The Concept of Terms Related to Democracy in Euripides' *Suppliant Women*¹

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This study focuses on the words that refer to democracy in the play, *Suppliant Women*, written by the tragic poet Euripides, who lived in Athens at the fifth century B.C - the period of transition from dictatorship to democracy.² And so it was natural that this period had an influence on his way of handling his plays to introduce the concept of democracy and its positive and negative aspects.³ Euripides uses terms remarkably to highlight the cooperative moral values, associated with democracy, such as self-control and prudence, wisdom and justice, which help the democratic system to achieve its objectives.

The *Suppliant Women* aims at praising the city of Athens for its method of applying the principles of democracy and estimating the value of youth as a political force of the democratic system.⁴ Although the *Suppliant Women* introduces a simple subject which is "burial as a right for the dead", Euripides makes a good use of this event to show his perspective on the democratic system through a debate between the Messenger of Thebes' king, who represents the dictatorial regime and Theseus, the governor of Athens, who represents the democratic system.⁵ On one hand, Theseus shows us, in this debate, that the city of Athens has the best system of government which is the democratic system.⁶ On the other hand, the messenger of Thebes criticizes the democratic system for giving opportunity to demagogues to prefer their personal benefit at expense of the public good of the state.

Therefore, this research focuses on the positive and negative impacts of a democratic system, through analysis of some Greek terms which refer
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to the principles of democracy, and also introduces the characteristics that must be met in the found in the leader or demagogues in the democratic system. And surely, this research illustrates the dramatic function of these terms during the events of the play.

I. *The Positive Aspects of Democratic System*

Firstly, the most important advantages of the democratic system are clear in the term δημοκρατία (κρατώνω, κράτος "rule" - δήμος "people"), which means that the people govern themselves, and this is illustrated by various terms and expressions which support this meaning. When the Messenger of dictatorial Thebes asked, in his first appearance, "Who is the absolute ruler of this country?" (τὰ χρήσιμον 439), Theseus, the king of Athens Democracy, answered, "You made a mistake in your speech" (πρὸ τοῦ μὲν ρήτορος τῷ λαῷ γονοῦ ψευδής 403), "there is no absolute ruler here" (οὐχ ἐχειγαίνει εὐφροσύνη ἡ δύναμις 404-405), "the public govern" (δημός δὲ γεννᾶται 406).

Theseus' refusal to be addressed as a τυραννὸς injects anachronistic modern reverberations and draws further attention to his own singular position among the Athenians. And when the Apostle of Thebes asks how the people can govern the city (δῆμος ἐλθόντειν πῶλαν 418), and they are not capable of good judgment (μὴ διὸ χθονικὸν λαῷ γονοῦ ἡ δύναις 417), Theseus answers that the people of Athens are in charge of the land (δῆμος ἐλθον—φ χθονίφ 422), he applies the equality in the city (ἐσαχερον πῶλει 441), and so the young men find the opportunity to ascend political offices (καὶ ἀπὸ τὸν …διέταξεν νεανίσκαιφ 443). But in the dictatorial regime, the Tyrant, worrying about his power (δεδοκιλφ τὰ χρήσιμον τυραννὸς πῶλος 446), kills the best youth among the citizens (τὸ πρὸς ὁμοιότομον κτείνει 445-446). Consequently Euripides uses Theseus as a character to make clear the political implications of the
theme of youth and their meaning for the play as a whole. Youth is emphasized throughout the play, because they are a vital political force, a force whose behavior shows the success or failure of the government.  

And the king of Athens confirms that democracy allows the people to make the important decisions of the country such as the decision of war it is the right of the people only to reach this resolution. When Aithra, the king's mother, asks her son to help the suppliants to bury their children, even if the need arises for the war (325-331), Theseus agrees, but declares that it is better to consult the people, the master of the decision (\'λλά τοῦ λαοῦ προσδοκὴν \χοιμίνυ δὲ Μοῦν εἰμενεπετέρον 350-351), and hold the supreme authority (κατεστήσας αὐτὸν ἐφέμοναρχαν 352), as the city enjoys freedom (δειευθέρα πολιν 405, 477), and everybody has equal rights of vote without discrimination (ςοςηπῆ δον 353).  

The term νιμωφ is one of the fundamental terms that reflect law which guarantees achievement of the democratic system's objectives such as equality, justice and freedom. This term has come in a variety expressions that emphasize its importance for democracy. When Theseus compares the negative aspects of dictatorial Thebes with the positives of democratic Athens, he introduces laws as an example of democracy's principles. In the dictatorial system, the people are ruled by the tyrant (τυραννοθ 429), and so there is no public laws (ολκεφος νιμωτο θνην 430-431), the tyrant has all laws in his hands (κρατεῖ δεεφ τύν νιμων κεκτημονοφ 431), and therefore there is no equality (ολκετυτεροσον 432), while in the democratic system, the written laws (γεγραμμενον δε τυν νιμων 433) guarantee, for all classes of people, equality and justice (σθεν—φιλονετοφ τε τυν δικην σην 433-434).  

