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An eminent German critic once said, that Goethe’s Iphigenie was ‘the only poetical production in the literature of Germany nearly every line of which requires a full explanation; for whilst in his “Faust” there occur scenes and a number of passages which can be well understood without any further elucidation, such is not the case with his Iphigenie, which the reader cannot fully appreciate or thoroughly comprehend as a whole, unless he understands throughout the work every allusion, is familiar with all the parallel passages in the classical authors, and is, besides, enabled by a complete analysis to enter fully into the spirit of the noble production.’ Admitting that opinion, the truth of which is generally acknowledged, it will readily be granted that a thorough and complete commentary on Goethe’s Iphigenie is an absolute necessity for English readers of that drama. Guided by this fact, and by my own long experience as a teacher in this country, I have explained and elucidated in my Notes every passage—nay, every single expression—which seemed to me to require elucidation and interpretation. I have also, from beginning to end, explained every mythological allusion, pointed out classical reminiscences, and quoted to the best of my knowledge parallel passages from Greek and Latin authors. Goethe’s Iphigenie is the fruit of his classical readings, carried on with sympathetic interest; and there are therefore to be found in this drama numerous reminiscences, which can be traced not only to the Tauric Iphigenia of Euripides and other plays of that poet, but also to the tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles, treating of kindred subjects, and to Homer. The parallels are frequently not actual adaptations, and offer, as it were, external similarities only; still I deemed them of sufficient interest to
be embodied into a commentary on a work which is pervaded by the spirit of antiquity: for the same reason I could not help inserting Notes which will be found of interest to classical scholars only. In calling attention to reminiscences and parallel passages, I considered it advisable not only to give the references to the respective authors, but to quote bodily, the classical passages themselves—with very few exceptions—both in the original text and in an English translation. Besides the translations of the References, many explanations have been inserted in the commentary which are necessary for such students only who are not familiar with the Greek Classics or with Greek mythology. For the same class of students I have prefixed a General Introduction, giving a brief and succinct account of the house of the Atridae and their ancestors.

The Critical Introduction consists of three Parts. The first gives the History of the Composition, the second a Critical Analysis of the drama and of the individual characters. The third Part contains chiefly a Critical Estimate of the relative merit and the respective tendencies of Goethe's Iphigenie and the 'Iphigenia' of Euripides, which estimate will show that the two authors had quite different objects in view in their compositions; the Greek poet having written a play for a Greek audience, and the German poet having composed a drama in order to represent the glorification of truth as embodied in a noble-minded woman.

I may add that, as this drama affords one of the purest readings in any literature, a more suitable work cannot be placed in the hands of the young. What Schiller's Wilhelm Tell is to less advanced readers of German, Goethe's Iphigenie is to more advanced students of the language; and that it is read with the greatest delight and enthusiasm by Englishmen and Englishwomen—when fully understood by them—I have had ample opportunities of convincing myself.

1 Since the above was written, the distinguished Kantian philosopher, Prof. Kuno Fischer, has emphatically accentuated in his Festvortrag on 'Goethe's Iphigenie,' delivered at Weimar in 1888, the religious character of the poem. Cp. his Goethe Schriften, I. 19 seq.
In interpreting the Text, which frequently offers very great difficulties, I have made large use of the Prose Versions in which Goethe first composed his Iphigenie. This mode of interpreting a poet through the poet himself I believe I have been the first to adopt, and in order to do it efficiently I have invariably quoted, in explaining the most difficult poetical passages, the corresponding prose passages in full.

For my 'Translation Notes' I have found much help in the admirable translations of the present drama by Miss Swanwick, and by William Taylor of Norwich, and occasionally also in the Ancient Greek Version of the drama by Prof. Kock. I must, however, most specially acknowledge—and I do so with a feeling of sincere gratitude—the help which I derived from my learned friend and colleague, Professor J. B. Mayor, who kindly read through my Notes as they went through the press, and assisted me with some very valuable suggestions in my laborious task. I am also indebted to the well-known German philologist and lexicographer, Prof. Dr. D. Sanders, for having called my attention to several linguistic difficulties in the Text. These I explained on issuing the Second edition. The principal improvement in the Third edition consisted in the insertion of an additional paragraph on Goethe's use of Stichomythia—Wechselreden—or 'line for line dialogue,' and I must claim the merit of having been the first—as far as I know—to draw attention to that interesting subject.

The feature of appending a List of Quotations to German Classics, of which I set the example, for the first time in this country, in my edition of Wilhelm Tell (1870) I have also adopted in the present drama; which, by the way, contains so many pithy sayings and aphorisms, that hundreds of lines might have been added.

Lessing says: Seines Fleisses darf sich Jeder rühmen, and so I trust that I may be allowed to state that I have bestowed the greatest care and attention on the present edition of Goethe's great work, and that I have spared no study and research to make it generally popular in this country. Should I succeed in this object, I shall consider myself amply rewarded for my labour.
The demand for a *Fourth* edition of this volume is a most satisfactory sign of the progress which the study of German has made in this country during the present generation. The number of well-educated English readers—who cultivate the study of German literature for their own gratification, is constantly increasing, and although the majority of English schools are more or less tied down to the exclusive use of certain prescribed books, there is nevertheless an independent group of teachers of German who select books for their pupils to read according to their own judgment, and who prefer classical works to commonplace productions. The pedantic objection, based on a wrong conception of Goethe's drama, that it is not a regular *Greek* play, vanishes more and more, as the opinion is gaining ground that he did not intend to write a *Greek* play at all, but a German, or rather a *modern* play, on an ancient subject. I have repeatedly pointed out this fact in my editorial matter, but I could not help reverting to it again, as there are some critics who obstinately adhere to the hackneyed and groundless censure.

In Germany itself the popularity of Goethe's drama has of late years also considerably increased, and the *Iphigenie*-literature has assumed there immense proportions. Not only the drama as a whole, but also various passages, nay single lines and expressions, and even the punctuation, have been analysed with that microscopic minuteness which learned editors are in the habit of claiming as the exclusive privilege for comments on the ancient classics. To have embodied in this volume, even to a moderate extent, the results of the recent *Iphigenie*-criticisms, some of which appear to me by the bye far too subtle, would have utterly

1 English readers will find a genial appreciation of Goethe's masterpiece in Mr. C. S. Jerram's excellent edition of the 'Iphigenia in *Tauris* ' by Euripides (C. P. S. p. x. seq.).

2 In France there are also signs that continued attention is being paid there to Goethe's *Iphigenie*, and the learned *Goetheforscher*, Dr. C. Witkowski, has called my attention to a more recent French translation than that of Legrelle, issued by L. Marie d'Hyer 1882.
destroyed the main object for which it has been issued, viz. to furnish to English readers a convenient and handy medium for a proper appreciation of the poetical beauties and lofty tendency of this drama. Special attention has also been paid in Germany to the precursors of Goethe in the dramatisation of the Iphigenie-fable, which topic has undoubtedly a great litterarhistorisches Interesse; but to treat this subject, which has by no means been neglected in the present edition, exhaustively, would again have been out of place in this volume, as it would only have impeded the enjoyment of the beautiful poem.

Guided by the above considerations, and by the fact that my edition has met with the approval of both eminent classical scholars and intelligent teachers of German, I have limited myself, in revising this volume for a new issue, to such additions and emendations—chiefly based on the results of recent Iphigenie-studies—as seemed to me absolutely necessary. Whenever I adopted any remark made by a brother editor, I mentioned the fact distinctly, but I consider it right to record here in particular my indebtedness to Düntzer's well-known Erläuterungen to the present drama.

The most important improvement in the present issue consists, however, in the adoption of the Text as given in the Weimar edition, under the special editorship of the distinguished literary historian Prof. Berthold Litzmann. That Text, contained in vol. x. of Goethe's Werke, is based on the poet's own manuscript of the drama, on which the editor has furnished some interesting remarks.

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Oct. 1895.

1 Dr. Hans Morsch has written an ingenious essay on the precursors of Goethe's drama under the title of 'Vorgeschichte von Goethe's Iphigenie' (Vierteljahrschrift für Litteraturgeschichte, vol. iv). I hope to revert to this monograph more fully in my projected critical account of all the valuable Iphigenie-criticisms which have hitherto appeared.
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

Iphigenia was the descendant of a race, which was one of the most ill-fated in the traditional history of Greece, and which furnished the Greek tragic poets with abundant subjects for their tragedies. The founder, or ancestor of the race was Tantalus, the old representative of the highest good fortune and of the deepest and most sudden fall. He is described as the son of Zeus and Pluto (i.e. abundance), a daughter of Cronos, and as having associated with Zeus and the other gods; he also shared at their table nectar and ambrosia, and was entrusted with their secrets. Intoxicated by his lofty position Tantalus became overweening and offended the gods—some say by setting his own son before them at a repast to test their omniscience, or, as others relate, by abstracting nectar and ambrosia, i.e. by divulging the secrets of the gods to other mortal beings¹—and in consequence he was visited after his death with that well-known terrible punishment of everlasting and never-gratified desire. He was doomed to stand in the midst of a lake, under trees covered with refreshing fruit, and both water and fruit got out of his reach, as soon as he attempted to quench his burning thirst. Others say he had a rock hanging over his head ever ready to fall.

Tantalus had three children, the eldest of whom, called Pelops, became one of the most celebrated kings of ancient Greece. Pelops was one of the suitors of Hippodamia, the beautiful daughter of Oenomaus, king of Pisa in Elis. All her suitors had to compete in a chariot race with her father, who, possessing very swift horses, easily defeated and subsequently killed them;

¹ According to Pindar, Tantalus gave ambrosia to other men, in order to impart to them the gift of immortality, which he himself then possessed.
but Pelops was so much bent on marrying her that he had recourse to treachery. He promised a bribe to Myrtilus, the charioteer of Oenomaus, to tamper with his master's chariot, and when the race took place, the king was thrown out and killed on the spot. Pelops succeeded him in the sovereignty and married Hippodamia, but instead of fulfilling his promise to the charioteer he hurled him from a cliff into the sea. Myrtilus, as he sank, cursed Pelops and his whole race; and to that curse all the calamities which subsequently befell the house of the Pelopidae are frequently attributed. Pelops had one son, named Chrysippus, by the nymph Axioche, and a number of other children by Hippodamia, of whom Atreus and Thyestes became the most famous. Chrysippus was a favourite with his father on account of his great beauty, and his half-brothers Atreus and Thyestes killed him from envy. Pelops expelled the latter from the country, and Hippodamia, being suspected by her husband of having instigated her sons to commit the cruel deed, and dreading his vengeance, destroyed herself. Pelops—from whom the name of Peloponnesus is said to be derived—seems to have died peaceably, but his two sons, who had murdered the beautiful Chrysippus, were exposed to great calamities.

The two brothers Atreus and Thyestes fled to Mycenae, where they became the successors of Eurystheus; but Atreus, being in possession of 'a lamb with a golden fleece' secured the sovereignty of the kingdom to himself alone. Atreus had by his first wife, Cleola, a son named Pleisthenes, and by his second wife, Aëropé, several sons, the most celebrated of whom were Agamemnon and Menelaus. Aëropé was bribed to betray her husband to Thyestes, who by her assistance got possession of 'the lamb with the golden fleece,' the ancient symbol of sovereignty in general, and of the enormous riches of the Atridae in particular. Atreus, being thus injured in his honour, expelled Thyestes, who secretly carried off the child Pleisthenes, brought him up as his own son, and when he was grown up sent him to Mycenae to kill Atreus. The attempt failed and Pleisthenes was put to death by the king, who found out too late that he had killed his
own son. After some time Atreus pretended to be reconciled to his brother, and invited him to Mycenae. When Thyestes had arrived with his two or three sons, Atreus caused the latter to be murdered, and to be served up to his brother at a banquet. After the wretched father had partaken of the horrible food, and anxiously asked for his children, Atreus ordered the remains of the murdered sons to be brought in. Horror-stricken at the sight—from which the sun is said to have turned his face—Thyestes fled and cursed the house of Atreus. Subsequently Atreus was killed by Aegisthus, the son of Thyestes, and these two having succeeded in the sovereignty of Mycenae, expelled Agamemnon and Menelaus, the sons of Atreus, from the country.

The two brothers went to Sparta, where Agamemnon married Clytemnestra, and Menelaus her sister Helena, daughters of king Tyndareus. In the course of time Agamemnon obtained possession of the kingdom of Mycenae, and became by Clytemnestra the father of four children—Electra, Chrysothemis, Iphigenia, and Orestes. His power and wealth became so great, that when the Greeks prepared the expedition against Troy, he was chosen chief commander; but when the Greek army and fleet were assembled at Aulis, ready to depart, they could not sail forth on account of adverse winds. The reason of the obstacle was explained by the seer Calchas. Agamemnon had offended Diana by killing a stag in a grove sacred to her, and by speaking irreverently of the goddess—or, as some assert, by having vowed in the year of Iphigenia’s birth to sacrifice ‘whatsoever the year should bring forth most beautiful,’ and having then neglected to sacrifice his daughter, who was distinguished by great beauty. Calchas further declared that it was Diana who detained the fleet, and that the goddess could only be appeased by the sacrifice of Iphigenia, the daughter of Agamemnon. With reluctance the king consented, and enticed his daughter to the camp under pretence of wedding her to Achilles. Iphigenia came, together with her mother and her infant brother Orestes; and on discovering the deception she at first implored her father to spare her, but finally resolved to die heroically for
the benefit of her country. The maiden was conducted to the altar, and when she was on the point of being sacrificed the goddess sent down a cloud, shrouding and carrying away the intended victim, and substituting in her place a hind, which was sacrificed. The Greeks imagined that Iphigenia had been sacrificed, but Diana had carried her away to the Tauric Chersonese, where she served in her temple as a priestess.

Agamemnon proceeded with the Greeks, who were now enabled to sail, to Troy, and Clytemnestra returned to Mycenae. There Aegisthus ingratiated himself with her, and having obtained entire control over her mind, he persuaded her to kill her husband—against whom he felt a deep resentment—on his return from Troy. When Agamemnon returned with the victorious army, and arrived at his 'father's halls,' he was received with feigned affection by his treacherous wife. According to Grecian custom he at once took a bath, and, when on the point of leaving it he demanded a garment from Clytemnestra, she threw over him a net-like robe, which rendered him helpless, and slew him. Some relate that Aegisthus merely devised the murder, and Clytemnestra carried it out alone; others say that he actually assisted her in perpetrating the deed; whilst according to a third version (Od. xi. 409, etc.) he butchered the king and his followers at a banquet.

Electra who had been ill-treated by Aegisthus, whose authority she would not acknowledge, and by her own mother, now trembled for her own fate, but still more for that of Orestes, whom the guilty pair would fear as his father's future avenger. She, therefore, secretly sent her brother to Strophius, king of Phocis, who was married to a sister of Agamemnon. Orestes was brought up by his uncle together with his son Pylades and there sprang up between the two youths that intimate friendship which has become proverbial. The thought of avenging his father's death was, however, uppermost in the mind of Orestes and after having stayed for seven years at Phocis and consulted the oracle of Delphi, which encouraged him to carry out his resolve, he repaired in company with his
faithful Pylades, in disguise, to Mycenae. The two friends announced the death of Orestes to Clytemnestra, and the unnatural mother, conscious that she deserved punishment at his hands, actually rejoiced at the tidings. Orestes was at first unwilling to avenge his father’s death on his mother, but Electra, to whom he made himself known, fanned in him the flame of vengeance and both Clytemnestra and Aegisthus fell by his hand. Tormented by remorse, or as the Greeks expressed it ‘pursued by the furies,’ Orestes consulted the oracle of Apollo, which promised him recovery from his ‘madness,’ if he carried away from Tauris the image of Diana—which was said to have fallen there from heaven—and took it to Athens. Orestes went with Pylades to Tauris and being taken prisoners by the natives, the two friends were to be sacrificed, by command of king Thoas, according to the custom of the country. A recognition took place, however, between Orestes and his sister Iphigenia—who still served there as priestess—and the two left Tauris together with Pylades, carrying away with them the image of Diana. The curse which had rested on the house of Tantalus ceased with the return of Orestes and Iphigenia to Mycenae, ‘the wonderful ruins of which still bear silent testimony to the splendour of the Atridae.’ Orestes not only took possession of his father’s kingdom, but of several other countries. He was married to Hermione by whom he had a son named Tisamenus, who, as will be seen from the following Genealogical Table, was the last of the Atridae.

Tantalus

Pelops

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<td>Clytemnestra = Agamemnon</td>
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<td>Iphigenia, Electra, Orestes = Hermione</td>
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<td>Tisamenus</td>
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Next to a critical estimate of important poetical productions, there is nothing so interesting and instructive as the history of their composition, more especially if it serves to illustrate at the same time the obstacles encountered and triumphantly overcome by a man of genius, and help us to gain an insight into the process of the author's intellectual development. Such is undoubtedly the case with the history of the composition of Goethe's Iphigenie, concerning the origin, growth, and completion of which abundant details are found in his correspondence and in his Italienische Reise.

The date when Goethe first conceived the idea of dramatising the subject of Iphigenia, is not quite certain; we only know that he actually began the composition on Feb. 14, 1779. He could not have undertaken the task at a less auspicious moment, for in the beginning of that year he was appointed 'President of the Military and Causeway Commissions' of the duchy of Weimar. The function of the poet-statesman was to superintend the levying of recruits and to watch over the repairs and construction of highways; and well might he exclaim that amidst these uncongenial occupations 'he was with one foot only in the stirrups of Pegasus.' Still, he resolutely proceeded to his task on the evening of the above-mentioned date. A pleasant letter received from his mother had cheered his mind, and the 'depressing spirits' of official drudgery were driven away by the soothing sounds of music, which was performed in a room adjoining his study. The beginning had now been made; and, the most urgent official duties being accomplished, the poet retired, at the beginning of March, to the solitude of the castle of
Dornburg, hoping to finish the drama in a few days. But an adverse fate threw a new difficulty in his way. A riot had broken out among the weavers of the neighbouring manufacturing town of Apolda, in consequence of great distress prevailing in that 'troublesome place.' This circumstance had a very disturbing effect on Goethe, and he bitterly complained 'that the drama would not advance, and that it was quite dreadful that the king of Tauris should speak as if there were no starving stocking-weavers at Apolda.' Returning to Weimar on March 11, he assiduously continued his work, and in a few days he had finished the first three acts. On March 19 he wrote the whole of the fourth act in one day, to judge from the following memorandum which he dictated to his secretary Riemer: 'Sereno die, quieta mente I wrote, after a "choice" of three years, the fourth act of my Iphigenie in one day.' The remaining fifth act was written within the next nine days, so that the first version of the drama was finished on March 28 of the year 1779. The piece, composed within the short space of about six weeks, was, however, only finished, but not perfected; for it was written in prose—partly owing to the strange prejudice of those days that tragedies should not be written in verse, and partly to the fact that the laws of German prosody were then still unsettled, as Goethe himself declared in a letter from Rome (Jan. 10, 1787). Nevertheless his prose of Iphigenia was so rhythmical, that it mostly read like verse.

After a space of nine days—on April 6—the drama was performed for the first time in the presence of the Ducal Court of Weimar. The part of Iphigenia was played by the famous Korona Schröder; Pylades by Prince Constantine; Thoas by Major von Knebel, and Arkas by Secretary Seidler. Goethe himself acted the part of Orestes; and all the records preserved of that memorable performance agree that at no time has there been witnessed such an union of intellectual and physical perfection as was exhibited by Goethe in playing that part. He

1 Düntzer advocates the reading von drei Tagen, referring the statement to the fourth act only, and not to the whole drama.
was likened to 'an Apollo descended from heaven, to represent bodily the beauty of Greece.'

The performance was repeated several times, and the author soon received from various quarters applications for his 'newest dramatic production'; but Goethe being fully conscious of the fact that his drama had not yet attained the right artistic form, decidedly declined to have it published or performed.

In 1780 Goethe proceeded to change his first Prose Version into a metrical form. Here and there he introduced some improvement, but his prose being 'saturated with verse,' his principal task consisted in merely transcribing the rhythmical prose into irregular iambics. However, this new form did not seem to satisfy him, and so he took up again, in 1781, his first Prose Version, limiting himself to extending and improving it, without altering the form. Five years later he changed, under the influence of Wieland, this second Prose Version again into irregular iambics. This new metrical version he touched up, with Herder's assistance, at Carlsbad, and wrote on Aug. 23, 1786, to Frau von Stein, 'Now that the drama is shaped into verse, it gives me new pleasure; one can see much better what improvement is still required. I am now engaged on it, and hope to have done with the work to-morrow.' His friends had repeatedly urged him to give the final touch to his Iphigenie, and this was most assiduously done by Herder, who probably best knew how to appreciate the great classical work. Owing to these solicitations Goethe took with him, together with other unfinished productions, the last version of his drama, when he left Karlsbad for Italy, on Sept. 3, 1786; and on the Brenner mountain, where he arrived five days later, he took out from a larger parcel of manuscripts that of his Iphigenie, 'that it might be his companion into the beautiful warm country.' 'The days are long,' he added; 'there will be nothing to disturb my thoughts, and the glorious objects of the surrounding scenery will by no means dispel the poetical inspiration; nay, assisted by open air and free exercise, they will rather promote it.' The fact is, Goethe was now free from the shackles of social and conventional life, and he was therefore in a position to follow the
impulse of his poetical genius. Four days after he had left the Brenner he wrote the first lines of his 'new version' on the Lake of Garda, while the powerful south winds drove the waves to the shore, 'where he was at least as lonely as his heroine on the coast of Tauris.' He continued the task of touching up his drama during his journey to Venice, and worked most industriously at the last-named place. Then the work suddenly came to a standstill, and he even conceived the idea of writing an Iphigenie von Delphi; fortunately 'a feeling of duty towards the older piece' induced him, on his arrival at Rome, to devote himself again to the task of entirely recasting the form of his Iphigenie auf Tauris, and this time he was to derive considerable aid from another quarter. He had made at Rome the acquaintance of the somewhat eccentric but ingenious writer K. P. Moritz (1757—93), who was the author of a treatise on German prosody; and by imparting to Goethe his views on that subject, he gave a new impetus to the poet to complete the task of changing the prose form of his drama into the purest iambics of five feet. 'My proceeding,' says Goethe, 'was very simple; I merely copied the piece, dividing it line by line, period by period into a regular rhythm.'

Those who will compare the prose with the poetic version, will readily convince themselves of the truth of that statement; for, as the late G. H. Lewes truly remarks, 'they will not only see how frequent the verses are, but how few were the alterations necessary to transform the prose drama into a poem. They are just the sort of touches which elevate poetry above prose.' The final classic stamp having been impressed by Goethe on his Iphigenie, he was in a position to send to Germany on Jan. 10

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1 Cp. Note to ll. 13, 14.
2 A sketch of Goethe's plan is given in his Italienische Reise under date of Bologna, 19th Oct., 1786.
3 An account of Goethe's intercourse with Moritz, and of the aid he received from him, will be found in the Italienische Reise in the letters dated Rome Dec. 1786 and Jan. 1787.
4 A complete reprint of the four Versions of Goethe's drama will be found in Prof. Jak. Baechthold's Goethe's Iphigenie auf Tauris, In vierfacher Gestalt, Freiburg i. B. 1883.
and 13, 1787, two manuscript copies of the new version of his drama, which he called his Schmerzenskind—an epithet, as he declared, which it deserved in more than one sense. This then is the last version of Goethe's Iphigenie, as it now lies before us—in a form which, in point of language alone, presents the purest and most perfect production of German literature.

II.

A considerable amount of ingenuity and learning has been displayed by various critics in discussing the questions: What object had Goethe in view in selecting a classical subject for dramatisation? What 'moral' did he intend to convey? Is it a modern specimen of Greek tragedy, or is it a purely modern drama? These questions have generally been answered in accordance with the individual standpoint of the critics, without paying much attention to the internal evidence to be derived from the various stages of the poet's intellectual development, and to his own utterances respecting his most matured production.

It has been repeatedly pointed out that the demoniac, or rather Titanic, element was in a considerable degree represented in Goethe's nature, as may be inferred, in particular, from a number of his works. His Faust, his Prometheus—not to mention any other of his larger or minor productions—are all emanations from that unsubmissive spirit. A significant passage in the fifteenth book of his Dichtung und Wahrheit gives us a sufficient clue as to the extent of that spirit in the poet and its relation to his works: 'The Titano-gigantic, heaven-storming spirit,' says Goethe, 'did not furnish any materials to my poetic direction. It was more in my line to represent that peaceful, plastic, at any rate passive resistance, which, whilst acknowledging a superior authority, wishes to be placed on an equal footing with the same. But also the bolder characters of that race, Tantalus, Ixion, Sisyphus, were adored by me. Admitted into the society of the gods, they may not have behaved in a sufficiently submissive manner,
and as haughty guests they may have deserved the wrath of their friendly host, and thus have drawn banishment upon themselves. I pitied them; the ancients had already acknowledged their state as a tragic one, and if I showed them in the background of my Iphigenie as members of an enormous opposition, I probably owe to them a part of the effect which it was the good fortune of that piece to produce. Here then we have the answer to the question why Goethe has chosen the story of Iphigenia as the subject of a drama. Not because it was a classical subject, but because it represented the sufferings of a high-minded, ambitious race. The curse lay heavily on the whole race, and one crime or wrong engendered another. How was that curse to be removed? Should it for ever continue, because the ancestors had deserved it? In this sense Iphigenie exclaims most pathetically (cp. p. 82, l. 1694, etc.):

Soll dieser Fluch denn ewig walten? Soll
Nie dies Geschlecht mit einem neuen Segen
Sich wieder heben?—Nimm doch Alles ab!
Das beste Glück, des Lebens schönste Kraft
Ermattet endlich, warum nicht der Fluch?

Besides, however, representing to us in the background the sufferings of the ‘bolder characters’ and the curse which weighed upon them and their descendants, the poet succeeds in exciting our pity for the various characters in the drama. First for Iphigenia, the innocently suffering maiden, who reluctantly spends her life in idleness among barbarians far from her kindred; then for the two noble friends, one of whom had been driven, as it were, to a crime, and in consequence was pursued by the furies, whilst the other was a victim to his generous friendship. The climax of pity is, however, reached in the scene in which the recognition between brother and sister takes place—when Iphigenia in deep distress appeals to the former:

Schilt einer Schwester reine Himmelsfreude
Nie unbesonnene, strafbare Lust;

and Orestes, dimly recognising his sister, exclaims in despair, ‘that he only wished their sister Electra might be there, so that
she should perish with them, and the sun should see the last horrors of their race, in beholding a sister sacrificing her brother' (p. 59, l. 1223, etc.).

Crushed by the thought of those 'last horrors' Orestes sinks down exhausted, and he again excites our pity when, on regaining his consciousness, he has a vision of 'calm frenzy' and Iphigenia implores the goddess:

\[O \text{ lasz} \text{ den Einz}{}'\text{gen, Spätgefunden mir} \]
\[\text{Nicht in der Finsternis}{}z \text{ des Wahnsinns rasen!} \]

The sudden and complete recovery of Orestes is brought about by his recognition of his sister, as is shown by his words:

\[\text{Lasz mich zum erstenmal mit freiem Herzen} \]
\[\text{In deinen Armen reine Freude haben!} \]
\[* \quad \* \quad \* \quad \* \quad \* \]

\[\text{Es löset sich der Fluch, mir sagt's das Herz.} \]

The recovery of Orestes, accomplished by the calming influence of Iphigenia, constitutes, however, only half of the task to be accomplished. There still remains that of 'purifying the house of Agamemnon,' and this too is effected by Iphigenia through the purity of her heart. We had already learnt to admire her humanising influence in the abolition, through her agency, of the human sacrifices in Tauris; and now, when a conflict arises in her heart between sisterly love and half-filial gratitude—between falsehood palliated by the law of self-preservation and all-powerful eternal truth—she triumphantly overcomes all worldly considerations and sacrifices all human interests on the altar of divine truth. Deceit and cunning were not only alien, but actually revolting to her; and when she has in the candour of her soul betrayed the secret plot to the king, he is so deeply touched by her confession, that he consents not only to the departure of the two friends, but also of her whom he hoped 'to lead to his home as bride, a blessing to himself and his realm.' It was then by the return of Iphigenia to the 'halls of her ancestors'—which was brought about by the truthfulness and purity of her heart—that the curse was removed from her house. The 'moral of the drama' is, therefore, nothing else but the apoteosis of truth, bodily represented,
in its highest perfection, by an innocent woman. That Goethe wished to show by his drama that purity of heart alone can atone for all human frailties and blot out past crimes, he has himself declared in the following lines, written in 1827, with respect to the present drama:

\[ \textit{Was der Dichter diesem Bande} \\
\textit{Glaubend, hoffend anvertraut,} \\
\textit{Werd' im Kreise deutscher Lande} \\
\textit{Durch des Künstlers Worte laut.} \\
\textit{So im Handeln, so im Sprechen} \\
\textit{Liebewoll verkünd' es weit:} \\
\textit{Alle menschliche Gebrechen} \\
\textit{Sühnet reine Menschlichkeit}. \]

If then Goethe's object was to show the triumph of civilisation over barbarism, and of truth over falsehood, or as the learned French translator of Goethe's Iphigenie, M. Legrelle, expresses it, to produce in Iphigenie \textit{un type éternel et suprême de perfection idéale}, can we suppose him to have aimed at constructing a Greek drama corresponding to the tragedies of the ancient Greek poets? Certainly not. All he did was to choose a classical subject which seemed to him most suitable as the background for a picture of human perfection, and in doing this he merely borrowed as much from the classical drapery for his picture as was actually necessary for the consistent execution of the work, and the representation of the characters respectively. The classical subject merely served him as a foil for the display of modern ethical ideas, and there is no single trait in the piece, which would impose upon us the acceptance of facts based upon the religious belief of the ancients, but quite incompatible with our modern views. We hear the complaints of Orestes that he is tormented by the furies, and see him suffering; but we do not behold the furies themselves. The bodily appearance of the avenging deities on the

\[ ^1 \text{After Eckermann had highly praised the performance of the part of Orestes by the actor Krüger, Goethe presented to the latter a handsomely bound copy of his Iphigenie, in which he had inscribed the above lines. Cp. Eckermann's \textit{Gespräche mit Goethe}, iii. 95, etc.} \]
stage was in its proper place before an audience in ancient Greece, whilst to admit it into a modern drama would be most unsuitable. Goethe was therefore quite right in rejecting the suggestion of Schiller, who was fond of scenic effect, to let the furies appear on the stage. He did not wish to imitate the ancient Greek tragic poets by having recourse to any external accessories which were peculiar to Greece only. If there is anything Greek in his drama besides the subject, it is the harmonious beauty of the piece as a whole, the calm dignity which pervades the action, and the unsurpassed majesty and melody of the language.

It is true there is not much action, in the usual acceptance of the word, to be found in the drama; still the characters are, one and all, distinctly and interestingly delineated, and bear the stamp of individuality. The character of the king—who has been, of course, greatly idealised,—is at once dignified and majestic. We learn to appreciate his noble qualities at the very outset of the drama through Iphigenia, who describes him as ein edler Mann, and through her dialogue with his faithful servant Arkas. When Thoas himself appears, we cannot deny him our tribute of admiration for his dignified bearing, and our sympathy for his loneliness and his unsuccessful wooing. That his feelings of humanity are stifled in him for a moment, and that he should address bitter reproaches to Iphigenia on ‘woman’s nature,’ is, under the circumstances, quite natural. The second time when the king appears—in the fifth act—we see him first represented as a man of great energy, prompt in command and ready in action. In thus depicting the character of the king, Goethe has happily applied a trait denoted by his name. Euripides describes him ‘as a barbarian who moves his feet like swift wings, and to whom his swiftness has given the name of Thoas’ (Iph. Taur. l. 32, etc.) 2; which circumstance has been pointed out in several passages, and most strikingly in the king’s behest:

1 The furies appear in the celebrated opera by Gluck, composed in 1779 to a libretto by M. Guillard.

2 ‘Thoos’ denotes in Greek ‘quick,’ ‘swift.’
Es komme schnell die Priesterin herbei!

Dann geht, durchsucht das Ufer scharf und schnell.

At the same time the king is represented as a man of valour, moderation, and sterling honesty. He subdues his anger in the presence of the fiery youth Orestes, but is ready to take up the single combat with him; and when he is reminded by Iphigenia of his promise and she appeals to his nobler feelings, he sternly but graciously grants her prayer.

Arkas, the king's confidant, worthily represents his master and reflects his good qualities. He earnestly pleads his cause with Iphigenia, for whom he seems to entertain feelings of reverence and friendship. There is also a touch of humanity in his character, and he is brave and prompt in his actions like his royal master.

The bright character of Bylades affords a pleasant relief against his stern surroundings. Undaunted by any calamity, shrewd and brave, he is a perfect counterpart of Odysseus. He is in fact a genuine Greek character. What can there be more indicative of an unflinching character than his assurance to Orestes:

Wenn die Priesterin

Schon, unsere Locken weibend abzuschneiden,

Die Hand erhebt, soll dein' und meine Rettung

Mein einziger Gedanke sein.

He had enlivened the gloomy mood of his friend (cp. l. 643, etc.), to whom he was attached with unparalleled devotedness, he had deceived the priestess with a 'cunningly devised story'; but with all his liveliness and shrewdness he is brave and thoughtful, for as Iphigenia says:

Er ist der Arm des Jünglings in der Schlacht,

Des Greises leuchtend Aug' in der Versammlung.

The character of Orestes can be properly defined from the moment of his recovery only. As long as he is under the ban of remorse, his soul is wrapped in deep melancholy; he is resigned to his fate and ready to die. Yet the spirit of heroism has not been entirely crushed in him. He still thinks with longing and regret of the bygone days, when he hoped to emulate the deeds
of Theseus and Hercules, and the love of truth is still paramount in him. When he finds that Iphigenia readily believed the 'fable' of Pylades, he confesses who he is, for he cannot bear to deceive such a noble soul by falsehood (cp. l. 1076, etc.). When he dimly begins to become conscious of the truth of Iphigenia's assurance that she is his sister, he manifests the most tender feelings of brotherly affection. How touching are his words to Iphigenia, when he comforts her to bear up under the new and last calamity:

_Weine nicht! Du hast nicht Schuld._

_Seit meinen ersten Jahren hab' ich nichts_

_Geliebt, wie ich dich lieben könnte, Schwester._

After his recovery Orestes appears in all the brightness of a young hero. From the speeches of Pylades (p. 75, etc.), we at once infer that a complete change has taken place in him, and that he is now like a new-born man; whilst when he appears armed (Act v. Sc. 4) we see bodily before us the valorous youth who is not even intimidated by the presence of the king. His bearing is at once royal, dignified, and courageous; and it is a fine trait in his character, that with the love of life there was aroused in him the love of heroic action, and that he, as a stranger, was ready for a contest on behalf of all the strangers who may in future approach the shore of Tauris.

The character of _Iphigenie_ is acknowledged to be one of the noblest that have ever been drawn by the master-hand of any poet. 'As a woman, as a daughter and sister, as a Greek and a priestess,' she is the embodiment of all ideal perfection, and her character stands before us in such harmonious beauty and completeness, that it would be just as difficult to describe it, as it is to give an exact idea in words of a beautiful work of art. The tender feeling for her kindred, the grateful sentiment towards her benefactor, the sense of duty in her function as priestess, are all strongly developed in her, but her truthfulness is paramount to everything else. What we most admire in _Iphigenie_ is her clear and distinct perception of what is right, and her unalterable resolution only to do what she acknowledges as such. She must
be all at one with her consciousness of what is right and good, if she is to be satisfied with herself; and in this sense she utters the words which give a clue to her whole character:

\[ \text{Ganz unbefleckt genieszt sich nur das Herz.} \]

In 1786 Goethe saw at Bologna a St. Agatha, painted in virginal purity, by Raphael. It made such a deep impression upon him, that he declared, \text{Ich habe mir die Gestalt wohl gemerkt und werde ihr im Geist meine Iphigenie vorlesen und meine Heldin nichts sagen lassen, was diese Heilige nicht aussprechen möchte.}

No wonder then that his Iphigenie is the purest and noblest female character ever delineated by a poet!

III.

'How many Iphigenias have been written! Yet they all differ from each other, for every writer handles the subject after his own fashion.' This remark of Goethe's should serve us as a guide in judging the numerous dramatisations of the subject of Iphigenia, from the time of Euripides down to that of Goethe himself; and it should, besides, completely settle the vexed question, which properly ought never to have been raised, Which production was superior, the Greek play, or the German drama?

An account of the various Iphigenias that have ever been written, would, of course, be beyond the scope of the present publication, but a brief summary of the Euripidean play—for the benefit of those who may not be acquainted with the drama itself—seems to be so much the more desirable, because it will clearly show the inexpediency of drawing a parallel between the two Iphigenias, as if they had been written with the same object.

The play of Euripides opens with a prologue composed after the author's usual fashion. Iphigenia first gives a genealogical account of her family, and after relating her own fate she describes a dream she had during the past night, which she can only interpret as a sure omen of the death of her brother Orestes. She prepares, therefore, with the help of her Grecian attendants
—consisting of female slaves, who form the Chorus—to carry
funeral libations to her brother’s shades. After Iphigenia has
left, Orestes and Pylades appear ‘to make a stealthy survey of
the temple,’ from which they intend to carry away secretly the
statue of Artemis; for Orestes had been promised release from
the furies, if he brought that statue to Athens. They retire with
the intention of carrying out their design at night time. Iphigenia
again appears on the stage, and joins the Chorus in singing a dirge.
The dirge ended, a herdsman announces to her the capture of
two Grecian strangers. She is asked to make immediate pre-
parations for sacrificing them. Hitherto she was, as she her-
sel declines, averse from carrying out the cruel law of the
land; but now, hardened by the assumed death of Orestes, and by
the remembrance of the wrong done to her at Aulis, she feels no
pity for her captive compatriots, and only wishes that Helen
and Menelaus might be thrown on the coast of Tauris, so that
she could immolate them. When the two captives, of whom she
only knows that one was called Pylades, are brought as victims
before Iphigenia, she gradually learns from them the events
which occurred since she left Argos, such as the capture of Troy,
the safe return of Menelaus and Helen, the murder of her father
Agamemnon by Clytemnestra, and the death of the latter by her
own son. Orestes persistently refused to give his name, in order
not to expose it to disgrace; and after Iphigenia had learnt from
his account that her brother was still alive, she hits upon the fol-
lowing plan. She declares herself willing to spare the life of that
one of the two captives, who will undertake to deliver a letter to
her brother Orestes, and here occurs that well-known contest
in generosity between the two friends, each of whom wishes the
other to save himself by carrying out the commission of the
priestess. At last Pylades is prevailed upon to accept the offer,
and he swears an oath that he will safely deliver the letter to
Orestes. By way of caution he adds, however, the saving clause,
that in case the ship should wreck, and the missive be lost, he
should no longer be responsible for the fulfilment of his oath.
This observation causes Iphigenia to read aloud the letter, in
which she relates her rescue at Aulis, and conjures her brother to save her. Pylades hereupon exclaims, that he can at once accomplish his task, and delivers the letter to Orestes. The recognition between brother and sister now takes place, and a plan is projected to effect the escape of all, and to convey away at the same time the statue of Diana. 'This affords,' as Professor Paley expresses it, 'abundant scope for the Greek arts of fraud and deception.' Thoas, the king of Tauris, is both a devout and credulous man, and he is easily persuaded by the priestess that the captives require lustration, in consequence of being guilty of the crime of matricide, and that the statue too must be purified by the water of the sea. The priestess retires with the two strangers and the image of the goddess to 'a lonely part of the sea-shore,' but finally the fraud is discovered, and Thoas is resolved to take summary vengeance. Nothing can now save the two friends and the priestess, except the expedient, to which Euripides so often had recourse, namely, the apparition of Pallas Athene, who commands the frightened king to allow both the priestess and Orestes to depart from Tauris, and to carry away with them the statue of Diana to Attica.

The above brief summary of the Euripidean Tauric Iphigenia will clearly show what has been pointed out before, that Goethe had in his Iphigenie no intention whatever to produce an imitation of the Greek play; that he did not wish to write any Greek play at all, in the usual acceptance of that term; and that the essential character of the two productions in question is so widely different, that every parallel is quite out of place. The two pieces could, if I may say so, only be contrasted, not compared.

