myths, and, for that matter, the reference to Clytemestra in the third strophe, are narrative descriptions. This continuity in the narrative passages would be broken if the third strophe and antistrophe were transposed, as Stinton has suggested.26 Unlike the three previous paradigms, the "Lemnian story" (τα λήμνιαν) is represented as a proverbial word needing no explanation of its meaning. "Lemnian" has become a euphemism for the worst of evils, that within a cursed race. It implicitly suggests inherited guilt and sin. As a proverb for such evil, it suits the series of gnomes which follow in the later part of the third antistrophe and in the final strophe-pair. (All three stanzas, in some way, deal with the
curse.) This structure of three narrative passages (605-30) followed by three gnomic passages (632-51) would be broken by transposing the text.

As a byword for evil, "each further act of horror is compared to the Lemnian sorrows": ἕικαςεν δὲ τις τὰ δεινὰν αὐτὸς λημυδίαση πνῆμασιν (633-34). This comment makes better sense only if the manuscript-order is retained. What new deed of horror do the Chorus have in mind except the crime of Clytemestra? Logically, they first narrate it, then compare it to a proverbial deed of horror it closely resembles. The narrative reference to Clytemestra and its gnomic equivalent are linked poetically through ring-composition, which would be lost if the strophe and antistrophe were switched. δουσφιλεσ γαμήλευμ' ἀπεχεταν (624-25) corresponds to σέβει σούτισ τὸ δουσφιλεσ (637). What is hateful to the gods but a "loveless marriage?"

The mention of a "loveless marriage" naturally recalls the "loveless passion" that destroys the wedded union of men and beasts. γυναικεῖαν ἀταλμαν αἰχμαν (630) further recalls γυναικῶν τημύσων (596) of the gnomic introduction. These verbal echoes link the gnomic introduction on the tolma of women with its narrative paradigm. They signal that in the third strophe the Chorus are passing from a description of the φράνημα of men to a description of the ερως of women. They first describe an example of "loveless passion;" then give its proverbial equivalent.

Clytemestra's crime resembles the "Lemnian evil" on two counts. First, she murders her husband; secondly, and more importantly, her crime is an
example of wrong begetting wrong within the race. It is for the latter reason that "Lemnian" had become a by-word for evil. According to Herodotus, the "Lemnian deed" had become proverbial for two separate crimes (Hdt. 6 138). In the time of Thoas the women of Lemnos murdered their husbands. At a later date the Pelasgians, descendants of the Lemnian women, murdered the Attic women they had taken as concubines. The situation is now the exact reverse of the former. The pattern of the first two myths and of the trilogy itself is continued where one crime engenders another as its "mirror image." The Chorus do not specify which crime; they simply refer in a proverbial manner to the "Lemnian evil." It is best to understand both. In fact, their third remark in the antistrophe virtually echoes what Herodotus has to say: because of these two crimes, "it had become customary throughout Greece to call every cruel deed Lemnian" (Hdt. 6 138 4). This is precisely what the Chorus is doing when they compare Clytemnestra's deed to the "Lemnian evil." Her murder of Agamemnon is an example of wrong begetting wrong. The possible presence of pathos in the second sentence further suggests the idea of inherited sin (ἔργα) and guilt (πάθος): γιότι τα ἔτη πάθος καταπτυστάν (632-33). As we have seen, doing and suffering is the pattern of the family, the result of the curse (1016). Erga and pathos are repeated in each generation according to the pattern of inversion. The murderer becomes the murdered.

The result of this curse is that the race or family perishes in dishonour: θεοτυγὴτω ά'έγει/βρατᾶτα ἀτιμώθεν ἀγκεταί γέναι (635-36). Because "Lemnian" is considered a by-word for inherited sin, the Chorus'
remark applies as much to the race of Atreus. Their remark has become a gnome. When a race or family is under such curse or pollution (ἄγγελος 635), when the crime of one generation is imitated and mirrored in the next, as in the case of Agamemnon and Orestes, the race disappears, loathed by the gods. "For no one reverences what is loveless to the gods" (637).

The Chorus conclude the ode by returning to the themes of the kommos. The sword (ξίφος 639), like the bloody blow, symbolizes that justice of "blood for blood." The sword is plunged deep into the heart at Dike's own bidding (διὰ Δίκαιας), and the cry raised by Dike is "bloody blow for bloody blow." Within the final strophe "like for like" is suggested in the poetry of lines 641 and following. The text is corrupt, but the sense is still clear: "Dike tramples underfoot that which is unlawful (τὰ μὴ ἔμυς), namely those who unlawfully transgress the reverence of Zeus." In Agamemnon the image of "trampling underfoot" becomes a metaphor for sacrilege. The idea of sacrilege is brought out in σέβομαι παρεκκλάντο (645). The one who tramples down what is sacred is himself trampled down by the justice that demands "like for like." As we pass into the antistrophe, "like for like" is seen not only as a law of Dike, but also as a decree of Fate (Aisa) and of the ancestral curse (Erinys). Throughout Agamemnon and Choephoroi, these three figures have been associated with the gnome. Their association emphasizes the pervasive importance of the gnome, equally conceived as a principle of fate to which all are bound, the divine justice of Zeus or even the result of the curse within the family. The various ideas are represented as allegories. Again the sword is the symbol of vengeance, "blood for blood."
Fate forges beforehand (πρό) the sword upon the anvil of justice. The image recalls the passage from *Agamemnon* where Moira sharpens Dike upon the whetstone (*Agm*. 1535-36). The metaphors are very similar and little or no distinction should be made between the figures Aisa or Moira. Before anything occurs, Fate ensures that it happens according to the rule of "like for like." She is the cause before its due effect, the necessity of suffering the consequences of an action. The doer is made to suffer his own deed. Zeus has incorporated this principle into his own system of justice. Dike, the daughter of Zeus, allegorizes that justice. Such justice is eternally fixed. "As long as Zeus abides upon the throne, it abides that the doer must suffer" (*Agm*. 1563-63). The same point is made here: justice is like an anvil firmly planted in the ground upon which the sword of vengeance is fashioned.

But Orestes' decision to kill his mother and avenge his father is as much a result of the family curse as it is a necessity of fate. Both the Erinys and Fate cooperate to the same end. "The renowned Erinys, the embodiment of the curse, is finally bringing the son into the house," forcing him "to requite the pollution of bloodshed of old" (648-51). With these final words the Chorus answer the question of what can atone for the pollution of blood: the sword and more bloodshed. Their words look back to the parodos, where bloodshed is first conceived as a pollution. But there the Chorus is not so positive: all the rivers of the world could not cleanse hands stained in blood (τὰν ἔρπανυγι φανὴν 72-74). The Chorus suppose that the murder of Clytemestra will finally (ἔρπανω 651) repay for the past deeds of blood.
This final act of bloodshed, this third libation (577-78), is supposed to satisfy the Erinys, to end the curse. However, this proves to be a false assumption and one that exposes the very weakness of the law of "blood for blood." More bloodshed is not an effective atonement. Later, as the bodies of Clytemestra and Aegisthus lie before him, Orestes begins to realize that he himself is polluted. His victory is unenviable pollution (1017). The very act which was designed to cleanse the sins of the past has only caused further pollution and even the possibility of further vengeance. Orestes can only stand there mourning the doing and suffering of his race in which he has now come to share. Each member avenges and is avenged. This curse is not resolved with more blood. Under such a "god-hated pollution" (Θεσπυρητωι ἀγεί) the race only perishes. Orestes is part of that race and seems to be under the same pollution. By the conclusion of the play he is pursued by the Erinyes. The Chorus fear that "the tempest of the race" now the symbol of the curse, may not have blown for its third and last time. It may not have run its course (1065-67). Has Orestes come as a doom rather than a saviour to the race (1073-74)? Where will the fury of the storm grow calm (1075-76)? Not in Argos where vengeance is taken. Orestes must learn that solution does not lie with revenge. By recognizing his deed for what it is, a pollution in need of cleansing, Orestes is well on his way to learning this moral lesson. In Eumenides he emerges as a man purified of his sin and schooled in suffering. Like Zeus, he learns through suffering and so avoids the necessity of "like for like."
NOTES FOR CHAPTER II

1. "The rhetorical question marks his choice. He prefers the pomp and the ceremony of the ships." N.G.L. Hammond, JHS, 85 (1965), 44; cf. Fraenkel, II, p.122, "it is decisive that the answer implied in this rhetorical question can only be impossible."

