

©Copyright 2020

Anna E Simas

Killer Queen: Clytemnestra as Goddess, Heroine, and Monster

Anna E Simas

A dissertation

submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington

2020

Reading Committee:

Ruby Blondell, Chair

Olga Levaniouk

Kathryn Topper

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

Classics

University of Washington

Abstract

Killer Queen: Clytemnestra as Goddess, Heroine, and Monster

Anna E Simas

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:

Ruby Blondell

Classics

This dissertation examines the mythological figure of Clytemnestra across genre and time. From Homeric poetry through late Greek tragedy, this duplicitous husband-murderer reflects ancient Greek male anxieties about women. I argue that the conceptualization of Clytemnestra shifts over time and according to generic conventions, and that authors portray her as heroic, monstrous, or divine in order to advance their own agendas about the dangerousness of women to male society. We will see that there is no universal conception of Clytemnestra: while many authors treat her as an example of the threat of the feminine, others explore the complexities of her motives, even presenting relatively sympathetic discussions of her situation. Although she is never fully exculpated, her actions are often rationalized as a consequence of her mistreatment by Agamemnon. Such a topic naturally raises questions about structural misogyny in ancient Greece, but as we shall see, many modern scholars have reproduced this misogyny in scholarship

on Clytemnestra. Thus, a major goal of this project is to identify and resist the sexism of such scholarship. This is the first comprehensive study of Clytemnestra across time and genre, and integrates both literary and visual sources with the goal of producing an anti-misogynistic, holistic portrait of this important cultural figure.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: The Murderess of Mycenae.....	1
Chapter 1. The <i>Iliad</i>	10
1.1. The Terms in the Formula.....	11
1.2. The Formula.....	21
Chapter 2. The <i>Odyssey</i>	30
2.1. Epic Glory.....	31
2.2. The Relation of a Name to Reputation	40
2.3. Clytemnestra's Name.....	43
2.3.1. Non-Etymological Descriptions of Clytemnestra.....	46
2.3.2. Etymological Evidence for Clytemnestra.....	51
2.3.3. Etymological Evidence for Clytemnestra.....	56
Chapter 3. Lyric Poetry.....	64
3.1. Stesichorus.....	64
3.2. Simonides.....	78
3.3. Pindar.....	81
Chapter 4. Aeschylus' <i>Oresteia</i>	98
4.1. The Structure of Female Choruses.....	98
4.2. The Female Monster	99
4.3. The Female Monster in Pre-Aeschylean Literary Sources	104
4.3.1. Gorgons.....	105
4.3.2. Harpies	109

4.4. Monstrous Language in the <i>Oresteia</i>	116
4.4.1. Gorgon Imagery used of Clytemnestra and the Erinyes.....	117
4.4.2. Harpy Imagery used of Clytemnestra and the Erinyes.....	131
Chapter 5. The <i>Electra</i> Plays.....	143
5.1. The Dates of the Plays.....	144
5.2. Electra’s Name.....	146
5.3. The Characterizations of Electra and Clytemnestra in Euripides.....	150
5.4. The Characterizations of Electra and Clytemnestra in Sophocles.....	167
Chapter 6. Euripides’ <i>Iphigeneia at Aulis</i>	188
6.1. Considerations for the Discussion of Eleusinian-Orphic Allusions and Intertexts.....	188
6.2. The Text of <i>IA</i>	193
6.3. Evidence for Demeter Erinys.....	196
6.4. References to the Myth of Demeter and Persephone in <i>IA</i>	203
6.4.1. Eleusinian-Orphic Framing of <i>IA</i>	205
6.4.2. Assimilation of Clytemnestra to Demeter and Iphigeneia to Persephone.....	208
Conclusion: Clytemnestra’s Enduring Appeal.....	220
Bibliography.....	222

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank first and foremost my dissertation director, Ruby Blondell, for their guidance, support, friendship, and encouragement throughout this process. They have often seemed to know what I want before I do, which has been invaluable for my research and for my psyche. Many thanks as well to my Reading Committee members, Olga Levaniouk and Kathryn Topper, who have inspired, challenged, and guided me from the very start of graduate school. Thank you also to Shirley Yee and Cricket Keating in the Department of Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies for their help as I planned and conducted my dissertation research and completed my Graduate Certificate in Feminist Studies. I have been lucky to have had such fierce and wonderful mentors to guide me through this process, and for that I am eternally grateful.

This dissertation would not have been possible without the support, both financial and otherwise, from the Department of Classics and the Department of Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies at the University of Washington, and from the American Association of University Women, to whom I owe the deepest gratitude. The last year of work on this dissertation was funded by an American Fellowship from AAUW (2019-2020), without which I would not have been able to complete this project. Many thanks to the Greenfield family, the DeLacy family, the Nesholm family, and Eleftherios and Mary Rouvelas, whose generosity has allowed me to conduct my research and engage in travel related to my research and studies. Lastly, I would like to thank the Women's Classical Caucus for their commitment to securing equity in Classics, as well as for guiding me in my journey through graduate school.

Finally, I would like to thank those closest to me who have provided support for my academic career. Thank you to my family, both natal and chosen. Emma Brobeck, whose

steadfast companionship has kept me in good spirits, thank you for the σκωμμάτων εἶδη μυρία. Many thanks are also owed to my colleagues at UW, too numerous and with too much emotion to adequately thank here, especially Megan O’Donald, whose keen editorial eye has benefited me in many instances; Edgar García, whose folk etymologies kept my wits sharp; the Dungeons and Dragons crew for countless hours of fun; and Matthew Gorey, Luke Parker, Chad Carver, and Canan Bolel, in whose company much of this dissertation was written. The sincerest appreciation for Tom, ὁδοιπὸρῳ διψῶντι πηγαῖον ῥέος.

DEDICATION

For my mother, κούφα σοι | χθών ἐπάνωθε πέσοι

INTRODUCTION: THE MURDERESS OF MYCENAE

Clytemnestra was a persistent source of fascination for ancient authors and artists.¹ Much like her sister Helen, though in a very different style, she represents the threat that female autonomy poses to the *oikos* and to patriarchal society. As we shall see, ancient authors use her to explore the role of women in society by projecting male anxieties about the nature of women onto her. But as I hope to make clear in the course of this dissertation, there is a great deal of variation in the portrayals of Clytemnestra across genre and time, and it is evident that authors were interested in the nuances of her motives and characterization. She is not a static figure; rather, I argue that authors' portrayals of Clytemnestra and her motives create a complex, evolving notion of her and, by extension, of the dangerous potential of women.

Ancient authors differ widely in their treatments of Clytemnestra. In some sources, she is fearsome and threatening like a monster, while in others, she is a loving wife and mother who is driven to murder out of care for her children. This variation in characterization is, as we shall see, both a function of genre and of the author's societal and temporal context. The first detailed account of the murder of Agamemnon is in Homer's *Odyssey*, in which Agamemnon's shade warns Odysseus of the potential dangers awaiting him upon his return home to his wife. In this account, Clytemnestra is not the principal agent of the murder; her culpability lies in her willingness to acquiesce to a seducer and to disregard the marital loyalty expected of a wife. However, by the time of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, Clytemnestra herself orchestrates the murder, tricking her husband into entering the house and slaying him and his concubine with an axe.

¹ Parts of this dissertation were originally published in Chapter 11 of *Greek Drama V: Studies in the Theatre of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries BCE*, edited by C. W. Marshall and Hallie Marshall, 145-59. London: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. (Permission for use granted June 9, 2020 by Claire Weatherhead.)

Later authors complicate her motives: for example, in Euripides' *Iphigeneia at Aulis*, Agamemnon's sacrifice of his daughter is presented as a direct cause of his subsequent murder: that is, Clytemnestra will eventually commit murder in order to avenge their slain daughter. While she is never completely exculpated, authors paint a complex and varied picture of her guilt.

Perhaps the most common way that authors explore Clytemnestra's culpability is through the "dual motive" model, where her motive is *either* vengeance for the sacrifice of Iphigeneia (revenge) *or* a desire to continue her affair with Aegisthus (lust). Pindar summarizes this most concisely in *Pythian* 11, where he asks whether the murder was a consequence of the sacrifice of Iphigeneia or of Aegisthus' influence.² As we shall see, this model works particularly well in tragedy as a device used to drive the *agon logon*, where Clytemnestra often defends herself by painting herself as a protective mother, while other characters (especially Electra) emphasize her adultery with Aegisthus as a way of highlighting her moral turpitude. But as we shall also see, these motives are not mutually exclusive: indeed, they are blended in many sources, including Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, where Clytemnestra herself alternately emphasizes one over the other depending on the moment and her audience.

Much, and paradoxically not nearly enough, has been written about Clytemnestra. Part of this problem stems from the misconception advanced in 19th- and 20th-century scholarship that the works in which Clytemnestra appears have been overanalyzed, and that there is nothing left to say about such a character.³ Such a position usually accepts wholesale the reading of

² 11.22-25.

³ See especially Düring 1943: 108 ("Aeschylus' Klutaimestra is too familiar to need a new analysis"). This is emblematic of the lack of regard with which scholars in the late 1800s and early 1900s treated her character.

Clytemnestra as a one-dimensional villain: that is, as a “bad woman” who is naturally disposed to such acts of treachery as murdering Agamemnon, and any claims she makes of contumelious treatment by her husband are construed as mere rhetorical attempts at *pathos* designed to distract her enemies. Moreover, scholarship on Clytemnestra often reinforces, rather than critically engages with, the ancient misogyny at work in the construction of her character. A reading of Clytemnestra informed by a feminist positionality is thus necessary to correct this scholarly imbalance. An example of this scholarly sexism lies in the debate on Clytemnestra’s murder weapon: was it an axe or a sword?⁴ Some scholars argue that because she likely borrowed Aegisthus’ sword, he, not she, was the true architect of the murder; Clytemnestra, a malleable woman under the influence of the wrong man, is merely a pawn in his machinations.⁵ The sword hypothesis deemphasizes Clytemnestra’s agency in Agamemnon’s death; more problematically, it lends scholarly credence to the ancient fear that women are dangerous because, in the absence of proper male oversight, their feminine suggestibility may manifest itself as deference to the wrong man. Scholars rarely critique this particular consequence of the sword hypothesis, thereby giving the impression of tacit approval of ancient misogyny. Similarly, other scholars prefer the axe hypothesis because of the idea that an axe would have been readily at hand in the house; thus, it is a more “feminine” weapon than the sword.⁶ Although this view grants more agency to Clytemnestra than the sword hypothesis, it likewise translates ancient misogyny into modern sexism. Thus, a more nuanced examination of Clytemnestra in ancient sources as well as modern scholarship is opportune.

⁴ On this question and the relevant scholarship, see Fraenkel 1950: appendix 3. See also Warr 1898, Davies 1987, and Prag 1991.

⁵ Warr 1898 is emblematic of this view.

⁶ Malcolm Davies (1987) is a principal adherent to this view.

The cultural climate is appropriate for this particular project for several reasons. On the scholarly front, there have been several important monographs in recent decades which have analyzed or reevaluated the female characters of Greek myth and literature in terms of their relevance to ancient authors and audiences, and shown that new interpretations of these characters are always possible. Beginning in the 1970s, feminist analyses of women in ancient Greece have demonstrated the value in revisiting and reconsidering the ways that patriarchy has affected our understanding of ancient gender roles and norms.⁷ At the forefront of these studies on the role of women in ancient culture are such works including Sarah B. Pomeroy's *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* (1975), Helene Foley's *Reflections of Women in Antiquity* (1981) and *Ritual Irony: Poetry and Sacrifice in Euripides* (1985), Elizabeth Wayland Barber's *Women's Work: the First 20,000 Years* (1995), Froma Zeitlin's *Playing the Other: Gender and Society in Classical Greek Literature* (1996), and Cristiana Franco's *Shameless: the Canine and the Feminine in Ancient Greece* (2014). These have all invited us to consider the role of women in the ancient world, as well as how patriarchy has functioned in scholarly analysis of ancient women.

Studies applying a feminist lens to particular characters of myth and literature have also demonstrated the importance of these figures as reflections of broad societal values. Particularly important for this dissertation is Ruby Blondell's *Helen of Troy: Beauty, Myth, Devastation* (2013), which has informed the scope, structure, and aims of my project. Blondell's analysis of

⁷ There are several influential feminist readings of Clytemnestra in particular. Winnington-Ingram 1948 is a proto-feminist analysis of the *Oresteia* in terms of gender roles. Millett 1970 explores the way that philosophers and critical theorists used the *Oresteia* trilogy to explore patriarchal ideology. The 1970s through the 1990s also saw a rise in psychoanalytic applications of the *Oresteia* myth, several of which centered on feminist readings of Clytemnestra (Hirsch 1989 is emblematic of this trend).

Helen as a projection of male anxieties about female beauty and sexuality was a crucial framework for my examination of Clytemnestra not as a person but as a construction. Indeed, because the sisters share many of the same characteristics including destructive sexuality, I view this project as complementary to Blondell's. Numerous other scholarly works which apply similar analytical frameworks to the often-treated and yet overlooked female characters of Greek myth and literature have influenced my reading of Clytemnestra. These include, but are not limited to, Marilyn Katz's *Penelope's Renown* (1991), Kirk Ormand's *Exchange and the Maiden: Marriage in Sophoclean Tragedy* (1999), Marianne Govers Hopman's *Scylla: Myth, Metaphor, Paradox* (2012), and Deborah Lyons' *Gender and Immortality: Heroines in Ancient Greek Myth and Cult* (2014). All of these explore the ways in which male authors use female characters to discuss the danger of women to society, focusing not on the figure as a "person" but as a construction of patriarchy.

Politically, it is crucial at this moment that we reexamine our preconceptions about power and patriarchy; this includes how they function in scholarship, especially in scholarship on female characters.⁸ A project on a character like Clytemnestra, who refuses to accept her husband's abuse of power, is well-timed for its resonances with the modern world. We, too, can refuse to acquiesce in patriarchy.

In the course of this dissertation, we will examine the ancient Greek sources which treat Clytemnestra in significant detail. By "significant," I mean that an author's discussion of Clytemnestra gives insight into the views of women prevalent during their time. In addition, I

⁸ Scholarship on female figures often includes unnecessary value judgements that add little to the argument; for example, Cropp writes that a woman's concern for her appearance was "typical of *hetairai* or other loose [sic] women" (Cropp 2013 ad 1072-4). This kind of unnecessary moralizing pervades scholarship on women in the ancient world.

have restricted my consideration to archaic and classical sources, despite the siren song of later authors like Lycophron and Seneca. The reason for this is that we can observe broad cultural similarities between authors of the archaic and classical periods, and therefore we can make inferences about the ways in which structural misogyny was consistent across these periods. However, I have used later sources occasionally, since these can demonstrate that a certain ancient idea persisted in the popular consciousness across time and genre.⁹ My principal sources include Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the fragments of Stesichorus' *Oresteia*, a lyric fragment attributed to Simonides, Pindar's eleventh *Pythian* ode, Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, Sophocles' *Electra*, and Euripides' *Electra* and *Iphigeneia at Aulis*; I supplement the literary analysis with evidence from Greek visual art (particularly vase-painting) to demonstrate the wide cultural impact of the *Oresteia* myth.

My first chapter explores the language used of Clytemnestra in the *Iliad*. The only instance in which Clytemnestra appears in the *Iliad* is in a comparison with Agamemnon's (enslaved) mistress, Chryseis. Agamemnon's comparison of Clytemnestra with a slave is a pointed repudiation of her status as legitimate wife; moreover, it raises issues of gender, class, and social status that pervade Homeric poetry.¹⁰ In particular, I shall examine the use of the formula οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φύην as a marker of a woman's status; we shall see that Agamemnon's use of this phrase, often used in comparisons of a goddess with a mortal, constitutes a twofold demotion of status for Clytemnestra.

⁹ Particularly important later sources include Pausanias, Lucian, testimonia on Stesichorus, and scholia on Homer and Euripides.

¹⁰ Easterling 1991, Steiner 2001, and Lyons 2012.

Clytemnestra appears more frequently in the *Odyssey*, the subject of my second chapter, where the story of Agamemnon’s death is recounted fifteen times.¹¹ I have found that these passages often use wordplay on Clytemnestra’s name to allude to her role in the murder, as well as to juxtapose her with Odysseus’ wife, Penelope. Scholars disagree on whether Clytemnestra’s name is properly Κλυταιμνήστρα (“famous for her suitor”) or Κλυταιμήστρα or (“famous for her cunning”); both etymologies connect her with Penelope, who is beset by suitors but cunningly outwits them to delay a new marriage.¹² Moreover, this wordplay invites us to question the nature of κλέος and the role of Clytemnestra in the *Odyssey*. I will show that the Oresteia myth, and indeed the etymology of Clytemnestra’s name, provides a compelling lens through which to consider the κλέος awarded to Penelope.¹³ Reading the *Odyssey* through the lens of the Oresteia myth allows us to fully appreciate the complexity of Penelope’s κλέος.

My third chapter, on Pindar, Stesichorus, and Simonides, explores the ways in which lyric poetry shape the Oresteia myth, and how these three lyric poets in particular explore the many facets of Clytemnestra’s motivations.¹⁴ As we shall see, the poets play with the motives presented in Homer and Hesiod, alternately emphasizing lust or revenge as primary in order to explore the complex morality of the murder of Agamemnon. In this chapter, I also analyze the relevant fragments of the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, which was popular source material for

¹¹ I follow the count proposed by Olson (1990).

¹² Marquardt 1992 and Loudon 1995. On the Oresteia myth and Odyssean plot management, see Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2009.

¹³ Edwards 1985 and Tsagalis 2003 are particularly important for our understanding of the function of the Oresteia myth in the construction of Penelope’s κλέος.

¹⁴ I engage with March 1987 quite a bit in this chapter, though I largely disagree with her interpretations of the work of these poets. On Stesichorus, Davies and Finglass 2014, Swift 2015, and Finglass 2018 have been particularly helpful; on Simonides, Vermeule 1966 and M.I. Davies 1969; on Pindar, Düring 1943, Finglass 2007, and Kurke 2013.

the lyric poets.¹⁵ This shows that notions of misogyny were largely consistent between the archaic and classical periods, and that Clytemnestra was routinely used as an anti-exemplum in such literature.

In my fourth chapter, on Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, I examine Clytemnestra's portrayal as a monster that must be defeated in order to restore order to the patriarchal world.¹⁶ Clytemnestra is described in terms that evoke the female monsters of myth, like Gorgons and Harpies. I examine Aeschylus' imagery and connect it to earlier accounts of mythical female monsters. This positions her as chief in a chorus of Erinyes; this effect is achieved in the *Eumenides*, in which Clytemnestra's ghost appears onstage to goad the Erinyes to action. The Erinyes are often described in terms that associate them both with other female monsters and with the monstrous iterations of Clytemnestra.¹⁷ In this chapter, I also discuss instances in which Aeschylus deploys the language of visual art in order to suggest to his audience a parallel between female monsters in art and Clytemnestra and the Erinyes.

My fifth chapter focuses on the *Electra* plays of Sophocles and Euripides. I examine the ways in which Clytemnestra is modeled on her Aeschylean counterpart in each of these plays; as we shall see, Euripides' Clytemnestra is presented rather sympathetically, while Sophocles' follows the Aeschylean model more closely. In this chapter, I also explore the ways in which traditional gender roles inform the characterizations of Clytemnestra and Electra. As evidence for this, I examine wordplay on Electra's name as an indicator of her unmarried status.¹⁸ We shall see that in both plays, Electra's unmarried status is juxtaposed with Clytemnestra's

¹⁵ On the *Catalogue*, see Ormand 2014.

¹⁶ Topper 2007; Hopman 2012.

¹⁷ Maxwell-Stuart 1973; Frontisi-Ducroux 2007.

¹⁸ Particularly illuminating are Kubo 1967, Blundell 1989, and Ormand 1999.

licentiousness, both of which are emblematic of the problems in Agamemnon's household. Mother and daughter embody male fears about uncontrolled women, but in opposite ways.

In my final chapter, I examine how in *Iphigeneia at Aulis*, Euripides models his Clytemnestra on the wrathful iteration of the goddess Demeter, Demeter Erinys or Demeter Melaina.¹⁹ Enraged both at the premature loss of her daughter Persephone to Hades, and at the role of Zeus in orchestrating Persephone's rape, Demeter Erinys roams the world searching for her daughter and causes the failure of the world's crops. Euripides maps the sacrifice of Iphigeneia onto the myth of the rape of Persephone: Iphigeneia is the daughter whose father tricks her into "marrying Hades" through her death, and Euripides connects Clytemnestra with the wrathful version of Demeter to hint at what will await Agamemnon upon his return home from the war. By connecting Clytemnestra with Demeter Erinys, Euripides characterizes her as divine in her wrath, a force that must be properly reckoned with in order to prevent the ruination of society.

As we shall see, Clytemnestra is a complex figure whose characterization reveals much about ancient anxieties about women. We will observe a range of portrayals ranging from damning to sympathetic, as well as a deep interest across time and genre in Clytemnestra's motives. This will give us an understanding of the ways in which ancient authors grappled with the dangerousness of the female.

¹⁹ On Eleusinian Orphism in *IA*, see Markantonatos 2016. On allusions to the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* in *Iphigeneia at Aulis*, see Radding 2015.

CHAPTER 1. THE *ILIAD*

The lone reference to Clytemnestra in the *Iliad* occurs in lines 109-115 of Book 1, in which Agamemnon compares her to his concubine, Chryseis. The passage is as follows:

καὶ νῦν ἐν Δαναοῖσι θεοπροπέων ἀγορεύεις	
ὡς δὴ τοῦδ' ἔνεκά σφιν ἐκηβόλος ἄλγεα τεύχει,	110
οὔνεκ' ἐγὼ κούρης Χρυσηΐδος ἀγλά' ἄποινα	
οὐκ ἔθελον δέξασθαι, ἐπεὶ πολὺ βούλομαι αὐτὴν	
οἴκοι ἔχειν· καὶ γάρ ῥα Κλυταιμνήστρης προβέβουλα	
κουριδίης ἀλόχου, ἐπεὶ οὐ ἔθέν ἐστι χερείων,	
οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν, οὔτ' ἄρ φρένας οὔτε τι ἔργα.	115

And among the Danaans in assembly you utter your prophecies, and declare that it is for this reason that the far-striking god is bringing woes on them, because in exchange for for the girl Chryseis, I would not accept the glorious ransom, since I would far rather keep her at home. For in fact I prefer her to Clytemnestra, my wedded wife, since she is in no way inferior to her, either in form or in stature, or in mind, or in handiwork.²⁰

Numerous scholars have commented briefly on Agamemnon's crudeness and the passage's odd tone. Malcolm Davies and Patrick Finglass write that, while potentially insulting to Clytemnestra, the comparison is "hardly evidence of enmity between husband and wife."²¹ G.S. Kirk notes that "the whole rhetorical list of female qualities could be worse—that is, even more heroic; but it has a suggestion of the cattle-market all the same. That suits Agamemnon's temperament."²² While many scholars acknowledge the unusual tone of this passage, only a handful have commented upon the gender implications of Agamemnon's comparison. Deborah Lyons argues that this comparison of the two women "commodifies their attractions" and "emphasizes the transience of male favor, and the degree to which women depend on it."²³ In

²⁰ Trans. after Murray.

²¹ Davies and Finglass 2014: 482. They discuss this passage, as well as other pre-Stesichorean versions of the myth, as context for Stesichorus' *Oresteia* (Davies and Finglass 2014: 482-4).

²² Kirk 1985 ad 114.

²³ Lyons 2012: 54-55.

line 115, Agamemnon enumerates the qualities of each woman as a way of indicating their respective value to him. As P.E. Easterling notes, all of these four qualities (δέμας, “form;” φύην, “stature;” φρένας, “mind;” and ἔργα, “handiwork”) “have the function of serving men’s sexual, domestic and dynastic needs.”²⁴ By comparing Chryseis to Clytemnestra in these terms, Agamemnon indicates the interchangeability of the women for the fulfillment of these needs, disregarding Clytemnestra’s status as his legitimate wife and elevating Chryseis to her rank.²⁵

What follows will be an examination of this passage, including an analysis of the functions of the terms δέμας, φύη, φρένες, and ἔργα and a survey of the formula οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φύην in Homeric poetry.

1.1. THE TERMS IN THE FORMULA

The terms δέμας, φύη, φρένες, and ἔργα convey the male conception of the role of women in the household. While δέμας and φύη are observable physical qualities, φρένες and ἔργα refer to a woman’s comportment within the household. Joachim Dalfen writes that δέμας and φύη are “optical”—that is, they reflect a body’s attractiveness.²⁶ A survey of the word δέμας, “build,” reveals that it “occurs nearly always as an accusative of respect—typically when a disguised god resembles someone in shape.”²⁷ It is frequent in scenes of transformation, as when gods or goddesses disguise themselves as humans or make a human preternaturally attractive.²⁸ For

²⁴ Easterling 1991: 146.

²⁵ Clytemnestra’s status as legitimate wife should not be in doubt, since she has already fulfilled her duty of bearing children for her husband. We hear elsewhere in the *Iliad* that Clytemnestra has borne Agamemnon at least four children; the poem gives Agamemnon and Clytemnestra’s children as Orestes, Chrysothemis, Laodice, and Iphianassa (9.142-5 and 284-7). See Chapter 5 of this dissertation for further discussion of variants on their children.

²⁶ Dalfen 1984: 15.

²⁷ Clarke 1999: 117.

²⁸ When Athena takes the form of a mortal woman, the poet puts particular emphasis upon her δέμας as related to her prodigious height and beauty: δέμας δ’ ἤϊκτο γυναικί | καλῆ τε μεγάλη τε

female characters in Homer especially, δέμας seems to be associated with height as a marker of beauty. As Ruby Blondell notes in their discussion of Helen in 2004's *Troy*, “height and physical substance [are] components of the Greek ideal of female beauty.”²⁹ For example, Athena beautifies Penelope by making her “taller” (μακροτέρην, 18.195) and “statelier” (πάσσονα, 18.195). The effect of this transformation is observed a few lines later (18.212-3) when Penelope appears before the suitors, whose “knees... were loosened, indeed with passion their hearts were enchanted, and they all prayed to lie beside her in bed” (τῶν δ' αὐτοῦ λύτο γούνατ', ἔρω δ' ἄρα θυμὸν ἔθελχθεν | πάντες δ' ἠρήσαντο παρὰ λεχέεσσι κλιθῆναι).³⁰ δέμας, then, represents a woman's visual attractiveness as reflected in her stature, a point to which I will return shortly.

Similarly, the term φυή denotes “fine” or “noble” physique. According to Rismag Gordesiani, φυή, along with δέμας and εἶδος, refer to a woman's physical charms.³¹ Gordesiani argues that male appreciation for the female form is a key component in scenes of flirtation or

καὶ ἀγλαὰ ἔργα ἰδυίη (“and [she] changed herself to the form of a woman, beautiful and tall, and skilled in glorious handiwork,” *Od.* 13.288-9; repeated at 16.157-8).

²⁹ Blondell 2009: 14. Consider *Od.* 18.192-6:

κάλλει μὲν οἱ πρῶτα προσώπατα καλὰ κάθηρεν
 ἀμβροσίῳ, οἷῳ περ εὐστέφανος Κυθήρεια
 χρίεται, εὖτ' ἂν ἦ Χαρίτων χορὸν ἱμερόεντα·
καὶ μιν μακροτέρην καὶ πάσσονα θῆκεν ἰδέσθαι, 195
 λευκοτέρην δ' ἄρα μιν θῆκε πριστοῦ ἐλέφαντος.

With beauty she first cleansed her lovely face,
 with beauty ambrosial, such as that with which Cytherea, of the fair crown,
 anoints herself when she goes into the lovely dance of the Graces;
and she made her taller, too, and statelier to behold,
 and made her whiter than new-sawn ivory. (trans. Murray)

³⁰ Trans. Murray.

³¹ Gordesiani 1997: 182. He calls this the “Zeichen des körperlichen Charmes” (Gordesiani 1997: 182).

seduction, largely because it implies the kind of attraction necessary for physical intimacy.³²

Much like δέμας, φυή is often used as a compliment in which a mortal woman is likened to a goddess, and similarly connotes physical substance.³³ For example, when Nausicaa is introduced at *Od.* Book 6.15-17, the poet emphasizes her beauty by likening her to a goddess in respect to her φυή: βῆ δ' ἴμεν ἐς θάλαμον πολυδαίδαλον, ᾧ ἔνι κούρη | κοιμᾶτ' ἀθανάτησι φυὴν καὶ εἶδος ὁμοίη, | Ναυσικάα, θυγάτηρ μεγαλήτορος Ἄλκινόοιο (“She went to the chamber, richly wrought, wherein slept a maiden like the immortal goddesses in form and looks, Nausicaa, the daughter of great-hearted Alcinous”).³⁴ Nausicaa, who is similar to the immortal goddesses in respect to her φυή, is a κούρη on the brink of marriage; this description of her invites association with Artemis. The poet invites her association with Artemis throughout Book 6; when Nausicaa and her handmaidens finish the laundry, they enjoy a game of catch in which Nausicaa acts as chief in their “chorus”:

τῆσι δὲ Ναυσικάα λευκώλενος ἤρχετο μολπῆς
οἷη δ' Ἄρτεμις εἴσι κατ' οὔρεα ἰοχέαιρα,

³² Gordesiani 1997: 182-3. In particular, Gordesiani highlights the connection between verbal flirtation, the gaze, and the desire that is provoked by male appreciation of the female form in Homer, looking specifically at how flirtation and the gaze cause γλυκὺς ἴμερος (1997: 182-3).

³³ When the Phaeacian prince Laodamas invites Odysseus to participate in the games, he observes that Odysseus must know how to compete, since his body is “not mean” in stature:

φυὴν γε μὲν οὐ κακός ἐστι,
μηρούς τε κνήμας τε καὶ ἄμφω χεῖρας ὑπερθεν 135
αὐχένα τε στιβαρὸν μέγα τε σθένος· οὐδέ τι ἦβης
δεύεται, ἀλλὰ κακοῖσι συνέρρηκται πολέεσσιν.

In build, surely, he is no mean man,
in thighs and calves, and in his two arms above,
his stout neck, and his great strength. Nor has he lost
any of the vigor of youth, but he has been broken by much suffering (trans. Murray).

In this passage, Odysseus' φυή is described as οὐ κακός because of the stoutness of its constituent parts: his thighs, calves, hands, and neck, and the great strength exhibited in them, are all part of what makes his body οὐ κακός.

³⁴ Trans. Murray.

ἢ κατὰ Τηϋγετον περιμήκετον ἢ Ἐρύμανθον,
 τερπομένη κάπροισι καὶ ὠκείης ἐλάφοισι·
 τῆ δέ θ' ἅμα νύμφαι, κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο, 105
 ἄγρονόμοι παίζουσι, γέγηθε δέ τε φρένα Λητώ·
 πασάων δ' ὑπὲρ ἢ γε κάρη ἔχει ἠδὲ μέτωπα,
 ῥεῖά τ' ἀριγνώτη πέλεται, καλαὶ δέ τε πάσαι·
 ὣς ἢ γ' ἀμφιπόλοισι μετέπρεπε παρθένος ἀδμής.

... and whitearmed Nausicaa was leader in the song.
 And even as Artemis, the archer, roves over the mountains,
 along the ridges of lofty Taygetus or Erymanthus,
 joying in the pursuit of boars and swift deer,
 and the wood nymphs, daughters of Zeus who bears the aegis,
 share her sport, and Leto is glad at heart—
 high above them all Artemis holds her head and brows,
 and easily may she be known, though all are beautiful—
 so amid her handmaids shone the unwed maiden.³⁵

Nausicaa's similarity with Artemis is physical: she, like the goddess, is taller and more noticeable—and therefore more beautiful—than her peers. This description of the maiden at play clarifies the poet's earlier description of Nausicaa as ἀθανάτησι φυὴν καὶ εἶδος ὁμοίη (6.16). She is like the goddesses, but like Artemis in particular because of their shared beauty, age, and leisure activities. Odysseus, too, draws a comparison between Nausicaa and Artemis as a way of gaining the girl's trust:

γουνουμαί σε, ἄνασσα· θεός νύ τις, ἢ βροτός ἐσσι;
 εἰ μὲν τις θεός ἐσσι, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν, 150
 Ἀρτέμιδι σε ἐγὼ γε, Διὸς κούρη μέγαλοιο,
 εἶδος τε μέγεθός τε φυὴν τ' ἄγχιστα εἶσκω·

I clasp your knees, my queen—are you a goddess, or are you mortal?
 If you are a goddess, one of those who hold broad heaven,
 to Artemis, the daughter of great Zeus,
 I liken you most nearly in looks and in stature and in form.³⁶

³⁵ Trans. Murray.

³⁶ Trans. Murray.

Here, Odysseus explicitly relates her φυή to her stature, filling out the picture of Nausicaa as a double for Artemis. It is her physical substance that makes her so beautiful that she resembles a goddess; as we see, φυή connotes the prodigious stature usually associated with goddesses.³⁷

This examination of the terms δέμας and φυή suggests that Chryseis is not only noble in form (that is, tall and stately), but is endowed with divine beauty that is pleasing to the male eye. Moreover, these terms imply a kind of beauty that is attractive in a way that can inspire wonder (θαῦμα), particularly in male viewers. A similar effect is achieved by statues, whose size provokes the viewer's awe.³⁸ Deborah Steiner writes,

The proportions of a statue provide an instant key to its nature and powers, and to build a colossal figure, as Greek sculptors did from the end of the seventh or early sixth century on, was both to set it outside the human realm and to express the notion that its power could not be contained within normal bounds.³⁹

Like the colossal images of deities, the “statuesque”⁴⁰ women of Homeric poetry arouse awe in those who behold them; it is their height and physical substance that endows them with a divine quality and thereby makes them attractive. Further, their “statuesque” beauty is rooted in their receptiveness to the male gaze: that is, like statues, they passively receive the gaze without returning one of their own. Steiner writes that statuesque women are empty vessels upon whom the viewer projects his own desire:

³⁷ See also the scenes of divine epiphany in the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* and *Hymn to Aphrodite*, in which the goddesses' divinity is indicated in part by prodigious height: μελάθρου | κῦρε κάρη, “her head reached the roof” (*h.Cer.* 188-9 and *h.Ven.* 173-4, trans. Foley). We might also consider the story in Herodotus 1.60, where Peisistratus legitimizes his sovereignty by marching into Athens accompanied by an extremely tall and beautiful woman named Φύη, dressed in armor so as to resemble Athena. Phye's height and beauty (and indeed, name) make her seem divine like Athena, lending credence to Peisistratus' claim to sovereignty. My thanks to Olga Levaniouk for the suggestion.

³⁸ See Steiner 2001: 99–100. Blondell also takes note of the “Greek propensity to liken beautiful people to statues” (Blondell 2009: 14).

³⁹ Steiner 2001: 99.

⁴⁰ I borrow this phrasing from Blondell (2009: 14).

Within the realm of verbal and visual representations, depicting a body in a manner that emphasizes its “to-be-looked-at-ness,” which codes its appearance for strong visual and erotic impact, turns that body from autonomous subject into spectacle and signals its position as the passive, “lithified” object of the viewer’s gaze.⁴¹

Thus, by presenting female bodies as statuesque, the Homeric poet invites the audience to imagine the viewer’s awe and desire for that body. Agamemnon’s use of the formula οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φύην of Chryseis indicates that she has a “statuesque” physical appearance that makes her so beautiful that she seems divine. The formula conveys Agamemnon’s desire for Chryseis while implying that Clytemnestra’s physical charms have waned, suggesting that Chryseis’ statuesque, divine beauty elevates her over Clytemnestra.⁴² His tone is heavily sexual: his reduction of each woman’s appeal to the value of her constituent parts (δέμας and φύή) suggests that Chryseis is just as capable as Clytemnestra of serving his sexual needs.

The next two terms in line 115, φρένας and ἔργα, refer to a woman’s function within the household. According to Shirley Darcus Sullivan, φρένας as an accusative of respect can be used to qualify a person or make a moral judgement about their character. As Sullivan argues, “in several passages a person’s specific relationship to φρένες becomes a cause of praise or blame.”⁴³ For a woman, φρένες can refer to her “intelligence, or perhaps to her character or

⁴¹ Steiner 2001: 198. For more on this topic, see especially Sartre 1976, Berger 1972, and Mulvey 1992. For ancient examples of male desire for statues, consider the myths of Pygmalion and Galatea, the Cnidian Aphrodite as represented in Ps. Lucian’s *Amores*, and perhaps even Pandora (although Steiner argues that her case is slightly different, as she is not actually a statue and has her own mind). The related metaphor of a woman as an *agalma* or an *eidōlon* appears frequently in literary sources, including Euripides’ *Alcestis* and *Helen* and Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon* (of Iphigeneia). On the idea that a woman’s “lithified” body causes a reciprocal rigidity in the male body, see Steiner 2001: 199.

⁴² As further evidence of this, we might also consider the connection to Aphrodite implied by Chryseis’ name. The conventional epithet of Aphrodite as “golden” (χρυσέα) is echoed in Chryseis’ name, which emphasizes Agamemnon’s sexual desire for her.

⁴³ Sullivan 1988: 119.

disposition” and takes on a moral connotation, as we see in the term *sōphrosynē*, “prudent-mindedness,” and its antonym *aphrosynē* “foolishness.”⁴⁴ Similarly, Penelope’s good character is summarized by the epithet *periphrōn*, “circumspect.” Thus, a woman’s φρένες are an indicator of her character, and can be used to confer praise or blame upon her.⁴⁵ Additionally, in the context of marriage, good φρένες indicate a woman’s emotional connection with and loyalty to her husband in the form of *homophrosynē*, or like-mindedness.⁴⁶ This term is most often

⁴⁴ Sullivan 1988: 119.

⁴⁵ As we see in Nestor’s account of the Mycenaean saga at *Odyssey* Book 3 line 265-6, Clytemnestra’s φρένες initially kept her from betraying her husband:

ἡ δ’ ἦ τοι τὸ πρὶν μὲν ἀνάινετο ἔργον ἀεικὲς 265
 δῖα Κλυταιμνήστρη· φρεσὶ γὰρ κέχρητ’ ἀγαθῆσιν·

Now at first she put from her the unseemly deed,
 the noble Clytemnestra, for she had an understanding heart. (trans. Murray)

Here, we see that Nestor is sympathetic to Clytemnestra, calling her δῖα, “noble,” because she has “good φρένες” (φρεσὶ γὰρ κέχρητ’ ἀγαθῆσιν). With this moral judgement on Clytemnestra’s φρένες, Nestor presents her as a good woman who is overwhelmed by her circumstances. The phrase φρεσὶ γὰρ κέχρητ’ ἀγαθῆσιν appears once more in a passage in Book 16, in a passage discussing Penelope’s suitor Amphinomus:

τοῖσιν δ’ Ἀμφίνομος ἀγορήσατο καὶ μετέειπε,
 Νίσου φαίδιμος υἱός, Ἀρητιάδαο ἄνακτος, 395
 ὅς ῥ’ ἐκ Δουλιχίου πολυπύρου ποιήεντος
 ἠγεῖτο μνηστῆρσι, μάλιστα δὲ Πηνελοπεΐη
 ἦνδανε μύθοισι· φρεσὶ γὰρ κέχρητ’ ἀγαθῆσιν·

Then Amphinomus addressed their assembly, and spoke among them,
 the glorious son of prince Nisus, son of Aretias.
 He led the suitors who came from Dulichium, rich in wheat and in grass,
 and above all others he pleased Penelope
 with his words, for he [?] had a good heart (trans. after Murray).

Murray interprets the phrase φρεσὶ γὰρ κέχρητ’ ἀγαθῆσιν as a reference to the suitor Amphinomus. However, the same phrase is used to describe how Clytemnestra’s φρένες fail in the face of Aegisthus’ beguiling words; here, the poet implies that Amphinomus’ pleasing words threaten to overpower Penelope’s “good φρένες.” But, as it will turn out, Penelope’s “good φρένες” are sufficient to protect her from her suitors.

⁴⁶ It is worth noting that all of these terms (*sōphrosynē*, *aphrosynē*, *periphrōn*, and *homophrosynē*) are cognate with φρένες.

applied to the relationship of Odysseus and Penelope; in lines 180-185 of *Odyssey* Book 6, Odysseus notes that *homophrosynē* is the foundation of a strong marriage.⁴⁷ When Agamemnon says that his concubine is just as pleasing to him as his wife is in respect to her φρένες, he indicates that Chryseis has the potential for marital *homophrosynē*. Additionally, we, knowing the full arc of Agamemnon’s story, might reasonably interpret this claim as a reference to a disjunction of φρένες in his marriage with Clytemnestra, who will in fact lure him to his death by using her superior wits against him.

The term ἔργα refers generally to a person’s deeds; in the context of *Il.* 1.115, it specifically means “women’s work.”⁴⁸ Agamemnon’s comparison of Chryseis with Clytemnestra in terms of their ἔργα references their respective abilities to increase his household’s wealth through their production of woven material. Agamemnon explicitly discusses his desire for Chryseis in terms of her aptitude for women’s work in the opening of the *Iliad*:

⁴⁷ *Od.* 6.180-5:

σοὶ δὲ θεοὶ τόσα δοῖεν ὅσα φρεσὶ σῆσι μενοινᾶς,	180
ἄνδρα τε καὶ οἶκον, καὶ ὁμοφροσύνην ὀπάσειαν	
ἔσθλην· οὐ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ γε κρεῖσσον καὶ ἄρειον,	
ἢ ὄθ’ ὁμοφρονέοντε νοήμασιν οἶκον ἔχητον	
ἄνῆρ ἠδὲ γυνή· πόλλ’ ἄλγεα δυσμενέεσσι,	
χάρματα δ’ εὐμενέτησι, μάλιστα δέ τ’ ἔκλυον αὐτοί.	185

And for yourself, may the gods grant you all your heart desires,
a husband and a home, and may they bestow on you as well oneness of heart
in all its excellence. For nothing is greater or better than this,
than when a man and a woman keep house together sharing one heart and mind,
a great grief to their foes
and a joy to their friends; while their own fame is unsurpassed (trans. Murray).

⁴⁸ Easterling argues that “Erga includes skills like weaving and the supervision of a household as well as more erotic accomplishments” (Easterling 1991: 146). ἔργα used absolutely is not an erotic term; rather, it is usually accompanied by a modifier like φιλοτήσια (*Od.* 11.246), γάμοιο (*Il.* 5.429), and Ἀφροδίτης (*h.Ven.* 1, where it applies ambiguously to Aphrodite’s “deeds,” which naturally include erotic pursuits) to indicate an erotic connotation.

τὴν δ' ἐγὼ οὐ λύσω· πρὶν μιν καὶ γῆρας ἔπεισιν
 ἡμετέρῳ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ ἐν Ἄργεϊ τηλόθι πάτρης 30
 ἰστὸν ἐποιχομένην καὶ ἐμὸν λέχος ἀντιόωσαν·

But her I will not set free; before that, old age will come on her
 in our house, in Argos, far from her country,
 as she walks back and forth in front of the loom and shares my bed.⁴⁹

In line 31, Agamemnon frames his refusal to return Chryseis to her father in terms of her value both as a weaver and as his sexual partner. He thus paints a picture of the ideal woman, who serves him by producing woven material and satisfying his sexual needs. Agamemnon's desires are evident in the correspondence of the two halves of line 31 with the two halves of line 115, where δέμας and φυή are analogues for ἐμὸν λέχος ἀντιόωσαν, and φρένες and ἔργα are parallel to ἰστὸν ἐποιχομένην. δέμας and φυή have an overtly sexual connotation, while φρένες and ἔργα refer more generally to a woman's role in the household, but strongly suggest a sexualized fantasy of Chryseis as a slave in his house. Once again, the full arc of Agamemnon's story lends an eerie tone to this term, since we know that Clytemnestra will use her weaving to ensnare her husband in the bath.

I will now focus on the alignments of δέμας and φυή with λέχος, and of φρένες and ἔργα with ἰστός. δέμας, φυή, and λέχος are clearly sexual; the combination of these terms evokes Aphrodite, goddess of love, sex, and beauty. φρένες, ἔργα, and ἰστός, which refer to wisdom and weaving, conjure Athena, the goddess of wisdom and handiwork. As the poem implies, φρένες and ἔργα are the domain of Athena, while δέμας and φυή belong to Aphrodite; this dichotomy is confirmed by Achilles' words at *Il.* 9.388-390:

κούρην δ' οὐ γαμέω Ἀγαμέμνονος Ἀτρεΐδαο,
 οὐδ' εἰ χρυσεῖη Ἀφροδίτη κάλλος ἐρίζοι,
 ἔργα δ' Ἀθηναίη γλαυκῶπιδι ἰσοφαρίζοι· 390

⁴⁹ Trans. Murray.

And the daughter of Agamemnon, son of Atreus, I will not wed,
not even though she vied in beauty with golden Aphrodite
and in handiwork were the peer of flashing-eyed Athene.⁵⁰

In this passage, Achilles refuses Agamemnon's offer of marriage to his daughter, stating that he will not marry her even if she is as beautiful as Aphrodite and as proficient in women's work as Athena. The alignment of δέμας, φυή, and κάλλος with Aphrodite and of φρένες and ἔργα with Athena is confirmed by a quotation of both Iliadic passages in Lucian's *Imagines* section 22.

Lucian deploys this quotation in regard to Panthea, a mistress of the emperor Lucius Verus. In this passage, δέμας and φυή are characteristics aligned with Aphrodite, while φρένες and ἔργα belong to Athena:

γυνή περὶ ἧς ἂν τις εὐλόγως τὸ Ὀμηρικὸν ἐκεῖνο εἴποι, χρυσεῖη μὲν αὐτὴν Ἀφροδίτῃ ἐρίξειν τὸ κάλλος, ἔργα δὲ αὐτῇ Ἀθηναίῃ ἰσοφαρίζειν. γυναικῶν γὰρ συνόλωσ οὐκ ἂν τις παραβληθεῖη αὐτῇ 'οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν,' φησὶν Ὀμηρος, 'οὔτ' ἄρ φρένας οὔτε τι ἔργα.'

[Panthea is] a woman about whom one can quote with propriety the saying of Homer, that she vies with golden Aphrodite in beauty and equals Athena herself in accomplishments. Among mortal women there is none to compare with her, "neither in stature nor mould" (as Homer says), "nor in mind nor in aught that she doeth."⁵¹

As is confirmed by this passage, δέμας and φυή refer to sexual characteristics, while φρένες and ἔργα refer more generally to a woman's role in the household. In the passage above, Lucian assimilates Panthea to Chryseis and Verus to Agamemnon; Clytemnestra, then, is equivalent to all of the mortal women who cannot compete with Panthea, including Verus' wife Lucilla, the daughter of Marcus Aurelius.⁵² Caroline Vout notes that Panthea, whose non-Roman status is

⁵⁰ Trans. Murray.

⁵¹ Trans. Harmon. Again we can see the connection between Chryseis and Aphrodite implied in Lucian's use of the adjective χρυσεῖη.

⁵² The date of Lucian's *Imagines* is uncertain, though it is generally agreed to have been written between 160 and 169. Harmon dates it to between 162 and 166, the dates of Verus' "residence in the East" (Harmon 1925: 255), but Anderson dates it to before 164, citing the year of Verus'

highly eroticized, represents the territory conquered by Rome and the spoils won in war.⁵³ If we follow this thread, Panthea, like Chryseis, represents the eroticized foreign woman who threatens the status of high-born native wives like Clytemnestra through her mastery of the spheres of both Aphrodite and Athena. In the *Iliad*, then, we see that Agamemnon's comparison elevates Chryseis over Clytemnestra, both by disregarding Clytemnestra's status as legitimate wife and by implying Chryseis' physical similarity with the goddesses.

1.2. THE FORMULA

I move now to analysis of the formula οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φύην, which appears once in the *Iliad* and twice in the *Odyssey*. Both instances of the phrase in the *Odyssey* (at 5.212 and 7.210) occur within a comparison between a divine figure and a mortal figure. Charles Segal has shown that in both scenes in which οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φύην occurs, Odysseus rejects immortality and firmly establishes himself as mortal.⁵⁴ In both instances, Odysseus must deny that he is, or could become, immortal so that he can make a full return to the mortal world of Ithaca.⁵⁵ Moreover,

marriage to Lucilla as a logical *terminus ante quem* for the work (Anderson 1977: 275–76). However, Lucilla was betrothed to Verus in 161 CE; it is likely that she was at least betrothed to, if not married to, Verus at the time of the publication of the *Imagines*.

⁵³ Vout 2007: 215. Panthea seems to have been from Asia Minor (Lucian calls her “Smyrnaean” in the *Imagines*), but Vout argues that her name and her non-Romanness allows her to be assimilated to mythical and historical women of various origins (Vout 2007: 214–6). Moreover, her name (“All Goddess”) reinforces Lucian's connection of her with both Athena and Aphrodite. Vout also notes a potential pun on Panthea's name with πανθεία, “a plaster used in medical treatments... Perhaps Lucian had this malleable material in mind as a further pun on his mistress' name” (Vout 2007: 230). Moreover, Panthea's “statuesque” qualities are enumerated in Lucian's *Imagines* 6–9, where she is likened to several particularly well-known statues, including Praxiteles' Cnidian Aphrodite (Harmon 1925 and Vout 2007: 216–8). She, like Chryseis, invites the male gaze with her statuesque body, offering visual pleasure to any man who would look upon her.

⁵⁴ Segal 1962: 26–7.

⁵⁵ Are the Phaeacians immortal? Segal shows that they are “quasi-divine,” citing as evidence the term ἀγγίθιοι, “close to the gods” in 5.35 and the meeting of Odysseus and “the godlike (8.457) Nausicaa...” to whom he promises to pray ““as a god” (467) when he returns to Ithaca” (Segal

both instances of οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν in the *Odyssey* occur in the context of an implied marriage proposal. In the first, in Book 5 of the *Odyssey*, Calypso attempts to persuade Odysseus not to return to Ithaca, promising him marriage to her if he should stay:

εἴ γε μὲν εἰδείης σῆσι φρεσὶν ὅσσα τοι αἴψα
 κήδε' ἀναπλήσαι, πρὶν πατρίδα γαῖαν ἰκέσθαι,
 ἐνθάδε κ' αὖθι μένων σὺν ἐμοὶ τόδε δῶμα φυλάσσοις
 ἀθάνατός τ' εἴης, ἰμειρόμενός περ ἰδέσθαι
 σὴν ἄλοχον, τῆς τ' αἰὲν ἐέλδεται ἥματα πάντα. 210
 οὐ μὲν θὴν κείνης γε χερείων εὐχομαι εἶναι,
 οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν, ἐπεὶ οὐ πῶς οὐδὲ ἕοικεν
 θνητὰς ἀθανάτησι δέμας καὶ εἶδος ἐρίζειν.

