Agamemnon (458 BCE)

1) Prologue w/ Watchman
   looking for light
   refers to Klytemnestra as “a woman who thinks like a man”
   anticipate gender issues of *Eumenides*

2) Parados, Chorus of old men
   themes of vengeance in Troy introduced
   vengeance & justice recur throughout
   end: “Justice finds the balance/we learn by suffering.”
   eagles, dogs, lions, Iphigenia as sacrificed hare, blood;
   nets, snares, & traps; images often multivalent

3) 1st Episode, introduced to Klytemnestra

4) analyze 2nd Chorus in some detail (21-22)
   home & hospitality, taboo/sacred, *hybris*, persuasion vs. force
5) Agamemnon’s entrance (35)
   strange image of justice: “urn of blood filled with votes” (38): the red carpet
dialogue between K & A (39)
sophistic, legalistic
(40): Cassandra’s silence (cf. Pylades in Choephoroi)
   A’s pride, entrance into the house (oikos and polis) culminates (41) w/ fertility image gone awry
6) Murder of A & C (53-4)
   lead up to w/ the individualized chorus of 12 lines?
   K’s rationalizations of murder qua Iphigenia
   force & pride (56)
From the Dead (Choephori, Libation Bearers)

1) Prologue: Orestes returns to avenge father’s death
   symbolic gesture of mourning, lock of hair, recognition prop
2) Parados: Chorus of female slaves, their exile & Orestes’
   more active Chorus than Agamemnon
   (69): “Our nourishing earth/has drunk its fill . . .”
   chthonic forces, miasma, pharmakos, goat-song, catharsis
3) Elektra at father’s tomb
   “To bring justice – or vengeance?” (70)
4) Elektra & Orestes’ meeting
   imagery escalates into kommos: nets, eagles, vipers
   “Zeus, violent and just/stand with us!” (74)
5) Kommos (76-82)
   dance & song
6) Orestes & Electra
reconciled to murder
transform net metaphor from Father’s death (82) to own life (83)
(83): Klytemnestra’s dream of suckling snake
claustrophobia of closed sphere of imagery
Orestes & Pylades to appear as foreign suppliants
use values of hospitality for treachery, as so often w/ H of Atr.
7) Chorus w/ examples of female treachery
8) Change of scene or not? (87)
   Orestes before palace, recall of staging of Agamemnon
   “morass of death . . cure the house”
   “Where is there greater kindness/than between a host and guest?”
9) Nurse’s episode (3rd actor)
   parody of omen reading w/ child? break tension?
10) steady dance of chorus, rhythm of inevitability?
11) Aegisthus’ hubris (93-4)
12) Kl, Or, Py (96): snake image from K, than P’s one line
13) Repeat death image from ekkyklema; Orestes back into exile
Created after suicide of George Dyer. Notice Erinys’ shadow in center.

For next time: *The Eumenides*, “Melian Dialogue”