There are other expressions urging to respect these laws in the light of the democratic system; For example Aithra encourages her son, the king, to help the suppliants as he must abide by the strict implementation of laws.
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This is the Charter which links the countries (τῷ γὰρ τοιοῦτου θρόνῳ πολεμεῖ 312), and the chorus of suppliants asks the city of Athens to bury their sons, so as not to desecrate the canons of human beings (νομοὶ βροτίων μείναι 378).

The theme of the play throws light also on the law of citizen's right to be buried after death by various terms, as it is a religious law in the democratic system which is considered a civil law for humans. Theseus reassures both the mothers of the dead and the commander Adrastos that he will ask Creon, the king of Thebes, to bury the dead (δικαίως θεψαὶ δικαίως 526), because the law of Greece supports the religious principle of burying the dead (τῷ Πανελλήνιῳ νόμῳ νομίζω σαί 526-527, 670-672), and this law should prevail (Νῦν τεθνεὶ νομὸς 541); for the lack of application of this law, will harm Argos and all Greece (537-538).

The term νομοφ was mentioned repeatedly with the law of burial-right, to assure us that the worldly laws accord with the religious laws, in the light of democratic system. When Theseus takes the decision to bury the dead (Ν δὲ λαὸς τὸν θρόνον μείναι καὶ δικαίως θεψαί 560), he explains that by saying, "So as not to say in Greece that the ancient heavenly laws have been destroyed" (νομοφίλοι πάλαι πόλεις δικαίως θεψαί 563).

Theseus has declared that his belief, in an optimistic view of the world, based on law and order, and democracy is the best embodiment of that law and order within the state; therefore he goes to war with tyrannical Thebes to preserve, in the international sphere, those laws without which civilization and the rational ordering of society are impossible.

The term δῆκη is introduced in this play in a variety of expressions to illustrate the importance of justice for the stability of society under the democratic system and also its importance for avoiding war and achieving peace in the world. Aithra is not worried about her son in the war, for he has justice on his side, and so he is not accompanied by fear (οὐ δὲ τοιαύτᾳ νομὴν δῶμα 328). The chorus of suppliants praises the city of Athens that reveres justice and hates falsehood (βεβαιωθεὶς δῆκην,
The law plays an important role to achieve justice. According to Theseus' words, the written laws ensure equality between rich and poor before justice (\(\sigma\theta\epsilon\nu—\varphi \angle \pi\lambda\omicron\nu\sigma\iota\varphi \tau\varepsilon \tau—\nu \delta\kappa\eta\nu \sigma\eta\nu \chi\epsilon\ 433-434\)), the weak poor (\(\angle \mu\epsilon\omicron\nu\nu\tau\ 437\)) can conquer the strong rich (\(\tau\Pi\nu \mu\gamma\alpha\nu\nu\tau\ 437\), if he has right (\(\delta\kappa\iota\ \chi\omicron\nu\ 437\)). The chorus of suppliants reassures the king of Athens after his decision to bury the dead; for as long as he preserves the light of justice (\(\tau\Pi\nu \gamma\phi\tau\tau\iota \tau\iota \delta\kappa\eta\nu \sigma\iota\omega\nu \phi\xi\omega\rho\ 564\), he will avoid many accusations (\(\pi\omicron\lambda\lambda\omicron\theta\rho\ —\pi\epsilon\kappa\phi\gamma\nu\omicron\nu\psi\gamma\omicron\nu\phi\ 565\)). The chorus encourages him that justice is accompanied by success and victory; and the gods are with those who revere justice (\(\delta\kappa\eta\nu \sigma\beta\omicron\nu\tau\iota\ 595\), and give them victory (\(\nu\kappa\eta\nu \delta\dot\omega\sigma\iota\nu\ 596\)). Human will not benefit from courage only (\(\Upsilon\nu\tau\tau\delta\sigma\nu \mu\rho\varepsilon\tau\iota \beta\rho\omicron\tau\omicron\sigma\iota\nu 596-597\)), unless it is accompanied by the gods' good will (\(\mu—\tau\Pi\nu \theta\varepsilon\Pi\nu \chi\rho\xi\iota\zeta\omicron\nu\tau\iota \chi\eta\nu 596\)).

When the suppliants doubt the justice of the gods (\(\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\omicron\omicron\omicron\phi\ \delta\alpha\mu\omicron\nu\alpha\phi \sigma\nu \gamma\ \nu\nu\nu\pi\omicron\nu\phi 610\)) by making the gods responsible for Thebes' insolence against Argos' warriors, some suppliants answer that the people are to blame because justice calls for justice and blood demands blood (\(\delta\kappa\alpha \delta\kappa\alpha \nu \delta\kappa\kappa\lambda\epsilon\sigma\epsilon \kappa\omega \phi\nu\omicron\nu \phi\nu\omicron\nu 614\)). The gods are not responsible for the unjust behavior of human beings; while people are committing their sins, the gods are patient and suddenly put an inevitable end of the people's misfortunes (615-617).

