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Edited by Frederick Apthorp Paley
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From the Renaissance to the nineteenth century, Latin and Greek were compulsory subjects in almost all European universities, and most early modern scholars published their research and conducted international correspondence in Latin. Latin had continued in use in Western Europe long after the fall of the Roman empire as the lingua franca of the educated classes and of law, diplomacy, religion and university teaching. The flight of Greek scholars to the West after the fall of Constantinople in 1453 gave impetus to the study of ancient Greek literature and the Greek New Testament. Eventually, just as nineteenth-century reforms of university curricula were beginning to erode this ascendancy, developments in textual criticism and linguistic analysis, and new ways of studying ancient societies, especially archaeology, led to renewed enthusiasm for the Classics. This collection offers works of criticism, interpretation and synthesis by the outstanding scholars of the nineteenth century.

Euripides

Frederick Apthorp Paley (1815–1888) published Volume 1 of his English commentary on Euripides in 1857. It contains the Greek text of seven of Euripides's most popular plays: *Rhesus*, *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Alcestis*, *Heraclidae*, *Supplices* and *Troades*, each with an introductory essay. Paley's detailed commentary is given at the foot of each page of Greek text. It discusses Euripides' language and style, explaining difficult grammatical structures, syntax and vocabulary; poetic form and Euripides' innovative approach to composing tragedy; textual variation between manuscripts; the historical and literary context of each play; and their reception history. Paley's work greatly influenced Euripidean scholarship: for over a century it was a widely used teaching tool in schools and universities. An outstanding piece of classical scholarship and a key text in the history of Euripidean interpretation, it deserves continued consideration by future generations of scholars and students.

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Euripides

With an English Commentary

VOLUME 1

EDITED BY FREDERICK APTHORP PALEY
EURIPIDES



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BY

F. A. PALEY.

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E U R I P I D E S.

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P R E F A C E.

Celebrity of Euripides.—Reasons of it.—His simplicity of style.—Proofs of his popularity.—His enemies.—Unfairness of Aristophanes.—Of Schlegel.—The true province of Tragedy.—Euripides charged with having lowered it.—His familiar style.—His object in depicting woe.—Why displeasing to Athenians.—His common characters.—His slaves.—Political opinions.—Dislike of tyrants.—Praise of the agriculturists and the middle classes.—Whether attached to the war-party.—Alcibiades.—Passages against the demagogues.—Expedition to Sicily.—His dislike of the Spartans.—His religious views.—The soothsayers.—His scepticism.—Popular unbelief.—Socrates.—Euripides charged with atheism.—His Pantheism, and ideas of a Supreme Being.—Influence of Fortune in human affairs.—Doctrine of Necessity.—Not really an atheist.—His disbelief in the old Polytheism.—Alleged immoralities of the gods.—Their existence sometimes acknowledged.—His philosophical opinions.—Astronomy.—Pantheistic views of *Αἰθέρ*.—The rotation (*δίνη*) of the earth.—Doctrine of Mind, borrowed from Anaxagoras.—*Αἰθέρ* identified with *Ζεὺς*.—His study of physics.—The sun a red-hot mass.—His frequent use of the word *σοφός*.—The philosophizing of his characters.—Rhetorical and legal quibbles.—Dialectics.—Fondness for etymologies.—His pathos.—Melancholy temperament.—Love of tears.—Dismal views of the lot of humanity.—His occasional feebleness and misplaced pathos.—Alleged tendency to comedy.—Greek notions about falsehood and revenge.—His misogyny.—Supposed causes of it.—His distinction of good and bad women.—Invectives against the bad.—His fondness for children.—Views of married life.—Profligacy of Athenian women.—His influence in improving them.—Euripides not alone in declaiming against women.—Charges of immorality examined.—Objected doctrines explained.—His opinion of wealth.—His *Phædra* and *Medea*.—Not a sensual poet.—General tendency of his writings decidedly good.—Precepts of virtue.—His object to inculcate virtue.—His citizenship.—Proofs of his true patriotism.—Dislike of heralds, athletes, and fops.—Friendship of Socrates.—Causes of Aristophanes' enmity.—Euripides' allusions to it.—Rival of Aeschylus.—Relative merit of Euripides.—Design of present edition.—Porsonian school of critics.—Porson, Elmsley, and Hermann.—The Scholiasts.—Adaptation of notes to the wants of youthful students.

Not one of the ancient Greek Poets, with the single exception of Homer, appears to have enjoyed a more general and a more lasting popularity than Euripides. By the common consent of mankind in every age Homer stands supreme. He alone me-

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rited the glorious title of *The Poet*; he was the *divine* Homer¹, and from him the Tragic authors, not less than the rest of his more direct imitators, derived the themes which their art has invested as it were with a second immortality². Viewed in the aspect under which the Greeks themselves seem to have regarded him, he is (to use a simile not strictly in accordance with their physical theories,) as the sun in the centre of the system, round whom the other poets, little and great, and at very unequal distances, revolve, borrowing their own splendour from his unapproachable rays, and diffusing a milder radiance from the light of his eternal wisdom. Although Aeschylus and Sophocles have ever been the favourite study of the learned, and have been held by competent critics as second only to Homer, yet there are good reasons for believing that Euripides was the more familiar and cherished companion of the many in the Republic of ancient Literature, as he appears also to have been in the middle ages, wherever the Greek language was studied at all³. At the present day, though the taste of modern scholars has rather gone against him, not a few may be found, who, either because he appears to them more easily intelligible, or from the greater tenderness and pathos of his poetry, prefer him to either of his competitors in the tragic art. When Aristophanes⁴, comparing

¹ δ θεῖος Ὅμηρος, Ar. Ran. 1034.

² The Epic Cycle was a collection of poems by various authors and with several distinctive titles, but forming in the whole a sequel or continuation, or rather perhaps an expansion, of the Homeric poems. It was from the Cycle, rather than directly from the Iliad or the Odyssey, that the subjects for tragedies were so frequently selected. Thus, the *Orestea*, of Aeschylus, the *Philoctetes*, *Electra*, and *Ajax* of Sophocles, the *Troades* and *Helena* of our poet, with many more, were taken from the Cycle. But the Tragic writers freely borrowed both words and sentiments, as well as imagery, from Homer himself, and they did so avowedly.

³ The Greek language, unlike the Latin, was little known in Europe from the subversion of the Western Empire till the end of the fourteenth century, when it seems to have been first introduced into Italy by a Byzantine, Emanuel Chrysoloras. It was not till after the Council of Florence (1439) and the capture of Constantinople by the Turks (1453) that the study of Greek became at all common in the West. Our present Greek MSS., with rare exceptions, were written either by Byzantine scholars, or in Greek monasteries in the East. See Hallam's *Middle Ages*, Vol. iii. chap. ix. Part ii.

⁴ Ran. 1413.

