ADDENDUM

Translation

CHORUS

1. We here are the trustees, called to stand guard over both the riches and gold-laden estates of the Persians who have left for the Grecian land; because of our age.

5. lord Xerxes, king, son of Darius chose us to oversee the land.

10. Our hearts - prophets of doom - are already extremely worried here deep inside about the royalty’s return and concerning the gold-paid army: because a whole Asian generation was led away, and is wailing about a young man, yet neither a messenger nor any rider.

15. has returned to the city of the Persians; these men that left Susa, Agbatana and the ancient walled city of Cissa set out, some on horseback, others per ship, and marching on foot,

20. surging forward as a solid column of war; men like Amistres, Artaphrenes, Megabates and Astaspes - Persian marshals, lords, subjects of the great king,

25. hastened, supervisors of the great army, archers and horsemen, causing fear when seen, deadly in battle, reputed for their steadfast courage: Artembares, the one who relishes fighting from the chariot;

30. Masistres; the archer brave Himaeus; Pharandakes; and the driver of horses Sosthenes.

The big and prolific Nile also sent some: Sousiskanes;

35. Pegastagon, Egyptian born; the lord of holy Memphis, great Arsames; the regent of wealthy Thebes, Ariomardos; and marsh-dwellers that row ships,

40. skilled and uncountable in number.

They were followed by a crowd.
of delicately living Lydians, who control
the whole Mainland nation, those leaders that Mitrogathes
and brave Arkeus, aspiring lords,
45. and wealthy Sardis,
excited with countless chariots,
arranged in squadrons two and three abreast,
a most fearful sight to observe!

The neighbours of holy Tmolos threaten
50. to throw the yoke of slavery over Greece:
Mardon; Tharybis, those anvils of the spear;
Mysian javeliners; Babylon - the
rich in gold - is sending a powerful multitude,
in a long row, and the commanders of ships;
55. they all have faith in the tight temper of the bow;
and the spear-bearing nation from all over
Asia follows
in the terrifying escort under the king.

Such is the blossom of men from the Persian land
60. who have gone,
all of the Asian soil that fed them
mourns for them with a glowing yearning;
parents and wives tremble as they count
the stretched out time day by day.

STROFE A
65. The royal army, the city destroyers
have gone to a neighbouring land
across the sea,
they crossed the Strait of Helle, Athama’s daughter,
70. on a light boat fastened with ropes
while the way was strengthened
by fastening a yoke on the neck of the sea.

ANTISTROFE A
The impetuous lord of populous Asia,
drives his godly herd over every land
75. from both sides;
attacking by foot and from the sea
he trusts his marshals,
dependable and mighty,
80. an offspring of golden descent, a godlike man.

STROFE B
While he stares with the dark glare
of a murderous viper in his eyes
over his many men and plentiful ships,
while driving his Syrian chariot,
85. he an Ares sends the archer
in against men famed for their spears.
Translation of *The Persians*

**ANTISTROFE B**

Nobody, however renowned
can stand one’s ground against such a great flood,
cast up strong walls
90. against the relentless wave from the sea;
because the Persian army cannot be withstood,
and the nation is battle-minded.

**STROFE C**

Because when Moira (Goddess of fate) was in power
as of old, as the gods had sanctioned,
95. she allotted for the Persians
tower destroying battles,
chariot charges
as well as the
upheaval of citizens.

**ANTISTROFE C**

100. They mastered the broad pathway
of the grey growing ocean,
with the howling wind,
and they saw a green landscape,
while trusting on slightly-built
105. bridges
engineered with flimsy ropes.

**MESODE**

But what mortal-man can escape
the crafty-minded deception of God?

Whose foot is so light

110. that he can leap aside easily?

Because while slanting friendly smiles,
Até (Ruin) first leads man into a net,
from where there is no escape
by fleeing for any mortal.

**STROFE D**

115. Concerning these things, my black-robed
heart is struck with fear -
oh, the Persian armoury -
may the city not hear this cry,
the big city Susa which is empty of men.
Translation of The Persians

ANTISTROFE D

120. Also the Cissian city will
let an echo be resounded,
oh, a thronging crowd of women
will take up these lamentations,

125. and a tear appear on full-robies made of fine linen.

STROFE E

Because all the horse riders
and hordes of foot soldiers
have left like a swarm of bees
streaming after the soldiers’ leader,

130. after they had crossed over the bridge
that yokes both lands’ necks
together onto one another.

ANTISTROFE E

And wedding beds are filled with tears
due to the yearning for men;

135. and while each Persian woman mourns separately
softly with a yearning for her marriage partner:
the brave soldier
whom she sent away into battle
has left her in her room alone.

140. But come, Persians, who sit here
at this ancient abode,
let us think the thoughts over, anxious and deep,
because the crisis demands it,
how the situation has developed for Xerxes the king

145. born of Darius,

.....
whether the victory belongs to the flight of the bow,
or whether the strength
of the sharpened spears has seized the victory.

150. But here comes the king’s mother
whose eyes glow with the light of gods -
my queen - I fall down before her;
let us all now give honour to her
with welcoming words of praise.

155. Oh Lady, first-most amongst Persian women, wearers of flowing
dresses, honoured mother of Xerxes, greetings, wife of Darius;
spouse of the Persian god, and also mother of their god,
if their ancient Fortune Bringer were not to abandon the soldiers.
THE QUEEN
This is the reason I came from the palace’s golden halls
and out from the room Darius and I too shared.

Serious anxieties also tear my heart; I shall thus tell my account
to you which leaves me in no way untroubled, friends, that Great
Patmos (Death) doesn’t disturb the harmony of the earth’s dust
with his foot, that which Darius had established, not without one of the gods.