2. N.B. Booth, "Aeschylus, Choephori, 61-65," CQ, ns. 7 (1957), 143.

3. Lebeck, p.100.

4. Booth (Op.cit. p.143) suggests that akrantos refers to Agamemnon, who is powerless to exact his vengeance. "Only those in the light can obtain justice swiftly." Night is the place where nothing can be accomplished by the dead. A similar thought is expressed in the first stasimon of Agamemnon: ἐν δ' αἴσχαν τελεύτατος ἄρτιο ἄλκα (Agm. 466-67). "When a man is among the unseen he has no strength." In both gnomes a related euphemism is used for death. ἄρτιο ἄλκα and ἀκραντάς are related in meaning. In death there is no strength to accomplish anything.


6. Even the belief that the descendants of the guilty pay for the sins of the past is not foreign to Aeschylus: "A bane appears to the descendants of those who breathe with a pride greater than just" (Agm. 374f).


8. Verrall, p.10.

9. Ἡθοσαν μάταν (74) is an emendation of ἵθοςαν ἔτην. The latter makes no sense. μάταν is common with the motif of "no remedy." ἄκασ (72) μάταν should recall ἄκασ μάταίαν of the first stasimon of Agamemnon, where the motif is expressed several times through the opening strophe-pair (cf. 381, 385).

10. At 96f. Electra compares the murders of Clytemestra and Aegisthus to libations poured out upon the ground. This libation, unlike the one sent out by Clytemestra, does have an atoning effect (καθάρμαπ' 98). This reinforces the point implied in the parodos: only blood can atone for blood.


13. The passage provides a good example of literary features of the gnomes. First there is the personification of justice (τὰ δίκαιαν).
Secondly, an abundance of verbal jingles. Words are repeated in interlocking word order (ἀντὶ μὲν ἐχθρῶς γλῶσσα ἐχθρὰ πληγῆν) or in a chiasmus (ἀντὶ δὲ πληγῆσ φανίας φανίαν πληγῆν) to achieve assonance.


15. At the conclusion of the play (1065-76), the Chorus describe the curse in terms of a storm within the race (χεῖρων γανίας) that has blown for the third time (τρίτας) upon the house. It is clear that the motif of three refers to the curse of three generations. The Chorus refer to the feast of Thyestes first (νπξυξν 1068-69), then to the murder of Agamemnon (δεύτεραν 1070-72) and thirdly to the coming of Orestes (τρίτας 1073-74).


17. Verrall, pp.43-44, suggests that the gnome "like for like" expressed in γλῶσσα γλῶσσα (308) signifies the deception to be used by Orestes against his mother. "The 'deceptive tongue' of Clytemestra will be repaid by the 'deceptive tongue' of Orestes."


20. The third strophe (623-30) is seriously corrupt. However, there can be no question that the Chorus are referring to Clytemestra and her murder of Agamemnon and not, as some suggest, to Agisthus; cf. Rose, II, p.182 and Verrall, pp.88-89. Obviously δυσφιλέα γαμήλωμα and γυναικεῖαν θάλαμον can only refer to Clytemestra. As for the text itself one could change ἀκαίρως δὲ to ἀκατ'αὐτὲ which gives the sense of καίρως needed here and balances ἀυκ ἐνδίκως ἀγείρω (638) at the end of the strophe in ring-composition. ἀπεφάσαι replaces ἀπεύχεται and supplies the needed main verb. It appropriately contrasts with τίω at the end of the strophe. These emendations require little change to the text. The passage translates as follows: "Since I have mentioned relentless toils, it is not inappropriate to abominate a marriage hostile to the house." See Stinton, CQ, ns. 29 (1979), 260.

21. Electra's description of Clytemestra at 430f. recalls the elders' description of Agamemnon, who conceives utter reckless thoughts (τὸ παντοτάλαμν Ἀγμ. 222) and dares (ἐτλα Ἀγμ. 224) to sacrifice his daughter. Both exhibit the same bold temperament characteristic of their race.

22. "Womanly boldness" is suggested in the passage from Agamemnon by the juxtaposition of τὰλμα θηλὺς (Ἀγμ. 1231). Pages' text gives τάιωντα
ταλμυτι, while Fraenkel gives ταίδε ταλμα. Θηλωσ belongs to the next sentence; nonetheless the juxtaposition is keenly felt. It is "womanly boldness" that causes the murder of the husband (Θηλωσ ἀφσενας φανεύσ Agm. 1231).


24. Ibid. "The term "mirror image: is used by Lebeck to describe this pattern of reversal.


26. Stinton, CQ, ns. 29 (1979), 255.

27. At 600 ἔρως is described as ἀπερωτάς. The meaning of the word parallels the meaning of δυσφίλεσ, which describes the character of Clytemestra's marriage. Her loveless passion causes a loveless marriage for Agamemnon and his whole household. This echo links the third strophe more closely to the gnomic introduction on the passions of women.

28. Rose, II, p.183 takes παταιμένας to be middle, while others translate it passively; cf. Holtsmark, CW, 59 (1966), 251.
CHAPTER III - Eumenides

The first stasimon of Choephori concludes with a version of the gnome "like for like." The gnome is envisioned as many things. At one level it is seen as a rigid principle of fate, the necessity of cause and effect, where the doer must suffer in kind. At a different level, it is seen as the justice of Zeus: Dike is the advocate, calling out "bloody blow for bloody blow." And then again, it is seen as the inevitable result of the ancestral curse, the law of the Erinyes who incite this vengeance. In the previous plays, Moira, Zeus and the Erinyes work together for the fulfillment of the lex talionis. However, this cooperation breaks down in Eumenides. A divergence is apparent even in Choephori, where the law becomes narrowly defined in terms of the family and "blood for blood." The gnome is less often seen as universally applying to all men. At its narrowest, it is seen exclusively as the law and prerogative of the Erinyes, whose function in Eumenides is also at its narrowest. They no longer avenge broken hospitality or even bloodshed in general but only matricide. They have become exclusively the "vengeful hounds of a mother."

The Erinyes fail to recognize another law governing the affairs of men, the law of "learning through suffering." In Eumenides, the gnome again assumes its full importance. Through his long wandering Orestes suffers. This suffering eventually purifies him of his blood-guilt and his acquittal affirms his purification. What is foreshadowed on the divine level in Prometheus and the Hymn to Zeus is now realized on the human level. Like
Zeus, Orestes learns from his suffering and so escapes the necessary consequences of "like for like." Unlike Agamemnon or Clytemestra, Orestes recognizes the guilt of his action and accepts the responsibility. He seeks purification. What he suffers during his long exile teaches him the way of purification. Consequently his case deserves some qualification. His situation can no longer be judged according to the narrow limits of "blood for blood."

However, the Erinyes continue to recognize only the law of vengeance. In *Eumenides*, we come full turn to the situation of Prometheus, where events of human significance are determined at the divine level first. *Eumenides* cannot be fully appreciated except in light of the Hymn to Zeus and *Prometheus*, to which the Hymn alludes. Like Zeus, the Erinyes themselves become bound to the necessity of fate: they must suffer the consequences of their actions. "Avenge and be avenged" is the law they advocate, and one that must be followed to its logical conclusion. By becoming the actual avengers of Clytemestra, they too must suffer the fate of the family.

The similarity between their fate and the fate of the family, now represented by Orestes, becomes the central point made in the gnomes of the first stasimon and the opening scenes to which these gnomes relate. Both Orestes and the Erinyes become disenfranchised. Both are forced to wander but are finally invited into Athens. Like Orestes and Zeus, the Erinyes learn from their suffering that the violence of revenge is not the only solution. Their experience results in a new political order for men, just as
Zeus' experience resulted in the law of *pathetikos mathos* to guide mortals to understanding. Their violence is tempered by reconciliation. That balance between force and knowledge, symbolized in the law of "learning through suffering," is symbolized in the Erinyes' transformation into "Eumenides."

A pattern develops in the early scenes that culminates in the gnomes of the first stasimon. As each scene unfolds, the Erinyes become closely identified with Orestes. The fate that he suffers at their hands soon becomes their own. The pollution with which he is stained soon stains the hands of the Erinyes. It is our purpose first to trace this pattern through the opening scenes of the play, then to see how it is expressed at the lyrical level in the gnomes of the first stasimon.