But after the victory of Athens over Thebes and burial of the dead, the suppliants declare their faith in the gods (\(\gamma\theta\omicron\nu\omicron\nu \nu\omicron\mu\zeta\omicron\omega 731-732\), for having their cares reduced (\(\delta\omega\kappa\iota \tau\phi\ \sigma\mu\phi\rho\phi\tau\ \chi\epsilon\nu\).
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The term ἄσον is also one of the terms of democracy, which expresses, in this play, the principle of equality as recognized by law in the democratic system. According to Theseus’ praise to Athens; the city is free, and there is equality of the right-vote between the citizens without discrimination (ἐλευθερὰ σαφ ἀνθρώπων 353), the people alternate to govern respectively (δὶμοφ δὴ νῦν οἱ διαδοχακιν 406), and the rich people have no privileges for their wealth (οὐκ ὦς τί πλοντοι διοδοτος 407), and so there is equality between rich and poor in mounting positions (τῆς πλεῖστος ἄνθρωπος 406-407). Thus the written laws (γεγραμμένων δὲ τό νῦν 433) ensure, in the democratic system, the equality of the weak poor and the strong rich in front of justice (ἐσθεν—φ οὗ πλονσιν 433-434); and so equality permeated the state (σατερον πολει 441).

Freedom is one of the most fundamental pillars of democracy, and a basic product of the written laws. Freedom was expressed in the Suppliant Women by the Greek term ἐλευθερὸ ἅ among many expressions. On one hand, the king Theseus confirms that he freed the state (ἐλευθερὰ πολιν 353, ἐλευθερὸ πολιν 405), and applied democracy; the state is not governed by the tyrant (οὐ γὰρ ἀρχεται ἐν ἱππο πρποῦ χερὶ 404-405), but the people are the ones who govern the state (δὴ δὴ νῦν οἱ 406). On the other hand, the messenger of the
dictatorship acknowledges that the state of Athens, under a democratic system, is a free state (πολίτευμα πανελλήνιο 477).

The most important aspect of freedom is that every individual has freedom of speech and action, but on the condition that he is always listening to useful advice, which is expressed, in this play, by the Greek term ελπισμός, as one of the basic principles of democracy. It is necessary for everyone to listen to useful advice from the experts before starting any work that may harm society such as war, as did the king of Argos, Adrastos, when he started a war with Thebes, without consulting the assembly of his people; he is led by his magnanimity instead of useful advice (ελπίνηαν ἐπευαφρον ἐλπισμός 161). But as for the democratic Theseus, he must provide good reasons for his people (λέγων καλον 247), who have to agree with him about having war with the city of Thebes in order to bury the dead of Argos.

Therefore the freedom, in a democratic system, must be accompanied by other virtues, which are expressed by the terms of prudence and restraint (σοφία 203), knowledge (γνωστοίν 204), and the ability to express opinion by tongue (γλώσσα 204). And so, the mind and tongue are the tools of knowledge and the only way to resolve disputes rather than war.

There are many terms, in the play about the individual's free expression of his opinion which is useful for the country and avoiding remaining silent. The democratic Theseus demonstrates that it is a shame for the citizen to hide his opinion which is useful to his friends (αὐτοκράτοραν γέλεξαφ, χρηστίππη κράτειν φίλοι 296).

And Queen Aithra asks her son not to be silent and express his opinion which is useful to the case of suppliants, saying that she will not fall silent (οὐκ αὐτοῖς σιωπή 297) as a woman out of shyness, but she will not stop giving good advice (εἰς ἀληθείαν 297), for fear of the belief that women's advice is useless (χρείαν τῷ φιλανδρίᾳ δεσοσίσ' φύσοι τι
Euripides supports that women, in the democratic system, must have an equal right to men to express their opinion.

The King agrees to his mother’s advice (ζρ̅, δι, κ’γ’, ταυθ’/περ με νουθετεφ’ 337) and promises to show his opinion about the suppliants’ issue (γν̅, μην –φ’ ο̅ων δοσφςλη βουλευμιστων 335-336). Theseus confirms, in his interview with the messenger of Thebes' dictator, that freedom of expression is guaranteed for all, and declares that through the important principle of democracy: "Speak and do not be silent" (λ̅γςε,... ο̅λ κινηζ’Πφ ε’ 567). And the messenger of Thebes agrees stating that each person must participate in conversation (δε δοναι μ’ροφ 570).

One of the positive points about democracy is that it gives equal share in public deliberation, but democracy places a condition for the freedom of expression (τολενθερον 438): every one having a useful view for the state (χρηστ’ν τι βουλευμα 439) must show it and so he will get a good reputation (ζ χρειζουν λαμπροφ’ 440), otherwise it is better to remain silent (ζ μ— θ.λον κιν’ 441).