Aeschylus with Euripides, makes Dionysus, as the judge, to say

τὸν μὲν γὰρ ἡγοῦμαι σοφὸν, τῶ δ' ἥδομαι,

he not only expresses the opinion of his contemporaries on their respective merits, but he supplies us with the precise grounds on which the reputation of Euripides rests. He is, to speak familiarly, "pleasant reading." There is less of mystic theology, of obscure and involved diction, we might almost say, less of *Mind* in him, than in the other two Tragic authors. It is not meant by this, that he was less thoughtful, or had less of inventive genius than they; but that his language is simpler, his doctrines less recondite, his ideas more tangible, more on a level with ordinary comprehension, his characters more like those of men in general. At the same time, the student of Euripides must be warned, that there is no greater delusion than to imagine that this author is, absolutely or even comparatively, *very easy*. No really good scholar, no careful critic or grammarian, has ever found him so; and therefore, if any young persons should be inclined to congratulate themselves on the supposed facility with which they can construe and understand his plays, let them learn to be very suspicious of their own powers, for then they will have a much better chance of really doing justice to their author⁵. There is an epigram in the Anthology wherein his style is aptly described as

λείη μὲν γὰρ ἰδεῖν καὶ ἐπίκροτος· εἰ δὲ τις αὐτὴν
 εἰσβαίνει, χαλεποῦ τρηχυτέρῃ σκόλοπος.

At first sight, his meaning often seems clearer than it will appear on a much more attentive and critical perusal; and the reason of this is, that he has a certain fluency or facility of *words*, which is deceptive, unless we deeply consider all that they are intended to convey. His dexterity of expression⁶ is

⁵ Joshua Barnes, in his quaint way, says (Vit. Eurip. fol. xix), "Stylus Euripidis adeo facilis, pervius et apertus legentibus apparet, ut cuius videatur nullo negotio in imitationem trahendus. Quod si illum assequi putes, eodem tempore ventos pugno comprimes, solem ferula e coelo tolles, Homero carmen eripies, clavam Herculi extorquebis et fulmen Jovi."

⁶ κομψευριστικῶς, Ar. Equit. 18.

apt to hurry us on faster than his train of thought. That Euripides has always been the most popular writer may be inferred, (apart from anecdotes and direct testimonies to that effect,) not only from the much greater number of his tragedies and of the fragments that have been preserved to us, but from the more frequent mention of his name and reference to his writings and opinions which we meet with in Greek authors, especially the grammarians and the philosophical essayists of a later age⁷. The Romans too were very partial to the *γνώμαι* of Euripides. The very nature of his plays, so full of feeling, so touching to the heart, so deeply imbued with sympathy for the failings and sufferings of humanity⁸, was such as to secure a large share of admiration from all who themselves know what it is to feel.

“ Mollissima corda
 Humano generi dare se Natura fatetur,
 Quae lacrimas dedit.”

Yet, with such undoubted claims upon our esteem, it is nevertheless true, that while neither Aeschylus nor Sophocles has ever had any serious detractors, it has been the fate of Euripides, if he has had many warm friends, also to have met with some bitter enemies. Now much of this odium is unquestionably due, not to any real faults of his own, but to the irresistible wit and raillery of Aristophanes, who, whether he had any personal quarrel with Euripides, or simply disliked his innovations in the old tragedy, has so severely and unceasingly satirized him, that the very name of Euripides almost unconsciously connects itself with the idea of a butt set up for the

⁷ Müller remarks (*Literature of Ancient Greece*, p. 361) that “it is just because it is so easy to extract sententious passages from his plays, and to collect them in *anthologies*, that the later writers of antiquity, who were better able to appreciate the part than the whole,—the pretty and clever passages than the general plan of the work,—have so greatly liked and admired this poet.”

⁸ This alone is sufficient to raise Euripides above the standard both of his contemporaries and of his predecessors. Generally speaking, Grecian and Roman literature is alike devoid of that spirit of true humanity which perhaps can only proceed, as a principle of action, from the Christian doctrine of the duty of love to our enemies. The Greeks were sentimental, but not therefore humane. A reflecting mind is constantly struck with the near approach which Euripides makes to many truths which we hold sacred. It is a fine verse which says (Suppl. 768), *τί δ' αἰσχρὸν ἀνθρώποισι τὰλλήλων κακά;*

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UNFAIRNESS OF ARISTOPHANES.

IX

arrows of ridicule. Unfortunately, most persons (at all events young persons) are more partial to what is merely amusing than to either deep thought or the exercise of independent judgment,—and we are all naturally more disposed to join others in blaming, than to stand forward in defence of disputed merit. It is to be feared that many, even up to the present day, have laid far too much stress on the flippant jokes of Aristophanes. Some, like A. W. Von Schlegel, the German critic, have adopted the most disparaging tone and language in speaking of Euripides, and have closely followed the great master of Comedy⁹ in his specific attacks upon the Tragic poet. Without calling in question the genius of Aristophanes, nor his competence to judge of Tragic art, (of which indeed he has given convincing proofs in his amazing versatility of composition,) we must remember that the cleverest men are not always the most exempt from prejudice. What we doubt is simply his fairness. He probably foresaw that Euripides was becoming a favourite with the people¹⁰, and (from what motive is uncertain, though many motives may be plausibly suggested) was determined at all hazards to laugh him down. And certainly it was not in human nature,—at least, not in Athenian nature,—to withstand the ludicrous figure which the poor poet is made to assume in the *Acharnians*, where, seated between heaps of tragic tatters, he exclaims,

⁹ “In him (Euripides) he has exposed with infinite cleverness and good sense the quibbling sophistry, the rhetorical display, and philosophical cant; the immorality and debauching softness, the excitement of mere animal emotion,” &c. &c. (Schlegel, Fifth Lecture, in *Theatre of the Greeks*, p. 232.) Against such language as this, and generally against the flippant and sarcastic tone which this critic adopts in his analysis of the plots of Euripides’ dramas, and in comparing him with the other tragic writers, the present editor ventures to protest. This *Greek Theatre* wants a thorough sweeping out; much that is behind the critical knowledge of the day (e. g. “*Canones Dawesiani*”) might be cut out; but at all events, let not young students be set against the study of Euripides by such preposterous mis-statements as Schlegel’s.

¹⁰ It is clear, from the whole tenour of that amusing passage in the *Clouds*, v. 1364, &c., that Euripides was the *fashionable* poet of the day. Strepsiades there complains that his son, such are his new-fangled notions, when challenged to sing an ode of old Simonides or at least to recite a passage from Aeschylus, churlishly refused to comply; and being then bidden ἀλλὰ πούτων λέξαι τι τῶν νεωτέρων, ἔπ’ ἔστι τὰ σοφὰ πάντα, he forthwith delivers a βῆσις from Euripides, which the virtuous and modest Aristophanes, as a matter of course, represents as monstrously immoral.

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X CHARGE OF LOWERING TRAGEDY.

as he parts with fragment after fragment to the importunate Dicaeopolis¹,

ἄνθρωπ', ἀφαιρήσει με τὴν τραγῳδίαν.

Nor can we withhold a smile at the frequent and witty travesties of his verses, nor at the dissection of his prologues in *The Frogs*, nor at the part which he takes in dressing up his relative Mnesilochus as a woman, to speak in his defence before the assembled females at the Thesmophoria. Still we must be just, and dismiss from our minds all such slanderous buffoonery², if we wish to form a right estimate of one who was the intimate friend of Socrates, and whom the great Aristotle has not hesitated to call "the most tragic of all the poets."

Now if it be admitted (as most critics seem to maintain, though the proposition may surely be questioned) that the true province of Tragedy is to treat of Gods and Heroes, rather than of men, or at least to elevate men above the standard of reality, for the sake of representing an ideal virtue³—if it be incumbent

¹ Ach. v. 464. The point of this passage is to ridicule the *πειθῶ* or persuasive power often spoken of by Euripides.