The play opens in Delphi at the temple of Apollo. The Pythia begins her prayer by tracing the heritage of the oracle. Apollo has succeeded a line of prophetesses extending back through Phoebe, Themis and Gaia. The prayer reflects a peaceful harmony between the old and new gods that is not restored until the end of the play. This harmony among the gods is soon shattered by the presence of Orestes and the Erinyes. The Pythia describes the horrid sight she sees within the temple of Apollo. Her description of Orestes is important to our discussion because it identifies certain traits in Orestes which are later ascribed to the Erinyes. She sees Orestes garbed as a suppliant, his hands dripping with blood (αἰματι στάζοντα χειρός 41-42), a man polluted and hated before the gods (ανδρα θεομοσι 40). The word *theomose* hits upon a key-thought in the play. Throughout the Erinyes are
characterized as polluted and hated by the gods. In Apollo's speech that immediately follows (65-84), he describes the Furies as "objects of hate" to both the Olympian gods and men alike (μισήματι ἄνδρῶν καὶ θεῶν ἀλυσμίων 73). No mortal or god or even wild beast associates with these loathesome creatures (70-71). Like Orestes, they are ostracized from all society both divine and human. The Erinyes become closely identified with Orestes and the rest of the family of Atreus in their crime, pollution and fate. Like the members of the family they desire vengeance and so must suffer the consequences of taking vengeance. In the first stasimon of *Choephori* we see exactly what are the consequences in store for the race, where vengeance breeds within. That race eventually "perishes under a god-hated pollution in dishonour" (Θεσπυγήτωι δ' ἄγει θραττὸν ἀτιμωθῆν ἱχεῖται γένεσ Cho. 635-36). This is precisely the fate in store for the Erinyes, who continue the cycle of vengeance within the race of Atreus. They eventually "depart" in dishonour, loathed by the gods. Momentarily, they are driven out of Apollo's temple, forced to wander as outcasts.

In the ghost-scene the similarities between the Erinyes and Orestes continue even further. In this episode, the ghost of Clytemnestra appears to arouse the Furies. The scene parallels the kommos of *Choephori*, where the unseen ghost of Agamemnon stirs Orestes to vengeance. Clytemnestra has become the daemonic force prompting the Erinyes to avenge the dead.³ Clytemnestra's reproaches sting them like a goad (ἀντίκεντρα 134-36). The image of the Erinyes being goaded on as if they were horses is picked up later in the opening strophe of the parodos (155-61). Both ἄνειδῶς and κέντραν are
echoed. Her reproach comes to them in a dream. It strikes them in the heart as a charioteer would strike a horse under the ribs (ὑπὲρ ψένας 159) "with a firmly gripped goad" (μεσόλαβεῖ κέντραν 157). The imagery effectively identifies the Erinyes with their victim. The metaphor of the κέντραν is used of Orestes, who is likewise spurred on to vengeance and matricide. Upon her arrival in Athens (377f.), Athena questions the Chorus as to the reason for pursuing Orestes. Did he kill his mother out of necessity or out of fear (426)? The Chorus reply to her question by asking another: "Where is there a goad so sharp as to compel matricide?" (πῦρ γὰρ τασσότα κέντραν ὡς μητρὰκτὰνεῖν; 427). In a moment Orestes answers the charge: the oracle of Loxias proved a strong goad for his purpose (Ἀντίκέντρα 466). But it was more than just Apollo's oracle that goaded Orestes on. His own desire to avenge his father proved a strong incentive. He confesses to Athena that he slew his mother for that very reason: Εἴκενα τὴν πεῖκόσαν, ἄφικ ἀφυήσαμαι, ἀντίκένταναι πολυναι ἄντικέντανα πατρός (463-64). The goad of vengeance is indeed sharp. κέντραν becomes an important metaphor indentifying the Erinyes with their victim. The image of a horse spurred on by the driver's whip describes both Orestes and the Erinyes, who are driven on by a common desire for revenge.

In the scene following the parodos the Erinyes continue to be closely associated with the race of Atreus. For the first time the gods come into open conflict. The scene turns into a heated argument between Apollo and the Erinyes, with each side venting its anger on the other. This close identification between the Furies and the house of Atreus is particularly
emphasized in Apollo’s opening speech (179-97). A place befitting them, he says, is not his temple but where men’s eyes are gouged, heads are cut off, throats cut. "Where the seed is destroyed and the youth of children is ruined" (ἀλλ’ ἐκαρανιστήρεσ ἰδίκαι σφαγαί τε, σπέρματὸς τ’ ἀποθεόραται παιδών κακῶταί ἠλέουν 187-88). At Troy such destruction was administered by Agamemnon. Apollo’s words recall the speech of the Herald, who describes how Agamemnon "destroyed the seed of the whole land of Troy" (καὶ σπέρμα πάσης ἔξαπάλλυται θεῶν ἁγμ. 528). At Troy the youthful flower of Greece and Troy was cut down. Apollo continues his reproach of the Erinyes: "Listen to the kind of feast they love that makes them hated and loathed by the gods:" ἔκακες ἔδεικνυσι ἔστιν ἀπάθεται θελιαίος τεγευνθῆρ’ ἐχοῦσαι (190-92). One cannot help but recall the feast of Thyestes, described in Cassandra’s vision, a feast attended by the Erinyes themselves, a band of Erinyes kindred to the race (ἁγμ. 189-90). The place they haunt, the house of Atreus, is described by Cassandra in much the same way as Apollo describes it. According to Cassandra, it is a place of kindred murders, beheadings (καράτια ἁγμ. 1091; cf. καρανιστήρεσ), the slitting of throats (ἀνέπρεφαγγέλτων ἁγμ. 1092; cf. δίκαι σφαγαί), a place where blood sprinkles the ground (πέπου ψαντηρίαν ἁγμ. 1092). In Apollo’s words, it is "a den of blood-thirsty lions" (λέοντας ἀντρῶν αἵματαρράθαυν 193). The lion-imagery invariably links the Erinyes to the house of Atreus whose members, from Agamemnon to Clytemestra and even to Orestes, are all compared to lions. The house of Atreus, the den of lions, is certainly a welcome place for the Furies.
Apollo's speech not only links the Erinyes with the race of Atreus in general but also with Orestes in particular. This continues the pattern of Choephoroi, where the avenger and the avenged become closely indentified with one another in character, crime and suffering. The end of Apollo's speech recalls the description of Orestes given by the Pythia at the beginning of the play. The Furies, he says, inflict pollution on all those they meet (ἐν ταλασσα πλησίασι τρίβεσθαι μυσάσι 195). This recalls the polluted man (ἀνδρὰ θεὶμυσὴν 40) whom the Pythia sees within the temple. Apollo concludes by stating that the Furies are "loveless to the gods" (άφινε εὐφιλῆς θεῶν 197). These final words echo the first stasimon of Choephoroi: σέβεται γὰρ ἄφινε τὰ ἄνθρωπον θεῶν (Cho. 637). What is hateful to the gods receives no reverence; rather it departs and perishes in dishonour. This is precisely the fate of the Erinyes who have just been forced from Apollo's temple. Like Orestes, they are under a pollution (μυσάς) and loathed by the gods (cf. θεὶμυστήτει ἕτει Choir. 635). They are forced to wander in exile to their dishonour. But like Orestes, they are eventually reconciled and gladly welcomed into Athens.

The eventual reconciliation of the Erinyes is foreshadowed in the experience of Orestes, whose own wandering brings suffering, but also learning, and eventually a release from his toils. The scene preceding the first stasimon reveals the purpose of his long wandering, pathei mathos. We have not heard this gnome since the parados of Agamemnon. At line 276 a variation on the gnome is clearly expressed. Orestes declares that he has been "schooled in affliction" and so has "learned many ways of purification"
(ἐγὼ διδαχθείη ἐν κακότητι ἐπίσταμαι/πέλλας καθαρμός 276-77). The suffering from his long exile has taught him the way of purification. Such learning has resulted in the blood fading from his hands (βρίζει γὰρ αἷμα καὶ μαραίνεται ἡμέρα 280) and the cleansing away of the pollution of matricide (μητρακτάνων μίσσας ἐκμυλωτὸν πέλες 281). When he presents himself to Athena, he can extend to her a hand washed of its pollution (αὖθε' ἀφθάθοντα ἡμέρα 237). Upon this basis, that Orestes has suffered and been purified, Athena recognizes him as καθαρός (474) and subsequently casts her vote in his favour, in favour of the law of "learning through suffering."