Democracy places another condition: the freedom of speaking must be accompanied by the power of persuasion (λ̅γγος ι πεζθων 347), as Theseus explains that he will use the power of persuasion in his dialogue with the king of Thebes before the war, but if he refuses his request for burying the dead, at once he will try to convince (πεζσαφ τ’δε 355) the assembly of his people until they agree to his war. Adrastos begs also States to have a discussion as a way to stop their evils (π̅λειφ’ τ’, δε κουσαι διφ λ̅γγου κεμψαι κακς 748), and to prefer speaking to murder in resolving their issues (φ̅ωνι καθαιρεσθ’ ολ λ̅γγοι τ’φ πρεματα 749).

The work, effort, and tasks are the actual means to achieve the principles of democracy, which have been released through the following terms: π̅νοφ (e.g. 317, 323, 373), μ̅θημα (1187). The queen Aithra stimulates her son, saying that if he finds an opportunity to show his
proficiency in the service of his country, he must exploit it and he should not be a coward (χρὴ μὲν ἐκπονῶσαι δεῖλαίμηπρο ν ὀφειρθημὶ 319), and he has to work hard to advance his position (ἐν γερῷ τὸ ἐπὶ πνοείσαιν αἰτὶ ἔξεται 323).

Democracy has identified this work with the adjective "ἐλπιόβε—φ" (373) which shows that it must be pious act for the benefit of society without any personal goals. The chorus of suppliants shows that pious work is such a beautiful statue which decorates the cities (καλὴν <δ’> ἐγαλίμα πνευσιν ελπιόβε—φ πνοφ 373), and requires gratitude forever (χρὴν τ’ ἄχει τ’ ἔπ ϕα κτε 374). The chorus here implicitly suggests that the democratic Theseus’ work which is burying the dead, is pious act that deserves good reward.30 One of the first external tasks is that mission of ambassadors who are experts at delivering various letters of the State to the other countries. For example, Theseus praises the Athenian envoy, whom he sends to the city of Thebes as his experience served the state and its ruler (τ’ χνην μὲν αἰεὶ ταὐτὸ ἐκτοῦν —προτείειφ πνευσιν τε κ’ ὑμὸ 381-382), by transferring their reports to the other various countries (διαφρων κηνηγματα 382).

The democratic system was interested in the middle class as Theseus explains that the State is made up of three classes: 1– The highest, the rich are useless for their country (οὐ μὲν ὁμὴν ἐκπληθοὶ ὀφειρεί ψφ 238-239)31, as they are always craving for more (πνευσιν ὑπὸ ντ’ ὅ ς’ ἐκ 239). 2– The lowest, the poor (οὐ δ’ ὀλκ χοντεφ 240) who have no source of income (σπανεχοντεφ βου 240) and are dangerous, as they are controlled by envy and hatred (δείνων μοντεφ τ’ ἵ φθονοι πνευσιν μεροφ 241), which drive them to commit evils against the rich (ἔφω τον φυτ’ χονταφ κοντρ’ ὕποι ὑσιν κακε 242).32 These poor are misled by the tongues of their evil leaders (γλ’ ἀσαίφ πονηρὶ ν προστατὶ ν φιλονμενοι 243).33 3– The middle, the people who preserve the state (ἐν μὲν σωι σρει πνευφ 244) and protect the order in the
country and stability in society (φυλασσοῦσας τὸτένι πληρωμά
tης 245). The people of this class are the men of moderate wealth and
moderation, and are not greedy like the rich or envious like the poor, but
they have cooperative moral values such as sanity, restraint and conviction,
which qualify them to apply the principles of democracy: justice, freedom,
equality and social solidarity. In order to have social peace between the rich and the poor, there must
be social solidarity, as the democratic system aims. Adrastos, encouraging
both the rich and the poor, declares that it is wise for rich and poor, fortunate and unfortunate, to watch each other's actions (σοφοὶ Ποιητικοί περιβαλλόμενοι του Περιβαλλομένου 176); the poor must look at the rich ambitiously (πείθεσθαι τοις χρηματικός πλούσιος πολιτικός 177) in order that he may long for wealth (ξηρασία, αληθινοί χρηματικοί δραμάτες 178), and the rich must care about the poor (τοις χρηματικοί διπλασίας διδομένοις 179).

Adrastos' words seem to be tending in direction of trying to Theseus help the suppliants and himself on the grounds that the king may one day find himself in their position, as every rich loses his wealth for changing his fate. The two verbs "πολιτικός, διδομένοις" play an important role in achieving social solidarity; both the care and the ambition guarantee this solidarity and lead to a renaissance of the community.