² We say *slanderous*, for there is every reason to believe that Aristophanes cared nothing about truth in attacking Euripides and his friend Socrates. For instance, it is nearly certain that Euripides was *not* the son of a green-groceress (*λαχανοπωλῆγίας*) as we are so often led to believe. We suspect that some nick-name in allusion to his art furnished the hint for attacking him on the score of his birth. See below, p. xi, note 7.

³ Aristotle says in his Treatise on Poetry, that "the aim of Comedy is to exhibit men worse than they are, that of Tragedy, better than they are." But this applies perhaps to what *is* rather than to what ought to be. To define the respective departments or proper provinces of each in this way, is to deprive the drama of its original mimetic feature, reality. At the conclusion of the same Treatise he observes that Tragedy is for the people, and being the most vulgar kind of imitation, is inferior to epic poetry. He seems, in saying this, to quote an objection in which he does not himself share. Perhaps however it is a sound criticism for all that. The ideal nature of Greek Tragedy is mainly due to the accident of its connexion with religion; it is not essential to it, considered in its largest sense. Such however is by our modern scholars considered the orthodox doctrine. Thus Müller says (Hist. Lit. p. 296), that "ancient tragedy departs *entirely* from ordinary life; its character is in the highest degree ideal." Schlegel, in his Third Lecture, also maintains that "the aim of Tragic poetry was *altogether* to separate her ideals of humanity from the soil of Nature, to which the real human being is fettered as a vassal of the glebe" (Theatre of the Greeks, p. 178).

That Euripides did not take these extravagantly high views of tragedy is certain; whether he was wrong in his notions of it, is not quite so easily proved.

on a tragic poet to maintain a grand and sonorous and lofty style of diction adapted to such a subject⁴—if the Doctrines of Fate, and Necessity, and Divine Retribution, be essential ingredients in a true tragic plot; in a word, if mysticism be a necessary part of religion;—then, and then only, must Euripides be accused of having *lowered* tragedy, by bringing it to a level better suited to the feelings of the populace than were the sublimer aspirations of his predecessors. Casting off much of the old epic guise, and discarding for the most part quaint and obsolete words, he preferred to use a well-selected vocabulary from the polite Attic dialect of the day⁵. Colloquial, to a certain extent, his style undoubtedly is, and was so of necessity from the familiar and easy manner in which his characters argue and converse⁶. In this sense he certainly did *lower* Tragedy. He took it down from its stilts, and made it walk, we might almost say, even without the high-soled Cothurnus. Such is the boast put into his own mouth by Aristophanes⁷,

ἴσχυρα μὲν πρῶτιστον αὐτὴν καὶ τὸ βᾶρος ἀφείλον
 ἐπυλλοῖσι καὶ περιπάτοις καὶ τευτλίοισι λευκοῖς,
 χυλὸν διδοὺς στωμυλμάτων.

In the opinion of many, he even vulgarized it. He not only

⁴ *ῥήματα ἐπαχθῆ* Ran. 940. *Ibid.* v. 1060, εἰκὸς τοὺς ἡμιθέους τοῖς ῥήμασι μείζουσι κρῆσθαι, says Aeschylus in defence of his own grandiloquence.

⁵ Aristot. Rhet. iii. 2, p. 1404, κλέπτεται δ' εὖ, ἂν τις ἐκ τῆς εἰωθυίας διαλέκτου ἐκλέγων συντιθῆ, ὕπερ Εὐριπίδης ποιεῖ καὶ ὑπέδειξε πρῶτος. Longinus speaks of his "common words," *δημῶδη ὄνματα*, xl. 2.

⁶ In the *Ion*, vv. 264 and 934 seqq., we have examples of unbroken monostich dialogue of a hundred lines each. Aeschylus seldom exceeds twenty lines; Sophocles seldom thirty. His longest *στιχομυθία* is fifty verses, *Electra* 1176–1226.

⁷ Ran. 941. The joke about *τευτλίοισι* is not commonly appreciated. It is clear from the parody on *Alcest.* 367 in *Acharn.* 893,

μηδὲ γὰρ θανῶν ποτε
 σοῦ χωρὶς εἶην ἐντετευτλανωμένης,

that Euripides had somewhere in his plays used the too common and vulgar word *τεῦτλον*, *beet-root*. Cf. Pac. 1012, εἶτα μονωδεῖν ἐκ Μηδείας, Ὀλόμαν, ὀλόμαν, ἀποχρηθθεῖς τὰς ἐν τεύτλοισι λοχουομένας. Even supposing with the Schol. that the *Medea* of Melanthius was here parodied, the indefinite words ἐκ Μηδείας would mislead many to suppose the play of Euripides was meant. See Elmsley on *Med.* 96. We think this also throws some light on the taunt that he was the son of a herb-seller.

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took his themes from every-day life⁸, but he delighted to represent the great fallen from grandeur to poverty, and even to beggary. To bring a king or an unsuccessful general before the eyes of the people, clad in squalid garments, or prostrate in the dust bewailing his unhappy lot, or with muffled face shedding tears of anguish and remorse⁹,—such were his favourite devices for exciting compassion. Now all this, especially when carried somewhat to excess, may have been offensive to those who, already inspired with the lightsome gaieties of a semi-religious festival, frequented the theatre for the gratification of eyes and ears, rather than to be reminded of the common lot of humanity,—care, suffering, and death¹⁰. They did not like to see those famous heroes of old, with whose names they were accustomed to associate all that was brave and chivalrous and resolute, giving way to effeminate lamentations¹. But it is perfectly reasonable to suppose that Euripides did this from design rather from a mere morbid sentimentality, as his detractors have generally assumed. Men, and especially Athenian men, had to be taught a great moral truth, which Athenian pride was always slow to learn, and which it required not only many bitter experiences, but the united efforts of a Socrates and a Plato even partially to inculcate. That truth was, that man is not born for unmixed happiness and uninterrupted success. It was a salutary, if an unwelcome lesson to the proudest nation of Hellas to learn, that reverses were possible; and if the same idea appears somewhat too constantly insisted on and too querulously repeated, this may have been done from the difficulty of impressing such a light-hearted audience with a just view of the instability of Fortune.

⁸ Ran. 959, οἰκεία πράγματ' εἰσάγων, οἷς χρώμεθ', οἷς ζύνεσμεν.

⁹ Adrastus in the *Suppliant Women*, Menelaus in the *Helena*, Hecuba in the play of that name, and in the *Trojan Captives*.

¹⁰ On this consideration we can more fully and correctly understand the resentment of the Athenians against Phrynichus for his tragedy called *The Capture of Miletus*. See Herod. vi. 21.

¹ Sophocles even makes Hercules apologize for his tears, Trach. 1071. His how- ever, like those of Philoctetes, were extorted by bodily pain; which is altogether different from the grief of disappointment or humbled pride.

But it is not only through the mouths of heroes and heroines, nor even of the chorus, whose proper department it was, that Euripides conveys his moral instructions. For this end he makes use of slaves, servants, nurses, messengers, and attendants.