The experience of Orestes is shared by the Erinyes. Following the trial, the kommos occurs between the Furies and Athena. On the one hand the Erinyes lament over their suffering; on the other hand Athena replies with kind, persuading words. In the opening stanza (776-93), the Furies sing of how they have become dishonoured (Ατιμῶς 780; cf. 792), how they have suffered (ἐπαθὼς 790). To this Athena responds, "be persuaded" (ἐμὴ πιθεσθει 794). The Chorus then sings as before; and again Athena responds with the words "be persuaded" (σὺ δὲ ἐπιθυμὸς ἐμὲλὲ 829). The kommos turns into a refrain on pathos and peitho, that balance between violence and knowledge, expressed in the law of "learning through suffering" and experienced by Orestes. 7 The Erinyes come to share his experience. In their final stanzas (837-46; 870-880), the identification between the Erinyes and Orestes becomes complete. The Chorus confess that they have suffered (ἐμὲ παθεῖν 837; cf. 870) as a dishonoured pollutant (Ατιτετῶν μῦσας 838; cf. 873). Their suffering approaches that of Orestes, who in like manner becomes a polluted
outcast, yet who eventually learns the way of purification and welcome acceptance back into society. Again the Erinyes' experience resembles that of Orestes. To their lament Athena again responds with persuasion. If the Erinyes honour Peitho (ἀλλ' ἐι μὲν ἄγνων ἔστι σει πειθοῦ σέβαις 885), they will not become dishonoured outcasts of Athens (ἀτιμασ ἐρρεῖν ταῦτα, ἀπάξενα πέδαυ 884). Rather, they will be honoured with a share of the land (890-91). From their suffering as outcasts, the Erinyes learn the benefits of such persuasion. Like Orestes, they have become subject to the law "learning through suffering." This beneficial balance between violence and knowledge is symbolized in the reconciliation between them and Athena.

Our discussion so far has centered on a certain pattern developing in the early scenes of the play, a pattern borne out in the gnomes of the first stasimon. Through each scene the Erinyes have become more closely identified with Orestes, sharing in his situation and fate. This identification between avenger and the one avenged is achieved in the gnomes by the fact that the "lot" of avenger is seen to be the same as that which they distribute to those they avenge. In the anapaests, the Erinyes declare the purpose of their song. They are "resolved upon showing their hateful music and declaring how their faction distributes the lots among men": (μὴ συγεράν ἀπεφάνεσθαι δὲ δὲ γεγένεται ἡ λάχνη τὰ κατ' ἀνθρώπον κλῆσις ἐπινοεῖ στάσιος ἀμή. 308-11). λάχνος or λάχη appears four times in the ode as a key thematic thought. There is ambiguity and disagreement about its exact meaning throughout the ode. At line 347 the scholia state that λάχη is used in place of γέρας (ἀντὶ τῶν γέρα). This has led certain scholars to apply
the meaning of "office" to the word throughout the ode. However, it is questionable whether such a meaning can be understood at each occurrence of the word. According to Lebeck, "λάχασ normally denotes one's allotted portion or lot in life," and this meaning predominates, despite any secondary meanings that may arise. So in the course of the ode the word denotes the office allotted to the Erinyes by Fate, as well as the fate allotted to men by that office, and even the fate awaiting the Erinyes. There is a definite interweaving between the lot of the Furies and the lot of men, emphasized by the repetition of λάχασ which refers to both. Avenger and avenged become inseparably linked in a common fate.

At line 310 λάχη is only modified by τὰ κατ' ἀνθρώπων. To understand the possessive pronoun ἥμαν here is difficult. Lebeck maintains that "the text more naturally suggests 'we distribute the lots of men' than 'we distribute our lots in regard to men'." 11 ἐπινωμαί which means "to allot" or "portion out" reinforces the thought. The Furies are determined to declare how they distribute the lots of men. Even if we assign to, ἐπινωμαί the extended meaning of "managing," λάχασ still can refer to the lot in store for men. It is the Erinyes' task to direct the affairs of men. How they deal with men becomes man's lot. λάχασ carries a double sense, referring to the Erinyes' "office" of avenging, but also man's lot when he is avenged by them.

In the gnomes of 313f. the Erinyes outline what are the lots in store for men at their hands. To the innocent they grant blessing; to the guilty sorrow. They insist that they are upright in their judgment (ἐγώδικαι).
To the innocent, the one who extends hands free of pollution (τὰν μὲν καθαρὰ χεῖρας πρὸς τὸν οὐρανόν τ' 313), the Erinyes grant only impunity. Their wrath does not assail such a man (ἡμῖν ἀδίκως παρεῖπε τὸν θρόνον 314), but rather "he passes his life free from harm" (ὁσισθής δ' αἰῶνα διέθετε 315). The latter remark invokes as its inverse a gnome commonly expressed in Agamemnon and Choephoroi: "No mortal passes his life free of harm" (ὁμοθετεὶς μερόοπων ἀοίνης βίας... ἀμείψαι Cho. 1018). As we have seen, this gnome is closely linked with the idea of "like for like," the law of vengeance advocated by the Erinyes. Agamemnon and Clytemestra do not pass their lives free from harm because they must suffer the consequences of their vengeance. Such is the law of the Erinyes. In their "office" of exacting this law, they grant to men a life free of, or filled with harm. This point is made clear at 316f. The Furies appear as upright witnesses on behalf of the slain (τὰς θανάσιν 318) to avenge their spilled blood (πράκτορες αἷματος 319), even to the end. Those guilty of bloodshed are punished. In contrast to the innocent, the guilty do not pass a life free of harm. The fate allotted them by the Erinyes is vengeance. In contrast to the innocent, the guilty are characterized by their soiled hands, a common gnomic image for sin and guilt (cf. Αγμ. 776-77). χεῖρας φανίας ἑπικρύπτει (317) is contrasted with καθαρὰ χεῖρα πρὸς τὸν οὐρανόν (313). Whereas the guiltless man openly shows his hands, the guilty man tries to conceal them. Against the latter the Erinyes appear as avengers.

In their "office" of avenging the dead, the Erinyes allot to men their respective portions: To the innocent impunity, but to the guilty vengeance. λόγος at this point refers primarily to the fate of man.
In the opening strophe the Erinyes reiterate what they have just said at the close of the anapaests. Their duty is to avenge. They have been born of Night as a retribution to the dead and living alike (321-23). Aeschylus departs from the Hesiodic tradition, which makes the Erinyes the daughters of earth (Theog. 185). Their association with Night is significant because she is elsewhere conceived as the author of retribution. In Agamemnon she is hailed by the Chorus as the author of Troy's destruction. She has cast a great net over the walls of Troy from which her quarry cannot escape (Agm. 355-60). During that night retribution is born. During that night the Atreidae, the Erinys sent by Zeus to avenge broken hospitality (Agm. 59-60), exact their due. Directly, and through their mother, the Erinyes are linked to the fall of Troy. A common system of imagery is used to describe their work of vengeance upon Troy and upon Orestes. The net-imagery used of Night is also used of the Erinyes who hunt down their prey with a net (147-48). In both plays, the victims of retribution are compared to a helpless animal. In the eagle-omen Troy becomes the timorous hare (πτώκα Agm. 135), devoured by winged hounds of Zeus, who represent the Atreidae, the Erinys of Troy (Agm. 122-126). The same imagery is invoked here in the first stasimon and elsewhere in Eumenides. Orestes is now compared to the timid animal (πτώκα 325), the Erinyes to the vengeful hounds (132; 247; cf. Cho. 1054). By invoking the imagery of Agamemnon the Erinyes closely indentify themselves with the house of Atreus in its desire for vengeance. In the form of the Atreidae they came as vengeful hounds to devour Troy and to avenge broken hospitality. Now they have come in person to devour another timid hare.
In the corresponding antistrophe this identification between the Erinyes and the house of Atreus is continued. Again the subject is man’s fate. The word λάχασ is still ambiguous. Moira weaves out the portions of life: ταύτα γὰρ λάχασ διανταία μὴ τε ἐπέκλωσεν ἐμπέδωσ ἔχειν (334-35). The juxtaposition of lachos and Moira and the weaving imagery would suggest that lachos retains its usual sense here. Fate distributes the allotted portions. There is no clear indication at lines 334-35 that λάχασ belongs exclusively to the Erinyes or means "office." ἐμπέδωσ ἔχειν is best taken intransitively: "Moira weaves out this lot to stand steadfastly."12 Such a use of ἔχω is paralleled in the Hymn to Zeus where Zeus is said to have established as valid (κυρίως ἔχειν) the law of "learning through suffering" (Agm. 177-78). To translate ἐμπέδωσ ἔχειν intransitively not only is possible but in keeping with good Greek idiom, especially when no personal pronoun is present to indicate to whom lachos belongs.

