

The following questions are based on Sophocles, *Electra*, from line 515, (marking the entrance of Clytemnestra), to line 1098, (the entrance of Orestes). NOTE: The quoted excerpts from the text may bear a slight difference to the text on the course website. The excerpts below are taken from R. C. Jebb's translation and commentary on the play, originally published in 1894.

1. At line 655, Clytemnestra prays to Apollo for protection from "any who are plotting to hurl me by treachery." She goes on to ask that she might continue to share the house of the Atridae with her friends and "with those of my children from whom no enmity or bitterness pursues me." Which children is she referring to?

2. After learning from the Paedagogus that Orestes died at the chariot races, Clytemnestra tells the Paedagogus that he deserves a reward for silencing Electra, whose hopes for revenge are crushed after she hears that Orestes has died. In the moments after hearing that is left outside the palace as she invites the Paedagogus inside the palace. Electra asks the chorus how is it possible that her mother does not mourn for her son but instead laughed. How would you answer Electra's question? What makes it possible for Clytemnestra to respond to news of her son's death by welcoming in the messenger who relayed the news, leaving her daughter, Electra, outside the palace "to make loud lament for herself"?

3. At line 992, Chrysothemis withdraws her promise to help Electra, telling her to restrain her rage since her plot to kill Aegisthus will certainly result in their mutual ruin. Electra tells her sister that she is not surprised that her sister has reversed herself. Electra tells Chrysothemis that she envies her restraint and reviles her weakness. (In the ancient Greek, the words are more direct, "I envy you your presence of mind, but I hate your cowardice.") Do you think that Electra would like to be like her sister, Chrysothemis, who remains intent on marrying and having children, despite saying that Aegisthus will never permit either daughter to marry and produce children who would threaten his grip on power? Why or why not?