ἔλεγεν ἡ γυνή τέ μοι χῶ δοῦλος οὐδέν ἦττον,
 χῶ δεσπότης χῆ παρθένος χῆ γραῦς ἄν².

And it is not to be denied, that he sometimes makes such persons utter reflections which are too deep, too full of sophistry, perhaps even, of virtue, for their natural character. But in this also there is reason to believe the poet had a special object in view. His ideas of humanity were large; he saw and felt that the poor slave was a fellow man, and he could not bear to see him trampled on, despised, and as it were thrust without the social pale. He ever reminds us that a slave is still a man,—it may be, a good one,—and with the feelings, the attachments, the capabilities of a man. He delights to record their fidelity to their masters, their sympathy in the trials of life;

χρηστοῖσι δούλοις ξυμφορὰ τὰ δεσποτῶν
 κακῶς πίτνοντα, καὶ φρενῶν ἀνθάπτεται³,—

their gratitude for kindness and considerate treatment,

καί μ' ἔφερβε σὸς δόμος,
 πένητα μὲν, χρῆσθαι δὲ γενναῖον φίλοις⁴,—

and their pride in bearing the character of honourable men.

ἐγὼ μὲν εἶην, κεῖ πέφυχ' ὅμως λάτρις,
 ἐν τοῖσι γενναίοισιν ἠριθμημένος
 δούλοισι, τοῦνομ' οὐκ ἔχων ἐλευθέρων,
 τὸν νοῦν δέ,

is the aspiration of a faithful servant of the Atridae in the *Helena*⁵. So in the *Ion*⁶,

ἐν γάρ τι τοῖς δούλοισιν αἰσχύνην φέρει,
 τοῦνομα τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντα τῶν ἐλευθέρων
 οὐδεὶς κακίων δούλος, ὅστις ἐσθλὸς ᾗ.

In the *Alcestis*⁷ he makes especial mention of the slaves

² Ran. 949. ³ Med. 54. ⁴ Orest. 869. ⁵ v. 728. ⁶ v. 854.

⁷ V. 193. Yet some rather severe remarks on slaves may be found in Frag. 49, 50, 53, 59, 84. Of course, many of them were bad and despicable characters.

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SLAVES.

when the whole household is taking a sorrowful leave of their mistress. She shook hands with each of them, and not one of them was too despicable (*κακός*) to receive a kind word and to return it. "A good slave," he said in the *Melanippe*⁸, "is none the worse for the name of slave."

δοῦλον γὰρ ἐσθλὸν τοῦνομ' οὐ διαφθερεῖ,
 πολλοὶ δ' ἄμεινους εἰσι τῶν ἐλευθέρων.

Similarly in the *Phrixus*⁹,

πολλοῖσι δούλοις τοῦνομ' αἰσχρὸν, ἣ δὲ φρῆν
 τῶν οὐχὶ δούλων ἐστ' ἐλευθερωτέρα.

He allows them to reason, to advise, to suggest; and he even makes them philosophize on the follies and the indiscretions of their superiors¹.

In thus making use of the character even of slaves, he has certainly shown much boldness in departing from the stiff proprieties of the ancient drama. It was a courageous step, for it was one that was certain to lead him into obloquy. Let us however try to dismiss from our minds the notion, inculcated from our earliest school-life, that this was so much derogation from the *dignity* of tragedy. Humanity itself is a dignified subject; its very frailties may be made so in the hands of a great artist; and that Euripides has done this, let us think it not unreasonable to believe.

As might be expected in a man of his genius, and in one who was conscious of exercising great influence as a teacher of the people², his philosophical, religious, and political opinions are clearly defined and plainly and fearlessly expressed. In regard to the last, he was a partisan of the moderate and constitutional party, equally opposed to the tyranny of absolute rulers, and the still worse tyranny of overbearing demagogues. His inclinations would seem to have been rather against the side of the aristocracy; for he frequently speaks of the worthlessness of mere wealth or birth (*εὐγένεια*) without sense and wisdom.

⁸ Frag. 506.

¹ E. g. in Hippol. 88 seqq.

⁹ Frag. 823.

² See Ran. 1420.

POLITICAL OPINIONS.

XV

κακῶς ὄλονται πάντες, οἳ τυραννίδι
 χαίρουσιν, ὀλίγη τ' ἐν πόλει μοναρχία·
 τοῦλεύθερον γὰρ ὄνομα παντὸς ἄξιον,
 κὰν σμίκερ' ἔχη τις, μεγάλ' ἔχειν νομίζεται³.

The life of a *τύραννος* he considered by no means enviable;

δημότης ἂν εὐτυχίης
 ζῆν ἂν θέλωμι μᾶλλον ἢ τύραννος ὢν,
 φῶ τοὺς πονηροὺς ἡδονὴ φίλους ἔχειν,
 ἐσθλοὺς δὲ μισεῖ καταθανεῖν φοβούμενος⁴.

The position of his subjects he thus severely describes in a single verse,

τὰ βαρβάρων γὰρ δοῦλα πάντα πλὴν ἑνός⁵.

But on the other hand he had nothing to say in favour of the unbridled licence of the mob.

ἔταν γὰρ ἡβῆ δῆμος εἰς ὄργην πεσὼν,
 ὅμοιον ὥστε πῦρ κατασβέσαι λάβρον⁶.

In the *Iphigenia at Aulis*⁷,

τὸ πολὺ γὰρ δεῖνδν κακόν.

Again in the *Phaethon*⁸,

ἐν τοῖσι μῶροις τοῦτ' ἐγὼ κρίνω βροτῶν,
 ὅστις πατήρ ὢν παισὶ μὴ φρονούσιν εἰδ
 ἢ καὶ πολίταις παραδίδωσ' ἐξουσίαν.

He consistently taught that the true source of power was the just influence of the middle classes, and he especially advocated the cause of the agriculturists, probably from a desire that they should be a check on the more violent *ἄστοι* in the public assembly. The former, it is clear from Aristophanes, (and indeed, from the very nature of their occupation,) were the supporters of the peace-party. It is to them that the successful effort is attributed in hauling up the buried *Εἰρήνη*, (which was doubtless represented by a wooden statue⁹.)

³ Frag. 276.

⁴ Ion 625. Compare Hippol. 1014. Suppl. 429,

οὐδὲν τυράννου δυσμενέστερον πόλει, &c.

⁵ Helen. 276.

⁶ Orest. 696.

⁷ V. 1357.

⁸ Frag. 767.

⁹ Pax 511. So also the rustic Dicaeopolis in the *Acharnians*. This is one of the

οἱ τοὶ γεωργοὶ τοῦργον ἐξέγκουσι, κάλλος οὐδεῖς.

Thus he speaks of the *αὐτουργοὶ* with marked praise both in the *Electra*¹ and the *Orestes*², as the party

οἴπερ καὶ μόνου σώζουσι γῆν.