165. Concerning these things, there is an inexpressible double anxiety in my heart:

neither do the people revere the widows’ wealth with respect;
nor does the light shine as bright as it could for the poor.

Because there is indeed over enough wealth, but my fear is for the eye;
because I maintain that the master’s presence is the eye of the house.

170. Therefore, seeing that matters stand as such, be advisors
to me in this matter, Persians, trustworthy because of your age;
because you are appreciated advisors of all matters to me.

CHORUS
Be assured of this, Queen of this land, you shouldn’t need to
request twice from us either a word or a deed in which we are able to guide you;
because we are so kindly disposed, you call us to give advice in these matters.

THE QUEEN
For many nights I have had constant dreams as
companions, since my son raised a force and went off to
the land of Ionians wishing to destroy it;
but never has the dream been so clear

180. as it was in the night that has just passed, I shall set it out for you:
I dreamed two well-clothed women appeared before me,
the one was attired in a Persian shawl,
and the other was in Doric dress,
they were far more distinguished in greatness than before,

185. and faultless in beauty, and they looked like sisters from the same
family; Greece was allotted to the one and she
resided in the land, the other was a Barbarian.

Then as I dreamed, an argument arose
between the two; and when my son found out about it
190. he tried to stop and calm them. He then tied them up
in front of his chariot and placed a yoke over their
heads. The one remained quiet in the grip due to her
towering pride and kept her mouth obediently to the reins,
but the other one fought, and with her hands she tore the

195. harness straps, and now she drags it on with force unchecked
by the bridle pieces and she broke the cross-bar into two between them.

My son falls, his father Darius stands close by
taking pity on him; but when Xerxes sees
him, he tears the clothes off his body.

200. And these then are the nightly dreams I tell.

After I had risen and washed my hands
at a fountain of clean water, I stood at the altar
with an offer in my hands, while I wished to make
an offering to the protecting gods, to whom these actions belong.

205. But there I saw an eagle that was flying to the altar of
Phoebos (Apollo); and in fear I stood speechless, friends;
and a moment later I saw a hawk circle about;
then with flapping feathers it attacked and tore at the eagle’s head
with its claws; the eagle did nothing else except cower

210. and yield. It was a terrible sight for me to see,
and for you to hear. Because as you should well know, if my son
were to do well he would be a man admired by all,
but if he fares badly - he does not owe the city an explanation,
and if he is safe he will be ruler of the land as he was before.

CHORUS

215. We wish not to make you, mother, either fearful with our answer
nor to encourage you; but we wish you to go to the gods with petitions,
if what you saw were terrible, ask them to avert the evil,
and to provide you with every perfect gift as well as for your sons,
the city and all your people. Secondly it is necessary

220. to our offerings for the earth and the dead; you must request with gracious heart
that your husband, Darius, whom you say you saw in last nights dream,
send blessings up into the light to you and to your son,
from beneath the earth and to keep constrained the opposite of this in the darkness
under the ground.

Such advice I give you with compassion and a gracious heart;

225. and concerning these things we calculate that matters everywhere will go well for
you in all respects.

THE QUEEN

But surely, you, the first interpreter of these dreams
have kindly confirmed this report on my son and house.

May the outcome be very positive; and all these things, as you have
recommended,
we shall entrust to the gods and to our friends under the ground,

230. as soon as we return home. But first I wish to know this,
friends, where in the world do the people say Athens is situated?

CHORUS

Far in the region where Lord Helios declines and sets.

THE QUEEN

Does my son yearn to hunt down this city?
CHORUS
   Yes indeed, then all of Greece will become subject to the king.

THE QUEEN
235.  So, do they have an army consisting of many men at their disposal?

CHORUS
   Yes, such an army that they provide the Medes with many problems.

THE QUEEN
   What besides men do they possess? Are there ample riches in their homes?

CHORUS
   A silver fountain they own, a treasure from the ground.

THE QUEEN
   Do their powers in archer warfare show in their use of hand bows?

CHORUS
240.  Definitely not, an erect spear and shields are their weapons.

THE QUEEN
   And who has been appointed as shepherd and commands the army?

CHORUS
   No-one’s slaves they are called, nor are they subject to any man.

THE QUEEN
   How then will the men possibly keep an enemy attack at bay?

CHORUS
   So well that they could destroy Darius’ large and excellent army.

THE QUEEN
245.  You are telling terrible things to parents of children to think over.

CHORUS
   But it seems to me you will soon receive a full and accurate report.

   Because the style of this man coming seems suited to a Persian, and he brings us a clear message to listen to, whether good or bad.

THE MESSENGER
   Oh cities of all the Asian land,
250.  oh Persian land and great harbour of wealth, how only a single stroke brought great prosperity to an end, and Persia’s flower, that had fallen, has been destroyed

   Oh, oh to be the first messenger of bad news is unfortunate; but necessity demands that all suffering be made known,
255.  Persians: because the whole Barbarian army has been wrecked.
STROFE A

CHORUS
Distress, anguish
unheard of and
disaster. Alas, mourn, Persians
when you hear of this woe.

MEESENGER
260. Indeed, everything there has gone to ruin for us;
and I myself unexpectedly see the light of my return.

ANTISTROFE A

CHORUS
Life has proven to be
too long for us,
old men, to hear
265. of such affliction unexpectedly.

THE MESSENGER
And since I was there, and not having heard my report from others,
Persians, I can thus tell what disasters have befallen us.

STROFE B

CHORUS
Oh no, oh no, to no avail
the great variety of weapons
270. left the Asian land for - alas -
the wretched land of Greece.

THE MESSENGER
Filled with corpses most miserably destroyed
are the beaches of Salamis and the whole surrounding coast.