II. Negative Aspects of the Democratic System

The play's terms show also negative aspects of the democratic system. These negatives are shown through the behavior of the People's Congress leaders who mislead people with their tongues' eloquence and false promises in order to obtain a private gain, at expense of the public good. For example, Theseus illustrates, in his speech to Adrastos, that the reasons of his people's defeat are due to the negative aspects within the community itself; from the abusive behaviors of individual such as: seeking power and misusing it (διά διαδίκασε τοῦ βραχύτητος δυνάμεις διαδίκασε 235), and...
waging war only for the sake of gain (κραδοφυς ουκενεκ 236)\textsuperscript{39}, neglecting the people's good, the extreme ambition and the harm coming out of it. (ολκ 'ποσκοπιν τη τη πλ.θοφ επι τι βλαπτεται πεσχοι τεδε 236-237).\textsuperscript{40}

Theseus' criticism may be directed against Alcibiades, and the contemporary Athenian democracy of the 5\textsuperscript{th} Cent. B.C.\textsuperscript{41} Theseus describes the forceful and selfish pressure of the young hotheads in Argos in ways that seem very similar to Thucydidean view of some of the young Athenian politicians. The ⇨βριφ of one typical such young men; who are held to put private ambitions and profit before the security of citizens as a whole, this leads to praise of the moderates as the main source of stability and order for the state (245).\textsuperscript{42}

The Messenger of dictatorial Thebes declares that governance of the mob (ΤΝχλων κρατνεται 411) is one of the most important democratic system negatives, and this leads to the appearance of some leaders who mislead the citizens with their words (✆στιφ κχαυν/ν λ@γουφ 412)\textsuperscript{43} for their private gain (πρPiφ κρδωφ διον413). They cover their previous mistakes with new lies (διαβιλαφυ ναιφ κλψαφ 415-416).\textsuperscript{45} Then they escape from the punishment of justice (✏δυ δκηφ 416).\textsuperscript{46} And so the demagogue's habitual use of διαβιλαφυ confirms the truth of Theseus' concern that such a leader might exacerbate the resentments of the poor against the rich (242-243).\textsuperscript{47}

The principle, that citizens from the public (δΙμφοφ ελθνειν π@λιν418) govern the state, leads to the existence of a ruling class that is not able to manage the affairs of the country properly (μ—διορθενων λ@γουφ Βρθφ δναιτο 417-418). For example, it is not suitable for a poor ignorant peasant (γαπ@νoφ δφ ν—ρ πνηφ, μ— 'μαθζφ 420-421) to ascend the political office for his lack of political culture, as a result of the nature of his work, and then cannot manage the public affairs of the country (ολκ ν δναιτο πρPiφ τ'κον αφ ποβλπειν 422). And also it is not convenient for a crafty man who has no value before (πνηφPiφ,... ολδν/ν τη τη πρν424-425), to get a political office of high
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Esteem by wooing the people with his tongue (ξιωμ' ν—ρ ἔχη γα ση κατασχ'ν διμον 424-425). The Messenger of dictatorial Thebes criticizes the decision of war which was taken by Athens against Thebes and explains negatives of the public's control on the decision of war; the spirit of people and the equality of the vote may lead to damage, especially when the consensus of people vote for a war, this may lead to destruction. Euripides halts the action while he permits the founder of Athenian democracy to wrangle with an impudent herald on such topics for debate as resolved that "there is more evil than good in the world", "the vanity of human ambition", "tyranny versus democracy", "war versus peace".

When the people vote for war, (ὅταν γρ ἐλθη παλευφ ἔφ ψηφον λέ( 481), no man thinks that his own death may be in his vote, as result of this war (ολδεφ θ' α—τοθ θυνατον κλονζεται 482). And every one casts reason of the defeat on the other (τι δυστυχεφ δε τοθ' ἔφ ὑλον κτρεπει 483); if they imagine death with their own eyes during the vote (ε δ' φν παρ' τημιμα θυνατοφ δν ψηφον φορι 484), they will go back on the ill-fated decision, and so Greece would not rush to mad desire for the destruction of war (ολκ αν ποθ' ἐλλεφ δοριμαν—φ πλαυτο 485). It is part of Euripides' concern in this play to demonstrate uncertainty of human life, and man's ignorance of the outcome of his acts.

III. Criteria for the election of the leader and demagogues in democracy

The terms of the *Suppliant Women* show also the characteristics which should be available in the ideal leader and the demagogues, according to the democratic system. This play involves many features of democracy and tyranny, but both styles of government depend mainly on the qualities of leadership. We find some of these characteristics or qualities on the lips of the Apostle when he praises Theseus the democratic
leader, saying that the people should elect such a leader (τοι@ναδε τοι στρατηγιν αφε̂σθαι χρειν 726), then he declares the attributes of his personality: a brave man in the midst of serious crises (νεφ̂αν τε τοφ̂ ðεινοσιν στιν αλκιμοφ̂ 727), despises the arrogant countries (μιςδε θῆμ-βριστι̂ν λαλ̂αν 728), sacrifices life's goods (ζητην τιλεας τμλ̂ βων 730), for reaching to the highest degree of glory (κφ εκρα βηναι κλιμ̂σκων ἐνλατα 729). These expressions contrast Theseus, the ideal leader in peace and war, with Adrastos, who is led by the young hotheads, and equally the overconfident Thebes, as clear contrast between good and bad causes for wars.55

