

with a discussion of the various themes of the *Suppliants*, including the perception of the spectators and relevant cultural data such as supplication, marriage, the ‘Greeks vs barbarians’ opposition and the relationship between monarchy and democracy. On stage issues, the commentary follows the well-established view that the *Suppliants*, in which no building is required, belongs to the phase of the history of the Theatre of Dionysus prior to the construction of the *skēnē* (‘stage-building’), which appears for the first time in the *Oresteia*.

The critical apparatus that accompanies the edition is extremely detailed. The readings are recorded with great precision; the same is also true of the authors’ conjectures. This is the great merit of the volume. The line-by-line commentary that follows fully addresses issues of textual criticism, again and again argued for with philological rigour. However, one is less happy when it comes to more interpretative issues such as intertextuality, intratextuality, structuralism, poetics, gender studies, reception, etc. This is regrettable for a contemporary commentary, which should not have dismissed such important trends of classical criticism.

All in all, one must make clear that this commentary, apart from its value in textual issues, is quite restricted, repetitive and derivative, with expanded discussions of well-known issues. Therefore, the book is a good working tool especially for Italian readers, who, however, will not gain more from it if they have read Sommerstein’s English commentary first.

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STUTTARD (D.) (ed.) **Looking at Agamemnon**. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021. Pp. viii + 228. £85. 9781350149533.  
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Readers likely will be familiar with the format of this volume, the sixth to appear in the ‘Looking at’ series edited by David Stuttard. In addition to a translation of the play, Stuttard provides a short introduction (on myth, play, playwright, context, staging and his approach to the translation) and gathers a dozen essays on the play by some of the most eminent anglophone scholars of Greek tragedy.

Giving the contributing scholars the freedom to address issues that interested them results in a collection reflecting many of the play’s most salient issues, with little overlap. Edith Hall (‘Eating children is bad for you: The offspring of the past in Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*’) presents a rich essay, focussing on the background of the Hesiodic account of the Erinyes’ birth from the blood of the castrated Uranus and the resulting curse that serves as a paradigm for the family curse in the trilogy. The imagery that blurs animal and human sacrifice and sees ruin in terms of reproduction underscores the perversion of norms throughout this family’s history. Alan Sommerstein takes up the vexing question of Agamemnon’s choice in sacrificing Iphigenia in ‘Agamemnon at Aulis: Hard choice or no choice?’ and lays out a very clear analysis of the issues, conflicts and constraints. His conclusion that Agamemnon’s decision was inevitable but was indeed a choice (37) is reached also by Robert Garland (‘Agency in *Agamemnon*’), who cites the valuable notion of ‘double motivation’ (99).

Alex Garvie (‘Homecoming of Agamemnon’) effectively describes the play’s several elements that conform to the patterns of *nostos* (‘return’), including the fact that neither the returning hero nor his home community is the same as before he left. Similarities

between the play's two powerful female characters, Clytemnestra and Cassandra, are explored by Hanna Roisman ('Clytemnestra and Cassandra'), particularly the parallels between the 'tapestry scene' and Cassandra's fiery utterances and trampling of her mantic trappings. Appreciation of the role of ritual, alluded to, performed and perverted, in Greek tragedy has grown in recent decades, and Richard Seaford, who has contributed much to this appreciation, explores in 'Ritual in *Agamemnon*' how three rites of passage are treated in the play: wedding rites, funerals and mystic initiation. Sophie Mills ('Let the good prevail') surveys the many examples of wishes/prayers that things turn out well, looking in part through the useful prism of the difference between human and divine time. Michael Carroll teases out similarities to and difference from traditional, particularly Solonian, notions of excessive wealth in 'Wealth and injustice in *Agamemnon*'.

In 'There is the sea—who can drain it dry? Natural and unnatural cycles in *Agamemnon*', Rush Rehm argues that the playwright 'exposes the dangers of assuming—as Clytemnestra does—that the endlessly regenerative powers of nature can restore whatever humans inflict on it' (119). Anna Uhlig ('Similes and other likenesses in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*') takes a fresh look at the play's figures of similitude, with particular attention to the collective power of these images ('almost function[ing] like another character in the dramatic action', 135) and to the echo of the opening of *Iliad* 3 in the parodos' vulture simile. Isabelle Torrance reminds us in '*Agamemnon*, warfare, and its aftermath' how much the brutality of war and its consequences informs one's understanding of the play, and then surveys three modern poetic responses/translations of it (Seamus Heaney, Louis MacNeice and Colm Toibín). This penultimate essay leads readily into the final essay ('Revenge for murder seen through modern eyes: Recent reception of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*'), in which Betine van Zyl Smit looks at adaptations by Steven Gerko, Yael Farber and Zinnie Harris.

As a translator, Stuttard seeks to produce a text that is both 'accurate' and 'actable' (9) while at times 'expanding the denser images, developing passages or images so that their full impact can be felt' (10). In this translation, 'slightly modified' (9) from the one used in the original performance in 1999, he opts for a prose rendition and succeeds in offering a very readable and, I suspect, actable version of this extraordinary play. Occasionally, the diction is oddly *recherché* when the original is not (for example, 'murrain' [1018], 'dragon' [1062], 'cicatize' [1248]) and, inevitably, there are places where one might challenge or quibble about a choice of word or phrase. One phrase that particularly jars is 'leash of certainty' for *ἀνάγκας λέπαδνον* (more commonly translated something like 'yoke-strap of compulsion') in *Agamemnon*'s decision to sacrifice his daughter (218).

The scholars all wear their (considerable) learning lightly. Footnotes are modest and the argumentation, even when rich, is not dense. Anyone coming to this wondrously complex drama, whether as a novice or even as a veteran, will benefit from this volume. I add that it is attractively produced, and I noted very few typographical slips.

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COO (L.) and UHLIG (A.) (eds) **Aeschylus at Play: Studies in Aeschylean Satyr Drama** (Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies 62.2). London: Institute of Classical Studies, 2019. Pp. viii + 136. POA.  
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To undertake a study of Aeschylean satyr play is to enter waters murky with unknowns: about early tragedy, satyr drama, dramaturgy, genre, generic expectations and reception among Athenian audiences. If we trawl those waters for discrete answers through