ANTISTROFE B

CHORUS
Oh no, oh no, corpses
275. of our beloved ones, shaken
and sea dipped, you say, floating
turbulent in their clothes.

THE MESSENGER
Because their bows were of no use, and the whole army
was destroyed, overcome by the battering of the ships.

STROFE C

CHORUS
280. Scream for the unhappy wretched
a most horrible unhappy wail,  
as (the gods) ran everything everywhere  
for the worse; oh, our destroyed army!

THE MESSENGER
Oh Salamis, most hateful name that could be heard;  
285. groan, how I mourn when I remember Athens.

ANTISTROFE C

CHORUS
Athens hateful towards the wretched;  
we too have reason to remember;  
since they made so many Persian wives  
into widows - so without their men.

THE QUEEN
290. I was quiet for so long, poor me, I was shattered  
by the misfortune; because this sate is the best:  
that suffering should neither be mentioned nor questions asked about it.

Even so, necessity dictates that people must bare all ills  
when the gods send it; unfold the whole woeful  
tale, take your stand, even if you cry because of the agony;  
who did not die, and over which of the leaders  
should we mourn, which officer’s position  
has been left manless, empty because he had died?

THE MESSENGER
Xerxes himself lives and looks at the light.

THE QUEEN
300. You refer to a great light for my house  
and a bright morning after the black night.

THE MESSENGER
Artembares the leader of ten thousand horsemen  
was slammed against the cruel coasts of Sileniae.

The leader of one thousand, Dadakes, due to a spear attack  
305. jumped from his ship with a too light leap;  
and Tenagon most honourably born of the Baktrians  
fares about around the sea struck island of Ajax.

Lilaios, Arsames and thirdly Argestes  
were defeated close to the island  
310. and were shed against the tough, deadly land where doves find nurture;  
and from the dwellers alongside the fountains of Egypt’s Nile  
Arkteus, Adeues as well as the heavily weaponed  
Pharmouchos thirdly, fell from a single ship.

Chryseus with Matallos, he that is commander over ten thousand, died,
himself commander of thirty thousand dark horses,
his bushy, reddish, dark, full beard
was drenched, while his colour changed in the purple dye.

Also the Magus, Arabos, Artabes the Baktrian,
a stranger from a savage land, was slain there.

Amistris and Amphistreus, the skilful manipulator
of the spear, and he that brings forth suffering, noble Arionardos
from Sardis, and Seisames the Mysian,
and Tharubis, lord over five times fifty ships,
a Lurnaean by birth, a handsome man,

lies dead, victim of a not too fortunate fate;
and Stennesses foremost amongst the brave,
high commander of the Cilicians, one man who offered
the most resistance against the enemy, died like a hero.

Such then was my report concerning those things.

I have told a few disasters from many incidents.

**THE QUEEN**

Oh, oh, I have just heard the culmination of evils,
an embarrassment to Persians, and shrill lamentations.

But tell me this, return back again;
the numerous ships the Greeks had, were they so many,

that they deemed it worthwhile to engage in battle
against the Persian regiment with their battering-ramming vessels?

**THE MESSENGER**

On account of the numbers, be assured of this,
the Barbarian ships should have won. Because to be sure,
the Greeks ships were totalled at three hundred,

and of these, ten were placed one side specially;
but of Xerxes' fleet, as you well know, the number
was not less than one thousand, and those exceeding in speed
were two hundred and seven; and that's the issue.

Surely you do not think that we were overwhelmed here-in during battle?

No, a certain demon destroyed the fleet;
the weight of the scale was not equally distributed.

The gods protect goddess Pallas's city.

**THE QUEEN**

What, is the city of Athens not invaded yet?

**THE MESSENGER**

No, because as long as there are men there is a strong defence.
THE QUEEN
350. How did the battle between the ships start, tell;
which side attacked - the Greeks or my son,
while he depended on the number of his ships?

THE MESSENGER
The one, lady, who started all the evil
was one or other curse or an evil spirit
that appeared from somewhere.

355. Because a man, a Greek, came along out from the Athenian camp
and he said the following to your son Xerxes,
that as darkness and the black of night were to come along,
the Greeks would not remain, but would jump
onto the rowing chairs of their boats, each one for himself
360. and save their lives by fleeing in secret.

And immediately when he heard it, while he did not grasp the falsehood
of the man from the Greek camp nor the gods’ jealousy,
he proclaimed to all his captains the decree:
that when the sun’s brightness has stopped scorching the earth,
365. and darkness has covered the sky’s vault,
they must divide the main corps of ships into three columns,
(368) and while others surround the island of Ajax,
(367) to guard the exits and the straits to the open sea;
so that, if the Greeks wished to escape an evil death,
370. by finding some hidden escape route for their ships,
it was put to them: “Off with their heads”.

That was the totality of his words, and from an optimistic heart;
because he did not know the future as the gods had planned it.

And everyone, not in chaotic manner, but with loyal hearts,
375. prepared their supper, and every man in the navy
placed his oar onto its well fitted pin.

When the sun’s radiance had disappeared
and night had come along, every man in charge of an
oar went on board his ship, and each one that handled the heavy weapons:
380. the one regiment called out to the other regiment;
and everyone kept to his instructions as he had been ordered,
right through the night the ships’ captains sailed to and fro
according to the whole strategy of the navy.

And the night disappeared, the Greek fleet
385. had not attempted to sail out in secret at all;
but when the white horse chariot of a morning appeared
and filled the whole earth, beautiful to behold,
first, a noise; a call from the Greeks -
a joyful song, and in answer to this
390. piercing echoes resounded from the cliffs;
there was fear amongst the barbarians,
they were cheated in their hope; because not as in flight
did the Greeks sing a solemn song,
but boldly, they were busy rushing into battle with good courage;
395. and a trumpet let her sound reverberate over all else.