If, however, in your heart you knew all the measure of woe it is your fate to fulfill before you come to your native land, you would remain here and keep this house with me, and would be immortal, for all your desire to see your wife for whom you long day in and day out. Surely not inferior to her do I declare myself to be, either in form or in stature, since in no way is it reasonable that mortal women should vie with immortals in form or looks.⁵⁶

Calypso litotically asserts her superiority to Penelope, since she is “no worse in form or in stature,” in essence reminding Odysseus of their robust sex life. But Calypso’s attempts at persuasion are futile: Odysseus’ contentment with their affair has waned, as the poet has already made apparent at 5.151-5:

τὸν δ' ἄρ' ἐπ' ἀκτῆς εὔρε καθήμενον· οὐδέ ποτ' ὄσσε
 δακρυόφιν τέρσοντο, κατεῖβετο δὲ γλυκὺς αἰὼν
 νόστον ὀδυρομένῳ, ἐπεὶ οὐκέτι ἦνδανε νύμφη.
 ἀλλ' ἦ τοι νύκτας μὲν ἰαύεσκεν καὶ ἀνάγκη
 ἐν σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσι παρ' οὐκ ἐθέλων ἐθελούση· 155

Him she found sitting on the shore, and his eyes were never dry of tears, and his sweet life was ebbing away, as he grieved for his return, for the nymph no longer pleased him. By night indeed he would sleep by her side perforce

1962: 26). Nicholas P. Gross likewise emphasizes Odysseus’ reaction to meeting Nausicaa in 6.149-69 as indicative of her near-divine status (Gross 1976: 312–13).

⁵⁶ Trans. Murray.

in the hollow caves, unwilling beside the willing nymph...⁵⁷

Here, we see that Odysseus no longer enjoys sharing a bed with Calypso: the nymph no longer pleases him (οὐκέτι ἦνδανε νύμφη, 5.153), and he sleeps by her side perforce (ιαύεσκεν καὶ ἀνάγκη, 5.154), not wanting to even though she desires it (οὐκ ἐθέλων ἐθελούση, 5.155). The phrase οὐκέτι ἦνδανε νύμφη in line 153 suggests that, at one point, Calypso *was* pleasing to Odysseus, but no longer; it is to this former pleasure that Calypso appeals with the phrase οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν in line 212.⁵⁸ In his reply to her, Odysseus rather diplomatically acknowledges Calypso's physical superiority to Penelope, since she is immortal and Penelope is not (5.215-8):

πότνα θεά, μή μοι τόδε χῶεο· οἶδα καὶ αὐτὸς
πάντα μάλ', οὔνεκα σεῖο περίφρων Πηνελόπεια
εἶδος ἀκιδνοτέρη μέγεθός τ' εἰσάντα ιδέσθαι
ἢ μὲν γὰρ βροτὸς ἐστὶ, σὺ δ' ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρωσ. 215

Mighty goddess, do not be angry with me for this. I know very well myself that wise Penelope is less impressive to look upon than you in looks and stature, for she is a mortal, while you are immortal and ageless.⁵⁹

Odysseus rephrases Calypso's original δέμας...φυήν as εἶδος...μέγεθός τ' in line 217, conceding that Calypso is indeed "better" than Penelope because she is immortal. Calypso's reaction to this is never given, though the next scene sees Calypso and Odysseus returning to the cave to sleep together once more (5.225-7). As in the *Iliad* passage, the phrase οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν has an explicitly sexual connotation in *Odyssey* 5.

The phrase οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν occurs again at *Odyssey* 7.208-10. In this passage, the Phaeacian king Alcinous asks Odysseus if he is immortal, presumably as a way of testing

⁵⁷ Trans. Murray.

⁵⁸ In line 153, I note a potential play on the meaning of νύμφη as both "nymph" and "bride." Straightforwardly, this could mean "the nymph was no longer pleasing to him;" an alternative translation could indicate that Calypso "was no longer pleasing to him as a (potential) bride."

⁵⁹ Trans. Murray.

whether he has come as a suitor for Nausicaa. In this passage, Odysseus rejects Alcinous' implication that he might be a god:

Ἀλκίνο', ἄλλο τί τοι μελέτω φρεσίν· οὐ γὰρ ἐγώ γε
 ἀθανάτοισιν ἔοικα, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν,
 οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φύην, ἀλλὰ θνητοῖσι βροτοῖσιν. 210

Alcinous, far from you be that thought; for I am not
 like the immortals, who hold broad heaven,
 either in stature or in form, but like mortal men.⁶⁰

Here, Odysseus responds to Alcinous' question about whether he is a god in disguise or a mortal.

Alcinous has indirectly asked about Odysseus' identity in *Od.* 7.199-200:

εἰ δέ τις ἀθανάτων γε κατ' οὐρανοῦ εἰλήλουθεν,
 ἄλλο τι δὴ τόδ' ἔπειτα θεοὶ περιμηχανόωνται. 200

But if he is one of the immortals come down from heaven,
 then this is some new thing which the gods are planning.⁶¹

Alcinous' comparison of Odysseus with a god serves two purposes. First, by inquiring whether Odysseus is a god, Alcinous probes at his true identity without technically violating *xenia*.

Second, with this comparison, Alcinous is likely trying to ascertain whether this stranger could be a viable suitor for Nausicaa, who in Book 6 shows signs of being ready to marry. By framing his question about Odysseus' identity in this way, Alcinous activates a trope common in nuptial poetry, in which the bridegroom is likened to a god.⁶² According to J.C.B. Petropoulos, “the superhuman comparison [in wedding songs], whether direct or not, offers extravagant erotic or

⁶⁰ Trans. Murray.

⁶¹ Trans. Murray.

⁶² See, for example, Sappho fr. 123D, in which the bridegroom is compared to Ares, and fr. 44, in which Hector and Andromache are described as “godlike” (θεοεικέλο[ις]). Some scholars have also interpreted the context of Sappho 31 as nuptial, in which case the bridegroom is described as “like the gods” (ἴσος θεοῖσιν). For this argument, see Simelidis 2006: “the man is treated as God [sic] because he is so fortunate to be near or sleep with the woman” (Simelidis 2006: 90).

other praise.”⁶³ Further, Petropoulos notes that “the patent object of a generic *eikōn* which sets up a parallel between a divine or heroic figure and a mortal is to praise the latter with respect to (a) external appearance, stature and bearing, (b) conduct and moral qualities in general and (c) good fortune and material happiness (*olbos*).”⁶⁴ By asking whether Odysseus is a god, Alcinous compliments his potential son-in-law in a manner that evokes nuptial poetry. The Homeric poet has already hinted at the possibility of a marriage between Odysseus and Nausicaa using the language of the wedding-song: Odysseus greets Nausicaa at *Od.* 6.149-69 by likening her to Artemis. By greeting Nausicaa in “epithalamian” language, Odysseus hints that he may have come as a suitor for her, thereby ensuring his safety at her hands. Alcinous’ language likewise hints at a potential marriage between Odysseus and Nausicaa through the implicit comparison of Odysseus to a god.

Odysseus’ denial of divinity with the phrase οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φύην implies that he could be a potential suitor for Nausicaa, specifically because he is not actually divine. I suggest that Odysseus deliberately presents himself in an ambiguous light as a means of self-preservation among the Phaeacians. After so many failed interactions with hosts during his travels, Odysseus naturally acts with caution in the court of the Phaeacians. Moreover, Gilbert P. Rose has noticed a pattern of missteps in the Phaeacians’ enactment of *xenia* that suggest potential danger for Odysseus.⁶⁵ Rose notes that the Phaeacians are descended from Poseidon and the Giants, a lineage which strongly evokes the Cyclops.⁶⁶ Rose concludes that the Phaeacians ultimately mean well, but that the poet intends to suggest that Odysseus’ troubles are not at an end when he

⁶³ Petropoulos 2003: 39.

⁶⁴ Petropoulos 2003: 39.

⁶⁵ See Rose 1969.

⁶⁶ Rose 1969: 392–3.

arrives at their court. By suggesting that he has come as a suitor for Nausicaa, and therefore has the potential to become a member of the Phaeacian community by marriage, Odysseus makes provisions to ensure his safety as a guest.

Odysseus' use of the phrase οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φύην to describe himself at *Od.* 7.210 is unusual for a number of reasons, not least of which is that it is the only time in Homeric poetry that the phrase is applied to a man. When Odysseus uses οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φύην of himself, he sexualizes himself in a feminizing manner. This is not the lone instance in which Odysseus is feminized, for which scholars have offered a variety of reasons. W.B. Stanford argues that qualities like “his civilized gentleness, his intuitive intelligence, and his firm self-possession” align Odysseus with Homeric women, and that this feminine ethos creates in his male peers a sense of uneasiness about him.⁶⁷ According to Stanford, Odysseus' feminizing qualities grant him a certain popularity with the female characters he encounters and he ultimately secures his safe return to Ithaca through his alliances with women, not men. Similarly, Helene Foley shows that Odysseus' own experiences have made him uniquely appreciative of the female experience; this is articulated in the *Odyssey* through the use of “reverse similes” to describe Odysseus.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Stanford 1963: 65.

⁶⁸ Foley 1978. The first of these “reverse similes” occurs at *Od.* 8.521-31:

ταῦτ' ἄρ' ἀοιδὸς ἄειδε περικλυτός· ἀντάρ Ὀδυσσεὺς τήκετο, δάκρυ δ' ἔδευεν ὑπὸ βλεφάροισι παρειάς. ὡς δὲ γυνὴ κλαίῃσι φίλον πόσιν ἀμφιπεσοῦσα, ὅς τε ἔῃς πρόσθεν πόλιος λαῶν τε πέσησιν, ἄστεϊ καὶ τεκέεσσιν ἀμύνων νηλεὲς ἦμαρ·	525
ἢ μὲν τὸν θνήσκοντα καὶ ἀσπαίροντα ἰδοῦσα ἀμφ' αὐτῷ χυμένη λίγα κωκύει· οἱ δέ τ' ὀπισθε κόπτοντες δούρεσσι μετάφρενον ἠδὲ καὶ ὤμους εἴρερον εἰσανάγουσι, πόνον τ' ἐχέμεν καὶ ὀϊζύν· τῆς δ' ἐλεεινοτάτῳ ἄχεϊ φθινύθουσι παρειαί·	530
ὡς Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐλεεινὸν ὑπ' ὀφρύσι δάκρυον εἶβεν.	

This song the famous minstrel sang. But the heart of Odysseus

These “reverse similes” “suggest both a sense of identity between people in different social and sexual roles and a loss of stability, an inversion of the normal.”⁶⁹ Dianna Rhyon Kardulias argues that when Odysseus dons Leucothea’s veil (κρήδεμνον) at *Od.* 5.372-5, he reenacts the gender-bending initiatory rites of Leucothea’s cult.⁷⁰ Kardulias shows that this act of “transvestism [is] a ritual behavior” that reinitiates him into the mortal world.⁷¹ Ironically, says Kardulias, it is through his transvestism that Odysseus “symbolically regains not only life, but fully adult masculinity.”⁷² I suggest that Odysseus’ use of the phrase οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φηὴν operates on two levels within this motif of feminization. First, by denying his divinity, Odysseus

was melted and tears wet his cheeks beneath his eyelids.
 And as a woman wails and throws herself upon her dear husband,
 who has fallen in front of his city and his people,
 seeking to ward off from his city and his children the pitiless day;
 and as she beholds him dying and gasping for breath,
 she clings to him and shrieks aloud, while the foe behind her
 beat her back and shoulders with their spears,
 and lead her away to captivity to bear toil and woe,
 while with the most pitiful grief her cheeks are wasted—
 so did Odysseus let fall pitiful tears from beneath his brows (trans. Murray).

The second “reverse simile” used of Odysseus occurs at *Od.* 10.410-5:

ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἄν ἄγραυλοι πόριες περιβοῦς ἀγελαίας,	410
ἐλθούσας ἐς κόπρον, ἐπὴν βοτάνης κορέσονται,	
πᾶσαι ἅμα σκαίρουσιν ἐναντία· οὐδ' ἔτι σηκοὶ	
ἴσχουσ', ἀλλ' ἀδινὸν μυκώμενα ἀμφιθέουσι	
μητέρας· ὡς ἔμ' ἐκεῖνοι ἐπεὶ ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖσι,	
δακρυόεντες ἔχυντο...	415

And as when calves in a farmstead sport about the droves of cows
 returning to the yard, when they have had their fill of grazing—
 all together they frisk before them, and the pens no longer
 hold them, but with constant lowing they run about
 their mothers—so those men, when their eyes beheld me,
 thronged about me weeping... (trans. Murray)

⁶⁹ Foley 1978: 8.

⁷⁰ Kardulias 2001: 26.

⁷¹ Kardulias 2001: 26.

⁷² Kardulias 2001: 46.

hints that he could be a potential suitor for Nausicaa, thereby ensuring his safety among the Phaeacians. Second, by feminizing himself, he both presents himself as nonthreatening and makes himself particularly sympathetic to Arete, whom Odysseus was instructed to approach for protection.⁷³ By feminizing himself, Odysseus implies a certain similarity between himself and Arete, a tactic which increases the likelihood that she will promise him sanctuary. The feminization of Odysseus is a motif that has thus been understood and interpreted in a number of interlocking and compelling ways.

From my examination of οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φύην, I arrive at two related conclusions. First, the phrase is used in contexts of marriage and often has a sexual undertone; and second, it is used in a comparison between a divine and a mortal figure. Agamemnon's use of the phrase at *Iliad* Book 1 line 115 finds its closest parallel in Calypso's use of the phrase in the *Odyssey* by virtue of the fact that both instances compare a mistress to a wife. Moreover, the phrase seems to imply a kind of sexual satisfaction provided by a mistress that a wife cannot deliver. When Calypso uses οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φύην, it is a reminder to Odysseus both that she has been sexually pleasing to him and that she, a nymph, is of higher status than Penelope, a mortal. Agamemnon's use of the phrase to compare Chryseis with Clytemnestra accomplishes a similar objective: he indicates that Chryseis has at least the potential to satisfy him sexually, in a way that rivals Clytemnestra's ability to please him. Moreover, by comparing Chryseis, a captive, with Clytemnestra, his wedded wife, Agamemnon elevates Chryseis to the status of wife, implying that returning her to her father would be analogous to the loss of a wife. As Donna F. Wilson shows, describing Chryseis as a wife is a deliberate technique through which Agamemnon "legitimately scripts himself out of the role of abductor [and] perpetrator of harm and into the position of injured

⁷³ *Od.* 6.310-2.

party in relation to Chryseis.”⁷⁴. Wilson argues that Agamemnon purposefully exploits both the emotional and financial implications of a wife’s status as a means of eliciting *pathos* in his listeners.⁷⁵ Further, with this formulation, Agamemnon elevates Chryseis into the “divine” position and implicitly places Clytemnestra in the “mortal” slot. Clytemnestra thus suffers a twofold demotion of status, in which Chryseis is figured as superior to her as both wife and divinity.

Comparison of a wedded wife with a concubine disregards the former’s status while elevating the latter’s; for Agamemnon, Clytemnestra and Chryseis are interchangeable because they have equal potential to serve the same functions. By using the formula οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φύην, Agamemnon diminishes Clytemnestra while elevating Chryseis; however, by reducing each woman to her constituent qualities, he indicates that even Chryseis is replaceable. He is just as content with Chryseis as with Clytemnestra, and when he is forced to return Chryseis to her father, he finds an acceptable substitute in Briseis. Though Clytemnestra’s appearance in the *Iliad* is brief, Agamemnon’s comparison of her with Chryseis reveals the interchangeability of women in the *Iliad*.

⁷⁴ Wilson 2002: 51.

⁷⁵ Wilson 2002: 49-50.

CHAPTER 2. THE *ODYSSEY*

The question of Clytemnestra's function in the *Odyssey* is persistent. Two distinct but related issues arise in analyzing her appearances in the *Odyssey*: that of her role in the murder of Agamemnon, and that of her function in relation to the principal action of the poem. Many scholars believe that her part in Agamemnon's murder is portrayed as relatively small in comparison with Aegisthus'. However, as I will show, several key (but often overlooked) instances detailing the Oresteia myth include wordplay on Clytemnestra's name, suggesting that she was viewed as a major actor in plotting and carrying out the murder of Agamemnon. This strengthens the argument that her role within the poem is as a foil to Penelope. It is generally accepted that she acts as a warning to Odysseus and Telemachus about Penelope's destructive potential. When we consider the wordplay on her name within the context of the passages detailing the Oresteia myth, Clytemnestra's function as a warning to the male characters of the poem becomes evident.

Because there has been debate about the etymology of Clytemnestra's name, I will examine the contexts in which her story is told for etymological evidence related to her name; this evidence manifests as one of three types of wordplay on one or both parts of her name (either Κλυται-μήστρα or Κλυται-μνήστρα). As we will see, both versions of her name evoke Penelope's situation on Ithaca, and both are deployed as warnings about female cunning and autonomy. Moreover, we hear in Book 24 that Penelope has won κλέος through her loyalty, while Clytemnestra's χαλεπή φῆμις persists because of her utter betrayal of Agamemnon. I will show that, while Clytemnestra cannot win κλέος for her evil deeds, her reputation is inextricable from Penelope's; thus, Penelope's κλέος always carries with it the shadow of Clytemnestra's χαλεπή φῆμις. As context for this, I begin by discussing two major issues associated with

heroes: κλέος and the name of the hero, both of which are factors in the consideration of Penelope's and Clytemnestra's reputations.

2.1. EPIC GLORY

κλέος, “glory,” is central to the epic hero's identity. According to Gregory Nagy, the term κλέος “designates not only ‘glory’ but also, more specifically, the glory of the hero as conferred by epic.”⁷⁶ Nagy has also shown that the pursuit of κλέος is strongly associated with the short life of the hero: because he will die prematurely, the hero desires to gain κλέος as a means of “immortalizing” himself.⁷⁷ The hero may choose the κλέος resulting from his participation in the epic over a long life, as in the case of Achilles, who rejects Agamemnon's peace offering, citing his desire to attain κλέος ἄφθιτον.⁷⁸ Nagy argues that in epic, the verb μέμνημαι, “remember,

⁷⁶ Nagy 2006: §109. This linkage of κλέος with epic poetry is evident in the etymology of κλέος, which is related to κλέω, “to make famous, celebrate in song” (Liddell and Scott 1996: s.v. κλέω). A hero who has achieved κλέος is called κλυτός, “renowned.”

⁷⁷ Nagy 2013: 31. As both Nagy and Schein have shown, the Greek term ἦρως is etymologically related to the word ὥρα, “season, seasonality, the right time, the perfect time” (Nagy 2013: 32; Schein 1984: 69). This etymological link lends itself to two related interpretations of the Greek hero's function. First, as Nagy shows, the hero is “unseasonal” (Nagy 2013: 32) throughout his life, often operating outside of societal norms or timelines, only to become “seasonal” at the time of his death. This “unseasonality” (Nagy 2013: 44) enables the hero to achieve feats outside the normal realm of human ability. Additionally, the hero is often metatextually aware of his own etymology, and draws attention to how little time he has to achieve κλέος before his death; the hero's unseasonality is resolved at the time of his death. Second, as Schein argues, the hero is “‘seasonal’ in that he comes into his prime, like flowers in the spring, only to be cut down once and for all” (Schein 1984: 69). The hero, being metatextually aware of his etymology, may also be aware that his life will be short. The hero may die before he has achieved the usual milestones of his gender and age.

⁷⁸ *Il.* 9.412-6:

εἰ μὲν κ' αὖθι μένων Τρώων πόλιν ἀμφιμάχωμαι,
 ὄλετο μὲν μοι νόστος, ἀτὰρ κλέος ἄφθιτον ἔσται·
 εἰ δέ κεν οἴκαδ' ἵκωμι φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,
 ὄλετό μοι κλέος ἐσθλόν, ἐπὶ δηρὸν δέ μοι αἰὼν 415
 ἔσσεται, οὐδέ κέ μ' ὄκα τέλος θανάτοιο κιχείη.

If I remain here and fight about the city of the Trojans,
 then lost is my return home, but my renown will be imperishable;

make mention of,” refers specifically to the preservation of “memory by way of song;” remembering the hero in song is the primary vehicle for advancing and preserving his κλέος.⁷⁹ The hero’s enduring memory and κλέος are secured via his presence in epic.

An additional element in the acquisition of κλέος is the manner in which the hero dies; the preservation of the hero’s name and story in epic constitutes his victory over death. The κλέος of the *Iliad* consists in victory in battle, while that of the *Odyssey* is primarily related to a successful νόστος.⁸⁰ However, as Anthony T. Edwards notes, heroes who fought valiantly at Troy but were not victorious could also gain “a κλέος associated with death,” which refers specifically to death in battle at Troy. This kind of κλέος is achieved through the preservation of the hero’s name in the medium of epic and through the erection of a tomb by his comrades.⁸¹ Conversely, a shameful death can ruin a hero’s chance at κλέος;⁸² the shade of Achilles implies

but if I return home to my dear native land,
lost then is my glorious renown, yet will my life long endure,
and the doom of death will not come soon on me. (trans. Murray)

⁷⁹ Nagy 2013: 48. Nagy argues that an epic poet’s use of terms containing the root μνη- are important indicators of when the κλέος-agenda is being advanced. One example of this is the narrator’s invocation of the Muses, whose title is etymologically related to terms containing the root μνη- (Nagy 2013:53 n. 5). As Nagy notes, the Muses are the “goddesses of memory,” which is evidenced through their parentage and through the etymology of their name (Nagy 2013: 52). Nagy writes that a narrator’s invocation of the Muses could be considered programmatic of his or her function in preserving κλέος, as in *Il.* 2.484-6.

⁸⁰ Of course, a successful νόστος is only possible in the case of a victorious departure from Troy, and even then is not guaranteed.

⁸¹ Edwards 1985: 73. The acquisition of κλέος through a glorious death on the battlefield is a central issue of the *Iliad*. When faced with the choice between an early death but everlasting κλέος and a long life without κλέος, Achilles chooses the former, as we see in *Il.* 9.412-6 (above, note 77).

⁸² Near the beginning of the *Odyssey* (1.236-40), Telemachus laments that Odysseus should have died at Troy so that he could win κλέος, since his presumed death at sea is dishonorable: ἐπεὶ οὐ κε θανόντι περ ᾧδ’ ἀκαχοίμην, | εἰ μετὰ οἷς ἐτάροισι δάμη Τρώων ἐνὶ δήμῳ, | ἠὲ φίλων ἐν χερσίν, ἐπεὶ πόλεμον τολύπευσεν | τῷ κέν οἱ τύμβον μὲν ἐποίησαν Παναχαιοί, | ἠδὲ κε καὶ ᾧ παιδί μέγα κλέος ἦρατ’ ὀπίσσω (“For I should not so grieve for his death, if he had been slain among his comrades in the land of the Trojans, or had died in the arms of his friends, when he

that Agamemnon's death at the hands of his wife has destroyed any κλέος he may have won during the Trojan War.⁸³ The shade of Agamemnon likewise acknowledges that it would have been better for him to have died at Troy, since his death was dishonorable.⁸⁴ Moreover, as Christos Tsagalis argues, the poet of the *Odyssey* establishes the Odysseus as the supreme hero by tying his attainment of κλέος ἄφθιτον to his successful νόστος:

Agamemnon has neither won κλέος ἄφθιτον by dying in the battlefield nor has he fulfilled his νόστος since when he arrived in Mycenae he was murdered by his wife, Clytaemestra. Achilles won κλέος ἄφθιτον by dying at Troy but did not fulfill his νόστος. Odysseus, the poem's hero, both won κλέος ἄφθιτον because he was responsible for the sack of Troy and fulfilled his νόστος since he returned home, found his wife Penelope waiting for him and was reestablished as a king in Ithaca.⁸⁵

According to Tsagalis, the poet creates a hierarchy of heroes by linking κλέος with valor in battle and a successful νόστος. This hierarchy ranks Odysseus first, Achilles second, and Agamemnon last; thus, the supremacy of the *Odyssey* relies upon Odysseus' attainment of κλέος through his deeds in the *Iliad* and his successful νόστος.⁸⁶

had wound up the skein of war. Then would the whole host of the Achaeans have made him a tomb, and for his son, too, he would have won great glory in days to come," trans. Murray).

⁸³ *Od.* 24.30-4: ὡς ὄφελος τιμῆς ἀπονήμενος, ἧς περ ἄνασσεσ, | δήμῳ ἐν Τρώων θάνατον καὶ πότμον ἐπισπεῖν· | τῷ κέν τοι τύμβον μὲν ἐποίησαν Παναχαιοί, | ἠδέ κε καὶ σῶ παιδί μέγα κλέος ἦρα' ὀπίσσω· | νῦν δ' ἄρα σ' οἰκτίστω θανάτῳ εἵμαρτο ἀλῶναι ("How much better if, in the enjoyment of that honor of which you were master, you had met death and fate in the land of the Trojans! Then would the whole host of the Achaeans have made you a tomb, and for your son too would you have won great glory in days to come; but now we see that it was your fate to be cut off by a most piteous death," trans. Murray).

⁸⁴ *Od.* 24.93-7: ὦς σὺ μὲν οὐδὲ θανῶν ὄνομ' ὄλεσας, ἀλλά τοι αἰεὶ | πάντας ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους κλέος ἔσσειται ἐσθλόν, Ἀχιλλεῦ, | αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ τί τόδ' ἦδος, ἐπεὶ πόλεμον τολύπευσα; | ἐν νόστῳ γάρ μοι Ζεὺς μήσατο λυγρὸν ὄλεθρον | Αἰγίσθου ὑπὸ χερσὶ καὶ οὐλομένης ἀλόχοιο ("Thus not even in death did you lose your name, but always shall you have fair fame among all men, Achilles. But as for me, what pleasure have I now in this, that I wound up the skein of war? For on my return Zeus devised for me a bitter doom at the hands of Aegisthus and my accursed wife," trans. Murray).

⁸⁵ Tsagalis 2003: 55.

⁸⁶ Tsagalis 2003: 55.

Odysseus' supremacy as an epic hero is advanced through his juxtaposition with Agamemnon and the concomitant juxtaposition of Penelope with Clytemnestra. Throughout the *Odyssey*, the Oresteia myth is a lens through which Odysseus' νόστος is considered; Clytemnestra is used to warn Odysseus about Penelope's destructive potential. At *Od.* 24.191-202, the shade of Agamemnon discusses the role of Penelope in securing κλέος for her husband, explicitly comparing her with Clytemnestra:

ὄλβιε Λαέρταο πάϊ, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ, ἧ ἄρα σὺν μεγάλῃ ἀρετῇ ἐκτήσω ἄκοιτιν. ὡς ἀγαθαὶ φρένες ἦσαν ἀμύμονι Πηνελοπεΐη, κούρη Ἰκαρίου· ὡς εὔ μέμνητ' Ὀδυσῆος,	195
ἄνδρὸς κουριδίου· τῷ οἱ κλέος οὔ ποτ' ὀλεῖται ἧς ἀρετῆς, τεύξουσι δ' ἐπιχθονίοισιν ἀοιδὴν ἀθάνατοι χαρίεσσαν ἐχέφρονι Πηνελοπεΐη, οὐχ ὡς Τυνδαρέου κόρη κακὰ μήσατο ἔργα, κουρίδιον κτείνασα πόσιν, στυγερὴ δέ τ' ἀοιδὴ	200
ἔσσειτ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους, χαλεπὴν δέ τε φῆμιν ὀπάσσει θηλυτέρησι γυναιξί, καὶ ἧ κ' εὐεργὸς ἔησιν.	

Happy son of Laertes, Odysseus of many devices,
truly full of all excellence was the wife you won.
How good of understanding was flawless Penelope,
daughter of Icarus! How well she kept before her the image of Odysseus,
her wedded husband! Therefore the fame of her excellence shall never perish,
but the immortals shall make among men on earth
a song full of delight in honor of constant Penelope.
Not in this manner did the daughter of Tyndareus devise evil deeds
and kill her wedded husband, and hateful shall the song regarding her
be among men, and evil repute does she bring
upon all womankind, even upon her who does rightly.⁸⁷

Both Edwards and Tsagalis take note of the parallel structure of the poet's praise of Penelope and blame of Clytemnestra, which are, as Tsagalis shows, "symmetrically developed."⁸⁸ He argues

⁸⁷ Trans. Murray.

⁸⁸ Tsagalis 2003: 50.

that the structure of this passage compares Penelope with Clytemnestra in five specific phrases, outlined in the chart below:⁸⁹

Penelope	Clytemnestra
1) κούρη Ἰκαρίου	1) Τυνδαρέου κούρη
2) εὖ μέμνητ'	2) κακὰ μήσατο ἔργα
3) ἀνδρὸς κουριδίου	3) κουρίδιον... πόσιν
4) οἱ κλέος οὐ ποτ' ὀλεῖται	4) χαλεπήν δέ τε φῆμιν
5) χαρίεσσαν ἀοιδήν	5) στυγερὴ δέ τ' ἀοιδή

Tsagalis shows that the structure of this passage parallels Penelope's κλέος to Clytemnestra's evil reputation; this emphasizes the supremacy of Odysseus relative to Agamemnon by painting his wife as deserving of κλέος in her own right.⁹⁰ He argues that Penelope's acquisition of κλέος reinforces Odysseus' and is a significant factor in establishing his supremacy as a Homeric hero: her glory arises from her insistence upon remembering Odysseus, which enables his successful νόστος and ensuing κλέος.⁹¹ Conversely, Clytemnestra's liaison with Aegisthus constitutes a refusal to remember her husband, and her interference with his νόστος prevents him from earning κλέος. Additionally, because Agamemnon's death is shameful, he loses any κλέος he acquired during the Trojan War. It is clear, then, that both Clytemnestra and Penelope have a significant effect on the glory of their husbands.

This raises the question of the relationship between gender and glory: namely, whether female characters can acquire κλέος themselves, or whether they only affect the κλέος of male

⁸⁹ Chart from Tsagalis 2003: 50.

⁹⁰ This conclusion is supported by the way that names function in the passage. The names of Odysseus and Penelope are explicitly stated; they are, after all, the ones being celebrated in the passage, and the ones who gain κλέος. Lurking just behind the scenes, however, are Agamemnon and Clytemnestra: we hear echoes of "Agamemnon" in ἀγαθαί, ἀμύμονι, and μέμνητ', and "Clytemnestra" in both μέμνητ' and κούρη κακὰ μήσατο κουρίδιον κτείνασα. This suggests that the story of one couple cannot be fully appreciated without that of the other.

⁹¹ Tsagalis 2003: 51-2.

figures. Many scholars argue that the acquisition of κλέος does not seem to be possible for Homeric women; even Penelope's κλέος is contested, despite multiple references to her widespread fame in the *Odyssey*.⁹² Because Penelope's glory is achieved through trickery and paralleled with Clytemnestra's own deception, it is not clear until the very end of the *Odyssey* what kind of reputation she will get. Moreover, both women are famous for their craftiness consisting in δόλος and μῆτις, which are exhibited through their weaving.⁹³ For Penelope, this is the shroud she weaves to delay the suitors; for Clytemnestra, it is the robe in which she entraps Agamemnon to kill him.⁹⁴ Whereas Penelope uses her δόλος and μῆτις to uphold her husband's household, Clytemnestra uses hers to destroy it. Penelope's δόλος and μῆτις make her an ambiguous figure: it is hard to predict whether she will use these qualities for good or for evil, as Clytemnestra does.

⁹² Deborah Lyons posits that this is due to an anachronistic application of the Thucydidean theory of female κλέος to archaic poetry, arguing that “it is tempting to recall what Thucydides tells us Perikles said about the *kleos* of women: it consists in their not being spoken of at all,” but that such a reading cannot apply to Homeric poetry, in which women's κλέος is a frequent topic (Lyons 2014: 57). The suitor Antinous, speaking to Telemachus in Book 2, angrily remarks that Penelope's trick of the shroud is winning κλέος for her but bringing ruin to Telemachus (μέγα μὲν κλέος αὐτῇ | ποιεῖτ', αὐτὰρ σοί γε ποθὴν πολέος βιότοιο, *Od.* 2.125-6). Penelope herself even implies that she has a measure of κλέος in two instances, each related to the tale of the shroud. Speaking to the suitor Eurymachus at *Od.* 18.254-5, Penelope laments that her κλέος would be greater if Odysseus were to return (εἰ κείνός γ' ἐλθὼν τὸν ἐμὸν βίον ἀμφιπολεύοι, | μεῖζόν κε κλέος εἶη ἐμὸν καὶ κάλλιον οὕτως). Penelope repeats this sentiment at 19.127-8 when she speaks with Odysseus, who is disguised as a beggar. It is worth noting that Odysseus' first words to Penelope include the phrase ἧ γὰρ σευ κλέος οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἰκάνει, “for your fame goes up to the broad heaven” (*Od.* 19.108, trans. Murray). Finally, as Olga Levaniouk notes, the trick of the shroud “is Penelope's identifying story, her public face, and it is no surprise that it is the first thing she tells the beggar about herself and that her telling is prompted by mention of *kleos*... The very repetition of the weaving tale makes it seem like a set piece, a song in its own right, so that in effect the tale is her *kleos*” (Levaniouk 2011: 262-3).

⁹³ On weaving as feminine μῆτις, see, e.g., Lee 2004 and Bergren 2008.

⁹⁴ This admittedly may have been an Aeschylean innovation, since the robe in which Clytemnestra entraps Agamemnon is not mentioned in any extant pre-Aeschylean literary versions of the myth (Vermeule 1966: 4). On the depiction of Agamemnon ensnared in a robe in pre-Aeschylean material sources, see Vermeule 1966 and Davies 1969.

The passage at *Od.* 24.191-202 is perhaps the strongest confirmation of Penelope's κλέος, although it is not without its share of scholarly dispute.⁹⁵ Though this passage seems to bestow epic glory upon Penelope, Nagy argues that this is not the case, since the phrasing of lines 196-7 is ambiguous.⁹⁶ This so-called “ambiguity” arises from the fact that the pronoun οἱ (196) can be either masculine or feminine, and many scholars take this to refer to Odysseus because of the appearance of his name in line 195. This is clearly incorrect for three reasons. First, Penelope is the subject of μέμνητ' in line 195, which implies that she is also the subject of line 196 (since there is no change of subject indicated). Second, the κλέος of line 196 is defined by ἥς ἀρετῆς in line 197; this clearly refers to Penelope's virtue, which is contrasted with Clytemnestra's wickedness in lines 199-202. It would be an awkward stretch to assign the ἀρετή in line 197 to

⁹⁵ I leave aside the question of the “authenticity” of Book 24, in large part because I subscribe to the notion of “Homer” as a title for a series of epic poets over time rather than a singular figure at one moment in time.

⁹⁶ *Od.* 24.196-7: τῷ οἱ κλέος οὐ ποτ' ὀλεῖται | ἥς ἀρετῆς (“Therefore the fame of her excellence shall never perish”). Katz writes that scholars have long puzzled over whose κλέος is discussed in 24.196-7, and that she has “translated [the words] as they are ordinarily understood: ‘And so the renown of her [Penelope's] virtue will not die’” (Katz 1991: 21). However, male scholars seem to reject the idea that a woman could possibly gain κλέος which is hers and hers alone, instead insisting that the lines are ambiguous, as Katz shows:

Nagy, however, translates “the *kleos* of his *aretē* [virtue]” in line 196, referring to Odysseus, and explains with reference to line 193 that “it is his [Odysseus'] *aretē* ‘merit’ to have won a Penelope (rather than a Clytemnestra)”... A.T. Edwards adds that “σύν phrases are always adverbial in Homer, and never adjectival”... and so σύν μεγάλη ἀρετῇ (“with great virtue”) in line 193 must refer to the manner in which Odysseus “acquired” (ἐκτίσω) his wife, rather than to her personal characteristics... Edwards attempts to preserve the ambiguity by arguing that the speech awards *kleos* to both Penelope and Odysseus, and thus instantiates what he interprets as the interdependence of the *kleos* of husband and wife throughout the poem. Similarly, Pucci, with reference to this passage, says that “the text attributes *kleos*, ‘glory,’ ‘reputation,’ to Penelope and only through its ambivalent syntax also to Odysseus; but the grounds for his *kleos* remains Penelope's good and honest behavior”... Clay avoids the problem in these lines by incorporating an interpretation into her translation of 24.196-98: “And the gods themselves will make a pleasing song about them [Odysseus and Penelope] for mortals” (Katz 1991: 21).

Odysseus, especially since this would imply a contrast not between him and Agamemnon, but between him and Clytemnestra. Finally, lines 197-8 tell us that because of ἀρετή, the gods will create an enduring song (ἀοιδὴν... χαρίεσσας) for Penelope, and that this song is diametrically opposed to Clytemnestra's στρυγερὴ... ἀοιδὴ (200), a point to which I shall return. Since the Homeric song is the medium by which κλέος is preserved, lines 197-8 affirm that Penelope has won κλέος because of her virtue.

κλέος, then, is certainly attainable for Homeric women, as we see with Penelope in *Od.*

24. But can it be acquired by a “bad” woman like Clytemnestra? Deborah Lyons notes that in archaic poetry, women, whether good or bad, are discussed constantly; bad women like Clytemnestra, who “receives both mention [in the *Odyssey*] and perhaps even cult” are evidence “for the complete amorality with which fame is generated.”⁹⁷ Lyons argues that

a heroine who keeps quiet, not complaining when raped by a god, will never become a subject of song for generations to come. Her name will be forgotten, or even worse, multiplied to the point of meaninglessness. If she does something really horrible—kills her children or husband, for example—no one will ever stop speaking of her.⁹⁸

Thus, reading *Od.* 24.191-202 through Lyons’ interpretative lens would suggest that the poet intends to memorialize Clytemnestra in the epic medium. However, according to Nagy, Clytemnestra cannot gain κλέος because her deeds are evil:

κλέος ἄφθιτον is a designation given by the Singer to his own medium, when it serves the function of glorifying the deeds of heroes. But you cannot get κλέος ἄφθιτον through the Singer’s medium if your deeds have been evil... What you experienced may indeed be unforgettable (ἄλαστα), so that singers will always sing of it, but it is not κλέος ἄφθιτον from your standpoint or from the standpoint of your family and friends.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Lyons 2014: 57. There is some evidence to suggest that Clytemnestra was worshipped at Amyclae along with Agamemnon and Cassandra. See Pausanias *Descriptions of Greece* 3.19.6, Larson 1995: 83-4, and Ch. 3 of this dissertation for further discussion.

⁹⁸ Lyons 2014: 57.

⁹⁹ Nagy 1974: 261.

The juxtaposition of Penelope’s κλέος, propagated by the χαρίεσσα ἀοιδή, with Clytemnestra’s χαλεπή φῆμις, propagated by the στυγερὴ ἀοιδή, highlights the distinction between fame and κλέος. Although Clytemnestra’s most famous deed is memorialized in the *Odyssey*, the poet crucially does not sanction it: thus in the *Odyssey*, Clytemnestra can have φῆμις, but not κλέος, which requires the poet’s acknowledgement that the deed is a) worth remembering in a beautiful song, and b) worthy of eternal praise.¹⁰⁰

This raises the question of the distinction between the χαρίεσσα ἀοιδή and the στυγερὴ ἀοιδή as poetic forms. Is the ἀοιδή always epic, or can it be poetry of another genre? Nagy argues that Penelope’s glory is reinforced through the epic medium, which would suggest that her ἀοιδή is epic—specifically, it is the *Odyssey*. If Penelope’s ἀοιδή is the *Odyssey*, which the poet qualifies as χαρίεσσα, what, then, is Clytemnestra’s στυγερὴ ἀοιδή? Nagy argues that there is no question that Clytemnestra will remain a topic of song, but as we have seen in the poet’s refusal to bestow κλέος upon her in his medium, this song is not the *Odyssey*.¹⁰¹ Elsewhere, Nagy implies that this passage refers to two disparate poetic forms, that is, encomium vs. invective.¹⁰² However, Tsagalis argues that this need not be the case if we consider the poet’s agenda as presented in *Od.* 191-202. As both Edwards and Tsagalis have shown, the poet’s presentation of Odysseus as the supreme epic hero—and therefore of the *Odyssey* as the supreme

¹⁰⁰ The apparent exception is Helen, whose negative reputation does not preclude her from gaining epic κλέος. For evidence of this, consider *Il.* 6.357-8: οἷσιν ἐπὶ Ζεὺς θῆκε κακὸν μόνον, ὥς καὶ ὀπίσω | ἀνθρώποισι πελώμεθ’ ἀοίδιμοι ἔσσομένοισι (“Zeus has laid an evil destiny, so that in the future too we may be a subject of song for people yet to come;” trans. Blondell). Blondell notes that in several key instances in the *Iliad*, Helen’s “account of herself is thus inserted into the masculine narrative of the war, ensuring its survival as long as the epic itself survives,” despite the fact that she is the cause of a war that is detrimental to a great number of male heroes (Blondell 2013: 68). Helen’s κλέος arises from circumstances that threaten male society and yet, her attainment of κλέος is largely unquestioned.

¹⁰¹ Nagy 1974: 261.

¹⁰² Nagy 1979: 222-42.

epic—can be extended to the respective *αοιδαί* of Penelope and Clytemnestra. Following this logic, if Penelope’s *χαρίεσσα αοιδή* is the *Odyssey*, Clytemnestra’s *στυγερή αοιδή* is a competing epic like the *Nostoi*.¹⁰³ According to Tsagalis, both Penelope’s *χαρίεσσα αοιδή* and Clytemnestra’s *στυγερή αοιδή* are key parts of the poem’s self-referential establishment of its own supremacy within the epic tradition.¹⁰⁴ Thus, the poet reinforces the supremacy of the *Odyssey* relative to other epics by contrasting the *χαρίεσσα αοιδή* with the *στυγερή αοιδή*.

As we have seen, Clytemnestra is barred from gaining *κλέος* because of the nature of her most famous deed. However, because the poet associates her so strongly with Penelope throughout the poem, and because Agamemnon connects her reputation with Penelope’s epic glory in Book 24, Clytemnestra’s evil reputation is inextricably linked with Penelope’s *κλέος*. The passage at 24.191-202 suggests that Penelope’s *κλέος* is augmented by Clytemnestra’s evil reputation; this implies that her *κλέος* cannot exist without Clytemnestra’s *φῆμις*.¹⁰⁵ As we shall see, then, the poet mobilizes Clytemnestra not only as a foil for Penelope but as a tool for enhancing her *κλέος*, thereby amplifying the supremacy both of the *Odyssey* and of its hero.

2.2. THE RELATION OF A NAME TO REPUTATION

Carolyn Higbie writes that names are “an important part of identity and status in the heroic world and the recognition of that identity and status by others.”¹⁰⁶ In Homer, the most important characters have unique names that are widely recognizable and associated with their social status, personality, role in myth, or behavior. A name may be “paradigmatic” of a character’s actions: for example, *Καλύψω* is the goddess who conceals (*καλύπτειν*) Odysseus on her

¹⁰³ Tsagalis 2003: 53-5.

¹⁰⁴ See Tsagalis 2003: 53-4 for this argument.

¹⁰⁵ For the argument that Penelope’s and Clytemnestra’s narratives must be understood together, cf. Katz 1991 *passim*.

¹⁰⁶ Higbie 1995: 5.

island.¹⁰⁷ More complicated are the names which refer to a character's role in the mythic tradition, beyond their immediate function in a single work. The names of Achilles and of Odysseus have received the most attention because of their apparent collapsing of their respective myths into a single word.¹⁰⁸ The connection between a character's name and their role in the mythic tradition will be a major focus of this chapter.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Peradotto 1990: 104. For Peradotto, “it is of absolutely no interest to this type of analysis to speculate which came first, the name of Calypso or her story” (Murray 1999). Nagy believes that her “terrifying” name is in fact “derived from the verb *kaluptein*” (Nagy 2013: 305), in which case the story of Calypso would be older than her name.

¹⁰⁸ Nagy gives the etymology of Achilles as “**Akhi-lāmos*, the one who has grief [*ákhos*] for and of the *lāós* [people]” (Nagy 1979: 5§26); this etymology is glossed in *Il.* 1.1-2, in which Achilles' μῆνις causes numberless pains for the Achaeans (ἦ μυρί' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε). Thus, the name of Achilles recapitulates the entire plot of the *Iliad*. Similarly, Peradotto suggests that the name of Odysseus, “man of hate,” derived from *ὀδύσσομαι, “to hate,” collapses the plot of the *Odyssey* into one word (Peradotto 1990: 119). Lyons notes that “Odysseus' name is his fate, and it is only by remembering that name, and remembering to act in a way that is appropriate to it, that he is able to remember the day of his return” (Lyons 2014: 56).

¹⁰⁹ A character with a unique name is more likely to gain κλέος, since their name is both easily recognizable and particular to them. Male heroes are likely to have names that belong to them alone, while background characters often have generic names; the uniqueness of their names is reflective of and crucial to their ability to gain κλέος. The apparent exception is the name Ajax, though Lyons notes that the two Aiantes are distinguished from one another in very clear ways, including through their epithets (“the greater” and “the lesser”) and through patronymics (“son of Telamon” and “son of Oileus”). Ajax the lesser is also referred to as “Locrian” (Lyons 2014: 53). Likewise, Deborah Lyons demonstrates that “most of the best-known heroines, like most heroes, have names that are theirs alone,” and this is a major factor in their κλέος (Lyons 2014: 55). But heroines with unique names have often gained κλέος because theirs are more likely to be “stories of disaster;” their names cannot be divorced from the context of their calamities and thus cannot be recycled (Lyons 2014: 55). Conversely, names like Creusa, Eurydice, or Hippodameia are often recycled for noblewomen whose stories are not marked by some particularly noteworthy calamity (Lyons 2014: 52-3). Lyons shows that female figures who have generic names have no true κλέος, because “having no name means having no story” (Lyons 2014: 56). Lyons notes that, whereas the names of male heroes are not usually reused, the names of female heroes “are both variable and repeatable” (Lyons 2014: 51). This can create a great deal of confusion, especially in the context of large catalogues of women, as in Homer and Hesiod. Unique names always evoke the mythic history of their bearer, which in turn gives them κλέος.

For Homeric figures, folk etymologies and scientific etymologies have equal importance in enhancing the understanding of a character's mythic trajectory. Folk etymologies are "derived by the ancients from some perceived similarity between two words because of their shared sounds," while scientific etymologies are "based on linguistic principles developed during the last century of our own era."¹¹⁰ The name of Penelope (Πηνελόπεια) provides a good example of both kinds of etymology. Scientific etymology suggests that her name is derived from πηνέλωψ, a kind of waterfowl; as support for this etymology, Higbie gives comparable examples of Homeric women whose names are "derived from birds."¹¹¹ Olga Levaniouk has shown that the scientific etymology of Penelope's name is appropriate to her role in the *Odyssey*. "Penelope's name connects her, through the *pēnelops*, with the halcyon and the nightingale. Penelope's crying for Odysseus is comparable with the nightingale's mournful song for her son and the halcyon's for her mate."¹¹² Thus, the scientific etymology of "Penelope" shows that her name is both accurate for a Homeric woman and particular to her role in the *Odyssey*. The folk etymology of "Penelope" is equally important for understanding the ancient associations evoked by her name. According to the folk etymology of Πηνελόπεια, the woman famous for deceiving her suitors by weaving a shroud for Laertes during the day and unweaving it at night is called "the one who tears out" (ὀλόπτω) or "strips off" (λέπω) the weft (πήνη).¹¹³ An alternative folk

¹¹⁰ Higbie 1995: 4.

¹¹¹ Higbie 1995: 4. She cites the name Κίρκη, "hawk."

¹¹² Levaniouk 1999: 134.

¹¹³ Higbie 1995: 4. Higbie notes that some scholars have shied away from interpreting Penelope's name through folk etymology because of the lack of evidence in Homer: "... as Stephanie West observes, none of these words [ὀλόπτω, λέπω, or πήνη] appears in any of the three Homeric tellings of this story... nor does Homer encourage us to make this connexion by etymologizing Penelope's name himself" (Higbie 1995: 4). I do note, however, one potential play on Penelope's name in *Od.* 23.85, when Telemachus scolds Penelope for her uncharacteristic harshness toward Odysseus: μήτηρ ἐμή, δύσμητερ, ἄπηνέα θυμὸν ἔχουσα ("My mother, un-mother, what a harsh [un-Penelope] heart you have!").

etymology suggests that her name is derived from “πένεσθαι *penesthai* ‘to work’ and λόπος *lopos* ‘onion-shell’, but metaphorically, Eustathius says, referring to λώπιον *lōpion* ‘robe.’”¹¹⁴ Thus, both kinds of etymology help us understand the associations evoked by a character’s name, and, as Higbie writes, “by reading with both frames in place, we may approach the poems in a way closer to that of earlier audiences and readers.”¹¹⁵

As I will show, the line between folk and scientific etymology is blurred in the case of Clytemnestra, largely because of the question of the correct form of her name—is it *Clytemnestra* or *Clytemestra*? There is ample evidence for both spellings; in Homeric poetry, this evidence manifests as wordplay. Through my examination of this wordplay on Clytemnestra’s name, I shall show that both versions of her name are important for understanding her characterization in Homeric poetry.

2.3. CLYTEMNESTRA’S NAME

The question of the “correct” form of Clytemnestra’s name is of concern to both ancient and modern critics. Among modern editors, the issue tends to be largely one of personal preference. Some editors favor *Clytemestra* (from κλυτός + μήδομαι, “renowned for her cunning”), while others favor *Clytemnestra* (from κλυτός + μνηστεύω, “renowned for her suitor/wooing”). *Clytemestra* has been the prevailing form of the name since Eduard Fraenkel’s commentary on the *Agamemnon*, where he argues that Κλυταιμήστρα “is the only ancient form of the name; of that there should be no further question.”¹¹⁶ Subsequent scholarship has followed Fraenkel in defending this spelling.¹¹⁷ Certainly, as Patricia A. Marquardt notes, “*Clytemestra*—she who is

¹¹⁴ Levaniouk 1999: 95.

¹¹⁵ Higbie 1995: 5.

¹¹⁶ Fraenkel 1950 ad 84.