The Iphigenia of Euripides is a vindictive, scheming, and lying Greek woman. The mildness of her heart, which she herself praises so much, did not extend beyond the fact that she awarded to the victims a tear of pity when they happened to be her compatriots (l. 344, etc.); and now she only regrets, as was said above, that she was unable to wreak her

vengeance on Helen and Menelaus (l. 354, etc.). She rejoices at the news of the death of the seer Calchas, and wishes death to Agamemnon (l. 531, etc.). She is ready to betray her host without the slightest remorse; she does not hesitate to tell him that her father ‘was still alive and fares well,’ and assures him that she will not return to Greece, as she hates and detests that country (l. 1185, etc.); and finally she overawes him with the miraculous tale, that the image of the goddess had turned away from its seat of its own accord, and had closed its eyes when the two strangers were brought to the temple (l. 1165, etc.).

Almost the only redeeming trait in the character of the Euripidean Iphigenia, is her objection to the proposal that Orestes should kill the king, because a guest should not murder his host (l. 1021). Her love for her kindred is certainly touching; but such love is only based on the ordinary feelings of human nature, and does not testify to any noble sentiments.

How different is the character of Goethe’s Iphigenie! The ideal of truthfulness and gratitude, she is tempted, for a moment only, to tell the king an untruth; but soon the heroic resolve rises in her breast, rather to sacrifice all than tell a falsehood and deceive her benefactor.

The character of Orestes is also rather ignobly conceived by Euripides. He would rather flee than risk his life (l. 102, etc.), and he is ready to murder the king of the country; and when his sister observes, ‘that she will make use of his ravings as a contrivance,’ he makes the commonplace remark, ‘that women are always cunning to find out tricks’ (l. 1032, etc.).

With Goethe, however, the character of Orestes appears in every respect in a nobler light. We sympathise with his sufferings, and we admire his truthfulness, which becomes the means of his ultimate recovery.

The character of Pylades is represented in a better light by Euripides than that of Orestes; but after all he consents to save himself, and to leave his unfortunate friend behind to die; nor does he possess that bright cheerfulness with which Goethe has invested his character.
The king is represented by Euripides as a credulous and superstitious tyrant, at whose deception we smile; whilst with Goethe he appears as a royal warrior, full of dignity and stern manliness, whose character is raised in our estimation by his calm, though deep, affection for Iphigenia. The characters of the 'herdsman' and the 'messenger' are with Euripides, in accordance with the exigencies of the play, insignificant; whilst Arkas, who performs in the plot of Goethe's drama the function of those two personages, is of a superior stamp.

The difference in the general plots of the two Iphigenias need not further be pointed out; but it should be remembered, that, whilst the main point with Euripides turns on the actual possession of the image of Artemis—which is, of course, quite in accordance with the religious belief of the ancients—the essence of Goethe's drama consists in the return of Iphigenia, which is delayed to the end on account of the dubious wording of the oracle, and which is brought about by her truthfulness. Thus the solution of the plot, which is effected by Euripides through the convenient contrivance of a *deus ex machinâ*, is achieved by Goethe through the natural sequence of noble actions.

The scene of recognition is, considered from the point of view of Goethe in writing the drama, also superior in the German *Iphigenie*. The recognition simply takes place in consequence of the reluctance of Orestes to tell a falsehood in the saintly presence of Iphigenia; and thus it is quite consistent with the tendency of the drama. The expedient to which Euripides had recourse, namely, to bring about the recognition by means of the letter, has been characterised by many as ludicrous; but here we should remember, that the 'contemporaries and epigones' of

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1 'Id enim tragoeedias illas inter se comparanti ante omnia tenendum est, Euripidem necessario curare debuisse, ut non solum Iphigenia e Taurica abduceretur, sed asportaretur etiam simulacrum Dianae. ... Goethio vero licebat in solo Iphigeniae reeditu consistere, quomque, si statua illa maneret apud Tauros, ea ipsa re solvi nodum posse intelligeret, ad id ambiguitate oraculi, sororem reduci jubente Apolline, potuit uti.' Gottfried Hermann's 'Preface' to 'Euripidis Iphigenia Taurica.'
the Greek poet must have considered that expedient as both natural and ingenious; for even Aristotle places it above all other expedients for effecting the recognition 1.

It having been shown that the single elements in the two dramas form such striking contrasts, it seems unnecessary to say anything more on the inexpediency of drawing a parallel between the two Iphigenias as dramatic productions. Euripides wrote a realistic play and Goethe composed an idealistic drama. The former merely wished to produce a national or popular play, —half pathetic and half humorous—and his characters are therefore more life-like, more real. The Greek audience probably heartily enjoyed the scene in which Thoas is befooled by the priestess, and they fully recognised their own countrymen in the doings and sayings of Orestes, Pylades, and Iphigenia. Goethe himself said that his Thoas was not historical; and it is more than probable that a Scythian king would be rather more of the stamp of Thoas in the Euripidean play. Goethe also well knew that his 'Iphigenie' never existed, but he selected the heroine of the beautiful Greek fable as the most suitable to represent an ideal perfection personified in a woman 2.

The two poets having had different objects in view in composing their dramas—the one writing for a Greek audience who wished to be entertained, and the other for readers whose sentiments he was anxious to enoble—it naturally follows that the treatment of the two productions must be totally different, if not actually contrasting. I will not go so far as to call the drama of Euripides 'a glorification of falsehood,' but I entirely concur in the opinion that Goethe's Iphigenie is the 'glorification of truth,' and that from an ethical point of view the German Iphigenie is

1 Cp. Arist. Poetics, xvi. § 8; Butcher's ed. p. 57.
2 It has been conjectured that Frau von Stein, who by her sisterly affection exercised such a soothing influence on Goethe, was the prototype of his Iphigenie (cp. Hermann Grimm's admirable Goethe-Vorlesungen, ii. 29, etc.). It is, however, not impossible that he amalgamated in the Greek heroine both the character of Frau v. Stein and of his own sister Cornelia.
just as superior to the Greek 'Iphigenia' as the modern code of morality is superior to the ancient.

The Iphigenia of Euripides is certainly in its way a remarkable play; and—barring the tendency and loftiness of conception of Goethe's Iphigenie—I quite agree with the remark, 'that both poems stand side by side as master-works of equal value, in spite, or rather on account of their diametrical contrasts; and that only one-sided narrowness can raise the one at the expense of the other.'

Goethe's Iphigenie auf Tauris did not 'take the world by storm' in the same way as his Werther did, and partly also his Götz von Berlichingen. It is true the enlightened circle of his Weimar

1 Hermann says in his above-mentioned Preface of Goethe that 'ita ille Atheniensem poetam aemulatus, ut hominem natione Graecum, sed eum talem audire videamur, qui nostri aevi cultu eruditus non solum virtutis puriorem excelsioremque imaginem animo impressam habeat, sed etiam oblectandi materiam magis ex sententiarum vi et copia, quam ex verborum ornatu et varietate numerorum depromat.'

2 Iphigenia in Taurien. Erklärt von Schöne und Köchly. Einleitung, p. 41. It may be to the point to remark here, that the title of Goethe's drama has often been objected to by classical scholars, because the country was called Tauoush and not Tavises. Köchly is of opinion that the mistake arose from the Latin title Iphigenia in Tauris. This may have been the case with those who may have used the word Tauris as the name of the 'Chersonesus Taurica,' before Goethe. As regards himself he certainly knew that the Latin title meant 'Iphigenia among the Tauri'; but he chose the word Tauris instead of the more correct Taurien because it adapts itself better to the metre, and the title Iphigenie auf Tauris is certainly more handy and melodious than the dragging name Iphigenie auf Taurien. It should also be remembered that there is actually an island called Tauris, and so Goethe adopted it for his purpose. The reason why he used auf instead of in, although it does not refer to a complete island, must also be sought in his love of rhythm and melody, to which he often sacrificed the rigid behests of Grammar. The frequent repetition of the vowel i in the title of Iphigenia in Tauris would have jarred too much on every, even moderately, musical ear. At the same time it may not be superfluous to remark that the form Tauris as the name for the 'Chersonesus Taurica' is now, probably in consequence of its adoption by Goethe, frequently met with both in German and English works. Douner uses the expression: Iphigenie in Tauri.
friends was delighted with the drama, even in its first imperfect form; but when he read the last finished version to the German artists at Rome, they felt disappointed at the calm tenour of the work. They had expected, as the author himself declared, 'something tempestuous in the Berlichingen style.' Gradually only the world began to appreciate fully the master-work, for which the generality of readers seemed not to be ripe at the time of its appearance. The admiration for this drama spread so steadily and universally at home, that in the year 1825, when the fiftieth anniversary of the poet's arrival at Weimar was celebrated by the whole duchy, a special performance of his Iphigenie took place in the evening of his Goldner Jubeltag, and a new handsome edition was published Zur Feier des VII November 1825.

Since that time Goethe's Iphigenie has considerably grown in favour with the German public as a dramatic piece, and it is frequently used, like Lessing's Nathan der Weise, for Mustervorstellungen, in which all the parts, without exception, are played by first-rate actors only. The effect produced by the drama on the stage is so great, that it makes a deep impression upon all who are endowed with sensitive feelings and with an appreciative taste for poetical beauties. It often moves the spectators even to tears, and excites in them a greater—and I would say, also a more wholesome emotion—than most tragedies with the powerful dramatic accessories of harrowing incidents ¹.

¹ In 1881 the English public had a very favourable opportunity of witnessing, in London, a masterly performance of Goethe's Iphigenie by the 'Meiningen Company.' It was acknowledged to be one of the most successful performances of the whole cycle, and the applause with which the actors were greeted at the end of the performance was the heartiest which the German actors earned during their stay in this country. Numerous spectators who did not understand a single word of the original Text, listened in silent admiration and, as it were, with religious devotion. The English Press was also unanimous in its praises of the play as a dramatic piece, and testified to the electric and almost unparalleled effect it produced on the audience. At the request of the public it was performed a second time, and, if possible, with still greater success.
In 1818, Goethe had the gratification of seeing his work translated into modern Greek by Joannes Papadopulos, a young Greek student who had spent some time at Weimar. Goethe felt so delighted at seeing his drama in the modern Greek garment, that one cannot help regretting that he had not the gratification of seeing the subsequent excellent translation of his *Iphigenie* into ancient Greek. Goethe’s drama was several times translated into Italian, among others by Andrea Maffei. There are also several French translations extant, the last being that by M. A. Legrelle, who has prefixed to his version a short life of Goethe and an appreciative analysis of the drama. Goethe’s *Iphigenie* has met, in general, with great favour in France, where the interest in the fable of Iphigenia had been aroused through Racine’s ‘Iphigénie en Aulide,’ through Gluck’s Operas on the two ‘Iphigenias,’ and other kindred productions. The first English version of this drama (known to Goethe and approved of by him) was made by William Taylor of Norwich in 1793. Since that time a number of English translations have appeared, both in this country and in America; the most successful of which is beyond doubt that by the distinguished Greek and German scholar, Miss Anna Swanwick. The high value of the drama has also been, in general, duly acknowledged by English classical scholars and critics, and the late Mr. G. H. Lewes, who devotes a whole chapter to the work, has the following passage on it, which I cannot help quoting in extenso:

‘It is a marvellous dramatic poem. The grand and solemn

1 The above mentioned translation is by Prof. Kock, and was published at Berlin, 1861. The following passage from the translator’s Preface, in which he speaks of the cultivation of classical studies in our own days, will be of special interest to English classical scholars: ‘Sunt tamen, qui veterum poetarum non solum lectione sed etiam imitatione hodie quoque delectentur: viget adhuc in Britannia, fidelissima horum studiorum nutrice et adiutrice, viget Oxonii et Cantabrigiae, locis omnium saeculorum fama celebratis,’ etc.

2 An account of the various dramatised Iphigenias will be found in M. Patin’s well-known *Euripide*, which forms the third volume of his ‘Etude sur les Tragiques Grecs.’ The author has in his Analysis also some excellent remarks on Goethe’s *Iphigenie*. 

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An account of the various dramatised Iphigenias will be found in M. Patin’s well-known *Euripide*, which forms the third volume of his ‘Etude sur les Tragiques Grecs.’ The author has in his Analysis also some excellent remarks on Goethe’s *Iphigenie*. 

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movement of its evolution responds to the large and simple ideas which it unfolds. Its calmness is majesty. In the limpid clearness of its language, the involved mental processes of the characters are as transparent as the operations of bees within a crystal hive; while the constant strain of high and lofty music which sounds through the poem makes the reader feel as if in a holy temple. And above all witcheries of detail there is the one capital witchery, belonging to Greek statues more than to any other works of human cunning, the perfect unity of impression produced by the whole, so that nothing in it seems made, but all to grow, nothing is superfluous, but all is in organic dependence; nothing is there for detached effect, but the whole is effect. The poem fills the mind; but beautiful as the separate passages are, admirers seldom think of passages, they think of the wondrous whole.'

On the use of Stichomythia in Goethe's 'Iphigenie.'

In addition to the above critical estimate, it may be proper to point out that Goethe has most happily adopted in his Iphigenie a characteristic feature peculiar to the Greek drama. We allude to the form of conversation known as Stichomythia (στίχωμιθ'ia), or 'dialogue in alternate lines'; which form was very popular with the Athenians, probably on account of their fondness of quick repartee and of neat epigrammatic turns of speech. In dramas treating of modern subjects, this kind of dialogue is liable to become monotonous and ridiculous, as has been wittily shown by Sheridan in his Critic; but in a drama treating of an ancient subject it is quite in its place. Goethe has made a sparing use of that form, among others, in ll. 992-999; 1444-1464; 1643-1652. In all these passages the dialogue flows on naturally, and there is nothing affected or stilted about it. Milton's and Shakespeare's use of the 'line-for-line dialogue' is well known, but it may be incidentally mentioned that Mr. Matthew Arnold has most skilfully used it in his Merope, and Mr. Swinburne in his Atalanta.
Iphigenie auf Tauris.

Ein Schauspiel

von

Wolfgang von Goethe.
Personen.

Sphigenie.
Thoas, König der Taurier.
Drest.
Bylabes.
Arkabs.

Schauplatz: Hain vor Dianens Tempel.
ARGUMENT.

ACT I.

IPHIGENIA gives expression to the feelings of awe with which her abode inspires her, and to her intense longing for her beloved kindred and her native land. She bewails the fate of woman, who is obliged to submit patiently to her fate, and she remorsefully confesses that she serves the goddess Diana, merely because she is kept in sacred bondage. Still she hopes in Diana, whom she supplicates to restore her to her kindred. (Scene 1.)

Arkas announces to Iphigenia the arrival of the King, and whilst describing her beneficial influence on Thoas and on his people by inducing them to abrogate the ancient practice of human sacrifices, he implores her to meet in a friendly manner the intentions of the King, who cherishes the hope of an union with her. (Scene 2.)

The King appears and expresses to Iphigenia the desire to lead her home as his bride. She declines the offer by an evasive answer, and Thoas declares, that, although the goddess has placed her in his hands, he will renounce his claims on the priestess, if a safe return to her kindred is in store for her. Iphigenia then discloses to the King her descent, and relates both the horrors perpetrated by her ancestors and the miraculous way in which she herself had escaped from death. The King still persists in his offer, and when Iphigenia again implores him to restore her to her kindred, he seems moodily to grant her request, but declares at the same time, that the ancient rite of sacrificing strangers who approach the shores
of his country, on the altar of Diana, must henceforth be resumed. Two strangers have been found concealed in the caverns of the shore. They will be sent to her and she is to perform her duty as priestess. (Scene 3.)

When Iphigenia is left alone (Sc. 4) she invokes the goddess Diana, who had before saved her from death, to keep her hands pure from blood.
Erster Auffug.

Erster Auftritt.

Iphigenie.

Heraus in eure Schatten, rege Wipfel
Des alten, heil'gen, dichtbelaubten Gaien's,
Wie in der Göttin still'es Heiligtum,
Tret' ich noch jetzt mit schauderndem Gefühl,
Als wenn ich sie zum erstenmal beträte,
Und es gewöhnt sich nicht mein Geist hierher.
So manches Jahr bewahrt mich hier verborgen
Ein hoher Wille, dem ich mich ergebe;
 Doch immer bin ich, wie im ersten, fremd.
 Denn ach! mich trennt das Meer von den Geliebten,
Und an dem Ufer steh' ich lange Tage,
Das Land der Griechen mit der Seele suchend,
Und gegen meine Seufzer bringt die Welle
Nur dumpfe Töne brausend mir herüber.
Weh dem, der fern von Eltern und Geschwistern
Ein einsam Leben führt! Ihn zehrt der Gram
Das nächste Glück vor seinen Lippen weg;
Ihm schwärmen abwärts immer die Gedanken
Nach seines Vaters Hallen, wo die Sonne
Zuerst den Himmel vor ihm ausschloß, wo
Sich Mitgeborene spielend fest und fest
Mit sanften Banden an einander knüpfsten.
Ich rechte mit den Göttern nicht; allein
Der Frauen Zustand ist beklagenswerth.

zu Haus und in dem Krieger herrscht der Mann
Und in der Fremde weis er sich zu helfen.

Ich freuet der Bestk; ihn krönt der Sieg;
Ein ehrenvoller Tod ist ihm bereitet.
Wie enggebunden ist des Weibes Glück!

Schon einem rauen Gatten zu gehorchen,
Ist Pflicht und Trost; wie elend, wenn sie gar
Ein feindlich Schicksal in die Ferne treibt!

So hält mich Thoas hier, ein edler Mann,
In ernsten, heil'gen Sklavenbanden fest.
O, wie beschämt geflech' ich, daß ich dir

Mit stillen Widerwillen diene, Göttin,
Dir, meiner Nettetir! Mein Leben sollte
Zu freiem Dienste dir gewidmet sein.

Auch hab' ich stets auf dich gehofft und hoffe
Noch jetzt auf dich, Diana, die du mich,

Des größten Königes verloßne Tochter,
In deinen heil'gen, sanften Arm genommen.
Ja, Tochter Zeus', wenn du den hohen Mann,
Den du, die Tochter fordernd, ängstigtest,
Wenn du den göttergleichen Agamemnon,
Der dir sein Liebste zum Altare brachte,
Von Troja's umgewandten Mauern rühmlich
Nach seinem Vaterland zurückbegleitet,
Die Gattin ihm, Elekren und den Sohn,
Die schönen Schätze, wohl erhalten haft,

So gieb auch mich den Meinen endlich wieder.
I. Aufzug, 2. Auftritt.

Und rette mich, die du vom Tod errettet,
Auch von dem Leben hier, dem zweiten Tode!

Zweiter Auftritt.

Iphigenie. Arfas.

Arfas.

Der König sendet mich hierher und heut
Der Priesterin Dianens Gruß und Heil.
Dies ist der Tag, da Lauris seiner Göttin
Für wunderbare, neue Siege dankt.
Ich eile vor dem König und dem Heer,
Zu melden, daß er kommt und daß es naht.

Iphigenie.

Wir sind bereit, sie würdig zu empfangen,
Und unsre Göttin sieht willkommnen Opfer
Von Thoas' Hand mit Gnadenblick entgegen.

Arfas.

O fänd' ich auch den Blick der Priesterin,
Der werthen, vielgeehrten, deinen Blick,
O heil'ge Jungfrau, heller, leuchtender,
Uns Allen gutes Zeichen! Noch bedeckt
Der Gram geheimnißvoll dein Innerstes;
Vergebens harren wir schon Jahre lang
Auf ein vertraulich Wort aus deiner Brust.
So lang' ich dich an dieser Stätte kenne,
Ist dies der Blick, vor dem ich immer schaudre;
Und wie mit Eisenbanden bleibt die Seele In's Innerste des Busens dir geschmiedet.

Iphigenie.

Wie's der Vertriebenen, der Verwaisten ziemt.

Arkas.

Scheinst du dir hier vertrieben und verwaist?

Iphigenie.

Kann uns zum Vaterland die Fremde werden?

Arkas.

Und dir ist fremd das Vaterland geworden.

Iphigenie.

Das ist's, warum mein blutend Herz nicht heilt. In erster Jugend, da sich kaum die Seele An Vater, Mutter und Geschwister hand, Die neuen Schößlinge, gesellt und lieblich, Vom Fuß der alten Stämme himmelwärts Zu dringen strebten, leider faßte da Ein fremder Fluch mich an und trennte mich Von den Geliebten, riß das schöne Band Mit eh'ner Faust entzwei. Sie war dahin, Der Jugend beste Freude, das Gediehn Der ersten Jahre. Selbst gerettet, war Ich nur ein Schatten mir, und frische Luft Des Lebens blüht in mir nicht wieder auf.

Arkas.

Wenn du dich so unglücklich nennen willst, So darf ich dich auch wohl undankbar nennen.
I. Auszug, 2. Auftritt.

Iphigenie.

Dank habt ihr stets.

Arkas.

Doch nicht den reinen Dank,
Um dessenwillen man die Wohltat thut,
Den fröhnen Blick, der ein zufriednes Leben
Und ein geneigtes Herz dem Wirthe zeigt.
Als dich ein tief geheimmüßvolles Schicksal
Vor soviel Jahren diesem Tempel brachte,
Kam Thoas dir, als einer Gottgegebenen,
Mit Ehrenrucht und mit Neigung zu begegnen,
Und dieses Ufer ward dir hold und freundlich,
Daß jedem Fremden sonst voll Grausens war,
Weil Niemand unser Reich vor dir betrat,
Der an Dianens heil'gen Stufen nicht
Nach altem Brauch, ein blutig Opfer, fiel.

Iphigenie.

Frei athmen macht das Leben nicht allein.
Welch Leben ist's, das an der heil'gen Stätte,
Gleich einem Schatten um sein eigen Grab,
Ich nur vertrauen muß? Und nenn' ich das
Ein fröhlich selbstbewußtes Leben, wenn
Uns jeder Tag, vergebens hingeträumt,
Zu jenen grauen Tagen vorbereitet,
Die an dem Ufer Lethe's selbstvergessend,
Die Trauernschar der Abgeschiednen feiert?
Ein unnütz Leben ist ein früher Tod;
Dies Frauenenschicksal ist vor allen mein's.
Arkas.
Den edeln Stolz, daß du dir selbst nicht g'nügest,
Verzeih' ich dir, so sehr ich dich bedaure;
Er raubet den Genuß des Lebens dir.
Du hast hier nichts gethan seit deiner Ankunft?
Wer hat des Königs trüben Sinn erheitert?
Wer hat den alten grausamen Gebrauch,
Dass am Altar Dianens jeder Fremde
Sein Leben blutend läßt, von Jahr zu Jahr,
Mit fanfter Ueberredung aufgehalten,
Und die Gesangnen vom gewissen Tod
Ins Vaterland so oft zurückgeschickt?
Hat nicht Diane, statt erzürnt zu sein,
Dass sie der blut'gen alten Opfer mangelt,
Dein sanftes Gebet in reichem Maaß erhört?
Umschwebt mit frohem Fluge nicht der Sieg
Das Heer, und eilt er nicht sogar voraus?
Und fühlt nicht Teglicher ein besser Loos,
Seitdem der König, der uns weif' und tapfer
So lang' geführet, nun sich auch der Milde
In deiner Gegenwart erfreut und uns
Des schweigenden Gehorsams Pflicht erleichtert?
Das nennst du unnüch, wenn von deinem Wesen
Auf Taufendste herab ein Balsam tränstelt,
Wenn du dem Volke, dem ein Gott dich brachte,
Des neuen Glückes erw'ge Quelle wirst,
Und an dem unmüthbaren Todesüser
Dem Fremden Heil und Rückkehr zu bereitest?

Iphigenie.
Das Wenige verschwindet leicht dem Blick,
Der vorwärts sieht, wie viel noch übrig bleibt.
I. Aufzug, 2. Auftritt.

Arkas.

Doch lobst du den, der, was er thut, nicht schägt?

Iphigenie.

Man tadelst den, der seine Thaten wägt.

Arkas.

Auch den, der wahren Werth zu stolz nicht achtet,
Wie den, der falschen Werth zu eitel hebt.
Glaub' mir und hör' auf eines Mannes Wort, 150
Der treu und redlich dir ergeben ist:
Wenn heut der König mit dir redet, so
Erleichtr' ihm, was er dir zu sagen denkt!

Iphigenie.

Du ängstest mich mit jedem guten Worte;
Oft wisch ich seinem Antrag mühsam aus. 155

Arkas.

Bedenke, was du thust und was dir näht!
Seitdem der König seinen Sohn verloren,
Vertraut er Wenigen der Seinen mehr,
Und diesen Wenigen nicht mehr wie sonst.
Misgunstig sieht er jedes Edlen Sohn
Als seines Reiches Folger an, er fürchtet
Ein einsam hübslos Alter, ja vielleicht
Verwegnen Aufstand und frühzeit'gen Tod.
Der Schythe sagt ins Reden keinen Vorzug,
Um wenigsten der König. Er, der nur
 Gewöhnt ist zu befehlen und zu thun,
Kennt nicht die Kunst, von weitem ein Gespräch
Nach seiner Absicht langsam sein zu lenken. Er schwer's ihm nicht durch ein rückhaltend Weigern, Durch ein vorsätzlich Missverstehen! Geh Gefällig ihm den halben Weg entgegen!

Iphigenie.
Soll ich beschleunigen, was mich bedroht?

Arkaß.
Willst du sein Werben eine Drohung nennen?

Iphigenie.
Es ist die schrecklichste von allen mir.

Arkaß.
Gieb ihm für seine Neigung nur Vertraun!

Iphigenie.
Wenn er von Furcht erst meine Seele löst.

Arkaß.
Warum verschweigst du deine Herkunft ihm?

Iphigenie.
Weil einer Priesterin Geheimnis ziemt.

Arkaß.
Dem König sollte nichts Geheimnis sein!
Und ob er's gleich nicht fordert, fühlt er's doch,
Und fühlt es tief in seiner großen Seele,
Daß du sorgsältig dich vor ihm verwahrst.

Iphigenie.
Nährt er Verdruss und Unmut gegen mich?
I. Aufzug, 2. Auftritt.

Arkaß.

So scheint es fast. Zwar schweigt er auch von dir;
Doch haben hingeworfe Worte mich
Belehr't, daß seine Seele sebt den Wunsch
Ergriffen hat, dich zu besitzen. las,
O überlaß ihn nicht sich selbst, damit
In seinem Busen nicht der Unmut reife
Und dir Entseheen bringe, du zu spät
An meinen treuen Rath mit Reue denkeest!

Iphigenie.

Wie? Sinnt der König, was kein edler Mann,
Der seinen Namen liebt und dem Verhehrung
Der Himmlilichen den Busen händigt,
Je denken sollte? Sinnt er vom Altar
Mich in sein Bette mit Gewalt zu ziehn?
So ruf' ich alle Götter und vor allen
Dianen, die entschloßne Göttin, an,
Die ihren Schutz der Priesterin gewiß,
Und Jungfrau einer Jungfrau gern gewährt.

Arkaß.

Sei ruhig! Ein gewaltsam neues Blut
Treibt nicht den König, solche Jungling'stat
Verwegen auszuüben. Wie er sinnt,
Besürcheit ich andern harten Schluß von ihm,
Den unausf haltbar er vollenden wird;
Denn seine Seele ist fest und unbeweglich.
Drum bitt' ich dich, vertrau' ihm, sei ihm dankbar,
Wenn du ihm weiter nichts gewähren kannst!
Iphigenie auf Tauris.

Iphigenie.

O sage, was dir weiter noch bekannt ist!

Arkaß.

Erzähre's von ihm! Ich seh' den König kommen; Du ehrst ihn, und dich heißt dein eigen Herz, Ihm freundlich und vertraulich zu begegnen. Ein edler Mann wird durch ein gutes Wort Der Frauen weit geführt.

Iphigenie (allein).


Dritter Außritt.

Iphigenie. Thoas.

Iphigenie.

Mit königlichen Gütern segne dich Die Göttin! Sie gewähre Sieg und Ruhm Und Reichthum und das Wohl der Deinigen Und jedes frommen Wunsches Füße dir, Daß, der du über Viele sorgend herrschest, Du auch vor Vielen seltnes Glück genießest!
I. Aufzug, 3. Auftritt.

Thoas.

Zufrieden war' ich, wenn mein Volk mich rühmte:
Was ich erwarb, genießen Andre mehr
Als ich. Der ist am glücklichsten, er sei
Ein König oder ein Geringer, dem
In seinem Hause Wohlf bereitet ist.
Du nährest Theil an meinen tiefen Schmerzen,
Als mir das Schwert der Feinde meinen Sohn,
Den legten, besten, von der Seite riss.
So lang' die Nache meinen Geist besaß,
Nun such' ich nicht die Deede meiner Wohnung;
Doch jetzt, da ich beschieden wiederkehre,
Ihr Reich zerstört, mein Sohn geröthen ist,
Bleibt mir zu Hause nichts, das mich ergebe.
Der fröhliche Gehorsam, den ich sonst
Aus einem jeden Auge blicken sah,
Ist nun von Sorg' und Unmuth still gedämpft.
Ein Jeder sinnt, was künftig werden wird,
Und folgt dem Kinderlosen, weil er muß.
Nun komm' ich heut in diesen Tempel, den
Ich oft betrat um Sieg zu bitten und
Für Sieg zu danken. Einen alten Wunsch
Trag' ich im Busen, der auch dir nicht fremd,
Noch unerwartet ist: Ich hoffe, dich,
Zum Segen meines Volks und mir zum Segen,
Als Braut in meine Wohnung einzuführen.

Iphigenie.

Der Unbekannten bietest du zu viel,
O König, an. Es steigt die Flüchtige
Beschäm't vor dir, die nichts an diesem Ufer
Als Schutz und Ruhe sucht, die du ihr gabst.
Das du in das Geheimnis deiner Ankunft
Vor mir, wie vor dem Legten, stets dich hüllest,
Wär' unter keinem Volke recht und gut.
Dies Ufer schreckt die Fremden; das Gesetz
Gebietet's und die Not. Allein von dir,
Die jedes frommen Rechts genießt, ein wohl
Von uns empfangner Gast, nach eignem Sinn
Und Willen ihres Tages sich erfreut,
Von dir hofft' ich Vertrauen, daß der Wirth
Für seine Treue wohl erwarten darf.

Iphigenie.
Verberg ich meiner Eltern Namen und
Mein Haus, o König, war's Verlegenheit,
Nicht Mißtraun. Denn vielleicht, ach, wüßtest du,
Wer vor dir steht, und welch verwünschtes Haupt
Du nährst und schügst, ein Entsetzen faßte
Dein großes Herz mit seltnem Schauer an,
Und statt die Seite deines Thrones mir
Zu bieten, triebst du mich vor der Zeit
Aus deinem Reiche; fließest mich vielleicht,
Eh' zu den Meinen frohe Rückkehr mir .
Und meiner Wandrung Ende zugericht ist,
Dem Glund zu, das jeden Schweifenden,
Von seinem Haus Vertriebnen überall
Mit kalter, fremder Schreckenshand erwartet.

Thoas.
Was auch der Rat der Götter mit dir sei,
Und was sie deinem Haus und dir gedenken,
So fehl' es doch, seitdem du bei uns wohnst
I. Aufzug, 3. Auftritt.

Und eines frommen Gastes Recht genießest,
An Segen nicht, der mir von oben kommt.
Ich möchte schwer zu überreden sein,
Daß ich an dir ein schuldvoll Haupt beschütze.

Iphigenie.

Dir bringt die Wohltat Segen, nicht der Gast.

Thoas.

Was man Verruchten thut, wird nicht gesegnet.
Drum endige dein Schweigen und dein Weigern!
Es fordert dies kein ungerechter Mann.
Die Göttin übergab dich meinen Händen;
Wie du ihr heilig warst, so warst du's mir.
Auch sei ihr Wink noch künftig mein Geseg:
Wenn du nach Hause Rückkehr hoffen kannst,
So sprech' ich dich von aller Fordrung los.
Doch ist der Weg auf ewig dir versperrt,
Und ist dein Stamm vertrieben, oder durch
Ein ungeheure's Unheil ausgelöscht,
So bist du mein durch mehr als Ein Geseg.
Sprich offen, und du weißt, ich halte Wort.

Iphigenie.

Vom alten Bande lösst ungern sich
Die Junge los, ein lang verschwiegenes
Geheimnis endlich zu entdecken; denn
Einmal vertraut, verläßt es ohne Rückkehr
Des tiefen Herzens stehre Wohnung, schadet,
Wie es die Götter wollen, oder nützt.
Bernimm! Ich bin aus Tantalus' Geschlecht.

Thoas.

Du sprichst ein großes Wort gelassen aus.
Iphigenie auf Tauris.

Kennst du den deinen Ahnherrn, den die Welt
Als einen ehmals Hochbegnadigten
Der Götter kennt? Ist's jener Tantalus,
Den Jupiter zu Rath und Tafel zog,
An dessen altersfahrn'en, vielen Sinn
Verknüpfenden Gesprächen Götter selbst,
Wie an Drakelsprüchen, sich ergehen?

Iphigenie.

Er ist es; aber Götter sollten nicht
Mit Menschen wie mit ihres Gleiches wandeln;
Das sterbliche Geschlecht ist viel zu schwach,
In ungewohnter Höhe nicht zu schwindeln.
Unedel war er nicht und kein Berräther,
Allein zum Knecht zu groß, und zum Gesellen
Des großen Donnerg's nur ein Mensch. So war
Auch sein Vergehen menschlich; ihr Gericht
War streng, und Dichter singen: Nebennuth
Und Untreu stürzten ihn von Jovis Tisch
Zur Schmach des alten Xartanus hinab.
Ach, und sein ganz Geschlecht trug ihren Haß.

Thoas.

Trug es die Schul'de's Ahnherrn oder eigne?

Iphigenie.

Zwar die gewalt'ge Brust und der Titanen
Kraftvoller's Mark war seiner Sohn' und Enkel
Gewisses Erbtheil; doch es schmiedete
Der Gott um ihre Stirn ein ehern Band:
Rath, Mäßigung und Weisheit und Geduld
Verborg er ihrem scheuen, düstern Blick;
Zur Wuth ward ihnen jegliche Begier,
Und grenzenlos drang ihre Wuth umher.
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Schon Pelops, der Gewaltigrossende,
Des Tantalus geliebster Sohn, erwarb
Sich durch Berrath und Mord das schönste Weib,
Denomaus' Erzeugte, Hippodamien.
Sie bringt den Wünschen des Gemahls zwei Söhne,
Tyoon und Atreus. Neidisch sehen sie
Des Vaters Liebe zu dem ersten Sohn,
Aus einem andern Bette wachsend, an.
Der Hass verbindet sie, und heimlich wagt
Das Paar im Brudermord die erste That.
345
Der Vater wänet Hippodamien
Die Mörderin, und grimmig fordert er
Bov ihr den Sohn zurück, und sie entleibt
Sich selbst—

Thoas.
Du schweigest? Fahre fort zu reden!
Lass dein Bertraun dich nicht gereuen! Sprich!
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Iphigenie.
Wohl dem, der seiner Väter gern gedenkt,
Der froh von ihren Thaten, ihrer Größe
Den Hörer unterhält und, still sich freuend,
Aus Ende dieser schönen Reihe sich
Geschlossen zieht! Denn es erzeugt nicht gleich
355
Ein Haus den Halbgott noch das Ungeheuer;
Erst eine Reihe Böser oder Guter
Bringt endlich das Entsehnen, bringt die Freude
Der Welt hervor.—Nach ihres Vaters Tode

C 2
Und ihren Wagen aus dem ew'gen Gleise.
Dios sind die Ahnherrn deiner Priesterrin;
Und viel unseliges Geschick der Männer,
Biel Thaten des verworrenen Sinnes deckt
Die Nacht mit schweren Fittigen und lässt
Uns nur in grauenvolle Dämferung sehn.

Thoas.

Verbirg sie schweigend auch! Es sei genug
Der Gräuel! Sage nun, durch welch ein Wunder
Von diesem wilden Stamme du entsprangst.

Iphigenie.

Des Atreus ältester Sohn war Agamemnon;
Er ist mein Vater. Doch ich darf es sagen:
In ihm hab' ich seit meiner ersten Zeit
Ein Muster des vollkommenen Manns gesehen.
Ihm brachte Klysthenes mich, den Erstling
Der Liebe, dann Elektron. Ruhig herrschte
Der König, und es war dem Hause Tantal's
Die lang entbehrte Rast gewährt. Allein
Es mangelte dem Glück der Eltern noch
Ein Sohn; und kaum war dieser Wunsch erschle,
Daß zwischen beiden Schwestern nun Dreist,
Der Liebling, wuchs, als neues Nebel schon
Dem sichern Hause zubereitet war.
Der Ruf des Krieges ist zu euch gekommen,
Der, um den Raub der schönsten Frau zu rächen,
Die ganze Macht der Fürsten Griechenlands
Um Trojens Mauern lagerte. Ob sie
Die Stadt gewonnen, ihrer Rache Ziel
Erreicht, vernahm ich nicht. Mein Vater führte
Der Griechen Heer. In Aulis harrten sie
Auf günst'gen Wind vergebens; denn Diane,
Erzürnt auf ihren großen Führer, hielt
Die Glienden zurück und sorderte
Durch Kaleas' Mund des Königs älteste Tochter.
Sie lockten mit der Mutter mich in's Lager,
Sie rissen mich vor den Altar und weisnten
Der Göttin dieses Haupts. — Sie war versöhnnt;
Sie wollte nicht mein Blut, und hüllte rettend
In eine Wolke mich; in diesem Tempel
Erkannt' ich mich zuerst vom Tode wieder.
Ich bin es selbst, bin Iphigenie,
Des Atreus Enkel, Agamemnon's Tochter,
Der Göttin Eigenthum, die mit dir spricht.

Iphigenie

Mehr Vorzug und Vertrauen geb' ich nicht
Der Königstochter als der Unbekannten.
Ich wiederhole meinen ersten Antrag:
Komm, folge mir und theile, was ich habe!

Iphigenie.

Wie darf ich solchen Schritt, o König, wagen?
Hat nicht die Göttin, die mich rettete,
Allein das Recht auf mein geweihtes Leben?
Sie hat für mich den Schuhort ausgesucht,
Und sie bewahrt mich einem Vater, den
Sie durch den Schein genug gestraft, vielleicht
Zur schönsten Freude seines Alters, hier.
Vielleicht ist mir die frohe Rückkehr nah,
Und ich, auf ihren Weg nicht achtend, hätte

Mich wider ihren Willen hier gefesselt?

Thoas.

Das Zeichen ist, daß du noch hier verweilst.
Such' Ausschacht solcher Art nicht ängstlich auf!
Man spricht vergebens viel, um zu versagen; 450
Der Andere hört von Allem nur das Nein.

Iphigenie.

Nicht Worte sind es, die nur blenden sollen;
Ich habe dir mein tieffstes Herz entdeckt.
Und sagst du dir nicht selbst, wie ich dem Vater,
Der Mutter, den Geschwistern mich entgegen 455
Mit ängstlichen Gefühlen sehnen muß,
Daß in den alten Hallen, wo die Trauer
Noch manchmal stille meinen Namen lispelt,
Die Freude, wie um eine Neugeborne,
Den schönsten Krantz von Säul' an Säulen schlinge! 460
O sendestest du mich auf Schiffen hin!
Du gäbest mir und Allen neues Leben.

Thoas.

So kehr' zurück! Thnu', was dein Herz dich heisst,
Und höre nicht die Stimme gutes Nath's 465
Und der Vernunft! Sei ganz ein Weib und gieb
Dich hin dem Triebe, der dich zügellos
Ergreift und dahin oder dorthin reißt.
Wenn ihnen eine Lust im Bufen brennt,
Hält von Verräther sie kein heilig Band,
Der sie dem Vater oder dem Gemahl 470
Aus langbewährten, treuen Armen lockt;
Und schweigt in ihrer Brust die rasche Gluth,
So dringt auf sie vergebens treu und mächtig
Der Ueberredung goldne Junge los.

Iphigenie.

Gedenk', o König, deines edeln Wortes!
Wißt du mein Zutraun so erwidern? Du
Schienst vorbereitet, Alles zu vernehmen.

Thoas.

Aufs Ungehoßte war ich nicht bereitet;
Doch sollt' ich's auch erwarten; wußt' ich nicht,
Daß ich mit einem Weibe handeln ging?

Iphigenie.

Schilt nicht, o König, unser arm Geschlecht!
Nicht herrlich wie die enern, aber nicht
Unedel sind die Waffen eines Weibes.
Glaub' es, darin bin ich dir vorzuziehn,
Daß ich dein Glücks mehr als du selber kenne.
Du wäheßt, unbekannt mit dir und mir,
Ein näher Band werde' uns zum Glück vereinen.
Voll guten Mutheß, wie voll guten Willens,
Dringst du in mich, daß ich mich fügen soll;
Und hier dank' ich den Göttern, daß sie mir
Die Festigkeit gegeben, dieses Bündnis
Nicht einzugehen, das sie nicht gebilligt.