At once dashing oars together in harmony
beat the sea from out deep after a summon,
and suddenly they were all visible to sight.

From the right first, a well arranged wing
400. showed the way in orderly fashion, and secondly the whole army
advanced forward, and jointly they brought forth
an enormous voice that could be heard: “Oh sons of Greece, go,
bring freedom to your fatherland, and bring freedom
to your children, wives, and to all the thrones of your forefathers’ gods,
405. and to the graves of your predecessors; now the battle is for all of them”.

Also on our side a multitude of Persian tongues
called out: “There is no more time for delay”.

And immediately a ship rammed its bronze beak against
a ship; the ramming was started by a Greek
410. ship, it broke away a whole side of a Phoenician
ship, the one directed a spear to the other.

At first the flowing Persian force withstood;
but as their crowded ships thronged in the
passages, no longer giving assistance to one another,
415. they struck each other amongst themselves with bronzed
rams, they broke their whole stock of oars,
and the Greek ships hardly without plan,
came around them and struck, ships’ hulls were overturned
and the sea was no longer visible,
420. being filled with wreckages and the slaughter of mortals,
the beaches and reefs around were filled with corpses.

Without order all the ships were hastening to the flight,
as many ships as there were in the Barbarian army.

Like Tuna or a certain catch of fish
425. they chased us, broke our oars
and smashed our wrecks; they hacked us to pieces;
the screaming kept control over the sea during the moaning,
until the eye of the dark night removed it.

And the pains are so great, that not even if I were to take ten days
430. to give an account, then I could not even tell it to you in full.

Because realise this well, never before in one day
has such a large sum of men gone to their death.
THE QUEEN
Ah ah, a great sea of evil has broken out
and has overwhelmed the Persian and Barbarian nations.

THE MESSENGER
435. Now realise it well, you have not heard half the evil yet;
because such a great number of suffering has come our way,
that they were out balanced twice in the scales.

THE QUEEN
What fortune could be more confronting than this?

Tell us what suffering befell the soldiers would you say

440. and tilted the balance of evil over.

THE MESSENGER
As great as they were in the prime of their Persian strength,
noblest courage and most outstanding family trees,
the first on whom the king could always rely,
disgracefully they were slain with the most inglorious death.

THE QUEEN
445. Oh poor me! How harsh my fate is, friends.

What kind of death do you say they died?

THE MESSENGER
There is a certain island just before Salamis,
a small one, without ship's anchorage, where Pan who
loves dancing wanders all along the sea's coast.

450. He sent these men there, so that, when the enemy
were to seek shelter from their abandoned ships on the island,
the easy to overcome Greek army would surely fall prey,
and he would rescue our beloved ones from the salty straights,
but he had judged the outcome of events poorly. Because when God

455. gave the honour of the naval battle to the Greeks,
on that very day, after setting up a tight defence with heavy shields
wrought from fine brass, the body leapt forth from their ships; and from around
the whole island they circled in, that the Persians were planless
of where they could turn. Because at first

460. hordes were struck by hand thrown rocks, and
arrows shot from bows showered down, destroying them;
finally, after storming forward in a single stream,
they struck, they butchered the limbs of the wretched,
until the life of everyone had been totally destroyed.

465. When Xerxes saw the magnitude of the destruction he screamed,
because he had a seat in full view of the entire army,
on top of a forested hill alongside the sea;
he tore his clothes and let out a sharp shrill;
immediately after giving orders to the troops,
he fled in confused flight. To the previous events
these too are attached for you to mourn over.

THE QUEEN
Oh hateful spirit, how you deceived the Persians’
minds; how bitter the vengeance was that my son
sought from famous Athens, had Marathon formerly
not destroyed enough of them - the Barbarians departed;
while my son thought he was avenging them
he drew in such a big catch of woes.

But you must tell, the ships that escaped destruction,
where did you leave them, would you know at all to be
able to tell it clearly?

THE MESSENGER
The captains of the remaining ships hastily
started a down-wind escape without any good order;
the remaining soldiers were marginalised
in the Boeotian land; some were suffering with thirst
for a nourishing fountain, but we passed out
through to the Phoenician land, exhausted from lack of breath,
and on to the Dorian country, the Gulf of Malia, whose
plain Spercheios waters with its friendly stream;
from there the land and soil of Achaea and the
towns of Thessalia received us, empty handed without food
as we were; most died there as a result of
thirst and hunger, because both these enemies were very present there.

We arrived in the Magnesian land and in the land of the
Macedonians, at the stream of Axios,
at the reedy marsh of Bolbe, and at Pangaeus’ mountains,
the home of the Edonites; during that same night God
evoked an untimely storm, and holy Strumon’s
total course froze. Whoever did not
have faith in the Gods before now prayed and
made promises, while kneeling before earth and sky.

When the soldiers completed their many
prayers, they started crossing over the bridge of solid ice;
and whoever of us could cross over before the rays of God’s
sun spread out, crossed safely.

Because the sun’s bright disc, flaming with its rays,
bore through the middle of the passage, warming it with its flame;
and they fell over each other; and fortunate was
he whoever could breathe out his breath of life quickest.

Whoever survived and was unfortunate to be saved,
after scarcely crossing through Thrace with much suffering,
arrived at refuge, not many of them though
at their sanctuary and land; with the result that the Persian city is mourning, while yearning for the beloved youthfulness of the land.

That is the truth. Much have I omitted while relating the woes that God brought down upon the Persians.