¹¹⁷ See Marquardt 1992: 243 for a summary of this scholarship.

renowned for her μῆτις or cunning—is without doubt the more readily intelligible name for Agamemnon’s wife.”¹¹⁸ But *Clytemnestra*, whose seduction by Aegisthus results in Agamemnon’s ill-fated νόστος, has resonances with the theme of the *Odyssey*, where Penelope’s numerous suitors pose a major threat to Odysseus’ homecoming. Further, as both Fraenkel and Marquardt acknowledge, there is epigraphical and manuscript evidence for *Clytemnestra* as well, and, as Marquardt notes, this is the *lectio difficilior*.¹¹⁹ In Homeric prosody, either form of the name is metrically acceptable, so the question of the correct spelling of *Clytemnestra*’s name bears further investigation. As I will show, both etymologies are active in the Homeric contexts where she is mentioned.

Scholarly consensus has long held that the *Odyssey* presents Aegisthus as the principal actor in Agamemnon’s murder. However, a close examination of the language used in the Oresteia myth of the *Odyssey* shows that this is not the case; *Clytemnestra* is a crucial figure in the story of Agamemnon’s death, as evidenced by the numerous instances of wordplay on her name in mentions of the Mycenaean saga in the *Odyssey*.¹²⁰ I use Bruce Louden’s definition of Homeric wordplay: “a connection between two similar-sounding words which invests the

¹¹⁸ Marquardt 1992: 243.

¹¹⁹ Fraenkel cites no fewer than ten separate MSS representing a variety of ancient authors that preserve *Clytemnestra* (Fraenkel 1950 ad 84); Marquardt notes that “the *Clytemnestra*-spelling is cited once in *CIG* IV.8419” and that *Clytemnestra* occurs with greater frequency in all of the *Odyssey* manuscripts and “all but one of the *Iliad* manuscripts” (Marquardt 1992: 243 and 250, respectively).

¹²⁰ I follow S. Douglas Olson in identifying these references to the Mycenaean saga at 1.35-43, 298-300; 3.193-8, 234-5, 255-312; 4.90-2, 512-37, 546-7; 11.387-9, 409-34, 452-3; 13.383-4; 24.19-22, 96-97, and 199-200 (Olson 1990: 57). Five of these fifteen instances contain etymological wordplay on *Clytemnestra*’s name; in one instance of paronomasia, etymological wordplay and the non-etymological figure of alliteration are used in conjunction. Six references to the Mycenaean saga relate important facets of *Clytemnestra*’s characterization (as at 3.262-6 and 4.90-4), but do not contain significant evidence of wordplay on her name.

relationship between them with additional meaning.”¹²¹ Louden identifies three categories of Homeric wordplay: *figura etymologica*, parechesis, and deformation. *Figura etymologica* refers to the “play upon the etymological meaning of a name.”¹²² For example, the poet plays on the derivation of Hector’s name from ἔχω at *Il.* 5.472-3 and the etymological relation of Ὀδυσσεύς to *ὀδύσσομαι at *Od.* 19.407-9.¹²³ Parechesis “involves the non-etymological collocations of words sharing several common sounds, usually a similar sounding root.”¹²⁴ One particularly famous example, from *Il.* 16.141-4, connects Achilles’ wielding (πάλλειν, πῆλαι) of his spear with the locative name of the material from which it is made, Pelian ash (Πηλιάδα, Πηλίου) to evoke the unnamed giver of the spear, Achilles’ father Peleus (Πηλεύς).¹²⁵ Whether these words are etymologically related is irrelevant, since the poet achieves the poetic effect through repetition of similar sounds. Deformation is the creation of “a compound that negates or worsens the force of a name or noun.”¹²⁶ This occurs several times in Homer, as with the deformation of Paris’ name as Δύσπαρις at *Il.* 3.39 and 13.769 or of Ilion as Κακοίλιον at *Od.* 19.260, 19.597, and 23.19.¹²⁷ I argue that significant instances of wordplay on Clytemnestra’s name, particularly *figura etymologica* and parechesis, occur at *Od.* 1.35-9, 1.300, 3.194-8, 11.422-9, and 24.199-200. Although Clytemnestra’s name itself is rarely used, the language of these passages suggests

¹²¹ Louden 1995: 27.

¹²² Louden 1995: 28.

¹²³ *Il.* 5.472-3: Ἐκτορ, πῆ δὴ τοι μένος οἴχεται ὁ πρὶν ἔχεσκες; | φῆς που ἄτερ λαῶν πόλιν ἐξέμεν ἠδ’ ἐπικούρων | οἶος. *Od.* 19.407-9: πολλοῖσιν γὰρ ἐγὼ γε ὀδυσσάμενος τόδ’ ἰκάνω, | ἀνδράσιν ἠδὲ γυναιξίν ἀνὰ χθόνα πουλυβότειραν· | τῷ δ’ Ὀδυσσεύς ὄνομ’ ἔστω ἐπώνυμον. Cf. Louden 1995: 28-9. Louden argues that the Ὀδυσσεύς-*ὀδύσσομαι connection is also “implied at [*Od.*] 1.62, 5.340, [and] 19.275” (Louden 1995: 29).

¹²⁴ Louden 1995: 29.

¹²⁵ τὸ μὲν οὐ δύνατ’ ἄλλος Ἀχαιῶν | πάλλειν, ἀλλὰ μιν οἶος ἐπίστατο πῆλαι Ἀχιλλεύς, | Πηλιάδα μελίην, τὴν πατρὶ φίλω πόρε Χείρων | Πηλίου ἐκ κορυφῆς..., *Il.* 16.141-4. Cf. Louden 1995: 29-31 for further discussion of parechesis.

¹²⁶ Louden 1995: 31.

¹²⁷ See Louden 1995: 31-33.

etymological wordplay on the two components of her name (κλυται-μηστρα and κλυται-μνηστρα). These instances of wordplay show that Clytemnestra is equally, if not more, culpable in the murder of Agamemnon.

2.3.1. *Non-Etymological Descriptions of Clytemnestra*

Descriptions of Clytemnestra in the *Odyssey* vary in the details they present about her. The accounts of Menelaus in Book 4 and of Agamemnon's shade in Book 11 depict her most fully, while other accounts of the Oresteia myth present only the barest details about her. Significant non-etymological descriptions of Clytemnestra occur at *Od.* 3.235, 3.266, 4.92, 11.384, 11.410, 11.424, 11.432, 11.439, and 24.97. These can be divided into three categories, corresponding to the three principal characteristics of Clytemnestra (destructiveness, brazenness, and mental acuity):

Destructiveness	Brazenness	Mental Acuity
οὐλομένη (4.92, 11.410, 24.97)	κυνῶπις (11.424)	δόλω... ἀλόχοιο (3.235, 4.92) φρεσὶ... κέχρητ' ἀγαθῆσι (3.266) κακῆς ἰότητι γυναικός (11.384) λυγρὰ ἰδυῖα (11.432) Κλυταιμνήστρη δόλον ἤρτυε (11.439)

What follows is an examination of each of these three characteristics.

Clytemnestra is called οὐλομένη, “destructive,” once by Menelaus (4.92) and twice by Agamemnon (11.410, 24.97). James Redfield argues that οὐλομένη is a “notably unspecific negative adjective, covering a range from inadequate to unfortunate to harmful to outrageous... it has a tone of subjectivity, and expresses a personal rejection of another person or personified thing.”¹²⁸ However, Nagy argues that οὐλομένη is a term that specifically refers to the epic medium. According to Nagy, the *Odyssey* is summarized by the term νόστος λυγρός, “baneful

¹²⁸ Redfield 1979: 100.

homecoming,” as seen in *Odyssey* 1.326-7 and 3.132; similarly, the *Iliad* is recapitulated by the phrase μῆνις οὐλομένη, “ruinous wrath,” which occurs at *Iliad* 1.1-2. Nagy argues that λυγρός is the particular epithet of the νόστοι, and is used in the *Odyssey* to describe the way in which the νόστοι of the Greeks after the Trojan War are disastrous.¹²⁹ For Agamemnon, his return home fails because of his wife, who is described as λυγρὰ ἰδυῖα (“plotting baneful things,” *Od.* 11.432), specifically because she thwarts Agamemnon’s νόστος. Similarly, Nagy argues that the phrase μῆνις οὐλομένη is programmatic of the *Iliad*, and is parallel to the phrase νόστος λυγρός.¹³⁰ By Nagy’s logic, the epithet οὐλομένη always evokes heroic anger and prompts the reader to recall the plot of the *Iliad*, in which Achilles’ destructive wrath (μῆνις οὐλομένη) causes countless woes for the Greeks and Trojans alike. To call Clytemnestra οὐλομένη has a similar programmatic effect which associates her with heroic μῆνις. Indeed, Nicole Loraux writes that Clytemnestra becomes μῆνις incarnate when she kills Agamemnon.¹³¹ The descriptions of Clytemnestra as λυγρὰ ἰδυῖα and οὐλομένη give the reason for Agamemnon’s failure to attain κλέος: the combination of her destructive wrath and her mind adept at trickery causes her husband’s νόστος λυγρός, which negates his κλέος. Thus, the description of Clytemnestra as

¹²⁹ Nagy 2013: 261.

¹³⁰ Nagy 2013: 286.

¹³¹ Loraux 1995: 190. Consider *Agamemnon* 154-5, in which the Chorus discusses the φοβερὰ... | οἰκονόμος δολία μνάμων μῆνις τεκνόποινος (“a fearsome, guileful keeper of the house, a Wrath that remembers and will avenge a child,” trans. Sommerstein 2008) that awaits Agamemnon inside the house. Sommerstein notes that “in Calchas’ oracular words—unintelligible to his original hearers, and mostly also to the Elders now, but easily interpretable by the audience—the coming sacrifice of Iphigeneia is half-identified with the wrath it will generate, which in turn is half-identified with the person... in whom that wrath will reside” (Sommerstein 2008: 19). Loraux believes that the Chorus is “unambiguously referring” to Clytemnestra in this passage and that they make her the embodiment of “Wrath that remembers” (Loraux 1995: 190).

οὐλομένη is not simply a general pejorative term; rather, it evokes the heroic anger that is characteristic of the *Iliad*, as well as explains Agamemnon's failure to attain κλέος.¹³²

Agamemnon's shade calls Clytemnestra κυνῶπις in 11.424. κυνῶπις (masc. κυνώπις) is a term which denotes brazenness, undue boldness, or insatiability; it is not exclusively a gendered insult, as shown by Achilles' application of the term to Agamemnon in *Iliad* 1.159. Rather, as Margaret Graver shows, κύων and its related terms connote general greed, which can, though does not always, manifest in women as sexual voraciousness.¹³³ Similarly, Cristiana Franco shows that the term κυνῶπις is often used in response to a perceived lack of αἰδώς, "shame":

[κυνώπις/κυνῶπις] is a term of abuse that probably evoked the demeanor of a dog daring to look a man in the eyes even when it has gotten in some trouble and should lower its gaze in shame. In the brazen-faced dog, the temerity of a direct gaze may be associated with an expression of feigned innocence that conceals in shameless arrogance a consciousness of guilt.¹³⁴

A woman who is called κυνῶπις is thought to lack αἰδώς; this shamelessness in women is often interpreted as sexual. Rather, Franco suggests that a woman to whom the term κυνῶπις is applied is perceived as unapologetic or arrogant. In the context of its usage in 11.424, Clytemnestra is certainly not remorseful for her role in the murders of Agamemnon and Cassandra. Agamemnon laments that he asked for pity, but Clytemnestra was unmoved:

... αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ ποτὶ γαίῃ χεῖρας αἰείρων
 βάλλον ἀποθνήσκων περὶ φασγάνῳ· ἢ δὲ κυνῶπις
 νοσφίσατ', οὐδέ μοι ἔτλη ἰόντι περ εἰς Αἶδαο
 χερσὶ κατ' ὀφθαλμοῦς ἐλέειν σὺν τε στόμ' ἐρεῖσαι. 425
 οὐκ αἰνότερον καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο γυναικός,

¹³² While it is true that οὐλομένη is used of a variety of people and objects in Homeric poetry, I would note the irony in the fact that Clytemnestra is οὐλομένη to Agamemnon, who is responsible for Achilles' οὐλομένη anger in *Iliad* 1. In effect, both Achilles and Clytemnestra are "destructive" in relation to Agamemnon.

¹³³ Graver 1995: 51.

¹³⁴ Franco 2014: 86.

ἢ τις δὴ τοιαῦτα μετὰ φρεσὶν ἔργα βάλῃται·

And I, lying on the ground, trying to raise my arms,
tossed dying upon Aegisthus' sword. But she, bitch that she was,
turned away, and did not deign, though I was going to the house of Hades,
either to draw down my eyelids with her fingers or to close my mouth.
So true is it that there is nothing more frightful or more shameless than a woman
who puts into her heart such deeds...¹³⁵

The phrase *χεῖρας ἀείρων* is a gesture of supplication which Clytemnestra rejects by turning her back on her dying husband (*νοσφίσαι*, 11.425). Agamemnon emphasizes Clytemnestra's pitilessness once again in 11.427-8, saying that there is nothing "more doggish" (*κύντερον*, 11.427) than a woman who unapologetically plots such evil deeds. Thus, in this passage, the idea of Clytemnestra as "doggish" refers to her total faithlessness to and lack of pity for her husband as well as her sexual transgression.

While destructiveness and brazenness are definitively negative characteristics, Clytemnestra's mental acuity is presented as ambiguous. She has a mind that is particularly apt for trickery (*δόλος*); this is presented as a negative characteristic in 3.235, 4.92, and 11.439. Similarly, Clytemnestra's propensity to use her wits for evil is shown in the phrases *κακῆς ἰότητι γυναικός* (11.384) and *λυγρὰ ἰδυῖα* (11.432). With the phrase *κακῆς ἰότητι γυναικός*, Odysseus implies that Clytemnestra's wits and her "bad" nature are inextricable from one another: she uses her wits for evil, which makes her evil by extension. Similarly, Agamemnon's identification of Clytemnestra as *λυγρὰ ἰδυῖα* both evokes the *νόστος* *λυγρός* that is programmatic of the *Odyssey* and calls to mind the phrase *κεδνὰ ἰδυῖα*, a Homeric descriptor of a particularly trustworthy woman. A good woman is knowledgeable about (*ἰδυῖα*) how to be trustworthy; Agamemnon shows that Clytemnestra only knows how to be baneful—her mind is apt for plotting ruin.

¹³⁵ Trans. Murray.

Moreover, the fact that Clytemnestra is λυγρὰ ἰδυῖα causes Agamemnon's disastrous death, which is described both as a λυγρὸς νόστος (*Od.* 1.326-7 and 3.132) and λυγρὸς ὄλεθρος (3.87, 3.194, and 24.96); Agamemnon qualifies Clytemnestra's wits as evil because of the effect they have upon him.

Nestor, however, presents Clytemnestra's wits as a positive attribute. He emphasizes her ἀγαθαὶ φρένες, noting that it was not until she was left alone with Aegisthus that she yielded to his advances:

ἡμεῖς μὲν γὰρ κεῖθι πολέας τελέοντες ἀέθλους
 ἤμεθ'· ὁ δ' εὐκηλος μυχῶ Ἄργεος ἵπποβότοιο
 πόλλ' Ἀγαμεμνονέην ἄλοχον θέλγεσκ' ἐπέεσσιν.
 ἢ δ' ἦ τοι τὸ πρὶν μὲν ἀναίνετο ἔργον ἀεικὲς
 δῖα Κλυταιμνήστρη· φρεσὶ γὰρ κέχρητ' ἀγαθῆσι·

265

We on our part stayed there in Troy fulfilling our many toils;
 but he, at ease in a nook of horse-pasturing Argos,
 kept seeking to beguile with words the wife of Agamemnon.
 Now at first she put from her the unseemly deed,
 the noble Clytemnestra, for she had a good heart...¹³⁶

As Marilyn Katz notes, both Clytemnestra and Penelope have ἀγαθαὶ φρένες but are left unsupervised under difficult circumstances; thus, Nestor's emphasis on Clytemnestra's ἀγαθαὶ φρένες constitutes a warning for Telemachus.¹³⁷ Clytemnestra, left alone with Aegisthus, was

¹³⁶ Trans. after Murray.

¹³⁷ Katz 1991: 45. On Penelope's ἀγαθαὶ φρένες, see *Od.* 24.194. The phrase φρεσὶ γὰρ κέχρητ' ἀγαθῆσι also occurs at *Od.* 16.398 and is ambiguously applied to either the suitor Amphinomus or to Penelope herself to describe why Amphinomus is Penelope's preferred suitor. We can read a heavy degree of irony in the passage at 16.398, since we know that Penelope's suitors will ultimately fail because of Penelope's ἀγαθαὶ φρένες and despite Amphinomus'. Comparison of 16.398 with the description of Clytemnestra's ἀγαθαὶ φρένες at 3.266 reveals that the same danger is posed to the integrity of the marital household by both Aegisthus and Amphinomus; the beguiling words of the suitors have a potentially disastrous effect on ἀγαθαὶ φρένες, resulting in a serious threat to the master's νόστος.

corrupted by him, though she had previously been a good wife; Telemachus must swiftly return to Ithaca to forestall a similar situation with Penelope.¹³⁸

Clytemnestra is thus characterized as destructive, brazen, and sharp-witted in a way that lends itself to trickery. Her mental faculties will be a particular focus in the next section, which explores the evidence for the etymology of her name as *Clytemestra*, “renowned for her cunning.”

2.3.2. Etymological Evidence for *Clytemestra*

There are numerous puns on the *Clytemestra*-spelling in the *Odyssey*. Definitive wordplay on *Clytemestra* falls into one of three categories: 1) a form of κλέος/κλυτός combined with a form of μῆτις/μῆδομαι, as in 1.300 and 3.194-8; 2) a form of μῆτις/μῆδομαι occurring near *Clytemnestra*’s name and referring to her, as in 11.422-9; or 3) a form of μῆτις/μῆδομαι surrounded by “non-etymological collocations of words sharing several common sounds, usually a similar-sounding root,” as in 24.199-202.¹³⁹ All three categories occur within the Oresteia myth of the *Odyssey* and thus constitute significant wordplay on *Clytemestra*, “renowned for her cunning.”

The first two instances of wordplay on *Clytemestra* fall into the first category of pun, in which a form of κλέος/κλυτός is combined with a form of μῆτις/μῆδομαι.¹⁴⁰ At *Odyssey* 1.298-

¹³⁸ On the irony of the term Ἀγαμεμνονέην ἄλοχον (3.264) in the context of the Oresteia myth, see Higbie 1995: 114.

¹³⁹ Louden 1995: 29.

¹⁴⁰ The most explicit puns on *Clytemestra* reverse the order of her name (e.g. in *Od.* 1.300, the name appears as δολόμητιν...κλυτόν). Reverse-order wordplay on names is not uncommon in Homeric poetry: cf., e.g., *Il.* 5.668-70 of Περσέμειον (Τληπόλεμον δ’ ἐτέρωθεν εὐκνήμιδες Ἀχαιοὶ | ἐξέφερον πολέμοιο· νόησε δὲ δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς | τλήμονα θυμὸν ἔχων, μαίμησε δὲ οἱ φίλον ἦτορ); 10.157 of Nestor (τὸν παρστάς ἀνέγειρε Γερήνιος ἱππότης Νέστωρ); 14.471-3 of Antenor (ἦ ῥ’ οὐχ οὗτος ἀνὴρ Προθοήνορος ἀντὶ πεφάσθαι | ἄξιος; οὐ μὲν μοι κακὸς εἶδεται οὐδὲ κακῶν ἔξ, | ἀλλὰ κασίγνητος Ἀντιήνορος ἱπποδάμοιο); 23.155-6 of Achilles (εἰ μὴ Ἀχιλλεὺς αἴψ’ Ἀγαμέμνονι εἶπε παραστάς | Ἀτρεΐδῃ, σοὶ γάρ τε μάλιστά γε λαὸς Ἀχαιῶν); *Od.* 19.

300, Athena, disguised as Mentès, urges Telemachus to begin searching for his father, presenting Orestes as an exemplum for him:

ἢ οὐκ αἴεις οἶον κλέος ἔλλαβε δῖος Ὀρέστης
 πάντας ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους, ἐπεὶ ἔκτανε πατροφονῆα,
 Αἴγισθον δολόμητιν, ὃ οἱ πατέρα κλυτὸν ἔκτα; 300

Or have you not heard what fame the noble Orestes won
 among all mankind when he slew his father's murderer,
 the guileful Aegisthus, because he slew his glorious father?¹⁴¹

A careful reading of line 300 reveals wordplay on *Clytemnestra* in the adjectives δολόμητιν (used of Aegisthus) and κλυτὸν (used of Agamemnon); these terms occur in proximity to one another three times in the *Odyssey*.¹⁴² S. Douglas Olson has argued that Athena's version of the story omits both Clytemnestra's complicity in the murder of Agamemnon *and* Orestes' retribution against his mother; Olson attributes this to Athena's recognition of the growing "tensions... between Telemachus and Penelope."¹⁴³ A.F. Garvie, too, argues that Athena's account of the Mycenaean saga suppresses Clytemnestra's role in the killing, since "to put [her] in the forefront would suggest an altogether wrong and misleading parallel with Penelope, in whose case the idea of matricide is totally irrelevant. Telemachus, who is to win glory like that of Orestes, could hardly do so by the murder of his mother."¹⁴⁴ It is for this reason that Clytemnestra's role in the murder of Agamemnon is downplayed in versions of the Oresteia myth recounted to

571 of Odysseus (ἦδε δὴ ἠὼς εἴσι δυσώνυμος, ἢ μ' Ὀδυσ-ῆος); 21.380-2 of Eurycleia (ἐκ δὲ καλεσσάμενος προσέφη τροφὸν Εὐρύ-κλειαν· | Τηλέμαχος κέλεται σε, περίφρων Εὐρύ-κλεια, | κληῖσαι μεγάροιο θύρας πυκινῶς ἀραρυίας·). On this kind of parechesis related to proper names, see Rank 1951, Louden 1995 (especially 32-39), and Nagy 2004.

¹⁴¹ Trans. Murray.

¹⁴² All six instances of the term δολόμητις in the *Odyssey* occur in the context of the Mycenaean saga; as I will show, four of these instances refer, either directly or indirectly, to Clytemnestra.

¹⁴³ Olson 1990: 61. See *Od.* 1.249-51.

¹⁴⁴ Garvie 1986: xi.

Telemachus: he should model himself upon Orestes by driving away the suitors, not by committing matricide, which in Penelope's case will turn out to be wholly unnecessary.

Nestor repeats Athena's version of the Oresteia myth at 3.193-200, again transmitting the pun on *Clytemestra* in line 198 with *δολόμετιν... κλυτὸν*. Further, Nestor says that Aegisthus "contrived" (*ἐμήσατο*, 3.194) the plan for Agamemnon's death; this additional verbal resonance strengthens the force of his earlier pun on *Clytemestra*. Nestor's wordplay implies that he is aware of the true sequence of events in Mycenae, but instead reports a version of the story that is largely consistent with Athena's in Book 1. Olson argues that Nestor's version of the Oresteia myth is less explicit than Athena's about urging Telemachus to emulate Orestes by killing the suitors; rather, his version of the story is intended as a "gentle encouragement of Telemachus."¹⁴⁵ Olson concludes that Nestor's version of the Mycenaean saga seems to have "only a very general paradigmatic force: let Telemachus too be a good son, whatever that may mean."¹⁴⁶ Once again, *Clytemnestra*'s role in the murder of Agamemnon is suppressed: the puns on her name are meant for the audience, not for Telemachus.

The passage Book 11 in which Agamemnon recounts his death contains the second type of *figura etymologica*. In this passage, forms of *μητις/μήδομαι* occur near *Clytemnestra*'s name and refer specifically to her:

οἰκτροτάτην δ' ἤκουσα ὅπα Πριάμοιο θυγατρός,
Κασσάνδρης, τὴν κτεῖνε Κλυταιμνήστρη¹⁴⁷ δολόμετις

¹⁴⁵ Olson 1990: 63. According to Olson, "the explicit comparison between the two young men in 3.199-200 is apparently a later intrusion into the text" (Olson 1990: 63).

¹⁴⁶ Olson 1990: 63–64.

¹⁴⁷ The spelling of *Clytemnestra*'s name in this passage and its interruption of the soundplay in *δολόμετις* and *ἐμήσατο* introduces the issue of why the manuscripts nearly unanimously transmit the name as *Clytemnestra*, despite the abundance of evidence for the form *Clytemestra* in the *Odyssey*. Marquardt notes that of the approximately 200 Homer MSS, "only the 10th century Venetus A differs with this spelling [*Clytemestra*] in the *Iliad* inasmuch as a scribe seems to correct *Κλυταιμνήστρης* to *Κλυταιμήστρης* by adding two suprascript dots over the *nu* and has

ἀμφ' ἐμοί, ἀτὰρ ἐγὼ ποτὶ γαίῃ χειῖρας ἀείρων
 βάλλον ἀποθνήσκων περὶ φασγάνῳ· ἢ δὲ κυνῶπις
 νοσφίσατ', οὐδέ μοι ἔτλη ἰόντι περ εἰς Αἴδαο
 χερσὶ κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐλέειν σὺν τε στόμ' ἐρεῖσαι. 425
 ὧς οὐκ αἰνότερον καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο γυναικός,
 ἢ τις δὴ τοιαῦτα μετὰ φρεσὶν ἔργα βάληται·
 οἷον δὴ καὶ κείνη ἐμήσατο ἔργον ἀεικέες,
 κουριδίῳ τεύξασα πόσει φόνον. 430

But the most piteous cry that I heard was that of the daughter of Priam,
 Cassandra, whom guileful Clytemnestra slew
 as she clung to me. And I, lying on the ground, trying to raise my arms,
 tossed dying upon Aegisthus' sword. But she, bitch that she was,
 turned away, and did not deign, though I was going to the house of Hades,
 either to draw down my eyelids with her fingers or to close my mouth.
 So true is it that there is nothing more frightful or more shameless than a woman
 who puts into her heart such deeds like the ugly thing she plotted,
 contriving her wedded husband's murder.¹⁴⁸

In line 422, Agamemnon describes Clytemnestra as δολόμητις, “guileful,” which echoes other descriptions of Clytemnestra as adept at δόλος (3.235, 4.92, 11.439) and evokes the wordplay with δολόμητις... κλυτὸν (1.300, 3.198, and 3.308). Both δολόμητις and ἐμήσατο suggest the sound of *Clytemnestra*. Indeed, δολόμητις qualifies *Clytemnestra*: she is “famous for her cunning,” and that cunning manifests as δόλος, “trickery.”

The third category of wordplay occurs again at *Odyssey* 24.199-202. Here, consonance combines with a form of μῆτις/μῆδομαι to evoke *Clytemnestra*:

οὐχ ὧς Τυνδαρέου κούρη κακὰ μῆσατο ἔργα,
 κουριδίον κτείνασα πόσιν, στυγερὴ δέ τ' ἀοιδὴ 200
 ἔσσειτ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους, χαλεπὴν δέ τε φῆμιν ὀπάσσει

written Κλυταιμῆστρης in the margin of the manuscript” (Marquardt 1992: 250-1). Contrary to Fraenkel’s pronouncement that the form *Clytemnestra* is the result of “the etymologizing fancies of a late period” (Fraenkel 1950 ad 84), *Clytemnestra* seems to be the typical Homeric spelling of the name. Marquardt posits that both forms of the name were in use during antiquity, but that the *mnestra*-spelling was the older of the two (hence its near universality in the manuscripts). In this particular context, I suggest that the poet uses both the spelling *Clytemnestra* and puns on μῆτις in the same passage as a way of encapsulating *all* of the potential issues awaiting Odysseus in Ithaca; the breaking of the echo effect is intentional.

¹⁴⁸ Trans. Murray.

θηλυτέρησι γυναιξί, καὶ ἦ κ' εὐεργὸς ἔησιν.

Not in this manner did the daughter of Tyndareus devise evil deeds
and kill her wedded husband, and hateful shall the song regarding her
be among men, and evil repute does she bring
upon all womankind, even upon her who does rightly. (trans. Murray)

The repetition of similar sounds here, combined with the verb μήσατο, evokes *Clytemnestra*: the hard ‘k’ sound that recurs throughout the passage, coupled with the suggestion of etymological wordplay in μήσατο of line 199, form a complex pun on Clytemnestra’s name: οὐχ ὡς

Τυνδαρέου κούρη κακὰ μήσατο ἔργα, | κουρίδιον κτείνασα πόσιν, στυγερὴ δέ τ' ἀοιδὴ | ἔσσειτ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους, χαλεπὴν δέ τε φῆμιν ὀπάσσει | θηλυτέρησι γυναιξί, καὶ ἦ κ' εὐεργὸς ἔησιν.¹⁴⁹

Of course, the poet does not actually suggest that the words containing this hard ‘k’ sound and the root Κλυται- of Clytemnestra’s name are etymologically related, but the effect is to conjure Clytemnestra.

The proposed etymology of *Clytemnestra* as “famous for her cunning” is compelling given her actions in her mythic tradition, but also has resonances with other characters in the *Odyssey*, like Odysseus, Penelope, and Athena. The repeated puns on this spelling throughout the *Odyssey* stress the importance of μῆτις in the poem. Further, both Clytemnestra’s and Penelope’s μῆτις is manifested through δόλος, but the results of each woman’s cunning are vastly different.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ The consonance in lines 199 and 200 creates an effect of laughter or scoffing, which is particularly fitting in a passage where the shade of Agamemnon gleefully denies Clytemnestra a place in the epic song. The use of such consonance to evoke the sound of derisive laughter occurs elsewhere in Homeric poetry, most notably in *Iliad* Book 3 line 43, where Hector repeats hard ‘k’ sounds to shame Paris into entering battle: ἦ που καγγαλόωσι κάρη κομόωντες Ἀχαιοὶ (“I think the long-haired Achaeans will laugh aloud,” trans. Murray). In this line, form and content converge to evoke the sound of the Achaeans’ scornful laughter; I would argue that a similar effect is observed in the *Odyssey* passage here. Agamemnon’s shade scoffs at Clytemnestra, whose most memorable deed has, according to him, only resulted in a “hateful song” rather than in true κλέος.

¹⁵⁰ For more on μῆτις and δόλος in the *Odyssey*, especially as it relates to Penelope and Clytemnestra, see Marquardt 1985 and Katz 1991.

Whereas Penelope uses her cunning to uphold her husband's household, Clytemnestra uses hers to destroy it. Through her μῆτις, Penelope contrives the δόλος of the shroud, which keeps her suitors at bay until Odysseus returns. Clytemnestra, however, acquiesces to Aegisthus and uses her μῆτις to trick Agamemnon. The repetition of both δόλος and μῆτις in the numerous retellings of Agamemnon's disastrous return in the *Odyssey* are contrasted with the proof of Penelope's μῆτις: the δόλος of the shroud.¹⁵¹ Thus, the poet plays with the contrast between good and bad μῆτις and good and bad δόλος as a way of highlighting Penelope's virtue by contrast with Clytemnestra.

2.3.3. *Etymological Evidence for Clytemnestra*

The alternative spelling, *Clytemnestra*, means “renowned for suitors/wooing.” This etymology evokes the theme of the *Odyssey*, where a primary source of conflict is the infestation of Odysseus' house with Penelope's suitors. But how apt is this form of the name in the individual case of Clytemnestra? After all, it is Penelope, not Clytemnestra, who is famous for her suitors; moreover, she famously rebuffs them and retains her virtue. Neither of these is exactly true for Clytemnestra: Aegisthus cannot be considered a proper suitor until after Agamemnon's death, and the question of when this change in his status (that is, from seducer to suitor) occurs is persistent. Whereas Penelope remains chaste, Clytemnestra succumbs to Aegisthus' advances. This would suggest that Penelope, not Clytemnestra, is the one “renowned for her suitors.” Nevertheless, there is strong evidence for wordplay on the *-mnestra* spelling of Clytemnestra's name, by means of which, argues Evanthia Tsitsibakou-Vasalos, “etymology and narrative

¹⁵¹ The story of the shroud is told by Antinous at *Od.* 2.85-128, where he calls it a δόλος (2.93); Penelope herself calls the trick of the shroud a δόλος in 19.137, and refers to her plan to delay the suitors as a μῆτις (19.158); the shade of Amphimedon calls Penelope's weaving a δόλος in 24.128 and 24.141.

interlock, bridging the tales of Agamemnon and Odysseus, and integrating them into the wider, enframing story of the *Odyssey*.¹⁵² Penelope, and the danger she could pose to Odysseus, is evoked through this wordplay; as Tsitsibakou-Vasalos notes, this heightens the tension of Odysseus' situation and acts as a “mnemonic, literary and narratological tool” that frames the poem's action.¹⁵³ Let us now consider the passage at *Odyssey* 1.32-43, in which this etymology is activated.

Odyssey 1.32-43 is characterized by a lexical ring structure. The ring opens and closes with antonyms (κάκ' in 1.33 and ἀγαθὰ in 1.43) and is loosely centered on lines 37 and 38. The annular structure presents as follows:

ὦ πόποι, οἷον δὴ νῦ θεοὺς βροτοὶ αἰτιόωνται·
 ἐξ ἡμέων γάρ φασι κάκ' ἔμμεναι, οἱ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ
 σφῆσιν ἀτασθαλίησιν ὑπὲρ μόρον ἄλγε' ἔχουσιν,
 ὡς καὶ νῦν Αἴγισθος ὑπὲρ μόρον Ἀτρεΐδαο 35
 γῆμ' ἄλοχον μνηστήν, τὸν δ' ἔκτανε νοστήσαντα,
 εἰδὼς αἰπὺν ὄλεθρον, ἐπεὶ πρό οἱ εἶπομεν ἡμεῖς,
 Ἑρμείαν πέμψαντες, εὐσκοπον ἀργεῖφόντην,
 μήτ' αὐτὸν κτείνειν μήτε μνάσθαι ἄκοιτιν·
 ἐκ γὰρ Ὀρέσται τίσις ἔσσεται Ἀτρεΐδαο, 40
 ὀππότε' ἂν ἠβήσῃ τε καὶ ἦς ἰμείρεται αἴης.
 ὧς ἔφαθ' Ἑρμείας, ἀλλ' οὐ φρένας Αἰγίσθοιο
 πεῖθ' ἀγαθὰ φρονέων· νῦν δ' ἀθρόα πάντ' ἀπέτισεν.¹⁵⁴

It's astonishing how ready mortals are to blame the gods.
 It is from us, they say, that evils come, but they even by themselves,
 through their own blind folly, have sorrows beyond that which is ordained.
 Just as now Aegisthus, beyond that which was ordained,
 took to himself the wedded wife of the son of Atreus, and slew him on his return,
 though well he knew of sheer destruction, seeing that we told him before,
 sending Hermes, the keen-sighted Argeiphontes,
 that he should neither slay the man nor woo his wife;
 or from Orestes shall come vengeance for the son of Atreus
 when once he has come to manhood and longs for his own land.
 So Hermes spoke, but he did not prevail upon the heart of Aegisthus;

¹⁵² Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2009: 180.

¹⁵³ Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2009: 181.

¹⁵⁴ Markup after Megan O'Donald (see O'Donald 2019).

for all his good intent, and now he has paid the full price for it all.¹⁵⁵

The repeated syllables contained in lines 37 and 38 (εἰδῶς αἰπὸν ὄλεθρον, ἐπεὶ πρό οἱ εἴπομεν ἡμεῖς, | Ἑρμείαν πέμπσαντες, ἐύσκοπον ἀργεῖφόντην) indicate the presence of a ring structure. Particularly striking in this annular formation are lines 36 and 39, structured as A-B-C—C-B-A (ἄλοχον-μνηστήν-ἔκτανε—κτείνειν-μνάσθαι-ἄκοιτιν). ἄλοχον and ἄκοιτιν are both semantic and etymological synonyms. Semantically, the two terms mean almost exactly the same thing: a woman who “shares a bed with” a man, in this case, a wife.¹⁵⁶ Additionally, ἄλοχον and ἄκοιτιν are etymological synonyms because they both have as their prefix the alpha copulative.¹⁵⁷ Moreover, Tsitsibakou-Vasalos notes a tension around “courtship and steadfastness” introduced in this passage that continues through the rest of the poem.¹⁵⁸ Tsitsibakou-Vasalos notes the “linguistic kinship” of words like μνήστη, μιμνήσκω, μένω, and μνάομαι, arguing for the connection between steadfastness (i.e., “remembering” one’s husband in the correct way) and performing wifedom correctly.¹⁵⁹ Penelope, who remembers Odysseus, remains steadfast, and is therefore a proper μνηστή ἄλοχος—that is, she is κουριδίη. Clytemnestra, who willfully

¹⁵⁵ Trans. after Murray.

¹⁵⁶ Does ἄλοχος always refer to a “legal” wife? Scholars have argued about who can be called an ἄλοχος in Homeric poetry. The prevailing thought on the matter has, by and large, been that ἄλοχος always refers to a legitimate wife; Leaf 1892: 181 is paradigmatic of this argument. W.P. Clark argues that ἄλοχος refers simply to an emotional attachment between a man and a woman; in some cases this occurs within a marriage, while in others it does not (Clark 1940). Helena Guzmán has refined Clark’s argument to show that ἄλοχος only refers to a “legal” wife when it is accompanied by an adjective that defines it, such as κουριδίη or μνηστή; without this defining adjective, ἄλοχος can be generically applied to any woman who shares a man’s bed (Guzmán 2009: 23–25).

¹⁵⁷ The alpha copulative is derived from Proto-Indo-European *sem-, which is cognate with English “same” (cf. Chantraine 2009: s.v. ἄ-(ἄ-): préfixe copulatif). Thus, an ἄ-λοχος is one who shares the “same λέχος [bed],” and an ἄ-κοιτις is one who shares the “same κοίτη [bed].”

¹⁵⁸ Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2009: 179.

¹⁵⁹ Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2009: 179. She argues that a pervasive folk etymology connected μένω with μνήστη, μιμνήσκω, and μνάομαι (Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2009: 179 n. 7). However, scientific etymology does not support this claim.

forgets Agamemnon, is vulnerable to Aegisthus' advances, and is therefore a bad μνηστή ἄλοχος.¹⁶⁰ Moreover, Aegisthus' disregard for the gods' warning casts him as not only an improper suitor who attempts to begin his suit before his intended is available, but also, as Tsitsibakou-Vasalos notes, "ridden by ἀτασθαλίαι, i.e. by φρενοβλάβειαι, μωρία, παράνοια, or ἁμαρτία and 'thrives in mental blindness', thus emerging as a model suitor, hybridic, defiant of the gods and sound *peitho*, in sum a reprehensible and criminal usurper."¹⁶¹ Thus, the structure of the passage supports the central theme of anxieties surrounding wooing, a wedded wife, and murder of a returning husband.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ M.I. Finley connects the term μνηστή ἄλοχος, "wooed wife," with the courtship practice of presenting a woman with *hedna*, or suitor-gifts. Finley notes that the type of gifts that the girl receives is based upon the wealth of her father: if her father is wealthy (and thus provides a large dowry), her suitors would have to compete for her hand by presenting her with gifts that reflect her social status. It is usually understood that *hedna* are given with the intention of provoking a counter-gift from the girl's family. If the *hedna* are costly enough, the appropriate counter-gift is the girl herself. It is worth noting that, though the girl is often "bribed" by her suitor, she is *never* considered to have been "bought." Finley suggests that a husband might affectionately call his wife by the term μνηστή ἄλοχος as a way of reminding her of her value to him (Finley 1981: 233–45).

¹⁶¹ Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2009: 183. Is Aegisthus actually "blameless"? Scholars disagree about the meaning of the word ἀμύμων in *Od.* 1.29. Tsitsibakou-Vasalos writes that the ancient scholia seem to "derive ἀμύμων from ἀ-*privativum* + μῶμος, and explain it in terms of beauty, nobility of birth, and blameless or impeccable character; some others reject any characterological interpretations" (Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2009: 183). Rather, she suggests that ἀμύμων should properly be derived from the alpha copulative and μῶμος, which would make this epithet mean that Aegisthus is blameworthy (Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2009: 183-7). However, this view fails to consider the usage of ἀμύμων elsewhere, as well as in the context of the passage in question. In other passages, ἀμύμων seems to suggest nobility of birth and a kind of excellence of mind and body that is conferred by noble birth. This meaning fits with the context of *Od.* 1.32-43, where Zeus shows that Aegisthus' misfortunes are a result not of the gods' punishment but of his own actions and choices. Despite his nobility and the advance warning given by the gods, Aegisthus brings about his own death; thus, the definition of ἀμύμων as "noble" or "excellent" underscores the idea presented in this passage that regardless of status or birth, mortals often create their own misfortunes (my thanks to Olga Levaniouk for this suggestion). For more on the semantics of ἀμύμων, see Combellack 1982 and Parry 1973.

¹⁶² Tsitsibakou-Vasalos notes that Zeus also uses terms that suggest the *-mnestra* spelling: he "recalls and mentions (μνήσατο, ἐπιμνησθεῖς, 29, 31) the basic features of the tale..." (Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2009: 182). In light of this argument, we might also consider how

This nexus of anxieties is perhaps best observed in line 36, which contains wordplay on another name: Agamemnon's. The structure of the first half of the line (γῆμ' ἄλοχον μνηστήν) mirrors the sound of Agamemnon's name (Ἀγαμ-έ-μνων). This pun falls into what Louden classifies as "a non-etymological collocation," perhaps transmitting a folk etymology of Agamemnon's name which references his "disastrous" marriage to Clytemnestra.¹⁶³ Further, in this line, the figures of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra converge around μνηστή, which summarizes the principal problem in their marriage: namely, that of steadfastness, remembering, and courtship. Beekes argues that Agamemnon's name seems to be derived from the "intensifying prefix" ἀγα-, "great" + μέδομαι, "to think, plan."¹⁶⁴ Alternatively, a folk etymology transmitted in Plato's *Cratylus* 395a connects Agamemnon's name with steadfastness:

κινδυνεύει γὰρ τοιοῦτός τις εἶναι ὁ Ἀγαμέμνων, οἷος ἂ δόξειεν αὐτῷ διαπονεῖσθαι καὶ καρτερεῖν τέλος ἐπιτιθεὶς τοῖς δόξασι δι' ἀρετὴν. σημεῖον δὲ αὐτοῦ ἢ ἐν Τροίᾳ μὴ τοῦ πάθους τε καὶ καρτερίας. ὅτι οὖν ἀγαστὸς κατὰ τὴν ἐπιμονὴν οὗτος ὁ ἀνὴρ ἐνσημαίνει τὸ ὄνομα ὁ Ἀγαμέμνων.

Yes, for Agamemnon (admirable for remaining)¹⁶⁵ is one who would resolve to toil to the end and to endure, putting the finish upon his resolution by virtue. And

wordplay on the *-mnestra* form casts Clytemnestra's and Agamemnon's incompatibility as an issue of proper remembering (**mnā-*). Clytemnestra is a μνηστή ἄλοχος who ought to be treated as such, but her husband, as we have seen in Chapter 1, forgets or overlooks her status as wedded wife. Clytemnestra could thus be understood as the wife who remembers and avenges what her husband forgets. My thanks to Olga Levaniouk for this suggestion.

¹⁶³ Louden 1995: 31. For another occurrence of this pun, cf. *Iliad* 9.388: κούρην δ' οὐ γαμέω Ἀγαμέμνονος Ἀτρεΐδαιο ("And I will not marry the daughter of Agamemnon, the son of Atreus"). This folk etymology derives Agamemnon's name from ἀ-, "not" + γαμέω, "marry." For further discussion of this "non-etymological collocation" on Agamemnon's name, see Louden 1995: 31.

¹⁶⁴ Beekes 2009: s.v. Ἀγαμέμνων. Beekes gives ἀγα- and ἄγαν as "from the same stem as μέγα-" and derives verbs like ἄγαμαι, "to admire, envy" and ἀγάζω, "to have too much" from this root (Beekes 2009: s.v. ἀγα-). Beekes gives both proposed etymologies of -μέμνων (1. from *Αγα-μέδ-μων, "with the root of μέδομαι" or 2. connected with μένος and μένειν), but prefers the former (Beekes 2009: s.v. Ἀγαμέμνων).

¹⁶⁵ This etymology seemingly derives "Agamemnon" from ἄγαμαι + μένω. "Remaining" or "steadfastness" indeed seems to be characteristic of the men of the House of Atreus: Plato

a proof of this is his long retention of the host at Troy and his endurance. So the name Agamemnon denotes that this man is admirable for remaining.¹⁶⁶

Much like the dual forms of Clytemnestra's name, both etymologies of "Agamemnon" are active in the *Odyssey*; in the passage at 1.32-43, though, the Homeric poet seems to place particular emphasis on marital steadfastness, centering the conflict between Agamemnon and Clytemnestra on μνηστή in line 36. Agamemnon, who is "too steadfast" (ἄγαν + μένειν), is characterized by a perhaps unreasonable expectation of unwavering marital faithfulness. Clytemnestra, meanwhile, has taken a lover who will then become a suitor; this utter infidelity casts her as "famous for her suitor" (κλυτός + μνηστήρ). The term μνηστή in 1.36 thus condenses all of the tension around faithfulness, remembering, and waiting into a joint reference to the names of both Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. This clarifies the essence of each character, suggesting a fundamental incompatibility: Agamemnon expects excessive faithfulness, while Clytemnestra defies this expectation and becomes famous for her tryst with Aegisthus.

The puns in this passage raise the question of whether Aegisthus can properly be considered a μνηστήρ. The repetition of wooing terms in this passage certainly suggests that Clytemnestra has become famous, κλυτή, for improper wooing (μνηστήν, 1.36, and μνάσθαι, 1.39). But Patricia A. Marquardt shows that Aegisthus cannot be considered a true suitor until after Agamemnon's death:

Clytemnestra, with a husband living, is not free to receive suitors in the way, for example, that Penelope is, whose husband Odysseus is presumed to be dead... Clytemnestra might take a lover, but he could not be a μνηστήρ strictly speaking, since μνηστήρ and related words are used properly of a situation in which both parties are free to marry.¹⁶⁷

connects Atreus' name with the adjective ἀειπέξ, "stubborn" (*Cratylus* 395c). As further evidence of μένω in this family, we might also think of the steadfastness demonstrated by Menelaus awaiting Helen's return. My thanks to Olga Levaniouk for this suggestion.

¹⁶⁶ Trans. Fowler.

¹⁶⁷ Marquardt 1992: 242.

Indeed, the passage at 1.32-43 suggests that Aegisthus can be considered a proper suitor only once Agamemnon is dead; that is, the murder *must* occur in order for Aegisthus to be considered a true suitor. Overall, this passage suggests both Clytemnestra's lack of steadfastness and Aegisthus' improper wooing (that is, his murder of Clytemnestra's lawful husband and subsequent suit) through puns on the *-mnestra* form.

The etymology of *Clytemnestra* as "renowned for her suitor/wooing" is crucial to the poet's framing of the narrative. The positioning of this wordplay at the opening of the *Odyssey* foregrounds the issues of marital fidelity and the dangers posed to a husband by a disloyal wife. *Clytemnestra* acts as an important lens through which to consider Penelope's situation, since it is Penelope who is truly "famous for her suitors," and who thus seems likely to pose a considerable threat to her own husband. Once again, *Clytemnestra* is used as a foil for Penelope: the *-mnestra* spelling of her name contrasts her moral failings with Penelope's virtue. Whereas *Clytemnestra* succumbs to the seduction of a single figure who cannot truly be considered a suitor, Penelope resists the advances of 108 suitors and retains her virtue.¹⁶⁸ Once again, the poet uses *Clytemnestra* as a point of contrast for Penelope, heightening the tension around Odysseus' return to Ithaca through wordplay that hints at the situation he will find there.

In the *Odyssey*, neither etymology of *Clytemnestra*'s name is privileged over the other; rather, both are vital for defining her role in the poem. The associations embedded in each form of her name frame the narrative, creating tension by connecting her with Penelope. *Clytemnestra* evokes the ambiguous nature of Penelope's μητις, while *Clytemnestra* conjures Penelope's situation

¹⁶⁸ Telemachus gives the number of Penelope's suitors as 108 in 16.247-51.

with the suitors. Both etymologies are important for our understanding of the precarious nature of Odysseus' νόστος as highlighted through comparison with Agamemnon's disastrous one. As Tsagalis notes, this comparison creates a hierarchy of Homeric heroes wherein Odysseus is ranked first because of his successful return to Ithaca; this establishes the supremacy of the *Odyssey*, and, by extension, of its poet.

The juxtaposition of Clytemnestra with Penelope and the repeated wordplay on her name throughout the poem suggests that her reputation is inextricable from Penelope's κλέος, and that her evil reputation will last as long as Penelope's κλέος survives. I have shown that wordplay on both forms of Clytemnestra's name evokes Penelope's situation, which thus increases Penelope's κλέος. Moreover, such wordplay acts as a framing device which foregrounds the central issues of the *Odyssey*: feminine μητις and its risks, marital fidelity, and the unexpected dangers of a νόστος. I have suggested that the parallelism between Penelope and Clytemnestra throughout the poem presents their reputations as intertwined: Penelope's κλέος is inextricable from Clytemnestra's infamy. Through wordplay on both forms Clytemnestra's name, the poet preserves her most famous deed in the epic medium, thereby granting her a reputation that mirrors Penelope's κλέος.

CHAPTER 3. LYRIC POETRY

Clytemnestra is a strong presence in lyric poetry, where her role in the murder of Agamemnon continues to be a question. In this chapter, I will examine the evidence for Clytemnestra's characterization in lyric poetry, with an eye to correspondences between or divergences from her portrayals in epic and drama. I begin with an examination of the fragments of Stesichorus, looking at how he responds to Homer's and Hesiod's portrayals of Clytemnestra and how he influences later authors, especially Pindar and Aeschylus. I then move into analysis of the papyrus fragment *P.Oxy.* 2434, usually attributed to Simonides, which seems to detail the ramifications of Iphigeneia's sacrifice. Finally, I discuss Pindar's eleventh *Pythian* ode, considering how he presents Clytemnestra's motivations and actions and the ways in which he alludes to her other portrayals. I show that lyric presentations of Clytemnestra are largely consistent with her portrayals in epic and in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, and that the lyric poets consider her motivations in ways that engage earlier authors and influence later ones.