And elsewhere³ he most clearly states this opinion ;—

*τριῶν δὲ μοιρῶν ἧ'ν μέσφ' σώζει πόλεις,
 κόσμον φυλάσσοι' ὕντιν' ἂν τάξῃ πόλις.*

So in the *Plisthenes*⁴,

*μηδ' ἄνδρα δῆμῳ πιστὸν ἐκβάλλῃς ποτὲ,
 μηδ' αἰεὶ καιροῦ μεῖζον· οὐ γὰρ ἀσφαλὲς,
 μή σοι τύραννος λαμπρὸς ἐξ ἄστοῦ φανῆ.*

We are told⁵ that the poet was attached to Alcibiades and the war-party. It does not seem easy to reconcile this with his frequent praises of peace,

Εἰρήνη μὲν ἐμοὶ γ' ἀρέσκει⁶,

and in the *Cresphontes*⁷,

*Εἰρήνη βαθύπλουτε καὶ
 καλλίστα μακάρων θεῶν,*

nor with his condemnation⁸ of the young and hot-headed aspirants who, like Alcibiades,

*πολέμους ἀξάνουσι' ἄνευ δίκης
 φθείροντες ἄστούς.*

His sentiments on the subject are contained in the following remarkable words⁹, which, although put in the mouth of the Theban herald, are not replied to by Theseus, as would have been the case had it been the object of Euripides to expose the arguments of the peace-party.

“Hope,” he observes, “has the worst consequences to men, in

many proofs, (and indeed, a very conclusive one,) that Euripides was no partisan of the war-party.

¹ V. 380 seqq.

² V. 920, compared with Suppl. 420.

³ Suppl. 244.

⁴ Frag. 620.

⁵ Theatre of the Greeks, p. 98.

⁶ Heracl. 371.

⁷ Frag. 453.

⁸ Suppl. 233.

⁹ Suppl. 479—493.

that it sets many cities to fighting, leading their passions into excesses. For when war is brought before the votes of the city, no one any longer reckons on his own death, but turns this disaster aside upon some other; whereas, if *Death* were in men's eyes at the time of voting, Hellas would never go on ruining itself with this mad love of the spear. Now we all of us know which is the better of two propositions, the good and the bad; and how much better peace is than war for mankind; peace, which in the first place is most friendly to the Muses, and hostile to lamentations; which rejoices in a numerous offspring, and delights in wealth. All these blessings, wicked that we are, we throw to the winds, and take up war by choice; and so man enslaves his fellow man if weaker than himself, and city enslaves city."

Again he says in the same play¹,

*πόλεις τ' ἔχουσαι διὰ λόγου κάμψαι κακῶ,
 φόνοφ καθαιρείσθ', οὐ λόγῳ, τὰ πράγματα.*

And similarly²,

*ὦ ταλαίπωροι βροτῶν,
 τί κτᾶσθε λόγχα, καὶ κατ' ἀλλήλων φόνους
 τίθεσθε; παύσασθ', ἀλλὰ λήξαντες πόνων
 ἕστη φυλάσσεσθ' ἥσυχοι μεθ' ἡσύχων.*

Nor is he less explicit on this subject in another play³,

φεύγειν μὲν οὖν χρὴ πόλεμον, ὅστις εὖ φρονεῖ.

And how, we may ask, can his alleged attachment to Alcibiades be reconciled with his reply to the question of Dionysus⁴ on this very subject?

ΔΙ. *πρῶτον μὲν οὖν περὶ Ἀλκιβιάδου τίν' ἔχετον
 γνώμην ἐκάτερος; ἢ πόλις γὰρ δυστοκεῖ.*
 ΕΥΡ. *μισῶ πολίτην, ὅστις ὠφελεῖν πάτραν
 βραδὺς φανεῖται, μεγάλα δὲ βλάπτειν ταχύς.*

Surely such passages as these prove that in the war-question he agreed with Aristophanes. Both lived in the troublous times of the Peloponnesian war, and both were alike interested in its speedy termination. It was the demagogue, the ambitious

¹ V. 748.

² V. 949.

³ Troad. 400.

⁴ Ran. 1422.

aspirant to office, the man of lost credit and broken fortunes,
 who wished for its continuance,—

ὁ μὲν ὅπως στρατηλατῆ,
 ὁ δ' ὡς ἑβρίζη δύναμιν εἰς χεῖρας λαβῶν,
 ἄλλος δὲ κέρδους οὐνεκ', οὐκ ἀποσκοπῶν
 τὸ πλῆθος, εἴ τι βλάπτεται πάσχον τάδε⁵.

As the favourite of Socrates, Alcibiades may have been noticed by the poet; and it is said by Plutarch that he wrote an ode to celebrate a victory gained by him at Olympia. But there is not a shadow of proof that politically Euripides was attached to his principles, the leading feature of which seems to have been conceit and self-aggrandizement. In truth, there is some considerable probability that the very passage last quoted (Suppl. 232—7) was directly aimed at the mischievous ambition of Alcibiades, for this (B.C. 421) was exactly the time when Alcibiades commenced his prominent political career. But further: Cleon was the very life and soul of the war party. Now it was through this man's influence that the friend and preceptor of Euripides, Anaxagoras, was banished from Athens. How then could Euripides have favoured Cleon's views? Or, if he did, why does he so often speak⁶ against the bad influence of demagogues?

But we are also told⁷ that the chorus in *Troad.* 794,

Μελισσοτρόφου Σαλαμίνος
 ὦ βασιλεῦ Τελαμών, κτλ.,

was written to encourage the expedition to Sicily (undertaken the same year in which that play was acted,) “by recalling the

⁵ Suppl. 234.

⁶ E. g. Suppl. 412. *Hipp.* 436. 989. *Bacch.* 270. *Orest.* 772,

δεινὸν οἱ πολλοὶ κακουργοῦς ὅταν ἔχῃσι προστάτας.

Ibid. v. 907,

ὅταν γὰρ ἡδὺς τοῖς λόγοις, φρονῶν κακῶς,
 πείθῃ τὸ πλῆθος, τῇ πόλει κακὸν μέγα.

Hec. 254,

ἀχάριστον ὑμῶν σπέρμ', ὅσοι δημηγόρους
 ζηλοῦτε τιμάς.

Cleon himself seems alluded to in Suppl. 236, 880.

⁷ *Theatre of the Greeks*, p. 99.]

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EXPEDITION TO SICILY.

xix

recollection of the success of a similar expedition, undertaken in the mythical ages." But, on carefully perusing the ode, we doubt not the reader will come to the conclusion, that such an inference is only the vaguest surmise. However, in that play⁸ there is a clear allusion to Sicily. Is it then of such a disparaging nature as to encourage the Athenians to suppose the island could easily be reduced? It is exactly the reverse. "I hear," he says, "that the land of Hephaestus opposite to Carthage is celebrated for its prizes of valour." Truly an original way of inducing his countrymen to invade it.

But there is another passage which seems more strongly than any other to prove that the poet had no share whatever in promoting the expedition against Sicily. The *Helena* was brought out in Ol. xci. 4, or B.C. 413, in the Archonship of Cleocritus⁹. Now in the autumn of the very same year (Thucyd. viii. 1, fin.) the terrible defeat of that expedition occurred. If the *Helena* was acted in the spring of that year, (at the Great Dionysia,) of course the poet could not have written in direct reference to the disaster. But some place the *Helena* as late as B.C. 412¹, in which case he must have shared in the general consternation. Now, if Euripides had really advocated this war, and had not yet heard of its failure, was he likely to write of it in the following strain?²

ἄφρονες, ὅσοι τὰς ἀρετὰς πολέμῳ
 κτᾶσθε δορὸς ἀλκαίου τε λόγ-
 -χαις καταπαυόμενοι πό-
 -θους θανάτων ἀμαθῶς.
 εἰ γὰρ ἄμιλλα κρινεῖ νῦν
 αἵματος, οὐποτ' ἔρις
 λείψει κατ' ἀνθρώπων πόλεις.