Thoas.

Es spricht kein Gott, es spricht dein eignes Herz.

Iphigenie.

Sie reden nur durch unser Herz zu uns.

Thoas.
Und hab' ich sie zu hören, nicht das Recht?

Iphigenie.
Es überbrausst der Sturm die zarte Stimme.

Thoas.
Die Priesterin vernimmt sie wohl allein?

Iphigenie.
Bor allen Andern merke sie der Fürst!

Thoas.
Dein heilig Amt und dein geerbtes Recht
An Jovis Tisch bringt dich den Göttern näher
Als einen ergeborenen Wilden.

Iphigenie.

So
Büß' ich nun das Vertraun, das du erzwangt.

Thoas.
Ich bin ein Mensch; und besser ist's, wir enden.
So bleibe denn mein Wort: Sei Priesterin
Der Göttin, wie sie dich erforren hat;
Doch mir verzeih' Diane, daß ich ihr
Bisher, mit Unrecht und mit innerm Vorwurs,
Die alten Opfer vorenthalten habe!
Kein Fremder nahet glücklich unserm Ufer;
Von Alters her ist ihm der Tod gewiß.
Nur du haft mich mit einer Freundlichkeit,
In der ich bald der zarten Tochter Liebe,
Bald stille Reigung einer Braut zu sehn
Iphigenie auf Tauris.

Mich tief ersprente, wie mit Zauberbanden
Gejoffelt, daß ich meiner Pflicht vergaß.
Du hattest mir die Sinnen eingewiegt,
Das Murren meines Volks vernahm ich nicht;
Nun rufen sie die Schuld von meines Sohnes
Frühzeit’gem Tode lauter über mich.
Um deinetwillen halt’ ich länger nicht
Die Menge, die das Opfer bringend fordert.

Iphigenie.

Um meinetwillen hab’ ich’s nie begehrt.
Der mißversteht die Himmlischen, der sie
Blutgierig wähnt; er dichtet ihnen nur
Die eigenen grausamen Begierden an.
Entzog die Göttin mich nicht selbst dem Priester?
Ihr war mein Dienst willkommener, als mein Tod.

Thoas.

Es ziemt sich nicht für uns, den heiligen
Gebrauch mit leicht beweglicher Vernunft
Nach unserm Sinn zu deuten und zu lenken.
Thu’ deine Pflicht, ich werde meine thun.
Zwei Freunde, die wir in des Ufers Höhlen
Versteckt gefunden, und die meinem Lande
Nichts Gutes bringen, sind in meiner Hand.
Mit diesen nehme deine Göttin wieder
Ihr erstes, rechtes, lang’ entbehrtes Opferr
Ich sende sie hierher; du weist den Dienst.
Iphigenie (allein).

Du haft Wolken, gnädige Natterin,
Einzuhüllen unschuldig Verfolgte,
Und auf Winden dem eh'rnen Geschick sie
Aus den Armen, über das Meer,
Neber der Erde weiteste Strecken,
Und wohin es dir gut dünkt, zu tragen.
Weise bist du und siehst das Künstige;
Nicht vorüber ist dir das Vergangne,
Und dein Blick ruht über den Deinen,
Wie dein Licht, das Leben der Nächte,
Neber der Erde ruhet und waltet.
O, enthalte vom Blut meine Hände!
Nimmer bringt es Segen und Ruhe;
Und die Gestalt des zufällig Ermordeten
Wird auf des traurig unwilligen Mörder's
Böse Stunden lauern und schrecken.
Dein die Unsterblichen lieben der Menschen
Weitverbreitete gute Geschlechter,
Und sie fristen das flüchtige Leben
Gerne dem Sterblichen, wollen ihm gerne
Ihres eigenen, ewigen Himmels
Mitgenießendes, fröhliches Anschau'n
Eine Weile gönnten und lassen.
ARGUMENT.

ACT II.

Orestes looks forward with calm resignation to his approaching death on the altar of Diana, and he only bewails the fate of Pylades. The latter, however, does not give up all hopes of rescue for both of them, and he encourages his friend to look forward to a new heroic career. Orestes calls up to memory the days gone by, when he had hoped to accomplish great and noble deeds together with Pylades; but as the gods seem to have decreed the ruin of the race of Tantalus, he is doomed to die an inglorious death. Pylades now encourages his desponding friend with the hope, that if he brings, according to the command of the gods, the image of Diana to Apollo at Delphi, the united ‘noble pair’ will rescue him from the grasp of the furies. He also interprets it as a favourable omen, that there was a priestess in the temple of Diana, who restrains the cruel rite of human sacrifices by her gentle influence, and he founds his hopes on her nobleness of mind. On seeing Iphigenia approaching, he bids Orestes retire, as he wishes first to speak with her alone. (Scene 1.)

Iphigenia appears, and after unbinding the chains of Pylades asks him from what race he sprang, and what fate had brought him hither with his companion. Pylades tells her that they were the sons of Adrastus of Crete, and that his brother, having committed fratricide, was now pursued by the furies. Rescue was, however, promised to him in the temple of Diana. Being asked about the fate of Troy, Pylades informs Iphigenia of the fall of the town, and whilst
bewailing the death of many Greek heroes, he deplores the sad fate of Agamemnon, who had been killed by Clytemnestra and Aegisthus. Iphigenia, unable to listen any longer to the recital of the horrors which had occurred in her family, retires (Sc. 2), and Pylades, surmising that the priestess must have known king Agamemnon, and that she must herself be descended from a noble race, is still more strengthened in his hopes of safety.
Zweiter Aufzug.

Erster Auftritt.

Drest. Pylades.

Drest.

Es ist der Weg des Todes, den wir treten:
Mit jedem Schritt wird meine Seele stiller.
Als ich Apollon bat, das gräßliche
Geleit der Nachgeister von der Seite
Mir abzunehmen, schien er Hülfe und Rettung
Im Tempel seiner vielgeliebten Schwester,
Die über Laurus herrschet, mit hoffnungserhebender
Gewissen Göterworten zu versprechen;
Und nun ersüßet sich's, daß alle Noth
Mit meinem Leben völlig enden soll.

Wie leicht wird's mir, dem eine Göttersand
Das Herz zusammendrückt, den Sinn betäubt,
Dem schönen Licht der Sonne zu entsagen!
Und sollen Atreus' Enkel in der Schlacht
Ein siegbesegnetes Ende nicht gewinnen,
Soll ich wie meine Ahnen, wie mein Vater
Als Opferthier im Todeskampf bluten,
So sei es! Besser hier vor dem Altar,
Als im verworfnen Winkel, wo die Neige

565

570

575
Der nahverwandte Meuchelmörder stellt.
Laßt mir so lange Ruh, ihr Unterirdischen,
Die nach dem Blut ihr, das von meinen Fritten
Herniedertrüpfelnd meinen Pfad bezeichnet,
Wie losgelassene Hunde spürend hebt!
Laßt mich, ich komme bald zu euch hinab.
Das Licht des Tages soll euch nicht seh'n, noch mich.
Der Erde schöner, grüner Teppich soll
Kein Zummelplatz für Larven sein. Dort unten
Such' ich euch auf; dort bindet Alle dann
Ein gleich Geschick in ew'ge matte Nacht.
Nur dich, mein Pylades, dich, meiner Schuld
Und meines Banns unschuldigen Genossen,
Wie ungern nehms' ich dich in jenes Trauerland
Frühzeitig mit! Dein Leben oder Tod
Giebt mir allein noch Hoffnung oder Furcht.

Pylades.
Ich bin noch nicht, Dreist, wie du bereit,
In jenes Schattenreich hinabzugehn.
Ich sinne noch, durch die verworren Pfade,
Die nach der schwarzen Nacht zu führen scheinen,
Und zu dem Leben wieder auszuwinden.
Ich denke nicht den Tod; ich sinne' und horche,
Ob nicht zu irgendeiner frohen Flucht
Die Götter Rath und Wege zurückschlagen.
Der Tod, gefürchtet oder ungefürchtet,
Kommt unaufhaltsam. Wenn die Priesterin
Schon, unsere Locken weidend abzuschneiden,
Die Hand erhobt, soll dein' und meine Rettung
Mein einziger Gedanke sein. Erhebe
Von diesem Unmut' deine Seele! Zweiselnud,

Dreß.

Des Lebens dunkle Decke breitete
Die Mutter schön mir um das zarte Haupt,
Und so wuchs ich herauf, ein Ebenbild
Des Vaters, und es war mein stummer Blick
Ein bitterer Vorwurf ihr und ihrem Buhlen.
Wie oft, wenn still Elektra, meine Schwester,
Am Feuer in der tiefen Halle saß,
Drängt' ich beklommen mich an ihren Schoß
Und starre, wie sie bitter weinte, sie
Mit großen Augen an! Dann sagte sie
Von unserm hohen Vater viel. Wie sehr
Verlangt' ich ihn zu sehn, bei ihm zu sehn!
Mich wünscht' ich bald nach Troja, ihn bald her.
Es kam der Tag—

Bylades.

O laß von jener Stunde
Sich Hölzungeister nächstlich unterhalten!
Uns gebe die Erinnerung schöner Zeit
Zu frischem Heldenlaufe neue Kraft!
Die Götter brauchen manchen guten Mann
Zu ihrem Dienst auf dieser weiten Erde.
Sie haben noch auf dich gezählt; sie gaben
Dich nicht dem Vater zum Geleite mit,
Da er unwillig nach dem Orkus ging.
Drest.

D, wär' ich, seinen Saum ergreifend, ihm Gesolgt!

Pylades.

So haben die, die dich erhielten,
Für mich gesorgt; denn was ich worden wäre,
Wenn du nicht lebtest, kann ich mir nicht denken, 640
Da ich mit dir und deinetwillen nur
Seit meiner Kindheit leb' und leben mag.

Drest.

Erinnre mich nicht jener schönen Tage,
Da mir dein Haus die freie Stätte gab,
Dein edler Vater flug und liebenvoll
Die halberstarre junge Blüthe pflegte;
Da du, ein immer munterer Geselle,
Gleich einem leichten, bunten Schmetterling
Um eine dunkle Blume, jeden Tag
Um mich mit neuem Leben gaukeltest,
Mir deine Lust in meine Seele spieltest,
Daß ich, vergessend meiner Notth, mit dir
In rascher Jugend hingerissen schwärme.

Pylades.

Da sing mein Leben an, als ich dich liebte.

Drest.

Sag': meine Notth begann, und du sprichst wahr. 655
Daß ist das Nöthlichere von meinem Schicksal,
Daß ich, wie ein verpfeister Vertriebner,
Geheimen Schmerz und Tod im Busen trage;
Daß, wo ich den gesund'sten Ort betrete,
Gar bald um mich die blühenden Geschicke
Den Schmerzenzug langsamem Todes verrathen.

Pylades.
Der Nächste war' ich, diesen Tod zu sterben,
Wenn je dein Hauch, Dresst, vergistete.
Bin ich nicht immer noch voll Müch und Lust?
Und Lust und Liebe sind die Fittige
Zu großen Thaten.

Dr'est.
Große Thaten? Ja,
Ich weiss die Zeit, da wir sie vor uns sähn.
Wenn wir zusammen oft dem Wilde nach
Durch Berg' und Thäler rannten und vereinst,
An Brust und Faust dem hohen Achtenrm gleiche,
Mit Keul' und Schwert dem Ungeheuer so,
Dem Räuber auf der Spur, zu jagen hofften;
Und dann wir Abends an der weiten See
Uns an einander lehnend ruhig saßen,
Die Wellen bis zu unsern Füssen spielten,
Die Welt so weit, so offen vor uns lag;
Da sahr wohl Einer manchmal nach dem Schwert,
Und künst'ge Thaten drangen wie die Sterne
Rings um uns her unzählig aus der Nacht.

Pylades.
Unendlich ist das Werk, das zu vollführen
Die Seele bringt. Wir möchten jede That
So gross gleich thun, als wie sie wächst und wird,
Wenn Jahre lang durch Länder und Geschlechter
Der Mund der Dichter sie vermehrend wälzt.
Es klingt so schön, was unsere Väter thaten,
Wenn es, in stillen Abendstunden ruhend,
Der Jüngling mit dem Ton der Harfe schlürft;
Und was wir thun, ist, wie es ihnen war,
Voll Mühe und eitel Stückwerk!
So laufen wir nach dem, was vor uns fliet,
Und achten nicht des Weges, den wir treten,
Und sehen neben uns der Ähnherrn Tritte
Und ihres Erdelebens Spuren kaum.
Wir eilen immer ihrem Schatten nach,
Der göttlergleich in einer weiten Ferne
Der Berge Haupt auf goldnen Wolken krönt.
Ich halte nichts von dem, der von sich denkt,
Wie ihn das Volk vielleicht erheben möchte;
Allein, o Jüngling, danke du den Götttern,
Daß sie so früh durch dich so viel gethan.

D re s t.

Wenn sie dem Menschen frohe That bescheren,
Das er ein Unheil von den Seinen wendet,
Das er sein Reich vermehrt, die Grenzen sichert,
Und alte Feinde fallen oder fliehn,
Dann mag er danken! Denn ihm hat ein Gott
Des Lebens erste, legte Lust gegönnt.
Mich haben sie zum Schlächter außerkoren,
Zum Mörder meiner doch verehrten Mutter,
Und, eine Schandthat schändlich rächend, mich
Durch ihren Wink zu Grund gerichtet. Glaube,
Sie haben es auf Tantals Haus gerichtet,
Und ich, der Lebte, soll nicht schuldlos, soll
Nicht ehrenvoll vergehn.
Pylades.
Die Götter rächen
Der Väter Missfallen nicht an dem Sohn;
Ein Zeglicher, gut oder böse, nimmt
Sich seinen Lohn mit seiner That hinweg.
Es erbte der Eltern Segen, nicht ihr Fluch.

Drest.
Uns führt ihr Segen, dünkt mich, nicht hierher.
Pylades.
Doch wenigstens der hohen Götter Wille.

Drest.
So ist's ihr Wille denn, der uns verderbt.
Pylades.
Thu', was sie dir gebieten, und erwarte!
Bringtst du die Schwester zu Apollon hin,
Und wohnen Beide dann vereint zu Delphi,
Berehrt von einem Volk, das edel denkt,
So wird für diese That das hohe Paar
Dir gnädig sein, sie werden aus der Hand
Der Unterird'schen dich erretten. Schon
In diesen heil'gen Gαιn wagst keine sich.

Drest.
So hab' ich wenigstens geruh'gen Tod.
Pylades.
Ganz anders denu' ich, und nicht ungeschehst
Hab' ich das schon Geschehne mit dem Künst'gen
Verbunden und im Stillen ausgelegt.
Vielleicht reist in der Götter Rath schon lange
Das große Werk. Diana sehnet sich
Von diesem rauen Ufer der Barbaren
Und ihren blut'gen Menschenopfern weg.
Wir waren zu der schönen That bestimmt,
Uns wird sie auferlegt, und seltsam sind
Wir an der Pforte schon gezwungen hier.

Drest.
Mit seltner Kunst sticht du der Göttter Rath
Und deine Wünsche flug in Eins zusammen.

Phlades.
Was ist des Menschen Klugheit, wenn sie nicht
Auf Jener Willen broben achtend laufst?
Zu einer schweren That beruft ein Gott
Den edlen Mann, der viel verbrach, und legt
ihn auf, was uns unmöglich scheint zu enden.
Es fiegst der Held, und küßend dient er
Den Götttern und der Welt, die ihn verehrt.

Drest.
Bin ich bestimmt, zu leben und zu handeln,
So nehm' ein Gott von meiner schweren Stirn
Den Schwindel weg, der auf dem schlüpfriegen,
Mit Mutterblut besprengten Pfade sort
Mich zu den Todten reist! Er trockne gnädig
Die Quelle, die, mir aus der Mutter Wunden
Entgegen sprudelnd, ewig mich besleckt!

Phlades.
Erwart' es ruhiger! Du mehrst das Nebel
Und nimmtst das Amt der Furien auf dich.
Laß mich nur sinnen, bleibe still! Zuletzt,
Iphigenie aus Tauris.

Bedarf's zur That vereinter Kräfte, dann
Aus' ich dich aus, und Beide schreiten wir
Mit überlegter Rührheit zur Vollendung.

Dreßt.
Ich hö' Ulyssen reden.

Phlades.

Spotte nicht!
Ein Legischer muß seinen Gelden wählen,
Dem er die Wege zum Olymp hinauf
Sich nacharbeitet. Laß es mich gestehn:
Mir scheinen List und Klugheit nicht den Mann
Zu schänden, der sich rühnen Thaten weist.

Dreßt.
Ich schähe den, der tapfer ist und g'rad

Phlades.

Drum hab' ich keinen Rath von dir verlangt.
Ich weis, ein fremdes, gottergleiches Weib
Hält jenes blutige Geseh gefesselt;
Ein reines Herz und Weihrauch und Gebet
Bringt sie den Göttern dar. Man rühmet hoch
Die Gütige; man glaubet, sie entspringe
Vom Stamm der Amazonen, sei geslohn,
Um einem großen Unheil zu entgehn.

Dreßt.
Es scheint, ihr lichtes Reich verlor die Kraft
Durch des Verbrechers Nähe, den der Fluch
Wie eine breite Nacht verfolgt und deckt.

Die fremme Blutgier löst den alten Brauch
Von seinen Fesseln los, uns zu verderben.
Der wilde Sinn des Königs tödelt uns;
Ein Weib wird uns nicht retten, wenn er zürnt. 785

Pylades.

Wohl uns, daß es ein Weib ist! Denn ein Mann,
Der beste selbst, gewöhnet seinen Geist
An Grausamkeit und macht sich auch zuletz
Aus dem, was er verabscheut, ein Gesetz,
Wird aus Gewöhnheit hart und faft unkenntlich. 790
Allein ein Weib bleibt stets aus einem Sinn,
Den sie gefaßt. Du rechnest sicherer
Auf sie im Guten wie im Bösen.—Still!
Sie kommt; laß uns allein! Ich darfs nicht gleich
Ihr unjre Namen nennen, unser Schicksal
Nicht ohne Rückhalt ihr vertraun. Du gehst,
Und eh' sie mit dir spricht, tress' ich dich noch.

Zweiter Auftritt.

Iphigenie. Pylades.

Iphigenie.

Woher du feist und kommst, o Fremdling, sprich!
Mir scheint es, daß ich eher einem Griechen
Als einem Sythen dich vergleichen soll. 800
(Sie nimmt ihm die Ketten ab.)
Gefährlich ist die Freiheit, die ich gebe;
Die Götter wenden ab, was euch bedroht!
Iphigenie auf Tauris.

Pylades.

O süße Stimme! Vielwillkommner Ton
Der Muttersprach' in einem fremden Lande!
Des väterlichen Hasses blaue Berge
Seh' ich Gesangner neu willkommen wieder
Vor meinen Augen. Läß dir diese Freude
Versichern, daß auch ich ein Grieche bin!
Vergessen hab' ich einen Augenblick,
Wie sehr ich dein bedarf, und meinen Geist
Der herrlichen Erscheinung zugewendet.
O sage, wenn dir ein Verhängnis nicht
Die Lippe schliesst, aus welchem unserer Stämme
Du deine göttergleiche Herkunft zählst!

Iphigenie.

Die Priesterin, von ihrer Göttin selbst
Gewästet und geheiligt, spricht mit dir.
Das laß dir g'nügen! Sage, wer du feist
Und welch unselig waltendes Geschick
Mit dem Gefährten dich hierher gebracht.

Pylades.

Leicht kann ich dir erzählen, welch ein Nebel
Mit laustender Gesellschaft uns verfolgt.
O, könntest du der Hoffnung frohen Blick
Uns auch so leicht, du Göttliche, gewähren!
Aus Kreta sind wir, Söhne des Adraste:
Ich bin der jüngste, Kephalus genannt,
Und er Laodamas, der älteste
Des Hauses. Zwischen uns stand rauch und wild
Ein mittlerer, und trennte schon im Spiel
Der ersten Jugend Einigkeit und Luft.
Gelassen folgten wir der Mutter Worten,
So lang des Vaters Kraft vor Troja stritt;
Doch als er heutreich zurücke kam
Und kurz darauf verschied, da trennte bald
Der Streit um Reich und Erbe die Geschwister.
Ich neigte mich zum ältesten. Er erschlug
Den Bruder. Um der Blutschuld willen treibt
Die Furie gewaltig ihn umher.
Doch diesem wilden Ufer sendet uns
Apollo, der Delphische, mit Hoffnung zu.
Im Tempel seiner Schwester hieß er uns
Der Güße segensvolle Hand erwarten.
Gefangen sind wir und hierher gebracht,
Und dir als Opfer dargestellt. Du weiss'raz.

Iphigenie.
Fiel Troja? Theurer Mann, versich' es mir!

Pyladès.
Es liegt. O fiehre, du uns Rettung zu!
Beschleunige die Güße, die ein Gott
Versprach! Erbarme meines Bruders dich!
O, sag' ihm bald ein gutes, holdes Wort;
Doch schöne seiner, wenn du mit ihm sprechst,
Das bitt'ich eifrig; denn es wird gar leicht
Durch Freut' und Schmerz und durch Erinnerung
Sein Innerstes ergriffen und zerrüttet.
Ein sieberhafter Wahnflun fällt ihn an,
Und seine schöne, freie Seele wird
Den Furien zum Raube hingegeben.

Iphigenie.
So groß dein Unglück ist, beschwör' ich dich,
Bergiß es, bis du mir genug gethan!
Pylades.

Die hohe Stadt, die zehn lange Jahre
Dem ganzen Heer der Griechen widerstand,
Lieg nun im Schutte, steigt nicht wieder aus.
Doch manche Gräber unserer Besten heissen
Uns an das Ufer der Barbaren denken.
Achill liegt dort mit seinem schönen Freunde.

Iphigenie.

So seid ihr Götterbilder auch zu Staub!

Pylades.

Auch Palamedes, Ajax Telamons,
Sie sah'n des Vaterlandes Tag nicht wieder.

Iphigenie (für sich).

Er schweigt von meinem Vater, nennt ihn nicht
Mit den Erschlagen. Ja! Er lebt mir noch!
Ich werd' ihn sehn! O hoffe, liebes Herz!

Pylades.

Doch selig sind die Tausende, die starben
Den bittersüßen Tod von Feindeshand!
Denn wüsste Schrecken und ein traurig Ende
Hat den Rückkehrenden statt des Triumphs
Ein feindlich ausgebrachter Gott bereitet.
Kommt denn der Menschen Stimme nicht zu euch?

So weit sie reicht, trägt sie den Ruf unmer
Von unerhörten Thaten, die geschah.
So ist der Jammer, der Mycenzens Hassen
Mit immer wiederholten Seufzern füllt,
Dir ein Geheimnis? — Klytämnestra hat
Mit Huls' Aegisthens den Gemahl berück,
Am Tage seiner Rückkehr ihn ermordet! —
Ja, du verehrest dieses Königs Haus!
Ich seh' es, deine Brust bekämpft vergebens
Das unerwartet ungeheure Wort.

Bist du die Tochter eines Freundes? Bist
Du nachbarslich in dieser Stadt geboren?
Verbirg es nicht und rechne mir's nicht zu,
Daß ich der Erste diese Gräuel melde!

Iphigenie.
Sag' an, wie ward die schwere That vollbracht?

Pyllades.

Am Tage seiner Ankunft, da der König,
Vom Bad erquickt und ruhig, sein Gewand
Aus der Gemahlin Hand verlangend, stieg,
Warf die Verderbliche ein faltenreich
Und kunstlich sich verwirrendes Gewebe
Ihm auf die Schultern, um das erse Haupt;
Und da er wie von einem Nebe sich
Vergebens zu entwickeln strebte, schlug
Nagisch ihn, der Verräther, und verhüllt
Ging zu den Todten dieser große Fürst.

Iphigenie.

Und welchen Lohn erhielt der Mitverschworne?

Pyllades.

Ein Reich und Beute, daß er schon besaß.

Iphigenie.

So trieb zur Schandthät eine hohe Lust?

Pyllades.

Und einer alten Rache tief Gesühl.
Iphigenie auf Tauris.

Iphigenie.

Und wie beleidigte der König sie?

Phlades.

Mit schwerer That, die, wenn Entschuldigung
Des Mordes wäre, sie entschuldigte.
Nach Aulis lock't er sie und brachte dort,
Als eine Gottheit sich der Griechen Fahrt
Mit ungestümen Winden widerfiehnte,
Die ält'fte Tochter, Iphigenien,
Vor den Altar Dianen's, und sie fiel
Ein blutig Opfer für der Griechen Heil.
Dies, sagt man, hat ihr einen Widerwillen
So tief in's Herz geprägt, daß sie dem Werben
Aegisthens sich ergab und den Gemahl
Mit Neigen des Verderbens selbst umschlang.

Iphigenie (sich verhüllend).
Es ist genug! Du wirst mich widersehen.

Phlades (allein).

Von dem Geschick des Königshauses scheint
Sie tief gerührt. Wer sie auch immer sei,
So hat sie selbst den König wohl gekannt,
Und ist, zu unserm Glück, aus hohem Hause
Hierher verkauft. Nur stille, liebes Herz,
Und laß dem Stern der Hoffnung, der uns blinkt,
Mit frohem Muth uns klug entgegensteuern!
ARGUMENT.

ACT III.

In loosening the bonds of Orestes, Iphigenia bewails the hopeless doom of the strangers, whose aspect recalls to her mind the image of Greek heroes. Being asked to conclude his brother's tale, he tells her that both Orestes and Electra survive; but the former, having slain his mother Clytemnestra, in order to avenge his father's death, was now pursued by the furies. He then reveals to Iphigenia that he himself is Orestes, and after imploring her to save his friend and to return with the latter to Greece, he withdraws. Iphigenia fervently expresses her thanks to the gods for having granted to her the fulfilment of her ardent desire to behold her brother, and when Orestes again approaches her, she reveals to him that she is his sister Iphigenia, and endeavours to inspire him with hope. Orestes is first unwilling to believe her, but when he is convinced that she is Iphigenia, he only sees despondingly a decree of relentless fate in the circumstance, that his own sister was destined to slay him on the altar of Diana. He sinks down exhausted, and Iphigenia retires to seek the aid of Pylades (Scene i).

When Orestes recovers from his swoon he believes to be in the realm of the dead, and in his vision he beholds the spirits of his ancestors and his reconciled parents (Scene 2), and when Pylades and Iphigenia appear he greets them as shades, who have descended, like himself, to the realm of Pluto. Iphigenia addresses a prayer to Apollo and Diana to free her brother from delusion, and Pylades admonishes
him to collect himself and to recognise them as living beings, so that their safe return might not be endangered. The veil of delusion seems now to vanish from the eyes of Orestes, and he feels that the dread Eumenides have left him. He is restored to new life, and Pylades urges him and Iphigenia to quick counsel and resolve. (Scene 3).
Dritter Aufzug.

Erster Auftritt.

Iphigenie. Drest.

Iphigenie.

Unglücklicher, ich löse deine Bände
Zum Zeichen eines schmerzlicheren Geschicks.
Die Freiheit, die das Heiligthum gewährt,
Ist, wie der letzte lichte Lebensblick
Des schwer Erkrankten, Todesbote. Noch
Kann ich es mir und darfs es mir nicht sagen,
Das ihr verloren seid! Wie könnt' ich euch
Mit mörderischer Hant dem Tode weisen?
Und Niemand, wer es sei, darfs euer Haupt,
So lang' ich Priesterin Dianens bin,
Berühren. Doch verweig' ich jene Pflicht,
Wie sie der aufgebrachte König fordert,
So wählt er eine meiner Jungfrauen mir
Zur Folgerin, und ich vermag alsbann
Mit heißem Wunsch allein euch heizustehn.
O werther Landsmann! Selbst der letzte Knecht,
Der an den Herd der Vatergötter treiste,
Ist uns in fremdem Lande hochwillkommen:
Wie soll ich euch genug mit Freud' und Segen
Empfangen, die ihr mir das Bild der Helden,
Spfligenie auf Xauriö.
Sie lebte auf Xauriö.

Drest.

Verbirgst du deinen Namen, deine Herkunft
Mit flugem Borsag? Oder darf ich wissen,
Wer mir, gleich einer Himmlischen, begegnet?

Iphigenie.

Du sollst mich kennen. Jego sag' mir an,
Was ich nur halb von deinem Bruder hörte,
Das Ende derer, die, von Troja fahrend,
Ein hartes, unerwartetes Geschick
Auf ihrer Wohnung Schwelle stumm empfing.

Zwar ward ich jung an diesen Strand geführt;
Doch wohl erinn'r ich mich des scheuen Blickes,
Den ich mit Staunen und mit Bangigkeit
Auf jene Helden warf. Sie zogen aus,
Als hätte der Olymp sich ausgethan
Und die Gestalten der erlauchten Vorwelt
Zum Schrecken Ilion's herabgesendet,
Und Agamemnon war vor Allen herrlich.
O sage mir!—Er fiel, sein Haus betretend,
Durch seiner Frauen und Aegisthens Lüfte?

Drest.

Du sagst's!

Iphigenie.

Weh dir, unglückes Mycen!
So haben Tantals Enkel Fluch auf Fluch
Mit vollen wilden Händen ausgesät
Und, gleich dem Unkraut, wüste Haupte schüttelnd
3. Aufzug, 1. Auftritt.

Und tausendfält'gen Samen um sich freuend,
Den Kindeskindern nahverwandte Mörder
Zur ew'gen Wechselfucht erzeugt! — Enthülle,
Was von der Rede deines Bruders schnell
Die Finsterniß des Schreckens mir verdeckte!

Wie ist des großen Stammes letzter Sohn,
Das holde Kind, bestimmst des Vaters Rächer
Dereinst zu sein, wie ist Drest dem Tage
Des Bluts entgangen? Hat ein gleich Geschick
Mit des Avernuß Neben ihn umschlungen?
Ist er gerettet? Lebt er? Lebt Elektra?

Drest.

Sie leben.

Iphigenie.

Goldne Sonne, leise mir
Die schönsten Strahlen, lege sie zum Dank
Vor Jovis Thron! Denn ich bin arm und stumm.

Drest.

Bist du gastfreundlich diesem Königshause,
Bist du mit nähern Banden ihm verbunden,
Wie deine schöne Freude mir verrath,
So bändige dein Herz und halt' es fest!
Denn unerträglich muß dem Fröhlichen
Ein jäher Rückfall in die Schmerzen sein.
Du weist nur, wer' ich, Agamemnons Tod.

Iphigenie.

Hab' ich an dieser Nachricht nicht genug?

Drest.

Du hast des Gräuels Häßte nur erfahren.
Iphigenie aus Tauris.

Iphigenie.
Was fürcht' ich noch? Dreft, Elektra leben.

Dreft.
Und fürchtest du für Älytämmestren nichts?

995

Iphigenie.
Sie rettet weder Hoffnung, weder Furcht.

Dreft.
Auch schied sie aus dem Land der Hoffnung ab.

Iphigenie.
Bergoss sie reinig würthend selbst ihr Blut?

Dreft.
Nein, doch ihr eigen Blut gab ihr den Tod.

Iphigenie.
Sprich deutlicher, daß ich nicht länger sinne!

Die Ungewißheit schlägt mir tausendsältig
Die dunkeln Schwingen um das hange Haupt.

Dreft.
So haben mich die Götter außersehn
Zum Boten einer That, die ich so gern
Ins klanglos-dumpfe Höhlenreich der Nacht
Verbergen möchte? Wider meinen Willen
Zwingt mich dein holder Mund; allein er darf
Auch etwas Schmerzliches fordern und erhält's.
Am Tage, da der Vater fiel, verbarg
Elektra rettend ihren Bruder; Strophius,
Des Vaters Schwächer, nahm ihn willig auf,
Erzog ihn neben seinem eignen Sohne,
Der, Pylades genannt, die schönsten Baude
Der Freundschaft um den Angekommenen knüpfte.
Und wie sie wuchsen, wuchs in ihrer Seele
Die brennende Vergier, des Königs Tod
Zu rächen. Unversehen, fremd gekleidet,
Erreichen sie Mycen, als brachten sie
Die Trauer nachricht von Drestens Tode
Mit seiner Asche. Wohl empfängt sie
Die Königin; sie treten in das Haus.
Elektren giebt Drest sich zu erkennen;
Sie läßt der Rache Feuer in ihm aus,
Das vor der Mutter heil'ger Gegenwart
In sich zurückgebrannt war. Stille führt
Sie ihn zum Orte, wo sein Vater sit,
Wo eine alte leichte Spur des frech
Vergoßnem Blutes oft gewaschnen Boden
Mit blaffen, ahnungsvollen Streifen färbte.
Mit ihrer Feuerzunge schilderte
Sie jeden Umstand der verruchten That,
Ihr knechtisch elend durchgebrachtes Leben,
Den Niebernuth der glücklichen Verräter,
Und die Gefahren, die nun der Geschwister
Von einer stiefsgewordnen Mutter warteten.—
Hier drang sie jenen alten Dolch ihm aus,
Der schon in Tautals Hause grimmig wuthete,
Und ctymännestra fiel durch Sohnes Hand.

Iphigenie.

Unsterbliche, die ihr den reinen Tag
Auf immer neuen Wolken selig lebet,
Habt ihr nur darum mich so manches Jahr
Von Menschen abgesondert, mich so nah
Bei euch gehalten, mir die kindliche
Beschäftigung, des heil'gen Feuers Gluth
Zu nähren, aufgetragen, meine Seele
Der Flamme gleich in ew'ger, stromm'r Klarheit
Zu euern Wohnungen hinausgezogen,
Daß ich nur meines Hauses Gräuel später
Und tiefer fühlen sollte? — Sage mir
Vom Unglücksel'gen! Sprech mir von Dresf!

Dresf.
O könnte man von seinem Tode sprechen!
Wie gährend stieg aus der Erstlagnen Blut
Der Mutter Geist
Und ruft der Nacht uralten Töchtern zu:
„Laß nicht den Muttermörder entflehn!
Versolgt den Verbrecher! Euch ist er geweiht!“
Sie horchen auf, es schaut ihr hohler Blick
Mit der Begier des Adlers um sich her.
Sie rühren sich in ihren schwarzen Höhlen,
Und aus den Winkeln schleichen ihre Gesährten,
Der Zweifel und die Neue, leis' herbei.
Vor ihnen steigt ein Dampf vom Acheron;
In seinen Wolkenkreisen wälzet sich
Die ewige Betrachtung des Geschehnen
Verwirrend um des Schuld'gen Haupt umher.
Und sie, berechtigt zum Verderben, treten
Der gottbesä'ten Erde schönen Boden,
Von dem ein alter Fluch sie längst verbannte.
Den Flüchtigen verfolgt ihr schneller Fuss;
Sie geben nur, um neu zu schrecken, Raft.

Inseliger, du bist in gleichem Fall
Und fühlst, was er, der arme Flüchting, leidet!

Dreß.
Was sagst du mir? Was wünscht du gleichen Fall?

Iphigenie.
Dich drückt ein Brudermord wie Ilen; mir
Vertraute dies dein jüngster Bruder schon.

Dreß.
Ich kann nicht leiden, daß du, große Seele,
Mit einem falschen Wort betrogen wirst.
Ein lügenhaft Gewebe knüpf' ein Fremder
Dem Fremden, sinnreich und der List gewohnt,
Zur Falle vor die Füße; zwischen uns
Sei Wahrheit!
Ich bin Dreß, und dieses schuld'ge Haupt
Senkt nach der Grube sich und sucht den Tod;
In jeglicher Gestalt sei er willkommen!
Wer du auch seist, so wünsch' ich Rettung dir
Und meinem Freunde; mir wünsch' ich sie nicht.
Du scheinst hier wider Willen zu verweilen;
Erfindet Rath zur Flucht und laßt mich hier!
Es hürze mein entselster Leib vom Fels,
Es rauche bis zum Meer hinab mein Blut
Und bringe Fluch dem Ufer der Barbaren!
Geht ihr, daheim im schönen Griechenland
Ein neues Leben freundlich anzufangen! (Er entfernt sich.)

Iphigenie.
So steigst du denn, Erfüllung, schönste Tochter
Deß größten Vaters, endlich zu mir nieder!
Wie ungeheuer steht dein Bild vor mir!
Raum reicht mein Blick dir an die Hände, die,
Iphigenie auf Tauris.

Mit Frucht und Segenskränzen angesüßt, 
Die Schätze des Olympus niederbringen. 
Wie man den König an dem Uebermaß 
Der Gaben kennt—denn ihm muß wenig scheinen, 
Was Tausenden schon Reichthum ist—so kennt 
Man euch, ihr Götter, an gesparten, lang 
Und weise zubereiteten Geschenken.

Denn ihr allein wisst, was uns frommen kann, 
Und schaut der Zukunft ausgedehntes Reich, 
Wenn jedes Abends Stern- und Nebelhülle 
Die Aussicht uns verdeckt. Gelassen hört 
Ihr unser Flehn, das um Beschlemmigung 
Euch kindisch bittet; aber eure Hand 
Bringt unreif nie die goldnen Himmelsfrüchte; 
Und wehe dem, der, ungeduldig sie 
Ertragen, saure Speise sich zum Tod 
Geniesst. O laßt das lang erwartete, 
Noch kaum gedachte Glück nicht, wie den Schatten 
Des abgeschiednen Freun des, eitel mir 
Und dreifach schmerzlicher vorübergehn!

Dreß (ber wieder zu ihr tritt).

Rufst du die Götter an für dich und Pylades, 
So neune meinen Namen nicht mit eurem! 
Du rettest den Verbrecher nicht, zu dem 
Du dich gesellst, und theilet Fluch und Roth.

Iphigenie.

Mein Schicksal ist an deines festgebunden.

Dreß.

Mit nichten! Läß allein und unbeleitet
Mach zu den Toten gehn! Verhülltest du
In deinen Schleier selbst den Schuldigen,
Du birst ihn nicht vorn Blic von innerwachen,
Und deine Gegenwart, du Himmlische,
Drängt sie nur zeitwärts und verscheucht sie nicht.
Sie dürfen mit den ehrnen frechen Füßen
Deß heilgen Waldes Boden nicht betreten;
Doch hör' ich aus der Ferne hier und da
Ihr grässliches Gelächter. Wölfe harren
So um den Baum, aus den ein Neisender
Sich rettete. Da draussen ruhen sie
Gelagert, und verlass' ich diesen Hain,
Dann steigen sie, die Schlangenhäupter schüttelnnd,
Von allen Seiten Staub erregend, aus
Und treiben ihre Beute vor sich her.

Iphigenie.
Kannst du, Drest, ein freundlich Wort vernehmen?

Drest.
Spar' es für einen Freund der Götter auf!

Iphigenie.
Sie geben dir zu neuer Hoffnung Licht.

Drest.
Durch Rauch und Qualm seh' ich den matten Schein
Des Todesflusses mir zur Hölle leuchten.

Iphigenie.
Hast du Elektron, Eine Schwester nur?

Drest.
Die Eine kannst' ich; doch die ält'fte nahm
Ihr gut Geschick, das uns so schrecklich schien,
Iphigenie auf Tauris.

Bei Zeiten aus dem Glend unsres Hauses. D, laß dein Fragen, und geselle dich Nicht auch zu den Geistern! Sie blasen Mir schadenfroh die Asche von der Seele, Und leiden nicht, daß sich die letzten Kohlen Von unsres Hauses Schreckensbrande still In mir verglimmen. Soll die Gluth denn ewig, Vorsätzlich angesacht, mit Höllenschwefel Genährt, mir auf der Seele marternd brennen?

Iphigenie.


Dreßt.

Es rufst, es rufst! So willst du mein Verderben? Verbirgt in dir sich eine Nachegöttin? Wer bist du, deren Stimme mir entsieglich Das Innerste in seinen Tiefen wendet?

Iphigenie.

Es zeigt sich dir im tieffsten Herzen an:
3. Aufzug, 1. Auftritt.

Dreist, ich bin's! Sieh Iphigenien!
Ich lebe!

Dreist.

Du!

Iphigenie.
Mein Bruder!

Dreist.

Läß! Hinweg!
Ich rathe dir, berühre nicht die Locken!
Wie von Kreusa's Brautkleid zündet sich
Ein unauslöschlich Feuer von mir fort.
Läß mich! Wie Herkules will ich Unwürd'ger
Den Tod voll Schmach, in mich verschlossen, sterben.