Lachos probably refers then to the fate apportioned to men by Moira, at the hands of the Erinyes.13 In the following lines (336-40), the Chorus of Furies specify what man’s lot is. Moira has woven as an eternal lot that those who foolishly murder their kin should be pursued by the Erinyes until death: θναίνῃ ταίσειν αὐτὴν ταιαί/ἐμπέδωσεν μάταια, /τάσις δὲμοτείν ἐφ ’αυ/γὰν ὑπέλθη (336-39).14 The passage parallels the anapaests, where the lot of man also is outlined in the gnomes. In both cases λάχασ more naturally signifies the fate man receives at the hands of the Erinyes than the actual office of the Erinyes. In each case the Furies are the agents of vengeance who pursue the guilty until their death. The word τελέωσ of the anapaests is
picked up here in ὑφήγεν γὰν ὑπέλεθη. The subject of ἐμπέδωσε ἔχειν is clearly the Erinyes; they do the pursuing; but that does not make them the subject of ἐμπέδωσε ἔχειν. The confusion about what or whom lachos refers to helps suggest an interweaving of fates between the Erinyes and their victim. It is their lot to pursue the guilty; it is man's lot to be pursued by them; but soon it will be the Erinyes' own lot to suffer as their victims do.

The point is clearly made in the second strophe: "This lot was ordained at birth for us" (γιγνώμεναι λάχαν τά νῦν ἐστ' ἐμ' ἐκράνθη 349). The Erinyes' remark looks back to the opening strophe, where they refer to their birth. Night bore them to be a retribution (321-13). Poina explains what is the capacity of their office. They are ordained to bring vengeance upon the guilty. This constitutes their λάχαν or "office." In view of the verb Κραίνω, λάχαν could acquire the technical sense of γέρας. However, when the Erinyes actually outline their lachos, it appears less as an official duty and more as their fate. It is their lot to live excluded from the gods (ἀθανάτων δ' ἀπέχειν χέρας 350), not to share a common feast (350-51), and to be without a portion of the festive robes (παλλεύκων δὲ πέπλων ἀπόμειρας ἀκληρᾶς ἐτύχοντι 352). Their words look forward to the conclusion of the play, when the Erinyes are invited by Athena, an Olympian, to dwell with her (γίγνεσθα γὰρ σοι τὴν γαμοῦσα χθόνας/ἐνιαί δικαίως ἐστ' τὰ πᾶν τιμωμένη 890-91; cf. 867-69), and to wear the festive robes (φθειρικῆςτέλειας ἐνδύσεσθαι ἐσθημασία τιμητέ 1028-29). No longer are they regarded as outcasts without honour (ἀτιμῶς ἀπόεκλετοι 884), but they obtain their rightful share among the gods. However,
if they persist in seeking vengeance by pouring out their wrath upon Athens, they will remain outcasts without honour (888-90). As they themselves confess in the first stasimon, "the race dripping in blood Zeus deems hateful, unworthy of his converse": ζεύς δ' αἰμασταγές ἀζίδμισθεν ἔθνας τάδε λέσχας/ἀσ ἀπηλιώσας (365-66). This description of themselves recalls the Pythia's description of Orestes dripping in blood (ἀβοτι στάζετα 41-42).

The lot of the race that takes vengeance, whether the race of Atreus or the Erinyes, is to suffer dishonour, as outcasts under a god-hated pollution (cf. Cho. 635-36). This then is the lot of the Erinyes ordained at birth by Moira, the same unchanging lot ordained by Fate for men (334-35). Like the rest of the family of Atreus, the Erinyes become bound to the necessity of suffering for their vengeance.

The point is furthered emphasized in the final stanzas of the ode. In the third strophe-pair the Erinyes describe the sinful nature of their victims. They are proud in thought (368), covered in the gloom of pollution (378), and consequently are punished with a dishonourable death (369). This description of their victims, in the final strophe-pair, is applied to the Erinyes themselves. The fate of those they avenge becomes their own. This interweaving of fates is achieved through the verbal echoes between the two strophe-pairs. The Furies are σεμναί (383). This looks back to line 368f. of the third strophe, where the word is used to describe the proud thoughts of their victims: "The thoughts of men, though proud under heaven, fade and diminish beneath the earth" (δέκα δ' ἀνδρῶν καὶ μάλε π' αἰθερί σεμναί/τακτέμεναι κατὰ γῆς μισοθεμειν ἵδρυμεί 368-69). The
Erinyes share the nature as well as the fate of their victims. In proud arrogance they “pursue a lot void of honour, severed from the (celestial) gods by the sunless light”: ἀτιμω/ἀτιτέτα διδυμεναί/λάχη Θεῶν διχαστατῆτ' ἀνηλίω/λάμπασ (385-87 Murray). ἀτίμα should be retained because it precisely recalls ατιμία of the third strophe (369). The Erinyes, who inflict dishonour upon those they consign to the world below, are themselves dishonoured and consigned to the world below. Their appointed place is the sunless gloom below the earth (καίει χαθὼ τάξιν ἑκάστασα/καὶ δυσηλίων κνέφας 395-96). The Erinyes have become like their own victims who fade away below the earth (κατὰ γᾶς 369) shrouded in the gloom of pollution (κνέφας...μυσίς 378). Κνέφας is echoed in both strophic systems, providing a further link between the two, between the Erinyes and those they avenge.

The word λαχῶς (385) again retains its primary meaning and is applied to the lot the Erinyes share with their victims, particularly because of the final antistrophe (389-96). Instead of λαχός, γέρας is used by the Erinyes to designate their ancient office. This γέρας is an ordinance ordained by Fate and granted by the gods (Θέσμων τῶν μαρτυρόκρατων ἐκ Θεῶν δαθέντα τέλεαν 391-93). In the ancient office of the Erinyes, the gods freely cooperate because that office originally extended beyond the narrow scope of avenging kinsmen. Originally the Erinyes protected the rights of gods, strangers and parents alike (cf. 269-72; 545-49); and so subsequently were honoured (δικά/ἀτιμίας κύρω 394). In Agamemnon they participated with Zeus in avenging broken hospitality. It was in his role as guardian of strangers that Zeus dispatched an Eriny against Troy (Agm. 59-62). But now in their
uncompromising pursuit of Orestes, the Furies can only meet with disapproval. There is a deliberate contrast within the final strophe-pair between the lachos and geras, between ἀτιμα λάχη and γέρας πολαίνω δῆ, ἀτιμία. The Erinyes' lot is one of dishonour, brought upon themselves by their insistence on vengeance. Their office is one of honour, granted to them as a gift by the gods.

The first stasimon reveals an affinity between the family of Atreus and the Furies. They share the same fate, to suffer dishonourably. The Erinyes desire revenge, so must suffer the same consequences as the rest. They share the lot of their victim in much the same way as Clytemestra, let us say, experiences the fate of Agamemnon. It seems that the Erinyes have become bound to the necessity of "like for like." However, the play does not close, as the previous plays do, by simply reiterating the validity of that law. The fate of the Erinyes does not conclude "like for like," as Agamemnon's or Clytemestra's fate did. As we have seen, it approaches the fate of Orestes.

The remaining part of the play is taken up with the trial, Orestes' acquittal and the reconciliation of the Furies. The Erinyes are as much on trial as is Orestes, for they assume that their honour and jurisdiction will be violated if Orestes is acquitted. But at the same time the acquittal of Orestes is as much a victory for the Erinyes as it is for Orestes himself, although the Erinyes do not recognize it at first. The acquittal of Orestes not only anticipates, but also makes possible, the Erinyes' welcome into Athens. The spirit of reconciliation, which on the one hand guarantees
Orestes' acquittal, also allows the Erinyes to be treated in like fashion, and not along the rigid lines of "like for like." As avengers they should be cast out in dishonour, but they are not.

Still, Athena must find a solution that can allow a place for the Erinyes and that can allow the two opposing sides in the trial to come together and be reconciled. Athena persuades the Chorus that they are not defeated because of the outcome of the trial (795). The trial resulted in a tie vote without dishonour to themselves (ἀυτήν ἀνθρώπην 796). Both Orestes and the Erinyes are considered just. What could prove an impasse does not. A solution is reached by Athena that gives the victory to both sides. That solution comes in the form of the Areopagus. Before the trial, Athena establishes the court to be "an abiding order for all time" (Θέσμον, τὰν εἶναι ἀποντὶς Ἡρῶ θρήσκον 484). This court is appointed to decide the case between Orestes and the Erinyes. The 'new' order does not supersede the 'old' order decreed by fate and represented by the Erinyes (392-93); it incorporates the old with the new. The new justice is still based on the violence of the old laws, symbolized in the Erinyes, but now tempered by a spirit of persuasion and reconciliation, symbolized in Athena. This balance between the two opposing elements is symbolized in the tie vote cast by the Areopagus, a vote in favour of reconciliation as well as retribution. Both elements are represented in the Areopagus, which wisely deliberates and then exacts swift punishment.