3.1. STESICHORUS

In antiquity, Stesichorus' work was regarded as a crucial link between epic and choral lyric.¹⁶⁹

His influence seems to have been derived from his innovations on epic themes for the lyric

¹⁶⁹ The *Suda* gives Stesichorus' *floruit* as 632-556 BCE, though as M.L. West notes, the dates of Stesichorus' life correspond all too conveniently with innovations in the lyric form: "it has long been realized that [these dates] are founded on nothing but the assumption that Stesichorus was younger than Alcman and older than Simonides" (West 1971: 302). The *Marmor Parium* reports that he first came to Greece in 480 BCE (*Marm. Par. FGrHist* 239A50). However, Ewen Bowie argues that Athenians may have been familiar with his work as early as the 560s BCE, since by that time Stesichorus seems to have had an international following (Bowie 2015: 120). Bowie believes that Stesichorus' verses, especially when accompanied by music, would have been recognizable to "at least some people... right into the fourth century," and hypothesizes that passages from the Stesichorean corpus may have been sung at symposia, parodied or alluded to in stage productions, and perhaps even learned in schools (Bowie 2015: 112-15). Bowie notes a number of allusions to Stesichorus in comedy, including at Aristophanes' *Peace* 775-80 and 796-801; certainly, if Stesichorean verses were recognizable to some of the audience members when

medium.¹⁷⁰ His popularity in antiquity stems from his particular kind of poetry, which West calls “lyric epic,” referring to the adaptation of epic or heroic themes for choral lyric; the importance of this genre can be observed in later works, especially tragedy, where choral lyric is blended with epic or mythological topics.¹⁷¹ In this section, I will show that Stesichorus is both in dialogue with earlier poets and influences later authors in their development both of the Oresteia myth and of Clytemnestra as a character.

Ancient sources suggest that Hesiod in particular was a chief inspiration for Stesichorus, and that he seems to follow Hesiod in his version of the Oresteia myth.¹⁷² Evidence of this appears in Philodemus’ *Piety*:

Στη[σίχορο]ς δ’ ἐν Ὀρεστει[αι κατ]ακολουθήσας [Ἡσιό]δωι τὴν Ἀγαμέ[μνονος
Ἴφιγένειαν εἶ[ναι τῆ]ν Ἑκάτην νῦν [ὄνομαζ]ομένην

Peace was produced in 421 BCE, the same could have been true for audiences of earlier dramatic productions (Bowie 2015: 113-14). Because of its wide popularity during the 5th and 4th centuries, Stesichorus’ work is quoted, paraphrased, and parodied by other authors and seems likely to have been recognizable to select audience members.

¹⁷⁰ Longinus calls Stesichorus Ὀμηρικώτατος (*On the Sublime* 13.3), referring to his “close link with the Homeric tradition” (Carruesco 2017: 178). As we shall see, he is also closely linked with Hesiod. Several scholars (most notably Nagy 1990), following the *Suda* (Σ 1095), have argued that Stesichorus’ name, much like those of Hesiod and Homer, is a title—that is, the name Στησίχορος marks the poet as a *choregos* inspired by the Muse Stesichore (another name for Terpsichore, as seen on the François Vase; see Stewart 1983). More specifically, he is an epic poet who “appropriate[s] chorality” (Carruesco 2017: 180). Stesichorus also seems to have been influenced by earlier authors like Xenocritus of Locri and Xanthus, who “are sometimes cited as predecessors to Stesichorus’ special brand of narrative choral poetry” (Carruesco 2017: 181). For Xanthus’ influence on Stesichorus, see Athenaeus *The Learned Banqueters* 12.512f-513a (Olson 2007) and Aelian *Historical Miscellanies* 4.26 (Wilson 1997). On Xenocritus (sometimes called Xenocrates), see ps. Plutarch *Moralia*, “On Music” 1134 e-f (Einarson and De Lacy 1967). West believes that “the fact that Xenocritus and Stesichorus both came from the same area may suggest that their genus of heroic narrative lyric was a regional phenomenon” (West 2015: 76).

¹⁷¹ West 2015: 75.

¹⁷² On Hesiod as a special source of inspiration for Stesichorus and the ancient tradition of their familial relation, see testimonia 10-12 (Campbell 1991).

Stesichorus in his *Oresteia* follows Hesiod and identifies Agamemnon's daughter Iphigenia with the goddess called Hecate.¹⁷³

Philodemus refers here to a passage of the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, fragment 23a M.-W., which discusses the marriage and family of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra.¹⁷⁴ Much of the fragment is devoted to the story of Iphigeneia (here called Iphimede):¹⁷⁵

γῆμ[ε δ' ἐὸν διὰ κάλλος ἄναξ ἀνδρ]ῶν Ἀγαμέμνων κού[ρην Τυνδαρέοιο Κλυταιμῆσ]τρην κυανῶπ[ιν· ἦ τ[έκεν Ἴφιμέδην καλλίσφ]υρον ἐν μεγάρ[οισιν	15
Ἥλέκτρην θ' ἦ εἶδος ἐρήριστ' ἀ[θανά]τησιν. Ἴφιμέδην μὲν σφάζαν ἐυκνή[μ]ιδες Ἀχαιοὶ βωμῶ[ι ἐπ' Ἀρτέμιδος χρυσηλακ]άτ[ου] κελαδεινῆς, ἦματ[ι τῷ ὅτε νηυσὶν ἀνέπλ]εον Ἴλιον εἴσω ποινή[ν τεισόμενοι καλλισ]φύρου Ἀργειώ[νης],	20
εἶδω[λον· αὐτὴν δ' ἐλαφηβό]λος ἰοχέαιρα ῥεῖα μὰ λ' ἐξεσά[ωσε, καὶ ἀμβροσ]ίην [ἐρ]ατε[ινὴν στάξε κατὰ κρή]θεν, ἵνα οἱ χ[ρῶς [ἔ]μπε[δ]ο[ς] εἴη, θῆκεν δ' ἀθάνατο[ν καὶ ἀγήρ]αον ἦμα[τα πάντα. τὴν δὴ νῦν καλέο]υσιν ἐπὶ χ[θονὶ φύλ' ἀν]θρώπων	25
Ἄρτεμιν εἰνοδί[ην, πρόπολον κλυ]τοῦ ἰ[ο]χ[ε]αίρ[ης]. λοῖσθον δ' ἐν μεγά[ροισι Κλυτ]αιμῆστρη κυανῶπις γεῖναθ' ὑποδηθ[εῖς Ἀγαμέμ]νον[ι δῖ]ον Ὀρέ[στην, ὅς ῥα καὶ ἠβήσας ἀπε]τείσατο πατροφο[ν]ῆα, κτεῖνε δὲ μητέρα [ἦν ὑπερήν]ορα ¹⁷⁶ νηλεί [χαλκῶι.	30

Because of her beauty] Agamemnon, [lord of men,] married Tyndareus'] daughter, dark-eyed [Clytemnestra;

¹⁷³ Trans. Campbell. Ingemar Düring writes that there is no evidence that Stesichorus treated either Iphigeneia's actual sacrifice or its aftermath, and that this is proof that the revenge motive was a later innovation (Düring 1943: 107). Rather, he argues, Stesichorus' assimilation of Iphigeneia to Hecate is not sufficient evidence of a sacrifice.

¹⁷⁴ On the construction, themes, and poetics of the *Catalogue of Women*, see Ormand 2014.

¹⁷⁵ Pausanias (1.43.1) notes that Hesiod's Iphimede is equivalent to Iphigeneia: οἶδα δὲ Ἡσίοδον ποιήσαντα ἐν Καταλόγῳ Γυναικῶν Ἴφιγένειαν οὐκ ἀποθανεῖν, γνώμη δὲ Ἀρτέμιδος Ἐκάτην εἶναι ("I know that Hesiod in his *Catalogue of Women* says that Iphigeneia did not die, and by the will of Artemis is Hecate," trans. Jones). On Pausanias' interpretation of this fragment, see Ormand 2017: 125–27. For a general analysis of the fragment, see Solmsen 1981. On the name(s) of Iphigeneia, see Palaima 2006 and Nagy 2017; see also Ch. 5 of this dissertation.

¹⁷⁶ March conjectures ὀλεσῆνωρα here, though she derives this through comparison with its use in Stesichorus' *Geryoneis* (*P.Oxy.* 2617) (March 1987: 89). Neither ὀλεσῆνωρ nor ὑπερήνωρ is applied to women in other extant literature; however, see note 263 on compound adjectives ending in -άνωρ and their applications to Helen and Clytemnestra.

she [bore beautiful-ankled Iphimede] in the halls
 and Electra who contended in beauty with the immortal goddesses.
 The well-greaved Achaeans sacrificed Iphimede
 on the altar of [golden-spindled] noisy [Artemis],
 on the day [when they were sailing on boats to] Troy,
 to wreak] vengeance for the [beautiful-]ankled Argive woman—
 a phantom: [herself, the deer-shooting] Arrow-shooter
 had very easily saved, and lovely [ambrosia
 she dripped onto her head, [so that her] flesh would be
 steadfast forever,
 and she made her immortal [and ageless all her] days.
 Now the tribes of human beings [on the] earth call her
 Artemis by the Road, [temple servant of the glorious]
 Arrow-shooter.
 As the last one in the [halls, dark-eyed Clytemnestra,]
 overpowered by¹⁷⁷ [Agamemnon], bore godly Orestes,
 who when he reached puberty [took vengeance] on his
 father's murderer,
 and he killed his [own man-destroying] mother with the
 pitiless [bronze].¹⁷⁸

Jennifer R. March argues that Hesiod's version of the Oresteia myth shows that Clytemnestra and Aegisthus were co-conspirators in Agamemnon's death: she argues that the noun πατροφονεύς (29) is unlikely to refer to Clytemnestra, since it is separated from μήτηρ by both a line break and the adversative particle δέ (30).¹⁷⁹ M.I. Davies concurs with this interpretation, noting that the passage focuses on Orestes' revenge on Clytemnestra, and therefore that “despite

¹⁷⁷ ὑποδηθεῖσα, translated here as “overpowered by,” is a term often occurring in marriage narratives to denote the “breaking” or “taming” of a maiden, through which she becomes submissive to her husband. Ann Bergren writes that the verb “denotes the power of men to ‘break’ wild creatures into civilized form—beasts through domestication, children through education, and virgins through marriage” (Bergren 1989: 4). For examples of the sexual or marital use of δαμάζω/δαμάω/δάμνημι, see *Il.* 3.301, 14. 198-9, 14.315-6, 14.353, and 18.432–34 and *h. Ven.* 3, 17, and 251.

¹⁷⁸ Trans. Most.

¹⁷⁹ As support for this claim, she cites *Od.* 3.197-8 because of its similar wording: ἐπεὶ καὶ κείνος ἐτίσατο πατροφονῆα, | Αἴγισθον δολόμητιν, ὃ οἱ πατέρα κλυτὸν ἔκτα (“since that son [Orestes] took vengeance on his father's slayer, | the guileful Aegisthus, because he slew his glorious father,” trans. Murray). See Ch. 2 of this dissertation for discussion of these lines of the *Odyssey*.

the fact that Aegisthos alone is called a murderer, Klytaimestra... may be presumed to have been either the protagonist or at the very least an equal partner in the murder of her husband.”¹⁸⁰ It seems, then, that Hesiod justifies Orestes’ matricide by emphasizing Clytemnestra’s role as Aegisthus’ co-conspirator.

March also argues that the passage dismisses the idea that Iphigeneia’s sacrifice impelled Clytemnestra to the murder. She writes that “no special guilt attaches to Agamemnon for the death of Iphigeneia, here called Iphimede, for she is murdered by the Greeks... and again she is saved by Artemis and immortalised... so it would not have been her death which gave Klytaimestra a motive for helping to kill Agamemnon.”¹⁸¹ There are several problems with this interpretation. First, the possibilities of revenge and lust as motives are not mutually exclusive. As we shall see, authors tend to play with Clytemnestra’s dual motives, alternately emphasizing one over the other even in the same work. The lust motive and the revenge motive coexist in multiple works; the focus on one does not negate the other. Rather, an author can choose to emphasize, or make his characters emphasize, one over the other as a rhetorical device. Second, the abrupt transition from the sacrifice of Iphimede to the revenge of Orestes suggests that the sacrifice *was* a factor in Clytemnestra’s crime. The positioning of Iphimede at the center of the annular structure in this passage suggests a focus on her sacrifice as a motive for the murder of Agamemnon. Moreover, Artemis’ intervention in the sacrifice and Iphimede’s subsequent transformation into “Artemis by the Road” (26) or Hecate, act as reminders of the importance of

¹⁸⁰ Davies 1969: 237.

¹⁸¹ March 1987: 89. March also discusses fragment 191 *PMG*, preserved in Pausanias 2.22.6, which gives Helen and Theseus as Iphigeneia’s parents; she argues that this shows that Iphigeneia’s death would not have been considered as Clytemnestra’s motivation for killing Agamemnon, since she would not have been avenging her own daughter with the murder (March 1987: 90).

protecting young daughters; indeed, Davies writes that “though [Iphimede] is made immortal, this event might well have driven her mother Klytaimnestra to kill Agamemnon with the motivation of revenge.”¹⁸² He notes that, although the fragment makes no such cause explicit, the structure of the passage and later writers’ engagement with Clytemnestra’s dual motivations suggest that Hesiod may have been experimenting with multiple possible motives.¹⁸³

A third problem with March’s argument is that her reading of fragment 23a M.-W. is predicated on a side-by-side reading with another fragment, 176 M.-W., which gives Clytemnestra’s affair with Aegisthus as the primary force behind the murder of Agamemnon.¹⁸⁴ It is preserved in the scholia to Euripides’ *Orestes* as commentary on lines 249-50, and pairs a fragment of Stesichorus with a fragment of Hesiod, both giving Clytemnestra’s motive as sexual in nature.¹⁸⁵

Στησίχορος φησιν ὡς θύων τοῖς θεοῖς Τυνδάρεως Ἀφροδίτης ἐπελάθετο· διὸ ὀργισθεῖσαν τὴν θεὸν διγάμους τε καὶ τριγάμους καὶ λειψάνδρους αὐτοῦ τὰς θυγατέρας ποιῆσαι. ἔχει δὲ ἡ χρῆσις οὕτως· οὐνεκα Τυνδάρεος ῥέζων ποτὲ πᾶσι θεοῖς μούνας λάθετ’ ἠπιόδωρου Κύπριδος· κείνα δὲ {Τυνδαρέου κόραις} χολωσαμένα διγάμους τε καὶ τριγάμους τίθησι καὶ λιπεσάνορας... καὶ Ἡσίοδος δέ·

τῆσιν δὲ φιλομμειδῆς Ἀφροδίτη
ἠγάσθη προσιδούσα, κακὴν δὲ σφ’ ἔμβαλε φήμην.
Τιμάνδρη μὲν ἔπειτ’ Ἔχεμον προλιποῦσ’ ἐβεβήκει,
ἴκετο δ’ ἐς Φυλῆα φίλον μακάρεσσι θεοῖσιν·
ὥς δὲ Κλυταιμίστρη <προ>λιποῦσ’ Ἀγαμέμνονα δῖον
Αἰγίσθῳ παρέλεκτο καὶ εἴλετο χεῖρον’ ἀκοίτην·

¹⁸² Davies 1969: 237.

¹⁸³ Davies notes that “such motivation [i.e., revenge] may have been developed by Simonides... It was clearly part of the version of the legend known to Pindar... and other authors” (Davies 1969: 237 n.1).

¹⁸⁴ Aegisthus is never mentioned by name in fragment 23a M.-W., and the reference to him in line 29 is ambiguous at best; for discussion of this potential reference to Aegisthus as πατροφονεύς (29), see above (p. 67-8 and note 179).

¹⁸⁵ The lines of *Orestes* 249-50 are as follows: ἐπίσημον ἔτεκε Τυνδάρεως ἐς τὸν ψόγον | γένος θυγατέρων δυσκλεές τ’ ἀν’ Ἑλλάδα (“Marked for censure were the daughters Tyndareus bore, ill-famed throughout Greece,” trans. Kovacs). See also Merkelbach and West 1967: 84–85.

ὦς δ' Ἑλένη ἤσχυνε λέχος ξανθοῦ Μενελάου.

Stesichorus says that when Tyndareus was sacrificing to the gods he forgot Aphrodite: the goddess was angered and made his daughters twice-wed and thrice-wed and husband-deserters. The passage runs as follows: “because Tyndareus when sacrificing one day to all the gods forgot the Cyprian only, kindly in her giving; and she in anger made the daughters of Tyndareus twice-wed and thrice-wed and husband-deserters”¹⁸⁶... And Hesiod too:

Smile-loving Aphrodite
was angry with them when she saw them, and she
cast bad repute upon them.
Then Timandra left behind Echemus and ran away,
and came to Phyleus, who was dear to the blessed gods;
so too, Clytemnestra, leaving behind godly Agamemnon,
lay beside Aegisthus and preferred a worse husband;
so too Helen shamed the marriage bed of blond Menelaus.¹⁸⁷

March argues that Hesiod and Stesichorus considered Clytemnestra’s infidelity as the primary motive for her crime. But her analysis of fragment 176 M.-W. both ignores the implications of fragment 23a M.-W. (discussed above) and posits an unrealistic degree of narrative unity between fragments 23a M.-W. and 176 M.-W. Moreover, later authors like Pindar, Aeschylus, and Euripides explore the double motives for Clytemnestra’s crime, alternately emphasizing one over the other even in the same work as a rhetorical device. After all, such motives are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, a side-by-side reading of fragments 23a M.-W. and 176 M.-W. shows that Hesiod may have been playing with Clytemnestra’s dual motives; a similar phenomenon could have been active in Stesichorus.

We have seen that Stesichorus draws inspiration from earlier sources, adapting epic themes for choral lyric; conversely, his influence can be observed in other genres, especially drama. Laura Swift writes, “The influence of Stesichorus on Greek tragedy is generally

¹⁸⁶ Trans. Campbell. The Stesichorus fragment is numbered 223 *PMG*.

¹⁸⁷ Translation of Stesichorus Campbell’s; translation of Hesiod Most’s.

accepted. Indeed, scholars have gone as far as to call the poems ‘tragedies in embryo’, or to describe Stesichorean characterization as ‘a prototype of the tragic principal.’¹⁸⁸ However, due to the fragmentary nature of his work, this influence is primarily observed through allusion to general tropes rather than specific intertext. Swift notes that “much of our information comes from testimonia about the content of Stesichorus’ poem rather than from his original lines,” and therefore an argument about his language (rather than about plot or structure) is difficult.¹⁸⁹ Rather, she argues for a more nuanced interpretation of Stesichorus’ influence on the tragedians, using his *Oresteia* and *Thebais* as case studies. In what follows, I will examine Stesichorus’ influence on the dramatic characterization(s) of Clytemnestra.

We know from fragment 217 *PMG* that Stesichorus made several important changes to the *Oresteia* myth, and that the tragedians incorporated these into their own work. Fragment 217 *PMG*, a papyrus commentary, runs as follows:

ὁ τε Στησίχορος ἐχρήσατο διηγήμασιν, τῶν τε ἄλλων ποιητῶν οἱ πλείονες
 τῶν ἀφορμῶν ταῖς τούτου· μετὰ γὰρ Ὅμηρον καὶ Ἡσίοδον [οὐδενὶ] μᾶλλον
 Στησιχόρου [συμφωνοῦσι]· Αἰσχύλο[ς μὲν γὰρ] Ὀρέστ<ε>[ια]ν ποιήσα[ς]
 τριλογία[ν] Ἀγαμέμνον[α] Χοηφ[όρου]ς Εὐμεν[ίδας . . .] τὸν ἀναγ[νωρισμὸν] διὰ
 τοῦ βοστρύχο[υ]· Στησιχόρωι γὰρ ἔστιν [.....], Εὐριπίδης δὲ τὸ τ[όξον] τὸ
 Ὀρέστου ὅτι ἔστιν δε[δομέ]νον αὐτῷ δῶρον παρὰ τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος· παρ’ οἷ
 [μὲν γὰρ] λέγεται· δὲ τόξα μοι κερουλκά, δῶρα Λοξίου, | [οἷς εἶπ’] Ἀπόλλων μ’
 ἐξαμύνασθαι [θ]εῶν (Eur. Or. 268s.)· παρὰ δὲ Στησιχ[όρω]ι·

τόξα δέ τιν’ τάδε δώσω
 παλάμιασιν ἑμαῖσι κεκασμένα [...] ... [ἐ]πικρατέως
 βάλλειν·

[Εὐριπίδ]ης δὲ καὶ τὴν Ἰφ[ιγένειαν] ἐποίησε γαμουμέ[νην Ἀχιλλεῖ] . . . σατ[]ρ

Stesichorus used narratives (of Homer? and Hesiod?), and most of the other poets used his material; for after Homer and Hesiod they agree above all with Stesichorus. Aeschylus, for example, in composing his trilogy the *Oresteia*—*Agamemnon*, *Choephoroi*, *Eumenides*—managed the recognition by means of the

¹⁸⁸ Swift 2015: 125.

¹⁸⁹ Swift 2015: 127.

lock of hair: this is in Stesichorus. Euripides says of Orestes' bow that it had been given to him as a gift by Apollo: his lines are, 'Give me the horn-tipped bow, the gift of Loxias, with which Apollo told me to ward off the goddesses' (*Orestes* 268f.); and in Stesichorus we find

and I shall give you this bow fitted (?) to my hands... for shooting mightily.

And Euripides made Iphigenia (come to Aulis) to marry Achilles.¹⁹⁰

Swift argues that this passage demonstrates more about Stesichorus' influence than the "mere plot outline."¹⁹¹ First, she says that the connection of Stesichorus' recognition scene with Aeschylus' in the *Choephoroi* suggests both that the offering of a lock of hair places the scene at the tomb of Agamemnon, and that "it is most likely that the person who recognises Orestes is Electra, in which case we can infer that the poem to some extent explored her changing emotional state."¹⁹² She suggests that both of these innovations are crucial for establishing a connection between Orestes' return home and his act of matricide.¹⁹³ She also shows that the last line of the testimonium, which refers to Euripides' *Iphigeneia at Aulis*, means to connect Euripides' and Stesichorus' respective versions of Iphigeneia's death. She argues that this "confirms [Stesichorus'] interest in Clytemnestra's characterisation... Since Clytemnestra must

¹⁹⁰ Trans. Campbell.

¹⁹¹ Swift 2015: 127.

¹⁹² Swift 2015: 127. Swift notes that "the cutting of a lock indicates a grave offering, which suggests that some of the action took place at Agamemnon's tomb (at the least, Orestes must have visited the tomb to leave the lock), and the recognition may also have taken place there" (Swift 2015: 127). On the potential inclusion of Electra in this version of the story, she says that this "would represent a change to the Homeric version of the myth; while we cannot judge the exact role Stesichorus' poem played in this development, all the tragic versions of the myth adopt her as a significant figure" (Swift 2015: 128).

¹⁹³ "[L]ocating the action at the tomb of Agamemnon has a symbolic function, since it connects Orestes' return to the act of vengeance, and foregrounds his motivations for the matricide. Aeschylus makes similar use of this motif in *Choephoroi*, where the setting of the tomb allows the siblings to commune with their dead father and imagine the significance of the coming killings (315-509)" (Swift 2015: 128).

have also been a victim of the pretence [of Iphigeneia's marriage to Achilles], the story suggests an interest in exploring the origins of her hatred of Agamemnon..."¹⁹⁴ This passage tells us that Stesichorus may have been playing with multiple ways of increasing the narrative tension leading to Orestes' revenge.

The role of Apollo as Orestes' protector against the Erinyes also seems to have been a Stesichorean innovation. Swift argues that "the presence of the bow in Stesichorus shows that his Orestes too [like his Aeschylean and Euripidean counterparts] was tormented by the Erinyes, and that this was a significant plot element... The poet brings Apollo in as a character; he acts as Orestes' personal guardian, offering him a similar support against his enemies."¹⁹⁵ We see variations on Apollo's protection of Orestes, and indeed the bow, in both Aeschylus and Euripides: whereas Aeschylus makes Apollo wield the bow, with which he threatens to shoot the Erinyes, Euripides has Apollo give the bow to Orestes as a symbol of his patronage and a tool with which to protect himself.¹⁹⁶ Swift notes that we can fruitfully analyze Stesichorus' language (rather than simply his influence on plot or structure) in this fragment, and argues that

¹⁹⁴ Swift 2015: 129. Swift notes that this ruse was apparently also a theme of the *Cypria* (Swift 2015: 127). On Stesichorus' engagement with the Epic Cycle, see Carey 2015.

¹⁹⁵ Swift 2015: 129-30.

¹⁹⁶ Aeschylus' *Eumenides* 64-6: οὔτοι προδώσω· διὰ τέλους δέ σοι φύλαξ | ἐγγὺς παρεστὼς καὶ πρόσω δ' ἀποστατῶν | ἐχθροῖσι τοῖς σοῖς οὐ γενήσομαι πέπων ("I will not betray you: I will be your guardian to the end, whether standing close to you or a long way off, and I will not be soft towards your enemies," trans. Sommerstein. *Eumenides* 179-84: ἔξω, κελεύω, τῶνδε δωμαίων τάχος | χωρεῖτ', ἀπαλλάσσεσθε μαντικῶν μυχῶν, | μὴ καὶ λαβοῦσα πτηνὸν ἀργηστὴν ὄφιν, | χρυσηλάτου θώμιγγος ἐξορμώμενον, | ἀνῆς ὑπ' ἄλγους μέλαν' ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων ἀφρόν, | ἐμοῦσα θρόμβους οὖς ἀφείλκυσας φόνου ("Out, I tell you, get out of this house at once! Get away from my inner prophetic sanctum, in case you find yourself on the receiving end of a winged flashing snake speeding from my golden bowstring, and vomit out in agony black foam taken from human bodies, bringing up the clots of blood that you have sucked," trans. Sommerstein). Similarly, Euripides' *Orestes* 268-70: δὸς τόξα μοι κερουλκά, δῶρα Λοξίου, | οἷς μ' εἶπ' Ἀπόλλων ἐξαμύνασθαι θεάς, | εἴ μ' ἐκφοβοῖεν μανιάσιν λυσσήμασιν ("Give me my bow of horn, gift of Loxias! Apollo told me to keep off the goddesses with it if they should frighten me with raving," trans. Kovacs).

“though the verbal details are different, the language of military protection acts as a link” between Stesichorus and Aeschylus and Stesichorus and Euripides; moreover, each tragedian adapts the motif of Apollo’s protection for his own purposes. Whereas Aeschylus’ Apollo retains his bow, thus signaling “the replacement of individual violence with formal justice,” Euripides’ Apollo is essentially absent from the action of the play, the Erinyes are portrayed as figments of Orestes’ imagination, and Orestes’ claim about the bow’s divine origins is never substantiated.¹⁹⁷ Swift argues that Euripides’ version “presents [the] motif [of Apollo’s patronage] in a way which fits with the play’s broader depiction of a dysfunctional heroic world... This degradation of the bow, and of Apollo’s aid, fits with the broader presentation of the matricide throughout the play as a futile and ignoble act rather than a terrible choice.”¹⁹⁸ Overall, then, this shows that Stesichorus’ innovations were popular with the tragedians, who adapted them for their own purposes.

Another fragment crucial for understanding Stesichorus’ influence on the tragedians is one preserved in Plutarch’s *De Sera Numinis Vindicta* (554f-555a) which discusses Clytemnestra’s dream:¹⁹⁹

τᾷ δὲ δράκων ἐδόκησε μολεῖν κάρα βεβρωτώμενος ἄκρον,
ἐκ δ’ ἄρα τοῦ βασιλεὺς Πλεισθενίδας ἐφάνη.

And it seemed to her that a snake came, the top of its head bloodstained,
and out of it appeared a Pleisthenid king.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ Swift 2015: 130.

¹⁹⁸ Swift 2015: 130-1.

¹⁹⁹ Davies and Finglass give this fragment the number 180 (2014: 219). Plutarch contextualizes the fragment of Stesichorus thus: ὥστε πρὸς τὰ γινόμενα καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἀποπλάττεσθαι τὸ τῆς Κλυταιμίστρας ἐνύπνιον τὸν Στησίχορον, οὕτωςί πως λέγοντα (“so Stesichorus is modelling the dream of Clytemnestra on life and reality when he speaks in this sort,” trans. De Lacy and Einarson).

²⁰⁰ Trans. Campbell.

Davies and Finglass interpret the bloodstained snake as Agamemnon and the Pleisthenid king as Orestes. They make this identification for two reasons. First, they note that the snake's "bloodstained crest correspond[s] to Agamemnon's head after its encounter with Clytemnestra's axe... Dead spirits were sometimes thought to retain the wounds which caused their deaths;"²⁰¹ second, "the dead were sometimes thought to come back as snakes... and heroes in particular were frequently associated with them; dead bodies could be thought to generate snakes."²⁰² Davies and Finglass argue that Stesichorus likely used the dream as a plot device designed to motivate a guilt-ridden Clytemnestra to send offerings to Agamemnon's tomb, ultimately facilitating the reunion of Orestes and Electra.²⁰³ Finglass also argues that the dream suggests "an interest in Clytemnestra's psychology and motivation," since it is her inner turmoil that motivates her offering at Agamemnon's tomb.²⁰⁴ Although the passage does not specifically indicate the motive behind the murder of Agamemnon, it does hint at Clytemnestra's culpability.

Davies and Finglass write that Stesichorus' version of the dream had a significant influence on Aeschylus and Sophocles in particular, who each use a dream to motivate

²⁰¹ Davies and Finglass 2014: 505. March concurs, writing that "the snake itself clearly stood for the dead Agamemnon, and its headwound suggests that an axe was used to kill him" (March 1987: 90). But March argues that because the passage does not identify who caused the snake's head wound, "there is no reason here to see Klytimestra as the principal criminal" (March 1987: 91). But March, like Davies and Finglass, associates the wound with an axe, which seems to be a logical choice of weapon if one intends to split open the head of one's adversary. If Stesichorus is indeed describing an axe wound, it would almost certainly have been a blow struck by Clytemnestra, since there is neither literary nor visual evidence suggesting that Aegisthus ever wielded an axe. See Prag 1985 for a comprehensive study of the visual depictions of the murder of Agamemnon. See especially M. Davies 1987, Prag 1985: 82-3, Prag 1991, Marshall 2001, and Davies and Finglass 2014 on the topic of the axe as a murder weapon. The snake's head wound thus hints at Clytemnestra's role in the murder, especially in tandem with Davies' and Finglass' argument that the dream reflects her guilt and fear.

²⁰² Davies and Finglass 2014: 505.

²⁰³ Davies and Finglass 2014: 504-5.

²⁰⁴ Finglass 2018: 32.

Clytemnestra to send offerings to Agamemnon's tomb, thus facilitating a recognition scene between Orestes and Electra.²⁰⁵ Finglass argues that Aeschylus' version is perhaps the most similar to Stesichorus' in its characterization of her guilt and fear.²⁰⁶ In *Choephoroi* 535-9, we learn that the dream, in which she gives birth to and suckles a serpent, causes her emotional distress, which motivates her to send offerings to Agamemnon's tomb.²⁰⁷ Here, we see that Clytemnestra's offering at Agamemnon's tomb is a direct consequence of her dream; Finglass hypothesizes that this is due to Stesichorus' influence.²⁰⁸

An additional link between Aeschylus and Stesichorus is evident in the image of the Pleisthenid king springing from the cloven head of the serpent. This suggests a parallel with the myth of Athena's birth, which Aeschylus uses in the *Eumenides* (658-66) to acquit Orestes of matricide. As proof of his argument that the mother is not a parent, Apollo offers the example of Athena, born from the head of Zeus. This evidence is used to show that Orestes did not commit a crime against his family; rather, he protected his father's line by killing Clytemnestra.

²⁰⁵ Davies and Finglass 2014: 504-5. Finglass notes elsewhere that Sophocles does not include the dream's usual snake imagery (Finglass 2018: 32). See Sophocles *Electra* 410-30 for the dream, and for a compelling interpretation of Sophocles' version of the dream see Ormand 1999: 70-72.

²⁰⁶ Finglass 2018: 32.

²⁰⁷ *Choephoroi* 535-9:

ἡ δ' ἐξ ὕπνου κέκλαγγεν ἐπτοημένη.	535
πολλοὶ δ' ἀνῆθον, ἐκτυφλωθέντες σκότῳ,	
λαμπτήρες ἐν δόμοισι δεσποίνης χάριν·	
πέμπει τ' ἔπειτα τάσδε κηδεῖους χοάς,	
ἄκος τομαῖον ἐλπίσασα πημάτων.	

She cried out in terror in her sleep,
and many house-lights which had been extinguished into blind darkness
blazed up again for the sake of our mistress.

Then she sent these drink-offerings of mourning,
hoping for a decisive cure for her troubles. (trans. Sommerstein)

²⁰⁸ Finglass 2018: 35.

Similarly, Stesichorus' version of the dream, in which the Pleisthenid king springs from the head of the snake, suggests a focus on Orestes' paternal lineage in a way that downplays Clytemnestra's role. This image thus links Orestes more strongly with his father than with his mother, suggesting that Orestes springs directly from his father's bloodline and will avenge his father's death as his true heir. Aeschylus, however, twists the Stesichorean presentation of the snakelike Agamemnon and his son, instead using snake imagery to associate Orestes with his duplicitous mother.²⁰⁹ Swift argues that Aeschylus deliberately "inverts the Stesichorean version by identifying Orestes with his mother instead of with his father," and that this adds a layer of "moral complexity" to Orestes' ultimate act of vengeance.²¹⁰ By foregrounding Orestes' connection with his mother, Aeschylus "presents the killing as an act of betrayal rather than simple vengeance."²¹¹ Swift also argues that members of the audience who were familiar with Stesichorus' version of the dream would "appreciate how the changes to the dream highlight Orestes' dilemma."²¹² By inverting the imagery of the Stesichorean dream, Aeschylus at once complicates Orestes' motivations and connects him with his serpent-like mother.

In this section, we have seen that Stesichorus interacts with earlier poets and influences later ones in his depictions of Clytemnestra. Although his *Oresteia* is heavily fragmented, we can trace the interconnections among these fragments, as well as see his influence on the development of the *Oresteia* myth in later authors. We see even in the fragments an exploration of Clytemnestra's character and motivations, which is picked up by later authors in their versions of the myth.

²⁰⁹ See the following chapter for further discussion of this theme.

²¹⁰ Swift 2015: 132.

²¹¹ Swift 2015: 132.

²¹² Swift 2015: 132.

3.2. SIMONIDES

A commentary on a papyrus fragment attributed to Simonides has also been interpreted as an account of Clytemnestra's motivations for the murder of Agamemnon. Much like Stesichorus' *Oresteia*, the evidence for a Simonidean *Oresteia* is fragmentary and thus highly speculative. Using the same methodology as for Stesichorus, we can cautiously confirm Simonides' treatment of certain themes suggestive of the *Oresteia* myth, though it is difficult to make definitive assertions to this effect. Much like in the fragments of Stesichorus' *Oresteia*, the language used and themes evoked in this fragment imply an interest in Clytemnestra's psyche.

Although the fragment is not dated, Simonides was alive between 556-468 BCE and active in Athens "for much of the time from the period of the tyrants onward."²¹³ March argues that Simonides' poetry acts as a link between Stesichorus' *Oresteia* and Pindar's *Pythian* 11 (which she dates to 474), since he was popular at Athens in the late 6th to early 5th century BCE. According to her, this chronology explains the popularity of the *Oresteia* myth in pre-Aeschylean visual art.²¹⁴ March argues that Simonides' version of the *Oresteia* myth was influenced by Stesichorus and in turn influenced both Pindar and Aeschylus.²¹⁵ Let us now examine the evidence for Clytemnestra's characterization in the fragment.

²¹³ March 1987: 93. Simonides was apparently summoned to the court of Hipparchus, who ruled from 527-514. In a testimonium from Aristotle's *Constitution of Athens* (Campbell 1991: testimonium 10), we hear that "Hipparchus was frivolous, amorous, and fond of the arts: it was he who sent for Anacreon and Simonides and the other poets" (ὁ δὲ Ἱππάρχος παιδιώδης καὶ ἐρωτικὸς καὶ φιλόμουσος ἦν καὶ τοὺς περὶ Ἀνακρέοντα καὶ Σιμωνίδην καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ποιητὰς οὗτος ἦν ὁ μεταπεμπόμενος, Campbell 1991: 338-9).

²¹⁴ March 1987: 92-3. She believes that the "sudden" surge in the popularity of the *Oresteia* myth during the fifth century cannot be explained by Stesichorus' influence, since his *Oresteia* was apparently popular between 40 and 100 years before *Pythian* 11 was composed (March 1987: 92-3). So her chronology of the development of the *Oresteia* myth from Stesichorus onward is as follows: Stesichorus—Simonides—Pindar—Aeschylus.

²¹⁵ March 1987: 93-8.

The fragment, *P.Oxy.* 2434, seems to describe a mother's grief following the sacrifice of her daughter:

φῆσι κωκυτὸν [] τούτῳ ὁ Σιμωνίδης ἄν
 σημαίνοι τὸ περὶ τοῦ [] οὐ[ν εὐλόγως ἡ παρ []
]τον ἐθρήνουν ἐπιό [] ἔοικεν δαιμονι []
 ἐτοῖμοι στενά[ζ]ε[ιν γ]ὰρ τὸ ὄλον συνημμ[έν- ἄν]
 γένοιτο ῥῆσις περὶ το[] τὴν σφαζομέν[ην
] ν
 τὸν λαὸν αὖει [] ν ιτ' ἐπὶ τὸ ἐναν[τί]ον [.....]ι
 ἐξαλλαγή. μητρὶ δὲ ὑπ' οὐδενὸς ἄν ἠττηθείη ἡ λύπη,
 ἀναιρουμένων δὲ τῶν παίδων ἐ]τοῖμον στενάζειν. φέρεται [δὲ
 καὶ] ἄλλη γραφή· ἐμοὶ δὲ τίς ἄμφατις (ἔστι)· πάνυ σαφῆς ἀπὸ
 τῆς προκειμ[ένης] ἐξηγήσεως. παρατηρεῖν δεῖ[ῖ] ὅτι ἠθικῶ[ς]
 πέπλασται ὁ λόγος αὐ[] γὰρ ἐν Μυκάναισι δ' αὐ[]τασευε
 κωκυτὸν ἠκο[]πειν· οἱ δὲ γε κωκύοντες [ἔ]πρασον ὅτι οὐχὶ
 ἀναιρε[σις φα]ύλη ἀλλὰ ἐπὶ τιμῇ τοῦ δαίμ[ον]ίου· τοῦτο δὲ αὐτὸ
 ἠθικῶς ἀπήγ[γειλ]εν τῆ[ι] ἀναφωνήσει χρυσά[μενος] α[]το τίς ἄμφατις ἔσται
 Κ [] ε οἱ βαρεῖα λαί[λαψ
 ε]ῦρυχορ[

Says 'wailing' ...: by this Simonides might (be indicating) the matter of... reasonably... they mourned... it seemed good (to the deity?)...

'(they) certain to groan'... for the sense (of) taken together would be a speech about... the one being slain...

'(she?) calls on the people'...by a change to the opposite. And no one could outdo a mother in her grief, and when one's children are being killed 'groaning' is 'certain.' Another reading is found: 'and for me what... is there?' The reading is quite comprehensible in the light of the present explanation. One must note that the sentence has been given an expressive form...

'for... in Mycenae... -ed wailing...': the wailers were (so?) acting because it is not a trivial killing but done to honour a deity. This too he has described expressively by using the exclamation 'and for me what... will there be?'

'... grievous hurricane...'

'spacious...'²¹⁶

P.Oxy. 2434 evokes the death of Iphigeneia. The poem seems to have reflected on the grief and lamentation caused by the sacrifice of a female victim, apparently demanded by a god or goddess. Moreover, the poem's reference to Mycenae and the focus on the mother's grief-

²¹⁶ Trans. Campbell.

motivated actions seems to conjure Clytemnestra.²¹⁷ The focus on and rationalization of Clytemnestra's grief suggests that Simonides was considering her characterization in a nuanced way, perhaps hinting at revenge as a motive for the murder of Agamemnon.²¹⁸ Moreover, the rhetorical questions appearing just after the discussion of the mother's grief are similar to those seen in tragedy when a character's situation is so dire as to warrant a desperate action.²¹⁹ We might cautiously interpret these questions in the same way, especially since they are contextualized by the mother's grief; they potentially foreshadow the murder of Agamemnon as an act of retribution. Despite the fact that there is no outright discussion of vengeance in *P.Oxy.* 2434, the passage's focus on maternal grief, lamentation, and helplessness suggests a concern for the way in which the sacrifice of a child could influence her mother's actions.

Although we can make very few definitive claims about Simonides' *Oresteia*, *P.Oxy.*

2434 suggests a portrayal of a mother whose daughter has been sacrificed, and perhaps a

²¹⁷ March is quick to note that Mycenae is not a universally agreed-upon setting for the Oresteia myth (March 1987: 94). Indeed, the scholiast on Euripides' *Orestes* 46 (Schwartz 1887) gives the options proposed by various authors: φανερόν ὅτι ἐν Ἄργει ἢ σκηνὴ τοῦ δράματος ὑπόκειται. Ὅμηρος δὲ ἐν Μυκῆναις φησὶ τὰ βασιλεία Ἀγαμέμνονος, Στησίχορος [frg. 39] δὲ καὶ Σιμωνίδης [frg. 207] ἐν Λακεδαίμονι. ("It is clear that the setting of the play is in Argos. Homer says that the palace of Agamemnon was in Mycenae, but Stesichorus and Simonides say that it was in Lacedaimonia," trans. my own). March believes that the mother in the poem is Clytemnestra and that the mourners in Mycenae are her subjects; she argues that "perhaps it is she who calls out upon the people (in protest?)" (March 1987: 94). If this is true, it would mean that Simonides' Clytemnestra attempts to persuade the people to rise up to avenge Iphigeneia's death. Prag remarks that the scholiast's note of the Laconian setting of his Oresteia myth contradicts the poem's ἐν Μυκάναισι, which leads Prag to hypothesize that "unless the ancient commentator made a mistake over the setting... Simonides wrote two *Oresteias*" (Prag 1985: 77).

²¹⁸ See Vermeule 1966 and M. I. Davies 1969 on Simonides' use of Iphigeneia's death in the development of the revenge motive. Vermeule writes that the sympathy expressed in this fragment suggests that "perhaps Simonides, excellent psychologist, is exploring the way Klytaimnestra's grief hardens to grimness while Agamemnon gathers glory abroad" (Vermeule 1966: 12).

²¹⁹ On this kind of deliberation in Greek tragedy, see McWhorter 1910 (especially the table on pg. 159 for a summary of the different forms of these questions).

development of revenge as a motivating factor for Clytemnestra's later actions. Simonides' treatment of this theme, and the way in which he portrays the mother's situation as hopeless, suggests an interest in Clytemnestra's psyche and the motivations behind the murder of Agamemnon.

3.3. PINDAR

Perhaps the clearest and most concise exploration of Clytemnestra's dual motives is in Pindar's *Pythian* 11. As we have seen with both Stesichorus and Simonides, Pindar displays a similar interest in Clytemnestra's psyche. In his version of the myth, both of her motives carry equal weight: it is the reader's prerogative to decide whether one is more likely than the other. By not explicitly confirming one motive over the other, Pindar invites us to explore his Clytemnestra's psyche and the ways in which she engages earlier models for her characterization.

Pindar's *Pythian* 11, composed in celebration of the victory of the Theban athlete Thrasydaeus in either 474 or 454 BCE, is striking for a 20-line digression that Leslie Kurke characterizes as a "mini-*Oresteia*."²²⁰ Scholars have long puzzled over the function of this "mini-*Oresteia*" within the ode and wondered whether we can look for resonances with Aeschylus' *Oresteia* as evidence for the date of the ode's composition.²²¹ Although scholars remain divided on these issues, they agree that Pindar's ode is an important moment in the

²²⁰ Kurke 2013: 102. As Finglass points out, the characterization of *Pythian* 11 as "a 'Little *Oresteia*' (Race), 'Pindar's *Oresteia*' (Robbins (1986), or 'Pindar's miniature *Oresteia*' (Hornblower (2004))" is elitist, since it regards the cosmopolitan Aeschylus as prior to and better than the provincial Pindar (Finglass 2007: 15). Finglass adds that because of this inherently elitist mindset, "the *Oresteia* could never be referred to as 'Aeschylus' *Pythian Eleven*'" (Finglass 2007: 15).

²²¹ On the argument for a composition date of 474, see Fraenkel 1950, Von der Mühl 1958, Vermeule 1966, Young 1968, Prag 1985, and March 1987. On the argument for a composition date of 454 based on comparison with Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, see Bowra 1936, Düring 1943, Herington 1984, and Kurke 2013. Finglass (2007) seems to remain neutral.

development of the Oresteia myth, largely for its consideration of Clytemnestra's dual motives.

In this section, I will discuss the influence of *Pythian* 11 on the development of the Oresteia myth, handling as necessary the issues of the poem's chronology, narrative structure, and intertextual relationships with earlier poetry and Aeschylus' *Oresteia*.

Two scholia, likely drawing from "Pythian victor lists" give two different composition dates for the ode: 474 and 454 BCE.²²² The two scholia read as follows:

A. (Σ Inscr. a. = ii.254.1-2 Drachmann): γέγραπται ἡ ᾠδὴ Θρασυδαίῳ παιδὶ νικήσαντι κη' Πυθιάδα [474] καὶ λγ' [454] διάυλον ἢ στάδιον ἄνδρας.

The ode was written for the boy Thrasydaeus when he defeated men in the 28th Pythiad [474] and in the 33rd [454] in the diaulos or the stadion.

B. (Σ Inscr. b = ii.254.6-9 Drachmann): ἄλλως· Θρασυδαίῳ Θηβαίῳ σταδιεῖ. γέγραπται μὲν ἡ ᾠδὴ τῷ προκειμένῳ νικήσαντι τὴν λγ' Πυθιάδα [454] διαύλω. οὐκ εἰς τὴν τοῦ διαύλου δὲ νίκην γράφει, ἀλλ' εἰς τὴν τοῦ σταδίου.

Otherwise: For Theban Thrasydaeus, winner of the stadion. The ode was written for the aforementioned victor in the diaulos at the 33rd Pythiad [454]. He didn't write it for the victory in the diaulos, but for the victory in the stadion.²²³

Finglass notes that "neither scholium has a secure text," and that B in particular contradicts itself several times; thus, it is difficult to determine the composition date from these scholia alone.²²⁴

Because of this, scholars have turned to all manner of comparanda to date the ode, including representations of the Oresteia myth in visual art, parallels in the language and motifs of other versions of the myth, and the historical and performance context(s) which could have influenced Pindar. Despite these numerous sources of comparanda, the date of the ode's composition is still uncertain. I summarize some of the principal arguments from each school below.

²²² Kurke 2013: 102.

²²³ Finglass 2007: 5–6. Finglass gives the text of the two scholia without translation; translations of these passages are my own.

²²⁴ Finglass 2007: 5-7.

Writing of the Boston *Oresteia* krater, which depicts Clytemnestra actively involved in the murder of Agamemnon, Emily Vermeule writes that the krater does not seem to have been influenced by any versions of the *Oresteia* myth earlier than Aeschylus'.²²⁵ The vase's "shape and ornament" are consistent with other vases produced between 475 and 450 BCE, but Vermeule notes that the scenes depicted seem to have the closest correspondence with details presented in Aeschylus' version of the myth.²²⁶ Most notably, the vase depicts Clytemnestra, axe in hand, actively engaged in the murder of Agamemnon, who is ensnared in a thin robe; on the reverse, she brandishes her axe against Orestes, who attacks a lyre-playing Aegisthus. Vermeule writes that Pindar's ode does not provide evidence of such implements, which would push the vase's date to after 458.²²⁷ However, Vermeule does not adequately account for the influence of Stesichorus (who may have presented Clytemnestra with an axe) on the myth, nor the depiction of the axe in the *Foce del Sele* metopes.²²⁸ Rather, she writes that the Boston *Oresteia* krater must have been influenced by Aeschylus in its presentation of the death scenes of

²²⁵ March likewise considers red-figure pottery as evidence in her argument for the development of the *Oresteia* myth in the 5th century. She argues that "just before 500 BC, and lasting some thirty or forty years, there seems to have been a spate of Attic vases depicting the death of Aegisthos at Orestes' hands which suggest a sudden interest in the *Oresteia* legend" (March 1987: 92). However, as I have shown thus far, this interest was anything but "sudden;" rather, as I have shown, it was fairly well sustained during the Archaic and Classical periods.

²²⁶ Vermeule 1966: 10. Scholars generally agree that red-figure emerged after about 525 and 524 BCE. On the chronology of red-figure vase-painting, see especially Beazley 1963, Trendall and Webster 1971, and Mannack 2001.

²²⁷ This is the date of the original production of the *Oresteia*. As I have shown in Chapter 11 of *Greek Drama V: Studies in the Theatre of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries BCE*, edited by C. W. Marshall and Hallie Marshall, 145-59. London: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., although red-figure depictions of the deaths of Agamemnon and Cassandra could be dated to before Aeschylus' original production of the *Oresteia* in 458 BCE, scenes from Orestes' flight to Athens are directly influenced by Aeschylus' vision of the events (Simas 2020).

²²⁸ On the *Foce del Sele* metopes, see especially Montuoro 1938, Pemberton 1966, and Van Keuren 1989. Prag 1985 also discusses these in relation to vase painting.

Agamemnon and Aegisthus, though this is “a pity... for the date of [Pindar’s eleventh *Pythian*] ode, 474 B.C., would suit red-figure chronology handsomely.”²²⁹ Because the krater’s decoration is consistent with other vases painted in the so-called Mannerist style (painted between 475 and 425 BCE),²³⁰ but not consistent with details presented in Pindar’s version of the myth, Vermeule assumes that the vase must have relied on Aeschylus’ *Oresteia*. Thus, she subscribes to the theory of a composition date of 474 for the ode.

Ingemar Düring notes a great number of similarities between the ode and the *Oresteia*, which he contends prove the priority of the *Oresteia*.²³¹ He analyzes three categories of similarities between Pindar’s and Aeschylus’ versions of the *Oresteia* myth: “the verbal echoes, the similarity in the concentration of myth and apophthegms, and above all, the spirit prevailing in both poems.”²³² In addition, Düring argues that Pindar makes explicit the question introduced by Aeschylus: that of Clytemnestra’s motives. He notes that Pindar seems to tell the story in an “unparalleled manner,” which he believes was made possible by Aeschylus.²³³ However, despite Düring’s claim that these similarities confirm the priority of the *Oresteia*, there is nothing concrete in either work that supports this, and it is equally possible that *Pythian* 11, or indeed any of the works examined in this chapter, influenced Aeschylus in his adoption of these themes. In his discussion of Düring’s argument, Finglass notes that the idea that Aeschylus came first is elitist: “behind the arguments for Aeschylean priority lurks the feeling that the great tragedian’s

²²⁹ Vermeule 1966: 12.

²³⁰ On the Mannerists, see Mannack 2001.

²³¹ Düring 1943: 109–14.

²³² Düring 1943: 114. Finglass summarizes the main similarities found by Düring: “These [shared motifs] include the praise of μεσότης (52-4/ *Eum.* 526-30), criticism of tyranny (53/ *Ag.* 1365), the complaints of the people against their leaders (28/ *Ag.* 449-57), and the link between φθόνος and ὄλβος (29/ *Ag.* 471, 832-3)” (Finglass 2007: 11).