Iphigenie.
Du wirst nicht untergeh'n! O, daß ich nur
Ein ruhig Wort von dir vernehmen könnte!
O löse meine Zweifel, laß des Glücks,
Des lang' erstehnten, mich auch sicher werden!
Es wälzet sich ein Nad von Freud' und Schmerz
Durch meine Seele. Von dem fremden Manne
Entfernet mich ein Schauer; doch es reizt
Mein Innerstes gewaltig mich zum Bruder.

Dreist.

Ist hier Lyäens Tempel? Und ergreift
Unbändig-heil'ge Wuth die Priesterin?

Iphigenie.
O, höre mich! O, steh mich an, wie mir
Nach einer langen Zeit das Herz sich öffnet,
Der Seligkeit, dem Liebsten, was die Welt
Noch für mich tragen kann, das Haupt zu küssen,
Mit meinen Armen, die den leeren Winden
Nur ausgebreitet waren, dich zu fassen!

O, las mich! Las mich! Denn es quillt heller
Nicht vom Parnass die ew'ge Quelle sprudelnd
Von Fels zu Fels ins goldne Thal hinab,
Wie Freude mir vom Herzen wallend fließt,
Und wie ein selig Meer mich rings umfängt.

Dreß! Dreß! Mein Bruder!

Dreß.

Schöne Nymphe,
Ich traue dir und deinem Schmeicheln nicht.
Diana fordert strenge Dienerinnen
Und rächt das enthiechte Heiligthum.
Entferne deinen Arm von meiner Brust!

Und wenn du einen Jüngling rettend lieben,
Das schöne Glück ihm zärtlich bieten willst,
So wende meinem Freunde dein Gemuth,
Dem würd'gern Manne, zu! Er irrt umher
Auf jenem Felsenpfade; such' ihn auf,
Weiß' ihn zurecht und schöne meiner!

Iphigenie.

Fasse
Dich, Bruder, und erkenne die Gesundhe!
Schißt einer Schwester reine Himmelsfreude
Nicht unberechnete, strafbare Lust!
D, nehmst den Wahn ihm von dem starren Auge,
Das uns der Augenblick der höchsten Freude
Nicht dreifach elend mache! Sie ist hier,
Die längst verlorne Schwester. Vom Altar
Niß mich die Göttin weg und rette
Hierher mich in ihr eigen Heiligthum.
Gefangen bist du, dargestellt zum Opfer,
Und findest in der Priesterin die Schwester.

Drest.
Unselige! So mag die Sonne denn
Die legten Gräuel unsres Hauses sehn!
Ist nicht Elektra hier, damit auch sie
Mit uns zu Grunde gehe, nicht ihr Leben
Zu schwererem Geschick und Leiden friste?
Gut, Priesterin! Ich folge zum Altar:
Der Brudermord ist hergebrachte Sitte
Des alten Stammes; und ich danke, Götter,
Daß ihr mich ohne Kinder auszurotten
Beschlossen habt. Und laß dir raten, habe
Die Sonne nicht zu lieb und nicht die Sterne!
Kommt', folge mir in's dunkle Reich hinab!
Wie sich vom Schwefelpfuhl erzeugte Drachen,
Bekämpfend die verwandte Brut, verschlingen,
Verstört sich selbst das wütende Geschlecht;
Kommt' kinderlos und schuldlos mit hinab!
Du selbst mich mit Erbarmen an? Läß ab!
Mit solchen Blicken suchte Klytämnestra
Sich einen Weg nach ihres Sohnes Herzen;
Doch sein geschwungner Arm traf ihre Brust.
Die Mutter fiel!—Tritt auf, unmüllger Geist!
Im Kreis geschlossen tretet an, ihr Turien,
Und wohnet dem willkommenen Schauplägel bei,
Dem letzten, gräßlichsten, das ihr bereitet!
Nicht Hass und Rache schärfei ihren Dolch;
Die liebevolle Schwester wird zur That
Iphigenie auf Tauris.


Iphigenie.

Allein zu tragen dieses Glück und Schleier Vermag ich nicht. —Wo bist du, Pylades? Wo finb' ich deine Hülse, theurer Mann? (Sie entfernt sich suchend.)

——

Zweiter Auftritt.


Sie gehen friedlich, Alt' und Junge, Männer
Mit Weibern; göttergleich und ähnlich scheinen
Die wandelnden Gestalten. Ja, sie sind'z,
Die Ahnherrn meines Hauses.— Mit Thesten
Gehst Atreus in vertraulichen Gesprächen;
Die Knaben schlüpfen scherzend um sie her.
Ist keine Feindschaft hier mehr unter euch?
Verlosch die Nache wie das Licht der Sonne?
So bin auch ich willkommen, und ich darf
In euern feierlichen Zug mich mischen.

Willkommen, Väter! Euch grüßt Drext,
Von eurem Stamme der letzte Mann;
Was ihr gesä't, hat er geerntet;
Mit Fluch beladen, stieg er herab.
Doch leichter trägt sich hier jede Bürde:
Nehmt ihn, o nehmt ihn in euren Kreis!—
Dich, Atreus, ehr' ich, auch dich, Thesten;
Wir sind hier Alle der Feindschaft los.—
Zeigt mir den Vater, den ich nur Einmal
Im Leben sah!— bist du's, mein Vater?
Und führst die Mutter vertraut mit dir?
Darf Klytemnästra die Hand dir reichen,
So darf Drext auch zu ihr treten
Und darf ihr sagen: Seht deinen Sohn!—
Seht euren Sohn! Geißt ihn willkommen!

Auf Erden war in unserm Hause
Der Gruß des Mordes gewisse Lösung,
Und das Geschlecht des alten Xantalus
Hat seine Freunden jenseits der Nacht.
Ihr ruft: Willkommen! und nehmt mich auf.
O führt zum Alten, zum Ahnherrn mich!
Wo ist der Alte? Das ich ihn sehe,  
Das theure Haupt, das vielverehrte,  
Das mit den Göttern zu Rathe saß!  
Ihr scheint zu zaudern, euch wegzuwenden?  
Was ist es? Leidet der Göttergleiche?  
Weh mir! Es haben die Uebermäch'tigen  
Der Heldenbrust grausame Dualen  
Mit ehrnen Ketten fest ausgeschmiedet.

Dritter Auftritt.

Drest. Iphigenie. Pylades.

Drest.

Seid ihr auch schon herabgekommen?  
Wohl, Schwester, dir! Noch fehlt Elektra;  
Ein gut'ger Gott send' uns die Eine  
Mit fausten Pfeilen auch schnell herab!  
Dich, armer Freund, muß ich bedauern!  
Komm mit, komm mit zu Pluto's Thron,  
Als neue Gäste den Wirth zu grüßen!

Iphigenie.

Geschwister, die ihr an dem weiten Himmel  
Das schöne Licht bei Tag und Nacht herauf  
Den Menschen bringet, und den Abgeschiedenen  
Nicht leuchten dürftet, rettet uns Geschwister!  
Du liebst, Diane, deinen holden Bruder  
Vor Allen, was dir Erd' und Himmel bietet,  
Und wende dein jungfräulich Angeicht
Nach seinem ew'gen Lichte sehend still.
D laß den einz'gen, spätgesundnen mir
Nicht in der Finsternis des Wahnsinns rauen!
Und ist dein Wille, da du hier mich barget,
Nunmehr vollendet, willst du mir durch ihn
Und ihm durch mich die sel'ge Hülfe geben,
So löß' ihn von den Bänden jenes Fluchs,
Daß nicht die theure Zeit der Rettung schwinde!

Phâdes.

Erkennst du uns und diesen heil'gen Gain
Und dieses Licht, das nicht dem Tödten leuchtet?
Fühlst du den Arm des Freunbes und der Schwester,
Die dich noch fest, noch lebend halten? Laß
Uns kräftig an! Wir sind nicht leere Schatten.
Merk' auf mein Wort! Vernim'm es! Raffe dich
Zusammen! Jeder Augenblick ist theuer,
Und unsere Rückkehr hängt an zarten Fäden,
Die, scheint es, eine günft'ge Parze spinnt.

Orest (zu Iphigenien).

Laß mich zum erstenmal mit freiem Herzen
In deinen Armen reine Freude haben!
Ihr Götter, die mit flammender Gewalt
Ihr schwere Wolken auszuzehren wandelt,
Und gnädig-ernst den lang' erslehten Regen
Mit Donnerstimmen und mit Windebrausen
In wilden Strömen auf die Erde schüttet,
Doch bald der Menschen grausendes Erwarten
In Segen auslöß't, und das bange Staunen
In Freudesblick und lauten Dank verwandelt,
Wenn in den Tropfen frischerquickter Blätter
Die neue Sonne tausendsfach sich spiegelt,
und Iris freundlich bunt mit leichter Hand
Den grauen Flor der letzten Wolken trennt:
O, laßt mich auch an meiner Schwester Armen, 1355
An meines Freundes Brust, was ihr mir gönn,
Mit vollem Dank genießend und behalten!
Es löst sich der Fluch, mir sagt's das Herz.
Die Eumeniden ziehn, ich höre sie,
Zum Tartarus und schlagen hinter sich 1360
Die ehrnen Thore fernabdonnernd zu.
Die Erde dampft erquickenden Geruch
Und ladet mich auf ihren Flächen ein,
Nach Lebensfreude und großer That zu jagen.

Pyldes.

Versäumt die Zeit nicht, die gemessen ist! 1365
Der Wind, der unsre Segel schwelt, er bringe
Erst unsre volle Freude zum Olymp!
Kommt! Es bedarf hier schnellen Rath und Schluss.
ARGUMENT.

ACT IV.

Iphigenia praises the mercy of the divine powers, who provide for man in the hour of trial, a thoughtful friend, such as Pylades was, whom the Gods seem to have preserved for the rescue of Orestes. The two friends had hastened to the bay, where their comrades were lying concealed, and had supplied her with artful answers, if the King should urge the sacrifice. Her pure heart revolts, however, against uttering a falsehood, and her soul is troubled, when she sees a messenger from the King approaching (Sc. 1). Arkas appears and bids her speed the human sacrifice, but Iphigenia avers that the temple of Diana having been polluted by the presence of the elder of the strangers, who was guilty of murder and pursued by the furies, she must purify the image of the Goddess in the sea. Arkas asks Iphigenia not to commence the rite before he has announced the obstacle to the King, and again urges her to appease the irritated temper of the King by favouring his wooing, but she persists in her refusal, and Arkas retires to announce the occurrence to Thoas (Sc. 2). When left alone, Iphigenia gives expression to the revulsion produced in her heart by the words of the faithful Arkas, who had by his representations awakened her from her joyful illusion of happiness. (Scene 3.)

Pylades appears and informs Iphigenia that her brother was fully restored and that they had found their comrades with their ship concealed in a bay. They were all ready to leave
the shore and he asks Iphigenia to guide him to the temple, so that he might carry away the image of Diana. The former informs him of the order of Arkas to await the King's decision about the intended ceremony, and that she feels considerable scruples in deceiving her fatherly benefactor. Pylades, however, declares that stern necessity commands her to save them (Sc. 4). Iphigenia bewails that the curse of the Gods will not leave the house of Tantalus, and she implores them to save her from betraying him to whom she owes her life. (Scene 5.)
Bierter Auszug.

Erster Auftritt.

Iphigenie

Denken die Himmelschen
Einem der Erdgeborenen
Biele Verwirrungen zu,
Und bereiten sie ihm
Von der Freude zu Schmerzen
Und von Schmerzen zur Freude
Tief erschütternden Uebergang:

Dann erziehen sie ihm
In der Nähe der Stadt
Oder am fernen Gestade,
Daß in Stunden der Not
Auch die Hülse bereit sei,

Einen ruhigen Freund.

O segnet, Götter, unsern Pylades
Und was er immer unternehmen mag!
Er ist der Arm des Jünglings in der Schlacht,
Des Greises leuchtend Aug' in der Versammlung;
Denn seine Seele ist stille; sie bewahrt
Der Ruhe heil'ges, unerschöpfstes Gut,
Und den Umhergetriebnen reichert er
Aus ihren Tiefen Rath und Hülse. Mich
Niß er vom Bruder los; den staunt' ich an
Und immer wieder an und konnte mir
Das Glück nicht eigen machen, ließ ihn nicht
Aus meinen Armen los und fühlte nicht
Die Nähe der Gefahr, die uns umgiebt.
Jetzt gehe sie, ihren Anschlag auszuführen,
Der See zu, wo das Schiff mit den Gefährten,
In einer Bucht versteckt, aus's Zeichen lauert,
Und haben kluges Wort mir in den Mund
Gegeben, mich lehrt, was ich dem König
Antworte, wenn er sendet und das Opfer
Mir dringender gebietet. Ach, ich sehe wohl,
Ich muß mich leiten lassen wie ein Kind.
Ich habe nicht gelernt zu hinterhalten,
Noch Jemand etwas abzulisten. Weh,
O weh der Lüge! Sie befreiet nicht,
Wie jedes andre wahrgesprochne Wort,
Die Brust; sie macht uns nicht getrost, sie ängstet
Den, der sie heimlich schmiedet, und sie kehrt,
Ein losgedruckter Pfeil, von einem Gotte
Gewendet und versagend, sich zurück
Und trifft den Schützen. Sorg' auf Sorge schwankt
Mir durch die Brust. Es greift die Furie
Vielleicht den Bruder auf dem Boden wieder
Des ungeweihten Ufers grimmig an.
Entdeckt man sie vielleicht? Mich bünkt, ich höre
Gewaffnete sich nahen! — Hier! — Der Bote
Kommt von dem Könige mit schnellem Schritt.
Es schlägt mein Herz, es trübt sich meine Seele,
Da ich des Mannes Angesicht erblicke,
Dem ich mit falschem Wort begegnen soll.
Zweiter Auftritt.
Iphigenie. Arkaš.

Arkaš.
Beschleunige das Opfer, Priesterm!
Der König wartet, und es harret das Volk.

Iphigenie.
Ich folgte meiner Pflicht und deinem Wink,
Wenn unvermuthet nicht ein Hindernis
Sich zwischen mich und die Erfüllung stellte.

Arkaš.
Was ist's, das den Befehl des Königs hindert?

Iphigenie.
Der Zufall, dessen wir nicht Meister sind.

Arkaš.
So sage mir's, daß ich's ihm schnell vermelde!
Denn er beschloß bei sich der Beiden Tod.

Iphigenie.
Die Götter haben ihn noch nicht beschlossen.
Der älteste dieser Männer trägt die Schuld
Des nahverwandten Bluts, das er vergoß.
Die Furien verfolgen seinen Pfad,
Ja, in dem innern Tempel faßte selbst
Das Nebel ihn, und seine Gegenwart
Enthießigte die reine Stätte. Nun
Gil' ich mit meinen Jungfräulein, an dem Meere
Der Göttin Bild mit frischer Welle neidend,
Geheimnisvolle Weiße zu begeh'n.
Es störe Niemand unsern stillen Zug!

Arkas.
Ich melde dieses neue Hinderniß
Dem König geschwind; beginne du
Das heil'ge Werk nicht eh, bis er's erlaubt!

Iphigenie.
Dies ist allein der Priest'r'in überlassen.

Arkas.
Solch seltenen Fall soll auch der König wissen.

Iphigenie.
Sein Rath wie sein Befehl verändert nichts.

Arkas.
Oft wird der Mächtige zum Schein gefragt.

Iphigenie.
Erbringe nicht, was ich versagen sollte!

Arkas.
Versage nicht, was gut und nützlich ist!

Iphigenie.
Ich gebe nach, wenn du nicht säumen willst.

Arkas.
Schnell bin ich mit der Nachricht in dem Lager,
Und schnell mit seinen Worten hier zurück.
O, könnt' ich ihm noch eine Botschaft bringen,

Die Alles löste, was uns jetzt verwirrt!
Denn du hast nicht des Treuen Rath geachtet.

Iphigenie.

Was ich vermochte, hab' ich gern gethan.

Arkaß.

Noch änderst du den Sinn zur rechten Zeit.

Iphigenie.

Das steht nun einmal nicht in unserer Macht.

Arkaß.

Du hältst unmöglich, was dir Mühe kostet.

Iphigenie.

Dir scheint es möglich, weil der Wunsch dich trügt.

Arkaß.

Willst du denn Alles so gelassen wagen?

Iphigenie.

Ich hab' es in der Götter Hand gelegt.

Arkaß.

Sie pflegen Menschen menschlich zu erretten.

Iphigenie.

Auf ihren Fingerzeig kommt Alles an.

Arkaß.

Ich sage dir, es liegt in deiner Hand.

Des Königs ausgebrachter Sinn allein
Bereitet diesen Fremden bittern Tod.
Das Heer entwöhnte längst vom harten Opfer
und von dem blut'gen Dienste sein Gemüth.
Ja, Mancher, den ein widrige's Geschick
An fremdes Ufer trug, empfand es selbst,
Wie göttergleich dem armen Irrenden,
Umhergetrieben an der fremden Grenze,
Ein freundlich Menschenangesicht begegnet.
O, wende nicht von uns, was du vermagst!
Du endest leicht, was du begonnen hast;
Denn nirgends baut die Milde, die herab
In menschlicher Gestalt vom Himmel kommt,
Ein Reich sich schneller, als wo trüb und wild
Ein neues Volk voll Leben, Muth und Kraft,
Sich selbst und banger Aehnung überlassen,
Des Menschenlebens schwere Bürden trägt.

Iphigenie.

Erschüttrre meine Seele nicht, die du
Nach deinem Willen nicht bewegen kannst!

Arkaß.

So lang' es Zeit ist, schont man weder Mühe,
Noch eines guten Wortes Wiederholung.

Iphigenie.

Du machst dir Mühs', und mir erregst du Schmerzen;
Vergebens Beides. Darum las' mich nun!

Arkaß.

Die Schmerzen sind's, die ich zu Hülfe rufe;
Denn es sind Freunde, Gutes ratzen sie.

Iphigenie.

Sie fassen meine Seele mit Gewalt,  
Doch tilgen sie den Widerwillen nicht.

Arkas.

Fühlt eine schöne Seele Widerwillen  
Für eine Wohltat, die der Edle reicht?

Iphigenie.

Ja, wenn der Edle, was sich nicht geziemt,  
Statt meines Dankes mich erwerben will.

Arkas.

Wer keine Neigung fühlt, dem mangelt es  
An einem Worte der Entschuldigung nie.  
Dem Fürsten sag' ich an, was hier geschehn.  
O, wiederholtest du in deiner Seele,  
Wie edel er sich gegen dich betrug,  
Von deiner Ankunft an bis diesen Tag!

Dritter Auftritt.

Iphigenie (allein).

Von dieses Mannes Rede fühlt ich mir  
Zur ungelegnen Zeit das Herz im Busen  
Auf einmal umgewendet. Ich erschrecke! —  
Denn wie die Fluth, mit schnellen Strömen wachsend,  
Die Felsen überspült, die in dem Sand  
Am Ufer liegen, so bedekte ganz  
Ein Freudensstrom mein Innerstes. Ich hielt
In meinen Armen das Unmögliche.
Es schien sich eine Wolke wieder saust
Um mich zu legen, von der Erde mich
Emporzuheben und in jenen Schlummer
Mich einzuwickeln, den die gute Göttin
Um meine Schläfe legte, da ihr Arm
Mich rettend faßte.—Meinen Bruder
Ergriff das Herz mit einziger Gewalt;
Ich hörchte nur auf seines Freundes Rath;
Nur sie zu retten drang die Seele vorwärts,
Und wie den Klippen einer wüststen Insel
Der Schiffer gern den Rücken wendet, so
Lag Tauris hinter mir. Nun hat die Stimme
Des treuen Manns mich wieder aufgeweckt,
Daß ich auch Menschen hier verlasse, mich
Erinnert. Doppelt wird mir der Betrug
Verhäßt. O, bleibe ruhig, meine Seele!
Beginnest du nun zu schwanken und zu zweifeln?
Den festen Boden deiner Einfamkeit
Mußt du verlassen! Wieder eingeschifft,
Ergreifen dich die Wellen schaufelnd, trüb
Und bang verkenntest du die Welt und dich.


Vierter Auftritt.

Iphigenie. Pylades.

Pylades.

Wo ist sie, daß ich ihr mit schnellen Worten
Die frohe Botschaft unserer Rettung bringe?

Iphigenie.
Du siehst mich hier voll Sorgen und Erwartung
Des sichern Trostes, den du mir verspricht.

Pylades.
Dein Bruder ist geheilt! Den Felsenboden
Des ungeweihten Ursers und den Sand
Betraten wir mit fröhlichen Gesprächen;
Der Gahn blieb hinter uns, wir merkten's nicht.
Und herrlicher und immer herrlicher
Umloderte der Jugend schöne Flamme
Sein lockig Haupt; sein volles Auge glühte
Von Muth und Hoffnung, und sein freies Herz
Ergab sich ganz der Freude, ganz der Lust,
Dich, seine Retterin, und mich zu retten.

Iphigenie.
Gesegnet seist du, und es möge nie
Von deiner Lippe, die so Gutes sprach,
Der Ton des Leidens und der Klage tönen!

Pylades.
Ich bringe mehr als das; denn schön begleitet,
Gleich einem Fürsten, pflegt das Glück zu nahe.
Auch die Gefährten haben wir gefunden.
In einer Felsenbucht verbargen sie
Das Schiff und saßen traurig und erwartend.
Sie fanden keinen Bruder, und es regten
Sich Alle jaulzend, und sie hatten dringend,
Der Absfahrt Stunde zu beschleunigen.
Es sehnet jede Faust sich nach dem Ruder,
Und selbst ein Wind erhob vom Lande lißpend,
von allen gleich bemerkst, die holden schwingen.
Drum las' uns eilen, führe mich zum Tempel,
Lass mich das Heiligtum betreten, las'
Mach unser Wünsche Ziel verehrend fassen!
Ich bin allein genug, der Göttin bild
Able wohlgesüßten Schultern wegzutragen;
Wie seh'n ich mich nach der erwünschten last!

( Er geht gegen den Tempel unter den letzten Werten, ohne zu
bemerken, dass Iphigenie nicht folgt; endlich kehrt er sich um.)
Du stehst und zauderst - sage mir - Du schweigs!
Du scheinst verworren! Widersetzt sich
Ein neues Unheil unserm Glücks? Sag' an!
Hast du dem Könige das kluge Wort
Vermeldet lassen, das wir abgeredet?

Iphigenie.
Ich habe, theurer Mann; doch wirst du schelet
Ein schweigender Berweis war mir dein Anblick.
Deß Königs Bote kam, und wie du es
Mir in den Mund gelegt, so sagt' ich's ihm.
Er schien zu staunen, und verlangte dringend,
Die selten Teier erst dem König
Zu melden, seinen Willen zu vernehmen;
Und nun erwart' ich seine Wiederkehr.

Phlades.
Woh uns! Erneuert schwebt nun die Gefahr
Um unsre Schläfe! Warum hast' du nicht
In's Priesterreht dich weislich eingeschult?

Iphigenie.
Als eine Hülle hab ich's nie gebraucht.
Pylades.

So wirst du, reine Seele, dich und uns
Zu Grunde richten. Warum dacht' ich nicht
Aus diesen Fall voraus, und lehrte dich,
Auch dieser Forbdrung auszuweichen!

Iphigenie.

Schilt
Nur mich! Die Schuld ist mein, ich fühls' es wohl!
Doch konnt' ich anders nicht dem Mann begegnen,
Der mit Vernunft und Ernst von mir verlangte,
Was ihm mein Herz als Recht gestehen mußte.

Pylades.

Gefährlicher zieht sich's zusammen; doch auch so
Laß uns nicht zagen, oder unbesonnen
Und übereilt uns selbst verrathen. Ruhig
Erwarte du die Wiederkunft des Boten,
Und dann steh' fest, er bringe, was er will!

Denn solcher Weihung Feier anzuordnen,
Gehört der Priesterin und nicht dem König.
Und forbert er den fremden Mann zu sehn,
Der von dem Wahnsinn schwer belastet ist,
So lehn' es ab, als hiestest du uns Beide

Im Tempel wohl verwahrt. So schaff' uns Luft,
Dah wir aufs Ciligsfe, den heil'gen Schatz
Dem rauch umwürd'gen Volck entwendend, siehn.
Die besten Zeichen sendet uns Apoll,
Und, eh wir die Bedingung fromm erfüllen,
Gesellt er göttlich sein Versprechen schon.
Dreßt ist frei, geheilt!—Mit dem Besreiten
O führet uns hinüber, günst'ge Winde,
Zur Felseninsel, die der Gott bewohnt!
Dann nach Mycen, daß es lebendig werde,
Dass von der Asche des verlosten Herdes
Die Vatergötter fröhlich sich erheben,
Und schönes Feuer ihre Wohnungen
Umleuchte! Deine Hand soll ihnen Weihrauch
Zuerst aus goldenen Schalen freuen! Du
Bringst über jene Schwebel Heil und Leben wieder,
Entführest den Fluch und schmückest neu die Deinen
Mit frischen Lebensblüthen herrlich aus.

Iphigenie.

Vernehm' ich dich, so wendet sich, o Theurer,
Wie sich die Blume nach der Sonne wendet,
Die Seele, von dem Strahle deiner Worte
Getroffen, sich dem süßen Frostes nach.
Wie köstlich ist des gegenwärt'gen Freunde's
Gewisse Rede, deren Himmelskraft
Ein Einsamer entbehrt und still versinkt!
Denn langsam reist, verschlossen in dem Busen,
Gedank' ihm und Entschluß; die Gegenwart
Des Liebenden entwickelte sie leicht.

Pylades.

Leb' wohl! Die Freunde will ich nun geschwind
Beruhigen, die sehnslich wartend harren;
Dann komm' ich schnell zurück und lausche hier
Zur Felsenbusch versteckt auf deinen Wink.
Was finnest du? Aus einmal überschwebt
Ein stiller Trauerzug die freie Stirne.
Iphigenie.

Verzeih! Wie leichte Wolken vor der Sonne,
So zieht mir vor der Seele leichte Sorge
Und Bangigkeit vorüber.

Pylades.

Fürchte nicht!
Betrüglich schloß die Furcht mit der Gefahr
Ein enges Bündniss; beide sind Gesellen.

Iphigenie.

Die Sorge nenn' ich edel, die mich warnt,
Den König, der mein zweiter Vater ward,
Nicht tückisch zu betrügen, zu berauben.

Pylades.

Der deinen Bruder schlachtet, dem entfliebst du.

Iphigenie.

Es ist derselbe, der mir Gutes thut.

Pylades.

Das ist nicht Undank, was die Notth gebent.

Iphigenie.

Es bleibt wohl Undank; nur die Notth entschuldigt's.

Pylades.

Vor Götttern und vor Menschen dich gewiß.

Iphigenie.

Allein mein eigen Herz ist nicht befriedigt.
Iphigenie auf Tauris.

Pylades.

Zu strenger Forde rung ist verborgner Stolz.

Iphigenie.

Ich untersuche nicht, ich fühlte nur. 1650

Pylades.

Fühlst du dich recht, so mußt du dich verehren.

Iphigenie.

Ganz unbestecht genießt sich nur das Herz.

Pylades.

So hast du dich im Tempel wohl bewahrt; Das Leben lehrt uns, weniger mit uns Und Andern strenges sein; du lernst es auch. 1655

So wunderbar ist dies Geschlecht gebildet, So vielsach ift's verschlungen und verknüpft, Daß keiner in sich selbst noch mit den Andern Sich rein und unverworren halten kann. Auch sind wir nicht bestellt, uns selbst zu richten; 1660 Zu wandeln und auf seinen Weg zu sehn, Ist eines Menschen erste, nächste Pflicht; Denn selten schätzt er recht, was er gethan, Und was er thut, weiß er faß nie zu schägen.

Iphigenie.

Faß überred'fst du mich zu deiner Meinung. 1665

Pylades.

Braucht's Ueberredung, wo die Wahl versagt ist? Den Bruder, dich, und einen Freund zu retten, Ist nur Ein Weg; fragt sich's, ob wir ihn gehen?
Iphigenie.

O, laß mich zaudern! Denn du thätest selbst
Ein solches Unrecht keinem Mann gelassen,
Dem du für Wohltat dich verpflichtet hieltest.

Pyладе3.

Wenn wir zu Grunde gehen, wartet dein
Ein härterer Vorwurf, der Verzweiflung trägt.
Man fühlt, du bist nicht an Verlust gewohnt,
Da du, dem großen liebe zu entgehen,
Ein falsches Wort nicht einmal opfern willst.

Iphigenie.

O, trüg’ ich doch ein männlich Herz in mir!
Das, wenn es einen führnen Vorsag heft,
Vor jeder andern Stimme sich verschließt!

Pyладе3.

Du weigerst dich umsonst; die eh’rne Hand
Der Noth gebietet, und ihr ernster Wink
Ist oberstes Gesetz, dem Götter selbst
Sich unterwerfen müssen. Schweigend herrscht
Des ew’gen Schicksals unberathne Schwester.
Was sie dir auferlegt, das trage! Thu’,
Was sie gebient! Das Andre weist du. Bald
Komm’ ich zurück, aus deiner heil’gen Hand
Der Rettung schönes Siegel zu empfangen.
Fünfter Auftritt.

Iphigenie allein.

Ich muß ihm folgen; denn die Meinigen
Seh' ich in bringender Gefahr. Doch ach,
Mein eigen Schicksal macht mir bang und bängen.
O, soll ich nicht die stille Hoffnung retten,
Die in der Einsamkeit ich schön genährt?
Soll dieser Fluch denn ewig walten? Soll
Nie dies Geschlecht mit einem neuen Segen
Sich wieder heben? — Nimmt doch Alles ab!
Das beste Glück, des Lebens schönste Kraft
Ermattet endlich, warum nicht der Fluch?
So hofft' ich denn vergebens, hier verwahrt,
Von meines Hauses Schicksal abgeschieden,
Dereinst mit reiner Hand und reinem Herzen
Die schwerbesetzte Wohnung zu entsühnen!
Kaum wird in meinen Armen mir ein Bruder 
Vom grimm'gen Nebel wundervoll und schnell
Geheilt, kaum naht ein lang' erleichtres Schiff,
Mich in den Port der Vaterwelt zu leiten,
So legt die taube Noth ein doppelt Last
Mit eh'ner Hand mir auf: das heilige,
Mir anvertraute, vielverehrte Bild
Zu rauben und den Mann zu hintergehn,
Dem ich mein Leben und mein Schicksal danke.
O, daß in meinem Bufen nicht zulegt
Ein Widerrville keine, der Titanen,
Der alten Götter tiefer Haß auf euch,
Olympier, nicht auch die zarte Brust
Mit Geierklauen sasse! Rettet mich,
Und rettet euer Bild in meiner Seele!

Vor meinen Ohren tönt das alte Lied—
Vergessen hatt' ich's und vergaß es gern—
Das Lied der Parzen, das sie grausend sangen,
Als Tantalus vom goldnen Stuhle fiel;
Sie litten mit dem edeln Freunde; grimmig
War ihre Brust, und furchtbar ihr Gesang.
In unserer Jugend sang's die Amme mir
Und den Geschwistern vor, ich merkt' es wohl.

Es fürchte die Götter
Das Menschengeschlecht!
Sie halten die Herrschaft
In ewigen Händen,
Und können sie brauchen,
Wie's ihnen gefällt.

Der fürchte sie doppelt,
Den je sie erheben!
Auf Klippen und Wolken
Sind Stühle bereitet
Um goldne Tische.
Erhebet ein Zwitt sich,
So stürzen die Gäste,
Geschmäht und geschändet,
In nächtliche Tiesen
Und harren vergebens,
Im Finstern gebunden,
Gerechten Gerichtes.

Sie aber, sie bleiben
In ewigen Festen
An goldenen Tischen.
Sie schreiten vom Berge
Zu Bergen hinaüber;
Aus Schlünden der Tiefe
Dampft ihnen der Athem
Erstickter Titanen,
Gleich Opfergerüchen,
Ein leichtes Gewölbe.

Es wenden die Herrscher
Ihr segnendes Auge
Von ganzen Geschlechtern,
Und meiden, im Enkel
Die ehemals geliebten
Still redenden Züge
Des Ahnherrn zu sehn.

So fangen die Parzen;
Es hörcht der Verbannte
In nächtlichen Höhlen,
Der Alte, die Lieder,
Denkt Kinder und Enkel
Und schüttelt das Haupt.
ARGUMENT.

ACT V.

ARAKAS expresses his vague suspicion to Thoas that some secret plot was laid to effect the escape of the two captives, and the King commands him to summon the priestess to his presence and to make a strict search on the shore (Sc. 1). Thoas regrets the leniency and benevolence he has shown to Iphigenia, who, forgetful of his benefits, now seeks to carry out her designs by deceit (Sc. 2). The latter appears and expresses her resolve not to perform the cruel sacrifice, and finally, loth to have recourse to deception, she reveals to the King who the two captives were, for what purpose they had come to Tauris, and what plot had been laid for their rescue. In the midst of her supplication to Thoas to grant her and the two strangers their freedom (Sc. 3), she is interrupted by the sudden appearance of Orestes, who comes armed and summons her to speedy flight. Thoas bids him sheath his sword, and Iphigenia telling him that he stood in the presence of the King, confesses, at the same time, that she had revealed their meditated flight and thus freed her soul from treachery (Scene 4).

Pylades and Arkas enter with drawn swords; the former urges Iphigenia and Orestes to follow him, and, on perceiving Thoas, asks whether he saw before him the sacred person of the King. Arkas assures the latter that only one word from his lips was required to set the ship of the strangers on fire; but Thoas commands that his enemies should be left unmolested, whilst he confers with Iphigenia and Orestes, and the latter asks Pylades to await calmly with their friends what the Gods had ordained for them (Scene 5).
Orestes, being asked by Thoas to prove that he was the son of Agamemnon, produces the sword of the latter, and asks to be allowed to fight for the right of hospitality for the benefit of any strangers who might in future come to Tauris. The King is ready to accept the challenge himself, but Iphigenia interposes and proves to him that the stranger is her brother. Thoas asserts that the issue must still be decided by a combat, as he will never consent to give up the image of Diana, which the strangers had come to take away; but when Orestes declares that he now sees the error which had deluded them, and that the command of Apollo 'to bring back the sister to Greece' referred to his own sister and not to Diana, Thoas at length consents to the departure of the strangers, together with Iphigenia.
Fünfter Aufzug.

Erster Auftritt.

Thoas. Arfas.

Arfas.


Es komme schnell die Priesterin herbei! Dann geht, durchsucht das Ufer scharf und schnell Vom Vorgebirge bis zum Hain der Göttin! Verschönet seine heil'gen Tiesen! Legt 1780 Bedächt'gen Hinterhalt und greift sie an! Wo ihr sie findet, faßt sie, wie ihr pflegt!
Zweiter Auftritt.

Theaš allein.

Entseglich wechselt mir der Grim in Busen,
Erst gegen sie, die ich so heilig hielt,
Dann gegen mich, der ich sie zum Berrath
Durch Nachsicht und durch Gute bildete.

Zur Sklaverei gewohnt der Mensch sich gut
Und lernt leicht gehorchen, wenn man ihn
Der Freiheit ganz beraubt. Ja, wäre sie
In meiner Abnehren rohe Hand gefallen,
Und hätte sie der heil'ge Grim in verschont,
Sie wäre froh gewesen, sich allein
Zu retten, hätte dankbar ihr Geschick
Erkannt und fremdes Blut vor dem Altar
Vergessen, hätte Pflicht genannt,
Was Not war. Nun lockt meine Gute
In ihrer Brust verwegen Wunsch hervor.
Vergebens hofft ich, sie mir zu verbinden;
Sie sinnt sich nun ein eigen Schicksal aus.
Durch Schmeichelei gewann sie mir das Herz;
Nun widerstehe ich der, so sucht sie sich
Den Weg durch List und Trug, und meine Gute
Scheint ihr ein altverjahrtes Eigenthum.

Dritter Auftritt.

Sphigenie. Theas.

Sphigenie.

Du forderst mich; was bringt dich zu uns her?

Thoas.
Du schiebst das Opfer auf; sag' an, warum?

Iphigenie.
Ich hab' an Arkas Alles klar erzählt.

Thoas.
Von dir möcht' ich es weiter noch vernehmen.

Iphigenie.
Die Göttin giebt dir Frist zur Ueberlegung.

Thoas.
Sie scheint dir selbst gelegen, diese Frist.

Iphigenie.
Wenn dir das Herz zum grausamen Entschluß
Verhärret ist, so solltest du nicht kommen!
Ein König, der Unmenschliches verlangt,
Findt Diener g'nug, die gegen Gnad' und Lohn
Den halben Fluch der That begierig fassen;
Doch seine Gegenwart bleibt unbesleckt.
Er finnt den Tod in einer schweren Wolke,
Und seine Boten bringen flammendes
Verderben auf des Armen Haupt hinab;
Er aber schwebt durch seine Höhen ruhig,
Ein unerreichter Gott im Sturme fort.

Thoas.
Die heil'ge Lippe tönt ein wildes Lied.

Iphigenie.
Nicht Priesterin, nur Agamemnons Tochter.
Der Unbekannten Wort verehrtest du,
Der Fürstin willst du rasch gebieten? Mein!
Von Jugend auf hab' ich gelernt gehorschen,
Erst meinen Eltern und dann einer Gottheit,
Und folgsam fühlst' ich immer meine Seele
Am schönsten frei; allein dem harten Worte,
Dem rauen Ausspruch eines Mannes mich
Zu fügen, lernt' ich weder dort noch hier.

Thoas.
Ein alt Gesetz, nicht ich, gebietet dir.

Iphigenie.
Wir saffen ein Gesetz begierig an,
Das unserer Leidenschaft zur Waffe dient.
Ein andres spricht zu mir, ein älteres,
Mich dir zu widersagen, das Gebot,
Dem jeder Fremde heilig ist.

Thoas.
Es scheinen die Gesangnen dir sehr nah
Am Herzen; denn vor Antheil und Bewegung
Bergisst du der Klugheit erstes Wort:
Daß man den Mächtigen nicht reizen soll.

Iphigenie.
Red' oder schweig' ich, immer kannst du wissen,
Was mir im Herzen ist und immer bleibt.
Löst die Erinnerung des gleichen Schicksals
Nicht ein verschlossnes Herz zum Mitleid auf?
Wie mehr denn mein's! In ihnen seh' ich mich.
Ich habe vorm Altare selbst gezittert,
Und feierlich umgab der frühe Tod
Die Knieende; das Messer zuckte schon,
Den lebendvollen Busen zu durchbohren;
Mein Innerstes entzogte wirlend sich,
Mein Auge brach, und — ich fand mich gerettet.
Sind wir, was Götter gnädig uns gewährt,
Unglücklichen nicht zu erstatten schuldig?
Du weist es, kennst mich, und du willst mich zwingen!

Thoas.

Gehorche deinem Dienste, nicht dem Herrn!

Iphigenie.

Lasst ab! Beschönige nicht die Gewalt,
Die sich der Schwachheit eines Weibes freut.
Ich bin so frei geboren als ein Mann.
Stünd Agamemnon's Sohn dir gegenüber,
Und du verlangtest, was sich nicht gebührt,
So hat auch er ein Schwert und einen Arm,
Die Rechte seines Busens zu verteid'gen.
Ich habe nichts als Worte, und es ziemt
Dem edeln Mann, der Frauen Wort zu achten.

Thoas.

Ich acht' es mehr als eines Bruders Schwert.

Iphigenie.

Das Looß der Waffen wechselt hin und her;
Kein flügler Streiter hält den Feind gering.
Auch ohne Hülfe gegen Trug und Härte
Hat die Natur den Schwachen nicht gelassen;
Sie gab zur List ihm Freude, lehrte ihn Künste;
Sphigenie auf Tauris.

Bald weicht er aus, verpästet und umgeht.
Ja, der Gewaltige verdient, daß man sie übt.

Thoas.

Die Vorsicht stellt der List sich flug entgegen.

Sphigenie.

Und eine reine Seele braucht sie nicht.

Thoas.

Sprich unbehutsam nicht dein eigen Urtheil!

Sphigenie.

O, hörst du, wie meine Seele kämpft,
Ein böses Geschick, das sie ergreifen will,
Im ersten Anfall mutig abzutreiben!
So steh' ich denn hier wehrlos gegen dich?
Die schöne Bitte, den annuth'gen Zweig,
In einer Frauen Hand gewaltiger
Als Schwert und Waffe, hörest du zurück:
Was bleibt mir nun, mein Innreß zu verteidigen?
Ruf' ich die Göttin um ein Wunder an?
Ist keine Kraft in meiner Seele Tiefen?

Thoas.