If, on the other hand, he had heard of the defeat of his countrymen, such expressions are clearly the sentiments of one who had disliked the affair from the first, not of one who had used every effort to support it.

⁸ V. 220.

⁹ Hermann, Praef. ad Hel. p. viii.

¹ Theatre of the Greeks, p. 139. It was brought out together with the *Andromeda*.

² Hel. 1151.

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XX

DISLIKE OF THE SPARTANS.

That he disliked the Spartans, both for their national character and national customs³, is evident; but that does not prove that he wished to prosecute the war against them. At the present day there are many who persuade themselves that they dislike the illustrious French Nation, but who at the same time would be extremely sorry to measure swords with them. The passage in the *Andromache*⁴ is well known,

ὃ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποισιν ἔχθιστοι βροτῶν,
 Σπάρτης ἔνοικοι, δόλια βουλευτήρια,
 ψευδῶν ἄνακτες, μηχανορράφοι κακῶν,
 ἔλικτὰ κούδεν ὑγιᾶς, ἀλλὰ πᾶν περίξ
 φρονοῦντες, ἀδίκως εὐτυχεῖτ' ἀν' Ἑλλάδα.

It is probable enough that both in that play and in the *Orestes* the character of Menelaus was depicted in an odious light on purpose to show his feelings against Sparta. The *Heraclidae* and the *Suppliants* were written to remind that ungrateful state of benefits formerly received from Athens, and to blame Argos for joining them in a league against the city of Pallas. But no logical conclusion can be drawn from these facts, that Euripides either secretly or openly advocated the continuance of the war.

There is no doubt that Euripides, in common with most of the Ionic philosophers, of whom his master Anaxagoras was one, despised in his heart the popular religion. The tendency of all philosophy is to make men think for themselves, and to break through and boldly cast aside the fetters of traditional belief, as soon as the reason refuses to be enchained by external authority. Euripides indeed did more than this; he did not delight, as some do, merely in boasting of his own superior wisdom and more enlightened views, but he anxiously wished to elevate his hearers above the low standard of the popular theology. He made use indeed of that theology, and to a considerable extent, but only as a conventional formula, a *πρόσχημα τῆς τραγωδίας*, and in compliance with the established laws and customs which regulated the scenic exhibitions. On this matter Schlegel⁵ is undoubtedly right, though he expresses himself, as usual, in

³ *Androm.* 597.

⁴ *V.* 445.

⁵ *Theatre of the Greeks*, p. 227.

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the language of prejudice. "We may distinguish in him," he says, "a twofold personage: the *poet*, whose works were dedicated to a religious solemnity, who stood under the patronage of religion, and therefore was bound in his turn to honour it; and the would-be-philosopher *sophist*, who studied to overlay those fabulous marvels of religion from which he derived the subjects of his plays, with his own sceptical and liberalizing opinions."—"He could not," says K. O. Müller⁶, "bring his philosophical convictions with regard to the nature of God and his relation to mankind, into harmony with the contents of the old legends, nor could he pass over in silence their incongruities. Hence it is that he is driven to the strange necessity of carrying on a sort of polemical discussion with the very materials and subjects of which he had to treat." Well, let us grant all this, and more. Euripides may in his heart have had a profound contempt for the popular religion. Still, it is preposterous to convert this into an accusation against him. It would be more fair to say, that he must have been a very great man indeed to have seen so much more of truth than other great men of his age. Of the soothsayers in particular Euripides often speaks with surprising boldness and severity; whereas Sophocles invariably treats their predictions with respect, and even with awe. But Euripides regards them as powerless to declare the inscrutable ways of Providence, and says it is silly (*εὔηθες*) to suppose birds can benefit men⁷, and that no man ever grew rich through their predictions, while he continued in idleness. He defines the *μάντις* to be one

ὅς ὀλίγ' ἀληθῆ, πολλὰ δὲ ψευδῆ λέγει
 τυχῶν⁸,

and tells men that they should pray to the gods and leave the art of divination alone.

τοὺς ὑπὲρ κἄρα
 φοιτῶντας ὄρνις πόλλ' ἐγὼ χαίρειν λέγω⁹.

⁶ Literature of Ancient Greece, p. 358.

⁷ Hel. 747. Electr. 400, βροτῶν δὲ μαντικὴν χαίρειν λέω.

⁸ Iph. A. 957.

⁹ Hippol. 1058.

He affirms that it is a science of mere guess-work, and therefore only empiricism at best.

γνώμη δ' ἀρίστη μάντις ἢ τ' εὐβουλία¹.

μάντις δ' ἄριστος ὅστις εἰκάζει καλῶς².

He treats the vulgar notions about Zeus, Apollo, and the rest, with contempt, almost with ridicule. He wonders that men can put their trust in beings to whom every crime is attributed by the very mythology whereby their existence is declared. So bold and even obtrusive is his scepticism, that it seems as if he wished to add all the weight of his influence on the side of his master Anaxagoras,—a great man, and for his age a great natural philosopher, the friend of Pericles and the founder of a new school of natural religion,—who had been fined and banished from Athens for his free-thinking, it is said³ through the influence of Cleon. It is remarkable that neither Aeschylus nor Sophocles supply a single hint of their distrust in the Homeric gods. Probably they dared not, perhaps they did not wish, or did not think it expedient to do so. But even in the time of Sophocles and Euripides the old polytheism was well-nigh worn threadbare⁴. The court of Areopagus no longer took cognizance of every trifling offence against religion, and the public mind, trained by the Sophists, was ready to embrace more reasonable views on the nature of the Supreme Being. Diagoras of Melos had paved the broad road of unbelief, and many Athenians had already trod thereon⁵. Socrates himself, with that consummate wisdom which he always shows in his disputations, did not openly assail the popular belief in the gods. That he was nevertheless condemned on the charge of teaching new doctrines, is not of itself any proof that the Athenians in general were sincerely attached to the old. The most immoral

¹ Hel. 757.

² Frag. 944.

³ Laertius, Vit. Anaxag. ii. 14. Plut. Vit. Pericl. c. 32.

⁴ Aristophanes makes Strepsiades say (*Clouds*, v. 821) that to believe in Zeus is φρονεῖν ἀρχαϊκά. Nor does the evident irony of the expression affect the testimony. Compare Equit. 32.

⁵ In the *Clouds* (v. 830) the sarcastic expression Σωκράτης ὁ Μήλιος proves what sort of tendency was attributed to the philosopher's teaching.

CHARGE OF ATHEISM.

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and careless are often those who show the greatest zeal in putting down all who differ from them. Aristophanes, of course, classes the poet and the philosopher as fellow infidels, though with singular inconsistency he every where ridicules the gods with a boldness and a flippancy immeasurably worse than their scepticism.

ποιους θεους ὁμει σύ; πρῶτον γὰρ θεοὶ
 ἡμῖν νόμισμα' οὐκ ἐστίν,

Socrates is made to say in the *Clouds*⁶; and when Euripides is asked⁷ to offer a preparatory prayer to the gods, he replies, "No thank you."