²³³ Düring 1943: 116.

greatest work must have influenced Pindar's much smaller, less famous poem, and not vice versa."²³⁴ As Finglass points out, when we consider the relationship between Aeschylus and Pindar, "we start from a position which already regards Aeschylus as primary, Pindar as secondary."²³⁵ This line of argument has been repeatedly reinforced in scholarship without much engagement with or acknowledgement of its elitist underpinnings.

The argument that Pindar could not have influenced Aeschylus also fails to consider the possibility of Hesiod's, Stesichorus', and Simonides' influence on the myth. While it is true that it is very difficult to make a concrete argument for Hesiod's, Stesichorus', or Simonides' specific influence because of the fragmentary nature of their work, the fragments I have examined above show that they may have been instrumental in the development of elements of the myth that are common to both Pindar's and Aeschylus' versions. As I have argued earlier, these may have included the presentation of multiple overlapping motives for Clytemnestra's act. As Finglass notes, "the possibility [of earlier poets' influence on the myth] remains open, and further weakens the position of those who support a late date for Pindar's poem on the grounds that Aeschylus could not have imitated it."²³⁶ It is entirely possible that both Pindar and Aeschylus were working from the same source material.

Leslie Kurke provides perhaps the most convincing argument for Aeschylean priority in her analysis of the cultural phenomena which could have influenced Pindar, though this argument likewise does not fully account for the role of earlier authors like Homer, Hesiod, Stesichorus, and Simonides in the development of the Oresteia myth. Kurke argues that the numerous scholarly attempts to "motivate or explain the intertextual dialogue" between *Pythian*

²³⁴ Finglass 2007: 15.

²³⁵ Finglass 2007: 15.

²³⁶ Finglass 2007: 16.

11 and the *Oresteia* overlook the ode's "specific, local performative contexts—religious, social, political, and economic."²³⁷ She writes that a composition date of 454 seems more plausible when accounting for the historical context, since the "Spartan coloring" of the ode dedicated to a Theban victor "makes little sense in 474 BCE, shortly after the end of the Persian Wars and Sparta's effort to oust Thebes from the Delphic Amphiktiony for medizing."²³⁸ Similarly, she argues, a date of 454 makes sense during the "First Peloponnesian War (461-446)... [when] Theban elites might well look to Sparta for help in resisting Athenian domination."²³⁹ Additionally, she reads Pindar's "politicking" in the ode—that is, his apparent linking of Thebes (home of Thrasydaeus), Sparta (the setting of the *Oresteia* myth), and Delphi (the proposed setting of the ode's performance)—as an assertion of a cultic network in competition with that advanced in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*. She argues that Pindar's triangulation of Thebes-Sparta-Delphi is a direct reaction against Aeschylus' presentation of a supreme Athens-Argos-Delphi cultic network.²⁴⁰ Moreover, Kurke posits that

by setting the murders of Agamemnon and Cassandra specifically at Amyklai (rather than just at Sparta, or in Lakonia) [Pindar] seems to want to re-establish an intimate linkage of place between the mythic violence and its compensating cult worship that Aeschylus' version conspicuously ruptures.²⁴¹

²³⁷ Kurke 2013: 103.

²³⁸ Kurke 2013: 128-9.

²³⁹ Kurke 2013: 129.

²⁴⁰ Kurke 2013: 134-7. She argues that Pindar reacts against Aeschylus' aetiology of "an Athenian ritual practice" presented in *Eum.* 9-14, where the connection between Athens and Delphi is deepened via references to Apollo's arrival in mainland Greece (Kurke 2013: 135-6). She suggests that Pindar is in fact asserting a competing cultic network that undercuts the Athenian supremacy advanced in *Eumenides*. Moreover, Pindar emphasizes Apollo's importance to his work by framing *Pythian* 11 with geographical markers significant to the god. This is particularly striking given the ode's presumed performance context, either a ritual for Apollo called the *Daphnephoria* or a "periodic staging of a *hieros gamos* in the Ismenion between Apollo and the local nymph Melia" (Kurke 2013: 127).

²⁴¹ Kurke 2013: 143.

Kurke interprets the details about the setting of the Oresteia myth (Λάκωνος, 16; Ἀμύκλαις, 32; and ἔδραισι Θεράπνας, 63) as Pindar’s reaffirmation of the legitimacy of epinikion as a poetic medium and as resistance to the “Athenian/Argive strategies of appropriation” of the Oresteia myth.²⁴²

Reading *Pythian* 11 with an understanding of the sociopolitical elements at play in its composition is indeed a more convincing, albeit still speculative, way of dating the ode. While Kurke ultimately provides intriguing evidence for the date of *Pythian* 11, a large part of her argument is predicated upon the idea that Pindar’s language and references are “tragic.” This is, of course, subject to the criticisms about elitism and circularity that I discussed earlier; further difficulties arise when we consider that a large part of Kurke’s argument about Pindar’s “tragic” language relies upon assumptions about the popularity of the Oedipus myth in tragedy.²⁴³ When Pindar emerges from his digression about the Oresteia myth, he wonders how he strayed so far from his intended topic:

ἦ ῥ', ὦ φίλοι, κατ' ἀμευσιπόρους τριόδους ἐδινήθην,
ὀρθὰν κέλευθον ἰὼν τὸ πρὶν· ἢ μέ τις ἄνεμος ἔξω πλόου
ἔβαλεν, ὡς ὄτ' ἄκατον εἰναλίαν; 40

My friends, did I become confused at the place where three roads meet despite travelling on a straight path beforehand? Or did some wind throw me off course, as if I were a small boat at sea?²⁴⁴

²⁴² Kurke 2013: 143-4. On Amyclae as a cult site with strong ties to the Oresteia myth, see Pausanias, who reports a cult of Agamemnon and Alexandra (Cassandra) there. He also notes that there was a statue of Clytemnestra next to the tomb of Agamemnon in the temple of Alexandra (*Descriptions of Greece* 3.19.6). For further discussion of this strange shrine at Amyclae, see Larson 1995: 83-4.

²⁴³ Kurke notes that there were multiple sources for the Oedipus myth in circulation before the advent of tragedy: “the well-known epic *Oidipodeia*, the first of the four epics of the Theban Cycle, and from sixth-century lyric.” (Kurke 2013: 116 n. 45). Of course, these are subject to the usual constraints of fragmentary or non-extant poetry. However, while Oedipus’ story was well-known before tragedy, the scholarly fixation on Oedipus-as-tragedy seems an internalization of Aristotle’s theory of tragedies wherein Oedipus is figured as the best kind of tragic hero.

²⁴⁴ Trans. Finglass.

Kurke focuses on Pindar's use of the word *τρίοδος*, which she argues acts as a shorthand for the tragic genre. She suggests that by emerging from his digression with a question about a wrong turn at the *τρίοδος*, Pindar signals that he took a tragic detour in the middle of his lyric ode. Her argument centers on the idea that *τρίοδος* generally connotes the stage, where the three *eisodoi* meet the *orchestra*.²⁴⁵ She argues that *τρίοδος* therefore functions as a shorthand for the tragic genre, and that Pindar, by contrasting the *τρίοδος* with the straight road, is in fact “map[ping] out a generic topography, in which epinikion represents the ‘straight road’ of praise, while tragedy is figured by the unstable and terrifying landscape of the ‘path-shifting crossroads.’”²⁴⁶ More specifically, Kurke believes that the *τρίοδος* refers to the tragic presentation of the Oedipus myth, perhaps including Aeschylus' lost Theban trilogy produced in 467, but also making reference to a choral passage in the *Agamemnon* (72-82) which alludes to the riddle of the Sphinx.²⁴⁷ She argues that Pindar's use of the word *τρίοδος* signals a tragic detour in the middle

²⁴⁵ See also Taplin 1983 on *τρίοδος* used to designate the theater space. In the discussion following Taplin's argument, Steiner notes that the *τρίοδος* structure of the theater space is particularly important for tragedy, where the choices faced by characters onstage are “structurally, topologically and existentially *undecidable*” (Steiner on Taplin 1983: 181). Thus, Steiner argues that the physical theater space underscores the difficulty of choice faced by tragic characters. On the early tragic connection of the term *τρίοδος* with the Oedipus myth, Kurke notes that the “only extant fragment of more than a single word likely to derive from one of the lost tragedies of Aeschylus' Theban trilogy of 467 actually contains the word *τρίοδος*, in the context of a description of the place where Oedipus and Laios met...” (Kurke 2013: 116-7). Certainly, *tri-* words, which often connote obscurity or difficulty of decision, are particularly important in many versions of the Oedipus myth (Rojcewicz 2018: 125-6). However, *τρίοδος* as metatheater is, of course, a sense of the term that arose from the development of the theatrical medium; absent the theatrical context, *τρίοδος* and related terms act as shorthand for a difficult or complicated decision. On *τρίοδος* as an indicator of *aporia* in decision-making, see the discussion following Taplin 1983 (175ff. but especially 181-3). In this context, Pindar must decide whether he should continue the story of the House of Atreus, or turn to celebration of Thrasymachus' victory; *τρίοδος* could simply indicate the viability of either choice for poetic treatment and thus the difficulty of deciding between the two.

²⁴⁶ Kurke 2013: 120.

²⁴⁷ Kurke 2013: 116-20. She suggests that Aeschylus' allusion to the Oedipus myth in the *Agamemnon* at lines 72-82 could have influenced Pindar's digression:

of the ode whereby he engages in, and ultimately wins, an artistic competition with Aeschylus. While this is an intriguing interpretation of the ode, the inclusion of the τρίοδος in *Pythian* 11 does not necessarily signal a reference to Oedipus, and even then does not necessarily confirm the priority of tragedy. Despite Kurke’s compelling reading of the ode, the evidence she presents in support of a composition date of 454 still relies on the presupposition of tragedy’s priority.

With these considerations as context, I move into discussion of the ode’s presentation of the Oresteia myth. *Pythian* 11 begins with an address to the daughters of Cadmus, fitting since it

ἡμεῖς δ’ ἀτίται σαρκὶ παλαιᾷ	
τῆς τὸτ’ ἀρωγῆς ὑπολειφθέντες	
μίμνομεν ἰσχὺν	
ἰσόπαιδα νέμοντες ἐπὶ σκῆπτροις·	75
ὃ τε γὰρ νεαρὸς μυελὸς στέρνων	
ἐντὸς ἀνάσσων	
ἰσόπρεσβυς, Ἄρης δ’ οὐκ ἔνι χώρα,	
τό θ’ ὑπεργήρων, φυλλάδος ἤδη	
κατακαρφομένης, τρίποδας μὲν ὁδοῦς	80
στείχει, παιδὸς δ’ οὐδὲν ἀρείων	
ὄναρ ἡμερόφαντον ἀλαίνει.	

But we, who because of our ancient flesh could not then contribute
to the force in support, and were left behind,
remain here, guiding
our childlike strength upon staffs.
For the immature marrow
that rules in a child’s breast
is like that of an old man, and there is no Ares in that realm;
while extreme old age, its leaves already
withering, walks its way
on three feet, no stronger than a child,
a dream-vision wandering through the day. (trans. Sommerstein)

These lines clearly allude to the riddle of the Sphinx; on this, see Fraenkel’s (1950) note on *Ag.* 80. Kurke argues that the phrase τρίποδας μὲν ὁδοῦς in line 80 “fleetingly conjures an image of the crossroads,” and that this is a metatheatrical reference to the tragic genre (Kurke 2013: 119-20). If this is in fact metatheatrical, it creates a potentially humorous effect wherein the chorus of Argive elders wonder aloud how old men like themselves physically made it into the theater.

is dedicated to a Theban victor, Thrasydaeus.²⁴⁸ This is followed by a brief description of Thrasydaeus' victory, and then an abrupt transition into the Oresteia myth following a description of the setting for Thrasydaeus' victory in the Pythian Games.²⁴⁹ The passage runs as follows:

τὸν δὴ φονευομένου πατρὸς Ἀρσινόα Κλυταιμνήστρας
χειρῶν ὕπο κρατερῶν ἐκ δόλου τροφὸς ἄνελε δυσπενθέος,
ὅποτε Δαρδανίδα κόραν Πριάμου
Κασσάνδραν πολιῶ χαλκῶ σὺν Ἀγαμεμνονία
ψυχᾷ πόρευς Ἀχέροντος ἀκτὰν παρ' εὐσκιον
νηλῆς γυνά. πότερόν νιν ἄρ' Ἴφιγένει' ἐπ' Εὐρίπῳ
σφαχθεῖσα τῆλε πάτρας ἔκνισεν βαρυπάλαμον ὄρσαι χόλον,
ἢ ἑτέρῳ λέχει δαμαζομέναν
ἔννουχοι πάραγον κοῖται; τὸ δὲ νέαις ἀλόχοις
ἔχθιστον ἀμπλάκιον καλύψαι τ' ἀμάχανον
ἀλλοτρίαῖσι γλώσσαις·
κακολόγοι δὲ πολῖται.
ἴσχει τε γὰρ ὄλβος οὐ μείονα φθόνον·
ὁ δὲ χαμηλὰ πνέων ἄφαντον βρέμει.
θάνεν μὲν αὐτὸς ἦρωσ Ἀτρεΐδας
ἴκων χρόνῳ κλυταῖς ἐν Ἀμύκλαις,
μάντιν τ' ὄλεσσε κόραν, ἐπεὶ ἀμφ' Ἑλένα πυρωθέντων
Τρώων ἔλυσε δόμους ἀβρότατος. ὁ δ' ἄρα γέροντα ξένον
Στρόφιον ἐξίκετο, νέα κεφαλά,
Παρνασοῦ πόδα ναίοντ'· ἀλλὰ χρονίῳ σὺν Ἄρει
πέφνεν τε ματέρα θῆκε τ' Αἴγισθον ἐν φοναῖς.

As his father was being slaughtered by the mighty hands of Clytemnestra,
the nurse Arsinoia snatched him away from her baneful treachery,
when with the grey bronze Clytemnestra dispatched Dardanid Priam's daughter,
the girl Cassandra,
to the shady shore of Acheron along with the soul of Agamemnon—
the pitiless woman. So was it that the sacrifice of Iphigenia at the Euripus,
far from her fatherland, provoked her to raise her heavy-handed anger?
Or were her nightly couplings leading her astray,
enthralled as she was to another man's bed? That offence is most hateful in
young wives and impossible to conceal

²⁴⁸ Victory apparently ran in Thrasydaeus' family: both he and his father Pythonicus (mentioned in line 44) were apparently victors. Some scholars believe that his grandfather was also a successful athlete. On this, see Finglass 2007: 1-5.

²⁴⁹ Finglass gives this location as "the plain of Cirrha, to the south of Delphi," where the exiled Orestes was hosted by Strophius, Anaxibia, and Pylades (Finglass 2007: 86).

because of other people's tongues:
 one's fellow-townsmen are scandal-mongers.
 For wealth incurs an envy no less than itself,
 whereas the lowly man blusters unheard.
 The very son of Atreus, the warrior, was killed
 in famous Amyclae when at last he returned,
 and he brought destruction on the prophetic maiden,
 when he despoiled the houses of the Trojans of their luxury, set on fire because of
 Helen.
 But Orestes, the young lad, came to the old man Strophius, his family friend,
 who dwelt at the foot of Parnassus. With Ares' eventual help,
 he slew his mother and laid Aegisthus in gore.²⁵⁰

Pindar follows this digression with several questions to his friends about how he arrived at the subject of the Oresteia myth.²⁵¹ These questions are picked up in scholarship on the ode, where many scholars wonder about the relevance of the Oresteia myth to the poem's overall theme. Wilamowitz proposed that the ode constitutes Pindar's disavowal of tyranny, an especially important sentiment under the circumstances of his return to Thebes from Sicily in 462.²⁵² He argues that the death of Clytemnestra represents the fall of tyrants; Bowra concurs.²⁵³ However, D.C. Young argues that this interpretation relies too heavily upon Pindar's personal life, preferring the explanation that the ode uses the Oresteia myth to advise a life of *μεσότης* to Thrasydaeus and his family.²⁵⁴ Indeed, the ode's focus on *φθόνος*, *ὄλβος*, and public reputation seems to encourage proper behavior for one's station, a message perhaps quite apt for a young man experiencing his first taste of fame. Kurke posits that the myth represents a generic competition between lyric and tragedy, wherein the ode's tragic detour ultimately strengthens Pindar's claim of lyric supremacy.²⁵⁵ While all interesting theories, they rely heavily on

²⁵⁰ Trans. Finglass 2007.

²⁵¹ On the "break-off" formula here, see Kurke 2013 and Waldo 2019: 29–32.

²⁵² Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1922: 263.

²⁵³ Bowra 1936.

²⁵⁴ Young 1968.

²⁵⁵ Kurke 2013. See also Waldo 2019: 25–32.

evidence external to the ode and presuppose the date of the ode's composition. Finglass offers perhaps the most compelling interpretation of the function of the Oresteia myth in the ode, especially since it requires nothing external to the ode. He argues that *Pythian* 11 is about the victor Thrasydaeus as a manifestation of his father's legacy: Orestes, who avenges Agamemnon and causes him to be remembered, is "a remarkably effective mythological parallel" for Thrasydaeus, who renews his own father's glory by winning in the games.²⁵⁶ Finglass argues that Pindar paints Clytemnestra as a formidable adversary to her son in order to characterize Orestes' matricide as agonistic, thereby strengthening the parallel with Thrasydaeus. While Pindar's reason for his use of the Oresteia myth in *Pythian* 11 may remain unknown, the idea of Orestes as a positive exemplum for Thrasydaeus seems to fit well with the overall message of the ode.

The structure of Pindar's digression has attracted much scholarly attention, not least because of the compactness of the mythic narrative. Finglass writes that the "smallness of the account is itself a source of pleasure: if Aeschylus' trilogy is a Colossus cut from a rock, Pindar's myth is a finely carved head on a cherry-stone."²⁵⁷ What Aeschylus treats in 3,796 lines Pindar covers in a mere 22; moreover, he treats the myth with remarkable complexity given its brevity. Finglass notes that Pindar covers most of the main events of the Oresteia myth, beginning *in medias res* for dramatic effect.²⁵⁸ He summarizes these main events as follows:²⁵⁹

Usual sequence of the myth	Pindar's account of the myth
1. Helen commits adultery	6. Agamemnon is killed
2. Iphigenia is sacrificed	8. The Nurse rescues Orestes
3. Clytemnestra commits adultery	7. Cassandra is killed

²⁵⁶ Finglass 2007: 44-5.

²⁵⁷ Finglass 2007: 35.

²⁵⁸ Finglass 2007: 35-6. For more on Pindar's "customary *Ringkomposition*" in this ode, see Young 1968: 4-5.

²⁵⁹ Finglass 2007: 35-6. Pindar repeats the murders of Agamemnon and Cassandra twice each.

4. Troy is sacked	2. Iphigenia is sacrificed
5. Agamemnon returns	3. Clytemnestra commits adultery
6. Agamemnon is killed	6. Agamemnon is killed
7. Cassandra is killed	5. Agamemnon returns
8. The Nurse rescues Orestes	7. Cassandra is killed
9. Orestes arrives at Strophius in Phocis	4. Troy is sacked
10. Orestes kills Clytemnestra and Aegisthus	1. Helen commits adultery
	9. Orestes arrives at Strophius in Phocis
	10. Orestes kills Clytemnestra and Aegisthus

According to Finglass, by opening *in medias res* and repeatedly circling back to Clytemnestra's role, Pindar draws the audience's attention to her motives and the consequences of her actions.²⁶⁰ Moreover, by repeating certain events like the murders of Agamemnon and Cassandra, Pindar emphasizes their importance to Clytemnestra's development as a character. This repetition sets the stage for Pindar's examination of her dual motives.

Pindar gives Clytemnestra full responsibility for crafting the plot and carrying out the murders of both Agamemnon and Cassandra. Finglass writes that both χειρῶν ὑπο κρατερῶν and δόλου are meant to be taken with Κλυταιμνήστρας, indicating that she is both the muscle and the brains behind Agamemnon's murder.²⁶¹ The detail that she "dispatched" (πόρευ') both Agamemnon and Cassandra to the shores of the Acheron with "grey bronze" (πολιῶ χαλκῶ) underscores her role in plotting and carrying out these murders. Moreover, Pindar's use of the phrase νηλῆς γυνά to characterize Clytemnestra places the blame for the murders squarely on her, since it is her hard-heartedness that ultimately steels her to the deed.²⁶² He gives Clytemnestra an active hand in carrying out the murders; rather than transferring any agency to

²⁶⁰ Finglass 2007: 36.

²⁶¹ Finglass 2007: 88-90.

²⁶² I read in νηλῆς γυνά a potential allusion to Hesiod's account of Orestes' vengeance, where he kills Clytemnestra νηλεί χαλκῶι (fr. 23a M.-W. line 30). Through his use of the adjective νηλής, Pindar associates his Clytemnestra with the Hesiodic weapon that kills her, seemingly suggesting Clytemnestra's own bronze-like—or brazen—qualities: pitilessness, hardness, and sharpness.

Aegisthus, Pindar emphasizes Clytemnestra's culpability. This sets up his exploration of her dual motives: revenge for the sacrifice of Iphigeneia and lust for Aegisthus.

Pindar explores the lust motive by associating the deaths of Agamemnon and Cassandra with the destruction caused by Helen.²⁶³ He recounts their deaths for the second time immediately following six lines of *gnomai* on the dangers of adultery, then transitions into a brief summary of Helen's role in the Trojan War. Lines 33-4 contain a reference to Helen's role as *casus belli*: ἐπεὶ ἄμφ' Ἑλένα πυρῶθέντων | Τρώων ἔλυσε δόμους ἀβρότατος ("when he despoiled the houses of the Trojans of their luxury, set on fire because of Helen").²⁶⁴ While these lines do not make Helen's adultery explicit, they remind the reader that her affair with Paris is the reason for the destruction of Troy. This creates a chain of causality wherein Helen's infidelity is figured as the catalyst for a series of events detrimental to patriarchal society; this chain begins with a tryst that causes large-scale destruction and culminates in an affair that causes the (small-scale, though nonetheless significant) destruction of the household. Aeschylus makes a similar rhetorical move: although Helen never appears onstage in the *Oresteia*, her

²⁶³ The connection of Clytemnestra and Helen perhaps alludes to Hesiod's and Stesichorus' characterizations of the Tyndarid women as naturally unfaithful. In both accounts, Aphrodite becomes angry with the daughters of Tyndareus, which results in their infidelity. For Stesichorus, this is because Tyndareus omits Aphrodite from his sacrifices, which provokes her to make his daughters "twice-wed and thrice-wed and husband-deserters" (διγάμους τε καὶ τριγάμους τίθησι καὶ λιπесάνορας, fr. 223 *PMG*, Sch. Eur. *Or.* 249-50). I note potential allusions to this in the *Agamemnon* in compound adjectives ending in -άνωρ: in the first instance, at *Ag.* 62, the Chorus calls Helen πολυάνωρ, "with many husbands," referring to her role as the *casus belli*. In the second, Clytemnestra is called οὐ δεισήνωρ, "not [appropriately] man-fearing," referring to her destructive potential. In the third, at 410-1, the Chorus describes Menelaus' suffering in Helen's absence: ἰὼ ἰὼ δῶμα δῶμα καὶ πρόμοι, | ἰὼ λέχος καὶ στίβοι φιλάνορες ("Alas for the house, alas for the house and its chiefs! Alas for the bed and the traces of a loving wife," trans. Sommerstein). Sommerstein notes that "the picture likely to be conjured up is that of a marital bed still bearing the impress of Helen's body" (Sommerstein 2008: 48 n. 89); the phrase στίβοι φιλάνορες might also conjure the image of the footsteps left by the "man-loving" Helen as she and Paris flee Menelaus' house.

²⁶⁴ Trans. Finglass (2007).

presence is felt throughout the *Agamemnon* in particular, where, as Ruby Blondell notes, the unfaithful Helen is figured as both the *casus belli* and as the indirect cause of Agamemnon's death.²⁶⁵ Helen's adultery causes the Trojan War and sets off a chain of events that cause widespread destruction; Clytemnestra engages in an affair with Aegisthus, who "warms her hearth" (*Ag.* 1435-7), to the detriment of her husband's household.²⁶⁶ Aeschylus and Pindar both present Helen's and Clytemnestra's respective affairs as intertwined *aitia* for the Oresteia myth; Pindar's consideration of Clytemnestra's affair as a motive for the murder of Agamemnon thus fits with the characterization of Tyndarid lust as a detriment to the fabric of patriarchal society.

Pindar's inclusion of Iphigeneia's sacrifice as a motive also resonates with other accounts of Agamemnon's murder. While the sacrifice of Iphigeneia is not mentioned in Homeric poetry, Hesiod discusses it at length in fragment 23a M.-W., seeming to connect Iphimede's sacrifice with Orestes' eventual vengeance on Clytemnestra.²⁶⁷ Aeschylus, too, uses Iphigeneia's sacrifice as Clytemnestra's own reason for the murder. In the parodos of the *Agamemnon* (148-55), the Chorus recounts the circumstances of Iphigeneia's death, lingering on the disastrous

²⁶⁵ Blondell 2013: 127–32. Nowhere in the *Agamemnon* is this more evident than in a choral passage at 1448-61, where the Chorus laments the destruction the sisters cause. Their lament for Agamemnon's death explicitly connects Clytemnestra's actions with Helen's adultery (lines 1448-61): πολλὰ τλάντος γυναικὸς διαί· | πρὸς γυναικὸς δ' ἀπέφθισεν βίον ("[he] who endured so much because of a woman and now has lost his life at a woman's hands!", trans. Sommerstein). This is followed by a sentiment that if Helen had never run off, Clytemnestra would never have dared such a deed (1455-61). Though seemingly a non sequitur, the connection of the sisters is clear: they are naturally unfaithful in all respects.

²⁶⁶ *Ag.* 1435-7: ἕως ἄν αἴθη πῦρ ἐφ' ἐστίας ἐμῆς | Αἴγισθος, ὡς τὸ πρόσθεν εὖ φρονῶν ἐμοί | οὗτος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἄσπις οὐ σμικρὰ θράσους ("so long as the fire upon my hearth is kindled by Aegisthus and he remains loyal to me as hitherto; for he is an ample shield of confidence for me," trans. Sommerstein).

²⁶⁷ Although March argues that Hesiod "obviously" means to convey that Clytemnestra's sexual passion was the motive for the murders, the passage as a whole suggests that Iphimede's sacrifice was a major factor in Clytemnestra's action (March 1987: 89). Hesiod devotes 12 lines to describing the sacrifice and its effects; he does not develop the sexual motive in fragment 23a M.-W. The sexual motive is developed in fr. 176 M.-W.

ramifications it will have for Agamemnon. Because of the sacrifice of Iphigeneia, Clytemnestra will become wrath incarnate (μῆνις, 155), which is specifically τεκνόποινος (155), “child-avenging.” As μῆνις incarnate, she requires a sacrifice in requital for Iphigeneia; this must be Agamemnon. Clytemnestra herself cites revenge as her primary motive after the murder of Agamemnon several times in her conversation with the Chorus;²⁶⁸ whether we believe her or view this as an attempt to sway the Chorus to pity her, we see in the *Agamemnon* that the lust motive and the revenge motive are not mutually exclusive. While Clytemnestra herself tends to endorse the revenge motive, this is coupled with plenty of support throughout the play for the adultery motive.²⁶⁹ By playing with dual motives, Aeschylus blurs the line between vengeance and adultery as motives, thus exploring the ambiguities of Clytemnestra’s character and showing that these motives are not mutually exclusive.

Pindar’s exploration of both motives demonstrates his interest in Clytemnestra’s psyche.²⁷⁰ Indeed, Finglass notes that the questions expressed here are innovative, and that there is no particular need to look to Aeschylus to explain this phenomenon.²⁷¹ As I have discussed, the possibility that Hesiod and Stesichorus also explored dual motives for Clytemnestra’s actions suggests an interest in the ambiguity of her character. Crucially, in Pindar’s version, both possibilities (vengeance and adultery) grant Clytemnestra complete agency in the murders. His

²⁶⁸ Especially lines 1414-18, 1432-3, and 1525-30.

²⁶⁹ See above for discussion of Aeschylus’ use of the adultery motive; see especially *Ag.* 1435-7: ἕως ἄν αἴθη πῦρ ἐφ’ ἐστίας ἐμῆς | Αἴγισθος, ὡς τὸ πρόσθεν εὖ φρονῶν ἐμοί | οὗτος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἄσπις οὐ σμικρὰ θράσους (“so long as the fire upon my hearth is kindled by Aegisthus and he remains loyal to me as hitherto; for he is an ample shield of confidence for me,” trans. Sommerstein). Other references to Clytemnestra’s adultery as a potential motive include *Ag.* 36-9, 606-14 (heavily ironic), 1223-5, 1258-60, 1625-7, and *Cho.* 132-4.

²⁷⁰ Finglass 2007: 94. Swift also argues that Stesichorus showed a similar interest (Swift 2015: 129).

²⁷¹ Finglass 2007: 94-5.

presentation of both motives gives Clytemnestra full autonomy in her decision to murder Agamemnon and Cassandra.

We have seen, then, that Pindar's account of the Oresteia myth is consistent with that of other poets; however, scholarly fixation on the dating of *Pythian* 11 has largely overshadowed this fact. As I have shown in this section, whether or not Aeschylus predated Pindar, we can see in *Pythian* 11 a great deal of engagement with and influence on the tradition surrounding Clytemnestra's actions and characterization.

As I have shown in this chapter, the lyric poets adopt themes and language used in epic (especially Hesiodic) accounts of Clytemnestra to play with her characterization. The lyric poets and Aeschylus take up the question of Clytemnestra's dual motives, alternately emphasizing revenge and adultery as a way of exploring complicated issues surrounding her role in and culpability for the murders of Agamemnon and Cassandra. We have seen in our consideration of lyric presentations of Clytemnestra a profound engagement with her earlier iterations and a complication of her motivations; this sets the stage, as it were, for later exploration of her character.

CHAPTER 4. AESCHYLUS' *ORESTEIA*

Clytemnestra takes her most fully realized form in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, where Aeschylus uses monstrous language and imagery to describe her.²⁷² By describing Clytemnestra as monstrous, Aeschylus connects Clytemnestra with the Erinyes and positions her as a sort of “chorus-leader” for them; this is literally realized in the *Eumenides* when the Erinyes comprise the chorus and Clytemnestra's *eidōlon* appears onstage to goad them to action.

I have organized this chapter in the following way: first, I look at how female choruses are structured in order to make the argument that Clytemnestra is positioned as chorus-leader for the Erinyes. Second, I situate my argument within the existing scholarship on female monsters. Third, I explore the role of female monsters in pre-Aeschylean literature, focusing primarily on Gorgons and Harpies, as these are the monsters to which Clytemnestra and the Erinyes are most often likened in the *Oresteia*. Finally, I examine the instances of monstrous imagery used to describe Clytemnestra and the Erinyes in the *Oresteia*; as I argue, the majority of this imagery can be classified as either Gorgon imagery or Harpy imagery. This section draws upon depictions of the Erinyes in fifth-century Attic vase-painting, since it is well established that Aeschylus' original production of the *Oresteia* in 458 BCE had a significant influence upon the visual artists of that period. I show that Aeschylus uses monstrous language of Clytemnestra to show that she poses a sexualized threat to patriarchal society, and that he describes her and the Erinyes in similar terms as a way of emphasizing her monstrousness.

4.1. THE STRUCTURE OF FEMALE CHORUSES

²⁷² Parts of this chapter were originally published in Chapter 11 of *Greek Drama V: Studies in the Theatre of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries BCE*, edited by C. W. Marshall and Hallie Marshall, 145-59. London: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. (Permission for use granted June 9, 2020 by Claire Weatherhead.)

As Claude Calame shows in *Choruses of Young Women in Ancient Greece*, a recurring feature of female choruses in archaic lyric is the young woman who is counted among, and yet distinguished from, her peers:

In the choruses of young women I am considering, we find it is usually one adolescent alone who distinguishes herself from her companions. She is given the attribute of ‘beauty,’ and is put in the place of honor in the middle of the others. In the *Odyssey*, Nausicaa stands out from the girls around her by her beauty, like Artemis among her chorus of Nymphs. In the same way as the divine Huntress, a head taller than her companions, is easily recognizable (ἀριγνώτη), so Nausicaa shines among her followers (ὥς ἢ γ’ ἀμφιπόλοισι μετέπρεπε παρθένος ἀδμῆς). Artemis herself stands out because of her stature and the brilliance of her appearance when she sings in the chorus of the Graces, the Seasons, and Aphrodite dancing on Olympus under the direction of Apollo.²⁷³

Calame goes on to argue that the young woman who is preeminent among the chorus of her peers acts as a sort of chorus-leader, directing the motions of the rest. As he notes, in female lyric choruses, the chorus-leader is usually marked by a special beauty.²⁷⁴ Similarly, in a chorus of monsters, the chorus-leader must be distinguished from the ranks she commands in some way such that she is preeminent among the chorus of monsters.²⁷⁵ As I will show, Clytemnestra and the Erinyes fit the pattern of choruses proposed by Calame.

4.2. THE FEMALE MONSTER

Female monsters, usually anthropomorph-zoomorph hybrids (*Mischwesen*), are distinct from male monsters because they present a sexualized threat to male society.²⁷⁶ Often, they are characterized by their uncontrolled sexuality, a wildness which is reflected in their physical

²⁷³ Calame 1997: 42.

²⁷⁴ Calame 1997: 43.

²⁷⁵ For more on this, see Topper 2007: 81.

²⁷⁶ See Winkler-Horaček 2015, where he discusses the idea that *Mischwesen* embody the struggle of male society to control the natural world (Winkler-Horaček 2015: 111–112).

appearance.²⁷⁷ They embody male fears about the unpredictability of all women: woman's familiarity is represented by the monster's anthropomorphic part and her unpredictability by her zoomorphic part.²⁷⁸ Whereas women trick men by concealing their destructive nature, female monsters represent the male fantasy of the female whose open hostility to men is reflected in their bodies: the fact that they are dangerous to men is clearly displayed, and their monstrosity requires that they be defeated in order to preserve the patriarchy.²⁷⁹ Whereas in real society women must be endured in the interest of propagating of the male line, in myth the female monster can be confronted and overpowered on a man's terms. Jenny Strauss Clay notes that an

²⁷⁷ For example, one component of what makes the Sirens of the *Odyssey* so terrifying is that they use their sexuality to lure sailors to their deaths; Gregory Nagy has argued that the Sirens are meant to represent a challenge both to Odysseus on his journey home *and* to the credibility of the poem's narrator (Nagy 2007: 70). Vermeule connects the Sirens' sexuality to the theme of *lethe* that runs through the *Odyssey*, since female characters who use their sexuality to entice male characters into *lethe* freeze the male narrative in the poem (Vermeule 1979: 131).

²⁷⁸ For more on this subject, see Blundell, who notes that female monsters are most often conceptualized as "part-woman and part-animal" (Blundell 1995: 17). Examples of hybrid female monsters include Scylla (woman/dog hybrid), Medusa (woman/horse hybrid; see Hopman 2012: 96), the Sphinx (woman/lion hybrid), the Harpies (woman/bird hybrids), and the Sirens (woman/bird or woman/fish hybrids).

²⁷⁹ Blundell writes of the "ambiguity of the male response to the female," which is exemplified by the male attitude towards the female reproductive system (Blundell 1995: 17). The uterus, positioned in the darkness of the female body, is unpredictable and mysterious. Male anxiety about the mystery of the uterus is reflected in the birth stories of monsters (see especially Hesiod, *Theogony* 270-336. For a detailed analysis of this catalogue of monsters, see Clay 1993). Because the womb is hidden from view, its activity is unobservable, and therefore its product is unknown until it emerges from the vagina. The Pandora myth epitomizes this anxiety. The problematic combination of Pandora's desirability and her tricky nature coalesces in the myth of her jar, from which she releases evil into the world. Froma Zeitlin has argued that this pithos represents the female uterus, concluding that "it is... difficult to resist the idea, even though it is nowhere directly stated, that what escapes from the jar equally escapes from the vagina in the most negative encoding of female sexuality, and that the child (or Hope), uncertainly placed between evil and good, is the single best, if still unsatisfactory, result" (Zeitlin 1996: 65-66). Women are a necessary evil: they make life unpleasant for men (cf. *Theogony* 590-612), but it is only through reproduction that men can beget heirs. Because of the evils that their sexuality release into the world, and because the uterus (and what it contains) is unobservable under normal circumstances, it is necessary to keep women under close supervision.

important feature of the Medusa myth is that Medusa lives at the end of the earth; though she poses no direct threat to society, Perseus nonetheless journeys to defeat her.²⁸⁰ Other female *Mischwesen* are “situated within the world of men” and must be defeated by a male hero (himself a “mixed creature” in the sense that he is typically half-mortal and half-immortal) in order to preserve male society; the defeat of these *Mischwesen* represents the triumph of male civilization over the chaotic world of the female.²⁸¹

Marianne Govers Hopman argues that female monsters are typically portrayed as either “aggressive” or as “parthenic,” a distinction which is ultimately sexual.²⁸² In her aggressive iteration, the female monster incapacitates any man who attempts to confront her. For example, the Gorgon petrifies any man who meets her gaze, while the Sirens use their sexuality to lure men to their deaths. The aggressive female monster’s “rapacity, doggishness, [and] voracity” connote sexual excess; male anxiety about this is often expressed through hunting metaphors wherein the monster pursues a male quarry like a hunting dog pursuing its prey.²⁸³ Hopman notes that the “carnivorous” hunting done by a female monster is eroticized because she reverses traditional gender roles.²⁸⁴ The rapacious female monster is terrifying because her pursuit of male quarries can be read as sexual aggressiveness.

²⁸⁰ Clay 1993: 110.

²⁸¹ Clay 1993: 112. Clay gives as an example the Sphinx, a woman/lion hybrid who, in traditional mythology, is situated in Thebes and threatens the order of the city until her demise (Clay 1993: 111–12).

²⁸² Hopman 2012: 113.

²⁸³ Hopman 2012: 123. Pandora’s sexual voracity is implied with the phrase κύνεόν τε νόον, “doglike mind” (*Works and Days* 67).

²⁸⁴ This eroticization “is facilitated by the fact that she reverses the traditional distribution of roles... Within the analogy that underlies the metaphor of the heterosexual erotic hunt (human/animal: male/female), [the female monster] plays both the animal and the female roles and subverts them equally... The sexual significance metaphorically attached to hunting in Greek culture thus provides a seamless transition between rapacity and sexual aggressiveness” (Hopman 2012: 127–28).

In her “parthenic” iteration, the female monster is characterized as an “untamed maiden” who has not been properly integrated into male society; this means that she needs to be “tamed” by the male civilizer. The parthenic monster is no less terrifying than the aggressive monster.²⁸⁵ Rather, whereas the aggressive female monster must be killed in order to preserve male society, the parthenic monster can be “tamed” and appropriated as a protective force. It is therefore crucial that the parthenic monster retain her fearsomeness, since only thus can she offer some protection against harm to the one who correctly tames her. Hopman goes on to argue that the parthenic monster’s virginity is often a metaphor for “civic protection;” thus, when the parthenic monster becomes protector of a city, her virginity becomes a metaphor for “the integrity of the polis.”²⁸⁶

Aeschylus emphasizes both the aggressive and their parthenic aspects of the Erinyes at strategic points in the *Oresteia*. It is crucial that the Erinyes are always terrifying in some capacity, since this ensures their protective power.²⁸⁷ Their parthenic nature is highlighted in the *Eumenides* in order to set the stage for their transformation into protectors of Athens at the end of the play. As Sommerstein notes, the *Eumenides* ends with the establishment of the cult of the

²⁸⁵ As Hopman argues in the case of Scylla, the separation that scholars often create between the “peaceful” and the “frightening” iterations of the female monster is artificial, and the female monster’s *parthenos* status in certain instances does not erase her fearsomeness (Hopman 2012: 143).

²⁸⁶ Hopman 2012: 150.

²⁸⁷ They are “entwined with close-packed snakes” (*Choephoroi* 1049-1050), drip blood from their eyes (*Choephoroi* 1058 and *Eumenides* 54), are clad in black (*Choephoroi* 1049 and *Eumenides* 52), are “foul” (*Choephoroi* 1048) and “completely disgusting to behold” (*Eumenides* 52), and overtly threaten Orestes (cf. *Choephoroi* 1050 and 1062). But they are also clearly female (they are called γυναῖκες, “women” at *Choephoroi* 1048) and their status as *parthenoi* is highlighted at several critical moments. For example, when Apollo appears onstage at the beginning of the *Eumenides*, he calls them “abominable aged maidens, ancient children, with whom no god nor human nor beast ever mingles [οὐ μείγνυται]” (*Eumenides* 68-70). Sommerstein notes that μείγνυται of line 69 is ambiguous, but could certainly have a sexual connotation (Sommerstein 1989: 95).

Semnai Theai.²⁸⁸ He argues that Aeschylus' identification of the Semnai Theai with the Erinyes was a "startling innovation" which likely had a profound effect on the audience's understanding of both the Semnai Theai and the Erinyes. Thus, in the *Oresteia* we see the appropriation of the parthenic monster's power as a way of preserving the patriarchal *status quo*.

In vase-painting, we see a blending of the aggressive and the parthenic iterations of the Erinyes. Erinyes on both Athenian and South Italian vases are far from the horrifying creatures that Orestes and the Pythia describe in the *Choephoroi* and the *Eumenides*. Scholars have argued that vase-painters pick up on Aeschylus' conflation of the Erinyes with the Semnai Theai, and that is the reason why the Erinyes are often depicted as "beautiful" in vase-painting. According to R.R. Dyer, the vase-painters choose to portray the Erinyes in the iconographic type of the Eumenides in order to "throw our minds forward to Athena's role in the later stages of the play."²⁸⁹ Oliver Taplin has a slightly different take:

After the initial shock of Aeschylus' horrible vision, it might soon have become more acceptable for the Erinyes, who became equated with the Semnai and other more conventional female divinities, to be assimilated to the ideal beauty that generally characterizes the portrayal of the divine in Greek art. It might also, like the title *Eumenides* (*Kind Goddesses*), have been a way to placate them.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁸ Sommerstein believes that Aeschylus was the "first to identify the Semnai with the Erinyes, but probably was not the first to associate them with the Areopagus council," largely because of the topographical evidence given by authors like Pausanias (Sommerstein 1989: 11). Pausanias reports that the Semnai Theai were worshipped at a cave near the Areopagus (1.28.6); Sommerstein believes that the "links between the Semnai and the council are no doubt due to their topographical proximity" (Sommerstein 1989: 11). Both Sophocles in the *Oedipus Coloneus* and Pausanias reference the fact that the Erinyes-Eumenides had different titles in different places—like Σεμναί at Athens and Πόρνιαι at Thebes (Jebb on *OC* line 43)—and, as Jebb notes, Aeschylus himself probably referred to the Erinyes-Eumenides as Σεμναί, since he never calls the newly-pacified Erinyes "Eumenides" (Jebb on *OC* line 42).

²⁸⁹ Dyer 1969: 53.

²⁹⁰ Taplin 2007: 59.

However, as Susan B. Matheson points out, although the Erinyes on these vases have none of the repulsive features that Aeschylus gives them in the *Oresteia*, Orestes is still clearly terrified of them.²⁹¹ While Dyer and Taplin argue for the conflation of these Erinyes with the Semnai Theai, Matheson interprets the Erinyes of Attic vase-painting as monstrous within the conventions of fifth century vase-painting. She notes that the “pointed faces and hooked noses [of the Erinyes on these vases] are far from the Greek ideal, and they are surely intended to convey the ugliness universally ascribed to these maleficent goddesses. Only rarely does such ugliness occur in vase-painting of the fifth and fourth centuries. As has often been noted, red-figure vase-painters increasingly beautified and un-demonized their female monsters.”²⁹² Moreover, in many of these vase-paintings, the Erinyes are wearing short chitons which, as Hopman notes, mark the female monster as “an unusual female and specifically as an Artemisian huntress.”²⁹³ As such, they are parthenic like Artemis, but also aggressively pursuing a terrified Orestes. Thus, the Erinyes of these vase-paintings embody Hopman’s idea that the parthenic monster retains her ability to terrify. These ideas about the aggressive and the parthenic female monster will be important for our consideration of Homeric and Hesiodic Gorgons and Harpies as prototypes for the Aeschylean Erinyes.

4.3. THE FEMALE MONSTER IN PRE-AESCHYLEAN LITERARY SOURCES

I move now to discussion of female monsters in pre-Aeschylean sources, with a particular focus on Gorgons and Harpies in Homer and Hesiod, since Aeschylus seems to adopt these as templates for his Erinyes. As I will show, the male anxiety around female sexuality is

²⁹¹ Matheson 1997: 23.

²⁹² Matheson 1997: 22.

²⁹³ Hopman 2012: 145.

pregnant by Poseidon, for from her corpse leap Chrysaor and Pegasus. Clearly, part of the problem with Medusa is that she follows the Pandora pattern: concealed within her body are hybrid monsters. Just as Pandora's jar contains a host of evils which are released when the jar is opened, Medusa's womb, once breached, is no longer able to conceal monsters within it. Hesiod's version of the myth hints that Medusa's death is, at least in part, connected with her sexuality, in a way that suggests an anxiety about the uterus and its contents.²⁹⁷

Once Medusa is decapitated by Perseus, her head is appropriated as a weapon: Athena mounts it on her aegis, which she dons prior to entering battle. This seems to be the aetiology of the Gorgoneion, a Gorgon's head that often appears on armor to protect the wearer from death in battle. The Gorgon's fierce gaze is highlighted as central to the effectiveness of the Gorgoneion in protecting the wearer. We see the Gorgon represented on shields in both Homer and Hesiod. In the Hesiodic *Shield of Heracles*, on the shield is depicted Perseus fleeing the Gorgons with the head of Medusa in a satchel upon his back, an iconography that becomes standard in visual representations of Perseus and the Gorgons. The Gorgons pursue Perseus, apparently brandishing in their hands the serpents that later become part of their facial features.

the meadow acts as an ecphrasis for sexual union (Motte 1973: 208–212). In Homeric and post-Homeric poetry, flowering meadows and flower catalogues connote potential erotic activity (Curtius 1948: 192–193). For a modern comparandum, consider the term “deflowering” as a euphemism for the loss of virginity. Medusa's liaison with Poseidon is verbally mirrored by the setting in which the act takes place. For more on the erotic connotations of the meadow, see Rosenmeyer 2004 and Levaniouk 2012.

²⁹⁷ Pindar's twelfth *Pythian* ode also explores Medusa's terrifying eroticism. In *Pythian* 12, Medusa is at once both monstrous and beautiful (Pindar, *Pythian* 12.9-17). Pindar reports that Medusa has snaky hair (ἀπλάτοις ὀφίων κεφαλαῖς, 9), but she is also a maiden (παρθενίως, 9) with beautiful cheeks (εὐπαράου, 16). She is the embodiment both of that which is most horrifying to men and of that which is most desirable to them; in other words, her duality represents male anxieties about female sexuality. This duality—the possibility that women can be both attractive and deadly to men—is central to the representation of the female monster in Greek art and literature.

Additionally, they are “glaring savagely,” ἄγρια δερκομένω in line 236, a description which evokes the Gorgons’ own terrible gaze. Importantly, Perseus is fleeing the Gorgons, who pursue him because of his killing of Medusa; this is an image that Aeschylus utilizes, as I will show later.²⁹⁸

Agamemnon’s shield in Book 11 of the *Iliad* likewise has Gorgons embossed upon it:

τῆ δ’ ἐπὶ μὲν Γοργῶ βλοσυρῶπις ἐστεφάνωτο
 δεινὸν δερκομένη, περὶ δὲ Δεῖμός τε Φόβος τε.
 τῆς δ’ ἐξ ἀργύρεος τελαμῶν ἦν· αὐτὰρ ἐπ’ αὐτοῦ
 κυάνεος ἐλέλικτο δράκων, κεφαλαὶ δέ οἱ ἦσαν
 τρεῖς ἀμφιστρεφές, ἐνὸς ἀχένοσ ἐκπεφυυῖαι. 40

And on it [the shield] was set as a crown the Gorgon, grim of aspect,
 glaring terribly, and about her were Terror and Fear.
 From the shield was hung a baldric of silver, and on it
 writhed a serpent of cyan, that had three heads
 turned in different directions, growing out from one neck.²⁹⁹

What is particularly striking about this passage is the emphasis on the deadly gaze of the Gorgon, who is described as “grim of aspect” (βλοσυρῶπις) and “glaring terribly” (δεινὸν δερκομένη). The Gorgoneion on the shield is clearly meant to protect Agamemnon as he enters battle by frightening his enemies with its gaze. Further, the Gorgon’s head is δεινὸν δερκομένη, “glaring terribly”. The verb δέρκεσθαι, “to see,” is etymologically related to the noun δράκων,

²⁹⁸ The pursuit of Perseus by the Gorgons has definite erotic implications, as Kathryn Topper has argued of vase-paintings (especially a red-figure kantharos at the Institut d’archéologie classique in Strasbourg, no. 1574). She has argued that the body positions of Perseus and the Gorgon who pursues him suggest that this pursuit has an erotic element. As she notes, “The poses of both Perseus and the Gorgon align them with the protagonists in more traditional scenes of abduction, as does the profile view of the Gorgon, a creature for whom frontality is the norm. Particularly telling in these scenes is the hero’s backward glance at his pursuer: given the nature of the creature he is looking at, the gesture makes little sense except in the context of an erotic pursuit, where it is a standard element” (Topper 2007: 84). As in Hesiod’s version of the Medusa myth, the Gorgon who pursues Perseus has a definite eroticism that is expressed through the gaze of each figure.

²⁹⁹ Trans. after Murray 1999.

“serpent.”³⁰⁰ Thus, δεινὸν δερκομένη suggests the fierce gaze not only of the Gorgoneion, but also of the serpents that are traditionally associated with Gorgon imagery.³⁰¹ The phrase thus emphasizes the snaky associations of Gorgons and the arresting power of the Gorgon’s serpent-like gaze.