Adrastos has more characteristics that must be met in leader's personality, as criteria of the human' merits, when he talks about his dead friends: the first is not arrogance (φρ̂ νημα δολδν 862-863), lack of careerism and escape from the tables of bribery (φενγον τραπζαιφ̂ 864), conviction and lack of greed, bloating (ολ γ̂φ̂ ∏ν γαστπφ̂ βοφ̂ 865), moderation (μπρια 866). The second is rich with honor (πλε̂σταφ̂ τιμφ̂ 874), refused to the material aid (χριναπ̂ πλκ εσεδεξατε οκον 875-876), so as not to become a slave to money (δονλοφ̂ χρημετων 877). The third is an ambitious character (φιλ@τιμον φ̂ φθοφ̂ 907), has a vigor in the act, not to speak (φρ̂ νημα δροιφ̂ ολκ̂ τοφ̂ λ̂ γοιφ̂ 907-908). The last is noble breeding (τλγρ τραφ̂ ιναι μ̂ κακιφ̂ αφ̂ διφ̂ φ̂ ρει 911), grew up well (τραφ̂ ιναи μ̂ κακιφ̂ 912), and so he used to practice virtue in order to shame from the commission of vice (τγ̂ θε σκςαφ̂ ν—φ, αφ̂ σχςνεται κακιφ̂ 912-913).

Conclusion
Thus, we can conclude that there is no doubt that the terms which reflect the principles of democracy, such as justice, equality, freedom and law, play an important role in the dramatic events, it has been a driving force pushed the democratic king of Athens, who believes in these
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principles, to be convinced of the justice of the Suppliants' case to bury their sons and waged war with city of Thebes to achieve justice and equality in the rights whom guarantee the laws of democracy.

On one hand, Euripides praises, in those terms, the positive aspects of the democratic system which represents the cooperative moral values, which benefit the individual and society, such as justice, equality, freedom, self-restraint, moderation, prudence, conviction, useful advice and piety. But on the other hand, Euripides criticizes bad behaviors, such as extreme ambitions, the love of gain at expense of the public good, the love of power, greed, bribery, careerism, which leads to corruption and destroying of the economic construction, social and moral in the society.

And so the people should choose carefully their deputies, whether as governor or demagogues, and should not be misled by the bright promises and false words. They must choose the fittest, regardless of his competitive values, such as origin, wealth, social status, but who has moral values that may benefit the individual, the family and all the state, internally and externally. Finally the play supports that the people should elect someone accustomed to practice of virtue, and has modesty from committing of vice.

Notes

1 A version of this paper was read in the ninth International Conference "Drama and Democracy" of Department of Greek and Latin Studies, Faculty of Arts, Cairo University in March 2012; I am grateful to participants in the conference for their stimulating feedback.


3 For Euripides and politics, see W. J. M. Starkie, "Euripides the Politician", (QR 9 no. 34 (1920) 195-212).

4 For praise of Athens in Greek tragedy generally, see L.V.Hook, "The Praise of Athens in Greek Tragedy", (CW 27 no. 24 (1934), 185-188).

P. J. Rhodes supports (Nothing to Do with Democracy: Athenian Drama and the Polis, J HS 123, 2003, pp. 105, 113) that Euripides' Supplices was a defense of the democracy.

V. Parker declares ("Τυραννοφ. The Semantics of a Political Concept from Archilochus to Aristotle, Hermes 126, 1998, p. 160) that the play makes a debate on the advantages and disadvantages of one-man rule; and this debate clearly revolves about this general topic and not any particular form of monarch.

For the τυραννοφ in view of the democratic system, see:


Cf. Xen. Hist. Ath. Resp. 1.8. 4-6:

\[ \angle γφρ δΣμωφ βονλεται ολκ ελνομουμ·νηφ τμφ πδεωφ αλπφ δουλενεί \]

"The people do not want a good government under which they themselves are slaves; they want to be free and to rule".


For the Ἑθος of Theseus in 'The Suppliant Women', see also Shaw, "The Ἑθος of Theseus in 'The Suppliant Women', p. 4.


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13 D.M. MacDowell, ""Hybris in Athens", *G&R* n.s. 23 no. 1, 1976, p. 26) explains that the word *nomos* in legal con-texts had come to mean exclusively written law; for at the end of the fifth century a law had been made forbidding the enforcement of laws not officially inscribed.

14 B. Sarachek explains (Greek Concepts of Leadership, *AMJ* 11 no. 1 1968, p. 45) that in the *Suppliant*, Euripides specifies the advantages of democratic rule over the sort of tyranny found in Creon's Thebes. He points out that the authoritarian becomes a law unto himself, and this leads to unfair and unequal treatment of subjects. See also Shaw, "The ἦθος of Theseus in *The Suppliant Women*," p. 4.


16 See D. J. Conacher, "Religious and Ethical Attitudes in Euripides' *Suppliant*," *TAPhA* 87 1956, p. 20.

17 For the funeral ritual in this play and the recovery of the dead warriors, see M. Toher, "Euripides' *Supplices* and the Social Function of Funeral Ritual", *Hermes* 129 (2001) 332-343.