CHORUS

515. Oh spirit of suffering, with how heavy a leap of your feet have you not pounced upon the whole Persian race.

THE QUEEN

Ah! I am miserable, the army totally destroyed; oh vision of the night so clear in dreams, how clearly you revealed the terrible disasters to me.

520. But you judged the warnings very thoughtlessly.

Nethertheless, since this is indeed what your words proclaimed, I wish to pray, first to the gods, thereafter for the earth and for the dead I shall give offerings while from my home I shall bring libations;

525. I know for certain that it is for events now fulfilled, but for that which remains, if something better were to arrive.

You must start with that which happened accurately and convince your council on whom we trust to think it over; and my son; if he should come along before I

530. return, set him at ease and lead him to my home, so that to the previous woes he may not add more troubles.

CHORUS

Oh King Zeus, the Persian army’s proud appearance and great numbers you have now destroyed -

535. the city of Susa and Agbatana too you buried in dark grief; and the veils of many wives, with soft hands were torn, their breasts drenched with tears

540. as they share in the pains.

The Persian women with feminine wailing yearn to see their recently married husbands, and their marital beds, of soft linen, the comfortable pleasure of the youth, they have lost, and they mourn with long unquenchable tears.

545. And I, because of the death of those who are away, am shedding tears of absolute grief.
STROFE A
Because now all Asia’s lands mourn
due to their empty state.

550. Xerxes led, oh oh,
    Xerxes destroyed, woe woe,
    Xerxes
    all his plans failed
    in ships in the sea.

    Why did Darius then

555. bring no injury to his men
    when he led them into battle,
    the beloved leader of Susa?

ANTISTROFE A
Because foot soldiers and also sailors
led the dark cheeked

560. ships ahead, oh oh,
    ships were destroyed, woe woe,
    ships
    with murderous thrusting rams,
    and through Ionian hands.

    The leader’s escape was close,

565. as we hear,
    through the abounding plains of Thrace,
    dangerous and wayward.

STROFE B
They were the first to die, shame,
when they were caught through necessity, ah,

570. on the beaches around Kuchreus, woe,
    they were drowned, moan and snarl,
    and in heavy lament
    scream to the heavens your sorrows, ah;
    stretch your sorrowful voices

575. in a heart-moving scream.

ANTISTROFE B
Terribly they were torn by the sea, shame,
mangled by the voiceless, ah,
the children of the unpolluted depths, woe.

    Every house mourns for the man
    it lost

580. and the childless parents
    bemoan the loss, ah,
    sent to them in their age
    and they hear all the pain.
STROFE C

Those people throughout Asia are no longer
controlled by Persian law,
no longer do they pay recognition
to the leader’s decisions due to necessity,
and also they don’t fall on the ground
to express honour, because the royal
power has been broken.

ANTISTROFE C

There is no control over men’s tongues,
because the crowds have been left to speak freely
without hindrance
when the power’s yoke broke.

595. The fields on Ajax’s Island,
drenched in blood
retains Persia’s residue.

THE QUEEN

Friends, who ever has met the experience of troubles,
how it comes up against men, when floods
600. of problems erupt, to become afraid of everything friendly,
but when the spirit flows, that wind
of good fortune is always trusted to blow.

Because concerning me, for long everything was fear;
God’s terrible visions have appeared before my eyes,
605. and a noise sounds in my ears, hardly healthy;
such are the evil’s panic causing my thoughts to fear.

Therefore I have returned once more from my dwelling
masking my way here without a chariot or without
the pomp, to bring pleasant gifts to my son’s
610. father, that comfort the dead,
milk so white and sweet from an unyoked cow
and glowing honey, flower working bee’s droplets,
mixed with globules from a virgin fountain,
and purified from its mother in the field
615. this drink is the pride of a very old vine;
and from the ever flowering yellow olive
here are the wonderful smelling fruits,
and woven garlands, child of the fertile earth.

But, oh Friends, sing over these offers to
the dead a song of goodwill, and call on the spirit
of Darius, while I am sending these gifts,
to be drunk by the earth, to the gods beneath the earth.
CHORUS
Lady queen, whom the Persians honour,
you must send offers to the inner chambers beneath the surface
while we shall request the escorts
of the dead with songs
to be gracious down below.

But, holy spirits of the underworld,
Earth and Hermes, and King of the Dead,
send a soul from beneath the light.
because if he were to know of additional cures for our ailments,
he alone would hopefully share it with mortals.

STROFE A
Upon my honour does the Blessed King hear me
he equal to a god while
I send my Barbarian cries
sharply alternating and clear sorrowfully sad shrills?
Will my pitiful nagging
penetrate?
Can he hear me below?

ANTISTROFE A
But for me you, Earth and also the others
that lead the dead away, allow
the spirit to proudly
come forth from the home underneath, god born in Susa for the Persians;
send him up
he whose type
Persian soil never before covered up.

STROFE B
Beloved was the man, beloved his grave;
because the remains it covers are beloved.
Aidoneus let him free
and guide, oh Aidoneus,
our king Darius, ah.

ANTISTROFE B
Because he never killed our men
through the blindness of worthless warfare,
he was called God’s councillor
by the Persians, and he was a God’s councillor,
because he steered the army well, ah.

STROFE C
King, ancient
king, come, appear;
come to the highest point of your grave,
Translation of The Persians

660. while you lift up your saffron coloured slippers,  
of your royal garments  
ehibit the feathers.  
Make haste father unharming Darius, oh.

ANTISTROFE C  
So that you may hear of hardship  
665. new and strange,  
appear lord of my lord.  

Because a certain (death) mist from Stugia hangs in the air;  
seeing that all the youth  
670. have already died.  

Make haste father unharming Darius, oh.

EPODOS  
Ah ah  
oh most mourned of the dead by friends,  
675. why, oh lord, lord,  
this abnormal double and twice mourned fault?  