Es scheint, der beiden Fremden Schicksal macht
Unmäßig dich besorgt. Wer sind sie, sprich,
Für die dein Geist gewaltig sich erhebt?

Sphigenie.

Sie sind — sie scheinen — für Griechen halt' ich sie.

Johann von Goethe

Thoas.

Landesleute sind es? Und sie haben wohl
Der Rückkehr schönes Bild in dir erneut?

Iphigenie (nach einigem Stillschweigen).

Hat denn zur unerhörten That der Mann
Allein das Recht? Drückt denn Unmöglicheres
Nur er an die gewalt'ge Heldenbrust?
Was nennt man groß? Was hebt die Seele schaudernd 1895
Dem immer wiederholenden Erzähler,
Als was mit unwahrscheinlichen Erfolg
Der Mutigste begann? Der in der Nacht
Allein das Heer des Feindes überschleicht,
Wie unversehen eine Flamme wüthend
Die Schlafenden, Erwachenden ergreifst,
Zuletzt, gebrängt von den Ermunterten,
Auf Feindes Pferden, doch mit Beute kehrt,
Wird der allein gepriesen? Der allein,
Der, einen sichern Weg verachtend, füchse
Gebirg' und Wälder durchzuströmen geht,
Daß er von Räubern eine Gegend säubre?
Ist uns nichts übrig? Muß ein zartes Weib
Sich ihres angebor'nen Rechts entäußern,
Wild gegen Wilde sein, wie Amazonen
Das Recht des Schwerts euch rauben und mit Blute
Die Unterdrückung rächen? Auf und ab
Steigt in der Brust ein kühnes Unternehmen;
Ich werde großem Vorwurf nicht entgehn,
Neben schwerem Hebel, wenn es mir misslingt;
Allein euch leg' ich's auf die Kniee! Wenn
Ihr wahrhaft seid, wie ihr gepriesen werdet,
Iphigenie auf Tauris.

So zeigt's durch euren Beistand und verherrlicht
Durch mich die Wahrheit! — Ja, vernimm, o König,
Es wird ein heimlicher Betrug geschmiedet;
Vergebens fragst du den Gefangnen nach;
Sie sind hinweg und suchen ihre Freunde,
Die mit dem Schiff am Ufer warten, auf.
Der Nebl'lis, den das Nebel hier ergriffen
Und nun verlassen hat — es ist Drest,
Mein Bruder, und der andre sein Vertrauter,
Sein Jugendsfreund, mit Namen Pylades.

Apoll schickt sie von Delphi diesem Ufer
Mit göttlichen Befehlen zu, das Bild
Dianens wegzurauben und zu ihm

Die Schwester hinzubringen, und dafür
Verspricht er dem von Furien Verfolgten,
Des Mutterblutes Schuldigen, Befreiung.
Uns beide hab' ich nun, die Ueberbliebenen
Von Tantal's Haus, in deine Hand gelegt:
Verdirb uns — wenn du darfst!

Thoas.

Du glaubst, es hörte
Der rohe Schyte, der Barbar; die Stimme
Der Wahrheit und der Menschlichkeit, die Atreus,
Der Griech, nicht vernahm?

Iphigenie.

Es hört sie jeder,
Geboren unter jedem Himmel, dem
Des Lebens Quelle durch den Busen rein
Und ungehindert fließt. — Was finst du mir,
O König, schweigend in der tiefen Seele?

Ist es Verderben? So tödte mich zuerst!
Denn nun empfinde ich, da uns keine Rettung
Mehr übrig bleibt, die grausliche Gefahr,
Worein ich die Geliebten übereilt
Vorsätzlich stürzte. Weh, ich werde sie
Gebunden vor mir seen! Mit welchen Blicken
Kann ich von meinem Bruder Abschied nehmen,
Den ich ermorde? Nimmer kann ich ihm
Mehr in die vielgeliebsten Augen schaun!

Iphigenie.

Nein, o König, nein!
Ich könnte hintergangen werden—diese
Sind treu und wahr. Wirst du sie anders finden,
So laß sie fallen und verstoße mich,
Verbanne mich zur Strafe meiner Thierheit
An einer Klippeninsel traurig Ufer!
Ist aber dieser Mann der lang' erleschte,
Geliebte Bruder, so entlasse uns, sei
Auch den Geschwistern wie der Schwester freundlich!
Mein Vater fiel durch seiner Frauen Schuld,
Und sie durch ihren Sohn. Die letzte Hoffnung
Von Atreus' Stamme ruht auf ihm allein.
Laß mich mit reinem Herze, reiner Hand,
Sinnübergehn und unser Haus entführen!
Du hältst mir Wort.—Wenn zu den Meinen je

1945
1950
1955
1960
1965
1970
Iphigenie auf Tauris.

Mir Rückkehr zubereitet wäre, schwurst
Du, mich zu lassen; und sie ist es nun.
Ein König sagt nicht wie gemeine Menschen
Verlegen zu, daß er den Bittenden
Auf einen Augenblick entferne, noch
Verspricht er aus den Fäll, den er nicht hofft;
Dann fühlt er erst die Höhe seiner Würde,
Wenn er den Harrenden beglücken kann.

Thoas.

Unwillig, wie sich Feuer gegen Wasser
Im Kampfe wehrt und gischtend seinen Feind
Zu tilgen such't, so wehret sich der Zorn
In meinem Busen gegen deine Worte.

Iphigenie.

O, lasst die Gnade wie das heil'ge Licht
Der stillen Opferflamme mir, umkränzt
Von Lobgesang und Dank und Freude, lodern!

Thoas.

Wie oft befänstigte mich diese Stimme!

Iphigenie.

O, reiche mir die Hand zum Friedenszeichen!

Thoas.

Du fordrest viel in einer kurzen Zeit.

Iphigenie.

Um Güt's zu thun, braucht's keiner Überlegung.

Thoas.

Sehr viel, denn auch dem Guten folgt das Unheil.

Iphigenie.

Der Zweifel ist's, der Gutes böse macht.
Bedenke nicht! Gewähre, wie du's fühlst!

vierter Auftritt.

Dreist gewappnet. Die Vorigen.

Dreist (nach der Scene gescheht).

Verdoppelt eure Kräfte! Haltet sie
Zurück! Nur wenig Augenblicke! Weicht
Der Menge nicht, und deckt den Weg zum Schiffe
Mörd und der Schwester! (Zu Iphigenien, ohne den König zu
sehen.)

Komm, wir sind verrathen.
Geringer Raum bleibt uns zur Flucht. Geschwind!

(Er erblickt den König.)

Thoas (nach dem Schwerte greifend).

In meiner Gegenwart führt ungestraft
Kein Mann das nackte Schwert.

Iphigenie.

Entheiligt

Der Göttin Wohnung nicht durch Wuth und Mord!

Gebietet eurem Volke Stillstand, höret
Die Priesterin, die Schwester!

Dreist.

Sage mir!

Wer ist es, der uns droht?

H
Iphigenie auf Tauris.

Iphigenie.

Berehr in ihn
Den König, der mein zweiter Vater ward! 2005
Verzeih mir, Bruder! Doch mein kindlich Herz
Hat unser ganz Geschick in seine Hand
Gesetzt. Gestanden hab' ich euren Anschlag,
Und meine Seele vom Berrath gerettet.

Dreßt.
Will er die Rückkehr friedlich uns gewähren?

Iphigenie.

Dein blinkend Schwert verbindet mir die Antwort. 2010

Dreßt (der das Schwert einstekte).

So sprich! Du stehest, ich horche deinen Worten.

_____

Fünfter Außtritt.

Die Borigen. Pylades, bald nach ihm Arkaß; beide mit bloßen
Schwertern.

Pylades.

Verweilet nicht! Die letzten Kräfte raffen
Die Unfrigen zusammen; weichend werden
Sie nach der See langsam zurückgedrängt.
Welch ein Gespräch der Fürsten find' ich hier! 2015
Dies ist des Königes verehrtes Haupt!

Arkaß.

Gelassen, wie es dir, o König, ziemt,
Stehest du den Feinden gegenüber. Gleich
Ist die Verwegenheit bestrafft; es weicht
5. Auszug, 6. Auftritt.

Und fällt ihr Anhang, und ihr Schiff ist unser. 2020
Ein Wort von dir, so steht's in Flammen.
Thoas.

Geht,
Gebiete Stillstand meinem Volke! Keiner
Beschädige den Feind, so lang wir reden! (Arkas ab.)
Drest.

Ich nehm' es an. Geh, sammle, treuer Freund,
Den Rest des Volkes! Harret still, welch Ende 2025
Die Götter unsern Thaten zubereiten! (Pylades ab.)

Sechster Auftritt.

Iphigenie. Thoas. Drest.

Iphigenie.
Besiegt von Sorge mich, eh' ihr zu sprechen
Beginnet! Ich besychte bösen Zwist,
Wenn du, o König, nicht der Billigkeit
Gelinde Stimme hörest, du, mein Bruder,
Der raschen Jugend nicht gebieten willst.

Thoas.
Ich halte meinen Zorn, wie es dem Neulern
Gezeigt, zurück. Antworte mir! Womit
Bezeugst du, daß du Agamemnon's Sohn
Und dieser Bruder bist?

Drest.
Hier ist das Schwert, 2035
Mit dem er Troja's tapfre Männer schlug.
Dies nahm ich seinem Mörder ab, und hat
Die Himmlischen, den Muth und Arm, das Glück
Des großen Königes mir zu verleihn,
Und einen schöneren Tod mir zu gewähren.
Wähl' einen aus den Edeln deines Heers
Und stelle mir den besten gegenüber!
So weit die Erde Heldensohne nährt,
Ist keinem Fremdling dies Gesuch verweigert.

Thoas.

Dies Vorrecht hat die alte Sitte nie
Dem Fremden hier gestattet.

Drest.

So beginne
Die neue Sitte denn von dir und mir!
Nachahmend heiligt ein ganzes Volk
Die edle That der Herrscher zum Gesetz,
Und laß mich nicht allein für unsre Freiheit,
Laß mich, den Fremden, für die Fremden kämpfen!
Fäll' ich, so ist ihr Urtheil mit dem meinen
Gesprochen; aber gönnet mir das Glück
Zu überwinden, so betrete nie
Ein Mann dies Ufer, dem der schnelle Blick
Hülfreicher Liebe nicht begegnet, und
Getrüstet scheide Jeglicher hinweg!

Thoas.

Nicht unwert scheinesst du, o Jüngling, mir
Der Ahnherrn, deren du dich rühmst, zu sein.
Groß ist die Zahl der edlen, tapfern Männer,
Die mich begleiten; doch ich siehe selbst.
5. Aufzug, 6. Auftritt.

In meinen Jahren noch dem Feinde, bin
Bereit, mit dir der Waffen Loos zu wagen.

Iphigenie.

Mit nichten! Dieses blutigen Beweises
Bedarf es nicht, o König! Laßt die Hand
Vom Schwerte! Denkt an mich und mein Geschick!
Der rasche Kampf verewigt einen Mann;
Er falle gleich, so preist ihn das Lied.
Allein die Tränen, die unendlichen,
Der überbliebenen, der verlassnen Frau,
Zählt keine Nachwelt, und der Dichter schweigt
Von tausend durchgeweinten Tag- und Nächten,
Wo eine stille Seele den verlornen,
Rasch abgeschiednen Freund vergebens sich
Zurückzurufen bangt und sich verzehrt.

Mich selbst hat eine Sorge gleich gewarnt,
Daß der Betrug nicht eines Räubers mich
Vom sichern Schutzort reiße, mich der Knechtschaft
Berrathe. Fleißig hab' ich sie befragt,
Nach jedem Umstand mich erkundigt, Zeichen
Gefordert, und gewiß ist nun mein Herz.
Sich hier an seiner rechten Hand das Mal
Wie von drei Sternen, das am Tage schon,
Da er geboren ward, sich zeigte, das
Auf schwere That, mit dieser Faust zu üben,
Der Priester deutete. Dann überzeugt
Mich doppelt diese Schramme, die ihm hier
Die Augenbraue spaltet. Als ein Kind
Ließ ihn Elektra, rasch und unvorsichtig
Nach ihrer Art, aus ihren Armen stürzen.

Er schlug auf einen Dreifuß auf.—Er ist's!
Soll ich dir noch die Aehnlichkeit des Vaters,
Soll ich das innre Lachzen meines Herzens
Dir auch als Zeugen der Versicherung nennen?

Thoas.

Und hübe deine Rede jeden Zweifel,
Und bändigt' ich den Zorn in meiner Brust,
So würden doch die Waffen zwischen uns
Entscheiden müssen; Frieden seh' ich nicht.
Sie sind gekommen, du bekennest selbst,
Das heil'ge Bild der Göttin mir zu rauben.
Glaubt ihr, ich sehe dies gelassen an?
Der Griechen wendet oft sein lüstern Auge
Den sernen Schägen der Barbaren zu,
Dem goldnen Felle, Pferden, schönen Töchtern;
Doch führte sie Gewalt und List nicht immer
Mit den erlangten Gütern glücklich heim.

Dreß.

Das Bild, o König, soll uns nicht entziehen!
Jetzt kennen wir den Irrthum, den ein Gott
Wie einen Schleier um das Haupt uns legte,
Da er den Weg hierher uns wandern hiess.
Um Rath und um Befreiung trat ich ihn
Von dem Geleit der Furien; er sprach:
„Bringt du die Schwester, die an Lauris' Ufer
Im Heiligthum wider Willen bleibt,
Nach Griechenland, so löset sich der Fluch."  
Wir legten's von Apollon's Schwester aus,
Und er gedachte dich! Die strengen Bande
Sind nun gelöst; du bist den Deinen wieder,
Du Heilige, geschenkt. Von dir berührt,
War ich geheilt; in deinen Armen sahle
Das Nebel mich mit allen seinen Klauen
Zum letztenmal, und schüttelte das Mark
Entsetzlich mir zusammen; dann entsloh's
Wie eine Schlange zu der Höhle. Neu
Genieß' ich nun durch dich das weite Licht
Des Tages. Schön und herrlich zeigt sich mir
Der Göttin Rath. Gleich einem heil'gen Bild, 2125
Daran der Stadt unwandelbar Geschick
Durch ein geheimes Götterwort gebannt ist,
Nahm sie dich weg, dich Schützerin des Hauses,
Bewahrte dich in einer heil'gen Stille
Zum Segen deines Bruders und der Deinen.
Da alle Rettung auf der weiten Erde
Verloren schien, gießt du uns Alles wieder.
Laß deine Seele sich zum Frieden wenden, 2130
O König! Hinde nicht, daß sie die Weihe
Des väterlichen Hauses nun vollbringe,
Mich der entsfühnten Halle wiedergebe,
Mir auf das Haupt die alte Krone drücke!
Vergilit den Segen, den sie dir gebracht,
Und laß das nähern Rechtes mich genießen!
Gewalt und List, der Männer höchster Ruhm,
Wird durch die Wahrheit dieser hohen Seele
Beschämmt, und reines, kindliches Vertrauen
Zu einem edeln Manne wird belohnt. 2145

Iphigenie.

Denk' an dein Wort, und laß durch diese Rede
Aus einem graden, treuen Munde dich
Bewegen! Sieh uns an! Du hast nicht oft
Zu solcher edeln That Gelegenheit.
Versagen fannst du's nicht; gewähr' es bald! 2150
Iphigenie auf Tauris.

Thoas.

So geht!

Iphigenie.

Nicht so, mein König! Ohne Segen,
In Widerwillen scheid' ich nicht von dir.
Verbannt uns nicht! Ein freundlich Gastrecht walte
Vom dir zu uns; so sind wir nicht auf ewig
Getrennt und abgeschieden. Werth und theuer, 2155
Wie mir mein Vater war, so bist du's mir,
Und dieser Eindruck bleibt in meiner Seele.
Bringt der Geringste deines Volkes je
Den Ton der Stimme mir ins Ohr zurück,
Den ich an euch gewöhnt zu hören bin,
Und seh' ich an dem Aermsten eure Tracht,
Empfangen will ich ihn wie einen Gott,
Ich will ihm selbst ein Lager zubereiten,
Auf einen Stuhl ihn an das Feuer laden,
Und nur nach dir und deinem Schicksal fragen. 2160
O, geben dir die Götter deiner Thaten
Und deiner Milde wohl verdienten Lohn!
Leb' wohl! O wende dich zu uns und gieb
Ein holbes Wort des Abschieds mir zurück!
Dann schwellet der Wind die Segel sanfter an, 2170
Und Tränen fließen lindernder vom Auge
Des Scheidenden. Leb' wohl! und reiche mir
Zum Pfand der alten Freundschaft deine Rechte!

Thoas.

Leb' wohl!
NOTES.

Erster Aufzug.

Erster Außtritt.

The sacred ground surrounding the Greek temples used to be planted with a grove. In such a grove, in front of the temple of Diana, the scene of the present drama is placed, in accordance with the structure of ancient Greek plays, the action of which generally passed in the open air.

The temple of Diana here mentioned may be assumed to be that which forms the scene of action of the 'Iphigenia in Tauri' by Euripides, and which stood at the 'now historic Balaclava' in the Crimea, the Chersonesus Taurica of ancient times.

II. 1-9. Although kept by the will of heaven in the temple of Diana for many a year, the spirit of Iphigenia does not become familiar with the silent sanctuary of the goddess, and she still feels the awe with which the mysterious rustling in the 'waving tree-tops' inspired her, when she first stepped forth into the shades of the grove.

1. 1. It must be supposed that Iphigenia begins her soliloquy, not when in the act of coming out of the temple, but when already in the grove, for which reason she uses the expression hiero, and not hina. Cp. note to l. 4.

The expression rege Winkel forms an antithesis to filles Heiligtum (l. 3).

1. 2. Diichtelwander, 'having dense foliage; ' 'leafy.' Cp. the Greek πυκνόφυλλος.

1. 4. Schauderndes Gefühl stands here for Schauer, 'awe,'

1 Those readers, who are not perfectly familiar with the subject of this drama, should, before attempting to read it, make themselves acquainted with the General Introduction.
'feeling of awe.' 1 P. V. i. has: Herans in eure Schatten, ewig reger Wipfel des heiligen Hains, hinein ins Heiligthum der Göttin... tret' ich mit immer neuem Schauer, etc.

1. 5. Sich refers to Schatten (l. 1).

1. 6. The Gram. Subj. is need, of course, not be translated here. Some editions have hierfür for hierher.

1. 9. Iphigenia still feels herself a stranger, as in the first year of her sojourn in the temple.

1. 11. The epithet lange here conveys the notion of 'weary.'

11. 13, 14. All the response, which the waves bring to her sighs, consists of roaring, hollow sounds.

The above lines, which occur for the first time in the last version of the drama, were evidently suggested to Goethe by the aspect of the Lake of Garda (Lat. Benacus), which, as he states in his Italianische Reise (Torbole, 12 Sept. 1786), was so agitated by a strong wind, that high waves rolled against the shore, and made him realize the meaning of the Virgilian verse: 'Fluctibus et fremitu adsurgens Benace marino' (Georg. ii. 160). Goethe quoted 'resonans' instead of 'adsurgens.'

A few months later he wrote from Rome (6 Jan. 1787), with reference to this drama; Am Gardasee, als der gewaltige Mittagwind die Wellen ans Ufer trieb, was ich wenigstens so allein war als meine Helden am Gestade von Tauris, zeig ich die ersten Linien der neuen Bearbeitung.

1. 16, &c. That deep grief snatches away from man the cup of happiness, before it has reached his lips, is a poetical simile probably derived from the fate of Tantalus, the ancestor of Iphigenia. P. V. i. has: Ihn läßt der Gram des schönsten Glücks nicht genießen.

1. 18. Ihn... die=seine. It is an idiomatic peculiarity in German, as in some other languages, to point out the personal relation by the dative of the personal pronoun, instead of by the possessive pronoun, usually employed in English.

Abwärts is here synonymous with fernab, 'afar.'


The P. V. had Wohnung.

1. 21. Mitgebrachte denotes 'persons born of the same parents,' and is used in poetry for Geschwister, i.e. brothers and sisters. Cp. the Greek συγγενείς, and the Latin cognati.

The poetical comparative form seh und säher for immer seher und säher is, with Goethe, of frequent occurrence.

1 P. V. i, ii, respectively stand for the first and second Prose Version of the drama.


ου γὰρ ἀλλ' ἀνὴρ μὲν ἐκ δόμων
θανὼν ποθείνος, τὰ δὲ γυναικὸς ἀσθενῆ.

I. 29, &c. Woman's fate is closely confined; even (ἰσθιμ) obedience to a harsh husband is to her a duty and a comfort, and what misery it is, if, &c. Cp. Eur. Andr. l. 213, &c.

χρὴ γὰρ γυναῖκα, κἂν κακῷ δοθῇ πόσει,
στέργειν.

I. 33, &c. Iphigenia now proceeds to illustrate the helplessness of woman by her own fate; and because she is compelled to perform the duties of priestess, she calls her bondage both 'stern' and 'sacred.'

II. 36-40. Iphigenia serves her rescuer dutifully, though with calm reluctance; but her life should be devoted to the goddess from gratitude, in voluntary service. Her sincere devotion to the goddess is, however, shown by the fact that she still rests her hope on her. Cp. for τί (l. 40) l. 582 n.

I. 41. Agamemnon was chief commander of the Greeks, and his dignity, power, and majesty placed him above all other kings. Hence he might well be called 'the greatest king,' 'the august man' (l. 43), and 'godlike' (l. 45); the latter epithet (ἰσόθεος) being applied by Homer to eminent heroes, and by the Greek tragic poets to kings.

I. 42. Œcumene. Cp. l. 792 n.


I. 46. Goethe certainly makes Iphigenia speak more modestly than Euripides does, who puts in her mouth the self-complacent boast, that her father 'gave her the prize of beauty' (τὸ καλλιστέον εἰς ἐμ' ἀναφέρων, Iph. Taur. l. 23) in offering her as a sacrifice to Artemis. In Iph. Aul. however, the Greek poet makes Clytemnestra speak of Iphigenia, 'as loving her father more than all his other children did' (φιλοπάτωρ δ' ἄει ποτ' εἰ μάλιστα παίδων τῶν' ὀσους ἐγὼ 'τεκον, l. 638, &c.). It may, therefore, be assumed, that he too 'prized her most.'

I. 47. The expression, umgewandte Mauern, 'overturned walls,' used in higher diction to denote the total ruin or demo-
lition of a city, is of classical origin. Cp. moenia vertere, &c.—
P. V. i. has: Bem Bels der umgewandten Troja.

I. 48. Iphigenia assumes that Diana, appeased by having 'frightened' Agamemnon, may have 'led him home covered with glory.'

I. 49. Agamemnon's third daughter, Chrysothemis, not entering into the plot of the drama, has here been omitted.

I. 50. Die θηέειν ζηάε REFERs TO the preceding line.


ω πότνι', ἡπερ μ' Αὐλίδος κατά πτυχας
dεινής έσωσας έκ πατροκτόνου χερός,
σώσον με καὶ νύν, &c.

Zweiter Auftritt.

I. 54. The obsolete form θατ from θιεται is now used in poetry only. The verb θιεται was formerly used for θήτειν.

I. 59. For the expected arrival of the king at the temple the verb θάυμα is here used, whilst the mere approach of the whole body of the army is expressed by the verb θατένη.


I. 72, &c. Iphigenia had shrouded her feelings in a gloomy, awe-inspiring reserve, and her soul was therefore as if 'locked up with iron bands in her innermost heart.'

Die Seele... dir. Cp. note to l. 18.

I. 74. Euripides makes Iphigenia say (Iph. Taur. l. 218):

νύν δ' άξεινον πότνιον ξείνα
δυσχόρτους ήκους ναίω
άγαμος, άτεκνος, άπολις, άφιλος.

I. 76. The antithesis here will be brought out in English by rendering Baterland by 'native land' and θέντε by 'foreign soil.'

I. 81, &c. P. V. i. has: (κά) ... die neuen ζηάηλίγειe in lieh-
licher Gesellschaft von den Ζαυζημ der alten Σαμμεν gen Himmel
übeten, &c. i. c. 'when the young shoots, in sweet union, strove
heavenwards from the foot of the old stems.'

The expression in liehlicher Gesellschaft was transformed in
the poetical version into the θεμιάδης, gejellt und liehlich.

I. 84. An 'alien curse' weighed upon Iphigenia, because she suffered through the deeds of her ancestors, and more especially through the guilt of Helen. Somewhat in this sense Euripides makes Orestes say (Iph. Taur. l. 566), θακής γνακός
χάριν άχαριν ἀπώλετο.

I. 86. The fig. express. θαμνε θαμη corresponds somewhat to
the English 'iron hand'; then, lit. 'brazen,' being frequently used by Goethe, and other German poets, for 'hard,' 'strong,' 'unrelenting,' &c. Düntzer refers here to the figurative use of the Greek χαλκεος.

1. 87. Youth's finest joy consists in the healthy and prosperous growth during the first years of life.

1. 88. Ἔσθις γερέτε, &c. The joy of life having left her forever, she was no more her former self, but only her own shadow, 'even after she had been saved.'

Iphigenia's comparison of herself to a mere shadow of a departed person, is more fully developed by her further on, l. 107, &c.

1. 99. The miraculous manner of Iphigenia's arrival at Tauris made Thoas consider her as one 'given to him by the gods.' Cp. further on, l. 140.

1. 104. Ἐνικ]); here used poetically for 'altar.'

1. 106. Μακάν here for αναμακάν, 'to constitute.'

1. 108. Όσεί ένιεμ, &c. This simile is derived from the belief of the Greeks, that the spirits of wicked persons were obliged to hover restlessly round their own graves.

1. 109. Βερτανεμ, 'to mourn out;' 'to spend in mourning.' Note the force of the prefix νευ in the present instance.

II. 110–14. Iphigenia cannot call hers a life of heart-felt joy, since she must consider every day uselessly spent by her in mere dreams, as a preparation only for the time, when she will have ceased to live; namely 'for those grey days, which are spent in idleness, on the shore of Lethe, by the melancholy and unconscious host of the departed.'

Homer describes the nether world as being filled with gloomy darkness (μαέντα γραινεν ομην), and the souls or shades of the departed as living on sadly and idly in a state of dreamy half-consciousness (σέλβινενεγένεν). Cp. Od.xi.15,222, 489, &c. That the 'ghosts' lost all consciousness after having drunk of the waters of Lethe (i.e. oblivion) is a post-Homeric conception.—The verb νειμ is used in l. 114 in the sense of 'to spend in idleness.'

1. 116. The thought contained in this line must be connected with Iphigenia's description of woman's fate, in general, in her soliloquy. P. V. i. has: meif it das des Weibes Schiffs, und' ver Alem meins.

1. 117. Ον'υψεϊ by syncope for χυψεϊ.

1. 119. Anyone who does good and is not satisfied with himself, is deprived of the real enjoyment of life.

1. 124. Σειν Leben blutend laffen is a poetical expression for 'to die' (as a sacrifice).
1. 131. That victory 'flies with joyous wing' round a successful army, and even precedes its march, seems to be a simple enough poetical simile, and it is hardly necessary to assume, as some commentators have done, that the poet alluded here specially to Nike, 'the goddess of victory,' who is represented as winged, or to a particular tutelary deity granting victory to an army.

1. 135, &c. Ειδ—ερφευτ, 'is inspired by mild benignity in thy presence.'

1. 138. The beneficial influence of Iphigenia's presence is compared by Arkas to a soothing balm.

1. 140, &c. The following four lines are a recapitulation of the whole speech of Arkas.

1. 142. The term unmüthbar, in the present sense, seems to be applicable to places only, and is somewhat more expressive than ungätlidh, 'inhospitable,' which is used both of persons and places.

The expression ἀγενός is used by Euripides with reference to Taurus (Iph. Taur. l. 94), and also of the sea (ibid. l. 341) surrounding the country.

1. 144, &c. The little we have done looks like nothing, when we consider how much remains to be done.

1. 148, &c. We blame alike those who proudly depreciate their own real merit, and those who conceitedly extol their 'spurious worth.'—In his Sprüche in Prosa Goethe says: Ein großer Fehler: daß man sich mehr dünft als man ist und sich weniger schätzt als man verdient. Cp. also his, generally wrongly quoted, saying, occurring in his poem, Rehenschaft:

Nur die Lunte sind beseelen,
Brave freuen sich der That.

1. 158. Der Seinen, i. e. of his kindred.

1. 161. Šelger is not unfrequently used in higher diction, by Goethe and other German poets, for Nachfolger. Cp. l. 939.

1. 164. The Scythians were known to the Greeks as a laconic people, who 'did not set any value on fine forms of speech.'

The Taurians proper are said to have been the remnants of the Cimmerii, who were driven from the country by the Scythians. It must, therefore, be supposed that they amalgamated, in the course of time, with the latter.

ll. 165-168. Thoas is represented in the drama as a man of action, who was chary with his words, and who did not understand the art 'to guide from far a discourse towards his own designs, slowly and shrewdly.'

1. 169, &c. Arkas implores Iphigenia not to render the king's task more difficult, by a reserved refusal when he
makes her his offer, but to meet him half way.—P. V. ii. has:
durch Mitleid, Weibern, &c.

1. 174. Iphigenia calls the wooing of the king 'the most
terrible threat' because her union with him would debar her
for ever from her return home.

1. 176. Lügen, here = betrügen.

1. 177. This question is a continuation of line 175.

1. 182. Daß bu, &c. i.e. that she studiously conceals from
him her descent and origin.

II. 184-87. These lines fully characterize the king's taciturn-
ity, which is so great, that he is silent even about Iphigenia:
and that Arkas learned by some casual words only that a firm
resolve has taken hold of his soul 'to call her his own.'

1. 187. Goethe has rendered the appeal of Arkas much
more impressive by prefixing the word Daß, which is wanting
in the Prose Version.

1. 193. Dem Verehrung, &c. 'whose passion is restrained by
his reverence for the gods,' &c.—Cp. note to l. 18.

Bändigen, lit. 'to tame,' is often figuratively used in German
poetry (cp. ll. 988, 2096) in the sense of beherziehen, beähmen.
Compare the similar use of the French dompter and the Greek
däμάζειν.

1. 195, &c. Einnt—ziehen, &c. Miss Swanwick translates:
‘Will he force employ
To tear me from this consecrated fane?’

1. 198. Iphigenia calls Diana the 'resolute goddess,' as being
always ready for quick action, in her capacity of huntress.
As a goddess she is sure to give her aid to the priestess, and
as a maiden-divinity she will readily grant it to a maiden.
It is not improbable that l. 200 suggested to Sir Walter
Scott the refrain of his 'Hymn to the Virgin' (The Lady of
the Lake, iii. 29), viz.

'Maiden hear a maiden's prayer.'

1. 201. Ein gewaltjam neues Blut, &c. Two interpretations are
given of this line. Dünzter considers it to denote: 'blood
that has been powerfully (gewaltjam, adv.) changed or renewed
by passion'; whilst Weber and Strehlke explain it to mean
simply 'passionate (gewaltjam, for gewaltjamig, adj.) youthful
blood.' The latter interpretation seems the more plausible
and is, besides, supported by the Prose Version, which ran:
Τολά ταυτα Σπιγλίσηνσηνην κάτι εν της θεάς Βλυτ.

The author of the Greek translation of Goethe's drama
seems also to have adopted the latter explanation, viz.

οὕ γὰρ ἔξωρμα μένος
βίανον αὐτον οὐδὲ μὴν ἥβης ὑβρισ—
The 'harsh resolve of another kind' alludes, of course, to the intention of Thoas to introduce again the human sacrifices.

Goethe often uses the prep. zu after heissen.

This saying has become a familiar quotation.

Dritter Austritt.

The expression fremmer Wünsch is here to be taken in the strict literal sense of 'pious,' i.e. pure and godly, and refers indirectly to the king's intention respecting Iphigenia.

Füße for Erfüllung may be used in poetry only.

This much discussed line simply refers to the king's distrust and to his apprehension that his people may prove disloyal.

Cp. II. 157–63.

Render ein Ghringer (lit. 'one lowly born'), a subject.

Cp. Eur. Or. 602,

γάμοι δ' ὅσοι μὲν εὖ καθεστάσει βρότῶν,

makários αἰῶν, &c.

The verb heissen expresses here emphatically that the spirit of vengeance had entirely taken possession of the king's mind.

Gerufen for geräht is now used in poetry only.

Still gedämpft, 'quietly subdued.'—was künftig, &c. 'what the future has in store.'

The king seems to avow frankly that his present motive for visiting the temple is not, as on former occasions, to offer prayers or thanks for victory; he comes, in accordance with his resolute and straightforward character, at once to the object of his visit.

Dem LeHNen, i.e. the last of his subjects.

The necessity of slaying all men who came to the shore of Tauris, must be sought in the circumstance, that the inhabitants were obliged to be on their guard against invaders, more especially against the Greeks. (Cp. l. 2102, &c.) Euripides distinctly says, that the cruel law referred to the Greeks only (Iph. Taur. l. 38, &c.). The acknowledgment of Thoas, that hospitality was a 'pious right,' is consonant with the nobleness of his character as conceived by Goethe. Cp. l. 282.

In similar relative clauses the verb is often used in the third, instead of in the second person; hence genießt, erfreut for genießest, erfreust. The clause ein—Gast, which is a poet. inversion for ein von mir weht, &c., stands here in apposition to Die—genießt, and may be introduced in the English rendering by the words 'who as.'—The form Gast is used in general both for
male and female guests. Cp. Sanders’ Wörterbuch der Haupt-
chwierigkeiten in der deutschen Sprache, p. 149 b, 6.

l. 262. The singular form Tag, for Leben, is used in poetry only.

l. 265, &c. P. V. ii. has: Wenn ich ... je verlang ... Vielleicht, ach! wenn du wütest, wer ich bin, welches eine Verwünschung du nähret und schüßt, würdest du dich entsehn vor der Götter Zorn, du würdest statt mir, &c.

Although herself innocent, Iphigenia is conscious of the ‘curse’ which rests on her race, and which has driven her from her kindred.

l. 275, &c. Iphigenia expresses here her firm hope, that a return to her kindred has been ‘ordained’ for her, and designates, therefore, her exile as a period of ‘wandering’ only.

l. 276. The expression Geland is here most appropriately used. It denoted originally a ‘foreign land’ only; being composed of the Gothic ‘ali,’ other, and ‘land,’ land (O. H. G. elilenti); later it was used to express ‘banishment,’ or ‘the misery experienced by people living in foreign lands,’ and subsequently it assumed the signification of ‘misery’ in general.

l. 278. Bremüter, here ‘unsympathetic.’

l. 279, &c. Thoas asserts, that whatever the decrees of the gods respecting Iphigenia may be, and whatever fate they may have ordained for her kindred and herself, they had made her coming a blessing to him.

Rath, especially when used of divine powers, is often employed for Rathhue, or Beschluss.—gedenfen is here used in the sense of ügedenfen.

l. 292. Thoas considers it as a ‘hint’ from Diana that Iphigenia should be treated as a sacred personage, because the goddess herself had miraculously placed her in the Temple.

l. 294. Demand van aller Forderung leßprechen, ‘to renounce all claims upon anyone.’

l. 295. Miss Swanwick translates:

‘But is thy homeward path for ever clos’d.’

l. 298. In case Iphigenia should for ever be separated from her kindred, she appertains to Thoas in virtue of the law of the land, by the law of gratitude, and by the fact, that the goddess had herself placed her in his power.

l. 307. This line forms one of the most popular quotations in German.

l. 309. The term hochbegnadt is a much more dignified expression than its synonym hochgünstigt, and would properly be only used, when speaking of one ‘highly favoured by the gods.’
l. 312, &c. It is rather difficult to give an exact literal translation of this and the following line, the general sense of which is, ‘in whose words of great experience, which link thought to thought.’ The attribute ἀυτής μεν is often strengthened by adverbs, as: ἡδή, ἡιεί, alt, &c. to denote ‘a high degree of experience.’

l. 314. It has been attempted to explain ‘geographically’ how it came to pass that Thoas was acquainted with the fate of Tantalus, but ignorant of that of his descendants. The reason, however, seems to be very simple. The tragic fate of Tantalus is connected with the ‘history’ of the Greek gods themselves, who were, in a manner, also worshipped by the inhabitants of Tauris.

See on Tantalus the General Introduction, p. xi.

l. 316. Ἰφιγενία is here poetically used in the sense of ἀυτής μεν, ‘to associate.’

l. 319. Iphigenia does not admit the common story, that Tantalus had ‘betrayed’ the secrets of the gods, or that, wishing to test the latter, he was so ‘ignoble’ as to kill his own son, and set him before them as food. She therefore presents in its mildest form the wrong attributed to her ancestor, viz. that he had partaken in the society of the gods of nectar and ambrosia, and being proud of this distinction—which placed him at too great a height (l. 318)—he presumptuously boasted of it. (Cp. Crit. Introd. p. xx, etc.)

Somewhat in the same way Euripides makes Electra say (Or. l. 8, &c.):

οὐ μὲν λέγουσιν, ὅτι θεὸς ἀνθρώπος ἄν
κουμής τραπέζῃς ἄξιωμ' ἦξων ἴσον,
ἀκόλαστον ἔσχε γλῶσσαν, &c.

l. 321. The designation Δαμνητης (by syncope Δαμνητερ), with reference to Zeus, is Homeric. Cp. the Gr. epithets ἐρυθρεμένης; ἐρίγδουτος, etc. applied to Zeus, and the Lat. Jupiter tonans.

l. 324. The gen. form Ζεὺς, from Jupiter, is more euphonious than the gen. Ζευς from Zeus, used by some German poets and translators.

l. 325. Tartarus is appropriately called ‘ancient,’ because it is represented as the lowest part in creation, viz. ‘as deep below Hades, as earth is below heaven,’ and is consequently assumed to have been created first of all things. It is also represented as the prison of Cronos, the Titans, &c.

The name of Tartarus occurs in the Iliad, but not in the passage of the Odyssey, where the punishment of Tantalus is described.

l. 328, &c. This passage is rather perplexing, as Tantalus
did not belong to the race of the 'Titans' proper. It may be inferred, however, from a passage in Goethe's Dichtung und Wahrheit that he considered as Titans not only those 'heaven-storming' beings, who actually revolted against the sway of the gods, but also those, who acknowledged the supremacy of the latter, and who, having once been admitted to their 'society and companionship,' would no longer submit to them as their inferiors 1.

The gen. der Titanen refers also, as is seen from P. V. ii, to the gewalt'ge Brust.

l. 330, &c. The saying that 'a band of brass was forged round the forehead of the descendants of Tantalus,' is used by Goethe to express in general their perversity, which 'shut out from their restless (fehmen) eyes, prudence, restraint, &c., and which turned every desire of theirs into a raging passion, that knew no bounds' 2.

Der Gott is here used, as Thes by Homer, in general for 'deity.' Cp. Schiller's Jungfrau v. Orléans (C. P. S.), l. 1799, n.

l. 336. The expression Gewaltigwellenbe, is here used to denote the 'strong-willed' character of Pelops, on which see the General Introduction, p. xi, xii.

l. 339. This line has six feet. The name of Seuemanus must be pronounced as two iambi, viz. Ænömäus. The genit. is not marked by an apostrophe in the W. Ed., but it is often used in German with Latin and Greek names ending in -us.

l. 340. Pelops is represented as having had many more children, but here only those are mentioned who are prominent in the history of their race.

1 The passage alluded to above, occurs in Book xv. of Goethe's Autobiography, and runs thus:


2 In describing in a letter to Schiller (1797) the external appearance of the gifted Siegfried Schmidt of Friedberg (1774-1825), Goethe quotes the passage from P. V.: Aber um die Stirne schmiedete ihm ein ehernes Band der Vater der Götter. S. Schmidt, who is said to have become insane towards the end of his life, was distinguished by a remarkable look, full of energy, obstinacy and a powerful will. Cp. Goethe's Briefe, W. Ed. iv. Abt. 12. Bd. S. 219.
1. 341. Thýsêstês, the younger brother, is here placed first, probably for metrical reasons; the accent being on the second syllable in Θύσετ and on the first in Ατρεύ. Cp. l. 360, note.

1. 342, &c. The favourite son of Pelops who 'sprang from another union' (Ἀδη—wóděîtλ) was called Chrysippus. His mother was Axioche, or the nymph Danais. The common story is that his step-mother Hippodamia induced Atreus and Thýsêstês to kill him. That Chrysippus was the eldest son of Pelops is not distinctly mentioned by ancient writers, but Goethe represented him here as such for the sake of dramatic expediency.