18 D. J. Conacher suggests (Rhetoric and Relevance in Euripidean Drama, *AJP* 102 no. 1 1981, p. 24) that Theseus goes to war with the Thebans in defense of that same "well-ordered universe". This is the point of his repeated claims to the Theban Herald later that he is championing the ancient law of the gods (563) and the international law of all the Greeks (671) in insisting, by force if necessary, that the Thebans allow burial of the enemy dead. See also J.E.G. Whitehorne,"The Dead as Spectacle in Euripides' *Bacchae* and *Supplices*", *Hermes* 114 1986, p. 68

19 Gamble (Euripides' *Suppliant Women*, p. 402) explains that Theseus' references to his desire to maintain the Pan-Hellenic law are excluded because they may be taken to imply solely that he maintains it because this is essential to the continuation of the virtue of courage in Greece (537 ff.), and not to suggest piety in particular. See also Conacher, "Religious in Euripides' *Supplicants*," p. 20.


21 See Conacher, "Religious in Euripides' *Supplicants*," p. 15.

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23 Cf. Theog. 177-178, where the man, for his poverty, has not freedom of speech and act: καὶ γὰρ ἐπὶ τὸν πενὸς δεδυμενον ὁ θεὸν ἔδωξεν τι εἰς πεταλοῦσαι. See Adkins, Moral Values and Political Behavior, pp. 104-105, 127. McDonald, Terms for Happiness Euripides, pp. 106-107.


27 For the pious act “ἐλεοσέβας θαυμάζων” and honor in democracy, see Gamble, “Euripides’ Suppliant Women”, pp. 402-403.


29 For the useless rich, cf. Eur. Heracl. 3-4:

"αἴρειστορ
fr. 641.2: δώρον τῷ ἡπείρῳ τῷ ἔνειμον πᾶσιν τῷ καλῷ ἐμῆς τῷ ἀκριβείαν.

For the concept of term "τῷ βοήθῳ", see McDonald, Terms for Happiness Euripides, p. 104.
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32 Cf. Plut. Nik. 11.2.3-5: τ𝕕Handlers Νικαν θε πλοδισμοφ πεφθονον ποιει, καὶ μηλιστα τιφ διατηρη τιπ μι—φιλεσθροπον μη το δημοτικν, where Plutarch relates that the Athenian demos was hostile to the wealthy.

And for the thought that poverty, as disease, teaches the evil, cf. Eur. Elec. 375-376: ἀλλʼ ἔχει νῆσον πενεία, διδᾶσκει δ ἄνδρα τιμί πρεπει κακοντευ.


34 D.K.Roselli ("Gender, Class and Ideology: The Social Function of Virgin Sacrifice in Euripides' Children of Herakles", Cl Ant 26 no. 1 2007, p. 99), suggests that despite the reference in Euripides' Suppliant to the "middle" group that "saves cities", it seems to promote a general group mentality, designed apparently to promote common interests yet supportive of the status, the idea of a "middling group" could thus be useful by offering a pleasing illusion of a community lacking in or reconciling class antagonism.


For the State's three classes according to Aristotle, cf. Pol.1295b.1-3: ἐν Τὴν ἐπαισιφ δocumenting ὑποθεον ὑποτιμ. τρια μηρη τιφ πολιοφ, οἱ ῶμοι εἰποροι σφδαρο, οἱ διο ἀποροι σφδαρο, οἱ δι τρίτοι οἱ μεσοι τοις τοις.


35 Michelini ("Political Themes in Euripides' Suppliants", p. 225) comments that in Theseus' formulation, the two major classes, rich and poor, display the same hubristic greed as the young. There is a saving grace only in the middle group, whose quiet and obedient stance.
For motives and objectives of the Middle-Class generally, see F.Vannier, "Euripide; La classe moyenne introuvable", (LEC 52 1984), pp. 99, 102.

36 Cf. the good rivalry "\(\gamma\alpha\theta—\delta\ \varepsilon\varepsilon\rho\varepsilon\)" in Hesiod W&D 21-24:

\[\varepsilon\varphi \varepsilon\epsilon\rho\varepsilon\gamma \varepsilon\varphi \varepsilon\varphi \ \varepsilon\delta\epsilon\nu \varepsilon\gamma\sigma\iota\nu \varepsilon\alpha\tau\iota\zeta\iota\nu\]

One who lacks work looks at another, a rich man who strives to plow and plan, and to set his household right and neighbor envies his neighbor as he strives for wealth.


38 See M.C.Fera, "Euripides' Supplici 176-179 e il motiva della \(\mu\varepsilon\tau\alpha\beta\delta\alpha\lambda\nu \tau\nu\chi\nu\eta\varphi\)" (GIN 58 1986), pp. 255-257. Gamble, "Euripides' Suppliant Women", p. 388.