All this land’s  
three oared ships are lost  
680. ships no longer ships.

ENTER DARIUS  
Oh trustworthy amongst the faithful, friends of my youth  
aged Persians, which pain hurts the city?  

It moans, it has been struck and the ground has been irritated.  

As I look upon my wife standing near the grave  
685. I am afraid, the offers I received were wonderful.  

You standing around my grave raising groans  
and while you scream shrill crying to call up the dead  
you are calling me inconsiderately; it is not an easy way out  
all in another, the Gods beneath the ground are  
690. more eager to receive than to part.  

Nevertheless I have exercised authority and  
I have come; but make haste, so that you receive no blame  
for wasting time.  

What is the new evil the Persians are experiencing?
STROFE

CHORUS
Respectfully I hesitate to look,
695. respectfully I decline to speak
because of the ancient fear for you.

DARIUS
But seeing that I have come from down there after hearing your shrilling,
don’t make any long story but shorten the tale,
speak and complete all, place my respect one side.

ANTISTROFE

CHORUS
700. Fearfully I am reluctant to obey,
fearfully I decline to speak,
words that are confusing to friends.

DARIUS
Seeing that the age old fear has taken up its stand before your thoughts,
aged partner of my bed, noble lady,
705. take a rest from your mourning and these sighs and speak clearly
to me. The human condition indicates that suffering will come to men.

Since on one hand much from sea, and on the other much evil from land
will fall over men, especially if you stretch you life that longer too far.

THE QUEEN
Oh you that surpasses the happiness of all men in fortunate destiny,
710. In as much as when you still looked upon the sun rays how jealous
didn’t you make men as you led your life amongst the Persians like a god,
and now I desire your death, before the deep evil could be seen.

Because everything, Darius, you will hear in shortened version;
The Persian interests have all been brought to an end, as the saying goes.

DARIUS
715. How’d that happen? Did a disease suddenly appear, or a city rebellion?

THE QUEEN
Not so ever, but the whole army was destroyed close to Athens.

DARIUS
Who of all my sons drove the army there in warfare? Talk.

THE QUEEN
Furious Xerxes, who emptied the whole far stretching mainland.

DARIUS
And in what manner did he tackle the doomed expedition, on foot or sea?
THE QUEEN
720. Both, his onslaught was doubled with two faces.

DARIUS
How did such a large army succeed in crossing on foot?

THE QUEEN
With innovation he manipulated the strait of Helle, that it held a road.

DARIUS
And did he contrive this, that he closed the great Bosphoros?

THE QUEEN
In this way he did; but I think a certain spirit stood him by.

DARIUS
725. Ah, a certain big spirit must have come, that he couldn't think straight.

THE QUEEN
So much so that the evil he accomplished at the end can be seen.

DARIUS
And what happened to them that you cry so bad?

THE QUEEN
After the navy was doomed the foot soldiers were destroyed.

DARIUS
So that the whole armoured force was totally destroyed by the spear.

THE QUEEN
730. For this so that the whole city of Susa grows for its lack of men.

DARIUS
Oh the loss of secure support and the defence of soldiers.

THE QUEEN
Bactrians also went to the defence, without any success.

DARIUS
Oh pitiful, how young was the friendship's bind not which he destroyed.

THE QUEEN
And only Xerxes alone they say, and not with many along with him.

DARIUS
735. How and where did he meet his end? Was there any escape?

THE QUEEN
He was fortunate to arrive at the bridge that joins two lands.
Did he really succeed in crossing safely to the side?

THE QUEEN
Yes, this tale wins the day, without any competition.

DARIUS
Ah, the resolution of the oracle has come swiftly, Zeus has hurled
740. down against my son the prophecy’s fulfilment; but I thought
the gods would fulfil their promise in a long time to come;
but, when someone hastens himself, god speeds him on.

Now it would seem a fountain of disaster has been found for all our friends.

This is what my son brought about blindly in his rash youth;
745. he that hoped to possess the flowing sacred open sea of Greece,
a slave as in chains, Bosphorus, the streams of the gods;
and forced to root against its nature, and after casting across
strengthened chains he succeeded in crossing the great passage with the great
army.

As a mortal that he was he attempted to manipulate the gods, not with good
reason,
750. And to conquer Poseidon, surely my son did not possess
this madness of mind? I am afraid the fruit of my vast
wealth is no longer being set forward for anyone to plunder.

THE QUEEN
Eager Xerxes learned this from instruction through evil
men; they said you accumulated great wealth through warfare
755. and left it to your children, and he fought the inner self through
unmanliness, and the inherited wealth was not honoured.

After continuously hearing reproach as this from evil men
he planned this passage and lead his army to Greece.

DARIUS
Therefore an action accomplished by him is
760. gigantic, unforgettable, emptiness such as has never before
been brought upon this city of Susa,
since Lord Zeus bestowed this honour upon us,
one man would govern all the Asian sheep
grazing; holding the ruling sceptre.

765. Because Medos was the first to lead our army;
and another his son accomplished this task;
because he controlled his heart with his mind.

Third after him was Cyrus, a blessed man,
as monarch he established peace for all his friends;
770. he collected the people from Lydia and Phrygia,
and he suppressed the whole Ionia with force.
Because he was not hated by god, so wise was he.

The son of Cyrus was the fourth to lead the army.

Mardos was fifth, an embarrassment to the fatherland
and the ancient throne; he was assassinated in a clever plot
by Artafrenes in the royal halls,
assisted by brave friends, for whom this was essential.

[The sixth was Marafis, and the seventh Artathrene.

I was inaugurated after I desired the lot,
and led many expeditions with many men;
but I never brought down so much ill fortune on the city.