II. 351–58. Goethe assumes here the theory, founded on the axiom of 'natura nihil facit per saltum,' that no prominent character, for good or evil, springs up suddenly in any family, but that there always is in the 'inheritance of genius' a gradual succession of either good or bad men, before the climax is reached in one, who is either the delight or the terror of the world. He, then, may be called happy, who 'with pleasure remembers his fathers,' and 'inwardly rejoicing feels that he closes the glorious line,' i.e. that the climax of good is reached in him.

1. 360. In this line the name of Atreus is preceded by a short syllable. Cp. l. 341, note.

1. 361. Gemeinsam herrschend (W. Ed. Gemeinsam-herrschend), ruling in common, i.e. with a divided sway.

1. 362, &c. Miss Swanwick translates the clause Bald—Rette: 'His brother's honour first Thyestes avounds.'

1. 365. Schwere, here 'momentous,' in the sense of 'horrible'; lange=ver langer Zeit.

1. 366. Einen Saßn, i.e. Plisthenes, or Pleisthenes, who was born to Atreus by his first wife Cleola.

1. 368. Cp. note to l. 18.

1. 369. Königstatt, in poetry, 'a town where a king has his usual residence,' 'the royal city.'

1. 374. Trunfêi, lit. 'intoxicated,' here 'impassioned'; frenzied.'

1. 379. The two sons were called Pleisthenes and Tantalus.

1. 384. Seneca, who has dramatized the occurrence related in the present passage, makes the unfortunate father exclaim, after he had partaken of the banquet:

'Quis hic tumultus viscera exagitat mea?
Quid tremuit intus? Sentio impatien onus,
Meumque gemitu non meo pectus gemit.'

(Thyest. Act v. 1000.)

1. 387. Short lines are generally employed to denote a pause, caused either by horror and emotion—as is the case in the present instance—or by a change of the subject.
1. 390. That the sun changed his course in horror of the 'Thyestean Banquet' is related by several ancient poets. Cp. Eur. Iph. Taur. 1. 192:

\[ \text{δινευοῦσαι} \]
\[ \text{ιπποῖς πταναῖς ἄλλαξας} \]
\[ \text{ἐξ ἔδρας ἵεραν ἄρμ' αὐγὰν} \]
\[ ἄλιος ἄλλα προσέβαλεν \]

and El. 1. 736:

\[ \text{λέγεται} \ldots \]
\[ \ldots \ldots \ldots \]
\[ \text{oπρέψαι θερμάν ἄλιον} \]
\[ χρυσωτὸν ἔδραν ἄλλα-} \]
\[ ξαντα δυστυχία βροτεί-} \]
\[ φ θνατᾶς ένεκεν δίκισ.} \]

In relating the above occurrence Hyginus (Fab. Lib. Cap. 88) says: 'Ob id scelus etiam sol currum avertit.'

II. 393-96. These lines allude to other horrible occurrences which took place in the family of the Tantalides. (Cp. Hyginus, ibid.), but which are hidden from us, for 'night covers by her heavy wings many a terrible fate of men and many deeds of distracted minds, and only allows us to look into ghastly twilight.' Cp. on fūtīg, l. 665, note.

P. V. i. has: Die süßre Nacht hat noch viel schreckliches Geschick und Thaten dieser Unfretigen gebrütet.

1. 397. P. V. i. has: Λαβ δεις Θρανεσ ein Ende sein, 'enough of these horrors.'

1. 398. Thoas cannot help attributing it to a miracle, that so noble-minded a person should be 'descended' from such a savage race. (Σαγε μιρ, wer du bist, P. V.)

1. 402. The express. erfte Zeit is here used elliptically for erfte Lebenzeit, i.e. since her 'childhood'; namely, at all times.

1. 404. Substantives in -ing (not denoting the natural sex) are generally used both for male and female persons.

1. 410. Zwischen denotes here 'association'; 'companion-ship,' i.e. zwiib. Orestes was the common favourite of his sisters, and grew up as it were, 'between,' or rather 'with them.'—The Greek translation has: ἀδελφαίν μετὰ δυοῖν.

1. 416, &c. Τρέγεν, poet. gen. for Τρέγα, as Εὐρέγεν for Εὐράγα.—The following remark is very appropriately put into the mouth of Iphigenia, to show the interest she, as a Greek, takes in the capture of Troy.

1. 421. See General Introduction, p. xiii.

1. 430, &c. This climax is not uttered boastingly, but with the intention to overawe the king.

1 Given according to Schöne, Köchly, &c.
IPHIGENIE AUF TAURIS. [ll. 443-499.

1. 443. Hier refers to bewährt, l. 441.
1. 445. ἡγ has here the meaning of 'design.'
1. 447. Bitten is sometimes used without um.
1. 449. Angstlich, i.e. with anxiety to evade his offer.
1. 450. This happy saying, which forms a familiar quotation in German, denotes that long speeches uttered to palliate a refusal are entirely thrown away; for the person refused only hears the No!
1. 455. Gütgegen would in prose be placed before sehen.
1. 457, &c. Das is here used in the sense of 'so that,' and sippeln (in l. 458) in that of 'to whisper.' Cp. l. 1266, n.

ll. 459-60. These lines have called forth the remark of Düntzer: Die Sitte der Ausschmückung des Hauses durch Kränze bei der Geburt ist nicht grießif. — It is not impossible, however, that the clause 'joy should twine the most beautiful wreath from column to column,' is here meant figuratively only, and that the words wie um eine Kränzchen are intended to denote, 'as for one born anew,' i.e. for one restored again to life. The putting up of wreaths on festal occasions was customary with the Greeks. Cp. J. E. B. Mayor's 'Juvenal,' xii. 87 and 91, n.

Ben Sāul', &c. Similar forms sometimes occur in Goethe's poetry. Cp. l. 1747, &c.

1. 468 This censure, directed against women in general, is uttered by Thoas with special reference to the conduct of Helena. That Iphigenia feels the allusion is seen by line 476.
1. 473. Se dringt auf sie . . . los, 'then urges them on.'
1. 474. The beautiful, poetical expression: Der Ueberredung göttne Junge may be compared to the Greek usage of designating eloquent words by the attribute 'golden' (χρυσεος). The epithet χρυσόστομος 'of golden mouth,' Gelächter, was applied, among later Greeks, to great orators, as Dio Chrysostomus, &c. In the Greek transl. ll. 473, 474 are rendered:

ομως γε και τοτ' ευμενης αυτων ματην
μύθοις πειθω χρυσεοις ἀνθάπτεται.
1. 476. Cp. l. 468, note.
1. 480. Infinitives connected with gehem are used without ζη, when the two verbs form a compound verbal expression.
1. 495. Thoas avers that the feelings of his own heart may be, just as well as those of Iphigenia, an echo of the voice of the gods.
1. 496. Iphigenia alludes to the 'storm of passion.'
1. 498. Kings being considered as the first among the people should set an example of reverence for the divine word.
1. 499. Thoas alludes to the inherited right of Iphigenia to sit at the table of Zeus, in consequence of her descent from Tantalus (cp. l. 310, &c.). He taunts her, therefore, with
the reproach, that she must consider herself superior to him who was merely an 'earth-born savage,' or 'barbarian.'

1. 501, &c. Iphigenia now repeats her former complaint (cp. l. 476), that the king makes her smart for her confidence.

1. 503. The king has hitherto preserved his composure, and being now afraid of losing it, he exclaims, that after all he is but human, and it is, therefore, better, that their argument should end there. Ἐσο ἐσθίσε, &c. (l. 504), 'my word (i.e. his final decision) shall therefore prevail, remain,' &c.

1. 516. Είναι, instead of the more usual pl. form, Είναι, probably in order to avoid a hiatus.

1. 520, &c. Thoas will no longer restrain the wishes of the people, who demand the re-instatement of human sacrifices.

1. 522. Ἰπτίκείς τις Μέγα, &c., she never asked for her own sake, that the king should restrain the desire of the people.

1. 524. Εγὼ χαίτετ ἑαυτήν μικρ... αὐ̄, 'he only attributes to them,'

Cp. with the present passage, Eur. Iph. Taur. l. 386, &c.

ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν
tὰ Ταντάλου θεοίσων ἐστιάματα
ἀπίστα κρίνω, παίδος ἡσθήναι βορᾶ,
tοὺς δ’ ἐμπὴς, αὐτοὺς δὲντας ἀνθρωποκτόνους,
ἐς τὸν θεόν τὸ φαύλον ἀναφέρειν δοκῶ:
οὐδένα γὰρ σάμαι δαιμόνων εἶναι κακῶν.

1. 528. The king calls the custom 'sacred,' because it was hallowed by an ancient law. Cp. τὰς θεῖας γεβιτείς, &c. l. 258.

1. 529. Thoas calls reason 'easily moved,' because it is accessible to arguments.

1. 533, &c. The king suspects that the strangers bode no good to his realm, because they had concealed themselves.

1. 537. Διήνῡ denotes here 'office.'

Bierter Auftritt.

In the following soliloquy the dactylic measure prevails, intermingled with trochees and spondees.


1. 540, &c. It has been remarked, that this passage is contrary to the spirit of antiquity, which assumed that even the gods were powerless against fate. I think, however, that the word ζηλοφ is here not synonymous with σιδήρο, i.e. inexorable fate in general, but is rather used in the signification of 'a single occurrence befalling a man'; 'a single fortunate or
unfortunate event.' The rendering of ἁμεὶς—Ἀρμεὶς would, therefore, be 'out of the grasp of merciless misfortune.' This explanation seems the more plausible, as Iphigenia was not to be sacrificed by any decree of fate, but only by the command of Diana, who, being appeased by the 'appearance' of punishment (l. 442), saved her herself.

The words ἐπὶ ἦσσ' Βολφέω (l. 538) also refer to l. 540: i.e. thou hast clouds . . . to cover the innocently pursued and to carry them on the winds.

1. 544. Diana was, to a certain extent, the female counterpart of Apollo, and thus also a goddess of prophecy.

1. 546. Diana being the goddess of the moon, Iphigenia compares her glance which rests protectingly over her worshippers, to the light which rests and holds its sway over the earth.

1. 549. The verb enthalten is here employed in the obsolete signification of 'to keep from,' in which sense it is now used reflectively only.

1. 551, &c. These lines express the remorse which haunts anyone who has shed human blood, although he may not have done so of his own accord; for 'the form of the slain, even when murdered by chance, is sure to lie in wait for the evil hours of the murderer and terrify him.'

1. 554. ἐὰν, &c. i.e. that remorse is so powerful, because the immortals love the widely scattered, kindly human race.

The expression ἔτει—Γεσφέλητε may be traced to Homeric usages. Cp. for weitenbreitet, πολυστερῆς, II. ii. 804; Od. xi. 365, and for ἔτει Μοιστίφων . . . Γεσφέλητε, γένος ἄνδρῶν, II. xii. 23.

ll. 557-60. The gods readily grant to man this fleeting life, and willingly allow him the delight to enjoy with them the cheerful aspect of their own eternal heavens.

Mark the antithesis between οὐστέβλιζον (l. 554) and Στερβόλιζον (l. 557).

P. V. ii. has: Καμία οὐ μεν Μοιστίφων· χρείαν ἔχειν ἤπειρον μέλλειν, καὶ ἐπιλέγειν αὐτῷ ἕτερον πολυμοχθον.

Euripides makes the Dioscuri say (El. 1. 1329):

ἐν γὰρ κάμοι τοῖς τ' ὀρανίδαις ὧν κτοῖς θυγτῶν πολυμόχθων.
Orestes and Pylades are the two strangers to whom the king alluded (l. 532, &c.), and it must be assumed, that they had been brought to the temple by his command.

1. 561, &c. Orestes believes the growing calmness of his soul to be a presentiment of death. *Stehen* stands here for *betreten*.

1. 563. Goethe has here appended the German accusative termination to the abbreviated form *Apollo*. The same has been done further on with other proper names.


1. 566. Diana was the twin-sister of Apollo.

1. 567. *heißmäsig* is both a more expressive and more poetical term than *heißmäsigewell*.

1. 568. The attribute *Gewiß* is here synonymous with *heißmäsig*, *unzweifelhaft*, &c. i.e. ‘sure,’ ‘clear’; ‘indubitable.’—
*Götterworte* = *göttliche Worte*.

1. 571. Some commentators refer the expression *Götterhand*, ‘divine hand,’ to Apollo, who urged on Orestes to matricide; whilst others seem inclined to interpret the term as referring to the ‘gods’ in general, who deprived him of all enjoyment of life. I fully agree with the latter interpretation, since the punishment was not directly inflicted on Orestes by Apollo himself, but by the avenging deities or furies, ‘who compressed his heart and deadened his sense.’

The rendering of *Götterhand* by the Homeric expression *krateià Moùra*, in the Greek translation, coincides with this view.

1. 573. To be deprived of the enjoyment of the light of the sun is frequently used by Greek poets for ‘to die.’ Ep. Eur. Iph. Aul. 1250, &c., 1281, &c., and further on, l. 1233, n.

1. 574, &c. Atreus and his house were cursed by the gods after he had killed the sons of his brother Thyestes. Orestes thinks, therefore, that from Atreus dates the fatal doom of *all* his descendants, ‘never to obtain a glorious end in battle.’

*Cp. Eur. El. l. 1175, &c.:*

οὐκ ἐστιν οὐδεὶς οἶκος ἀθλιώτερος
tῶν Τανταλείων οὖν ἔφυ ποτ’ ἔκγονὼν.

1. 576. It has been observed that, Atreus alone having been
murdered—by Aegisthus—the term Ἀθνεῖα must not be taken literally; but as Orestes wished only to express, that some of his ancestors had perished by a violent death, i.e. ‘that they had suffered like victims—a miserable death,’ he may also have included Tantalus, who is represented as having been hurled down from Mount Sipylus by Zeus.

1. 579, &c. Goethe follows the usual version (not adopted by Homer. Cp. Il. xi. 389, &c.), according to which Agamemnon was killed by Clytemnestra in his bath, consequently in a secluded part of the house. Hence the expression Ἄθνεῖα—θινός, ‘than in a wretched nook,’ or ‘obscure recess.’

The clause ἔν—ἡθλί, refers here, in general terms, to the snare laid for Agamemnon by Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, the ‘closely related assassin.’

1. 581. Ἐν λανεί, i.e. until he dies as a sacrifice on the altar.

The Furies, or Erinyes, are described by Homer as dwelling in the gloomy space beneath the earth, called Erebus (Ἐρεβός), and by Aeschylus as inhabiting the deep darkness of Tartarus. The term ἔντεριτίσθη, denoting ‘those dwelling underneath the earth,’ is, therefore, a very appropriate euphemistic expression; for the Greeks dreaded to call the Erinyes by their real name. When Orestes, after having killed his mother, declared (Eur. Or. 1. 408, &c.), in allusion to the Furies, that he thought he saw ‘three black maidens,’ Menelaus answers: ‘I know them, but I am not willing to mention their names’ (οἴδ' ἃς ἥλεξας, ὄνομάσαι δ' οὐ βούλομαι), and Orestes rejoins, ‘Indeed they are terrible; you rightly dread to name them’ (σεμναὶ γὰρ ἐπαίδευτα δ' ἀποτρέπει λέγειν).

1. 582, &c. The parricidal blood never dries up; trickling down from the murderer, it shows the traces of his steps. He is relentlessly pursued by the Furies, who ‘dog-like hunt him by the scent of his blood’ (nach dem Blut ... ἱστρεύν ἠέχθε).—
The P. V. had: ἕνα ἔντεριτίσθην, die ich nach dem Blute, das von meinen Ξητίτα ταύρων τρίτε, wie labialisierte ἰόντε διστάρειɛν ἱστρεύν ἠέχθε. The personal pron. ἐν is repeated in l. 582, because the rel. pron. ἓρ refers to the second person.

The description of the pursuit of the Furies is chiefly based on that given by Aeschylus. After Orestes had fled at the advice of Apollo to Athens, to seek protection in the temple of Pallas from the pursuit of the Furies, the latter appear and exclaim (Aesch. Eumen. 235, &c.):

εἰεν' τῶν ἔστι ταύνδρον ἐκφανεὶς τέκμαρ.
ἔποι δὲ μηνυτὴρ αὐθένγκτου φραδάις.
There are clearest traces of the man:
Follow thou up that dumb informer's hints;
For as the hound pursues a wounded fawn,
So by the red blood's oozing gore track we.'

(Prof. E. H. Plumptre.)

Cp. also Aesch. Choëph. 103; 983, &c.
1. 586, &c. The Eumenides were represented, as stated above, as dwelling in darkness in the lower world. P. V. i. has:

The word Larve, which denotes in German, as larva in Latin, 'a terrifying phantom,' 'a spectre,' is here figuratively used in the plural for 'furies.'

The saying Der—sein, forms a familiar quotation.
1. 591, &c. Pylades is 'his guiltless partner,' because in assisting Orestes to carry out the command of Apollo, he was not guilty of any parricide, but helped to avenge his kinsman Agamemnon. Orestes himself was banished from Mycenae, and Pylades voluntarily shared his 'banishment.'

The Greeks considered it a great misfortune to be obliged to leave their native country. Thus Euripides makes Orestes exclaim, 'that there is no greater cause for sighing than to leave the boundaries of one's fatherland.' (El. 1314):

It is probable, that the figure of speech, 'to wind a way up to light through the entangled paths,' is borrowed from the legend of Theseus, who did 'wind up his way' from the labyrinth by means of the clue of thread, given to him by Ariadne.

1. 601. Derfen is not unfrequently used, in higher diction, with the accusative, without any preposition. Cp. l. 1762, n. Derfe, here 'list.'
1. 605, &c. Before the victim, human being or animal, was killed, it was 'consecrated' by cutting off from its forehead a lock of hair, and then throwing it into the fire, &c.

Euripides makes Iphigenia say—in mitigation of her cruel office—that she only 'consecrates the victims, and others

1 This refers to the scent of blood, perceptible to the Furies only.
carry out the horrible immolation in the sanctuary of the temple.' (Cp. Iph. Taur. l. 40, &c.):

kataρρχομαι μὲν, σφάγια δ' ἄλλοισιν μέλει ἀρρητ' ἐσωθὲν τῶν' ἀνακτόρων θέας.

l. 609. Ἴμυρθυ is here synonymous with Μίσμυρθυ, 'despondency.' The pres. part. ἰμυρένθω has in this place a causal signification, i.e. 'by your doubting' (the promise of Apollo).

l. 610–12. Euripides (Iph. Taur. l. 79, &c.) puts the mention of the promise of Apollo into the mouth of Orestes. Ξεi stands here in the sing., because Τρὶτ, Ἠὔσι, and Ἁὐστέη form one general notion. See Gen. Introd. p. xv.

l. 615, &c. Instead of being surrounded by that cheerfulness, which is the usual accessory of childhood, a gloomy veil was cast round the tender infant head of Orestes, through the ill-treatment of his mother Clytemnestra. Thus (ἢ) he grew up, and becoming the image of his father, his mute look was a silent reproof to her and her paramour.

l. 620. The adv. of manner ἄνιλ is here placed before the subject for rhythmical reasons.

l. 621. It is not impossible, that Goethe wished to designate by the expression τίς Ἡὔσι, Electra's sojourn in the large apartments used by the Grecian women for working in wool, &c. These rooms formed part of the 'women's apartments' (γυναικῶνῖτις), in which also the male children stayed as long as they required female attendance.

l. 622, &c. Befehlommen is here synonymous with mit schwerem Fürsten. Cp. for ἔνθα ξανάρτι, &c., l. 958, n.

l. 628. From the subsequent admonition of Pylades it would appear, that Orestes alludes here to the day, when he committed matricide; for he tells him, using a somewhat modern turn of speech, 'that he should let the "infernal spirits" —by which he means the "furies"—‘in their nightly converse speak of that hour.' (l. 629, &c.) Cp. l. 1154, n.

l. 631. Delsenlauf is a poetical expression for Laufbahn eines Ἑλετρι, i.e. "heroic career."

l. 632, &c. The service of the gods consists in the beneficial work, carried out by good men in this world.

l. 634, &c. Ξεί ἄφαν, &c. namely, at the time when Agamemnon was killed, i.e. when he reluctantly\(^1\) (unwilliq) descended into the Orcus. Goethe generally uses in this drama the Roman mythological appellations, as being more commonly known; hence here Orcus instead of Hades.

l. 637. Seinen Saum, &c. i.e. "the border of his robe."

\(^1\) Some assume unwilliq to denote 'indignantly' at the disgraceful death inflicted upon him by his wife's treachery.
I. 639. The omission of the augment ζε, as in the present instance, ωρετηλ for ωρετηλ, is allowed in poetry only.

I. 640, &c. The friendship between Orestes and Pylades has become proverbial. Euripides makes the latter say to his friend 'What is life (to me) without thy companionship?'

\[ \text{τί δὲ ζην σῆς ἑταρίας ἀπερ; } \quad \text{(Or. l. 1072.)} \]

I. 643, &c. These lines refer to the time when Orestes had found a refuge at the house of Strophius, the father of Pylades. See Gen. Introd. p. xiv.

I. 646. The expression Βιο—Βλήτη, 'the half-nipped young blossom,' is here used to denote the neglected state of Orestes in his childhood.

II. 648-53. The following lines characterize, by a most poetical simile, the individual dispositions of the two friends. Orestes, in his dejected mood, compares himself to 'a sombre flower, about which Pylades hovered like an airy, brilliant butterfly, with daily renewed vivacity.' Pylades thus 'playfully transmitted his cheerfulness into his friend's soul, so that, forgetting his misfortune, he lived on, carried away by youth's fantastic dreams.'

I. 655. Εἰς', &c., namely, Pylades should say, that his own woes began. P. V. i. has: Μιτ χειρας ὑπερετηλ μιν έβαλεν χειρ τον Εκλεξην.

II. 656-61. Orestes believes that, carrying like a plague-stricken fugitive the germ of latent pain and of death within himself, he infects all those with whom he comes in contact, so that even blooming faces soon show the languid traits of a slow death. Βερατράθεν in l. 661 is used in the sense of ϕανερον.

I. 665, &c. Εἰς᾽ διε, &c., i.e. the pinions on which man soars to great deeds. Φίλων is the poetical term for Φίλως.

I. 667, &c. Φιλήσε is here used in the sense of μελετήσει. Ναυφαί would in prose be placed before ραυνίτεν. Cp. l. 455, n.

I. 670. Βροντή is sometimes used, like Σέργα, for 'courage' (cp. l. 1894), and Σέργα for 'physical strength.'

The Prose Versions have the plural: μελέτης Ανδρατηι, which was subsequently changed by the author into the more poetical form of the singular, viz. τοι έν Ϋεσεν Ανδρατηι, in order to denote the 'ancestors' collectively. Some conjecture that the poet wished to allude in particular to Atreus or Tantalus, the common ancestors of both Orestes and Pylades.

I. 671. Αὐτ', &c., namely, they hoped 'to pursue in the same manner the track of the monster and the robber.'

I. 677. Αὐτής', &c., i.e. one of them would then seize his sword.

I. 678, &c. Future heroic deeds numerousely crowded before their mind's eye, as the countless stars appeared to them in succession during the evening dusk.
P. V. i. had: Und unfe künftige Thaten gingen, wie die Sterne
nichts über unseren Hämpfern auf.

l. 681. Dringt is here used for trängt, say, 'feels impelled.'

l. 684. Actions generally become magnified after the songs
of the poets (Der Mund der Dichter) have rolled them on
increasingly (vermehtrend wälzt); i.e. have glorified and trans-
mittied them to posterity.

l. 687. ΣÇfürüν, 'drinks in.'

ll. 690–96. In wishing to imitate the deeds of our ancestors,
as they stand before us in their completeness and grandeur, we
pursue an ideal, which always flies before us. We take no
heed of the path which we tread, and scarcely perceive the
traces which show the earthly career of our forefathers.
Thus we always chase after their phantoms which, being
removed from us by the distance of time, crown the mountain-
heights, resting godlike on golden, or brilliant, clouds.

ll. 697–700. Pylades asserts that he does not esteem the
man who only strives after the approbation of the world, who
does everything from vanity. Nevertheless, Orestes should
be thankful to the gods, who had wrought such great deeds
through him while yet a youth. We must assume, that Py-
lades refers to the fact, that Orestes had been chosen by
Apollo to be the avenger of his father.

P. V. i. has: Ich halte nichts von dem, der von sich denkt, wie das
Volk ihn etwa wolle duren dürfte, allein du darfst den Göttcn reichlich
danfen, für das, was sie durch dich, den Jüngling, sehen gethan.

l. 701. Render here frehe by 'happy,' and be§ieren by 'grant.'

l. 706. The contrasting expressions erfe and le§e are placed
in German side by side, in order to express 'a very high
degree.' Here both may be rendered by 'the highest.'

Orestes speaks here in the spirit of the 'heroic age,' when
similar achievements constituted the highest bliss of man.

l. 708. Der has here the signification of 'after all;' 'for all
that,' i.e. 'who after all was revered by me.'—Cp. the Latin
'tamen,' and the Greek ὀμως, which latter expression is used
in the present instance for der in the Greek translation.

l. 710. Durch ihren Wint, &c. The Gods ruined him by 'their
hint' at Delphi to avenge his father's death.

l. 711. The impers. phrase es auf etwas gerichtet haben denotes
'to have a design against anything;' 'to be bent upon the
ruin of anything.' Cp. ll. 326, 574 notes.

1 Lines 697 and 698 seem to have been generally misunderstood;
probably on account of the rather unusual expression: denft, in the
sense of der nur darauf denft, i.e. 'who only thinks' (how).
l. 714, &c. Render Väter by 'ancestors;' nimmt if by 'carne;' and Es eilt by 'transcends.' The import of this speech does not agree with the doctrine adopted by the Greek tragedians.


l. 721. Gewalten is here used in the sense of wanten. Cp. l. 1553; and note to l. 492 in my edition of Schiller's Wilhelm Tell (Clarendon Press Series).

l. 722. Goethe represents the oracle at Delphi, as having used the ambiguous expression 'to take away the sister from Tauris'; which the two friends interpreted as referring to the image of Diana. Cp. ll. 1928, &c., 2107, &c., and notes.

l. 724. Pylades wishes to point out the contrast between the cruel and barbarian Taurians, and the more humane Greeks. Cp. l. 734, &c.

l. 729. Θηρίδης is sometimes used in higher diction for τιτίς.

l. 731. The expression das ίδην Θήριδης stands here for das Vergangene.

l. 733. Pylades presumes that the execution of the great work, with which they have been commissioned, may have been decided upon long ago in the counsels of the gods.

l. 738, &c. In consequence of their having been captured, the two friends have already, strangely enough, arrived 'by mere compulsion' at the very gate of the temple.

l. 742, &c. Man's prudence is only then of some avail, if heedfully it listens to the will of 'those above,' i.e. if it is guided by the hints coming from the gods. Cp. for Æneer l. 2035, n.

ll. 744-48. The oracles used to impose upon heroes, who were guilty of some great crime, dangerous, or 'momentous deeds,' for the achievement of which they were subsequently honoured by the world. It may be that the poet alludes here specially, as in some other passages further on, to Hercules. Cp. l. 632, &c.

ll. 751-55. Cp. l. 582, &c., and note.

l. 759. Βεβαιαί's, 'when... will be required.' Cp. l. 1789, n.

l. 761. Ηπειρολέγειν, 'considerate;' 'mature.'

l. 762. The character of Pylades, as depicted by Goethe, bears in general some resemblance to that of Ulysses, or Odysseus, the valiant hero, who was 'inexhaustible in cunning.' (Cp. Critical Introd.) Euripides seems to have conceived the character of Pylades somewhat in the same light, when in describing the two friends he makes a Phrygian slave say:—

ο θὲ παῖς Στροφίου, κακομήτας,
οἰοὶ Ὀδυσσεύς, σιγᾶ δόλιος,
πιστὸς δὲ φίλοις, θρασὺς εἰς ἀλκῶν,
ἐνέτος πολέμου, φόνιος τε δράκων. Or. l. 1403.
1. 763. Everyone must select some hero whom he takes as a model in his pursuit of immortal glory. The simile of 'toiling up to Olympus' was evidently suggested by the heroic career of Hercules.

1. 771. The expression αὐάλευσθαι, 'to draw out' (cp. the Lat. 'elicere'), is very characteristic of the cunning of Pylades.

1. 776, &c. In their guesses about the mysterious priestess, the people naturally came to the conclusion that she must have fled from peril. Popular rumour placed then her origin in the land of the Amazons, who are said to have settled near the Thermodon, a river of Pontus Euxinus, consequently in comparative proximity to Tauris.

1. 779, &c. The wrath of the king against the two strangers, and his determination to have them sacrificed, must already have been known to the latter. Orestes believes, therefore, that the bright sway of the priestess must have vanished before the curse which covers him like all-pervading night; and that the pious thirst for blood will unchain the old custom which, as Pylades had said, was restrained by the priestess.

1. 790. Unfemīnlίς, 'unrecognizable,' i.e. quite transformed.

1. 791. στὰτ αὐτὸν ἐνίμιν χέθησαι, 'to adhere steadily (or "firmly") to the same opinion.'

1. 792. ἔστε οὑν γιάζει. The auxiliary verbs of tense ἔχειν and έστη may be omitted in dependent clauses, beginning with a conjunction or a relative pronoun.

Zweiter Auftritt.

Iphigenia unbinds the chains of Pylades, because the Greeks used to consider it as a favourable omen, when the intended victims allowed themselves to be led to the altar without any physical constraint. In the Greek play, Iphigenia bids the attendants of Orestes and Pylades 'to loose the hands of the strangers, for, being consecrated, they should no longer be fettered.'

μέθετε τῶν ένον χέρας,
ὡς οὖντες ἰρόι μηκέτ' ὄσι δέσμιοι.

(Eur. Iph. Taur. 1. 468, &c.)

1. 805. It is probable that in his first surprise at meeting a Greek in Iphigenia, Pylades actually thought of the land of his birth, in speaking of the 'azure mountains of his native port,' Phocis being a mountainous country, and bounded on the south by the Corinthian gulf.

1. 810. Ἑσίω, the original genitive of ἰς, is still employed in higher diction, instead of the modern enlarged form ἱςένειον.

I. 818. *Welch unjelig, &c., 'what adverse fate.'
I. 821. *Unmänter, here ‘oppressive.’

Il. 824–43. The fictitious story here told by Pylades has several features in common with some of the fabulous tales, related by his prototype Ulysses. (Cp. Od. xiii. 256, &c., xix. 172, &c.) Like the latter, he transfers the invented occurrence to Crete, the ‘land of seafaring adventurers and liars,’ and as with the latter there is a basis, or at least a sprinkling of truth, in his account, such as the pursuit of Orestes by the furies, and the promise of Apollo that help would be granted to him in the temple of Diana.

I. 824. Goethe sometimes deviated from the rule, not to decline proper names of persons, when preceded by the def. art. P. V. I. had Αδραστος Ἐδεις. The names here mentioned occur in Grecian history, but there was no Cretan king called Adrastus.

I. 827. Zwischen uns, &c., ‘between us grew up a rough and savage youth.’ Τῆε̂μεν, here ‘to disturb.’
I. 831. The expression des Vaters Kraft for ‘our mighty father’ is Homeric. Cp. Ἰηερακληνη, Il. ii. 658, 666; and the similar use of ἤς, ibid. xiii. 720.

Cp. also the expression: Die räfsche Kraft der leicht hinziehenden PeRe, in Goethe’s Hermann und Dorothea. Fünfter Gesang, Zeile 141.

I. 832. Beutereieh = mit reicher Beute.—ζυρύδε, for metrical reasons instead of ζυρύδος.

I. 844. The great interest which Iphigenia takes, as a Greek, and as the daughter of Agamemmon, in the destruction of Troy, is here emphatically shown by her impassioned appeal to Pylades whom, though a stranger to her, she calls Θείερε Μάντι, i.e. ‘beloved man.’

I. 845. It is hardly possible to render with adequate force and brevity the terse assertion: ἕς λείη, i.e. ‘it lies in ruins.’ On the whole it is best rendered by W. Taylor, who has, however, spun out the preceding line into two, viz.

*Iphig.* And is the fall of Troy accomplished?
Dearest of men, repeat, repeat that word.

Pyl. It is.

Euripides makes Iphigenia inquire of Orestes the fate of Troy, but the whole passage is without any dramatic force. (Cp. Iph. Taur. I. 517, &c.)

I. 849, &c. Pylades evidently wishes that Iphigenia should not speak to Orestes about his guilt, from fear that the latter would betray himself.

I. 862. It was usual with the Greeks to call the natives of other countries ‘Barbarians,’ which first meant only ‘non-
Greek,' and later on, also 'rude'; 'uncivilized.' The designation of 'Barbarians' was given to the Trojans by Euripides and other Greek dramatists.

1. 863. Pylades first mentions the name of Achilles, who was the bravest of all the Greeks. He was buried by his countrymen, together with his faithful friend Patroclus, before Troy. (Cp. Od. xxiv. 36–94.) Goethe chose for the latter hero the epithet ἄμετρος, 'beauteous,' as nearly all other attributes would, in German at least, here sound commonplace. Besides, in describing the apparition of Patroclus to Achilles, Homer speaks of his 'beautiful eyes' (ll. xxiii. 66), and Dares Phrygius says of him that he was 'beautiful in body,' pulchro corpore. (Cp. De Excid. Troj. Hist. cap. xiii.)

1. 864. Achilles was not only the bravest, but also the handsomest of the Greeks. The designation Götterbüller, 'divine forms,' which can be traced to a similar usage in Greek, is therefore very appropriate with reference to the two heroes.

1. 865. Palamedes, the son of Nauplius and Clymene, was, according to some traditions, killed by Paris, and according to others, through the envy or revenge of his own countrymen. The tragic poets celebrate him, not only as a hero, but also as a poet and a sage.

Ajax, the son of Telamon, king of Salamis, was considered as the greatest hero among the Greeks, next to Achilles. He is said to have died by his own hands, in consequence of his being foiled in the contest with Ulysses about the arms of Achilles. (Od. xi. 541, &c.)

The word ἑώριμα must be supplied after Ἀιας Τελαμώνιος, which expression is an imitation of his designation in Greek.

1. 866. The term Σαῦρος stands here for Λίθης, Ζέννε, i.e. das Lich des Vaterlandes; die heimische Zenne. Cp. the expression νόστιμον ἴμαρ, which has also been adopted by the translator into Greek.

1. 869. The expression λεῖθος ἱερόν may be used in German, as in Greek poetry, when persons address themselves in soliloquies. In English the epithet λεῖθος may be replaced by the possessive pronoun 'my.' Cp. l. 923, note.

1. 870, &c. Odysseus, when tossed by a fearful storm on the sea, exclaims, 'that thrice, four times happy are the Greeks who perished in the vast fields of Troy':

| τρισμάκαρες Δαναοί καὶ τετράκις, οἱ τὸτ ὄλοντο |
| Ὁ ῶη ἐν εὐρέη. |

The same idea has been expressed by other poets.

1. 872. In speaking of 'wild terrors,' Pylades alludes to the fate of Ulysses, his companions, and some other Greek
heroes. The 'sad end' refers, of course, to the death of Agamemnon.

I. 874. Freindlich aufgebrachter, 'in hostile anger.' For the term Gott cp. l. 330, n.

I. 878. The expression Mycenæ Hallen, stands here for 'the whole town of Mycenæ.' Similarly Schiller says: Freube war in Trejaß Hallen. Cp. l. 19, n.

That the citizens of Mycenæ lamented the death of Agamemnon may be seen from the reproaches which the Chorus addresses to Clytemnestra in the 'Agamemnon' of Aeschylus.


I. 884, &c. Pylades perceives, by Iphigenia's agitated state, that she strives in vain to suppress the emotion of her heart at the tidings which are the more terrible because unexpected. Goethe often places two adjectives side by side, leaving the first undeclined and using it adverbially, as here imwerwartet.

I. 886, &c. Nachbarlich is here used for als Nachbarin. P.V. ii. had: Vielleicht bist du die Tochter eines Gastfreunds oder Nachbars?

I. 888. Nach mir, &c., 'do not bear me any ill will.'

Cp. the saying of Sophocles (Ant. l. 277):

οστεργει γαρ ουδεις ανγελου κακων επων
(For no one loves the messenger of evil tidings).

I. 889. P. V. ii. had: ἃς ἴσ τεν Κύπρι, τε τε δει την φραντα.


I. 892. The term μηίq is here used to express the feeling of security of Agamemnon.

I. 894, &c. The statement that the 'pernicious woman threw upon his shoulders, &c. a garment complicate with folds and artfully entangling itself' is based on Clytemnestra's own confession, as given by Aeschylus (Agam. l. 1353, &c.):

ἀπειρον ἀμφίβληστρον, ὅσπερ ἰχθῶν,
περιστιχις, πλοῦτον εἰματος κακών,
which lines Dean Milman has rendered by:

'As round the fish the inextricable net
Closes, in his rich garment's fatal wealth
I wrapt him.'

Cp. also for ιππυτιλα, &c. Aesch. Choeph. l. 485: αἰσχρῶς τε βουλευτοῖσιν ἐν καλύμμασιν, i.e. Agamemnon was caught in a garment treacherously contrived for his ruin.

I. 897. Cp. for Νοθ, besides the above quotations, the statement which Euripides puts into the mouth of Electra, 'that her father perished in the treacherous meshes of a net' (δόλομενον δολίοις βρόχων ἐρκεσιν, El. 154, &c.).
1. 898, &c. Goethe has here modified the version of Aeschylus, who describes Clytemnestra as carrying out the deed alone.

1. 899. ἓφησεν γὰρ ἄνδρα σκῆψιν εἰχ' ἀλωλότα, El. 29. Sophocles, however, does not acknowledge any 'extenuating circumstances.' (Cp. El. 564, &c.)

1. 902. Aegisthus governed the country of Mycenae in the absence of Agamemnon, and after the death of the latter he 'called his own both the queen and the kingdom.'

1. 903. Βοές ξύστ, 'evil passion.'

1. 904. Und einer, &c. = und ein altes, tiefes Gefühl der Nacht.

Il. 906-17. Cp. Gen. Introd., p. xiii. etc. In this passage Goethe has adopted the mild interpretation which Aeschylus puts on the deed of Clytemnestra, in assuming that she was only actuated by a feeling of revenge. Cp. Agam. ll. 212; 217-38; 1389; 1407, &c. Euripides seems to have followed the same poet by putting into the mouth of the Peasant the words 'for as regards her husband's death, she had a pretence:'

ές μὲν γὰρ ἄνδρα σκῆψιν εἰχ' ἀλωλότα, El. 29.

(Who is this maiden? ... And how she pitied the unfortunate Agamemnon, and asked me about his wife and children.)

1. 923. Cp. l. 869, n.—The following note by the Greek translator of the present drama may be of some interest to classical scholars: 'Nescio an consulto hic Goethius imitatus sit Euripidem, non ubique felicem Homeri (ταληθή, φιλη κραδίη) sectatorem. Cf. Med. 1242, 1244. Iph. T. 344: quae lepide irrisit Arist. Ach. 450, 480, 483, 485, 488.'

Dritter Aufzug.

Erster Auftritt.

1. 926, &c. Cp. l. 801 and the first note to Sc. 2 of Act II.

1. 928. Die Freiheit, &c., namely, the freedom which the sanctuary grants to those who are brought there as captives.
l. 929. It is a well-known fact, that persons lying prostrate with a severe illness frequently enjoy, when on the point of death, a last bright look of life, which may be considered as 'death's herald.' Compare the lines:

'How oft when men are on the point of death
Have they been merry! which their keepers call
A lightning before death.' (Romeo and Juliet, v. 3.)

l. 931. Σαμια is here used in the sense of 'to acknowledge.'

l. 933, &c. Goethe seems to have here adopted the version of Euripides, that the priestess merely 'consecrated' the victims by cutting off a lock from their hair. Cp. l. 605, n.


l. 941, &c. The special Greek 'household gods' (θεοί παμφωι), as well as Hestia (the Roman Vesta), the goddess of domestic life, used to be placed on a sacred hearth; the latter in the hall, where all the members of the family, and even the meanest servants, assembled for the offerings before the meals.