39 For Theseus' declaration in the line 236, Michelini ("Political Themes in Euripides' Suppliants", p. 233) explains that the phrase recalls the young Argives whom Theseus accused of seeking \(\kappa\iota\varphi\delta\theta\iota\varphi\) through support of bellicose policies: this motivation is shared by elite and popular leaders as well.


36 For the truth that Euripides often attacks the bad gain, cf. fr. 695.7-8:

\[\sigma\delta\ \alpha\sigma\chi\rho\iota\ \kappa\iota\varphi\delta\theta\iota\varphi\ \pi\nu \pi\rho\pi\sigma\theta\nu \tau\omicron \kappa\alpha\lambda\omega\ \beta\rho\omicron\iota \nu \zeta\pi\omicron\omicron\sigma\iota\nu\]

And for demagogues, see J.Norwood, "Euripides and Demagogues", (CQ n.s. 59 no. 2 2009 353-363).

40 Sheppard (\(\gamma\nu\rho\alpha\nu\nu\omicron\nu\varphi, \kappa\iota\varphi\delta\theta\iota\varphi\), and the Modest Measure in Three Plays of Euripides, p. 5) supports that the first scene between Theseus and Adrastos is designed to give a new treatment to the motif \(\kappa\iota\varphi\delta\theta\iota\varphi\), making it nothing less than an indictment of profit-seeking war.

See also Shaw, "The \(\nu\theta\omega\) of Theseus in 'The Suppliant Women'", p. 5.

41 Starkie (Euripides the Politician, p. 200) suggests that the voice is the voice of Theseus, but the thought is that of the 5th century B.C. And L. H. G. Greenwood

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See also Conacher, "Rhetoric in Euripidean Drama", p. 24.

Cf. Plut. Per. 18.2-3. Hdt. 30.82, where in the Herodotean debate on constitutions, both democracy and oligarchy follow a similar path to destruction, both driven by the greed of their ruling faction and both ending in monarchical tyranny.

See Michelin, "Political Themes in Euripides' Suppliants", 225.

See Fisher, HYBRIS. A Study in the Values of Honor and Shame, pp. 419-420.

Cf. Solon fr. 11, 6-7 West: συμπασιν δ̅ νηστι νηστι

δρομον χανδοφ.beans ti φιλοτιμησει και δεια καρδη κακη με το φενελοσην.

Eur. Or. 903-906: 'ναρ θροφιρωςαφ......

θροντη ρε παρασι τα πμαθει παρησα, πιθανην προ

To the private gain as a political motive in democracy, cf. Thuc. 2.65.7.6-8:

σαλαρεξω το πολ̅σμου δοκοντα εναι κατε τοφ δειαρ 

ιλητιμησει και δεια καρδη κακη με το φενελοσην.


For the demagogues' slanders, cf. Thuc. 5. 16. 1. 4-6:

ζεωνουσηηςαφ κατασνιατεροφ νομεξων με εναι κακοφ 

γεωντεροφ διαιοβεθλον.


See Michelin ("Political Themes in Euripides' Suppliants", p. 233.

Cf. Xen. Hist. Ath. Resp. 1.6-7, 11, where the inferior people, as the "Old Oligarch" points out, may choose leaders who are like them, with disastrous results for civic unity and rational policy.

See Michelin, "Political Themes in Euripides' Suppliants", 234.


Gamble (Euripides' Suppliant Women, p. 397) explains that the glory or excitement of war is easily seen, but men do not consider the possibility of death.

As the mothers' view of the return of the dead was one-sided, so too do men take a similarly limited view of going to war. In both cases, human ignorance and
inability to see, before the event (482), the opposite tendencies of the action has a result in pain and suffering. 
Cf. Suppl. 734ff., where Adrastos describes how his expedition against Thebes went against what seemed to be the probabilities.

51 For the concept of war in this play, J. W. Fitton ("The Suppliant Women and the Herakleidai of Euripides: I. The Suppliant Women", Hermes 89 no. 4 1961 p. 433-434) suggest that the particular point that war is the enemy of culture, we may be sure, was an authentic Euripidean sentiment'. The trenchant lines on the fatal facility with which an Assembly votes for war (484-5) remind us of the ease with which Theseus obtained the support of the Demos, and no doubt had plenty of point for the Athenian audience. Euripides combines culture with the material blessings of peace.
Cf. Eur. fr.369 N.2 (Erechtheus): "the spear and shield must yield to the garlands of poetry"; Eur. fr. 453 N.2 (Kresphontes): "Peace is here at last, with beautiful choirs and garlanded bands".

McDonald, Terms for Happiness Euripides, pp. 105-106.

54 For the speech of Adrastos, Shaw (The Ἡθος of Theseus in 'The Suppliant Women, p. 11) comments that Adrastos' sentential true, but we must add that it is true for those cities who have not chosen a leader like Theseus. Adrastos' city, however, has chosen him, and they must suffer the destiny which this choice entails. See also Michelini, "Political Themes in Euripides' Suppliants", 240.

55 See Fisher, HYBRIS. A Study in the Values of Honor and Shame, p. 419-421.

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