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This resolution is anticipated at the lyrical level in the second stasimon, where the ode, like the odes of *Agamemnon* that foresee the death of Agamemnon, foresees the final outcome of the play. The ode begins by recalling the words spoken by the Erinyes at the conclusion of the first stasimon (391) and by Athena just prior to the ode itself (484), where θεσμός is used in both places to describe two different systems of justice: "Now are there revolutions caused by new ordinances" (νῦν καταστράφη νέων θεσμίων 490-91). The trial is clearly seen by the Erinyes as a conflict between the two orders. They are convinced that if Orestes is acquitted, these new ordinances will replace their own. Justice will be replaced by lawlessness. In the first three stanzas (490-516) the Chorus predict the consequences of the new ordinances. There will be revolution. The word καταστράφη may convey a political sense and comes close to the meaning of στασίς. What we see and what becomes clear in the second half of the ode is the application of the gnomes to a political setting. The new order will result in political unrest. The acquittal of Orestes will encourage license among all men (πάντως ἡν τὰ δ’ ἔργαν ἐξερέσαι συναρμόσει Ἀδασῆς 494-95). The end result is an abundance of sorrows in store for parents at the hands of their children (παίδατρωςτα 496-98). Under the new order the Erinyes will no longer punish such misdeeds by visiting the guilty with their anger (499-500). Men will seek release (λῆξιν 505) from their sorrow but will find none (502-05). Every remedy will prove useless and vain (ἄκεσα δ’ ἰ’ βίβαια τλάμων μάταν παρηγαρεί 506-07). The wronged person will call upon Dike and the Erinyes, but receive no answer to his prayer (508-12). Parents, whether mother or father, can only lament in vain expecting no revenge, since the house of Dike is falling (513-16).
In the mind of the Erinyes the new justice appears to be a perversion of the justice of Agamemnon. Motifs that in Agamemnon once represented the certainty of divine punishment upon the guilty here represent the certain sorrow in store for the innocent. Dike is something harmful (δίκα καὶ βλάβα 491). ἐν χρόνῳ (498), a catch phrase to describe the slow but certain coming of divine retribution (cf. Agm. 463; Eum. 555), now describes the inevitable sorrow in store for the unsuspecting parents. Normally the unjust could find no escape (ἀν γὰρ ἦσσεν ἡπαξία Agm. 381), and every remedy proved vain for them (ἐκὼ δὲ πᾶν ματαιῶν Agm. 387). But now this has become the predicament of the just (505-507). The innocent can call upon the gods but none will listen (cf. Agm. 396). The new justice pronounced by Athena, in the minds of the Furies, is only a perversion of the justice of Agamemnon, so staunchly advocated by themselves.

In the second antistrophe, the Chorus begin to contrast the values of the old thesmos with those of the new. The trial, which is dramatically presented later, is now begun at the lyrical level and partly resolved by the conclusion of the ode. In the stanzas that follow, the Erinyes recall many themes and motifs from the odes of Agamemnon. The remaining ode becomes a collection of gnomes recalling the gnomes of Agamemnon. The justice advocated by the Erinyes, then, is really only the justice of Agamemnon, the justice of Zeus that demands "like for like" but also "learning through suffering." It is not Athena but the Erinyes who pervert this justice by favouring the one law exclusively. They relentlessly pursue Orestes, blind to all other aspects of Zeus' justice. In its broadest aspects the Erinyes
are welcome advocates of this justice. And, as we shall see from the gnomes of the remaining half of the ode, it is this 'traditional' justice that becomes the basis for the new order, an order in which the Erinyes are participants.

The second antistrophe echoes the central gnomic thought of the Hymn to Zeus, "learning through suffering": "It is a profitable thing to learn prudence through groaning" (ξυμφέρει συμφανείν ὑπὲ στένει 520-21). This clearly is a variation on πάθει μάθεισ (Agm. 177). In fact the second antistrophe contains echoes from the third stanza of the Hymn (176-84).

σωφρανείν is used in both passages to denote the type of learning that comes to those that suffer. ξυμφέρει picks up on χάρισ of the Hymn. The Erinyes agree that σωφρανύνη is some thing beneficial to learn, even at the expense of suffering. Their understanding of σωφρανύνη is consonant with that of the Hymn. It is a fearful reverence and obedience of the gods. Before the hearts of the elders there is a steady drip of sorrow: στάζει δ' ἐν γ' ουπνώι πρ' καρδιάς μυστικήν πάντας (179-80). This image metaphorically describes their fear that prompts them to pray to Zeus and revere him as victor (Agm. 174-75). In our present passage fear and reverence go hand in hand. Terror and awe are the guardians of good sense (τὸ δὲιν ἦν καὶ φρένων ἐπὶσκάπναν 517-18). Furthermore, the implication is that good sense leads to reverence. The converse of this idea is expressed at 522f. The city or man that does not nurture his heart in fear shows no reverence to Dike: τίς δὲ μηδὲν ἐν φάει καρδίαν ἀνατρέψων ὡ σάλιος βραβέας θ'μαλίωσ εὐτ'αν σέβει δίκαιαν (522-25). Within the context of the antistrophe φάει makes no sense and
should be emended to φίλων or ἄτει. What we have then is ring-composition with ἐν φίλων καρδίαν closely paralleling τὰ ἄτειν ὑψεῖν. In effect, τὰ ἄτειν, φίλων and σέβει shape the meaning of σωφρόνειν, the key word of the second antistrophe. As in the Hymn to Zeus σωφρόνειν means a fearful reverence of the gods. Such prudent reverence is learned through suffering. The Furies are advocates of this law of justice, a law laid down by Zeus to lead men to understanding.

Although the gnomic thoughts are parallel, in Eumenides they take on a new emphasis. The justice of Agamemnon is broadened beyond the individual to include the community at large. The laws of Zeus, once laid down to guide individuals, now are applied to the polis: the city that cultivates fear will naturally rever justice (522-25). Athena’s new ordinance incorporates into the context of the city the old law that once determined the fates of individuals and their families. Consequently a body is needed to represent the city and try its important cases. The office of avenging the dead has now passed into the hands of the Areopagus, a body duly appointed to represent the polis. The Erinyes still play a role. Whereas before they were the guardians of individual families, now they become the guardians of the Areopagus and only avenge those convicted by the new law-court.

This resolution to the play is already fully anticipated here in the ode when the gnomes take on this new emphasis. The political imagery continues into the third strophe: "do not approve of a life of anarchy or despotism. God only grants power to the mean" (μὴττ' ἀναρκταὶν βίαν/μὴτε..."
In keeping with the political imagery the "mean" refers to moderate democracy, such as at Athens, where deliberation and persuasion prevail. Even ἐφορέω takes on a political meaning within the context. "God administers different things in different ways." The Zeus of Eugenides is the Zeus Agoraios, the Zeus of the polis (973). Contrary to the Erinyes’ expectation, he will direct Orestes’ affair differently, allowing not only a place for vengeance but also for moderation and reconciliation.

The new context is the polis rather than the family, and the admonitions voiced in the gnomes, although remaining the same, now appeal to citizens rather than members of a family. Lines 534f. recall the second stasimon of Agamemnon, where impiety is said to "beget many more children after its kind" (τὰ δυσεθέα γὰρ ἔργα μὲν πλείονα τίκτει σφέτερα δ’εἰκότα γέννας Agm. 758-60), or hybris begets hybris (ὑλεῖς δὲ τίκτειν ὑβρίς μὲν παλαιὰ νεᾶς ὑμῶν ὑβρίς Agm. 763-66). The metaphor of birth is here used to describe the proliferation of evil; "evil breeding evil" is the notion expressed in both places (δυσεθέας μὲν ὑβρίς τέκνα ἤστε ἐτύμμασ Ἑμ. 534). However, the idea of inherited sin, so frequently associated with the metaphor, is totally absent here. Rather, the Furies warn against the proliferation of evil that comes as a result of political excess.

But, when moderation is adopted, prosperity "loved by all and prayed for by all" results: ἐκ δ’ὑγιείας φερεῖν ὅ πᾶσιν φίλως/καὶ πάλινυκτὸς ἀλβᾶς (535-37). A healthy mind adopts the middle course, political
moderation. That health of mind is a metaphor for moderation is apparent not only from the context of the strophe itself, but also from Agamemnon, where a similar image is used: μάλα γάρ τεί ταυτίσα ύγιείας άκρασταν τέρμα (Agm. 1001-02). The text is seriously corrupt, but the general train of thought is apparent: too much of anything, whether it is good health or possession, is dangerous. The same thought is repeated here, where sound health becomes a metaphor for moderation. The Erinyes do not recommend political excess, whether it be anarchy or tyranny. Political moderation provides the cure for the ills of license, something the Erinyes fear will arise if Orestes is acquitted. However, what the Furies do not realize is that the new law is set within a polis governed by such moderation and health of mind.