ἕτεροι γὰρ εἰσιν οἷσιν εὐχόμεαι θεοῖς.
 ΔΙ. Ἰδιοὶ τινές σου, κόμμα καινόν; ΕΥΡ. καὶ μάλα.
 ΔΙ. ἴθι νῦν προσεύχου τοῖσιν ἰδιώταις θεοῖς.
 ΕΥΡ. Αἰθῆρ, ἐμὸν βόσκημα, καὶ γλώττης στρόφιγξ,
 καὶ ξύνεσι καὶ μυκτῆρες ὀσφραντήριοι, κτλ.

The same charge is brought against the poet in the *Thesmophoriasusae*⁸,

νῦν δ' οὗτος ἐν ταῖσιν τραγωδαῖς ποιῶν
 τοὺς ἄνδρας ἀναπέπεικεν οὐκ εἶναι θεούς.

Euripides however was certainly no atheist. He believed in the Providence, the Justice, the Omnipotence, the absolute Will of a Supreme Being. He was a Pantheist, perhaps, so far as the two principles can be reconciled; but, though he had attained to no very decided or settled convictions upon a subject on which he every where shows that he thought deeply, he was no scoffer at religion in the abstract, as Aristophanes was. His object seems to have been to lead men to a higher and sublimer contemplation and worship of the one great Mind, or Being, or Intelligence, who is the author and creator of all existing things. He finely describes him⁹ as

τὸν πάνθ' ὀρώμεντα καὶ τὸν οὐχ ὀρώμενον,

⁶ V. 247. *Ibid.* v. 1241, where the disciple of Socrates says,

θαυμασίως ἤσθηεν θεοῖς,
 καὶ Ζεὺς γέλοιος ὀμνύμενος τοῖς εἰδόσιν.

⁷ Ran. 885.

⁸ V. 450.

⁹ Frag. 960.

xxiv

HIS IDEAS OF GOD.

and as one not to be inclosed within temples built by mortal hands¹,

*πῶος δ' ἂν οἶκος τεκτόνων πλασθεὶς ἦπο
 δέμας τὸ θεῖον περιβάλοι τοίχων πτυχαῖς;*

or as the Great Unknown²,

*Ζεὺς, ὅστις ὁ Ζεὺς, οὐ γὰρ οἶδα πλὴν λόγῳ
 κλύων.*

In common with most unbelievers, and indeed, with many believers, he found a difficulty³ in the worldly success of the bad, and the misfortunes of the good.

*οἱ μὲν γὰρ εὖ πράσσουσι, τοῖς δὲ συμφοραὶ
 σκληραὶ πάρεισιν εὖσεβοῦσιν εἰς θεούς.*

But he seems to have acquiesced in the notion that these were but the caprices of Fortune, which

τὸν μὲν καθεῖλεν ὑψοθεν, τὸν δ' ἦρ' ἄνω.

Elsewhere⁴ he doubts whether it is Zeus or Chance that regulates human affairs,

*πολλάκι μοι πραπίδων διήλθε φροντὶς,
 εἴτε τύχα τις εἴτε δαίμων τὰ βρότεια κραίνει.*

In the *Hecuba*⁵ his conclusion is

τύχην ἅπαντα τὰν βροτοῖς ἐπισκοπεῖν.

And again⁶

*ὦ μεταβαλοῦσα μυρίους ἤδη βροτῶν
 καὶ δυστυχήσαι καὶθις αὐτὴν πρᾶξαι καλῶς
 Τύχη.*

In other passages⁷ it is Fate or Necessity that exercises supreme power over all human affairs.

*λόγος γὰρ ἔστω οὐκ ἔμδς, σοφῶν δ' ἔπος,
 δεινῆς ἀνάγκης οὐδὲν ἰσχύειν πλέον.*

We repeat, Euripides was no atheist at heart. He was simply

¹ Frag. 968.

² Frag. 483. Compare Herc. F. 1263. Troad. 885. Hel. 1137. Aesch. Agam. 155.

³ Hippol. 1104. Frag. 677.

⁴ Frag. 1013.

⁵ V. 491.

⁶ Ion 1512.

⁷ Hel. 513. Alc. 965. Heracl. 615.

too wise and too intellectual to put any faith in those fables⁸ which he considered it degrading to man's nature to accept. He was a Sophist, and so far a sceptic, that he did not feel bound to follow any other guide than his reason. He took delight in showing what a miserable set of deities men had formed for themselves out of their own imagination. They had invested them not only with a human form, but with human attributes, weaknesses, and caprices. He knew that the gods *ought* to be superior to such infirmities, and to set an example of virtue.

ἀλλ', ἐπεὶ κρατεῖς, ἀρετὰς δῖωκε,

Ion finely says of Apollo⁹. The *Bacchae* is an instance of a play which, although rationalistic in its tendency, is yet curiously interspersed with passages in praise of the old traditional belief. The moral indeed of this play, like that of the *Hippolytus*, is so far from being atheistic, that the point of both is to show the dreadful punishments which overtake those who refuse to acknowledge certain prescribed forms of worship. In the same way the *Alcestis* illustrates the temporal rewards which attend upon piety to the gods. He must therefore have had some feeling for religion, even in the debased and unspiritual form in which he found it. Doubtless there are some passages in his writings which at first sight appear to deny the very existence of a God. Thus he says¹,

ὁ γὰρ θεός πως, εἰ θεὸν σφε χρὴ καλεῖν,
 κάμνει ξυνὼν τὰ πολλὰ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἄει.

And in his *Bellerophon*²,

φησὶν τις εἶναι δῆτ' ἐν οὐρανῷ θεούς;
 οὐκ εἰσιν, οὐκ εἶσ'· εἴ τις ἀνθρώπων λέγει,
 μὴ τῷ παλαιῷ μωρὸς ὢν χρῆσθω λόγῳ.

In the *Troades*³ he asserts that the gods are *κακοὶ ξύμμαχοι* to a person in trouble, though nevertheless it has a specious appearance, *ἔχει τι σχῆμα*, to invoke them in prayer. But he

⁸ *μύθοις ἄλλως φερόμεσθα* Hippol. 198.

¹ Frag. 898.

² Frag. 293.

⁹ V. 440.

³ V. 469.

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xxvi

DISBELIEF OF POLYTHEISM.

does not mean that there is no such a Being as God; only that the old-fashioned accounts, *ὁ παλαιὸς λόγος*, i. e. the Homeric and Hesiodic polytheism, are absurd and incredible. On this subject there is an interesting passage in the *Mad Hercules* ⁴,

ἐγὼ δὲ τοὺς θεοὺς οὕτε λέκτρ' ἂ μὴ θέμις
 στέργειν νομίζω, δεσμά τ' ἐξάπτειν χερῶν
 οὐτ' ἠξίωσα πάποτ' οὕτε πείσομαι,
 οὐδ' ἄλλον ἄλλου δεσπότην πεφυκένας.
 δεῖται γὰρ ὁ θεὸς, εἴπερ ἔστ' ἕντως θεὸς,
 οὐδενός· ἀοιδῶν οἶδε δύστηνοι λόγοι.

