

Here the effect of the scene depends entirely on the spectacular conditions. The king in his chariot, Cassandra, either with him or (according to the tradition) in a second chariot with spoils, and his following enter, accompanied by a crowd who seem to be giving them a triumphant welcome and expressing their sympathy (*v.* 781) with the sufferings which they have undergone. The effect of these sufferings would be visible in their appearance and action. The elders, from their knowledge of the persons, cannot but suspect the honesty of the demonstration. It is this startling suspicion, as already noticed, which dictates the strange topics of their first address. At the close of the march, the stage is so arranged, we may presume, as to suggest a multitude entirely filling it and extending beyond it. This is one of the many passages of Athenian drama which might be cited against the view, formerly prevalent but lately shaken by the archaeological discoveries of Dr Dörpfeld and others, that in the Greek theatre of the fifth century there was a high and narrow separate stage (*λογεῖον*) for the speakers as distinct from the rest of the company. For such a theatre such a scene as the text here suggests could scarcely have been composed.

*Third Scene* (*vv.* 801—965). Agamemnon and Clytaemnestra. The king enters the palace, commending Cassandra, who remains without, to a kind reception. Clytaemnestra follows.

See the preceding narrative. Here also the general action is important, particularly as to the effect of Agamemnon's haughty and threatening address, and of the invidious honours which he is compelled to accept. The device of the tapestry in particular, the purpose of which is intelligible only in its relation to the feelings of the crowd represented on the stage, would have occurred only to a dramatist who considered his whole company not less than his principal personages. When the king and queen have withdrawn into the palace with their immediate attendants the crowd of returned soldiers, conspirators, and others would for the most part disperse, the king's companions still watched by their pretended friends. The general appearance of the action is easily imagined, though it would be useless to attempt exact description. During these proceedings is sung the

*Fourth Stasimon* (*vv.* 966—1018). The friends of the king, though unable to fix their suspicions, are more anxious than ever.

*Fourth Scene.* Clytaemnestra, The Elders, Cassandra. Clytaemnestra orders Cassandra, who remains still in the chariot, to come within and join the intended sacrifice. Cassandra, whose appearance is that 'of a wild beast new-taken', pays no attention, and the queen instantly withdraws.

In this brief incident the chief point is the violent impatience of the queen, who here and here only loses her dignity and presence of mind. In truth her act in summoning Cassandra at this critical minute is an imprudent concession to her appetite for revenge (see *v.* 1448). Note also that, being now sure of her triumph, she can scarcely refrain from a sneer at the victims of her deception (*vv.* 1040—42).

Cassandra, by her prophetic power, in a series of visions sees the history of the Atridae, the crime of Atreus, and the murder of Aga-