In the third antistrophe (538-49) we are taken back to the first stasimon of Agamemnon and particularly the opening strophe. In both places the gnomes deal with the theme of sacrilege, expressed by the metaphor of "trampling under foot." The Erinyes warn the audience "to honour the altar of Dike and not to dishonour it with a godless foot with their eye on gain. For retribution will follow" (538-43). This admonishment particularly recalls the final gnome of the first strophe, where again we see the altar of Dike kicked over and dishonoured out of greed: πλατύντα πρὸς κάραν ἀνάρη λακτίσαντι μέγαν δίκας/βομβῶν εἴς ἄφανταν (Agm. 381-84). The passage from Eumenides specifies exactly what the metaphor of "trampling underfoot" signifies. It symbolizes the sacrilege and dishonour shown to parents and strangers. Within the immediate context of Troy's fall the image refers to
Paris, who dishonoured the hospitality of Agamemnon (cf. Agm. 399-402). The Erinyes are even partly responsible for his punishment. Zeus Xenios sends them against Troy in the form of the Atreidae (Agm. 59-62). The fall of Troy confirms that the gods, and particularly the Erinyes, do not overlook those who trample down what is sacred (Agm. 370-72). The Erinyes in both plays appear as guardians of what is sacred, whether it be the rights of parents or strangers or gods (cf. 269-72). The passage from Eumenides indicates that their jurisdiction is actually broader than they make it out to be. The Furies are more than the vengeful hounds of a mother. The justice of Agamemnon, although defended by the Erinyes in the present ode, has really been forsaken by them in order to pursue Orestes. In its broader aspects, however, that justice, the justice of Zeus and the Erinyes, is adopted by Athena.

The final strophe-pair recalls the third stasimon of Agamemnon. The common point of comparison is the nautical imagery. In both, the ships are laden with too many stores (πλησμένων γέμων Ἀγμ. 1012; cf. Ἀγάμ. πάλλα παντάφυτε Eum. 554); they strike against the reef (καὶ πάτμας εὐθυμομὲν ἀνάρθω ξηπαίεν ἄφαιτον ἔρμα Agm. 1005-07; cf. τῶν πρὶν ἄλβων ἔρματι πρὸςβαλὼν δίκας Eum. 563-65). The terms πάτμας and ἄλβων appear to mean the same thing. They refer to a man’s good fortune that has been suddenly reversed. However, the character and subsequent fate of the two captains are entirely different. The one from Agamemnon directs his fortune aright (εὐθυμομένων); he unsuspectingly strikes the reef (ἄφαντον ἔρμα), but does not cause his ship to sink (ἀτρίξ ἑπάντιε σκάφω) because he throws
overboard his possessions. The other is a bold transgressor (τῶν αὐτῶν...παρθένων 553); he has acquired his wealth unjustly (ἀνευ δίκαιος 554); the yardarm of his ship snaps (Θραυσμένας κεραίας 557); he founders on the reef of justice and perishes unwept and unseen (564-65). The one learns moderation from his experience, the other does not. After boasting that he could never be touched by suffering (τῶν ἀπόφησαν αὐχέντας 561), he is punished for such arrogance. His ship breaks upon the reef of justice. In many ways his fate resembles the fate of the unjust man of the first stasimon of Agamemnon, who for a time prospers without justice (τυχθαν ἄνευ ἀνευ δίκαιος Αγμ. 464; cf. ανευ δικαιο Ευμ. 554), but finally is rendered faint and dim by the Erinyes. He perishes among the unseen (ἐν δ' αἰσθαντι τελεθήντας Αγμ. 466-67; cf. ωλετ' ακλαυτάς αἰστάς Ευμ. 565); He may cry out for help but no god listens to his prayer (λίταν δ' ἀκαυτεὶ μεν ἀυτίς θεῶν Αγμ. 396; cf. καλεὶ δ' ἀκαυτάς διδέν 558).

These echoes link the morality of the Erinyes with that of Agamemnon. The old θεσμοί, so vehemently defended by the Erinyes, are nothing more than the laws of justice that directed the action of Agamemnon. These 'old' laws do not become outdated. Justice does not change from Agamemnon to Eumenides. It simply takes on a new form of expression. The justice of Agamemnon is now expressed with in the framework of the polis and the Areopagus. This incorporation of the old with the new is already anticipated here in the ode. It is fully realized after the Erinyes are reconciled and invited into the city.
But even before this point the nature of the new order is clearly revealed. After the trial, Athena addresses the jurors who are about to cast their votes: κλέων θεσμόν, ἀπόκλισιν λέων, πρώτας δίκας κρίνατες αἰτίας χυτών (681-82). This tribunal of judges has been established by Athena as an abiding order for all time (ἐσται δὲ καὶ τὰ λαπίδαν αἰγέως στρατῶν/αλεί δικαστῶν τοῖς βουλευτηρίοις 683-84). It is as firm as the rock of Ares upon which it resides. This enduring quality is based upon the solid foundation of old law. In the lines that follow Athena repeats the admonitions spoken by the Erinyes in the second stasimon. She bids her citizens not to revere anarchy or tyranny (τὸ μὴ διαπικεφαλήν μὴ δεισινοῦνεν/διά τὸν πόλεως ἐξω βαλείν/τίς γὰρ δεδικώθη μηδὲν ἔνδικαι βραδίων; 698-99). In words that echo the second antistrophe (517-25), she advises them "not to cast terror and awe from the city. For what mortal is just who does not have fear?" (Καὶ μὴ τὸ δεινὸν παῖν πόλεως ἐξω βαλείν/τίς γὰρ δεδικώθη μηδὲν ἔνδικαι βραδίων; 698-99). Athena preserves the old law advocated by the Erinyes. If it is respected, it can become the defense of land and the safety of the city (ἐρμιμά τε χώρας καὶ πόλεως σωτηρίαν 701). But because the old law is adapted to a new setting, the polis, it requires a new political body to administer it. This body functions as the Erinyes did in Agamemnon and Choephoroi. It will be swift in wrath, a guardian of the land aroused on behalf of those who sleep and are dead (οἱ δὲ ἔνομον, ἐκεύζωμαν, εὐφάντων ὑπὲρ/ἐγερνυότερος πολέμωμα γῆς καθίσταμαι 705-06). Whereas the Erinyes acted on behalf of individuals alone, the law-court will act on behalf of the whole city. The Erinyes will become the guardian spirits of this court, punishing only those it convicts.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER III

1. In Choephoroi Apollo is closely linked to the chthonic world and to the Erinyes in particular. His association with the chthonic world is suggested not only here in what the Pythia says, but by Apollo himself. In particular it is reflected in the oracle he gives to Orestes (Cho. 269-96). He bids Orestes to avenge his father, to kill in turn (τρόπαιον αὐτῶν ἀνταπακτεῖναι λέγων Cho. 274). Like the Erinyes, he advocates blood-vengeance. He threatens Orestes with "the wrath of malignant powers from the earth" (Cho. 278) and attacks from the Erinyes "accomplished on behalf of a father's blood" (Cho. 283). Both Apollo's oracle and his prophecies are of chthonic nature and origin, and so the presence of the Erinyes in his temple may not seem so incongruous. See Winnington-Ingram, pp.136-37; 150-53.

2. The Pythia's prayer anticipates the conclusion of the play, when once again the chthonic powers and the Olympian gods will dwell peacefully together. Hephaestus' children will again play an important role. They, who once conducted Apollo to Delphi (12-14), will escort the Erinyes to their new seat. Winnington-Ingram, pp.152-53; cf Lebeck, p.143.

3. On the daemonization of Clytemestra, see Goheen, AJP, 76(1955), 130-31; cf Fontenrose, TAPA, 102(1971), 95-98.

4. In Choephoroi, Orestes is compared to a young colt harnessed to a chariot of sorrow (Cho. 794-96). See Lebeck, pp.140-41.