Xerxes my son is young in years and young in intelligence,
and he cannot remember any of my lessons;
because you know this well, my aged friends

none of us, that ever held this power,
would never have caused this much trouble.

CHORUS
Thus wherefore, Lord Darius, whence do you bring to an end
the conclusion of your message? How could we the people of Persia
survive in the situation as it is so that we excel?

DARIUS
If you were not to wage war against the place of Greece,
and if there were no more Median expeditions.

Because the land itself becomes their battle ally.

CHORUS
What are you saying here, in what manner does it fight with?

DARIUS
Enemy that is too big, it kills through famine.

CHORUS
But we will select a well-chosen force.

DARIUS
No, not even the army that now waits in
Greece will ever reach safety.

CHORUS
What are you saying? That not all the Barbarian forces
will return over the seaway of Greece from Europe?

DARIUS
A few of many, if someone trusts in the gods'
prophesies it will be, if everything that has happened till now
is looked upon; because that happens - not on the one hand and then not on the other.

If this were the case, he leaves behind a hand picked army in vain who are yielding to his futureless hope.

805. They are waiting where Asopus waters the fields with its streams, bringing a friendly wealth to the Boeotian land; where the climax of disasters await them to be experienced, a retaliation for their unfaithfulness and impious thoughts; they went to the land of Greece, not hesitating from looting

810. the images of the gods nor from burning down their temples; altars were destroyed, the spirits’ shrines were uprooted from their foundations and thrown about in confusion.

Therefore, because they acted in evil manner they suffer no less in reception, though more, and the boundaries of evil

815. have not yet been established, but still flows forth.

Because the flow of blood from the wounds will be so great in the land of the Plataeans through Dorian swords; and the piles of corpses, even in generations to come will indicate in silence to the eyes of men

820. that a mortal must not think greater than what needs be,

Because faithlessness blossomed and brought forth a crop of ruin, and a harvest full of tears was collected from it.

While you look down upon these deeds and ponder on them remember Athens and Greece and let no person

825. despise the presence of the spirits casting eyes onto other and so losing great wealth.

Zeus stands as the punisher of overly arrogant though, a terrible investigator.

Taking this into consideration, when he that lacks good sense returns,

830. give him good advice and reason, to stop him wounding God with overbearing pride.

And you, oh beloved aged mother of Xerxes, enter the house and take which ever cloak is most suitable and go greet your son. Because all

835. his clothing around his body are in tatters and his knitted coats are torn through grief.

But you must comfort him with tender words; because to you alone, I know, will he bear to listen.

I return once more beneath the dark earth.

840. To you, eldest, greetings, even in disasters
allow your souls to enjoy daily pleasures,
seeing that wealth has no use for the dead.

CHORUS
The sufferings present and still to come
are multiple as I have heard and over which I shudder.

THE QUEEN
845. Oh spirit, how much suffering from evil
has come, but this situation hinders me most,
to hear of my dishonoured son who wears shredded
garments around his body, oh to clothe him.

But I am, and I will bring him a cloak from the house
850. on my way to try meeting my son.

Because we will not betray our beloved ones in these trying times.

STROFE A

CHORUS
Oh how great and good the life was that we had
of civil law and order,
when the aged
855. and totally in control, maliceless, unconquered king
Darius equal to God
ruled the land.

ANTISTROFE A
First the army we displayed
was honoured, and attacked all the villages
860. of the enemy legally.

And back from warfare, healthy and unscaffed
they returned once more
successfully to their homes.

STROFE B
865. How many cities did he take in without
crossing the Halys river,
without departing from the homeland,
from the Acheloin towns all along the Strymon
870. and the Thrygian lands,

ANTISTROFE B
and those around the lake on the mainland, which is surrounded
by towers
listened to him as lord,
875. and those near Greece’s broad river, and the interior
of Propontis,
also the mouths of Pantos honoured him;
STROFE C
880. islands, washed through the sea near the mainland located close to this land such as Lesbos and Samos where olives grow, Chios and Paros,
885. Nachos, Mukonos, and Andros the neighbour beyond Tanus.

ANTISTROFE C
He governed over those on the sea from the mainland,
890. Lemnos, Ikaros, Rhodes, Knidos and the towns of Cyprus, Paphos, Soli, and Salamis,
895. whose mother city is the cause of the complaints.

EPODOS
He also ruled the wealthy Greek inhabited cities in Ionia
900. with all his wisdom.

The unpleishable power of soldiers and countless allies were near at hand but now we experience the contrary to this, where God has turned it without reasonability,
905. we were overwhelmed and by and large given a thrashing on the sea.

XERXES
Ah ah,
910. How unfortunate am I because this terrible fate I experienced did not indicate what was to come, how cruel the spirit came down on the Persian race; what will I do with my poor self?

Because the strength has flowed forth from my limbs.

915. When I see this youthfulness of the city oh that he had, Zeus, also buried me with the men that died through the result of death.

CHORUS
Oh please no, king, the beloved soldiers and the great honour of Persian domination,
920. and the extent of men, that the demon mowed down.

PRODOS
The land cries out aloud for the youth of Persia that Xerxes murdered and cast into Hades; because those carrying prickles
were many people, flower of the land,
that died through the bow, a dense thicket that was
a thousand men, all destroyed.

Ah ah, the proud force,
and the land of Asia, oh king of the earth,
has sunk down onto her knees.

STROFE A

XERXES
I am here, ah, with fruitless mourning
to be received as evil
by family and fatherland.

CHORUS
I greet you sir from your journey
evil sounding scream, an evil natured sound
of a Mariandunian mourner
I shall send up send up, a cry full of tears.