Part of what makes her so terrifying is that by meeting the male gaze directly, the Gorgon does something that no woman should do: overpowers the male gaze. This display of power reflects the social values of *sōphrosynē* (“moderation;” neg. *aphrosynē*) and *aidōs* (“shame, self-respect;” neg. *anaideia*). For women, *sōphrosynē* is connected to sexual modesty (*aidōs*): a woman is characterized by *sōphrosynē* if she remains inside the house in an effort to preserve her modesty and avoid the leering gaze of men who are not her husband.³⁰² As Gloria Ferrari

³⁰⁰ This etymological link is most evident in the verb’s aorist infinitive δρακεῖν. Gregory Nagy discusses the power of the serpent’s gaze in the Laocoon episode of *Aeneid* Book 2:

The epiphany of this serpent is relevant to the look of the serpent, by which I mean the power of a serpent to entrance its victims simply by looking at them. The notion of such a power is evident in the etymology of the word that is used for ‘serpent’ here in Iliad II: that word is *drakōn* (308). Etymologically, *drakōn* ‘serpent’ is ‘the one who looks’ (from *derkesthai* ‘look’) (Nagy 2008: 1§84).

Nagy argues that Vergil deliberately evokes the “epiphany” of the serpent through his use of the word *ecce*, “behold” (Nagy 2008: 1§84). According to Nagy, *ecce* is a crucial word that signals that Vergil is Homericizing in this passage; this exclamation indicates that the reader should be shocked by the sudden apparition of the serpent, just as a viewer would be by the serpent’s gaze.

³⁰¹ Additionally, this passage alludes to the snaky nature of the Gorgon: on the baldric is a serpent, which Thalia Feldman argues is meant to evoke the snaky hair characteristic of Gorgoneia (Feldman 1965: 488).

³⁰² Douglas L. Cairns notes that the *aidōs* of women is different than that of men: when used to refer to a woman, *aidōs* has a sexual connotation, “whether in relationships between the sexes... or with reference to an individual’s own sexuality or sexuality in general; in the former category *aidōs* is concerned with the social role of men and women, while in the latter it relates to a coyness regarding sex, sexual organs, and bodily functions” (Cairns 1993: 120). Helen F. North likewise explores the question of when and how *sōphrosynē*, originally a masculine-heroic characteristic, became applicable to women as well (North 1977: 35–36). North shows that there is a direct connection between *sōphrosynē* and *oikonomia*, the proper management of the

argues, *aidōs* is represented in textual sources by covering the body and casting one's eyes downward, for, as she shows, *aidōs* rests in the eyes.³⁰³ In this way, *aidōs* “is made visible.”³⁰⁴ By extension, the eyelids are analogous to cloaks: both cover in an outward display of a person's *aidōs*. Thus, imagery of covering and cloaking is particularly associated with *aidōs*, which in turn can indicate *sōphrosynē*.

The Gorgon, however, does not keep her eyes cloaked; rather, she meets and overpowers the gaze of every male figure who encounters her. This is problematic for many reasons, not least because *aidōs* has definite erotic connotations: a woman who meets the gaze of a man lacks *aidōs* in a way that suggests loose morals.³⁰⁵ Part of what makes the Gorgon's gaze so terrifying is the fact that it is loaded with erotic aggression. There is thus evidence in both Hesiod and Homer that the Gorgon (and the derived Gorgoneion) embodies both the aggressive and the parthenic aspects of the hybrid female monster.

4.3.2. *Harpies*

Few extant literary sources prior to Apollonius of Rhodes give any physical detail about the Harpies.³⁰⁶ We hear in *Eumenides* line 51 that the Harpies are winged, since the Pythia says that

household; a woman who shows the requisite devotion to her husband manages his household efficiently, and this is part of what contributes to her *sōphrosynē* (North 1977: 45–46).

³⁰³ For the notion that αἰδώς rests in the eyes, cf., e.g., Aristotle, *Art of Rhetoric* 1384a; Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* 214-215; and Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 2.1.22.

³⁰⁴ Ferrari 1990: 190.

³⁰⁵ As Ferrari notes when she discusses Xenophon's story of Virtue and Vice, “[Vice's] eyes are wide open, *anapeptamena*, her dress lets as much as possible of her body show through; she keeps looking around to see if she has been noticed” (Ferrari 1990: 189). Here, we can see the connection between the direct female gaze and erotic immodesty.

³⁰⁶ Aeschylus himself treated the Harpies in his *Phineus*, produced in 472 with *Persians*, but the surviving fragments contain very little information about the Harpies. For later (often more detailed) treatments of the Harpies, cf., e.g., Apollonius of Rhodes, *Argonautica* 2.178ff; Vergil, *Aeneid* 3.209ff.; and Valerius Flaccus, *Argonautica* 4.428ff. In each of these sources, the Harpies are conceptualized as woman/bird hybrid monsters.

the Erinyes cannot be Harpies because they are ἄπτεροι, “wingless.”³⁰⁷ To contextualize the Harpies as they appear in *Eumenides* 50-51, I turn again to Homer and Hesiod; like the Gorgons, the Harpies in Hesiod and Homer are fearsome in part because of their sexual aggression.

Part of what makes the Harpies so terrifying is conveyed by their name Ἄρπυιαι (*Harpuiiai*), which indicates their ability to ἀρπάζειν (*harpazein*), “snatch up,” a term which can have sexual connotations. ἀρπάζειν and the noun derived from it, ἀρπαγή (*harpagē*), can be used in connection with the marriage ritual, as Ruby Blondell discusses: “In myth and ritual, marriage itself is often presented as equivalent to abduction. The standard term for this is *harpagē*, an abstract noun formed from the verb *harpazein* (‘seize’).”³⁰⁸ Blondell notes that *harpagē* does not necessarily rule out the possibility that an “abducted” woman could consent to or even be happy about this turn of events.³⁰⁹ Of course, this normalization of the terms *harpagē* and *harpazein* is only possible within the normative marriage ritual in which a man is the active participant and the woman is passive; in the marital context, *harpagē/harpazein* represents the power that a husband has over his new wife. The reversal of this paradigm is at the root of the terrifying nature of the Harpies.

In Hesiod and Homer, the Harpies are associated with storm winds which snatch people away, never to be seen again; this can be seen in Hesiod’s naming of one of the Harpies as Ἄελλώ in *Theogony* 267, which is derived from ἄελλα, “gust of (storm) wind.”³¹⁰ As Nagy shows, winds called ἄελλαι *and* winds called θύελλαι can be considered ἄρπυιαι, since both

³⁰⁷ Aeschylus fragment 258 reports that the Harpies steal food directly from Phineus’ mouth, which perhaps suggests that they can fly.

³⁰⁸ Blondell 2013: 12.

³⁰⁹ Blondell 2013: 13.

³¹⁰ Nagy 1979: 10§25. Homer calls winds which can abduct or kill humans ἄρπυιαι, but the ἄρπυιαι can also be personified to refer to the Harpies, as we see in *Iliad* 16.149-151 (Nagy 1979: 10§25).

kinds of wind can abduct humans; this is shown in both the Homeric *Hymn to Aphrodite* and the *Odyssey*, where the abduction has a decidedly erotic undertone. In the Homeric *Hymn to Aphrodite*, Aphrodite tells Anchises the story of Zeus' abduction of Ganymede. In this version, he is not abducted by Zeus' eagle, but by a wind:

... ὅππῃ οἱ φίλον υἷὸν ἀνήρπασε θέσπις ἄελλα...
 ... to whatever place the marvelous whirlwind had caught up his dear son...³¹¹

As we can see from the connection of the ἄελλα to the verb ἀνήρπασε in this line, the ἄελλα that abducts Ganymede in the Homeric *Hymn to Aphrodite* is conceptually related to the ἄρπυιαι as winds that snatch people away. As we saw earlier, the terms *harpagē* and *harpazein* have a sexual meaning; contextual information also implies a sexual element in each of the passages above. Aphrodite's account of the story of Ganymede in the Homeric *Hymn to Aphrodite* is decidedly sexual, both because of the context in which the story is told (i.e. in a post-coital moment between Aphrodite and Anchises) and because of the content of the story itself (i.e., Ganymede is stolen by a gust of wind because Zeus desires him). Aphrodite's language in line 208 of the *Hymn* (ἀνήρπασε... ἄελλα) evokes the *harpagē* (evident in the verb ἀνήρπασε) that is sexual in nature.

Similarly, in *Odyssey* 1.241, Telemachus worries about the state of his father's κλέος, since it seems to him that Odysseus has disappeared without a trace. He expresses the anxiety that Odysseus has been snatched up by the ἄρπυιαι:

νῦν δέ μιν ἀκλειῶς ἄρπυιαι ἀνηρείψαντο·
 οἴχετ' ἄιστος ἄπυστος, ἐμοὶ δ' ὀδύνας τε γόους τε
 κάλλιπεν...

But as it is, the Harpies have swept him away and left no tidings:

³¹¹ Trans. after Evelyn-White.

female creatures who take on active roles in pursuing male sexual partners. Although the language of *harpagē* is never used of Calypso, context associates their situation with such gender-reversed abduction. *Odyssey* Book 5 opens with the story of Eos and Tithonus, the most famous case of female-driven erotic *harpagē* in all of Greek myth. These lines are programmatic in their introduction of a motif that recurs in the *Odyssey*: the sexually voracious divine female who abducts an (unwilling) mortal male.

Calypso herself is aware of the precedents for her treatment of Odysseus. When Hermes arrives to secure Odysseus' release, Calypso responds to Zeus' orders with a lament in which she recounts stories from myth in which goddesses desire mortal men (*Odyssey* 5.118-129):

σχέτλιοί ἐστε, θεοί, ζηλήμονες ἔξοχον ἄλλων, οἳ τε θεαῖς ἀγάσθε παρ' ἀνδράσιν εὐνάζεσθαι ἀμφοδίην, ἣν τίς τε φίλον ποιήσεται ἀκοίτην.	120
ὦς μὲν ὅτ' Ὠρίων' ἔλετο ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἥως, τόφρα οἱ ἠγάσθε θεοὶ ῥεῖα ζῶοντες, ἦος ἐν Ὀρτυγίῃ χρυσόθρονος Ἄρτεμις ἀγνή οἷς ἀγανοῖς βελέεσσιν ἐποιχομένη κατέπεφνεν.	125
ὦς δ' ὀπότε Ἰασίωνι ἐνπλόκαμος Δημήτηρ, ᾧ θυμῷ εἴξασα, μίγη φιλότητι καὶ εὐνῇ νειῶ ἔνι τριπόλῳ· οὐδὲ δὴν ἦεν ἄπυστος Ζεὺς, ὅς μιν κατέπεφνε βαλὼν ἀργῆτι κεραυνῷ. ὦς δ' αὖ νῦν μοι ἀγασθε, θεοί, βροτὸν ἄνδρα παρεῖναι.	

Cruel are you, you gods, and quick to envy above all others,
seeing that you begrudge goddesses that they should mate with men
openly, if any takes a mortal as her own bedfellow.
Thus, when rosy-fingered Dawn took to herself Orion,
you gods that live at ease begrudged her,
till in Ortygia chaste Artemis of the golden throne assailed him with her gentle
shafts and slew him.
Thus too, when fair-tressed Demeter, lay in love with Iasion,
yielding to her passion,
in the thrice-plowed fallow land, Zeus was not long without knowledge of it,
but smote him with his bright thunderbolt and slew him.
And in this way again do you now begrudge me, you gods, that a mortal man
should be my companion.³¹⁵

³¹⁵ Trans. Murray.

By connecting her detainment of Odysseus to precedents for female self-assertion, Calypso makes it clear that she is aware that she is operating within the same realm. Specifically, Calypso seems to know about Eos' desire for beautiful mortals.³¹⁶ Additionally, later in Book 5 when Calypso tells Odysseus of her decision to free him, she suggests that, if he should choose to stay with her, she could make him immortal (*Odyssey* 5.206-210). This is reminiscent of Eos' immortalization of Tithonus, and of a variant which we hear in *Odyssey* Book 15 in which Eos immortalizes Cleitus after abducting him.³¹⁷

We can also see the connection between the ἄρπυιαι as winds and the ἄρπυιαι as Harpies in *Odyssey* 20.61-78, when Penelope begs Artemis for death:

Ἄρτεμι, πότνα θεά, θύγατερ Διός, αἶθε μοι ἦδη
 ἰὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι βαλοῦσ' ἐκ θυμὸν ἔλοιο
 αὐτίκα νῦν, ἢ ἔπειτα μ' ἀναρπάξασα θύελλα
 οἴχοιτο προφέρουσα κατ' ἠερόεντα κέλευθα,
 ἐν προχοῆς δὲ βάλοι ἀπορροῦ Ὠκεανοῖο. 65
 ὡς δ' ὅτε Πανδαρέου κόουρας ἀνέλοντο θύελλαι·
 ...
 τόφρα δὲ τὰς κόουρας ἄρπυιαι ἀνηρείψαντο
 καὶ ῥ' ἔδοσαν στυγερῆσιν ἐρινύσιν ἀμφιπολεύειν·

Artemis, mighty goddess, daughter of Zeus,
 would that now you would fix your arrow in my breast and take away my life
 in this very hour; or else that a storm wind might catch me up
 and bear me from here over the murky ways,
 and cast me away at the mouth of the backward-flowing Oceanus,
 as once storm winds bore away the daughters of Pandareus.

...
 meanwhile the spirits of the storm snatched away the maidens

³¹⁶ The myth of Tithonus' unhappy immortality is not explicitly discussed in the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*; in the *Odyssey* he is a young, vigorous hero, as we see in the use of the adjective ἀγαυός (*Od.* 5.1). ἀγαυός implies that the reason underlying Eos' *harpagē* of Tithonus is sexual desire. For treatment of the myth in which Tithonus is immortalized but still ages, see the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 218-238.

³¹⁷ *Od.* 250-1: ἀλλ' ἦ τοι Κλεῖτον χρυσόθρονος ἦρπασεν Ἥως | κάλλεος εἵνεκα οἷο, ἴν' ἀθανάτοισι μετείη· (“Now Cleitus golden-throned Dawn snatched away because of his beauty, that he might dwell with the immortals,” trans. Murray).

and gave them to the hateful Furies to be their servants.³¹⁸

At the beginning of this passage, Penelope wishes for death, then revises this to wish that she be abducted by a storm wind (ἀναρπάξασα θύελλα, 63). Within her wish, she tells the story of the Pandareids, who, just as they became ripe for marriage, were stolen away by storm winds (ἀνέλοντο θύελλαι, 66); she later notes that it was the ἄρπυιαι (77) who snatched them up (ἀνηρείψαντο, 77), and gave them to the Erinyes (78), which implies their death.³¹⁹ The passage thus links the ἄρπυιαι, winds that carry people off, and female monsters who abduct people.

In the passages I have just examined, the Harpies are conflated with winds that snatch up mortals, often to their detriment. So where does the idea that the Harpies are monsters come from? There are instances in Homer as well as in Hesiod in which the Harpies are loosely conceptualized as monsters. Hesiod gives a short physical description of the Harpies in the *Theogony*: they are beautiful-haired (ἠυκόμους, 267), female, and have wings (ὠκεΐης πτερύγεσσι, 269).³²⁰ In Hesiod's description, the Harpies seem to be winged anthropomorphs; in other words, they are *Mischwesen*. It is not clear whether they have the bodies of birds here as they do in later sources. Whether the Harpies are anthropomorphic or zoomorphic, the idea that they can reproduce is crucial to their characterization. At *Iliad* 16.149-151 and 19.400-403,

³¹⁸ Trans. Murray.

³¹⁹ Nagy argues that “In the imagery of passages featuring the forms *anēreipsanto/aneireipsamēnē*, you experience death when the abducting winds plunge you into the earth-encircling river Okeanos... Since plunging into the Okeanos overtly conveys death (*Odyssey* xx 63-65), it follows that the notion of emerging from it conveys regeneration... In this light, it becomes significant that the Okeanos is also a traditional landmark both for the Isles of the Blessed (*Works and Days* 171) and for Elysium itself (*Odyssey* iv 567-568)” (Nagy 1979: 10§27-28). Nagy connects the idea of the reanimation of mortals who emerge from the Okeanos to the “death” of the sun as it plunges into the Okeanos and its “rebirth” at dawn.

³²⁰ Hesiod gives their individual names as Ἀελλώ, “Storm-swift” and Ὠκυπέτη, “Swift-flying;” they keep up with winds and birds with their swift wings, ὠκεΐης πτερύγεσσι, and they dart along as swift as time, μεταχρόνια ἴαλλον.

Homer reports that Achilles' horses, Xanthus and Balius, are sons of the west wind Zephyrus and the Harpy Podarge. Of course, Podarge is still heavily associated with wind here, which is indicated by the facts that 1) she has mated with Zephyrus to create the horses Xanthus and Balius, and 2) her name means "Swift-footed" and expresses a similar idea as the names Ἀελλώ, "Storm-swift" and Ὠκυπέτη, "Swift-flying" in Hesiod. Sarah Iles Johnston argues that, whatever the form of the Harpies, they are "wind demons who snatch people away."³²¹ Though there are few extant physical descriptions of them, part of the reason for their fearsomeness is apparent in their connection with Eos, Calypso, and female creatures who snatch men. The Harpies invert the formulation that normalizes *harpagē*: they are female figures characterized by their ability to *harpazein*, "snatch up," men. Like the Gorgons, then, they are fearsome because of their uncontrolled sexual aggressiveness.

4.4. MONSTROUS LANGUAGE IN THE *ORESTEIA*

In the *Oresteia*, Clytemnestra is both assimilated to, and preeminent among, the Erinyes; this is clearest in the *Eumenides*, when her *eidōlon* goads the literal chorus of Erinyes to action. Like the Erinyes, Clytemnestra is described like a Gorgon, a Harpy, Scylla, and like an Erinys herself, connections which emphasize her treachery, sexual aggression, and hunger for power. In the remainder of this chapter, I will examine the monstrous language used of Clytemnestra in the *Oresteia* and look at how this language characterizes her and how it positions her as a "chief Erinys."

³²¹ Johnston 1992: 89. Although scholars like Bernard Dietrich believe that the Harpies always had a defined corporeal form, Johnston convincingly shows that Dietrich's argument is based on "post-Homeric iconographical traits" (Johnston 1992: 89).

There is no conclusive evidence that suggests that the Erinyes were ever depicted in visual art prior to Aeschylus' original production of the *Oresteia* in 458 BCE.³²² In the following subsections, I will argue that Aeschylus mobilizes Gorgon and Harpy imagery to prepare the audience for the apparition of the Erinyes onstage in the *Eumenides*. I will also show that Aeschylus uses the same imagery to describe Clytemnestra as he does for the Erinyes, thus positioning Clytemnestra as a chorus-leader for the band of Erinyes.³²³

4.4.1. *Gorgon Imagery used of Clytemnestra and the Erinyes*

Aeschylus frequently uses Gorgon imagery to describe both Clytemnestra and the Erinyes in the *Oresteia*, the connotations of which are fairly clear: the instances in which Clytemnestra is described as Gorgon-like characterize her as sexually voracious and, in the latter two plays of the trilogy, deadly to the young male who must defeat her. The descriptions of the Erinyes as Gorgon-like characterize them as loyal to the Gorgon-like Clytemnestra and serve the pragmatic

³²² Some scholars, however, like A.J.N.W. Prag, argue that the the Erinyes were originally anguiform, and so their anthropomorphic depiction in post-Aeschylean art reflects an evolution, rather than an innovation, in their iconography. Prag argues that scenes in which the Erinyes appear follow the visual conventions of “hero versus serpent” stock scenes (Prag 1985: 45–47). He goes on to argue that Aeschylus opened up the possibility to the vase-painters of depicting the Erinyes as anthropomorphic and that the post-Aeschylean depictions of the Erinyes as winged females represent a shift in the conventional iconography of the Erinyes from anguiform to anthropomorphic. However, what Prag argues are anguiform depictions of the Erinyes have dubious identifications among scholars. For example, Prag argues that a lekythos by the Cactus Painter (Prag 1985: plate 29) from the late sixth or early fifth century depicts Orestes in flight from an Erinys, taking as a comparandum for the Cactus Painter lekythos this metope from the Temple of Hera at Foce del Sele. However, both pieces that Prag uses to make this argument are difficult to identify conclusively. As Haiganuch Sarian points out in her entry on Erinyes in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, every extant literary source that discusses the Erinyes describes them as “goddesses” or “women” and never in any language that suggests that they are anguiform (*Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* 1981: s.v. *Erinys*).

³²³ I am considering serpent imagery under the category of “Gorgon imagery” and hunting/dog imagery under the category of “Harpy imagery,” for reasons that will become clear in the course of my argument.

purpose of preparing the audience for their apparition onstage in *Eumenides*.³²⁴ Moreover, by using the same imagery to describe Clytemnestra as the Erinyes, Aeschylus paints her as a monster preeminent among her peers, whose demise will ensure the survival of patriarchal society.

The most overt instances of Gorgon imagery connect the gaze with Clytemnestra's lack of *aidōs*. Aeschylus often uses the image of the bleeding eye—usually in the appearance of the Erinyes, but in several instances, of Clytemnestra—to evoke the Gorgon.³²⁵ I will not be moving through each of these instances in chronological order, since the more detailed instances of Gorgon imagery occur later in the trilogy and can help us fully understand such imagery as used of Clytemnestra in the *Agamemnon* and first half of the *Choephoroi*.

Orestes' first encounter with the Erinyes is the first clear-cut instance of Gorgon imagery in the trilogy. When Orestes first glimpses them (*Cho.* 1048-50), he is unsure of what kind of creatures they are:

ἄ ἄ· δμοιαὶ ³²⁶ γυναῖκες αἶδε Γοργόνων δίκην φαιοχίτωνες καὶ πεπλεκτανημένοι πυκνοῖς δράκουσιν· οὐκέτ' ἄν μείναιμ' ἐγώ.	1050
... ἄναξ Ἄπολλον, αἶδε πληθύουσι δῆ,	1057

³²⁴ Because Aeschylus was likely the first tragedian to portray the Erinyes in any visual medium, he used familiar imagery to construct the Erinyes. See especially Frontisi-Ducroux 2007: 166.

³²⁵ Stephen R. Wilk suggests that the Gorgoneion gets its apotropaic power from its appropriation of characteristics associated with death. Wilk argues that the typical Gorgoneion is characterized by bulging eyes, a protruding tongue, and a “bloated” face, all of which are symptomatic of the decay of an unembalmed corpse (Wilk 2000: 186). A corpse's decomposition includes steps such as bloating (due to the production of noxious gases generated by the body's decay), the swelling and protrusion of the tongue from the mouth and the eyes from their sockets, and, perhaps most interestingly, the leakage of a “bloody fluid... from the mucous membranes around the eyes” (Wilk 2000: 186).

³²⁶ On the significance of this word, and the textual variants here, see Bakola 2018. Bakola argues that δμοιαὶ refers to the idea that the Erinyes belong specifically to the interior of Agamemnon's house.

κάξ ὀμμάτων στάζουσιν αἷμα δυσφιλές.

Ah! Ah!
 Look—foul women like Gorgons,
 dark-robed and entwined
 with close-packed serpents! I can no longer remain.

...
 Lord Apollo, they multiply even as I look at them!
 And they drip hateful blood from their eyes.³²⁷

Orestes' description of the Erinyes conveys several ways in which they resemble Gorgons. Their gender, dark robes, snaky accessories, and bleeding eyes lead Orestes to conclude that they are "like Gorgons." In addition to evoking the Gorgon, the language of line 1058 invites us to make connections among scenes from across the trilogy which use the motif of dripping liquid, especially blood, as a way of showcasing the family's cross-generational blood-guilt.³²⁸

The Pythia uses this language of dripping blood to describe the Erinyes in the opening scene of *Eumenides*, where she also suggests that their appearance makes them Gorgon-like:

πρόσθεν δὲ τάνδρὸς τοῦδε θαυμαστὸς λόχος
 εὔδει γυναικῶν ἐν θρόνοισιν ἥμενος.
 οὔτοι γυναῖκας, ἀλλὰ Γοργόνας λέγω·
 οὐδ' αὖτε Γοργείοισιν εἰκάσω τύποις.
 εἶδόν ποτ' ἤδη Φινέως γεγραμμένας
 δεῖπνον φερούσας· ἄπτεροί γε μὴν ἰδεῖν
 αὐται, μέλαιναί δ', ἐς τὸ πᾶν βδελύκτροποι,
 ῥέγκουσι δ' οὐ πλατοῖσι φυσιάμασιν,

50

³²⁷ Trans. after Garvie.

³²⁸ For further evidence of the familial tendency to drip liquid, consider the description of Iphigeneia's sacrifice at *Ag.* 205-47, which returns again and again to the image of flowing or dripping blood: *παρθενοςφάγοισιν* | *ῥείθροις* (209-10); *παρθενίου... αἵματος* (215); *πέπλοισι περιπετῇ* (233); *κρόκου βαφᾶς δ' ἐς πέδον χέουσα* (239). Iphigeneia's flowing blood is foreshadowed by her saffron-colored robes flowing to the ground as she is lifted up for sacrifice. Consider also *Electra* in *Cho.* 185-6: *ἐξ ὀμμάτων δὲ δίψιοι πίπτουσί μοι* | *σταγόνες ἄφρακτοι δυσχίμου πλημμυρίδος*. The *σταγόνες* which drip *ἐξ ὀμμάτων* verbally echo the Erinyes' dripping eyes (*κάξ ὀμμάτων στάζουσιν*, *Cho.* 1058). See also the Chorus' words to *Electra* at *Cho.* 399-401: *ἀλλὰ νόμος μὲν φονίας σταγόνας* | *χυμένας ἐς πέδον ἄλλο προσαιτεῖν* | *αἷμα*, which connects blood and bloody drops with the idea of pouring libations (*χυμένας*, 400). Fowler 1991 is also useful on this topic.

ἐκ δ' ὀμμάτων λείβουσι δυσφιλῆ λίβα·

And in front of this man sleeps a wondrous band
of women sitting on chairs.
But no—they aren't women, but I call them Gorgons.
Then again, I cannot liken them to the forms of Gorgons.
I once saw some female creatures like these in a painting,
carrying off the feast of Phineus—but these are wingless,
and black-robed, completely disgusting to behold,
and they snore with unapproachable blasts,
and from their eyes they drip hateful drops.³²⁹

The Pythia describes the Erinyes in a way that is consistent with their description by Orestes in the *Choephoroi*. Here too, their eyes are dripping with “hateful drops” (ἐκ δ' ὀμμάτων λείβουσι δυσφιλῆ λίβα, line 54), a description consistent with the detail in *Choephoroi* 1058 in which the Erinyes drip “hateful blood,” αἷμα δυσφιλές, from their eyes. The verbal mirroring of δυσφιλῆ (*Eum.* 54) with δυσφιλές (*Cho.* 1058) suggests that the drops, λίβα, which the Erinyes drip from

³²⁹ Trans. after Sommerstein. This passage uses the language of visual art: when the Pythia struggles to identify the Erinyes (*Eum.* 49), she says that she “cannot liken them to the forms [τύποις] of Gorgons.” τύπος is a word that can be used to describe the reliefs on temple pediments; as Mary Stieber notes, Gorgons were popular decorations for temple exteriors, especially in the archaic period (Stieber 1994: 96. See also Liddell and Scott 1996: s.v. τύπος). Since the beginning of the *Eumenides* is set in the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, the audience might reasonably wonder whether the temple decorations had come to life and fallen asleep inside the temple. However, Stieber argues that in this passage, Aeschylus is careful *not* to have the Pythia liken the Erinyes to a Gorgon that they might see on a temple pediment; this directs the audience not to envision the Erinyes like the “gape-mouthed and lolling-tongued” carved Gorgons that appear on, for example, the Temple of Artemis at Corfu (Stieber 1994: 96). The Pythia instead likens these creatures to ones that she has seen “in a painting,” (γεγραμμένας, 50), a term commonly used to refer to vase-painting. It was common for vase-painters to sign their work with their name followed by ἔγραψεν, “painted this” (Stieber 1994: 96). Cf., e.g., Ἐχσεκίας ἔγραψε κάποιεσε ἐμέ and Ἐχσεκίας ἔγραψε κάποιεσ' ἐμέ, cited by Andrej Petrovic (Petrovic 2013: 887). Petrovic notes that “painters’ signatures typically consist of some form of the verb γράφω and an object in the accusative” (Petrovic 2013: 886); in this formulation, the inscription is “spoken” by the vase itself and names its own painter. On the question of how literate the vase-painters were, see Immerwahr 2008.

their eyes, are actually blood.³³⁰ Identifying the λίβα that drip from the eyes of the Erinyes as blood opens up the possibility of integrating further instances of bleeding eye imagery into our consideration of Gorgon imagery. The noun λίβος, a “drop” or “teardrop,” appears several times throughout the trilogy, most notably when the Chorus reacts in horror to Clytemnestra’s murder of her husband (*Ag.* 1426-30):

μεγαλόμητις εἶ,
περίφρονα δ’ ἔλακες· ὥσπερ οὖν
φονολιβεῖ τύχα φρήν ἐπιμαίνεται,
λίβος ἐπ’ ὀμμάτων αἵματος ἐμπρέπει.
ἄντιτον ἔτι σε χρῆ στερομέναν φίλων
τύμμα τύμματι τεῖσαι.

1430

You are of outrageous, proud, ambitious plots,
and you speak haughtily! Just as
your mind is maddened by the circumstance involving dripping blood,
the drop of blood is conspicuous upon your eyes.
You, bereft of friends, must still
repay blow with blow in requital.³³¹

In both instances, the noun λίβος appears in direct connection with blood. In line 1427, the “circumstance involving dripping blood,” φονολιβεῖ τύχα, refers to the murder of Agamemnon, in which blood flows from his corpse; the repetition of the word λίβος in line 1428 suggests that a literal drop of blood has splashed onto Clytemnestra’s face during the murder.³³² When compared with the language of line 1427, and *especially* when compared with the descriptions of

³³⁰ Although Garvie argues that the eyes of the Erinyes drip with “an unspecified ‘discharge’ or ‘pus,’” there is no reason that we shouldn’t interpret αἷμα literally, and there is no reason that not to assume that the λίβα of *Eumenides* 54 are the same liquid.

³³¹ Trans. after Raeburn and Thomas.

³³² Raeburn and Thomas interpret line 1428 as a reference to Clytemnestra’s “madness,” arguing that the λίβος αἵματος refers to the bloodshot eyes resulting from her frenzied state (Raeburn and Thomas 2011 ad 14). Denniston and Page take a similar view (Denniston and Page 1957: 201). This interpretation seems to have been popularized by Fraenkel, who believes that Clytemnestra’s bloodshot eyes indicate her madness. He rejects the crude image conveyed by the interpretation of line 1428 “blood-spattered,” since in his view Aeschylus had no need to visually remind the audience of the horror of Clytemnestra’s act (Fraenkel 1950 ad 1428).

the Erinyes discussed earlier, the language of line 1428 suggests that we should understand the drop of blood, λίβος αἵματος, upon Clytemnestra's eye to be a *literal* drop of blood. She thus anticipates the bloody eyes of the Erinyes in the latter half of the trilogy.

In the *Choephoroi*, Clytemnestra is explicitly likened to a Gorgon. In a choral ode delivered just prior to the murders, the Chorus urges Orestes to become like Perseus, implying that Clytemnestra is the Gorgon he must kill:

Περσέως δ' ἐν φρεσὶν
καρδίαν < > σχεθῶν
τοῖς θ' ὑπὸ χθονὸς φίλοις
τοῖς τ' ἄνωθεν πρόπρασσ' ὧν χάρις,
Γοργοῦς λυγρᾶς <τοῖς> ἔνδοθεν
φόνιον ἄταν τιθείς, τὸν αἴτιον
δ' ἐξαπόλλυ' εἰσορῶν. 835

Having the courage of Perseus in your spirit,
do for your friends below the earth
and for those above those things which please them,
bringing bloody ruin of the
baneful Gorgon <for those> within the house,
and as you gaze upon the guilty
one, carry out your destruction.³³³

The metaphor is clear here: Orestes must become Perseus in order to kill Clytemnestra, who is the Gorgon lurking within the house. Crucially, Orestes must look directly at his Gorgon mother in order to defeat her (ἐξαπόλλυ' εἰσορῶν, 837).³³⁴ He must not only meet her gaze, but overpower it, despite her efforts to frighten or cajole him.

³³³ Trans. after Garvie.

³³⁴ Garvie notes the textual variant προπράσσω φάρος, that is, “shielding yourself with your cloak in front,” for πρόπρασσ' ὧν χάρις in line 834. This would potentially constitute an allusion to the steps Perseus must take to prevent the Gorgon from turning him to stone, since he cannot look upon her if he is to succeed in his mission to kill her. In the context of the passage, however, this cannot be the case, since Orestes must meet Clytemnestra's gaze in order to defeat her (ἐξαπόλλυ' εἰσορῶν, 837).

The most brazen of Clytemnestra's attempts to persuade Orestes to spare her occurs when she bares her breast to her son (*Cho.* 896-9).³³⁵ Faced with the sight of his mother's breast, the sign of her supposed maternal love, Orestes is momentarily immobilized and asks Pylades for help:³³⁶

Κλ. ἐπίσχες, ὦ παῖ, τόνδε δ' αἶδεσαι, τέκνον,
μαστόν, πρὸς ᾧ σὺ πολλὰ δὴ βρίζων ἄμα
οὔλοισιν ἐξήμελξας εὐτραφὲς γάλα.
Ορ. Πυλάδη, τί δράσω; μητέρ' αἰδεσθῶ κτανεῖν;

Cl. Forbear, my son! and have *aidōs* before this breast, child,
at which you, growing drowsy, often
sucked nourishing milk with your gums.
Or. Pylades, what should I do? Should I feel *aidōs* to kill my mother?³³⁷

The language and action of this passage are redolent of *aidōs*: Clytemnestra commands that Orestes should αἶδεσαι, that is, “have *aidōs* before” her breast. Of course, the gesture of baring her breast, coupled with her command to a servant a mere 7 lines earlier to “fetch [her] man-

³³⁵ Commentators generally agree that Aeschylus had Homer in mind when he was crafting this scene, since, as Garvie notes, in *Iliad* 22.79 and following, “Hecuba in similar language vainly bares her breast in an appeal to her son” (Garvie 1986: 292). This connection suggests that Clytemnestra's attempt to persuade Orestes will likewise be in vain. However, commentators disagree on whether Clytemnestra actually bares her breast onstage at this point, or makes a gesture as a visual shorthand to signify the actual baring of the breast. Garvie notes, “only here in extant tragedy is such a scene actually presented on the stage. With women's parts played by male actors it may have been considered difficult to produce effectively... and it is possible that a gesture had to suffice” (Garvie 1986: 293). Taplin argues that the baring of the breast would have been impossible because of 1) considerations of decorum and 2) the actor playing Clytemnestra was male (Taplin 1978: 61). However, Sommerstein pushes back against Taplin and argues that “neither reason is convincing. On the second point, male actors impersonated nude women in comedy. On the first, if the point of decorum did not worry Hekabe *in extremis* (*Iliad* 22.80), it will not have worried Klytaimnestra, nor Aeschylus who was endeavouring to stimulate recollection of the scene in the *Iliad*” (Sommerstein 1980: 74).

³³⁶ Despite Clytemnestra's rhetoric here, as a high-status woman she would have employed a wet-nurse to suckle her children. The Τροφός indicates as much at 749-50: φίλον δ' Ὀρέστην, τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς τριβήν, | ὄν ἐξέθρεψα μητρόθεν δεδεγμένη (“But dear Orestes, who wore away my life with toil, whom I reared after receiving him straight from his mother's womb!”, trans. Sommerstein).

³³⁷ Trans. after Garvie.

slaying axe” (δοίη τις ἀνδροκμήτα πέλεκυν ὡς τάχος, 889), displays her *anaideia* in a move that undermines her words.³³⁸ While the baring of her breast may be read as an appeal to Orestes’ filial piety, the fact that Clytemnestra has just threatened to kill her son suggests that she intends to distract him so she can strike first, rather than to convince him not to kill her. Her appeal to *aidōs* thus falls flat. Nevertheless, Orestes does worry that he is not displaying proper *aidōs*: he asks Pylades if he should feel shame to kill his mother (μητέρ’ αἰδεσθω κτανεῖν, *Choephoroi* 899).³³⁹ Further, Mary DeForest has shown that the breast is iconographically similar to an eye.³⁴⁰ In this scene, Clytemnestra opens the metaphorical eyelid of her breast, shedding her

³³⁸ Is baring one’s breast necessarily a display of *anaideia*? I would argue that the context of the gesture determines how we interpret it. What emerges from Helene A. Coccagna’s discussion of breast-baring scenes in Greek literature is the distinction between the breast as “non-eroticized [and] biologically functional” (Coccagna 2014: 402-3) vs. eroticized and therefore potentially dangerous. For example, we see Hecuba baring her (non-eroticized) breast to Hector in *Iliad* 22, appealing to his sense of filial piety (which is, as Coccagna notes, his duty to repay his mother’s *paidotrophia* with *gēroboskia*) in order to dissuade him from fighting Achilles. We read Hecuba’s gesture as dignified both because of the *pathos* of the scene and because of her genuine maternal connection to Hector. An eroticized, and therefore dangerous, baring of the breast occurs in Euripides’ *Andromache*, where we hear that Helen bares her breasts to distract Menelaus from killing her (627-31). There, Helen displays *anaideia* because the gesture is meant to be erotic—and therefore, distracting—rather than maternal (Coccagna 2014: 403-4). Clytemnestra’s gesture likewise seems principally intended to distract rather than as a genuine appeal to Orestes’ filial piety.

³³⁹ Cairns notes that Aeschylus uses *aidōs* to create dramatic tension and juxtapose personal morality with “the values of society” (Cairns 1993: 201-2). Cairns writes that scholars have variously interpreted Orestes’ invocation of *aidōs*: some, like Arrowsmith, see it as a sign of his wisdom (Arrowsmith 1959: 49), while others, including Cairns, view this as a delay intended to heighten dramatic tension. According to Cairns, Orestes’ concern for *aidōs* shows that he values it in principle, but because he quickly overcomes his hesitation “demonstrates the moral ambivalence of his revenge” (Cairns 1993: 201).

³⁴⁰ DeForest 1993: 131. This is perhaps best evidenced by the iconography of Baubo, the old woman who jests with Demeter in the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*. In Baubo’s traditional iconography, a face is “imposed upon a woman’s torso, with eyes where the breasts would be” (DeForest 1993: 131). We might also consider vases of the *mastoi* shape, that is, “conical... with an articulated nipple” (Coccagna 2014: 399). Helene A. Coccagna notes that the cup’s shape did not allow for it to be set down when filled with wine, so the symposiast had to hold the cup until it was drained (Coccagna 2014: 408). Coccagna argues that this replicates nursing in an amusing way: the symposiast is nourished by wine rather than by milk, but he must be careful not to drink

aidōs and meeting Orestes' gaze with that of her breast. When she looks Orestes in the eye with the gaze of her breast, Orestes is metaphorically "turned to stone" and calls upon Pylades to dissolve his *aporia*. Pylades, who reminds Orestes of Apollo's directive to commit matricide, acts as the mouthpiece for the Olympians: Andrea Doyle notes that "it is as if only this... Olympian power can successfully counter the chthonic force of Clytemnestra... the oracular power prevents Orestes from being drawn in by his mother's fictions of maternal love and nurturing."³⁴¹ Just as Perseus cannot meet the Gorgon's gaze without being turned to stone, Orestes cannot look at Clytemnestra's breast and still succeed in his mission to kill her.

The scene in which Clytemnestra bares her breast to Orestes thus associates Clytemnestra's breast with the Gorgon's eye. I turn now to Clytemnestra's dream as reported by the Chorus (*Cho.* 527-34), as further evidence of this association:

Χο. τεκεῖν δράκοντ', ἔδοξεν, ὡς αὐτὴ λέγει.	
Ορ. καὶ ποῖ τελευτᾷ καὶ καρανοῦται λόγος;	
Χο. ἐν σπαργάνοισι παιδὸς ὀρμίσαι δίκην.	
Ορ. τίνος βορᾶς χρῆζοντα, νεογενὲς δάκος;	530
Χο. αὐτὴ προσέσχε μαστὸν ἐν τῶνείρατι.	
Ορ. καὶ πῶς ἄτρωτον οὖθαρ ἦν ὑπὸ στύγου;	
Χο. ὥστ' ἐν γάλακτι θρόμβον αἵματος σπάσαι.	
Ορ. οὔτοι μάταιον ἂν τόδ' ὄψανον πέλοι.	

Ch. She dreamt that she gave birth to a serpent, as she tells it herself.
 Or. Where does her story end and have its conclusion?
 Ch. She laid it to sleep in swaddling-clothes like a child.
 Or. What food did this newborn serpent want?
 Ch. She herself gave it her breast in the dream.
 Or. And how was her nipple not wounded by the abominable beast?
 Ch. It was! It drew a clot of blood with the milk.
 Or. Surely this vision cannot be in vain!³⁴²

too greedily lest he behave in an unbecoming manner (2014: 405-7). In addition, when raised to the face, the *mastos* cup transforms the drinker's face into a breast (an effect similar to that of eye-cups). Thus, we can see that the breast's iconographical similarity to an eye is well attested in material culture. Many thanks to Kathryn Topper for this suggestion.

³⁴¹ Doyle 2010: 154.

³⁴² Trans. after Garvie.

In Clytemnestra's dream, she gives birth to a serpent; when she gives her breast to nurse the serpent, it draws both blood and milk from her nipple. The fact that her nipple drips with blood is significant, since, as I have shown, the breast is iconographically similar to an eye. I posit that the image of Clytemnestra's bleeding nipple, taken in conjunction with the serpent imagery of the passage in which it appears, evokes the eye of the Gorgon which drips with blood, but also her own eye which has a speck of blood upon it after the murder of Agamemnon in *Agamemnon* 1428. Further, this bleeding eye imagery strengthens the association of Clytemnestra with the Erinyes, whose bleeding eyes in turn associate them with the Gorgon, as I have shown above.

The snaky imagery of *Choephoroi* 523-534 is also important here. When the Chorus speaks of Clytemnestra's ominous dream, we understand that Orestes is the serpent which she has birthed.³⁴³ This serpent presumably has traits inherited from both of its parents; it is as much a product of its father as of its mother.³⁴⁴ In *Choephoroi* 523-534, Clytemnestra's snaky, Gorgon-like nature is reflected in the language used to describe the serpent she nurses in her dream. In the passage at *Choephoroi* 523-534, the serpent is called δράκων (527), νεογενὲς δάκος (530), and στύγος (532); each of these descriptors has particular resonances with Clytemnestra. As I have already shown, the noun δράκων is etymologically and conceptually related to the verb δέρκεσθαι, "to see." The description of the dream-serpent as a δράκων therefore emphasizes the importance of the gaze and who wields it. Thus, the δράκων conjures the semantic range of

³⁴³ For support of this interpretation of *Choephoroi* 523-534, cf. Zeitlin 1965 and Whallon 1958.

³⁴⁴ Clytemnestra's dream and its symbolism may be a reference to Stesichorus, in which Clytemnestra dreams about a serpent (δράκων) springing from the cloven head of a Pleisthenid king; the serpent is generally agreed to be Orestes. The purpose of the dream was apparently to impel Clytemnestra to send offerings to Agamemnon's tomb, thus facilitating the reunion of Orestes and Electra. See Davies and Finglass 2014, Swift 2015, Finglass 2018, and Ch. 3 of this dissertation for more on Stesichorus' version of the dream.

meanings associated with δράκων/δέρκεσθαι: δράκων alludes to the power of the gaze wielded by Clytemnestra-as-Gorgon, which Orestes-as-Perseus must face. Orestes-as-Perseus is petrified by the gaze of Clytemnestra's Gorgon-like breast, but Orestes-as-δράκων has more power to defeat Clytemnestra, since, as δράκων, he is uniquely able to meet and overpower the gaze of Clytemnestra-as-Gorgon.³⁴⁵ As the inheritor of Clytemnestra's snaky aspects, he will be able to defeat her by using her own characteristics against her.

The dream-serpent is also described as a νεογενὲς δάκος, “newborn serpent” (*Cho.* 530).³⁴⁶ δάκος is also used of Clytemnestra at *Agamemnon* 1232: in the scene in which Cassandra predicts Agamemnon's murder, she calls Clytemnestra both a δυσφιλέξ δάκος and an ἀμφίσβαινα (*Ag.* 1232-33). Both δάκος and ἀμφίσβαινα can refer to serpents: δάκος is related to the verb δάκνειν, “to bite,” and connotes a viper's deadly bite. An ἀμφίσβαινα is “a legendary snake with a head at both ends;”³⁴⁷ Marianne Govers Hopman notes that “the physical ambiguity of the *amphisbaina*—which, depending on our sources, either moves in opposite directions (with a sound play on the name, interpreted as ἀμφι and βάλνω) or has two heads—matches Clytemnestra's treachery and adultery.”³⁴⁸ Whether the *amphisbaina* properly has two heads or

³⁴⁵ See DeForest 1993: 136.

³⁴⁶ Garvie comments that δάκος is a “favourite word of Aeschylus, who uses it seven times in the extant plays (including *PV*) and fragments, three times in the trilogy... always with the meaning ‘a dangerous, biting animal’” (Garvie 1986: 189). In *Choephoroi* 532, the serpent is called a στύγος, “abominable beast” (literally “object of hatred”). Garvie notes that στύγος is “another favourite Aeschylean word (not found in Sophocles or Euripides), who uses it 10 times in the trilogy” (Garvie 1986: 189). He goes on to connect its usage at *Cho.* 532 to an earlier instance of the same word used of Clytemnestra, described as a θεῶν στύγος at *Cho.* 1028 (Garvie 1986: 189). According to Garvie, this “recurrence of the word, in slightly different senses, emphasizes the similarity between [her] deed and that which Orestes is about to do” (Garvie 1986: 189).

³⁴⁷ Raeburn and Thomas 2011: 200.

³⁴⁸ Hopman 2012: 117.

moves in opposite directions, Cassandra's words in the *Agamemnon* highlight Clytemnestra's snaky nature.

In Cassandra's description of Clytemnestra at *Agamemnon* 1232, the adjective *δυσφιλές* connects the *δάκος* of *Agamemnon* 1232 to the Erinyes of *Choephoroi* 1058 and *Eumenides* 54, where *δυσφιλές* is used to describe the blood which drips from their Gorgon-like eyes.³⁴⁹ The use of *δυσφιλές* to describe the *δάκος* of *Agamemnon* 1232 is of course contextualized by Clytemnestra's treacherous, and extremely bloody, murder of Agamemnon; because of this, I suggest that *δυσφιλές* here connotes blood, just as it does when used to describe the fluid that drips from the eyes of the Erinyes at *Choephoroi* 1058 and *Eumenides* 54. Further, Barbara Hughes Fowler discusses the connection between blood and venom; this connection is made explicit at *Eumenides* 478-479 and again at 782-783.³⁵⁰ In the context of *Agamemnon* 1232, *δυσφιλές* can thus be understood to describe *both* blood (which Clytemnestra causes to pour forth from Agamemnon's body when she kills him) *and* venom (which is characteristic of a *δάκος*, a venomous snake). *δυσφιλές* works to cast Clytemnestra as dangerous, especially towards her φίλοι. The phrase *νεογενές δάκος* (*Cho.* 530) echoes her words at *Agamemnon* 1232, *δυσφιλές δάκος*.³⁵¹ As the *δάκος* of Clytemnestra's dream, Orestes has inherited his mother's ability to *δάκνειν*, "to bite." Again, Orestes has traits inherited from Clytemnestra, uses

³⁴⁹ Commentators on the *Agamemnon* have relatively little to say about the adjective *δυσφιλής/δυσφιλές*, though Eduard Fraenkel notes that Aeschylus is particularly fond of *-φιλής* compounds. See Fraenkel 1950: 22 and Garvie 1986: 215. This adjective is very rare and only occurs seven times in all of Greek literature; six of these seven occurrences are in the *Oresteia* (Fraenkel 1950: 22).

³⁵⁰ Fowler 1991: 99.

³⁵¹ Not only is the adjective + *δάκος* formulation in the exact same metrical *sedes* at both *Agamemnon* 1232 and *Choephoroi* 530, but *νεογενές*, used to describe Orestes, verbally echoes the adjective *δυσφιλές* as used to describe Clytemnestra.

them in service of his father. Because he is the νεογενὲς δάκος to her δυσφιλὲς δάκος, he is primed to understand and overpower her, Gorgon-like though she may be.

The similarity of Clytemnestra and Orestes is further emphasized by Orestes’

interpretation of the dream:

ἀλλ’ εὐχομαι γῆ τῆδε καὶ πατρός τάφω	540
τοῦνειρον εἶναι τοῦτ’ ἐμοὶ τελεσφόρον.	
κρίνω δέ τοί νιν ὥστε συγκόλλως ἔχειν·	
εἰ γὰρ τὸν αὐτὸν χῶρον ἐκλιπὼν ἐμοὶ	
οὐφίς †επᾶσα σπαργανηπλείζετο †	
καὶ μαστὸν ἀμφέχασκ’ ἐμὸν θρεπτήριον	545
θρόμβω τ’ ἔμειξεν αἵματος φίλον γάλα,	
ἢ δ’ ἀμφὶ τάρβει τῶδ’ ἐπώμωξεν πάθει,	
δεῖ τοί νιν, ὡς ἔθρεψεν ἔκπαγλον τέρας,	
θανεῖν βιαίως· ἐκδρακοντωθεὶς δ’ ἐγὼ	
κτείνω νιν, ὡς τοῦνειρον ἐννέπει τόδε.	550

Well, I pray to this earth and to the grave of my father
that the dream be fulfilled in me.

I interpret it in such a way that it all fits:

For if, having come out of the same place as I did,
the snake was coiled in my swaddling-clothes
and gaped around the breast that nourished me,
and mixed her milk with a clot of blood,
and she laments over this misfortune in fear,
then she, who reared a terrible monster, must
die violently; and I, become serpent,
will kill her, as the dream says.³⁵²

Garvie asserts that Orestes must take on his mother’s characteristics and “will act as she did.”³⁵³

In order to defeat the viper living in the house, Orestes must “become serpent” (ἐκδρακοντωθεὶς, *Cho.* 549). He must use what he has inherited from his mother in order to kill her.

This point is supported by the fact that Clytemnestra herself is described as a viper in the *Choephoroi*. At *Choephoroi* 248-249, Orestes prays to Zeus to help the “noble offspring of the

³⁵² Trans. after Garvie.