The *immorality* attributed to Beings professedly divine evidently shocked him. “If,” he writes ⁵, “Apollo and Poseidon and Zeus were to pay the penalties of their illicit loves to man, they would exhaust their own temples of the treasures they contain.” Even their accumulated wealth would be insufficient to atone for accumulated wickedness. Such allusions are numerous, and it would be easy to multiply examples ⁶. But on the other hand there are passages of a somewhat different tendency ⁷,

ἐγὼ μὲν, εἴτ' ἂν τοὺς κακοὺς ὄρω βροτῶν
 πίπτοντας, εἶναί φημι δαιμόνων γένος.

And again ⁸,

ὄραθ', ὅσοι δοκεῖτε οὐκ (i. μῆδ') εἶναι θεόν.
 ἔστιν γὰρ, ἔστιν.

In the *Bacchae* ⁹,

πύρσω γὰρ ὄμωσ
 αἰθέρα ναίοντες ὄρωσιν τὰ βροτῶν Οὐρανίδαί.

In one of the lost plays ¹,

ἔστι, κεί τις ἐγγελαῖ λόγῳ,
 Ζεὺς καὶ θεοὶ βρότεια λεύσσαντες πάθη.

The partiality of Euripides for the philosophy of Anaxagoras is shown not only in his bold views about the gods, but in his occasional allusions to astronomy ², to the mutual relations of

⁴ V. 1341.

⁵ Ion 444.

⁶ See, for instance, Herc. F. 344–7. *Id.* 1316. *Iph. T.* 380–91.

⁷ Frag. 575.

⁸ Frag. 825.

⁹ V. 391.

¹ Frag. 959.

² E. g. Rhes. 530. Ion 1150. 1516. Alcest. 963. *Iph. Aul.* 6. Frag. 969 &c.

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earth and air, the *δίμη* or *ρύμβος* of the clouds (ridiculed by Aristophanes³), and the majesty (*σεμνότης*) of that bright ethereal fluid (*αἰθήρ*) which he regarded as the source of life and spirit and generally of all animated creation. Thus he is made to say in the *Thesmophoriazusaë*⁴,

αἰθήρ γὰρ ὅτε τὰ πρῶτα διεχωρίζετο,
 καὶ ζῶ' ἐν αὐτῷ ξυνετέκνου κινούμενα, κτλ.

In the *Melanippë*⁵,

οὐρανὸς τε γαῖά τ' ἦν μορφή μία·
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐχωρίσθησαν ἀλλήλων δίχρα,
 τίκτουσι πάντα κἀνέδωκαν ἐς φάος
 δένδρη, πετεινὰ, θήρας, οὓς θ' ἄλμη τρέφει,
 γένος τε θνητῶν.

In the *Danaë*⁶,

οὗτος (sc. αἰθήρ)
 θάλλειν τε καὶ μῆ, ζῆν τε καὶ φθίνειν ποιεῖ.

Again⁷,

Γαῖα μεγίστη καὶ Διὸς αἰθήρ,
 ὁ μὲν ἀνθρώπων καὶ θεῶν γενέτωρ, κτλ.

And in another unnamed play⁸,

ὄδ' αἰθήρ ἐνδιδοὺς θνητοῖς πνοάς.

That the soul was an emanation from Ether, and returned to it on the dissolution of the body, is taught in the following⁹ verses :—

ἐάσατ' ἤδη γῆ καλυφθῆναι νεκρούς·
 ὕθεν δ' ἕκαστον εἰς τὸ σῶμ' ἀφίκετο,
 ἐνταῦθ' ἀπῆλθε, πνεῦμα μὲν πρὸς αἰθέρα,
 τὸ σῶμα δ' εἰς γῆν.

³ Nub. 380,

ὁ δ' ἀναγκάζων ἐστὶ τις αὐτὰς, οὐχ ὁ Ζεὺς, ὥστε φέρεσθαι·
 ΣΩ. ἤκιστ', ἀλλ' αἰθέριος Δίνος.

This is an instance where Euripidean doctrines are attributed in that play to Socrates, who was himself no astronomer.

⁴ V. 14.

⁵ Frag. 487.

⁶ Frag. 329.

⁷ Frag. 833. Those who regard this doctrine of the creative power of Ether as a vain conceit should consider what it involves. Space is now believed to be filled by an electric emanation, or at least pervaded by electro-magnetic currents; and all organic life is connected closely with the same influences. See Humboldt's *Cosmos*, Vol. iii. p. 34 seqq., and the notes. Still, philosophy alone will never solve the mystery of Creation.

⁸ Frag. 963.

⁹ Suppl. 531.

xxviii PANTHEISTIC VIEW OF *Αἰθήρ*.

Equally interesting is the passage in the *Helena*¹,

ὁ νοῦς
 τῶν καθαρόντων ζῆ μὲν οὐδ', γνώμην δ' ἔχει
 ἀθάνατον, εἰς ἀθάνατον αἰθέρ' ἐμπεσάν.

When in the *Alcestis* he says²,

"Ἄλλε καὶ φάος ἀμέρας
 οὐράνιαί τε δῖναι νεφέλας δρομαίου,

and in the *Peirithous*³,

σὲ τὸν αὐτοφυῆ, τὸν ἐν αἰθερίῳ
 ῥύμβῳ πάντων φύσιν ἐμπλέξανθ', κτλ.,

he clearly alludes to the theory of the *δῖνος*, which is, in fact, the rotation of the earth balanced in air.

ὃ γῆς ὄχημα καὶ γῆς ἔχων ἔδραν,
 ὅστις ποτ' εἶ σὺ, δυστόπαστος εἰδέναι,
 Ζεὺς, εἴτ' ἀνάγκη φύσεος, εἴτε νοῦς βροτῶν⁴.

This doctrine of *Noûs* or *spirit* being the principle which imparted order and arrangement and regular motion to inert matter, was derived from Anaxagoras⁵. Elsewhere he takes up the pantheistic notion that the Ether is identical with Zeus⁶;—

ὄρᾶς τὸν ὑψοῦ τόνδ' ἄπειρον αἰθέρα,
 καὶ γῆν πέριξ ἔχονθ' ὑγραῖς ἐν ἀγκάλαις;
 τοῦτον νόμιζε Ζῆνα, τόνδ' ἡγοῦ θεόν.

And again⁷,

ἀλλ' αἰθήρ ἔτικτέ σ', ὃ κόρα,
 ὁ Ζεὺς, ὃς ἀνθρώποισιν ὠνομάζετο.

But in this Aeschylus had preceded him⁸,

Ζεὺς ἐστιν αἰθήρ, Ζεὺς δὲ γῆ, Ζεὺς δ' οὐρανός,
 Ζεὺς τοι τὰ πάντα χῶτι τῶνδ' ὑπέρτερον.

In another place⁹ the Ether is called the abode of Zeus,

ἄμνυμι δ' ἱρὸν αἰθέρ', οἴκησιν Διὸς,

¹ V. 1014. Strange that Dindorf should call these characteristic lines "versus non Euripidei," and inclose them within brackets as spurious.

² V. 243. Cf. Phoen. 163.

³ Frag. 593.

⁴ Troad. 884.

⁵ "Primus omnium rerum descriptionem et modum Mentis Infinitae vi ac ratione designari et confici voluit." Cic. de Div. lib. 1. Laert. ii. 6.

⁶ Frag. 836.

⁷ Frag. 1047.

⁸ Frag. 379, ed. Herm.

⁹ Frag. Melanipp. 491.