Ετρηκε, 'to touch in passing.'

ll. 945-48. The presence of the noble strangers recalled to Iphigenia the image of those heroes whom she learnt to honour in her parents' house; and it was also this reminiscence which, instinctively, comforted her 'inmost heart' with beautiful hope.

l. 956. Iphigenia alludes here, of course, to the fate of Agamemnon, which she calls 'mute,' because it was not granted to him to die in open battle, but he met his death in an 'obscure corner.' Cp. l. 899, n.

l. 957. Goethe seems to disregard here—evidently for dramatic reasons—the usual version, which represents Iphigenia as having already reached womanhood when she was brought to Aulis. Age is not recognized in poetical fiction.

l. 958. Iphigenia here simply describes the feeling of awe and admiration she entertained on looking at the assembled heroes, but she does not describe the look itself. It is certainly possible to remember whether we looked on a person with anger or affection, and the objection of M. Patin, with reference to this passage: Il y a là un démenti formel à ce que dit quelque part Cicéron que l'œil qui voit tout, ne se voit pas lui-même (Études sur les Tragiques Grecs, ii. 138), is, in my opinion, quite groundless.

l. 960, &c. Olympus was considered by the early poets as the chief seat of the gods, among whom several demi-gods, such as Perseus, Hercules, Theseus, &c., were ad-
mitted; and it is to the latter that Iphigenia alludes, in speaking of the heroic forms of glorious bygone ages.

Here, or Ηηλίαν is another name for Κυλία.

1. 966. Feminine substantives were formerly also declined in the singular. Now the practice is retained in a few expressions only, but Goethe has, both in prose and poetry, several times used the obsolete genitive singular of the word θρης, i.e. θρυσσων.

Δεσιφία is the genitive of the abbreviated form Νεφίον.

1. 967. Orestes, hesitating from a natural feeling to acknowledge the dreadful deed with a direct affirmative, does so by the indirect, but still emphatic affirmation: ὄν ταγή, 'it is as thou sayest.' Ταντάλες is the gen. of the abbrev. form Τανταλ.

II. 970–73. As ill weeds by shaking their dreary tops spread numerous seeds, thus the grandchildren of Tantalus (i.e. Atreus and Thyestes) have engendered to their children's children, murderers of their own race, for an endless reciprocation of frenzy, or 'mutual rage.'

P. V. ii. has: So haben Tantals Enkel den Fluch, gleich einem unvertilgbaren Unfrucht, mit voller Hand gesät, und jedem ihrer Kinder wieder einen Mörder zur ewigen Wechselwuth erzeugt.

Aeschylus makes Clytemnestra express a similar sentiment, viz. that an evil genius possesses the family of the Atridae, and incites them to 'mutual murder.' Cp. Agam. II. 1451, 1551, &c.

1. 973, &c. Iphigenia asks Pylades to reveal to her that part of his 'brother's' speech which the 'darkness of terror,' i.e. the giddiness overclouding her senses—had suddenly concealed from her. Cp. 1. 918, and the passage from the P. V. further on.

1. 977. Das halbe Kind. Euripides represents Orestes as having been brought as a child to Aulis by Clytemnestra with Iphigenia, and the latter brings him on the stage as a 'silent petitioner' to her father not to sacrifice her (Iph. Aul. l. 1241, &c.); and in Iph. Taur. (l. 834, &c.) she says 'that she had left him at home in the arms of his nurse.'

Bestimmt des Vaters Rächer, &c. According to the notions of the ancients, it was a duty to avenge the murder of one's kindred. Orestes was, therefore, 'destined' to be the avenger of his father, and this fact mitigates his guilt. P. V. ii. has: Ο σαί, mir an, was ich verwirrt von dieser Nachricht verhört, wenn mir's dein Bruder auch gesagt, wie ist des großen Stammes letzte Pflanze, den Mordgestünten ein aussermunder, gefährlicher Rächer, wie ist Dreyf dem Schreckenstag entgangen?

1. 980. The lake Avernus (Ital. Lago Averno) is situated about nine miles from Naples. On account of the noxious
mephitic vapours arising from it, and the gloomy groves covering its banks, the Roman poets considered it as the entrance to the 'nether-world' (Cp. Verg. Aen. vi. l. 237), and the name was also used to designate the latter. The expression the 'nets of Avernus' stands, therefore, here for the 'nets of death.'

1. 982. Gelbe Gene, &c. It is hardly necessary to call the special attention of the appreciative reader to the present passage which contains an exquisite poetical sentiment. The expression of joy uttered by Iphigenia in the drama of Euripides (Iph. Taur. l. 842, &c.), appears feeble and almost commonplace by the side of it.

1. 985. θανάτουβληθα may here be rendered by the periphrasis 'by ties of hospitality.'

1. 988. Orestes implores Iphigenia 'to rein in and control her feelings.'


(But misfortune after happy days must heavily press on us.)

1. 991. The verb wissen in the sense of 'to know of anything,' may be used in poetry only, without the prep. von.

1. 996. Iphigenia considers her mother doomed, and as being past fear and hope. The P. V. had: Die sei den Göttern überlassen, Geltung und Fürst hilft dem Verbrecher nicht.

The repetition of the conj. weder instead of weder ... noch is now not of frequent occurrence.

1. 997. The expletive auch has here, approximately, the meaning of 'and indeed.'—The expression Land der Geltung stands poetically for 'human life'; 'this world.'

1. 1001. Iphigenia's apprehensions are so manifold, that she feels as if uncertainty were flapping a thousand dark wings round her head, overwhelmed with anxiety.

1. 1004. Wer is here used in the sense of Herr.

1. 1005. Orestes was anxious to hide his deed from the knowledge of men, hence his assertion that he would fain bury it 'in the soundlessly hollow, dark realm of night.' Geheimreich, lit. 'cavern-realm,' denotes figuratively 'deep darkness.'


1. 1009. In the following account of the deed of Orestes, Goethe has adopted, with a few deviations, the version of Sophocles, as given in his Electra. See Gen. Introd. p. xiv.
l. 1010, Anaxibia, the second wife of Strophius and mother of Pylades, was the sister of Agamemnon. Cp. l. 643, n.

l. 1011. Schwäger, denoting primarily 'father-in-law,' was subsequently also used for 'brother-in-law.' It is derived from the same root as Schwager.

l. 1014. The expression den Angememnon seems here to be used in order to denote, that the friendship between the two youths sprang up as soon as Orestes had arrived.

l. 1017. Unverflehen is here used for unerwartet.—fremd gekleidet =als Fremde gekleidet, i.e. 'in disguise.'

l. 1018. Als brachten sie, &c., i.e. they feigned that they had brought the sad tidings, &c. Cp. for the gen. Dreyens l. 966, n.

l. 1022. Goethe, Lessing, and other great German writers, not infrequently add the termination -en to proper names in the dat. as well as in the acc. case, as here Gefallen.

l. 1023. With Aeschylus it is Pylades who, when Orestes hesitates to kill his mother, urges him 'to follow the behests of Apollo.' Cp. Choeph. l. 885, &c.

l. 1025. In fidi, &c., say '(which) had been stifled.'

The following incident is a free invention of the poet.

ll. 1027-29. Although the floor had been often washed, still there might be observed, where it was stained, faint traces of the shamelessly shed blood in pale, ominous streaks. This passage is based on the belief that human blood, wantonly shed, cannot be obliterated. Supply den before eit, &c.

When Orestes returned in order to avenge his father's death, Electra says: 'and my father's black blood still putrefies in the house.' Eur. El. l. 318:

\[ \text{μέλαν σέ στήσαν} \]

Cp. also Choeph. l. 63, &c.

l. 1034. As Goethe passes over the existence of Chrysothemis, the third daughter of Agamemnon (Cp. note to l. 49), the word Gejähnifter must here be taken to denote Electra and Orestes, since the latter was threatened, like the former, by dangers from their 'mother who had become estranged to them.'—The ill-treatment of Electra by her mother Clytemnestra has been described by the Greek tragic poets, who also mention that the queen felt no security as long as Orestes was alive.

The coined expression ütjegeworden has no exact equivalent in English, nor perhaps in any other language; ütjegeworden Mutter denotes 'a mother who has been changed into a stepmother.'

Cp. the late Latin 'novercor.'

l. 1036. The mention of a 'fatal family dagger' (Schicksal;
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delph) is a classical reminiscence. The poet seems to assume
that Electra gave to Orestes the same dagger with which
Areus and Thystes had slain their half-brother Chrysippus,
and with which subsequently Areus had killed his own son
and his nephews: (Cp. Gen. Intro. p. xii, etc.). Voltaire, in
his tragedy 'Oreste,' also speaks of a 'fatal family dagger.'

1. 1039, &c. The conception that the gods 'happily spend
their bright lives' (den reines Tag ... selig leben) is Homeric. Cp.
Od. vi. 1. 42, &c.
The use of the word leben as a transitive verb is properly
confined to higher diction only. The expression weni is here
employed in the sense of 'fresh' or 'bright.' The P. V. had:
auf ... reineu Welfen.

1. 1044. An 'eternal fire' was properly kept up in the
temple of Vesta only.

1. 1045. The purity and calmness of the life which Iphigenia
led at the temple of Diana, elevated her soul to the bright
dwellings of the gods.

1. 1052, &c. In the following passage Orestes describes the
torments of his soul caused by remorse and repentance—which
are the furies that ceaselessly haunt him—after the ghost of
his mother 'had risen from the reeking blood of the slain.'
The brevity of l. 1053 indicates the great emotion of the
speaker, who makes a pause after Der Mutter Geist (cp. l. 387,
.), and equally expressive is the evidently purposely chosen
irregular metre in ll. 1055, 1056.

1. 1054. Aeschylus calls the furies the 'aged' daughters of
night (NvKtoS 1 παλαιαί παιδεις. Eumen. l. 69). Cp. l. 581, n.

1. 1061, &c. Orestes was troubled by doubt whether he had
acted rightly, and that apprehension, together with his actual
remorse, is represented by the poet as the natural com-
panion of the furies.

1. 1062, &c. When the furies, accompanied by 'doubt' and
'remorse,' leave their gloomy dens, a vapour rises before them
from Achern (a river in the 'nether-world'); in its—i. e. the
vapour's—circling clouds, the ever-present consciousness of the
past rolls bewildering round the head of the guilty; i.e. after a
person has committed a crime, the consciousness of it haunts
him unceasingly, and that consciousness is then followed by
the tormenting furies.

1. 1066, &c. According to Homer the furies remained quiet
in the nether-world until some crime was committed; then
only were they permitted to appear on the 'beautiful soil of

1 Prof. Paley and others have adopted the reading of παλαιαί.
heaven-sown earth;' and exercising their privilege to punish or to destroy, they pursued the criminal.

The earth is called γηθεσία, because it is God who has endowed it with fertility, and in so far the expression may be a mythological allusion to Demeter, the goddess of the earth.

The description of the furies and their pursuit of Orestes—both in the above passage and p. 55—is chiefly based on that given by Aeschylus. In the ‘Choephoroe’ (l. 1037) Orestes is represented as seeing, directly after the deed, Gorgon-like women in black robes, and their hair entwined with serpents. He says that he distinctly sees his ‘mother’s vengeful hounds;' and the chorus endeavours to comfort him with the assurance that ‘his soul is bewildered on account of the fresh blood on his hands.’ In the ‘Eumenides’ Orestes is represented as resting on the central-stone of the temple of Apollo and the furies asleep on chairs before him. Orestes leaves, and the ghost rising from the ground arouses the sleeping furies. Moaning and groaning the latter awake, and being urged on to resume their relentless pursuit, they do so with renewed vigour. Cp. also the grand choral hymn in the ‘Eumenides,’ l. 311, &c.


l. 1078, &c. A ‘stranger, ingenious and practised in deceit, may weave a web of falsehood as a snare for a stranger,’ but Orestes, being sympathetically drawn to Iphigenia, does not consider her as a stranger, and he is, besides, so unused to cunning that he feels bound to reveal to her the truth.

l. 1081. Cp. l. 387, n.

l. 1083. Σενήν...Σενή, ‘is stooping to the tomb, is seeking death.’ (William Taylor.)

l. 1087. Ου jεσενή, &c. Orestes is led to this conclusion by the tenour of Iphigenia’s first address to him. Cp. l. 941, &c.

l. 1089. Orestes wishes here simply to express, that he is ready to die the usual death of the victims in the land of the Taurians—which seems to have consisted in their being first slain in the temple and then hurled down a rock—and that his blood reeking down to the sea, may bring a curse upon the barbarians.

When Orestes asks Iphigenia (Eur. Iph. Taur. l. 625) ‘What kind of grave shall be allotted to him, when he is dead’? (τάφος δὲ πόιος δέκεται μ’, ἄταν θάνω;), the priestess replies: ‘A sacred fire inside (the temple), and a rocky chasm’ (πῦρ ἵδον ἐνδον χάσμα τ’ εὐρωπόν πέτρας).

l. 1094. Some commentators are of opinion that Goethe refers here to the goddess ‘Fortuna’; which would in so far be plausible, as that goddess is described by Pindar as the
daughter of Zeus Σωτήρ, i.e. Zeus the Deliverer, or Preserver. It may be, however, that the poet merely uses here a poetical figure of speech, in designating 'the fulfilment of our wishes,' as the fairest daughter of Zeus; and this interpretation seems to be the more correct, because he used in the P. V. the figurative expression: reicht der Gnade, der schönsten Tochter Zeus.

1. 1096. Unteueuer has here the meaning of 'gigantic'; 'vast.'

1. 1100, &c. As a king is known by the profusion of his bounty, for to him must appear trifling what to the mass of men would be a treasure, so one knows the heavenly powers by their long-reserved and wisely prepared gifts.

The expression Ταύτενεν is here used in the sense of 'multitude;' 'common people.'

1. 1106. Whilst the vast-extending realm of the future lies open before the glance of the gods, mortal beings cannot penetrate into the 'to-morrow'; since every evening—or as the author poetically expresses it, the 'starry and misty veil of every evening'—closes before their eyes the prospect into the future. The P. V. had: Καθες Αβενδς γεστίνενεν Χύλε
erbirt sees i.e. die Χύλινς) φιλος; and it is this reading which helps us to interpret the rather unusual expression: Στερν· und Nebelhülse. Cp. Goethe's saying: Was dir das Schiffal bring't, leht dich der Tag.

1. 1112, &c. Man should wait patiently for the benefits of heaven, until they are ripe for him, and not, impatiently grasping at them, taste to his own ruin the immature fruit.

1. 1115. The P. V. had: Was es auch sei, lasst mir dieses Glück nicht wie das Gespenst eines geschiednen Geliechten, eitel verüberscheu. It seems, therefore, probable, that the def. article used in the poetical version is employed by Goethe in the general signification of the indef. art., i.e. 'of a departed friend'; which usage is not uncommon in German poetry. It may also be, that the present passage was suggested to Goethe by the exclamation of Iphigenia (Eur. Iph. Taur. l. 842, &c.), after she had recognised her brother; 'unhoped for joy fell to my share, my friends! but I fear, that he (Orestes) will soar out of my arms heavenwards':

\[\text{ἀτοσον ἥδοναν ἔλαβον, ἦ φίλαε, \ δέδοικα ἀ' ἐκ χερών με μη πρὸς αἰθέρα} \]
\[\text{ἀμπτάμενον φυγῇ.}\]

1 According to Düntzer the above passage contains an allusion to the phantom apparition of Patroclus, in the dream of Achilles, as related by Homer, ll. xxiii. l. 60, &c. Cp. l. 863, n.
IPHIGENIE AUF TAURIS. [ll. 1124–1148.

l. 1124, &c. It is possible that the ‘immortal veil,’ which the goddess Leucothea gave to Odysseus (Od. v. 346, &c.) as a means of rescue in the storm, suggested these lines to Goethe; or he simply took the veil of the maiden priestess as an emblem of perfect innocence; so that the meaning would be, that even if Iphigenia, the chaste and innocent priestess, would take Orestes under her special protection, she could not save him from the furies, whom the poet designates here by the epithet of Σύμμεταφέν, ‘the ever-wakeful.

l. 1127. The furies did not pursue Orestes into the temple itself. Cp. l. 727, &c.

l. 1129. Sophocles says of the Furies (El. 478, &c.):

ηγεί καὶ πολύπους καὶ πολύχειρ
ά δεινοὶς κρυπτομένα λόχοις
χαλκόσους Ἐρυνύς.

‘There shall come with many feet and many hands, the fury with brazen feet, who is lurking in the horrible den.’

l. 1131, &c. Aeschylus represents the furies as moaning, groaning, and barking in their repose like a hound, ever mindful of the chase (Eum. 1. 126, &c.); but Goethe, who represents the Erinyes in a less ghastly, but more demoniac manner than the Greek tragedians, describes them as uttering a ‘horrid laughter.’ Cp. l. 1066, n.

l. 1142, &c. The mind-obsuring bewilderment which has taken possession of Orestes, is here figuratively designated by the expressions ‘smoke and vapour’; and in this hazy shrouding he only perceives the pale light of the river of death, which leads him down to Tartarus.

The ancients assumed that the way to the nether-world led across a river. The earlier writers knew it under the name of Styx, the later under the name of Acheron.

l. 1144. This line contains a poetical inversion. The P. V. had: ἕξει βαρεῖς ἔλεος ἐξωθείς, διὰ Ελευθερᾶ ἱέτι?


Іφ. λείπει δ’ ἐν οὐκοις ὄλλον Ἀγαμέμνων γόνον;
ΟΡ. λέκοπτεν Ἡλέκτρων γε παρβένον μίαν.
Іφ. τί δὲ, σφαγείσης θυγατρός ἐστι τις λόγος;
ΟΡ. οὐδεὶς γε, πλῆθος θανοῦσαν οὐχ ὄραν φαός.

(Iph. Has Agamemnon left another child at home? Or. He has left a maiden, Electra. Iph. What? Is there any report of his daughter, who was sacrificed? Or. Only this: that she died and does no more behold the sun.)

l. 1148. Iphigenia’s questions arouse in Orestes anew the sting of remorse; so that the Erinyes ‘blowing away’ with malicious joy the ashes of oblivion from his soul, will not
permit the last embers of the terrible fire which consumed
the house of Tantalus—still burning in himself—to become
quietly extinguished. Orestes apprehends, therefore, that the
destructive 'flame, purposely fanned and nourished by hellish
sulphur, is for ever to torture his soul.'

The present instance seems to be the only one in which
verglitten, 'to get gradually extinct,' is used reflectively.

l. 1149. The word Ėriuēn, is to be pronounced in German
as two iambics, viz. Ėrīn-ēn.

l. 1154. Goethe uses the anachronism ᾱῆλē in this drama
to denote Tartarus as a place of punishment after death.
ᾱῆλενωτερός is more a biblical than a classical expression.

l. 1156. Stauwerf is a rather more poetical form than
Stauwerf for 'incense.'

l. 1159. The verb ērnehemen 'to listen' (to what another
says) without a direct object, is used in poetry only.

l. 1162, &c. Iphigenia asks Orestes whether all life has
become stagnant in him; whether a petrifying charm, as if
from the head of the terrible Gorgon, creeps through his limbs.

Goethe seems to follow the tradition adopted by Euripides
who, like Homer, mentions one Gorgon only. The post-
Homeric poets generally assumed three Gorgons, but Medusa,
as the most terrible of them, was specially called 'the Gorgo.'

l. 1164, &c. Aeschylus represents the ghost of Clytemnestra
as inciting the furies to pursue Orestes. Cp. note to l. 1066.

l. 1168. The words of Iphigenia harrow up the inmost
depth of the heart of Orestes, and he actually believes that he
hears the voice of the Eumenides; hence his exclamation:
They call! They call! 1 Cp. l. 1131, &c.

l. 1172. Iphigenia interprets the great agitation of Orestes
as a sign that he instinctively feels the presence of his sister.

l. 1176. When Crêusa, daughter of Creon, king of Corinth,
was married to Jason, Medea, who had been forsaken by the
latter, sent her a bridal garment, which burnt her to death
when she put it on, and spread the flames to the palace.

Jumpet fiū...vēn mir fort, 'spreads,' or 'proceeds from me.'

l. 1178. Orestes considering himself as an 'unworthy
wretch' wishes to die 'an ignominious death' alone—'locked
up in himself'—like Hercules who retired to die in solitude

1 The exclamation Ės ruft is referred by some to Mutterblut. This
interpretation seems to me, however, less plausible than the one given
above. The expression Ės ruft; Ės hat gerufen, is frequently used in
German, in a general way, for 'there is,' or 'there was the sound of a
cry'; or 'they cry,' &c. Cp. the Latin 'clamatum est.'
on mount Oeta, when he found that he could not escape the excruciating agony caused by the 'Nessus garment' which his wife Deianira had sent him.

I. 1184. The sudden change of the feelings of joy and sorrow is here compared to a 'revolving wheel.' The cause of the sudden revulsion of feelings in Iphigenia's heart, is explained by her in the following lines: she shrinks back in awe from one who is a stranger, and still the voice of her heart calls her to her brother.

I. 1188. Λυαῦς stands here as the genitive of Lyaeus (Gr. Δυαῖος, i.e. 'deliverer from care'), the epithet of Bacchus or Dionysus. The priestesses of Dionysus distinguished themselves in their worship by a boisterous frenzy, or an 'unrestrained sacred fury.' ἄνθρωπε is here used adverbially.

I. 1190. Iphigenia asks Orestes to look at her and to judge from her aspect, how her heart opens to the joy of kissing the head of him, than whom the world can contain nothing dearer for her.

I. 1197, &c. Die ew'ge Quelle, &c. i.e. the fountain Castalia, which flowed down mount Parnassus between the two cliffs, called Nauplia and Hyamplia, and which was sacred to Apollo and the Muses.

The epithet golden is in poetical diction used for 'beautiful'; 'splendid.'

II. 1199-1200. Not brighter is the Castalian spring flowing from mount Parnassus, than is the joy which, gushing from the heart of Iphigenia, flows and surrounds her with a sea of bliss.

The adv. wie before Freude is to be translated by 'than'; it being used here after the comparative instead of als, which usage is not uncommon with Goethe and other German writers. In the next line, however, wie is to be rendered by 'like,' as it refers to Freude in the preceding line.

I. 1211. Pylades had been wandering about in order to discover the ways and means of carrying out his designs, and Orestes now implores Iphigenia 'to advise him' (Wei' ihm 3ureft), how to carry out their escape.

I. 1215. The apostrophe O nehmft, &c. is, of course, addressed to the gods. In the second poetical version, the line stands thus:

O nehmst [ihr Götter, nehmst]
Den Wahn ihm von dem starren Auge.

I. 1219, &c. Und rette#, &c., i.e. 'and bringing me hither saved me'; 'and brought me hither in safety.'

I. 1222. The senses of Orestes having been quite bewildered, Iphigenia recalls to him in a few words the actual state of things.
l. 1226, &c. Orestes expresses the wish that Electra too might at once perish with them, so that she might not preserve her life for a heavier doom and greater sufferings.

l. 1229, &c. In asserting that 'fratricide was an old custom of their ancient house,' Orestes alludes to the murder of Chrysippus by his half-brothers Atreus and Thyestes, to the attempt of the latter to kill his brother Atreus through the agency of Pleisthenes, and to the mortal enmity between those two brothers.

l. 1232. The phrase σιδή ναθην λαβείν denotes 'to take advice'; 'to follow advice.'

l. 1233. The poet here expresses symbolically the love of life, by the love of the sight of the sun and the stars.

When Iphigenia utters her lament (Cp. Eur. Iph. Aul. l. 1281) at her impending death, she exclaims:

κοινκέτι μοι φῶς,
οὐδ' ἄελλον τὸδε φέγγος

(This light and the beams of the sun are no more mine). Cp. also above, l. 573, n.

l. 1235, &c. As dragons engendered in a sulphurous pool fighting with their own kin devour each other, so the grim race of Tantalus perishes in mutual destruction.

The rather high-flown simile of 'hell-born dragons which destroy each other,' is quite in accordance with the agitated state of the speaker. Cp. l. 1154, n.

l. 1240. Μῖτ σιδήν Βλήσσε, &c., i.e. with such pitiable looks of impassioned appeal. Compare the pathetic scene in the 'Choephoroe,' where Clytemnestra appeals to her son not to murder her.

l. 1245, &c. In the 'Eumenides' of Aeschylus the 'indignant shade' of Clytemnestra is represented as summoning the furies not to relent in their pursuit of Orestes. Cp. l. 1066, n.

l. 1252. The expression Σταυσ is figuratively used in German as 'steel' in English, for any 'sharp weapon.'

The imper, νισθεινε νισθεινε, of Dültzer very properly remarks, that as in the 'Oedipus Coloneus' of Sophocles, the much-tried aged sufferer must once more feel his horrible guilt in its whole extent, before he gains full peace of mind, so Goethe represents Orestes as sunk in the lowest depth of despair, before he can be freed from the furies and the torments of his remorse.

l. 1258. Orestes recovering from his paroxysm, feels himself at once calmed and appeased; and believing that he has drunk from the 'stream of Lethe,' or forgetfulness, he asks for
another 'draught of cool refreshment,' so that the last 'agony of life' may be washed away from his heart.

Krampf, lit. 'spasm,' is in German also used figuratively for the 'paralyzing of the mind.'

l. 1262. Der Nuelle, &c., 'plunged into the source of forgetfulness,' the latter expression refers, of course, to the river Lethe.

l. 1264, &c. Orestes, in half-awakened consciousness, believes himself to be in the nether-world, and implores the 'shades' (l. 1263) to allow him, after being so much tossed about, to enjoy the comfort of rest amidst their own repose.

The adv. gefällig does not refer to laßt, but to the verb laben, and is here used in the sense of behaglich. P. V. iii had: In einer Stille laßt gefällige Ruhe den umgetriebenen Schu der Erde.

l. 1266. Geißel is used in poetical diction for Flügeln, 'whispering.' Cp. l. 457, n.

l. 1267. Orestes alludes to the rustling noise caused in the gloomy twilight of the grove, by the moving tops of the trees. Cp. l. 1, &c., n.

l. 1269, &c., Die herrlich mit einander ... ich freut, 'who rejoice in glorious communion.'

l. 1271. The following lines express the perfect harmony which unites kindred of Orestes dwelling in the realm of shades. Their forms appear godlike, and in their traits they resemble each other.


l. 1281, &c. The following apostrophe to his ancestors, which Orestes utters in an exalted state of mind, is given by the poet in the more animated measure of the iambic Dimeter, or Quaternarius, with frequent employment of amphibrachic instead of iambic feet, in order to allow an appropriate pause in the middle of the lines, viz.

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| O--O-- | O--O-- |
| O--O-- | O--O-- |
| O--O-- | O--O-- |
| O--O-- | O--O-- |
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l. 1289. Den ich nur Günstl, &c., viz. when Agamemnon returned from Troy; since Orestes could have no recollection of the time when his father proceeded on the Trojan expedition.

l. 1296, &c. The greeting (Gruß) of welcome was upon earth the 'sure pass-word of murder' in the race of ancient Tantalus, and their joys begin only beyond the grave.

The second—poetical—version had:

Auch Geden war in unserem Haus
Der Willsommt—Fed.
and P. V. ii. ran: \( \text{Heißt ihn willkommn! Auf Erden war's in unserm Haus ein Gruss zum Tod!} \)

I. 1301. The ‘aged sire’ is, of course, Tantalus, whom Orestes hoped to see among the departed shades of his kindred, who had atoned for all the wrongs committed by them, and who, reconciled with each other, enjoyed undisturbed tranquillity. Cp. for the fate of Tantalus, ll. 310-325, notes, and Gen. Int. p. xi.

I. 1307, &c. Since Tantalus does not appear to Orestes in his vision, among the host of his departed kindred, he concludes that the all-powerful gods have ‘with brazen fetters firmly rivetted cruel tortures to his heroic breast,’ i.e. that he is doomed to eternal punishment.

Dritter Auftritt.

II. 1310-1316. The vision of Orestes still continues; and his address to Iphigenia and Pylades is in the same metre as the latter portion of his soliloquy.

I. 1312. \( \text{Die Ein, i.e. the only one of the race of Tantalus who was still missing in the nether-world.} \)

I. 1313. All sudden deaths were believed to be caused by the gentle arrows of Apollo, or Artemis. The former generally slew men, and the latter women. When Odysseus saw the shade of his mother—who had died in his absence—in Hades, he asked her, Was it a slow disease, or did Artemis, the archer, slay thee with the visitation of her gentle shaft?

\[ \gamma \, \delta\omicron\lambda\omicron\eta\, \nu\omicron\upsilon\sigma\sigma\omicron; \, \epsilon\omicron\nu\nu\nu\omicron\upsilon\nu\nu\upsilon\alpha\upsilon\omicron\rho\upsilon\alpha\omicron \]
\[ \omicron\nu\upsilon\omicron\epsilon\alpha\nu\omicron\omicron\upsilon\omicron\delta\omicron\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\omicron\delta\omicron\nu\upsilon\iota\upsilon\omicron\upsilon \, \epsilon\omicron\pi\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\nu\epsilon\upsilon\nu\omicron\mu\omicron\nu\omicron\epsilon\omicron\nu\upsilon\omicron\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\nu\upsilon \]  
(Od. xi. ll. 172-73).

I. 1314. The expression \( \text{αμερ} \, \text{σφιμ} \) does not stand here in apposition to \( \text{Σιδων} \), but is used as an exclamation.

I. 1315. \( \text{κεμμ μιτ, \&c.} \) This reading, which occurs in the \( W. \, Ed. \), contrary to the Editor’s opinion, necessitates the interpretation that Orestes addressed alternately Pylades and Iphigenia. Goethe originally wrote \( \text{κεμμ μιτ! κεμμ μιτ!} \) which reading was possibly altered by Herder on account of the accumulation of the letter \( t \) in the same line.

I. 1317. Goethe follows here the version of later writers, making Apollo god of the sun and Diana goddess of the moon. Render \( \text{Ωρίσωτερ, ‘brother and sister,’} \) Cp. ll. 544-46, notes.

I. 1323. In accordance with a highly poetical notion, the paleness of the moon is here represented as expressive of her constant longing for the eternal light of the sun.
1. 1325. The P. V. had: Ὄ ταῦθι μαίνειν εἰναίγειν, ἱπατεύμενον (i. e. Βριτερί) μήτης, &c.

Far less poetical is the invocation of Iphigenia to Diana in Euripides (Iph. Taur. l. 1398, &c.):

"ὢ Λητοῦς κόρη,

σῶσόν με, τήν σὴν ἱερίαν, πρὸς Ἑλλάδα

ἐκ βαρσάρου γῆς, καὶ κλαπαῖς σύγγραβ' ἐμαῖς.

φιλεῖς δὲ καὶ σὺ σὸν κασίγητον, θεὰ:

φιλεῖν δὲ καὶ μὲ τοὺς ὁμαίμονας δόκει.

(O daughter of Latona, bring me, thy priestess, safe into Greece from a barbarian land, and pardon my deceit. As thou lovest thy brother Phoebus, so believe that I too love those born of the same parents with myself.)

1. 1327. Ἡνὶ ἐστὶν Βίλλο, &c., i. e. if the will of Diana in concealing Iphigenia at Tauris has now been fulfilled. The conj. ἃ is here used in the sense of αἰ, 'at the time when.' The P. V. had ταῦθι. Render Ἰλ'γε (l. 1329) 'blissful.'

1. 1331, &c. It must be assumed that Iphigenia had, in the meantime, been informed by Pylades of his intended designs of rescue.

1. 1333. Pylades repeats here more distinctly what Iphigenia had stated before—l. 1319, &c.—in a general way.

1. 1336. The shades of the departed were represented as mere airy forms, which were not tangible. When Odysseus wished to embrace the spirit of his dead mother in Hades, she flitted from his hands, 'as a shadow or even as a dream' (Od. xi. l. 206, &c.).

1. 1339, &c. The Parcae, or Fates (Gr. Μ㎥^ραι), were described as spinning out, at the birth of man, the thread of his future life. The present passage must, therefore, be simply taken as expressing metaphorically that a favourable fate was now spinning the threads of their lives, and that the safe return of the two friends depended upon those slender threads.

1. 1341. The P. V. had after the expression ζῆν εἰρήνειν, the words: σεῖτι μείνειν Ριττείοιονιν.

II. 1343-57. Orestes, who considers the troubles he has overcome as a violent tempest, compares the returning peace of his mind to the calm and the revival of nature, which follows the purifying violence of a thunderstorm.

In construing the present passage, the reader should remember that the words from τί εἰπ (l. 1343) to τρέματ (l. 1354), form a parenthetical clause.

1. 1343, &c. The god who sent storm and thunder was with the ancients principally Zeus; but Goethe describes here the gods, in general, as producing lightning, thunder and tempests,
or, as he poetically expresses it, as 'moving to burn up heavy clouds with flaming might.'

The P. V. had: ὧν Ὁηετε, διε ὧν, &c. Cp. l. 582, n.

1. 1345. The expression γυατίγερου indicates here, that the gods graciously grant the blessing of the long-sought rain, but do so sternly amidst the roaring of thunder and the rush of winds.

1. 1348, &c. Ὄσο υπερ, &c., i.e. the gods soon transform what man looked at with dread anticipation into a blessing, and thus change the timid, wondering anxiety into a look of joy, &c.

1. 1351. ἦσσεκατοιωτερ, 'newly refreshed.'

1. 1352. The epithet Νευ indicates, in this place, the reappearance of the sun in his brightness, after having been hidden by clouds.

1. 1353, &c. The grey veil of the last remnants of the clouds is gently divided by the pleasing and varied colours of the rainbow. ἐρις is the personification of the 'rainbow.'

1. 1359. Orestes had hitherto called the furies by names characteristic of their dreadful functions, as: Ουρανίδις (l. 580); διε Ιμηρομαχίς (l. 1126); and also Ερίμην (l. 1149); but now, being healed, he applies to them the euphemistic name, Ερίμηνδε (Gr. Εὐμενίδες), i.e. the 'gracious goddesses.'

1. 1360, &c. The 'brazen gates of Tartarus' are mentioned by Homer. Their remoteness is here indicated by the expression σφανεθ' ηπερ, i.e. 'with a remote thundering clang.'

Grimm seems to be of opinion that it would grammatically be more correct to divide the compound, viz. σφανεθ' ηπερ.

1. 1362. Orestes continues his simile by comparing the world, as it now lay before him, to 'the earth which exhales a quickening odour,' after a storm.

1. 1363, &c. This line contains a poetical inversion. The P. V. had: und lasset mich ein auf ihren ἤλασην, &c.

The expression ἤλασην is here used, according to Düntzer, to denote the extended sphere of activity now open to Orestes.

1. 1366, &c. Pylades thinks that it is not yet time for rejoicing; for it is only the wind which will swell their sails, that may waft their perfect joy to Olympus, i.e. the time for rejoicing will come when they are in security on the open sea.
Bierter Aufzug.
Erster Auftritt.

The first thirteen lines of the following soliloquy are, in general, written in the so-called ‘logaëdic’ metre, which consists of dactyls, followed by trochees. Some consider the verses as anapaestical, as several lines can very easily be scanned in that metre. The verses will perhaps best be scanned in the following manner:

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\text{- - -} \\
\text{- - -} \\
\end{array}
\]

\&c., &c., &c., &c.

1. 1369-81. The heavenly powers do not quite forsake mortal beings, and when they predestine for them manifold perplexities and deeply agitating, sudden transitions of the mind, they provide for them a calm friend as a help in the hour of need. Cp. for the constr. of \text{Deuten sein}, &c., l. 1789, &c., n.

2. 1378-79. These lines express the contrast between near and far in a classical spirit, by designating the former by the ‘native town,’ and the latter by the ‘distant shore.’

2. 1385-89. Iphigenia represents Pylades as the embodiment of physical courage and of wisdom. The former is expressed by the ‘arm of a youth in battle,’ and the latter is metaphorically designated by the ‘luminous eye of age in counsel,’ i.e. by the clear-sightedness of experienced old age. The following lines are added to justify the assigning of the highest wisdom to the youth Pylades; for, possessing the sacred, inexhaustible treasure of calmness of mind, he was able to supply from its depth counsel and help to the restless wanderer.

1. 1390, &c. The fact that Pylades did not allow Iphigenia to give herself heedlessly over to the ‘happiness which she could not realise,’ is mentioned as a further proof of his thoughtful wisdom.

1. 1395. The verb \text{ausführen} does not form here a compound verbal expression with \text{geben}, but expresses the object or purpose of the same, and is therefore used with the supine. Cp. l. 480, \textit{n}.

1. 1398. It is a matter of course that the ‘artful words’
were imparted to Iphigenia during the time which elapsed between the third and the fourth acts. Cp. l. 1368.

l. 1400. Note here the use of the subjunctive.

l. 1403. *H[err]halten, 'to dissemble,' is an inseparable compound verb.

l. 1404, &c. The interjection *[Be()tev is used in higher diction with the genitive, in order to express the object which occasions the exclamation of lament (cp. Sanders' Wörterbuch). — Here, the interjection *[Be()tev der Lüge, might perhaps best be translated, *Woe to falsehood!*

l. 1406. A word spoken in truth relieves the heart, as it were, from a burden; which is not the case when a lie has been uttered.

l. 1407. *[Be()t(m]achen, 'to comfort.' — *[Be()t is used in poetry for the more familiar *[Be()tigen, 'to cause anguish.'*

l. 1408, &c. The lie which has been secretly coined does not hurt the person against whom it is directed, but fills with anxiety the man who has uttered it; as an arrow which has been shot off, being diverted by a god, misses its aim, and rebounding, hits the archer. The tradition that the gods divert the arrows from the direction given to them by man is already found in Homer, and the superstitious belief that enchanted bullets dart back on the shooter is perhaps founded on that legend.

l. 1409. Goethe follows in his earlier writings the former usage of employing the primary form *[Be()t(e)n (lausger-driven), instead of the modified *[Be()t(e)n (lausger-driven).

l. 1414. The consciousness of being about to utter a falsehood had gradually dawned upon the mind of Iphigenia, and as anxiety upon anxiety trembles through her heart, she even begins to fear for her brother, lest the furies should again seize him on the unhallowed ground, or lest he, with Pylades and the crew, might be discovered at the shore.

**Zweiter Auftritt.**

l. 1422. The expressions *[Be()t(en and *[Be()t(en are here most happily chosen. The former conveys rather the notion of 'expecting,' and the latter that of 'waiting patiently.'*

l. 1426. Arkas considers the command of the king to such a degree paramount, that he cannot conceive any obstacle to its fulfilment.

l. 1427. *De()ten wir, &c., 'which we are unable to control.'
I. 1431, &c. Ἰμήτις δὲ Ἐσχυλῷ, &c., viz. he has upon him the guilt of having shed 'kindred blood.' In Euripides, Iphigenia says of Orestes and Pylades, in bringing forward the same pretext (Iph. Taur. l. 1171):

οἴκεῖον ἥλθον τὸν φόνον κεκτημένοι.

(The guilt of murder they had upon them when they came, is that of their own kindred.)

I. 1435. Ὑμεῖς is here used in the sense of 'malady,' or rather 'frenzy.' In the P. V. Iphigenia says of Orestes that he was 'in des Wehnhnns abschließlichle Bünde gehefft.'

I. 1438. The expression mit reicher Welle is here used to denote that Iphigenia considered it necessary, in performing the mysterious rites, to bathe the image of the goddess with 'fresh running water,' and not with the 'lustral waters' kept in the temple.

When Thoas asks Iphigenia, in the drama of Euripides (Iph. Taur. l. 1188, &c.), 'What is to be done with the strangers?' the following dialogue occurs:

I. άγνοῖς καθαρμοῖς πρῶτα νυν νῦσαι θέλω.
Θ. πνεαίσιν ὑδάτων ἡ θαλασσία δρόσῳ;
I. θάλασσα κλύζει πάντα τάνθρόπων κακά.
Θ. οὐκοῦν πρὸς αὐτῶν ναὸν ἐκτίπτει κλύδων;
I. ἔρημίας δεῖ καὶ γὰρ ἄλλα δράσομεν.

I. άγνιστέου μοι καὶ τὸ τῆς θεοῦ βρέτας.

(Ipb. I wish first to cleanse them with holy purification. Th. With spring of water, or with the moisture of the sea? Ipb. The sea washes off all the ills of men. Th. Does not the sea dash against the temple itself? Ipb. Solitude is needful; for we shall do other things besides. . . . Ipb. I must also purify the image of the goddess.)

I. 1444. Νοῦ, &c., i.e. the sacred rite.

I. 1448. Εὐπρίνγεια is a somewhat more emphatic expression than Εὐπρίνγεια, 'to enforce.'

I. 1454. The suspicions of Arkas about the pretended mysterious rites seem already to have been aroused; hence his assertion, in general, that he would fain bring the king a message, 'which would solve the whole perplexity now surrounding them'—i.e. her consent to marry the king would be beneficial to the land, and would induce him to desist from his resolution to sacrifice the strangers.