³⁵³ Garvie 1986: 193. George Devereux likewise argues that it is crucial here for Orestes to understand some kinship with the dream-serpent (Devereux 1976: 190–91).

eagle father, who died in the coils of the terrible viper” (γένναν εὖνιν αἰετοῦ πατρός, | θανόντος ἐν πλεκταῖσι καὶ σπειράμασιν | δεινῆς ἐχίδνης). This is a clear reference to Agamemnon’s death at Clytemnestra’s hands, since, as Garvie notes, “the female [viper] was thought, while mating, to bite through the neck of the male, and to be, in vengeance, killed by her offspring as they bit their way out of the womb.”³⁵⁴ Garvie argues that the reference to the *echidna* conveys Clytemnestra’s sexual voracity. Agamemnon’s identification as an eagle here is reminiscent of his identification with the eagle in the Chorus’ Hymn to Zeus in the *Agamemnon*, and the language of the eagle’s death (θανόντος ἐν πλεκταῖσι, 248) calls to mind the circumstances of Agamemnon’s own death. Orestes again calls Clytemnestra a viper after he has killed her and Aegisthus; he says that her lawless mind would have caused anyone who touched her to rot as if she had been a moray eel or a viper (μύραινά γ’ εἴτ’ ἔχιδν’ ἔφου, 994). When Orestes repeats the word *echidna* here, it evokes all of the descriptions of Clytemnestra as serpent-like and Orestes as the one who must become serpent-like in order to defeat her.

It is not difficult to see why serpent imagery and Gorgon imagery are connected. Both serpents and Gorgons represent the worst aspects of female nature: treachery, viciousness, and a tendency towards secrecy and duplicity. Both serpents and Gorgons derive their power from their ability to wield the gaze in a way that makes their victims unable to act against them. For serpents, this is implicit in the etymological link between δράκων and δέρκεσθαι; for Gorgons, the power of their gaze is coded as a lack of feminine *aidōs* that implies the transgression of sexual mores.

Clytemnestra is certainly duplicitous, treacherous, and sexually voracious. Simon Pulleyn has shown that Clytemnestra displays her eroticism through language associated with

³⁵⁴ Garvie 1986: 107.

food, and that Clytemnestra derives a similar sort of sexual pleasure from killing her husband as one might from eating food.³⁵⁵ Similarly, Laura McClure argues that Clytemnestra's duplicitous speech at *Agamemnon* 958-974 is reminiscent of the language of "erotic incantations" usually used to ask the gods to inspire love in the object of the speaker's affection. McClure points out that her language is mirrored in the binding song of the Erinyes in the *Eumenides*; the language of both songs is imbued with the "perverted, destructive form of *peitho* which exerts a irresistible coercive influence over others."³⁵⁶ This perverted *peitho* reflects the destructive form of female sexuality, one which would cause a wife to use her woman's work to entrap and murder her husband. Clytemnestra's language is dripping with eroticism, which hints at her dangerous, unbridled nature even before she actually kills Agamemnon. Her dangerousness to her male *philoï* is reflected in the descriptions of her as a female-monster hybrid which threatens the very fabric of patriarchal society.

4.4.2. Harpy Imagery used of Clytemnestra and the Erinyes

I move now to instances in which Clytemnestra and the Erinyes are likened to Harpies. I connect Harpy imagery with hunting imagery because, as Christiana Franco has argued, female monsters like the Harpies are described as the "dogs of Zeus" because they are "disposed to blindly execute their master's orders."³⁵⁷ In the case of the Harpies, the orders they follow are to pursue and snatch mortals. In this section, I will explore the theme of the Erinyes as snatchers, and

³⁵⁵ Pulleyn 1997: 566.

³⁵⁶ McClure 1996: 139–40.

³⁵⁷ Franco 2014: 94. Apollonius of Rhodes is the first Greek author to refer to the Harpies explicitly as "dog-like" (*Argonautica* 2.289). This is likely in response to earlier source material, including visual art, that casts the Harpies as doglike; as Franco argues, this description of the Harpies as the "dogs of Zeus" works because they are unquestioningly loyal to their master in terrorizing Phineus. But I would argue that this is because they specifically pursue their quarry, as if they are hunting dogs tracking their prey.

show that the language Aeschylus uses of both the Erinyes and Clytemnestra when he refers to them as snatchers positions Clytemnestra as a chorus-leader for the chorus of Erinyes.

Aeschylus uses the association of the Harpies and the Erinyes in the *Oresteia* to prepare the audience for the appearance of the Erinyes onstage. The most overt instance of this connection occurs at *Eumenides* 50-51, when the Pythia attempts to identify the sleeping Erinyes as Gorgons, then revises her statement to reflect the fact that they look similar to the Harpies, which she once saw “in a painting, carrying off the feast of Phineus” (εἰδόν ποτ’ ἤδη Φινέως γεγραμμένας | δεῖπνον φερούσας, *Eumenides* 50-51). But the Erinyes are wingless, ἄπτεροί, as the Pythia notes in line 51, and so they cannot actually be Harpies.³⁵⁸ Nevertheless, there is something about the Erinyes that make them seem, at first glance, similar to Harpies. Part of this is presumably because the Erinyes, like Harpies, are hybrid female monsters who terrorize their victims. But more importantly, the Erinyes, like Harpies, pursue their victims with the intent to snatch them away. As I have already suggested, there is an erotic element to this *harpagē*; the Erinyes are both sexualized and asexual at the same time. In *Eumenides* 46-48, Aeschylus hints at this by describing the Erinyes as women-not-women (πρόσθεν δὲ τάνδρως τοῦδε θαυμαστὸς λόχος | εὔδει γυναικῶν ἐν θρόνοισιν ἡμενος. | οὔτοι γυναῖκας, *Eumenides* 46-

³⁵⁸ Scholars disagree on the true meaning of ἄπτερος: some argue that it means “wingless,” while others believe that it means “featherless.” P.G. Maxwell-Stuart argues that the Erinyes must be winged, since they cannot pursue Orestes over the sea if they are wingless (Maxwell-Stuart 1973: 83). Rather, argues Maxwell-Stuart, ἄπτερος refers to the featherless wings of the Erinyes, which are “membraned” like the wings of bats (Maxwell-Stuart 1973: 83–4). He maintains that the Erinyes are, in fact, human-sized bats belonging to the family *Vespertilionidae* (Maxwell-Stuart 1973: 84). However, he does not account for Athena, who also flies without wings and is decidedly anthropomorphic. In her speech at *Eumenides* 397-414, Athena tells us that she has arrived from Troy by means of wingless flight: ἐνθεν διώκουσ’ ἦλθον ἄτρυτον πόδα, | πτερῶν ἄτερ ροιβδοῦσα κόλπον αἰγίδος (“From there I have come on rapid and unwearied foot, not flying on wings but flapping the folds of my aegis,” trans. Sommerstein). Athena’s wingless flight suggests the possibility that the Erinyes are likewise wingless. For a full summary and analysis of the various arguments about ἄπτερος, see Fraenkel 1950 on *Agamemnon* 276.

48). Apollo describes them in a similar paradox as “aged maidens, ancient children” (*Eum.* 68-70). Thus, the Erinyes are at once aggressive and parthenic.

The Erinyes are conceptually linked with the Harpies as female monsters who pursue and terrorize male quarries. For the Erinyes, this pursuit characterizes them as hunters or, more often, as hunting-dogs commanded by a *kunagos* (Clytemnestra), with Orestes as their prey. Aeschylus uses the language of pursuit to indicate that Orestes is trapped within his own onstage version of the pursuit scene. Beginning in the *Choephoroi*, when the Erinyes are visible to Orestes alone, Aeschylus gives indications that Orestes will be pursued from his homeland by this band of female monsters. Aeschylus first hints at this when Clytemnestra threatens that the Erinyes will terrorize Orestes if he kills her:

Κλ. ὄρα, φύλαξαι μητρὸς ἐγκότους κύνας.
 Ὅρ. τὰς τοῦ πατρὸς δὲ πῶς φύγω, παρῆς τάδε; 925

Cl.: Take care; beware the grudge-bearing hounds of your mother.
 Or.: How shall I escape the hounds of my father, if I disregard this?³⁵⁹

When Clytemnestra calls the Erinyes her “grudge-bearing hounds” (924), she foregrounds the idea that the Erinyes will pursue Orestes from Argos like hunting dogs tracking a fawn. Several important characteristics of the Erinyes are brought to light in this line. The first is that they are doglike; as Cristiana Franco has shown, the doggishness of the Erinyes reflects both their loyalty to their master and their penchant for hunting human prey in the form of those guilty of kin-murder.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁹ Trans. after Garvie.

³⁶⁰ Says Franco, “The Erinyes are... dogs in many senses. They are dogs that defend the dead who claim vendettas, as well as watchdogs of Justice (*Dikē*), of the sanctity of oaths, and of all sacred, inviolable boundaries. In this last function, they display above all the aggressiveness of a canine phylax (guardian) that attacks someone who crosses a property boundary or trespasses some off-limits barrier. But they are also hideous hunting dogs set loose against human prey. As such, to the hunted they are monstrous images of reversal: furious dogs unleashing aggression

The second characteristic of the Erinyes that is highlighted in *Choephoroi* 924 is that they belong to Clytemnestra, as indicated by the possessive genitive μητρὸς. This suggests that Clytemnestra is in command of them as their *kunagos*, or hunt-leader, who commands them to track their prey. We see this played out onstage at *Eumenides* 94-139, when Clytemnestra's *eidōlon* attempts to rouse the Erinyes from their slumber. Further, the description of the Erinyes as the hounds of the *mother* (μητρὸς...κύνας) recalls a phrase in the *Agamemnon* in which the eagles of Zeus which kill Artemis' favorite hare are described as the πτανοῖσιν κυσὶ πατρὸς, "winged hounds of her father" (*Ag.* 135); the Erinyes are the hounds of the mother, just as the eagles are the hounds of the father.

When Orestes first sees the Erinyes, he also describes them as doglike:

Ὅρ. οὐκ εἰσὶ δόξαι τῶνδε πημάτων ἐμοί,
σαφῶς γὰρ αἶδε μητρὸς ἔγκοτοι κύνες.

Or.: These are not visions of troubles for me,
for they are clearly the grudge-bearing hounds of my mother.³⁶¹

Orestes' use of the same phrase to describe the Erinyes as Clytemnestra did earlier in the *Choephoroi* connects the creatures Orestes sees at the end of the play to the creatures Clytemnestra threatens to send after her son, extending the metaphor of the Erinyes as hunting-dogs into this scene.

This scene contains another important verbal repetition that indicates the function of the Erinyes as pursuers. In line 1050, Orestes realizes that the apparition of these creatures before him means that he cannot remain in his homeland; this is indicated by the phrase οὐκέτ' ἄν μείναιμ' ἐγώ ("I can no longer remain"). In fact, this realization brackets the exchange between

against a human instead of their usual animal prey. Representing the Erinyes as she-dogs thus allows Aeschylus to exploit the awful ambiguity of canine courage" (Franco 96).

³⁶¹ Trans. after Garvie.

Orestes and the Chorus: in his final line of this play, Orestes repeats the claim that he can no longer remain, with the important added detail that he is “driven out” (ἐλαύνομαι δὲ κούκ’ ἄν μείναιμ’ ἐγὼ, 1062). This phrase indicates that the Erinyes will, in fact, pursue Orestes like the female monsters of vase-painting *and* like the hunting-dogs to which they have repeatedly been compared. They will physically prevent him from remaining in Argos by running after him like hounds tracking the scent of their prey. It is crucial that in this scene at the end of the *Choephoroi*, the Erinyes are likened not only to hunting-dogs but also to Gorgons; the combination of these descriptions serves to evoke the pursuit scenes of vase-painting in which the Gorgons chase Perseus.

In the *Eumenides*, the Erinyes are again likened to dogs in several striking instances (most notably 111-113, 129-132, 147-148, 231, and 246). Like a *kunagos*, Clytemnestra’s *eidōlon* commands the Erinyes to track Orestes.³⁶² The commands she gives are reminiscent of those that a *kunagos* might give to her hounds: ἀκούσαθ’ (“listen,” 114), φρονήσατ’ (“take heed,” 115), ἔπου (“follow,” 139).³⁶³ Further, the Erinyes themselves take on the role of dogs in their vocalizations: the stage direction indicated by μυγμός in lines 117 and following can be used to describe the whimpering of dogs.³⁶⁴ Additionally, their cry of λαβὲ λαβὲ λαβὲ λαβέ· φράζου (“Get him, get him, get him, get him! See there!”) represents, as Sommerstein argues, “probably not the calls of huntsmen, but the vocalizations of hounds on the trail, made articulate and meaningful. The rapid, repeated λαβέ suggests the panting of the hounds as they pursue their quarry... then suddenly the leader gives a loud double bark, interpreted linguistically as

³⁶² The language of pursuit is also used of the Erinyes at *Eumenides* 334-340, 354-359, 372-376, 421-424, and 604-605.

³⁶³ For the language of hunting commands, see especially Xenophon *On Hunting* (Marchant and Bowersock 1968).

³⁶⁴ Liddell and Scott 1996: s.v. μυγμός.

φράζου.³⁶⁵ The Erinyes follow Clytemnestra's commands like the hunting-dogs that she casts them as.

Later in the play, the Erinyes once again describe themselves as doglike, saying that they have pursued Orestes to Athens by following his tracks:

εἶεν· τόδ' ἐστὶ τάνδρὸς ἐκφανὲς τέκμαρ·	
ἔπου δὲ μηνυτῆρος ἀφθέγκτου φραδαῖς·	245
τετραυματισμένον γὰρ ὡς κύων νεβρὸν	
πρὸς αἷμα καὶ σταλαγμὸν ἐκματεύομεν.	
πολλοῖς δὲ μόχθοις ἀνδροκμηῆσι φυσιᾶ	
σπλάγγνον· χθονὸς γὰρ πᾶς πεποίμανται τόπος,	
ὑπὲρ τε πόντον ἀπτεροῖς ποτήμασιν	250
ἦλθον διώκουσ' οὐδὲν ὑστέρα νεώς.	
καὶ νῦν ὄδ' ἐνθάδ' ἐστὶ που καταπτακῶν.	
ὄσμη βροτείων αἱμάτων με προσγελά.	

Aha! This is the clear track of the man!
 Follow the guidance of the voiceless informant!
 Like a hound on the trail of a wounded fawn,
 we are tracking him down by the drip of blood.
 My lungs are puffing with my long toil, which would have exhausted a mortal:
 our flock has ranged over every place on earth,
 and I have passed over the sea, in wingless flight, no less swiftly than a ship.
 And now that man is here somewhere, cowering down:
 the scent of human blood is greeting me!³⁶⁶

In the simile they describe themselves as dogs pursuing a wounded fawn who leaves drops of blood in his wake. This imagery is, of course, particularly apt to Orestes' situation, since the Erinyes are pursuing him because of the blood he has shed. They know he is nearby and that their chase is at an end because they can smell blood (ὄσμη βροτείων αἱμάτων με προσγελά, *Eumenides* 254).

Clytemnestra likewise describes Orestes as a fawn (*Eum.* 111-113):

ὁ δ' ἐξάλυξας οἴχεται νεβροῦ δίκην,
 καὶ ταῦτα κούφως ἐκ μέσων ἀρκυστάτων

³⁶⁵ Sommerstein 1989: 106.

³⁶⁶ Trans. Sommerstein.

ὄρουσεν ὑμῖν ἐγκατιλλώψας μέγα.

And he, having escaped, is gone just like a fawn,
and has rushed away easily from the middle of the snares,
mocking you.³⁶⁷

She calls the snare a “net” (ἀρκυστάτων), a term evocative of the means by which she murders her husband in the *Agamemnon*.³⁶⁸ While Clytemnestra’s weapon is traditionally the axe, the *peplos* in which she traps Agamemnon is equally important.³⁶⁹ She catches Agamemnon in a snare as if she is a hunter entrapping her prey: the language she uses when she reemerges onto the stage after the murder of Agamemnon and Cassandra reflects this image.³⁷⁰ Likewise in the *Eumenides*, she is the *kunagos* who has set the snare, and the Erinyes are the hunting-dogs who pursue her quarry—Orestes. The use of the net to describe the snare which the fawn has escaped is particularly apt here, since Clytemnestra herself used a net of sorts to entrap her most famous prey. Her method of entrapment has not changed, but she now employs a host of pursuers to aid her in catching her quarry.

³⁶⁷ Trans. after Sommerstein.

³⁶⁸ For a comprehensive analysis of net imagery in the *Oresteia*, see Lebeck 1971: 63–68. Lebeck argues that the image of the hunting net recurs throughout the trilogy to link Agamemnon’s death with the sack of Troy. Lebeck notes that “this imagery develops slowly in the course of the drama; its significance does not become apparent until the audience are shown the real ‘net’” (Lebeck 1971: 63). The net is introduced in *Agamemnon* 355-361, in which Night casts a στεγανὸν δίκτυον, “all-covering net,” over Troy; this image is concretized when Clytemnestra calls the robe in which she has caught Agamemnon a “net” (*Ag.* 1382-1383)—specifically, this is a “casting net for fish, first thrown and then drawn up from beneath the water” (Lebeck 1971: 66). Lebeck goes on to connect the net with other instances of hunting imagery, including the image of Clytemnestra as “the dog who drives her game into the net” (Lebeck 1971: 66), and later argues that the net is one of several instruments used in the trilogy to bind a victim. These binding instruments evoke the larger theme of “destiny and destruction as something that entangles man” (Lebeck 1971: 67). This system of imagery is brought to its *telos* in the binding song of the Erinyes at *Eumenides* 307-396.

³⁶⁹ Scholars disagree on whether Clytemnestra’s weapon was Aegisthus’ sword or the axe. See especially Warr 1898, M. Davies 1987, Prag 1985: 82-3, Prag 1991, Marshall 2001, and Davies and Finglass 2014 (and Ch. 3 of this dissertation) for discussion of the relevant arguments.

³⁷⁰ See *Agamemnon* 1372-1387.

Orestes is likened to a wounded fawn twice in the *Eumenides* (111-113, 246-247) and to an unspecified wild beast—still the prey in a hunting scene—once (*Eum.* 146). The image of the young male as the prey of a pack of dogs evokes another story from Greek myth—the myth of Actaeon, who, after seeing Artemis bathing, is torn apart by his own hunting-dogs.³⁷¹ As Cristiana Franco notes, the Actaeon myth is emblematic of the “grave suspicions” that the Greeks felt towards hunting-dogs: that the dog, in the heat of the moment during a hunt, might forget his domestication and “turn into a fierce wolf and unleash indiscriminate aggression against the wrong prey.”³⁷² Franco describes the propensity of the hunting-dog for misdirection of violence as an effect of a sudden onset of *lyssa*, “madness.”³⁷³ Of course, the Erinyes are not Orestes’ own hunting-dogs; rather, they belong to his mother. However, because it is his mother who sends her “dogs” against Orestes, the effect is still transgressive. As a mother, Clytemnestra is supposed to keep her children safe; she fails to do so through the aggressive act of sending the

³⁷¹“The story made famous by Ovid... that Artemis was angry with Actaeon because he had seen her bathing is not attested before Callimachus... in Euripides he had boasted that he was a better hunter than the goddess” (Sommerstein 2008: 247). Frontisi-Ducroux reports that four versions of the Actaeon myth are attested. In the first, Actaeon is punished for his excessive sexual desire for Semele, though Frontisi-Ducroux argues that his punishment occurs less because of his incestuous lust than because he tries to position himself as a rival of Zeus for Semele’s hand; this version is reported by Stesichorus and Acusilaus. In the second version, Actaeon boasts that he is a better hunter than Artemis; this is reported by Euripides in the *Bacchae*. In the third version, Actaeon accidentally spies Artemis bathing; this is a later variant of the myth, which Frontisi-Ducroux argues is an innovation of the Hellenistic poets. In the fourth version, Actaeon “poursuit Artémis de ses assiduités, cherchant à l’épouser, alors même qu’il lui consacre ses dépouilles de chasse en son temple” (Frontisi-Ducroux 1997: 436–38). In this version, reported by Diodorus, Actaeon’s transgression constitutes attempted sexual violence against the goddess. In all versions, he is punished by being torn apart by his hunting-dogs, though his transformation into a deer is not always explicit. Aeschylus himself treated the Actaeon myth in his now-fragmentary *Toxotides*, probably produced between 499 and 456 BCE (Sommerstein 2008: 244-247).

³⁷² Franco 2014: 30.

³⁷³ Franco 2014: 30–31.

Erinyes after Orestes.³⁷⁴ Further, Clytemnestra is sometimes described as a “dog” herself;³⁷⁵ in this way, she is both equated with and distinguished among the Erinyes. When he is pursued by the Erinyes, Orestes is attacked by “dogs” that do not recognize him as a member of the household.

The image of Orestes as a fawn evokes the version of the Actaeon myth in which Actaeon is transformed into a deer. This version was certainly in circulation during Aeschylus’ own time.³⁷⁶ Pausanias also reports that, while the traditional Actaeon myth features Actaeon’s

³⁷⁴ Franco distinguishes between the dog as “bloodthirsty psychopath” that hunts human prey (2014: 97) and the dog as “furious mother” that attacks in order to protect her children, even to the point of harming the very children she means to protect (2014: 108). Clytemnestra seems to be a blend of the two categories: as a “furious mother” type, she only attacks after the sacrifice of Iphigeneia, but as a “bloodthirsty psychopath” type, she commands the Erinyes to hunt Orestes. Neither category is meant to be taken as *exempla* of proper motherhood: Franco notes that even the “furious mother” type exhibits behavior that is guided by excessive wrath (2014: 110). Canine *lyssa* thus seems to apply to Clytemnestra whether she be of the “bloodthirsty psychopath” type or of the “furious mother” type.

³⁷⁵ She calls herself the “watchdog of the house” (δομάτων κύνα | ἐσθλήν) at *Ag.* 607-608; Cassandra calls her a “hateful dog” (μισητῆς κυνός) who “fawns over” (λείξασα), then “bites” (δάκνει) her master (*Ag.* 1228-1229). The verb λάσκω, which can connote a dog’s bark, is used of Clytemnestra’s speaking style at *Ag.* 275, 596, 614, 1426. At *Choephoroi* 420, Electra notes that Clytemnestra may try to “fawn over” (πάρεστι σαίνειν) her children in order to derail them from their mission. σαίνω or σαίνομαι can be used of dogs wagging their tails as they greet their masters (Liddell and Scott 1996: s.v. σαίνω).

³⁷⁶ In his book *Greek Mythology and Poetics*, Gregory Nagy argues that the version of the myth in which Actaeon is transformed into a stag is referenced in a passage of Pausanias which preserves a fragment of Stesichorus (*PMG* 236). As Pausanias reports,

Στησίχορος δὲ ὁ Ἰμεραῖος ἔγραψεν ἐλάφου περιβαλεῖν δέρμα Ἀκταίῳ τὴν θεόν,
 παρασκευάζουσάν οἱ τὸν ἐκ τῶν κυνῶν θάνατον, ἵνα δὴ μὴ γυναῖκα Σεμέλην λάβοι. ἐγὼ
 δὲ ἄνευ θεοῦ πείθομαι νόσον λύσσαν τοῦ Ἀκταίῳ ἐπιλαβεῖν τοὺς κύνας· μανέντες δὲ
 καὶ οὐ διαγιγνώσκοντες διαφορήσειν ἔμελλον πάντα τινὰ ὅτῳ περιτύχοιεν.

Stesichorus of Himera says that the goddess cast a deer-skin round Actaeon to make sure that his hounds would kill him, so as to prevent his taking Semele to wife. My own view is that without divine interference the hounds of Actaeon were smitten with madness, and so they were sure to tear to pieces without distinction everybody they chanced to meet. (Pausanias 9.2.3; trans. Jones)

transformation into a deer, it is more likely that Actaeon remained human and that his dogs were stricken by a sudden bout of madness. Pausanias' opinion is worth considering. Writes Franco, “*lyssa* signified not only a typical canine malady—the disease of ‘rabies’—but also the dog’s more general tendency toward mental disturbance, a lurking madness due to a congenital weakness in the species, ever perilously imbalanced toward the wolf’s indiscriminate ferocity... This furious characteristic (*lyssōdes*), composed of dogged vehemence, failed recognition, and boldness in resisting man, produces disturbing images of crazed dogs that mistakenly exchange prey for man.”³⁷⁷

The idea that dogs are vulnerable to sudden attacks of *lyssa* which bring out their wild nature recurs in both visual art and literary sources. Frontisi-Ducroux writes that in visual depictions of the Actaeon myth from the fifth century, the ambiguous nature of hunting-dogs is often represented by the presence of the figure *Lyssa* as the personification of madness.³⁷⁸ Consider, as an example of this, a bell krater in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts depicting the transformation and death of Actaeon.³⁷⁹ Actaeon is mid-transformation, with deer’s horns sprouting from his head. He kneels with one leg extended, a position that indicates his

Nagy believes that “the expression ἐλάφου περιβαλεῖν δέρμα Ἀκταίωνι ‘flung the hide of a stag around Actaeon’ reflects the actual words of Stesichorus” (Nagy 1992: 263). Further, Nagy argues that the verb περιβάλλω can be used of physical transformation, as in Agamemnon 1147, when Cassandra describes the transformation of Philomela into a nightingale (περέβαλον γὰρ οἱ πτεροφόρον δέμας | θεοὶ..., “the gods have clothed her with a feathered form”). If we accept that Pausanias is in fact preserving a fragment of Stesichorus here, we can see that the version of the myth in which Actaeon is transformed into a stag is in circulation among pre-Aeschylean authors.

³⁷⁷ Franco 2014: 97.

³⁷⁸ Frontisi-Ducroux 1997: 444.

³⁷⁹ Museum of Fine Arts, Boston: 00.346. See also Simas 2020: 154-5 for discussion of this vase and the *Oresteia* myth (Chapter 11 of *Greek Drama V: Studies in the Theatre of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries BCE*, edited by C. W. Marshall and Hallie Marshall, 145-59. London: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.).

powerlessness.³⁸⁰ Lyssa, identified by the label ΛΥΣΑ above her head, is dressed in the garb of a hunter, and seems to be urging the dogs toward *sparagmos* of their master. In this scene, Lyssa is clearly acting in the capacity of *kunagos*, urging her dogs to attack a human quarry by inflicting madness upon them.

The role of Orestes as the object of the hunt and Clytemnestra as the *kunagos* who sends her dogs after him positions Clytemnestra as a Lyssa figure who inspires frenzy in her dogs such that they do not recognize that their prey is in fact human. Clytemnestra, then, embodies the kind of madness that causes hunting-dogs to attack humans; this is evident at the end of the *Agamemnon*, when the Chorus, incredulous at Clytemnestra's murder of her husband, asks her what could have caused her to commit such a crime.³⁸¹ Aeschylus uses the language of hunting to describe the Erinyes, who pursue Orestes; Clytemnestra is both the *kunagos* who commands them and the lead dog among their ranks. This language of hunting can be, as I have argued, linked with Harpy imagery, since the Harpies are doglike in their pursuit of humans to snatch. Aeschylus uses the imagery of hunting and Harpies to describe the Erinyes in order to characterize them before they appear onstage, but this characterization is important in the *Eumenides* as well, since this is when the parthenic monster's power is appropriated for the protection of Athens.

³⁸⁰ We see Orestes kneeling in the same position in vases depicting his supplication at Delphi (London, British Museum 10-16.1; Berlin, Antikensammlung F2380; Paris, Musée du Louvre K343; Syracuse, Museo Regionale Paolo Orsi Siracusa 41621). See Simas 2020 on these vases (Chapter 11 of *Greek Drama V: Studies in the Theatre of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries BCE*, edited by C. W. Marshall and Hallie Marshall, 145-59. London: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.).

³⁸¹ See especially *Agamemnon* 1399-1400, 1407-1411, 1426-1430, 1455-1474.

I have argued in this chapter that the Erinyes are described in very specific language in the *Oresteia* which serves to prepare the audience for the unprecedented materialization of the Erinyes onstage. Clytemnestra, too, is described in these terms, which positions her as a chorus-leader for this band of monstrous females. But Clytemnestra is not, in fact, a monster. She is a human woman who has killed her husband and threatens the patriarchal structure of her society; she has transgressed her gender role and thus must be killed to restore order to the male world. However, the Erinyes she commands *are* actually monsters, and their power can therefore be appropriated for the protection of the city; therefore, we see the erasure of Clytemnestra but the transformation of the Erinyes into Eumenides, who uphold rather than challenge the patriarchy.

CHAPTER 5. THE *ELECTRA* PLAYS

Clytemnestra's relationship with Electra in the *Electra* plays of Euripides and Sophocles provides insight into Greek views on the proper role of women in the household and in society. We see the boundaries of appropriate behavior for women loosely outlined by the characters of Electra and Clytemnestra: it is clearly unusual for a woman of marriageable age to remain a *parthenos*, just as it is unseemly for a wife to challenge her husband's authority, and Euripides and Sophocles invite us to consider the impropriety of both extremes. Mother and daughter both embody male fears about women in Euripides' play, where Clytemnestra's marriage to Aegisthus is framed as an unholy union (E. *El.* 600, 645, 683, 926, 1170) and the revelation that Electra's marriage to the farmer is unconsummated is met with surprise (E. *El.* 245-63). Likewise, in Sophocles' *Electra*, the titular character repeatedly bemoans the fact that she still remains unmarried (164-6; 187-92), while Clytemnestra's indecorous marriage to Aegisthus casts her as ἄλεκτρος and ἄνυμφος (S. *El.* 489-94), adjectives that invite comparison of Clytemnestra with Electra. Thus, in both plays, mother and daughter exemplify and transgress the expectations of a proper marriage.

Much of the tension in Electra's relationship with her mother arises from their disparate conceptions of a woman's role in the *oikos*. Both mother and daughter subvert what is usually expected, but in opposite ways: Clytemnestra destroys the *oikos* by killing her husband and remarrying of her own accord; Electra refuses to procreate while her father remains unavenged.³⁸² However, there is a real danger that by refusing to obey sexual mores, the defiant

³⁸² According to Clytemnestra, a mother's role is to defend her children at any cost; thus, the murder of Agamemnon was necessary in order to avenge the sacrifice of Iphigeneia (E. *El.* 1018-45; S. *El.* 530-51). For Electra, however, the father's lineage must be protected, even if it requires that she remain a *parthenos* for longer than is usually proper.

Electra is in fact behaving in a manner similar to Clytemnestra. In several instances in both plays, Electra speaks in a manner that evokes Clytemnestra, and threatens actions reminiscent of her mother's. The similarities and differences between mother and daughter can be summarized through wordplay on Electra's name with ἄ-, "not, without" and λέκτρον, "bed, marriage." Both Clytemnestra and Electra are ἄλεκτρος at various points of the plays—the latter is unmarried in Sophocles and "unbedded" in Euripides. The former, however, is ἄλεκτρος because of her entrance into an unconventional union with Aegisthus. In this chapter, I will explore the ways in which Clytemnestra and Electra are similar to and different from each other, and the ways in which they jointly outline the proper role of women in the *oikos*.

5.1. THE DATES OF THE PLAYS

Neither *Electra* play is conclusively dated. It was long thought that Sophocles influenced Euripides, but current consensus is now that Euripides' *Electra* was prior to Sophocles'. Euripides' *Electra* was produced between 422 and 413 BCE, but some scholars have argued for a date no later than 415.³⁸³ Cropp argues that statistically, the years 422-417 are the most likely, largely due to evidence gathered from metrical analyses of Euripides' plays; so-called allusions to other works or to political events in Athens are, he says, unlikely to suggest a definitive production date.³⁸⁴ Most scholars now date Euripides' *Electra* to between 422 and 417, and

³⁸³ Cropp 2013: 31. As Cropp notes, 413 was once strongly preferred, though this is no longer the case. Zuntz 1955 argues strongly against this date based on metrical and stylistic analysis of this play alongside Euripides' other works. Subsequent scholarship largely follows Zuntz in this conclusion, but see also Vögler 1967 for an exhaustive study of both plays whose conclusion is Sophocles' priority.

³⁸⁴ Cropp 2013: 32-3. See also Zuntz 1955: 64-71 and Kamerbeek 1974: 5-8. Zuntz cautions against trying to date the play based on Athenian political events (1955: 70). The principal point of evidence used in such analyses are the lines νῶ δ' ἐπὶ πόντον Σικελὸν σπουδῆ | σώσοντε νεῶν πρῶρας ἐνάλουσ (1347-8), which have been taken to refer to the Sicilian Expedition (415-413 BCE). However, Zuntz notes that these two lines are not sufficient evidence to override that provided by the play's many similarities to earlier works of Euripides (1955: 67).

Sophocles' *Electra* to 418-410.³⁸⁵ Scholars have independently questioned whether Euripides' *Electra* influenced Sophocles', or vice versa.³⁸⁶ While this question cannot be conclusively answered since the plays' production dates are not definite, the arguments about respective influence are interesting to consider. Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff argues that Euripides undermined the Aeschylean tradition and Sophocles was restoring it, while Steiger argues that Euripides was reacting to Sophocles' "simplistic and morally repellent treatment of the story."³⁸⁷ But as Cropp notes, who influenced whom is an impossible question to answer without conclusive production dates.³⁸⁸ Moreover, as Patrick Finglass notes, the question of the priority of Euripides vis-à-vis Sophocles ignores the issue of the influence of the preexisting mythical tradition on the development of the two plays, which each demonstrate concern for continuity as well as innovation on the myth. Finglass argues that the "differences between the *Electra* plays are often better understood as the result of different responses to Aeschylus than as the later *Electra* reacting to the earlier."³⁸⁹ In any case, attempting to trace specific instances of intertextuality between the *Electra* plays is unconvincing; rather, both Euripides and Sophocles were innovating on earlier source material and operating under many of the same constraints.

³⁸⁵ See Storey and Allan 2005, and Rogers 2020 n.15.

³⁸⁶ This question is similar to that asked in Ch. 3 of Pindar and Aeschylus. One gets the sense that Sophocles' priority was long assumed because of his "elite" status relative to Euripides, and that Euripides' *Electra* was considered a cheap imitation of Sophocles'. On the "eliteness" of Euripides, see especially the rather florid Gellie 1981.

³⁸⁷ Cropp 2013: 27. See also Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1883 and Steiger 1897.

³⁸⁸ Cropp 2013: 26.

³⁸⁹ Finglass 2007: 3. I would add that, because the tradition of the House of Atreus is so prolific, Euripides and Sophocles could also have been responding to pre-Aeschylean versions of the myth. See also Rogers 2020, who traces potential allusions to Electra's characterization in *Choephoroi* in Ar. *Clouds* which could have influenced both Euripides and Sophocles.

5.2. ELECTRA'S NAME

Electra's name as wordplay on her parthenic status predates both Euripides and Sophocles. The earliest evidence of this wordplay comes from a testimonium of Xanthus preserved in Aelian's *Historical Miscellanies* (fragment 700 PMG), which implies that subsequent authors followed Xanthus in equating Laodice with Electra:³⁹⁰

Ξάνθος ὁ ποιητὴς τῶν μελῶν (ἐγένετο δὲ οὗτος πρεσβύτερος Στησιχόρου τοῦ Ἰμεραίου) λέγει τὴν Ἥλέκτραν τοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος οὐ τοῦτο ἔχειν τοῦνομα πρῶτον ἀλλὰ Λαοδίκην. ἐπεὶ δὲ Ἀγαμέμνων ἀνηρέθη, τὴν δὲ Κλυταιμνήστραν ὁ Αἰγισθος ἔγημε καὶ ἐβασίλευσεν, ἄλεκτρον οὖσαν καὶ καταγηρῶσαν παρθένον Ἀργεῖοι Ἥλέκτραν ἐκάλεσαν διὰ τὸ ἀμοιρεῖν ἀνδρὸς καὶ μὴ πεπειρᾶσθαι λέκτρον.

Xanthus, the lyric poet, who was earlier than Stesichorus of Himera, says that Electra, daughter of Agamemnon, was originally called Laodice; but after Agamemnon had been murdered and Aegisthus had married Clytemnestra and become king, Laodice, unwed and growing old in her virginity, was called Electra by the Argives since she had had no intercourse with any man and had no experience of the marriage-bed.³⁹¹

Aelian reports that Xanthus applied the epithet “Electra” to Laodice because of her long maidenhood. He implies that later authors, beginning with Stesichorus, were aware of the tradition in which Electra's name is connected with her parthenic status.³⁹² According to A.F. Garvie, this testimonium highlights ancient authors' attempts to reconcile Homer's account of Agamemnon's daughters with post-Iliadic myth in which “Electra already played a part.”³⁹³ But

³⁹⁰ For more on Xanthus and his influence, especially upon Stesichorus, see Chapter 3 of this dissertation (“Lyric Poetry”).

³⁹¹ Trans. Wilson.

³⁹² Garvie 1986: xvii. Aeschylus makes Electra unmarried (*Cho.* 487), but as Garvie notes, “there is no way of knowing whether... Aeschylus was conscious of the etymology (ἄλεκτρος) found in Xanthus,” since he does not seem to employ wordplay on λέκτρον (Garvie 1986 ad 486-8). See also Whallon 1980: 37, though he takes for granted that Aeschylus knew of this etymology.

³⁹³ Garvie 1986: xvii. It is important to note that the names of Agamemnon's daughters are reported differently in various sources. The Hesiodic fragment 23a M.-W. lists two daughters, Iphimede and Electra (Merkelbach and West 1967); Stesichorus includes both Iphigeneia and Electra in his *Oresteia*, though their names may or may not be given (Swift 2015). Pindar names

as I will show, the renaming of “Laodice” to “Electra” represents a fundamental shift in Agamemnon’s power.

Let us consider first *Iliad* 9.144-5, where Agamemnon offers Achilles any of his daughters as a potential bride:

τρει̃ς δέ μοί εἰσι θυγάτρεις ἐνὶ μεγάρῳ εὐπήκτῳ
Χρυσόθεμις καὶ Λαοδίκη καὶ Ἰφιάνασσα 145

Three daughters have I in my well-built hall,
Chrysothemis, and Laodice, and Iphianassa.³⁹⁴

Encoded in the offer to Achilles is a reminder of Agamemnon’s kingly power, which is reflected in his daughters’ names.³⁹⁵ Thomas G. Palaima shows that these three names convey information about Agamemnon’s role in society: it is his duty as king of Mycenae to act as

only Iphigeneia (*Pyth.* 11.22), while Aeschylus names both Iphigeneia (*Ag.* 1526, 1555) and Electra (*Cho.* 16, 252). Euripides refers to several daughters (Iphigeneia, Electra, and Chrysothemis, *Or.* 23; Iphigeneia has more than one unnamed sister in *IA*: 638-40 [?], 656, 1448-50), and Sophocles calls them “Electra, Chrysothemis, and Iphianassa” (*S. El.* 154-63). Most scholars maintain that the names “Iphianassa,” “Iphimede,” and “Iphigeneia” refer to the same daughter, largely because of their “synonymity” (Palaima 2006: 59).

³⁹⁴ Trans. Murray.

³⁹⁵ Commenting on this passage, Eustathius of Thessalonica writes that the names of these daughters convey crucial aspects of kingship, a message that is important in the context of the passage:

Ἔτι ἰστέον καὶ ὅτι τρία συνέχει τὴν ἀρχὴν, νόμος ὀρθὸς, κρίσις ἢ πρὸς τὸν δῆμον, καὶ ἰσχὺς ἄρχουσι πρέπουσα· ὅθεν καὶ Ἀγαμέμνων προσφυῶς Χρυσόθεμιν καὶ Λαοδίκην καὶ Ἰφιάνασσαν ἱστορεῖ τὰς ἑαυτοῦ θυγατέρας. καὶ ἔστιν ἢ μὲν Χρυσόθεμις τοῦ ὀρθοῦ νόμου καὶ καθαροῦ παρώνυμος διὰ τὴν θέμιν, ἢ δὲ Λαοδίκη τῆς κρίσεως τοῦ δικαζομένου λαοῦ, ἢ δὲ Ἰφιάνασσα τῆς βασιλικῆς ἰσχύος ἥτοι τοῦ ἴφι ἀνάσσειν.

It still ought to be known also that the three [daughters] encapsulate rule, that is, “right of law, judgement of the people, and strength fitting for a ruler;” because of this, Agamemnon fittingly asked [Achilles] about his [own] daughters, “Golden justice,” “Judgement of the people,” and “Strength of rule.” And Chrysothemis is the proper name of right and proper law because of justice, and Laodice [the proper name] of the judgement of a people giving judgement, and Iphianassa of kingly strength or of ruling by strength. (translation my own)

“guarantor of the general prosperity of his community.”³⁹⁶ For Palaima, this means both managing the people (as we see represented in the names Chrysothemis and Laodice), and ensuring the continuation of the community through procreation (represented in the name Iphianassa/Iphigeneia).³⁹⁷ As we see, then, a crucial part of Agamemnon’s role as king is his ability to be a generative force in both his family and in his community, and in his Iliadic iteration, he still has procreative potential. The later substitution of Laodice with a daughter called “Electra”—whose name is often connected with the adjective ἄλεκτρος, “unbedded” or “unwed”—suggests a diminution of this generative power.³⁹⁸ Thus, Electra’s status as ἄλεκτρος

³⁹⁶ Palaima 2006: 56.

³⁹⁷ On the latter point, Palaima argues that “Iphigeneia is in fact a ‘gloss’-substitute for Iphianassa, i.e., a later name in which the underlying meaning of the [Mycenaean Greek] –anassa component of the name is translated into Greek... So I think that –geneia ‘translates’ –wanassa” (Palaima 2006: 62). See Palaima 2006 for an in-depth examination of the variants of the names of Agamemnon’s daughters, as well as Nagy 2017 for a discussion of the values conveyed by the names “Iphigeneia” and “Iphianassa.”

³⁹⁸ The etymology of “Electra” is debated, as we see in Eustathius’ commentary on Iliad 9.144-5:

Ὅρα δὲ ὅτι ἡ Ἥλέκτρα ἐνταῦθα οὐ κεῖται, ἀλλὰ φασὶ τινες τὴν Λαοδίκην ταύτην εἶναι, Ἥλέκτραν ἐπικληθεῖσαν ἢ κατὰ τρόπον διωνυμίας ἢ διὰ τὸ κατ’ ὄψιν ἠλεκτρῶδες καὶ χρυσοειδὲς ἢ κατὰ λόγον τινὰ σκώμματος διὰ τὸ πολὺν χρόνον ἄλεκτρον μεῖναι χόλω Κλυταιμνήστρας, ὃ δὴ ἐμφαίνεται καὶ παρ’ Εὐριπίδῃ ἐν τῷ, ‘παρθένε μακρὸν δὴ μῆκος Ἥλέκτρα χρόνου.’

And notice that Electra is not there, but some say that she is Laodice, but called Electra either in the manner of a double name or because of her silver-and-gold appearance or, in the manner of a pun, because she remained unwed for a long time because of the wrath of Clytemnestra; this in fact appears also in Euripides, where he says “[o] Electra, unmarried now for so long.”

Translation of Eustathius my own; translation of *Orestes* 72 Kovacs. Eustathius here quotes Euripides *Orestes* 72, in which Helen greets Electra thus: παρθένε μακρὸν δὴ μῆκος Ἥλέκτρα χρόνου (“[o] Electra, unmarried now for so long,” trans. Kovacs). Additionally, the scholiast on Euripides’ *Orestes* 22, which names Agamemnon and Clytemnestra’s daughters as Chrysothemis, Iphigeneia, and Electra, notes:

ὅ παρθένοι μὲν τρεῖς Ὅμηρος [I 145]: ‘Χρυσόθεμις καὶ Λαοδίκη καὶ Ἰφιάνασσα’. οὗτος Ἰφιγένειαν τὴν Ἰφιάνασσαν καλεῖ, Ἥλέκτραν δὲ τὴν Λαοδίκην διὰ τὸ πολυχρόνιον ἴσως

is emblematic of the decline of her father's house. Agamemnon's murder at the hearth represents the end of the generative ability of his household; Electra's prolonged maidenhood is symptomatic of the untimely end of the patriarchal line.

In both *Electra* plays, the titular character's status as ἄλεκτρος is mirrored by Clytemnestra, who defies convention with her improper marriage to Aegisthus; thus, both Electra and Clytemnestra flout traditional gender roles, one by remaining a *parthenos* past her prime and the other by cohabitating with her lover-turned-husband. We will see that, in both *Electra* plays, Electra's maidenhood represents the issues that plague her family: she is ἄλεκτρος because of both her father's emasculation and the usurpation of his throne; her mother is likewise ἄλεκτρος because of her "un-marriage" to Aegisthus. Both Euripides and Sophocles engage in wordplay on Electra's name in order to show how issues of marriage and marital legitimacy plague the household. Both authors also engage in wordplay on the semantic web λέκτρον-λέχος-λόχος, as well as ἄλεκτρος, to discuss the reasons for Electra's prolonged maidenhood and Clytemnestra's "un-marriage." This kind of wordplay is not an uncommon way for authors to treat issues of marital legitimacy. As Victor Adrián Guzzo has argued of Euripides' *Medea*, the web of terms related to λέκτρον, λέχος, and λόχος are crucial for understanding the root of the conflict between Jason and Medea. Whereas Jason considers his λέκτρον-λέχος-λόχος with Medea a venue for bygone sexual pleasure, Medea conceives of the λέκτρον-λέχος-λόχος as a pact whose terms are agreed upon and then broken—that is, Guzzo argues that Jason ends what he considers

τῆς παρθενίας οἷον ἄλεκτρος τις οὔσα ὡς αὐτός φησιν [72]. '[ῶ] παρθένε μακρὸν δὴ μῆκος Ἡλέκτρα χρόνου'

He had three daughters: Homer [says]: 'Chrysothemis and Laodice and Iphianassa.' He [Euripides] calls Iphianassa 'Iphigeneia' and Laodice 'Electra'; perhaps because of the long duration of her virginity as if she were "unmarried" he says '[o] Electra, unmarried now for so long' ... (Schwartz 1887 ad *Or.* 22).

a dalliance because of sexual incompatibility, while Medea understands this to be the dissolution of a legal marriage.³⁹⁹ Because of this, argues Guzzo, when Medea realizes that her status as ἄλοχος is threatened, she reacts by laying a λόχος, that is, a trap, for Jason.⁴⁰⁰ Euripides mobilizes the semantic web λέκτρον-λέχος-λόχος in a similar way in *Electra*: mother and daughter are divided by their opposing stances on the status and duties of an ἄλοχος, and Electra contrives a λόχος (“ambush”) consisting of her false revelation that she has given birth (λέχος, λόγευμα, λεχώ, λόγια, λοχεύω). Likewise, we see Sophocles engaging in wordplay on Electra’s name, utilizing the semantic web λέκτρον-λέχος-λόχος as means of outlining the proper role of women in the household.

Let us now consider the evidence for both playwrights’ use of the λέκτρον-λέχος-λόχος terms in their respective *Electra* plays.

5.3. THE CHARACTERIZATIONS OF ELECTRA AND CLYTEMNESTRA IN EURIPIDES

Euripides’ *Electra* teems with wordplay on the titular character’s name. As we will see, Euripides invites consideration of the semantic connections between Ἡλέκτρα the unbedded, the lustful Clytemnestra who is ἄλοχος to a man who ought not be her lawful husband, and the trick (λόχος) of Electra’s false childbirth (λέχος, λόγευμα, λεχώ, λόγια, λοχεύω) by which the siblings entrap their mother. Euripides shows that the family’s problems can be traced to improper enactment of gender and marital roles, as shown in the dysfunctional beds of its women: Electra remains a *parthenos* despite her marital status, while Clytemnestra’s sexual excesses are cited as

³⁹⁹ Guzzo 2015: 85-6. See also Blondell 1999 n. 9 (p. 416), where they note that “part of the conflict between Jason and Medea is that he tends to view her concern for ‘the bed’ more in sexual terms, and she more in terms of contractual loyalty.”

⁴⁰⁰ Guzzo 2015: 86–87.

directly responsible for the family's predicament.⁴⁰¹ Euripides' repeated references to the bed (λέχος, 481, 786, 920, 936, 1089, 1099, 1156; λέκτρον 211, 1021, 1033, 1037) as the cause of the problems of the *oikos* and of Electra's ἄλεκτρος status are picked up in Electra's entrapment of her mother: he primes the audience to think about ambushes with the word λόχος (217), and uses cognate words for the trick of the child-bed (λεχώ 652, 654, 1108; λόγια 656; λόχευμα 1124; and λοχεύω 1129). Electra's (unnatural) parthenic status is thus tied with 1) her ambush of Clytemnestra through the trick of childbirth and 2) Clytemnestra's (excessive) lust for Aegisthus.

Euripides turns the expected characterizations of Electra, Orestes, and Clytemnestra on their heads. While we might expect a sympathetic Electra, a heroic Orestes, and an evil Clytemnestra, in Euripides' play Electra is bitter and vain; Orestes, vacillating and morally corrupt; Clytemnestra, regretful and even tender. By completely subverting each character's traditional characterization, Euripides invites us to question the morality of vengeance.⁴⁰²

From the beginning of the play, Euripides invites us to question Electra's motives. Her hatred of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus is as much a motivating factor as her desire to avenge her father. We hear in lines 60-3 that her anger stems not so much from the murder of her father, but from losing her rightful inheritance and status:

ἡ γὰρ πανώλης Τυνδαρίς, μήτηρ ἐμή,

60

⁴⁰¹ Especially E. *El.* 12-13 and 479-81. However, as W. Geoffrey Arnott has pointed out, Euripides seems to cast Electra as an unreliable narrator, which in turn casts doubt upon her description of Clytemnestra's faults (Arnott 1981: 183-5). We might thus question whether the portrayal of Clytemnestra as excessively lustful is "accurate" or merely a rhetorical strategy of Electra's designed to garner support from other characters as well as the audience. M.A. Harder argues that while Electra's judgement of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus "is not proven to be entirely wrong," she verges on vindictiveness throughout the play (Harder 1995: 23). This suggests that Euripides meant to complicate the black-and-white portrayal of Electra vs. Clytemnestra in earlier sources, and to invite questions of the morality of vengeance if such actions are undertaken in a vindictive spirit.

⁴⁰² David Konstan refers to Euripides' suggestion of the fallibility of the gods and the negative aspects of justice as "moral pessimism" (Konstan 1985: 178).

ἐξέβαλέ μ' οἴκων, χάριτα τιθεμένη πόσει
 τεκοῦσα δ' ἄλλους παῖδας Αἰγίσθῳ πάρα
 πάρεργ' Ὀρέστην κάμῃ ποιεῖται δόμων.

For the baneful daughter of Tyndareus, my mother,
 has thrown me out of our home to please her husband,
 and bearing other children with Aegisthus
 she robs Orestes and me of our place in the house.⁴⁰³

Electra is presented as self-absorbed—while she will ascribe her motive to the vengeance required by the gods, it often seems as though her primary motivation is self-interest. Much of her dialogue is devoted to bemoaning her fortune, including mourning the loss of her status as a princess. She is deeply concerned with being perceived as poor, since, as Eva M. Thury notes, Electra views wealth as an indicator of nobility: thus, poverty is unsuitable for a child of Agamemnon.⁴⁰⁴ Moreover, Thury notes that Electra's hatred of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra is presented in material terms, which suggests that her primary motivation is to regain her noble status; avenging her father is a secondary concern.⁴⁰⁵ Her bitterness, self-absorption, and preoccupation with her status do not paint Electra in a sympathetic light, and we are left to question the morality of vengeance when it is undertaken in a spirit of self-interest.