ANTISTROFE A

XERXES
Let your voice go filled with
tears and noise. Because this spirit on the other hand
has turned against me.

CHORUS
I will cry many tears for you sir,
overflowing misfortunes and highly regarded seamen and a ship,
the city mourns over her sons.
I shall scream and scream a tearful wail.

STROFE B

XERXES
Because the Ionians stole,
Aries gave strength
to the Ionian warships
while they cut through the double haunted
sea and shore during the night.

Ah.

CHORUS
Ah please no, learn everything.
Where are the other multitudes of friends?
Where are they that stood by you,
men like Pharandakes,  
Sousas, Pelagius, Dotomas, Psammis,  
960. Sousiskances and Agabates  
who left Agabatania?

ANTISTROFE B

XERXES  
I left them behind  
where they went to their death  
from a Turian warship  
965. on the beaches of Salamis,  
when they struck the rock hard coast.

CHORUS  
Ah please no, where did you leave  
Pharnochos and also good Ariomandos?  
And where is lord Sevalkes,  
970. or the honourable Lilaios,  
Memphis, Tharybis and Masistras,  
Artembares and Hustaichmas?  
I ask you again.

STROFE C

XERXES  
Poor poor me.  
975. after they all saw old  
and hateful Athens with one stroke,  
ah ah, they pitifully breathed out their last breathe on a beach.

CHORUS  
And the Flower of the Persians  
your totally trustworthy eye  
980. who counted the tens of thousands  
Alpistos son of Batanchos  
***************  
son of Sesame, son of Megabates,  
and Parthos also big Oibares  
985. you have left behind? Oh poor people.  
Evil upon evil you tell to the honourable Persians.

ANTISTROFE C

XERXES  
To be sure you keep me drinking  
the howling earth of the beloved and those longed for,  
990. when you speak of hateful cruelty on cruelty.
My heart screams and screams within my limbs.

CHORUS
And the others whom we miss,
captain over ten thousand Marondites,
Xanthes, Agcharen from Arion,
995. Diailia and also Arsaken
the calvary leaders,
and Agdatates, Luthimnas
and Tolmos the war hero.

1000. I am amazed, amazed, they are not
in your train, they are not following your wheeled and curtained carriage.

STROFE D

XERXES
But however therefore the pursuing have gone.

CHORUS
They have gone, oh without names.

XERXES
Ah ah, oh oh.

CHORUS
1005. Oh oh, devils;
you have brought an unexpected
evil, how visible Ata is.

ANTISTROFE D

XERXES
We are struck through the misfortune of the time;

CHORUS
we are struck, that is visible;

XERXES
1010. new pains new pains

CHORUS
without good fortune we ran
into Ionian sailors.

The Persian nation is definitely unfortunate in war.

STROFE E

XERXES
Was it not so? I felt the onslaught
1015. against such an overwhelming army.
CHORUS
And who did not die, the Persian greatly struck with ruin?

XERXES
Can you not see who has remained from my troops?

CHORUS
I see, I see.

XERXES
1020. And this arrow holder...

CHORUS
What is it you say has been spared?

XERXES
A store house for keen arrow heads?

CHORUS
So little from so much.

XERXES
We were stripped from our supporters.

CHORUS
1025. Ionian folk don’t flee from battle.

ANTISTROF E

XERXES
Very warlike; without foresight
I looked at a tragedy.

CHORUS
Are you talking about the route of the throng warships?

XERXES
1030. I tore my clothes at the sight of the disaster.

CHORUS
Ah shame ah shame.

XERXES
And even more than a mere ah shame.

CHORUS
Because it is double even triple...
XERXES
A casualty, but a prize for our enemy.

CHORUS
1035. And our strength was cut short...

XERXES
I am naked and bodyguardless.

CHORUS
Our friends died in sea disasters.

STROFE Z

XERXES
Weep wet your cheeks; go onto your homes.

CHORUS
I wet them in mourning.

XERXES
1040. Scream now to echo mine.

CHORUS
A terrible feedback to a terrible situation.

XERXES
Place your shrills alongside mine.

CHORUS
Ah please no.

These circumstances are heavy
1045. they also fill me with pains.

ANTISTROFE Z

XERXES
Row, wow and cry on my behalf.

CHORUS
Ah ah pain pain.

XERXES
Scream to resound mine.

CHORUS
We are still standing beside you, master.

XERXES
1050. Now exalt your sobs.
CHORUS
Ah please no.
The mixture will be black,
ah, that what tears cause.

STROFE H

XERXES
And hit your chests and scream a Mysian lamentation.

CHORUS
1055. Sorrow sorrow.

XERXES
And pull the white hair from your aged beard for me.

CHORUS
Firm, my hold is firm, shrill my complaint.

XERXES
Scream out aloud.

CHORUS
That I will do too.

ANTISTROFE H

XERXES
1060. And tear the clothes from your chests with your fingertips.

CHORUS
Oh horror horror.

XERXES
And pull your hair and pity the soldiers.

CHORUS
Firm, my hold is firm, my complaint is shrill.

XERXES
Let your eyes weep.

CHORUS
1065. I am drenching them.
Translation of *The Persians*

**EPIDOS**

**XERXES**
Now resound to resound mine.

**CHORUS**
Ah ah.

**XERXES**
Call out and go home.

**CHORUS**
Ah ah, [the earth is deeply trodden for Persia].

**XERXES**
1070. Call out through the city.

**CHORUS**
Yes yes, a call indeed.

**XERXES**
Mourn with a tender stride.

**CHORUS**
Ah ah, the earth is deeply trodden for Persia.

**XERXES**
Ah ah, the ships with three benches,
1075. ah ah, they that destroyed the ships.

**CHORUS**
I will walk with you with mourns and groans.

fin