I. 1456. Ὅσα ἐδὲ νομεῖτε, &c. Iphigenia evidently alludes here to the confidence which she had willingly bestowed upon the king.
1. 1457. This line ran in the P. V.: Rech wä́r’ des Zeit, den Sinn zu ändern.

1. 1458. This line contains the general statement, that it is not in the power of men to alter their feelings and inclinations, which have been put in their hearts by the gods.

1. 1459. The prep. für is sometimes omitted after haben, in the sense of 'to consider,' more especially in higher diction.

1. 1461. Arkas, seeing the firm composure of Iphigenia, asks her whether she would risk all, i.e. her own fate and that of others. It may, therefore, be more correct to render es in the following line by 'everything,' than by 'my fate.'

1. 1463. The gods are wont to save man in a natural manner and by human means, and he should not wait for their direct and miraculous interference; to which remark Iphigenia evasively replies that everything depends upon their guidance.

1. 1468, &c. The mind of the soldiers has now long been disused to the cruel sacrifices, and many of them, having been thrown on foreign coasts, have themselves realized the fact that a friendly human face is to the homeless wanderer a godlike apparition.

ll. 1477-82. The import of this passage, which is one of the most difficult in the whole drama, is this: mercy, which descends from heaven in a human form, nowhere establishes its sway more quickly, than among a vigorous, youthful people which, abandoned to itself and its own vague forebodings, bears in savage gloom the heavy burdens of human life; i.e. when one imbued with the principles of humanity appears among a healthy and primitive people which toils on, whilst it leads a cheerless and uncivilized life, and which has no other guide for its actions than an undefined instinct, or foreboding of what is right, then the task of spreading humane feelings is easily accomplished.

The term Milde includes the notions of 'mercy,' 'charity,' and 'humanity.' Cp. for trüb und wilb, l. 1528, n.

1. 1483. The mind of Iphigenia being already moved by her own remorse, she implores Arkas not to agitate it still more, especially as he cannot bend it according to his will.

1. 1489. The pain felt by Iphigenia may be compared to a friend, because it indicates to her instinctively what course would be proper for her to pursue.

1. 1491. The pain which Iphigenia feels seizes powerfully her soul, but it cannot have the effect of destroying her repugnance.

1. 1495. The clause: Was sich nicht gejient, 'which is not seemly to do,' is in the translation to be placed after verwerten will.
Dritter Auftritt.

I. 1503. The revulsion has been brought about in the breast of Iphigenia at an unseasonable hour, because it shakes her resolution of joining in the plan of escape.

II. 1506–9. A stream of joy had 'overflowed' the soul of Iphigenia as completely and suddenly as the tide, swelling in with rapid waves, covers the rocks lying among the sands of the shore.

I. 1509, &c. Iphigenia had never considered it possible to see her brother again; hence in embracing him, she actually 'grasped the impossible.' All the preceding versions had: Das Unmögliche hielt ich mit Händen gefaßt1.

I. 1511, &c. Sieh... um mich zu legen, 'to surround me.'—This passage refers to Iphigenia's rescue at Aulis. Cp. General Introduction, p. xiv.

I. 1516, &c. Mein Bruder, &c., i.e. her heart was entirely and forcibly engrossed by her brother. Iphigenia resumes here the thought expressed above in l. 1510.

I. 1519. Her soul was only bent on their safety.—vorwärts bringen, 'to strive onward.'

1. 1521. So lag, &c., i.e. she looked already back on Tauris with the same feeling of satisfaction with which the mariner turns his back on the cliffs of a desolate island.

I. 1525. Deceit in itself was hateful to her, and now it has become doubly detested, as she is to practise it on her benefactor.

I. 1526. Cp. ll. 869, 923, notes.

I. 1527. Iphigenia begins now to waver in her resolution, and to doubt whether what she intended to do was right.

II. 1528–31. Iphigenia had hitherto led in her limited sphere of action a life of childlike simplicity; but now there arises for her a conflict between her wishes and her duties; she has no more a distinct conception of her own obligations and the exigencies of the world, and thus, leaving the secure ground of her solitude, she embarks on the sea of life, the waves of which toss her about, and her mind is filled with 'gloomy anxiety.'

The expression trüb und bang is here used to denote the 'vagueness and anxiety' of the feelings of Iphigenia, in the same way as trüb und wild (l. 1479) denotes the state of a

1 The interpretation that the expression das Unmögliche refers to the rescue of Iphigenia, seems to me rather far-fetched.
primitive people, which leads an uncivilized life, without any definite object.

**Vierter Auftritt.**

1. 1536, &c. Pylades considers the fact that the furies did not approach Orestes on the 'unconsecrated' ground of the shore, as a sure sign that he has completely recovered.

1. 1541, &c. ὑμλούμενι may here be rendered by 'to shine,' 'to glitter,' and χαῖρε λαϊχός ἄνωτρία by 'his curly head.' The epithet λαϊχός must here not be taken as an attribute of youthful or effeminate beauty, but like the Greek ὀξός, applied to the hair of Odysseus, as 'bespeaking manly strength.'

1. 1542. The expression ἐπὶδεϊν denotes here that his eyes had lost their former gloomy look, and were open and beaming.

1. 1549, &c. These lines form a fine counterpart to the well-known passage:

When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions.

1. 1553. The *Hendiadys* τραυτικ ὑπὲρ ἐμπεξτερεῖν stands here for τραυτικ ἐμπεξτερεῖν ἐμπεξτερεῖν, as above τρίσυ ὑπὲρ ἐμπεξτερεῖν, and τρίσυ ὑπὲρ ἐμπεξτερεῖν ἐμπεξτερεῖν (l. 1530, &c.) for in τρίσυ ἐμπεξτερεῖν ἐμπεξτερεῖν. Cp. also l. 81, n.

1. 1554. The statement that the crew bestirred themselves rejoicingly at the sight of Orestes, is a further confirmation of his recovery.

1. 1557. ἡς ἰδων, &c., i.e. each hand longed to grasp the oar.

1. 1563. Euripides represents the image of Diana as of small size, so that Iphigenia could carry it in her arms; whilst Goethe found it necessary to represent the image as of such great weight that even Pylades could only remove it because his shoulders were 'well-practised' in carrying heavy loads. Only in this way could the fact be explained that Iphigenia had not yet the image with her when Pylades arrived.

1. 1569. The expression φλέγ is here not used boastingly, it being employed in the sense of 'shrewd;' 'artful.'

1. 1571. Render here θητεύει Μάμπο by 'my friend.'

1. 1580, &c. Σχάλη is not infrequently used by Goethe for 'head.'

1. 1584. &c. Pylades asks Iphigenia why she had not the wisdom to shroud herself wisely within the veil of her sacerdotal privilege.

1. 1584, &c. The phrase auf etwas denken, corresponds to the English 'to think on something.'
I. 1588, &c. Iphigenia must acknowledge within herself that Arkas had a full right to put forward his demand, and as he did so urgently and with reason, she could not behave towards him differently.

I. 1591. The idiomatic phrase es zieht sich gefährlich zusammen denotes 'dangers gather;' 'dangers assume a more threatening aspect.'

I. 1595. Er bringe, &c., i.e. whatever message he may bring.

I. 1601. By pretending that she keeps the two prisoners securely guarded within the temple, and not allowing Arkas to see them, Iphigenia would compel him to repair again to the king, and thus she would gain for them 'breathing time.'

I. 1603. Den rauf, &c. With these words Pylades wishes to justify the theft of the 'holy image.'

I. 1604, &c. The auspicious omens consist in their having found their companions, in the blowing of a gentle wind to favour their departure, &c. Besides, Orestes has been healed, even before he has fulfilled the condition for his recovery. Cp. ll. 610, &c., 722, &c.

I. 1609. This line offers considerable difficulty, and has given rise to various interpretations. The expression hůinüf can only point to Delos—the central island of the Cyclades in the Grecian Archipelago—which was 'the most holy seat of the worship of Apollo;' 'but on the other hand, the image of Diana was, according to ll. 722-23, to be brought to Delphi, and the first version had here actually Delphos instead of hůinüf. It cannot, of course, be assumed that Goethe mistook Delphi for an island; besides the expression hůinüf shows (l. 1608) that he thought here of Delos.

I. 1610, &c. By the return of Orestes and Iphigenia, Mycenae, which had been left without a ruler, would revive and a beauteous flame would illumine the abode of the household gods, joyfully arising from the ashes of the extinguished hearth.

I. 1615, &c. The mere presence of Iphigenia would bestow a blessing on the house of Tantalus, and remove the old curse weighing upon it.

I. 1619, &c. As flowers turn to the light of the sun, so her soul, struck by the ray of the words of the dear friend, turns to sweet comfort.

The repetition of the pron. hů (l. 1622), which is grammatically superfluous, here makes the assertion more emphatic.

I. 1624, &c. The 'lonely one' misses the present friend's 'confident' speech, and thus—to use Miss Swanwick's rendering—he 'in silence droops.'

I. 1628. Entwidelt (pres. cond.) 'would soon mature it.'
l. 1630. *Die sehulich, &c., 'who wait in anxious expectation.'*

l. 1632. *Felsenwuchs* is a 'thicket growing on,' or 'between rocks.' That the temple at Tauris was surrounded by rocks, has been mentioned before. *Cp. ll. 1089, 1210.*

l. 1634. *Trauerzustand, 'air of sadness.'*

l. 1635. The verb *sießet* is to be supplied after *Sanne.*

l. 1638, &c. Fear makes dangers appear greater than they are; and may hence be said to have concluded an alliance with it for the deception of man. The P. V. had: *Sage nicht!* Nur in der Furcht ist die Gefahr.

l. 1645. *Cp. for gebiut, l. 54, n.*

l. 1646. Necessity would only excuse her intended proceeding, but it could not remove the wrong of ingratitude.

l. 1647. *Der Göter, &c. i.e. necessity excuses her undoubtedly both before gods and men.*

l. 1649. *Too rigid claims on ourselves betray hidden pride.*

l. 1650. *Ich untersünde nicht, &c., Iphigenia asserts that she does not reason about her duties, but only acts according to her feelings.*

l. 1651. Some interpret this line as meaning 'that if Iphigenia is conscious of acting rightly (*reicht* = predicat. adj.), then she cannot refuse herself self-respect;' whilst others explain it to denote, 'that if Iphigenia would rightly, or properly (*reicht* = adv.) feel the good she is accomplishing,' i.e. 'if she had the right consciousness of her own worth, then she must also respect herself.' The latter version seems to be the more correct one, because according to the preceding line the feelings of Iphigenia tell her that she would *not* act rightly in deceiving the king.

l. 1652. *Ganz unbeschert, &c., i.e. the heart can only then be quite at ease and self-contented, if it is quite pure, or unspotted — when it can reproach itself with nothing whatever.*

l. 1653. Here again the opinions of the commentators vary; some consider *reich* as denoting 'indeed,' and others take it in its original significance of 'well,' the collateral adverb of the adj. 'good.'

ll. 1656–59. The human race is so wonderfully constituted and its nature is complicated and involved in so manifold a manner, that no one can maintain himself pure and straightforward either in himself or in his relations to others.

The demonstrative pronoun is sometimes used in German to express a notion in general, as: *dieses Leben, 'earthly, or human life;*' and here: *dies Gejichleht, for das menschliche Gejichtleht.*
IPHIGENIE AUF TAURIS. [ll. 1660–1706.

1. 1660. Befehl sein denotes here 'to be called upon.'

1. 1661, &c. The first and immediate duty of a man is to pursue the course of life pointed out to him, and to heed the path he is pursuing; i.e. to do one's duty in accordance with the requirements of practical life.

1. 1663, &c. Man can rarely judge and appreciate his past doings, and when he is in the act of performing them he scarcely ever knows how to appreciate them, he being then biassed by his inclination or passion.

-1. 1668. 'Frage sich's, 'can there be any question?'

1. 1674, &c. Since her marvellous escape, Iphigenia led an undisturbed life; hence the assertion of Pylades 'that one can see that she is not used to loss, for not knowing how painful a bereavement is, she will not even make the sacrifice of uttering a false word, in order to escape a great calamity.

gewohnt for gewohnt in higher diction.

1. 1680, &c. The notion that 'necessity' is paramount to everything else, and that her stern hint is supreme law even to the gods, is Homeric (cp. the Greek ἀνάγκη). She listens to no advice; and is, therefore, described by the poet as the 'uncounseled sister of eternal fate.'—Later writers described the Fates, or Parcae themselves, as daughters of 'necessity.'

1. 1688. Der Reifung ihres Siegels, i.e. the image of Diana the possession of which would complete the safety of Orestes, Iphigenia and himself.

Fünfter Auftritt.

1. 1689. The expression die Deinigen includes also Pylades, and may therefore be rendered by 'my beloved,' or 'those dear to me.'

1. 1691. Cp. for the form hung und hänger, l. 21, n.

1. 1692, &c. In what the quiet hope consisted, which Iphigenia yearned to retain, is described by her further on (l. 1699, &c.).

1. 1695, &c. The exclamation is here rendered more pathetic by the use of dieser instead of mein.

1. 1696. The verb abnehmen, used intransitively, denotes 'to diminish,' 'to decline.'

1. 1698. Entlehnt is here equivalent to am Ende.

1. 1701, &c. Iphigenia's hope to purify one day the 'deep-defiled house' of her ancestors serves also to explain her yearning—as expressed in the opening soliloquy of the present drama—for her return home.

1. 1706. The word Wasserwelt has been formed by Goethe on
the analogy of the expression ἥειμαρχετ, 'native land,' with which it is synonymous.

l. 1707. Necessity, the 'uncounseled sister of fate' (l. 1684), is called 'deaf,' because it does not listen to any appeal.

ll. 1712–17. The Titans, who are represented in Greek mythology as the 'ancient race of gods,' were vanquished by Zeus and his brothers and sisters. The former harboured consequently a deep hatred against the 'new race of gods' and would not acknowledge their authority. (Cp. note to l. 328.) Iphigenia, therefore, implores the gods, 'that there may not arise in her heart an aversion against them, that no Titanic hatred against their sway may infix its vulture talons in her breast, on account of her undeserved sufferings.'

The seat of the 'new gods' was Mount Olympus, whence their name Olympians; which designation is here, in particular, happily chosen, Zeus having carried on the contest against the 'old gods' from that mountain.

l. 1716, &c. Man reflects by the purity and nobleness of his heart the image of the gods; and thus by preserving the purity of her soul, the gods would save their own image. Cp. my Notes to Goethe's poem: Das Göttliche in the Deutliche Lyrif, p. 377 (Golden Treasury Series).

l. 1720. The Parcae were represented as not having approved of the sway of the 'new gods'; they sympathized, therefore, with Tantalus, on whom the gods had inflicted such severe punishment; and horror-struck they sang their fearful song of pity, which Iphigenia naturally remembers at the moment when the 'Titanic spirit' had been aroused in her. Cp. on Tantalus ll. 319–28, notes, and Gen. Int., p. xi.

l. 1721. Bem goldenem Göttle, &c., i.e. at the table of Jupiter.

l. 1726. The following celebrated song of the Parcae is written in the amphibrachic metre, but several lines occur without a final short syllable, viz.

\[ \begin{align*}
&\text{O-00-0} \\
&\text{O-00-} \\
&\text{&c. &c.}
\end{align*} \]

The song gives in grand poetic outlines a description of the tragic fate of Tantalus. The first strophe describes the arbitrary and everlasting power of the gods. The second contains a warning to men favoured by them, and a description of their glorious, but perilous abode. The third describes the fatal issue which results, when a contest arises between the gods and their favourites, or 'guests.' The latter are hurled into a dark abyss, waiting in vain for a just judgment. In the mean-
time—as the fourth strophe describes—the gods enjoy perpetual happiness in ‘everlasting feasts’ (ewigen Festen). Gloriously they stride from mountain to mountain, and from the deep abyss ascends to them the breath of stifled Titans, like a light haze and the odorous fumes from offerings. The fifth strophe characterizes the irreconcilable hatred of the supreme powers, who cast their curse on the descendants of the doomed man. They turn away their benign aspect from whole races, and avoid the sight of the descendants, in order not to behold in their features the once beloved and silently speaking traits of their ancestor.

II. 1762–65. Construe: Es heerdt der Verbaunte, der Alte, in nächtlchen Höhlen auf die Lieder; den’t (an) die Kinder und Enkel, &c.

Horden may be used like deuten in poetry, without any prep. Cp. l. 601, n. The expression Und schüttet das Haupt (l. 1766) denotes the discontent and wrath of Tantalus at his doom.

Fünfter Aufzug.

Erster Auftritt.

I. 1769. The ‘perplexity’ of Arkas consists in his doubt whither to direct his suspicion; whether it is the prisoners alone who clandestinely are planning flight, or whether the priestess aids them secretly.

I. 1773. Jemand nebst, a poet. inversion for nebst jemand.".
I. 1774. Render here Weise by ‘lustral ceremony,’ or ‘rite.’
I. 1780, &c. Thoas commands that whilst a strict search is to be made from the promontory to the grove, the sacred interior of the latter should not be entered by the soldiers with a view of making it the arena of a fight, but a watchful ambush should be set round the grove to prevent the escape of the prisoners.

Zweiter Auftritt.

I. 1787, &c. In spite of the nobleness of the king’s character, the Scythian makes himself heard in these lines.

1 The defeated Titans were thrown into a cavity below Tartarus, and the giants Enceladus and Typhon, who also had contested the rule of the gods, were buried by the latter under the volcano Etna.
2 The preceding versions had: Und Tantal herdigt in seiner Höhle.
Il. 1789–93. When a hypothetical clause precedes a principal one without being introduced by a conjunction, the former is frequently given in an inverted form, as here: wäre sie, &c., hätte sie, &c., for wenn sie wäre, wenn sie hätte. The adverbs se, jäll, &c., may in this instance be omitted before the principal clause, which is consequently put in the direct order, as here: sie wäre sich gewesen, &c., for se wäre sie sich gewesen; hätte dann bar ihr, &c., for sei hätte sie dann bar, &c.

l. 1791. The 'wrath' is here called 'holy,' because it was inspired by a kind of religious feeling.

l. 1796. •eft • • • hauft, 'calls forth.'

l. 1799. Iphigenia not wishing to link her fate to that of the king, has marked out her own course, i.e. she independently devises her own fate.


l. 1801. Der is here the dat. of the fem. demonstr. pron. and refers to Schmeidelei. Er jüdt, &c., 'she has recourse.'

l. 1803. Alwirjählt, here 'prescriptive'; 'vested,' i.e. a property hallowed by long enjoyment.

Dritter Auftritt.

l. 1806. Goethe uses the verb erzählen with the prep. an before proper names, in higher diction only.

l. 1807. Weiter is here used in the sense of 'more fully.'

l. 1808. It would seem that Iphigenia represents the delay which has been caused, as the result of a divine dispensation.

l. 1810. Iphigenia represents the intended offering as a 'cruel resolution,' in accordance with her own conception of human sacrifices. Cp. 1. 522, &c.

l. 1811. The accent is to be placed in this line on hu, the meaning being that the king should not have come himself.

l. 1813, &c. The eagerness with which hirelings take upon themselves for favour and reward, half of the share in a guilt, is in German emphatically pointed out by the expression faffen, lit. 'to snatch'; 'to seize.'

l. 1815. Das iine, &c. i.e. the king himself remains personally free from defilement.

Il. 1816–20. The tenour of these lines betrays a touch of the 'Titanic' feeling which had been aroused in Iphigenia by the contemplation of her undeserved sufferings. (Cp. 1. 1712, &c. and notes.) She likens the absolutely ruling king to the 'cloud-gatherer' (νεφεληγερέτα), 'high-thundering' (ὕψιβρεμέτης), and 'lightning-hurling (αστεροποιητής) Zeus;' for, like him, he plans death in gloomy clouds, and whilst his messengers
flash down destruction on the head of poor mortals, he calmly moves through his heights, amidst the storm, like an unapproachable god.—Cp. l. 1745, &c.

The line Und seine Beten, &c., contains a Biblical reminiscence.

1. 1821. The verb tont, which is here used transitively, may be rendered by 'utters.'

The king's remark shows that he rightly judges the import of the words 'uttered' by Iphigenia, which are directed against the arbitrary doings of the mighty.

1. 1822. The king having reminded Iphigenia of her sacred office, she replies that it is not the priestess who now stands before him, but the daughter of Agamemnon.

1. 1823. The king had respected her words, while she was yet unknown to him, by discontinuing the human sacrifices.

1. 1824. ἰαμί is here used in the sense of ungethüm.

1. 1827. Und folgtam, &c. In readily fulfilling the duty of obedience, first towards her parents and then towards a divine will, Iphigenia enjoyed the feeling of sweetest freedom. The P. V. had: Und diese Folgtamkeit ist einer Seele schönste Freiheit.

1. 1830. Deu, i.e. in her parental home.


1. 1832, &c. Iphigenia is, of course, aware of the fact that the king is prompted by passion only in his resolution to sacrifice the strangers. Cp. ll. 496, 1465, &c.

1. 1834, &c. The law of hospitality was, with the ancients, one of the oldest and most sacred rights. (Cp. Od. ix. l. 270, &c.) Iphigenia, therefore, designates the command declaring sacred every stranger, a law.

1. 1836. The brevity of this line indicates the emotion of the speaker. Cp. l. 1053, n.

1. 1840. Cp. the lines of Sophocles (El. 212, &c.):

\[ τά δὲ τοῖς δυνατοῖς
οὐκ ἔριστὰ πλάθειν. \]

i.e. 'one must not quarrel with those who are more powerful, so as to attack and provoke them.' (Cp. Wunder, Engl. Ed.)

1. 1841, &c. Whether Iphigenia speaks or not, the king could always discern what her immutable feelings are. The repetition of the adv. immer by no means offends the ear so much as to induce us to put it down—according to some commentators—as an error or misprint. It rather makes the assertion emphatic.

1. 1843, &c. Even a hardened heart is melted to pity by the remembrance of a common doom, and how much the more
must this be the case with Iphigenia, who is imbued with feelings of compassion.

1. 1845. Wie mehr, here elliptically for um wie viel mehr.

1. 1848. Ziehst schon, 'was already raised.'—The verb ziehen, when applied to weapons, denotes 'to raise,' or 'draw' with a quivering motion.

1. 1850. Miss Swanwick happily translates this line by:

'A dizzy horror overwhelm'd my soul.'

1. 1854. Du weist es, i. e. that we are bound to render to the distressed the benefits received from the gods.

1. 1857. Sie freuen is here used in the sense of 'to triumph over.'

II. 1859-61. When several conditional clauses, coming side by side, are connected by means of und, oder, &c., and the first clause is given in an abbreviated inverted form (cp. l. 1789, etc., n.), the subsequent clauses may assume the form of a direct principal sentence, as here: Und du verlangst instead of Und verlangst du (cp. Sanders' Wörterbuch der Hauptschwierigkeiten, &c., p. 64 a. 5). The indicative in l. 1861 is used instead of the conditional in order to make the assertion more emphatic.

1. 1862. Die Rechte, &c., 'the innate rights of his heart,' i. e. the rights of humanity.

1. 1866. Das Leb, &c., 'the chance of arms is changeable.'

1. 1868, &c. These lines will perhaps be best construed as follows: Auch hat die Natur den Schwachen nicht ohne Hilfe gegen Trug und Glaube gelassen.

1. 1870. Sie gab, &c., 'she makes him delight in cunning.'

1. 1871. Bald weist, &c., i. e. the weak practise various stratagems: either they elude, delay, or evade the commands enforced upon them.

Iphigenia, who had gradually begun to indirectly disclose her secret in lines 1862 and 1863, by alluding to the presence of her brother, now does so unconsciously in a more direct manner, which, according to l. 1875, is fully understood by Thoas.

1. 1874. The pron. sie refers to Sie.

1. 1876, &c. The soul of Iphigenia struggles to ward off at the outset the evil fate—i. e. the commission of a wrong—which threatens to overcome her. Cp. l. 2008.

1. 1880. The ancients used to hold in their hands olive or laurel boughs, bedecked with wool, when they came as suppliants or petitioner. Here the 'lovely prayer' itself is metaphorically designated by the 'graceful branch.'

1. 1883. Mein Sinn'res, &c., i. e. her innate right of freedom. Cp. l. 1862, n.

1. 1884, &c. Having before been miraculously rescued by
Diana, it is natural that Iphigenia should now think, in her distress, of invoking the aid of the goddess; but at the same time she asks herself, whether she has no resource in her own heart to extricate herself from the embarrassing position.

l. 1889. The first impulse of Iphigenia was to declare who the two strangers were—but then she recollects the danger in which she would place them by such a disclosure; hence her hesitation,—indicated by the various expressions and the irregular metre—which is perfectly natural and quite consistent with the conflict between feeling and duty in the heart of the speaker. Cp. for the metre l. 1944, n.

l. 1890. イェル is here used in the sense of ‘probably.’

ll. 1892-1936. In the following speech, which is, in some respects, the turning-point of the drama, Iphigenia asks herself whether man alone has the privilege of performing heroic and unheard of deeds? Whether achievements of physical prowess and daring alone can be called glorious and deserve admiration, and whether there remains nothing great for woman to perform, except by vying with man in the accomplishment of savage and heroic feats? She then arrives within herself at the conclusion that for woman too the path of heroism is open by acknowledging the truth even at the risk of sacrificing her life and that of her beloved ones; and finally she discloses the plot to the king.

l. 1895, &c. The performances undertaken by the valorous with improbable success are so stirring, and affect so deeply even the narrator himself, that they ‘shuddering uplift his soul,’ although he has recited them again and again.

The present passage is an allusion to the ‘wandering epic singers’ who used, in ancient times, to recite the deeds of the heroes. Cp. l. 681, &c.

ll. 1898-1904. This passage alludes to the capture of the horses of king Rhesus, before the Trojan camp, by Diomedes and Odysseus, as related in the tenth Book of the Iliad. Euripides treated that occurrence in his tragedy ‘Rhesus.’

Wie unrühren, &c., i.e. he furiously attacks those who are still sleeping or just awaking, like a sudden unexpected fire.

ll. 1904-7. These lines allude to heroic deeds, such as were performed by Theseus, who, on proceeding from Troezen to Athens, went by land—over cliffs, and through mountain-forests—to clear the road from robbers. Cp. ll. 667-72, and notes.

l. 1911, &c. The clause イツイ—räden does not refer to the Amazons, but to ネイフ (l. 1908). The Amazons did not
bloodily avenge any oppression, and the Lemnian women, who are said to have done so, did not belong to the Amazons proper.

1. 1912, &c. ἔρευν and αὖ ἔρευν, ‘moves up and down’; ‘vibrates through’; ‘revolves.’

1. 1916, &c. It must be assumed that the following invocation is addressed to the gods. Cp. l. 1215, n.

The phrase: εἰς ἀκροατήσ πρόσακοι, for ‘to leave anything to the decision of another,’ is Homeric. Cp. ἄλλ' ἤτοι μὲν ταῦτα θεῶν εν γούνασι κεῖται (II. xvii. 514, &c.).

ill. 1917-19. Iphigenia implores the gods—if they are truthful—to glorify through her conduct the power of truth, and then, strengthened, as it were, by this prayer, she reveals to the king the plot which had been laid.

1. 1929, &c. The wording of the oracle is here given as interpreted by Orestes and Pylades.

1. 1934. It is very natural that Iphigenia should, in her great agitation, think of herself and Orestes as the only ‘remnants’ of the house of Tantalus.

1. 1936, &c. These lines contain somewhat of a repetition of a former remark of Thoas. Cp. ll. 495, 499-501.

ill. 1939-41. Truth and humanity are universal qualities, and everyone, born under any clime, can hear their voice, ‘if the stream of life flows through his heart pure and evenly,’ i.e. if his feelings are not disturbed by passion.

1. 1942, &c. The silence of the king, which is indicated by the pause after ἔρευν, induced Iphigenia to ask him what fate he is planning for her in his inmost soul. The pron. ἦτοι does not refer to her fate alone, but also to that of Orestes and Pylades; it being an ‘ethical dative.’

1. 1944. The metre of this line is not quite regular, the second foot consisting of an amphibrach; but it is quite adapted to the agitated state of the speaker, and may almost be said to consist of two short lines. Cp. l. 1889 n.

1. 1947, &c. Υπερωρίην ἐμφάσιλ, ‘through my rash resolve.’

ill. 1953-56. Thoas feels now that Iphigenia fully believes the strangers, but he suspects that the ‘impostors have, cunningly devising, thrown a web of falsehood round the head of the priestess, who had so long led a secluded life, but who now easily and readily gives credence to her own wishes.’

1. 1957. Iphigenia modestly acknowledges that she could, in her simplicity, be deceived; but the two strangers are incapable of deception.

1. 1959. Σὲ λαφ τιε ἐκλείπει, i.e. let them perish as sacrifices.

1. 1961. ὅλα βίωντας, ‘rocky island.’

In the following lines Iphigenia completes briefly the account of the fate of her house, in order to bring forward her reasons for praying the king to allow both Orestes and herself to return to Mycenae. Cp. ll. 1610–18; 1699–1702.

l. 1970. The form of address here employed is very effective. First Iphigenia expresses her firm conviction that the king will keep his promise to her (Du hältst mir Wort), and then she describes in what that promise consisted. The reverse form would have been commonplace.


l. 1974, &c. Deu ... entferne, 'get rid of;' 'release himself from.'

l. 1976. Deu er nicht hefft, i.e. which he hopes will never occur.

l. 1978. Deu Harrenden, 'the expectant petitioner.'

l. 1979, &c. The adv. unwillig, 'angrily,' refers to der Herr, here 'my wrath.'

Gifßend is here used in the sense of gifßend.

ll. 1983–85. Iphigenia, who has perceived from the tenour of the king's last speech, that he is beginning to yield, implores him not to allow the flame of his wrath to destroy his humane feelings, but to 'let mercy shine upon her like the calm and sacred flame of the altar, which is surrounded by hymns of praise, gratitude and joy.'


l. 1990. Thoas avers that reflection is also needed for doing good, as the latter may perchance engender evil consequences.

ll. 1991–2. It is through 'hesitation' that good is turned into evil, since a good action performed too late may yield an evil result. Iphigenia's appeal to the king not to deliberate, but to act only according to the promptings of his heart, is quite in accordance with her own mode of action. Cp. l. 1650.

**Vierter Auftritt.**

l. 1993, &c. It must be assumed that the companions of Orestes and Pylades had been 'discovered' by Arkas and his followers, and that Orestes hastened to the temple in order to save his sister.

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The extreme difficulty of the above passage may be inferred from the circumstance, that nearly every translator or commentator has put a different meaning upon it. I have been guided in my explanation by the Prose Versions, which ran: O las die Gnade wie eine schöne Flamme des Altars umfränzt von Lobgesang und Freude lobern.
1. 2001. The appeal: 'command your warriors to pause in their struggle,' is addressed both to the king and Orestes.

1. 2008. This line contains the gist of Iphigenia's noble action.

**Sünfter Auftritt.**

1. 2013, &c. The crew had not been routed by the king's soldiers, and they retreated slowly and in good order to their ship, and so Pylades thought that there was no impediment to their rescue.

1. 2016. It shows the discernment of Pylades, that he at once recognised the king by the majesty of his look.

1. 2018, &c. Ολείης ἡμέν, &c. This refers to the 'followers' of Orestes and Pylades, whose 'temerity will at once be punished'; for they 'retreat already and they are sure to succumb.'

Note the use of the present sense in ll. 2019-2021 instead of the future in order to indicate the certainty of the action.

1. 2025. Ἀχρέτι, still, 'await calmly.'

**Sechster Auftritt.**

1. 2035. Render alter, lit. 'of this one,' i. e. of Iphigenia, by her. The pron. alter, jener may similarly be used substantively in German higher diction, when there is no room for ambiguity.

Cp. above l. 743, where the context shows at once that the words jener... trüber, of those above, refer to the 'gods.'

1. 2041, &c. Having implored the gods to grant him not only the courage, strength, and success of his father, but also a more beautiful death, he thinks the time has come to try his valour in a deadly struggle.

ll. 2048-49. These two lines contain a general remark, viz. by imitating the great deeds of a ruler, a whole people consecrates them into a law. The subjects imitate the noble actions of their king, and thus they become law by custom.

1. 2055. The glance of kindness is called 'rapid,' because it speedily discerns the want of the sufferer.

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1 Mr. W. Taylor (of Norwich) considers it necessary to defend the poet by appending to the above passage the following note in his translation: 'Strabo says of the dispute concerning the possession of Eleia, which was settled by single combat, that it was determined κατὰ ἐθος τι παλαιὸν τῶν Ἑλλήνων, b. viii, p. 357. So that this 'defial' is not a Gothic and misplaced idea, as a foreign critic would insinuate.'
IPHIGENIE AUF TAURIS. [II. 2062-2105.

I. 2062. Dem Feinde stehen, ‘to make a stand against the enemy.’
I. 2068. The construction Cr falle gleich, for wenn er auf (even if he should) falle, could be used in poetry only. Cp. l. 28, n.
I. 2070. Der überblicken, ‘of the surviving.’
I. 2072. Durchgeweinten, ‘spent in weeping.’—Durchweinen may be used as a separable and an inseparable comp. verb. The P. V. had von taudend durchgeweinten Tagen und Nächten. The form Tag und Nächten instead of Tagen und Nächten is, as a rule, permissible in higher diction only, and has often been employed by Goethe.
I. 2074, &c. Vergebens rüh, &c. ‘in vain mournfully yearns (kunt) to call back... and pines away.’
I. 2079. Fleißig is here used in the sense of ‘assiduously’; ‘carefully.’
II. 2082-86. The incident related in these lines, viz. that Orestes was born with ‘a mark as of three stars’ on his right hand—which circumstance the priest at once interpreted to indicate that he will perform a dreadful deed with the same hand—has been introduced by Goethe as one of the most natural signs of recognition.
II. 2087-91. The sign mentioned in these lines has been partially borrowed by Goethe from Euripides, who, in his Electra, makes (l. 573, &c.) an old servant of the Atridae recognise Orestes by ‘an old scar on his forehead, which was the trace of a bleeding wound he received from a fall while pursuing with Electra a hind in his father’s house.’

ουλὴν παρ’ ὄφριν ἕν ποτ’ ἐν πατρὸς δόμοις
νεβρὸν διόκων σοῦ μέθ’ ἡμαχθη πεσὼν.

I. 2089. The tragic poets represent the character of Electra as very energetic and somewhat impetuous.
I. 2092. Die Aehnlieheit, &c., i.e. die Aehnlieheit mit dem Vater.
I. 2094. Μιθ ζeugen, &c., i.e. as testimonies of her assurances. Cp. ll. 1186, &c. and 1190-1201.
I. 2097. Thoas does not allude here to the ‘single combat’ proposed by Orestes, but to a contest in general between his soldiers and the crew.
II. 2102-6. These lines contain a reproach and a taunt. Thoas alludes in the first instance to the expedition of the Argonauts in search of the ‘golden Fleece’—then to the horses captured by Hercules at the command of Eurystheus, and finally to Medea, Ariadne, &c. The Greeks were, of course, not always successful in other rapacious enterprises.
I. 2105. The pronoun *sie* is here used in accordance with the rule, that when a collective noun in the sing. number occurs in the antecedent clause, as here *Der Grieche* (l. 2102), the pronoun referring to it may be used in the plural. Thus Luther even says: *Das Wohl, so ihren Gott feinen, &c.*


I. 2107, &c. When Orestes perceives the strong resistance of Thoas to giving up the image of the goddess, and sees besides the impossibility of obtaining possession of it except by force of arms, it occurs to him that the words of the oracle speaking of 'a sister who dwells against her will on the shores of Tauris' could not have referred to the image of Diana, but must have pointed to his own sister.

I. 2111, &c. Lines 2111-2134 are addressed to Iphigenia.

I. 2115. *Löset *$\ddot{u}$*, lit. 'will be dissolved;' i. e. 'will terminate.'

I. 2117. Mark the use of the verb *gefunden* with the accusative in the sense of 'to mean anyone'; 'to have anyone in view.' The P. V. had: *und er verlangte dich.—Die strengen Bände, &c.,* i. e. the severe bonds in which Diana held Iphigenia at Tauris (cp. l. 35, &c.), are now loosened.

I. 2119, &c. The following lines describe the beneficial influence exercised on Orestes by the presence of Iphigenia—such as he had expected only from the possession of the image of Diana.

I. 2122, &c. *Und schütte!* &c., 'and terribly shook me to the inmost core.' The sufferings of Orestes had reached their climax after he had met his sister, and then followed his recovery. *Cp. Sc. 1 of Act III.*

Dann entflieh's, &c. This is an allusion to the flight of the furies to the dark depths of Tartarus.

I. 2124, &c. The furies having left him through the help of Iphigenia, Orestes enjoys through *her* anew the extensive light of day. At the same time the 'decrees' (*Nauh. Cp.-l. 279 n.*) of the goddess is revealed to him gloriously and beautifully.

II. 2127-29. These lines contain an allusion to the Palladia, or images of Pallas Athena, which were kept hidden and secret, and considered as a kind of safeguard; 'the immutable fate of the city having been attached to the possession of the sacred image by a mysterious divine decree.' The most celebrated of those images was the Trojan Palladium, which had to be carried off by Odysseus and Diomede before it was possible to take the city.
Iphigenia calls Iphigenia the *protectress* of their house, because during her presence it was free from all calamity.

1. 2130. Orestes calls Iphigenia the *protectress* of their house, because during her presence it was free from all calamity.

1. 2131. *In einer, &c., 'in holy stillness, 'i.e. like the Palladia, which used to be kept hidden and secret.

1. 2132. *Der Deinen, say, 'of thy kindred; 'of thy race.'

1. 2138. *Einfändig Fülle, 'redeemed abode.'

1. 2139. The emblem of royal sovereignty was with the ancient Greeks the sceptre only, and later the 'diadema,' or ornamented fillet encircling the head. Goethe uses here, however, the word *Krone as the more poetical emblem of royal power.


1. 2141. By the 'nearer right' Orestes alludes to the greater claim of the brother, as compared with that of the benefactor.

ll. 2142-45. These four lines give the clue to the 'moral' or tendency of the drama. *Cp. Critical Introduction, p. xx, &c.

1. 2151, &c. Iphigenia cannot content herself with the abruptly given permission 'to go,' which indicates that the king was still harbouring towards her an angry feeling.

1. 2153, &c. In imploring the king that the bond of hospitality may henceforth unite him and his people with her house, Iphigenia wishes also to perpetuate the more humane manners she introduced among the Taurians.

1. 2161, &c. The Scythians wore skins and leather garments, and were armed with bows and arrows. The following description of the promised hospitable reception contains several Homeric reminiscences.

1. 2166. The imper. *geben is here used for the more familiar: mögen dir . . . geben.

1. 2170. Iphigenia considers it as a favourable omen for the voyage, when a friendly word of farewell has been addressed to those who part, and their tears flow more soothingly from their eyes.

Iphigenia had first asked the king's blessing for herself (l. 2151, &c.), but then she prayed him 'to turn to her and Orestes' (l. 2168); and Thoas, to show his reconciliation, bids farewell to both of them.
LIST OF QUOTATIONS FROM
GOETHE’S IPHIGENIE.

1. Kann uns zum Vaterland die Fremde werden?  l. 76.
2. Dank habt ihr get.  l. 93.
3. Frei atmen macht das Leben nicht allein.  l. 106.
4. Ein unnütz Leben ist ein früher Tod.  l. 115.
5. Das Wenige verschwindet leicht dem Blick,
   Der vorwärts steht, wie viel noch übrig bleibt.  ll. 144-45.
6. Ein edler Mann wird durch ein gutes Wort
   Der Frauen weit geführt.  l. 213, &c.
8. Wohl dem, der seiner Väter gern gedenkt.  l. 351.
9. Man spricht vergebens viel, um zu versagen;
   Der andre hört von Allen nur das Nein.  ll. 450-51.
10. Der Erde schöner, grüner Teppich soll
    Kein Tummelsplatz für Larven sein.  ll. 587-88.
11. Wohl uns, daß es ein Weib ist!  l. 786.
12. Allein zu tragen dieses Glück und Glund
    Vermag ich nicht.  l. 1255, &c.
13. Oft wird der Mächtige zum Schein gefragt.  l. 1447.
14. Erdringe nicht, was ich versagen sollte.  l. 1448.
15. Dir scheint es möglich, weil der Wunsch dich trägt.  l. 1460.
16. Wer keine Neigung fühlt, dem mangelt es
    An einem Worte der Entschuldigung nie.  ll. 1497-98.
17. Betrogich schloß die Furcht mit der Gefahr
    Ein enges Bündnis; beide sind Gesellen.  ll. 1638-39.

THE END.
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