6. Between the passages in which Orestes reiterates the gnome "learning through suffering," the Erinyes respond by invoking gnomes of Choephoroi. The scene can be seen, at the ideological level, as a conflict between the ideas of "like for like" and "learning through suffering." The Erinyes believe that it is not right for Orestes to stand trial and possibly be acquitted because "a mother's blood upon the ground is past recovery" (τὰ ἀντιδίδουν τὸ ἀντίδιδον χάραις ἔσσεσθαι ἐν τῇ δίκῃ τὸ ἀντιδίδουν χάραις ἔσσεσθαι 260-261). "Once it is spilled upon the ground, it is lost forever" (τὰ διαρρέουν πέμπτα χέρες ἔσσεσθαι 263). Consequently, Orestes must pay with his life: like for like (ἀντιδίδοντας 264). The scene anticipates the trial, which also can be seen as a conflict between these two laws.

7. On the antithesis between force and persuasion, see Winnington-Ingram, pp.1, 68-69.

8. Lebeck, p.151. At 310 the scholia explain λάχη as the lots of men (τὰς κληθένσις ἠμένα) Rose, II, p.250.


11. Ibid. p. 152.

12. Ibid. p. 154.

13. We can compare Prometheus to see another example where the Erinyes work along with Fate in dispensing man's portion: The Fates and the Erinyes are called the "helmsmen of necessity" (516), together directing the fate of man and god. In particular, Prometheus is referring to the necessity of suffering "like for like," the law of fate and the Erinyes. In Eumenides, it is primarily as defendants of this law that the Erinyes dispense the lots of men.

14. ουταργηται may suggest no more than "deeds of someone's own doing," but in the minds of the Erinyes it can only mean the murder of kin. Again this emphasizes the narrowing view the Erinyes have. Everything else is secondary to the pursuit of Orestes. Like all members of the family of Atreus they desire revenge. It is their passion for vengeance that leads into conflict with Zeus. See Rose, II, p. 251.

15. The gnomes of the third strophe-pair seem to apply to Agamemnon more than they do to Orestes. The Erinyes begin by saying that "the thoughts of men, though proud beneath the heavens, diminish in dishonour beneath the earth" (369-70). It is difficult to imagine how Orestes' thoughts could be called σέμωνε. The description more aptly applies to Agamemnon. At Aulis his imagination reached unholy heights as he breathed forth impious thoughts of utter recklessness (Agm. 219-21). Such an arrogant man is trampled down by the vengeful foot of the Erinyes (370-71). Even if he is a swift runner, the Erinyes will trip him up (374-75). The trip that the Erinyes give to the runner is compared to "an unbearable infatuation" or Ate (δυσφραγμα θανατον 376). This thought is picked up in the opening line of the antistrophe in ὥπερ αθραντι λύμαται. Unable to bear up under Ate, the runner falls in confusion. He does not know why because of his senseless folly. The gnomes again seem to refer to Agamemnon, whose own action at Aulis resulted from "a wretched ill-counseling infatuation" (ἐριστάξε θαρσύνε γάρ ἀικαριστίας τάλανα παρακάπτα. Agm. 222-23). In contrast, Orestes never lacked clarity of mind. He is not driven to murder by "an ill-counseling infatuation" but by the straight-counseling of Apollo. Both before and after the murder of Clytemestra, he recognizes his deed for what it really is, a miasma. Never once does Agamemnon recognize his guilt. In fact, he could bring himself to think that the sacrifice of Iphigenia was themis (Agm. 215-17). Such a remark reveals the extent of his delusion. The Furies' remarks, then, are poignantly true for Agamemnon and not
Orestes: "He did not know why he fell because of senseless folly." As he returns home, he is unsuspecting. He cannot perceive the true intent of Clytemestra's words or actions. Her persuasion, the very child of Ate (Agm. 385-86), forces Agamemnon to his death. Clytemestra, in fact, embodies the Ate forcibly working, upon Agamemnon's mind. Later she is compared by Cassandra to an Ate with a guileful tongue (Δίκην ἄτης 1229-30), whom Agamemnon does not suspect (Ἀνθάνειν 1228). The symbolism suggests that an infatuation still clouds Agamemnon's thinking. He falls without knowing why, owing to his senseless folly. In the latter half of the antistrophe (378-80), Agamemnon, and not Orestes, again appears to be the subject of the gnomes. A great cloud of pollution hovers over the sinner and a rumour filled with the sorrows of many declares his guilt: ταῦτα ἐπὶ κνέφας ἀνδρὶ μοῦθα πεπόταται/Και ἰναφερόν τιν' ἀχλᾶν κατὰ δώματα/Αἰτάται παλαιόντας ψάτια. The gnome recalls the first stasimon of Agamemnon, where the Chorus speak at length about the grief the Trojan war has caused. The second antistrophe (Agm. 420-436), in particular, is taken up with the sorrows that affect each home. This sorrow has led to a dangerous talk against the Atreidae (Ὄρῳ ἀτῶν φάτω 456) and curses pronounced by the people (457). These cries of sorrow are heard by the gods (461-62) and, in particular, by the Erinyes, who eventually punish those guilty of much bloodshed (463-66). The gnomes of the third antistrophe more truly represent the experience of Agamemnon than that of Orestes. The Erinyes misapply the gnomes, revealing the narrowing view which they have. Consistently they accuse Orestes of sin of which he is not guilty. They try to exact vengeance where vengeance is not due.

16. Lebeck, p.155.

17. The Furies that Cassandra sees in her vision seem to be guardians of marriage. They become outraged at the adultery of Thyestes (Agm. 1192f.). See William Whallon, Problem and Spectacle, Studies in the Oresteia (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1980), pp.54-55.

18. On the question of whether or not the vote was a tie, see Michael Gagarin, "The Vote of Athena," AJP, 96 (1975), 121-23.

19. At 690f., E R Dodds, "Notes on the Oresteia," CQ, ns. 3 (1953), 19-20, sees a contemporary reference in κακάις ἑπιμικραῖς. Athena warns her citizens not to "innovate" upon the laws (ἐπιχωρισμαντῶν 693) by polluting them with "evil infiltrations." The allusion is possibly to reforms that allowed the Zeugitae admission to the archonship, and so to the Areopagus. The Ath. Pol (26.2) indicates that this reform was passed in 458/7, the year the Oresteia was produced. The words kakais and lampron have, then, social references. Aeschylus is warning against the infiltration of common people into an exclusively aristocratic body. Political moderation to Aeschylus is neither tyranny or anarchy, that is, radical democracy, but conservative democracy, where reforms of this nature are avoided.
CONCLUSION

The reconciliation between the Erinyes and Athena symbolizes that antithesis between violence and knowledge, expressed in the law of Zeus, "learning through suffering." As Athena herself boasts, "Zeus Agoraios prevailed (ἀλλ' ἔκρατης Ζεὺς ἁγήρατας 973), and her words again reflect that paradox between violence (κράτας) and persuasion, for it is in his role of orator and persuader (ἀγάρατας) that Zeus has prevailed through Athena over the Erinyes. The trilogy has been moving towards such a resolution as we find in Prometheus, where knowledge can beneficially balance force. On the human level, this is represented through the Areopagus that deliberates before it punishes. On the spiritual level, this is symbolized by the reconciliation between Athena and the Erinyes. The situation of Prometheus is relived in Eumenides, where a reconciliation at the divine level results in a new political order for men that reflects that reconciliation. The law of "learning through suffering," which is based on Zeus' own experience, in a sense, anticipates the experience of the Erinyes, where their violence becomes balanced by Athena's wisdom.

The above example shows how the gnomes reflect the drama. Themes and images worked out in the drama are often expressed at the lyrical level in the gnomes. The link between the dramatic and the gnomic is at times very complex; whole patterns are often reproduced in the gnomes. The pattern of inversion, where the situation of Choephoroi reverses the situation of Agamemnon, is picked up in the first stasimon of Choephoroi. At other times,
the link is very simply expressed; the gnomic image of "trampling underfoot" becomes a metaphor specific to Agamemnon's sacrilege, a metaphor dramatically expressed when he tramples down the purple tapestries.

The tendency in Aeschylus to express the dramatic at the gnomic level forces us to study the gnomes in the context of the drama. In the opening episodes of *Eumenides*, the Erinyes become closely identified with the fate of Orestes. This interweaving of fates gives sense to the first stasimon; the lot refers, not to the Erinyes' office, but to their fate, a fate in store for all those who take vengeance. The gnomes and their surrounding gnomic passages cannot be separated from the dramatic action. Their meaning and significance are bound up in it. The reader feels that a gnome is true because it is found true for the drama. We know that those who trample down what is sacred are punished because Agamemnon is punished. We know that like receives like because Agamemnon's own death exemplifies this law. The gnomes, then, form an integral part of the drama, enhancing its poetic power. They reflect and anticipate all that goes on within the plays.
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