Clytemnestra, on the other hand, is rather sympathetic. While Electra's description of her (314-22), coupled with the pomp of her arrival onstage (998), suggests a Clytemnestra who flaunts her wealth and has little concern for her children, her interactions with Electra suggest otherwise. In the first lines of their agon, Clytemnestra urges her daughter not to exert herself for her sake, likely because she is recently post-partum (1007); later, she shows concern that Electra lives in such poverty, especially after the birth of her child (1107-8), and promises to

⁴⁰³ Trans. Cropp.

⁴⁰⁴ Thury 1985: 10.

⁴⁰⁵ Thury 1985: 11.

offer sacrifices in thanksgiving for Electra's safe delivery (1132-3). She also expresses regret for her earlier actions at 1105-10:

συγγνώσομαί σοι· καὶ γὰρ οὐχ οὕτως ἄγαν	1105
χαίρω τι, τέκνον, τοῖς δεδραμένοις ἐμοί.	1106
οἴμοι τάλαινα τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων·	1109
ὡς μᾶλλον ἢ χρῆν ἦλασ' εἰς ὀργὴν πόσει.	1110

I'll be patient with you; for in fact, my child,
I'm not so very glad at what I've done.
Alas, how foolish I was in my planning,
how excessive the anger I nursed against my husband!⁴⁰⁶

Clytemnestra's regret, coupled with her concern for Electra's wellbeing, overall paints a sympathetic picture; Electra is portrayed as unyieldingly harsh and self-absorbed, which invites us to question her motives. By complicating the traditional portrayal of Clytemnestra as evil and Electra as justified in her rage, Euripides invites us to question the morality of vengeance.

In the prooimion of the play, the farmer expresses the conflict between Clytemnestra and Electra in marital terms. Whereas the farmer traces Clytemnestra's betrayal of her husband's *oikos* to her infidelity, he frames Electra's sustained virginity as a matter of familial loyalty. The similarities and pointed divergences in the language used of each woman invites their comparison. Let us consider the instances of such language in the prooimion:

... ἐν δὲ δώμασιν	
θνήσκει γυναικὸς πρὸς Κλυταιμῆστρας δόλω	
καὶ τοῦ Θυέστου παιδὸς Αἰγίσθου χερί.	10
χῶ μὲν παλαιὰ σκῆπτρα Ταντάλου λιπῶν	
ὄλωλεν, Αἰγίσθος δὲ βασιλεύει χθονός,	
ἄλοχον ἐκείνου Τυνδαρίδα κόρην ἔχων.	

... but in his home
he was killed by his wife, Clytemnestra, with her guile
and the violence of Thyestes' son, Aegisthus.
And so, relinquishing Tantalus' ancient sceptre,
he is gone, and now Aegisthus rules the land

⁴⁰⁶ Trans. and emendations Cropp.

and possesses his wife, the daughter of Tyndareus.⁴⁰⁷

The farmer seems to be aware of the dubious timeline of Clytemnestra’s new marriage, as we see in line 14 (ἄλοχον ἐκείνου Τυνδαρίδα κόρην ἔχων, “and possesses his wife, the daughter of Tyndareus”).⁴⁰⁸ This scene, crucial for contextualizing the action of the play, also foregrounds marital legitimacy (including consummation) as the root of the play’s principal conflict.

Aegisthus has taken another man’s wife, ἄλοχος (14): the violation of Agamemnon’s marriage-bed is what set the events of the Oresteia-myth in motion. The fact that the farmer calls Clytemnestra Agamemnon’s ἄλοχος, even after she has killed her husband, hints that the play will focus on the broken marriage pact as a principal *aition* of the family’s current predicament. Moreover, the phrase ἄλοχον... ἔχων is evoked in the farmer’s description of his marriage to Electra, where he explains that Aegisthus gave Electra to him (E. *El.* 34-6):

... ἡμῖν δὲ δὴ δίδωσιν Ἥλέκτραν ἔχειν
δάμαρτα, πατέρων μὲν Μυκηναίων ἄπο
γεγῶσιν... 35

And Electra he gave to me to take
as my wife—me, who am sprung from Mycenaean
stock...⁴⁰⁹

The farmer’s ἔχειν... δάμαρτα (34-5) echoes his words about Aegisthus’ “taking” of Clytemnestra (ἄλοχον... ἔχων, 13); however, the parallelism of these phrases highlights the difference between Clytemnestra’s and Electra’s respective marriages. Whereas Aegisthus

⁴⁰⁷ Trans. Cropp.

⁴⁰⁸ The phrase Τυνδαρίδα κόρην calls to mind *Od.* 24.299, where Clytemnestra is called Τυνδαρέου κόρη, the Hesiodic fragment 23a M.-W., in which she is called κού[ρην Τυνδαρέου] (14) and Stesichorus fragment 223 *PMG*, in which Tyndareus omits Aphrodite from his sacrifices and she curses his daughters, called Τυνδαρέου κόραις. For a parallel to the language of line 13 (ἄλοχον ἐκείνου Τυνδαρίδα κόρην ἔχων), consider *Od.* 1.35-6: ὡς καὶ νῦν Αἴγισθος ὑπὲρ μόρον Ἀτρεΐδαο | γῆμ’ ἄλοχον μνηστήν (“[Aegisthus] took to himself the wedded wife of the son of Atreus,” trans. Murray 1995, which I discuss in detail in Ch. 2.

⁴⁰⁹ Trans. Cropp.

possesses another man's wife, the farmer got his wife legitimately, since she was given in marriage by her presumed *kyrios*. Moreover, the farmer emphasizes his respect for Electra's status by swearing that she remains a virgin (E. *El.* 43-53):

ἦν οὐποθ' ἀνήρ ὄδε — σύννοιδέ μοι Κύπρις —
 ἥσχυνεν εὐνή· παρθένος δ' ἔτ' ἐστὶ δῆ.
 αἰσχύνομαι γὰρ ὀλβίων ἀνδρῶν τέκνα 45
 λαβῶν ὑβρίζειν, οὐ κατάξιος γεγώς.
 στένω δὲ τὸν λόγοισι κηδεύοντ' ἐμοὶ
 ἄθλιον Ὀρέστην, εἴ ποτ' εἰς Ἄργος μολῶν
 γάμους ἀδελφῆς δυστυχεῖς ἐσόψεται.
 ὅστις δέ μ' εἶναι φησι μῶρον, εἰ λαβῶν 50
 νέαν ἐς οἶκους παρθένον μὴ θιγγάνω,
 γνώμης πονηροῖς κανόσιν ἀναμετρούμενος
 τὸ σῶφρον ἴστω καὐτὸς αὖ τοιοῦτος ὄν.

Now I have never, as Cypris is my witness,
 shamed Electra in bed; she is in fact still a virgin.
 For I am ashamed to take and abuse the children of wealthy men,
 when I am not their equal;
 and I mourn for my so-called kinsman,
 wretched Orestes, if he ever comes to Argos
 and gets a sight of his sister's luckless marriage.
 And if anyone calls me a fool if I take
 a young maiden into my home and do not touch her,
 he should realize he's using poor measures of judgment
 to size up decent behaviour, and is a fool himself.⁴¹⁰

Cropp notes of this passage that “Electra's virginity was traditional, her loyalty being focused exclusively on her birth family.”⁴¹¹ The farmer, too, is loyal to Electra's birth family, refusing to consummate the marriage because of their status differential (E. *El.* 45-6). Interestingly, though, the farmer never makes explicit wordplay on Electra as ἄλεκτρος, though he does call her a *παρθενος*.⁴¹² Instead, Euripides invites the audience to make this connection themselves, both by repeatedly emphasizing Electra's status as a *parthenos*, and by painting her as diametrically

⁴¹⁰ Trans. Cropp.

⁴¹¹ Cropp 2013 ad 44.

⁴¹² E. *El.* 44; 51.

opposed to Clytemnestra, who is both Aegisthus' and Agamemnon's ἄλοχος (14) at the same time.⁴¹³ Thus, Euripides uses wordplay on Electra's name to set up the conflict between mother and daughter in the farmer's speech.

Mother and daughter are again differentiated by their sexual habits in the dialogue of Electra and Orestes (E. *El.* 215-99). When Orestes asks about the nature of Electra's marriage, she responds that her husband is "respectful":

Ἦλ. πένης ἀνὴρ γενναῖος ἔς τ' ἔμ' εὐσεβής.	
Ὀρ. ἢ δ' εὐσέβεια τίς πρόσσεσι σῶ πόσει;	
Ἦλ. οὐπόποτ' εὐνήσ τῆς ἐμῆς ἔτλη θιγεῖν.	255
Ὀρ. ἄγνευμ' ἔχων τι θεῖον ἢ σ' ἀπαξιῶν;	
Ἦλ. γονέας ὑβρίζειν τοὺς ἐμοὺς οὐκ ἠξίου.	
Ὀρ. καὶ πῶς γάμον τοιοῦτον οὐχ ἦσθη λαβῶν;	
Ἦλ. οὐ κύριον τὸν δόντα μ' ἠγεῖται, ξένε.	
Ὀρ. ξυνηκ'· Ὀρέστη μὴ ποτ' ἐκτείση δίκην.	260
Ἦλ. τοῦτ' αὐτὸ ταρβῶν, πρὸς δὲ καὶ σώφρων ἔφυ.	
Ὀρ. φεῦ·	
γενναῖον ἀνδρ' ἔλεξας, εἶ τε δραστέον.	
Ἦλ. εἰ δὴ πόθ' ἠξίει γ' ἐς δόμους ὁ νῦν ἀπῶν.	
Ὀρ. μήτηρ δέ σ' ἠ τεκοῦσα ταῦτ ἠνέσχετο;	
Ἦλ. γυναῖκες ἀνδρῶν, ὧ̃ ξεν', οὐ παίδων φίλαι.	265

El.: He's a poor but noble man, and respectful to me.

Or.: What sort of respect does your husband show to you?

El.: He has never yet presumed to touch my bed.

Or.: Keeping some religious abstinence, or disdaining you?

El.: He did not think it right to insult my family.

Or.: And how was he not pleased to get such a marriage?

El.: He considers the man who gave me had no right to, stranger.

Or.: I see—in case Orestes should punish him one day.

El.: He does indeed fear that, but he's right-minded too.

Or.: Ah, you've described a noble man; we should treat him well.

El.: Yes, if my absent brother ever comes home.

Or.: And the mother who bore you, did she put up with this?

El.: Women are friends to their husbands, stranger, not their children.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹³ See also *Il.* 1.113-14 and *Od.* 1.36 for Clytemnestra as ἄλοχος (especially the latter for an instance of ambiguity in re whose wife she is). See also Guzmán 2009 on the term ἄλοχος in Homer, as well as Chs. 1 and 2 of this dissertation.

⁴¹⁴ Trans. Cropp.

Electra invites comparison of her marriage with her mother's. Whereas Electra's marriage is grounded in respect for her natal family, Clytemnestra's is represented by the utter rejection of her children in favor of her new husband. Electra interprets her mother's rejection in sexual terms: she tells Orestes that their mother has not protected her from Aegisthus' cruelty because, as Cropp argues, "sexual attachment outweighs motherly love."⁴¹⁵ Line 265 summarizes Electra's view of her mother: she is primarily motivated by lust for Aegisthus, not by love for her children.⁴¹⁶ On the surface, this seems to apply to Clytemnestra's inaction in the face of Aegisthus' cruelty; however, if we consider the implications of this statement, we understand that Electra is also referring to her mother's dual motives for killing Agamemnon. Whereas Clytemnestra will argue that she murdered Agamemnon to avenge Iphigeneia (E. *El.* 1018-45), Electra will brush this motive aside in favor of the view that her mother was motivated by lust for Aegisthus (E. *El.* 1060-90). Here, Electra foregrounds her debate with Clytemnestra, painting herself as the polar opposite of her mother. According to Electra, Clytemnestra betrayed Agamemnon because of her uncontrolled sexuality; Electra mobilizes her virginity to show her exceeding loyalty to her father's line.

Electra also weaponizes her virginity in a surprising way when crafting the trap for Clytemnestra. The audience has been repeatedly reminded that Electra, although married, is still a *parthenos*; that she plans to lure her mother into her house by informing her of the birth of a son comes as a shock:

Ἥλ. [λέγ', ὃ γεραιέ, τάδε Κλυταιμίστρα μολών·]
 λεχώ μ' ἀπάγγελλ' οὔσαν ἄρσενος τόκῳ.
 Πρ. πότερα πάλαι τεκοῦσαν ἢ νεωστὶ δῆ;
 Ἥλ. δέχ' ἡλίους, ἐν οἷσιν ἀγνεύει λεχώ.
 Πρ. καὶ δὴ τί τοῦτο μητρὶ προσβάλλει φόνον; 655

⁴¹⁵ Cropp 2013 ad 265.

⁴¹⁶ For more on these dual motivations, see Ch. 3 of this dissertation.

Ἦλ. ἤξει κλύουσα λόγια μου νοσήματα.

El.: [Go to Clytemnestra, old man, and tell her this:]

Report that I'm confined with the birth of a son.

O.M.: Having borne him some time ago, or just recently?⁴¹⁷

El.: Ten days ago—those of isolation after a birth.

O.M.: And how does that bring murder upon your mother?

El.: She'll come when she hears I'm ailing in child-bed.⁴¹⁸

In this passage, Electra repeats λέχος-λόχος terms three times, emphasizing that she intends to entrap Clytemnestra with a trick consisting of her bed and showing us that she is ever-ready to fend off an ambush (λόχος), perhaps because she herself is often anticipating one. The audience has already been primed to expect the siblings to engage in preparing an ambush for their mother and Aegisthus. When Electra first sees Orestes and Pylades, she believes them to be lying in wait for her:

οἴμοι· γυναῖκες, ἐξέβην θρηνημάτων. 215
ξένοι τινὲς παρ' οἶκον οἶδ' ἐφεστίους
εὐνάς ἔχοντες ἐξανίστανται λόχου.

O dear me, my laments are ended, women.
Some strangers here have been lurking at the altar by the house,
and are rising up from their ambush.⁴¹⁹

Consequently, when Electra discusses her plan for killing Clytemnestra, we are already primed to connect the trick of the child-bed (λεχώ, 652 and 654; λόγια, 656) with an ambush (λόχος).⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁷ “O.M.”= “Old Man” (Cropp’s designation).

⁴¹⁸ Trans. Cropp.

⁴¹⁹ Trans. Cropp.

⁴²⁰ Crucially, Electra never explicitly asks the Old Man to bid Clytemnestra to visit; rather, she crafts her trick as a way of testing Clytemnestra’s intentions. Of particular importance, as Masaaki Kubo notes, is the detail that the child is a boy, since “the play has shown earlier how Electra’s possible child, especially her male child, had caused many fears and precautions among her persecutors” (Kubo 1967: 17). Electra’s inclusion of the detail that the child is male ensures that Clytemnestra will come to catch a glimpse of her newborn adversary; as a result, if Clytemnestra does come, it shows that she is not doing so out of concern for her daughter but because she must protect herself from the retribution of Agamemnon’s heirs. See *E. El.* 22-4, 40-2, and 267 for the idea that Electra’s ability to bear a son is a source of fear.

Electra’s repetition of *λεχώ* and *λόγια*, and indeed the crafting of the trick itself, is heavily ironic given the folk etymology of her name and the fact that she remains a *parthenos*: the very idea that she may no longer be a *parthenos* directly contradicts her nature. Moreover, both Clytemnestra and Aegisthus seem to fear that Electra will turn out like her mother, weaponizing her sexuality in order to avenge her father. In fact, Electra *does* emulate Clytemnestra, but her element of surprise is that she uses her sexuality in an unexpected way.⁴²¹ Clytemnestra will believe that her daughter’s loss of virginity and subsequent birth of a son—who would be Agamemnon’s rightful heir—is the threat, when in fact Electra’s sustained virginity is used as a means of displaying her loyalty to her father. Thus, the *λόγος* that she crafts plays upon her mother’s fears about Electra’s untamed sexuality.

The *agon logon* between mother and daughter introduces overt comparison of Clytemnestra and Electra’s respective sexual mores. In the introduction to her speech, Clytemnestra addresses her problematic reputation, asking Electra to reserve judgement on her until she has heard the full story.⁴²² Clytemnestra’s argument revolves around the ways in which her and her daughters’ beds have been violated, and she frames the injustices she suffered at Agamemnon’s hands with repetition of the word *λέκτρον*. She begins with Agamemnon’s promise of marriage for Iphigeneia:

κεῖνος δὲ παῖδα τὴν ἐμὴν Ἀχιλλέως
λέκτροισι πείσας ὄχετ’ ἐκ δόμων ἄγων
πρυμνοῦχον Αὔλιν, ἔνθ’ ὑπερτείνας πυρᾶς

1020

⁴²¹ For the idea that Electra emulates Clytemnestra, see especially line 279, where Electra threatens to kill her mother with the same axe used to murder Agamemnon (ταὐτῷ γε πελέκει τῷ πατὴρ ἀπόλετο).

⁴²² ... καίτοι δόξ’ ὅταν λάβῃ κακὴ | γυναιῖκα, γλώσση πικρότης ἔνεστί τις, | ὡς μὲν παρ’ ἡμῖν, οὐ καλῶς, τὸ πρᾶγμα δὲ | μαθόντας, ἦν μὲν ἀξίως μισεῖν ἔχη, | στυγεῖν δίκαιον· εἰ δὲ μή, τί δεῖ στυγεῖν; (“Mind you, when bad repute takes hold of a woman, people tend to find her speaking offensive. But that in my opinion is not as it should be. They should learn the facts and then, if hate is called for, it’s fair to hate her; but if not, what need is there to hate?” trans. Cropp)

λευκὴν διήμησ' Ἴφιγόνης παρηΐδα.

Yet that man lured my child
with a promise of marriage with Achilles, and took her off from our home
to the moorings at Aulis; and there he held her stretched above the altar
and slashed through Iphigeneia's pale white throat.⁴²³

Clytemnestra uses λέκτρον (1021) to describe Iphigeneia's promised marriage with Achilles, hinting that Agamemnon was the true cause of Electra's "un-marriage": by using a false betrothal as a premise for luring Iphigeneia to Aulis, Agamemnon ushers in a cycle of sexual dysfunction in the women of his household that reaches its *telos* in Electra.⁴²⁴

Clytemnestra further frames Agamemnon's treachery with the word λέκτρον when she describes his return with Cassandra. She insists that the sacrifice of Iphigeneia was not enough to make her turn vengeful; rather, Agamemnon's insult to her status was too much to bear:

ἐπὶ τοῖσδε τοίνυν καίπερ ἠδίκημένη	1030
οὐκ ἠγριώμην οὐδ' ἄν ἔκτανον πόσιν·	
ἀλλ' ἦλθ' ἔχων μοι μαινάδ' ἔνθεον κόρην	
λέκτροις τ' ἐπεισέφρηκε, καὶ νύμφα δύο	
ἐν τοῖσιν αὐτοῖς δώμασιν κατεῖχομεν.	
μῶρον μὲν οὖν γυναῖκες, οὐκ ἄλλως λέγω·	1035
ὅταν δ', ὑπόντος τοῦδ', ἀμαρτάνη πόσις	
τᾶνδον παρώσας λέκτρα, μιμεῖσθαι θέλει	
γυνὴ τὸν ἄνδρα χᾶτερον κτᾶσθαι φίλον.	
κᾶπειτ' ἐν ἡμῖν ὁ ψόγος λαμπρύνεται,	
οἱ δ' αἴτιοι τῶνδ' οὐ κλύουσ' ἄνδρες κακῶς.	1040

Well, in response, although I had been wronged,
I did not turn savage nor would I have killed my husband.
But he came back with a raving god-possessed girl,
imported her to our bed, and tried to keep two brides
together in the same house!
Now women are a foolish lot, I don't deny it;
but when, that being the case, a husband errs

⁴²³ Trans. Cropp.

⁴²⁴ Although Clytemnestra does not use λέκτρον to describe Helen's adultery (which she discusses at 1027-29), she does call Helen μάργος (1027) and Menelaus' ἄλοχος (1028); together these imply a predisposition evident in the family's women to excessive lust and to improper enactment of their roles as ἄλοχος.

and rejects his wedded wife, the woman is apt to follow his pattern
and take another partner.
And then the censure of it makes us notorious,
while the men responsible for it don't get a bad name!⁴²⁵

Clytemnestra uses λέκτρον twice in this passage to describe how Agamemnon insulted her status. First, he brought Cassandra home with him and behaved as if she was a wife, not a concubine; she uses λέκτρον of the marriage which Cassandra invaded in 1033.⁴²⁶ According to Clytemnestra, it was Agamemnon's rejection of her (for which she again uses λέκτρον, 1037) that pushed her to seek out a liaison with Aegisthus.⁴²⁷ Thus, in this passage, Clytemnestra frames the curse upon their household as a series of violated λέκτρα, which, as she implies, culminates in the person of Electra.

Electra, for her part, rejects Agamemnon's culpability, at least in terms of the λέκτρον. While she does not echo Clytemnestra's language in her rebuttal, she does counter the argument that Agamemnon deserved his death because of his disregard of the λέκτρον. She argues that her mother's immorality is congenital, and implies that her betrayal of Agamemnon could have been predicted by considering her similarities with Helen:⁴²⁸

τὸ μὲν γὰρ εἶδος αἴνον ἄξιον φέρειν
Ἑλένης τε καὶ σοῦ, δύο δ' ἔφυτε συγγόνω,
ἄμφω ματαίω Κάστορος τ' οὐκ ἄξιω.
ἦ μὲν γὰρ ἀρπασθεῖς ἑκοῦς ἀπόλετο,
σὺ δ' ἄνδρ' ἄριστον Ἑλλάδος διώλεσας,

1065

⁴²⁵ Trans. Cropp.

⁴²⁶ Cropp is unconvinced by Clytemnestra's use of Cassandra as additional motivation for her actions: as he implies, Clytemnestra's mind was made up before she knew of Cassandra, who poses no threat to "the first wife's children and their inheritance" (Cropp 2013 ad 1032-4).

⁴²⁷ The chronology of Clytemnestra's liaison does not support this line of reasoning: in all sources which treat her, she had already taken up with Aegisthus by the time Agamemnon returned home with Cassandra in tow. As Cropp notes, "she cannot afford to concede that jealousy over a concubine caused her to murder the king of Argos, so she only argues that Cassandra precipitated and justified her adultery" (Cropp 2013 ad 1011-50). See Cropp 2013 ad 1011-50 for further discussion of the timeline of Clytemnestra's adultery.

⁴²⁸ See also Clytemnestra's discussion of Helen at 1027-9.

σκῆψιν προτείνουσ', ὡς ὑπὲρ τέκνου πόσιν
 ἔκτεινας· οὐ γάρ σ' ὡς ἔγωγ' ἴσασιν εὔ.
 ἦτις, θυγατρὸς πρὶν κεκυρῶσθαι σφαγὰς,
 νέον τ' ἀπ' οἴκων ἀνδρὸς ἐξωρημένον, 1070
 ξανθὸν κατόπτρῳ πλόκαμον ἐξήσκεις κόμης.
 γυνὴ δ', ἀπόντος ἀνδρὸς ἦτις ἐκ δόμων
 ἐς κάλλος ἀσκεῖ, διάγραφ' ὡς οὔσαν κακὴν.
 οὐδὲν γὰρ αὐτὴν δεῖ θύρασιν εὐπρεπές
 φαίνειν πρόσωπον, ἦν τι μὴ ζητῆ κακόν. 1075

Your looks are worthy of procuring praise,
 both Helen's and yours; but in nature you are two of a kind,
 both of you reckless and unworthy of Castor.
 Helen was snatched and ruined willingly,
 and you destroyed the noblest man of Greece.
 Your pretext was that you killed your husband for your child;
 for people do not know you as well as I do—
 you, who before your daughter's sacrifice was sanctioned,
 when your husband had just lately set out from home,
 were dressing your hair's auburn locks in front of a mirror.
 Now if any woman cultivates her beauty while her husband is away from home,
 strike her off as no good.
 She has no need to display a pretty face in public
 unless she is looking for some mischief.⁴²⁹

According to Electra, Clytemnestra is congenitally disposed to infidelity. Clytemnestra's concern for her appearance signals a lack of concern for her husband and the maintenance of his household.⁴³⁰ As further evidence of this disregard for the maintenance of the household, Electra cites her mother's use of Agamemnon's property as a dowry in her marriage to Aegisthus:

πῶς οὐ πόσιν κτείνασα πατρώους δόμους
 ἡμῖν προσῆψας, ἀλλ' ἐπηνέγκω λέχει

⁴²⁹ Trans. Cropp.

⁴³⁰ Cropp notes that this is a common moralizing theme in Greek culture, where female κόσμος was considered “unnatural, or as typical of *hetairai* or other loose [sic] women” (Cropp 2013 ad 1072-4). Fears about the deceptive power of female κόσμος can be observed in numerous instances in Greek literature. For the use of female κόσμος in the wrong social circumstances, consider especially Lysias I.14, in which the speaker's wife powders her face while her husband is asleep (which the speaker uses as evidence of her infidelity). As a counterpoint, consider Athena's beautification of Penelope at *Od.* 18.177-205. Penelope's *sōphrosynē* is demonstrated by her lack of care about her appearance during her husband's absence; the goddess beautifies her without her knowledge as she sleeps.

πάρεστε· δεῖ γὰρ καὶ πόσει δοῦναι χάριν.

El.: You've heard, I think, that I have given birth?
Please make the tenth-night sacrifice for this, according to custom;
I don't know how to myself.
I'm inexperienced, being childless till now.
Cl.: That's someone else's job—the woman's who delivered you.
El.: I was my own midwife and bore the baby alone.
Cl.: Is your house so isolated from friendly neighbors?
El.: No one wants to get poor people as friends.
Cl.: And you, so unwashed, with such poor clothes to your body,
when you're confined and recovering from a recent birth?
I'll go, then, and make the sacrifice to the gods for the child's completed term.
And when I've done you this favour,
I'll go to the meadow where my husband is sacrificing
to the Nymphs. Come, servants, take the mules
and put them to the feed-stalls.
Come back when you think I'm finished with this sacrifice to the gods.
For I must give satisfaction to my husband as well.⁴³³

Euripides repeats λέκτρον-λέχος-λόχος three times in this passage, once again cuing us to make the connection between Electra's trick, a λόχος, her child-bed, and her name. As Cropp notes, the passage is full of dramatic irony: Clytemnestra speaks of sacrifices but does not realize that she will *be* the sacrifice. Further, when Electra tells her mother that she does not know how to make the requisite sacrifice to the gods because she was formerly inexperienced with having children (ἄτοκος οὖσ' ἐν τῷ πάρος, 1127), Clytemnestra does not realize that her daughter still remains inexperienced. Thus, the tone of the passage imbues the discussion of Electra's child-bed with irony: the audience understands that she remains “unbedded” and that the discussion of her child-bed is not in earnest, but Clytemnestra, preoccupied with the revenge made possible by Agamemnon's new male heir, fully believes the ruse.

From this point, the play quickly reaches its *dénouement*. Electra frames her mother's death both as a sacrifice and as a perversion of the “marriage to death” trope:

⁴³³ Trans. Cropp.

χώρει πένητας ἐς δόμους· φρούρει δέ μοι
 μή σ' αἰθαλώση πολύκαπνον στέγος πέπλους. 1140
 θύσεις γὰρ οἷα χρή σε δαίμοσιν θύη.
 κανοῦν δ' ἐνήρκται καὶ τεθηγμένη σφαγίς,
 ἥπερ καθεῖλε ταῦρον, οὗ πέλας πεσῆ
 πληγεῖσα· νυμφεύση δὲ κὰν Ἄιδου δόμοις
 ὧπερ ξυνηῦδες ἐν φάει. τοσήνδ' ἐγὼ 1145
 δώσω χάριν σοι, σὺ δὲ δίκην ἐμοὶ πατρός.

Go on into this poor house—and pray take care
 that the soot that smothers the building doesn't soil your clothes.
 That way you'll make the sacrifice you should to the gods.
 The basket is prepared, the knife is sharpened,
 the one that killed the bull whom you'll lie beside
 when you're struck down. You'll be wedded in Hades too
 with the man you slept with in this world. That much I'll
 give you as a favour—and you will give me justice for my father.⁴³⁴

Electra frames her mother's death as a sacrifice, echoing both Aegisthus' death while sacrificing
 and Clytemnestra's discussion of the sacrifices that must be performed after the birth of a son.⁴³⁵

Further, the image of the sacrificed bull calls to mind one from the *Agamemnon*, in which

Cassandra envisions Agamemnon's death as if he is a bull being gored by his mate (1125-9).⁴³⁶

⁴³⁴ Trans. Cropp.

⁴³⁵ Relatedly, consider the phrase βουῆς ἐπὶ φάτνη, sometimes used in descriptions of Agamemnon's murder, and whose language is echoed in the scene between Clytemnestra and Electra (*E. El.* 1130-46, especially 1132-9). See especially *Od.* 4.535 and 11.411 for this phrase's occurrence in descriptions of Agamemnon's murder.

⁴³⁶ *Ag.* 1125-9:

ἄ ἄ, ἰδοῦ ἰδοῦ· ἄπεχε τῆς βοῆς 1125
 τὸν ταῦρον· ἐν πέπλοισι
 μελαγκέρῳ λαβοῦσα μηχανήματι
 τύπτει· πίτνει δ' ἐν ἐνύδρῳ τεύχει.
 δολοφόνου λέβητος τύχαν σοι λέγω.

Oh, oh! See, see! Keep the bull
 away from the cow! She traps him
 in the robe, the black-horned contrivance,
 and strikes—and he falls into the tub full of water.
 I am telling you of the device that worked treacherous murder in a bath. (trans.
 Sommerstein)

Here, then, Electra aligns herself with the Aeschylean Clytemnestra: she will kill her mother in the same manner as Clytemnestra did her father. In addition, with the phrase νυμφεύση δὲ κἄν Ἄιδου δόμοις | ὅπερ ξυνηῦδες ἐν φάει (1144-5), Electra implies a perversion of the “marriage to Hades” that is often used of maidens who die before their weddings.⁴³⁷ But Clytemnestra, whose marriage to Aegisthus has resulted in so much violence, and whose licentiousness firmly excludes her from the category of *parthenos*, will make no marriage to Hades; rather, she will remain wedded to Aegisthus in death, a fitting eternity for someone who has defied marital convention in life.⁴³⁸ Electra frames this as a “favour” to her mother in exchange for the sacrifices promised by Clytemnestra; her tricky rhetoric has concealed from Clytemnestra that *she* will be the sacrifice. Thus, Electra is reminiscent of her Aeschylean mother; this similarity to Clytemnestra invites us to consider the morality of the siblings’ vengeance.

Unlike *Choephoroi*, where Orestes is driven from his homeland by the Erinyes, Euripides’ *Electra* does not end in ruin for its characters; rather, Electra is promised to Pylades, who will become her lawful husband and to whom she will bear legitimate children. There is no wordplay on λέκτρον-λέχος-λόχος in Castor’s prediction of Electra’s future—she has transitioned from “unbedded” to bride with the killing of her mother. In fact, it is through the trick of the child-bed that Electra is able to become a bride. She emulates her mother not in licentiousness but in treachery, however, and this is ultimately how she loses her status as ἄλεκτρος. She breaks the cycle of marital dysfunction characteristic of the women in her family, and thus differentiates herself from her mother. Overall, though, the play leaves us to question the morality of

⁴³⁷ See especially Rehm 1994 for discussion of this trope.

⁴³⁸ Consider also Orestes’ taunts at *Cho.* 894-5, 905-6, 975-9 and see Cropp 2013 ad 1144-6.

vengeance: by presenting Electra as vindictive and Clytemnestra as regretful, Euripides invites us to consider whether vengeance is ever ethical.

5.4. THE CHARACTERIZATIONS OF ELECTRA AND CLYTEMNESTRA IN SOPHOCLES

In Sophocles' *Electra*, the use of Aeschylean language and line formulations and the modeling of Electra upon the Aeschylean Clytemnestra likewise invites the association of mother and daughter. Further, Electra weaponizes her sexuality in a way that is reminiscent of the way that Clytemnestra uses hers to entrap Agamemnon. As we shall see, this weaponization of sexuality is focalized by the adjective ἄλεκτρος, which is used of both Electra and Clytemnestra. By using this term of both mother and daughter, Sophocles hints at the possibility that they are equally dangerous because of the ways in which they each weaponize their respective marital statuses.⁴³⁹

Sophocles' Clytemnestra is quite similar to her Aeschylean iteration: she claims to have acted justly by murdering Agamemnon, and her disregard for her children is reminiscent of the Clytemnestra of *Choephoroi*. Although it is unclear whether Sophocles' *Electra* came before Euripides' or after, as Blundell has noted, the Aeschylean "overtones" of this play are unmistakable.⁴⁴⁰ Just as in *Choephoroi*, Sophocles' Electra is a reliable narrator; we pity her misfortunes and trust her judgements, and thus we are likely to trust her judgement of Clytemnestra as harsh and unfeeling. Sophocles paints Clytemnestra as antagonistic and even violent toward Electra; her lack of maternal care leads Electra to characterize her as a μήτηρ ἀμήτωρ (1154), "unmotherly mother." Indeed, she seems to care little for her children: the brief

⁴³⁹ See Ormand 1999: 62 on the idea that "Electra and Clytemnestra... map out the proprieties of marriage and its function within the *oikos*. Between their extremes lies the position of normalcy defined, implicitly, as marriage."

⁴⁴⁰ Blundell 1991: 179. If Sophocles' play came before Euripides', this would indicate an adherence to the Aeschylean portrayal of characters; if it came after, this would constitute a "restoration" of these characters after the relatively shocking Euripidean version.

maternal pang she feels at news of Orestes' death (766-72) quickly changes to relief that this will be a benefit to her (773-87). Despite her invocation of Iphigeneia's death as a motivator for the murder of Agamemnon (530-51), her lack of care for her surviving children, coupled with her staunch defense of her relationship with Aegisthus in the *agon logon* with Electra, suggests that she is not so maternal as she would have us believe.⁴⁴¹

While Sophocles presents Electra as a reliable narrator, and thus encourages us to accept her view of matricide as just, there are points in the play at which he constructs Electra as a mirror image of her mother. Their similarities are especially evident in the *agon logon*, where their arguments rapidly descend into invective. Blundell notes that in this scene, Electra, "like her mother,... uses a veneer of dubiously rational argument to justify behaviour prompted by passionate feeling."⁴⁴² Indeed, both Electra and Clytemnestra accuse each other of behavior that they themselves each display: "excessive passion and an inability to listen... injustice... *hubris*... boldness... and disgraceful behaviour."⁴⁴³ Moreover, their respective refusal to adhere to gender norms, while achieved through disparate strategies, suggests their similarity. By emphasizing Electra's similarities to her mother, Sophocles invites us to consider the morality of vengeance, especially if this vengeance requires matricide; however, unlike Euripides' version of this question, where Electra and Orestes are presented as morally repulsive, Sophocles quickly diverts our attention from matricide to the murder of Aegisthus. By reversing the traditional order of the deaths of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, Sophocles reworks the usual climax of the play. Clytemnestra's death thus becomes of secondary importance to Aegisthus'; the corrupt king must die, and there is no question that this vengeance is morally correct. Thus, the play

⁴⁴¹ This is perhaps Sophocles engaging with the traditional "dual motives" of Clytemnestra.

⁴⁴² Blundell 1991: 172.

⁴⁴³ Blundell 1991: 172.

ends on an action that is presented as ultimately ethical; the matricide is of little consequence in comparison with the divinely-sanctioned murder of Aegisthus.

From the moment Electra enters the stage, she frames the ills of the household in sexual terms. She contrasts her solitary sleeplessness with Clytemnestra's slumber beside Aegisthus:

τὰ δὲ παννυχίδων ἤδη στυγεραὶ
 ξυνίσασ' εὐναὶ μογερῶν οἴκων,
 ὅσα τὸν δύστηνον ἐμὸν θρηγῶ
 πατέρ', ὃν κατὰ μὲν βάρβαρον αἶαν 95
 φοίνιος Ἄρης οὐκ ἐξένισεν,
 μήτηρ δ' ἡμὴ χῶ κοινολεχῆς
 Αἴγισθος ὅπως δρῶν ὑλοτόμοι
 σχίζουσι κάρα φονίῳ πελέκει,
 κούδεις τούτων οἴκτος ἀπ' ἄλλης 100
 ἢ 'μοῦ φέρεται, σοῦ, πάτερ, οὔτως
 αἰκῶς οἰκτρῶς τε θανόντος.

And my hateful bed in the miserable house
 knows of the sorrows of my sleepless nights,
 how often I lament for my unhappy father,
 whom the bloody war-god did
 not make his guest in a barbarian land,
 but my mother and her bedfellow,
 Aegisthus, split his head with a murderous axe,
 as wood-men split an oak.
 And from none but me does your due
 of lamentation come, father,
 though your death was so dreadful and so pitiful!⁴⁴⁴

Here, Electra contrasts her “hateful bed” (στυγεραὶ... εὐναί, 92-3) with Clytemnestra's bed, shared with Aegisthus (κοινολεχῆς, 97).⁴⁴⁵ She frames the conflict with her mother as marital in

⁴⁴⁴ Trans. Lloyd-Jones.

⁴⁴⁵ Electra later frames Clytemnestra's betrayal of Agamemnon through the image of the polluted marriage-bed (S. *El.* 267-76):

ἔπειτα ποίας ἡμέρας δοκεῖς μ' ἄγειν,
 ὅταν θρόνοις Αἴγισθον ἐνθακοῦντ' ἴδω
 τοῖσιν πατρώοις, εἰσίδω δ' ἐσθήματα
 φοροῦντ' ἐκείνῳ ταῦτ' αἰ παρεστίους
 σπένδοντα λοιβάς ἐνθ' ἐκεῖνον ὤλεσεν,
 ἴδω δὲ τούτων τὴν τελευταίαν ὕβριν, 270

nature: whereas she is a virgin of marriageable age, her mother's affair with Aegisthus has destroyed the household, and with it, any hopes Electra might have had of marrying.⁴⁴⁶ She correlates this with the fact that she alone mourns her father, while her mother, unconcerned with Agamemnon's memory, takes pleasure in her life with Aegisthus. Electra thus frames the filial duty of mourning in sexual terms: she remains a virgin because she must adequately mourn her father, while her mother's sexual excesses indicate her refusal to mourn Agamemnon.⁴⁴⁷

Electra further expresses this sexualized view of familial loyalty in her conversation with the Chorus at 121-253. Consider the following excerpt, where Electra discusses her prolonged virginity:

ὄν γ' ἐγὼ ἀκάματα προσμένουσ', ἄτεκνος,
τάλαιν', ἀνύμφευτος αἰὲν οἰχθῶ,
δάκρυσι μυδαλέα, τὸν ἀνήνυτον
οἷτον ἔχουσα κακῶν· ὁ δὲ λάθεται

165

τὸν αὐτοέντην ἡμῖν ἐν κοίτῃ πατρὸς
ξὺν τῇ ταλαίνῃ μητρί, μητέρ' εἰ χρεῶν
ταύτην προσαιδᾶν τῷδε συγκοιμωμένην·
ἢ δ' ὥδε τλήμων ὥστε τῷ μιάστορι
ξύνεστ', Ἐρινὺν οὔτιν' ἐκφοβουμένη·

275

And then what kind of days do you think I pass
when I see Aegisthus sitting on my father's throne,
and when I see him wearing
the same clothes he wore, and pouring libations by the same hearth
at which he murdered him;
and when I see their final outrage,
the murderer in my father's bed with my miserable mother,
if she can be called mother when she sleeps with him?
But she is so abandoned that she lives with the polluter,
having no fear of any Erinyes... (trans. Lloyd-Jones)

⁴⁴⁶ Electra calls upon the Erinyes to avenge her father, since Clytemnestra has broken the marriage pact by taking a lover. She conceives of them as the gods who witness the injustice to Agamemnon's marriage bed (112-14). She later expresses surprise that Clytemnestra does not seem to fear the Erinyes.

⁴⁴⁷ Although we see evidence of Clytemnestra leaving offerings at Agamemnon's tomb, this is spurred not by a desire to honor her late husband, but out of fear resulting from her dream (*S. El.* 406-30). See Ch. 3 for discussion of the other forms of Clytemnestra's dream in various authors.

ὄν τ' ἔπαθ' ὄν τ' ἐδάη. τί γὰρ οὐκ ἐμοὶ
 ἔρχεται ἀγγελίας ἀπατόμενον; 170
 αἰὲ μὲν γὰρ ποθεῖ,
 ποθῶν δ' οὐκ ἀξιοῖ φανῆναι.

Yes, he whom I unwearyingly await, lost,
 without child or bridegroom,
 drenched in tears, with my never-ending
 fate of sorrows! But he forgets
 what he has suffered and what he has learned.⁴⁴⁸ Why, which of his messages
 does not end in disappointment?
 Always he feels the longing,
 but for all his longing he does not think fit to appear!⁴⁴⁹

She connects her maidenhood with her remembrance of her father, while Orestes' "longing" (ποθεῖ, 171, ποθῶν, 172) is equated with forgetting. In Electra's estimation, Orestes' πόθος—a term often used of yearning for that which one lacks—could be easily remedied by returning home.⁴⁵⁰ She disapproves of his πόθος since it is not reflected in action; rather, this longing for his homeland is paired with a forgetfulness (λάθεται, 167) that manifests as a failure to return home (οὐκ ἀξιοῖ φανῆναι, 172). His inaction, in Electra's view, indicates a forgetfulness of all that their family has learned through suffering.

Electra, on the other hand, proves her loyalty to and remembrance of Agamemnon through her prolonged virginity. She regards betrayal and lustfulness as concomitant, while she proves her loyalty through her chastity, an idea upon which she expounds later in the scene:

Ἦλ. ἀλλ' ἐμὲ μὲν ὁ πολὺς ἀπολέλοιπεν ἤδη 185
 βίωτος ἀνέλπιστος, οὐδ' ἔτ' ἀρκῶ·
 ἄτις ἄνευ τεκέων κατατάκομαι,
 ἄς φίλος οὔτις ἀνήρ ὑπερίσταται,
 ἀλλ' ἀπερεῖ τις ἔποικος ἀναξία

⁴⁴⁸ Compare *Ag.* 176-8: τὸν φρονεῖν βροτοὺς ὁδῶ- | σαντα, τὸν πάθει μάθος | θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν ("Zeus who set mortals on the road to understanding, who made 'learning by suffering' into an effective law," trans. Sommerstein).

⁴⁴⁹ Trans. Lloyd-Jones.

⁴⁵⁰ For πόθος as a term related to "desire for something absent" (Calame 1992: 30), see Calame 1992: 30–40. This is often used of sexual desire in the sense of "unrequited love."

οἰκονομῶ θαλάμους πατρός, ὧδε μὲν 190
 ἀεικεῖ σὺν στολᾷ,
 κεναῖς δ' ἀμφίσταμαι τραπέζαις.

Χο. οἰκτρὰ μὲν νόστοις αὐδὰ,
 οἰκτρὰ δ' ἐν κοίταις πατρώαις 195
 ὅτε οἱ παγγάλκων ἀνταῖα
 γενύων ὠρμάθη πλαγά.
 δόλος ἦν ὁ φράσας, ἔρος ὁ κτείνας,
 δεινὰν δεινῶς προφυτεύσαντες
 μορφάν, εἴτ' οὖν θεὸς εἶτε βροτῶν
 ἦν ὁ ταῦτα πρᾶσσω. 200

El.: But much of my life has already abandoned me
 without hope, and my strength is failing!
 Yes, I melt away without offspring,
 I who have no husband to protect me,
 but like a lowborn slave serve in the chambers of my father,
 in such mean attire as this,
 and stand at empty tables!

Ch.: Piteous was the cry at his return
 piteous as your father lay there,
 when the blow of the brazen axe
 came straight upon him!
 Cunning was the teacher, passion was the killer;
 horribly they brought into being a
 shape horrible, whether it was a god or a mortal
 who was the doer.⁴⁵¹

Electra and the Chorus paint a picture of the effects of uncontrolled lust upon the household.

Once again, we hear that Electra shows her loyalty to Agamemnon by remaining a virgin, even though it has cost her her dignity (190-2). Clytemnestra, on the other hand, has fully succumbed to Aegisthus' advances: we understand that through her cunning, she crafted the murder plot, while her lust for Aegisthus impelled her to commit the act (197).⁴⁵² The Chorus describes her

⁴⁵¹ Trans. Lloyd-Jones.

⁴⁵² The interrelatedness of Clytemnestra's lust for Aegisthus and the crafting of the murder plot appears in Homer, Pindar, Aeschylus, and Euripides. Blundell notes that Clytemnestra's δόλος will be repaid by Orestes', a manifestation of the *talio*: "*Dolos* will be paid for *dolos*, blood for blood" (Blundell 1989: 150). See also MacLeod 2017 on this theme.

betrayal of Agamemnon as a metaphorical sexual act, which has resulted in a terrible offspring (δεινὰν δεινῶς προφυτεύσαντες | μορφάν, 198-9). In a perversion of a normal marriage, their union is cemented by the birth of their “child,” namely, the plot against Agamemnon. Electra’s childlessness is thus contrasted with the birth of Clytemnestra’s metaphorical child with Aegisthus.

We again see Electra juxtaposed with Clytemnestra in the first stasimon. The Chorus equates Electra to an Erinys, playing upon the collocation λέκτρον-λέχος-λόχος to paint Electra as both Clytemnestra’s true heir and her opposite:

ἥξει καὶ πολύπους καὶ πολύχειρ ἄ δεινοῖς κρυπτομένα λόχοις	490
χαλκόπους Ἐρινύς. ἄλεκτρ’ ἄνυμφα γὰρ ἐπέβα μαιφόνων γάμων ἀμιλλήμαθ’ οἷσιν οὐ θέμις.	
πρὸ τῶνδέ τοί μ’ ἔχει	495
μή ποτε μή ποθ’ ἡμῖν ἀψεγές πελᾶν τέρας	
τοῖς δρῶσι καὶ συνδρῶσιν. ἦ τοι μαντεῖαι βροτῶν	500
οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐν δεινοῖς ὄνειροις οὐδ’ ἐν θεσφάτοις, εἰ μὴ τόδε φάσμα νυκτὸς εὖ κατασχήσει.	

She shall come, with many feet and many hands,
she who lurks in dire ambush,
the brazen-clawed Erinys!
For the drive to a polluting marriage,
that brought an accursed bed, an accursed bridal,
came upon those for whom it was forbidden.
Therefore I have confidence
that the portent will never come
in a manner welcome to the doers and partners in the deed.
Indeed there is no prophecy for mortals
in fearsome dreams or oracles,
if this apparition in the night is not to find due fulfillment.⁴⁵³

⁴⁵³ Trans. Lloyd-Jones.

The connection of λέκτρον, λέχος, and λόχος in this passage focalizes the principal issues between Clytemnestra and her daughter.⁴⁵⁴ Electra is the Erinys who will lay a trap for her mother (ἀ δεινοῖς | κρυπτομένα λόχοις | χαλκόπους Ἐρινύς, 489-91); we hear an echo of her name in λόχοις (490).⁴⁵⁵ In addition, this image conjures one presented in the *Agamemnon*, in which Clytemnestra, like an eagle bereft of its chicks, is equated with an Erinys coming to avenge the death of her child:

δέκατον μὲν ἔτος τόδ' ἐπεὶ Πριάμου
 μέγας ἀντίδικος,
 Μενέλαος ἄναξ ἠδ' Ἀγαμέμνων,
 διθρόνου Διόθεν καὶ δισκῆπτρου
 τιμῆς ὄχυρὸν ζευγὸς Ἀτρειδᾶν
 στόλον Ἀργείων χιλιοναύτην,
 τῆσδ' ἀπὸ χώρας 45

ἦραν, στρατιῶτιν ἀρωγὰν,
 μέγαν ἐκ θυμοῦ κλάζοντες Ἄρη
 τρόπον αἰγυπιῶν, οἷτ' ἐκπατίοις
 ἄλγεσι παίδων ὕπατοι λεχέων 50
 στροφοδινοῦνται
 περύγων ἐρετμοῖσιν ἐρεσσόμενοι,
 δεμνιοτήρη
 πόνον ὀρταλίχων ὀλέσαντες·
 ὕπατος δ' αἰὼν ἢ τις Ἀπόλλων 55
 ἢ Πᾶν ἢ Ζεὺς οἰωνόθροον
 γόον ὄξυβόαν τῶνδε μετοίκων
 ὑστερόποινον

πέμπει παραβᾶσιν Ἐρινύν.

This is the tenth year since against Priam
 his great prosecutor,
 King Menelaus, together with Agamemnon,
 the Atreidae, a pair firmly yoked
 in the honour of their twin thrones and twin scepters
 given by Zeus,

⁴⁵⁴ See the discussion above on the semantic web λέκτρον-λέχος-λόχος.

⁴⁵⁵ See Winnington-Ingram 1980: 219–23 on the rather unexpected references to the Erinyes in the *Electra*. Ormand also makes note of “Sophocles’ unusual treatment of the Furies... the idea that the Furies would avenge Clytemnestra’s killing of Agamemnon [is remarkable]” (1999: 70).

launched the thousand-ship expedition of the Argives
from this land

as military backers for their suit,
uttering from their hearts a great cry for war,
like birds of prey who, crazed
by grief for their children, wheel around
high above their eyries,
rowing with wings for oars,
having seen the toil of watching
over their nestlings' beds go for nothing;
and some Apollo on high, or Pan,
or Zeus, hearing the loud shrill wailing cries
of the birds, exacts belated revenge
on behalf of these denizens of his realm

by sending a Fury against the transgressors.⁴⁵⁶

In the *Agamemnon*, it is understood that Clytemnestra will be the Erinys who has waited ten years to bring vengeance upon her husband.⁴⁵⁷ In the passage at *S. El.* 489-501, Electra is likewise imagined as an Erinys who has lurked in the house preparing an ambush. By using this metaphor of Electra, Sophocles invites us to compare her with the Aeschylean Clytemnestra and thus to question the morality of her actions. But in the same breath, the Chorus reassures us that Electra's motivation is sound: she, the Erinys, is avenging "an accursed bed, an accursed bridal," ἄλεκτρ' ἄνυμφα (492). Moreover, the "accursed bed" is ἄλεκτρ'—that is, such a perversion of marriage that it is an "un-bed." While we might expect ἄλεκτρ' to refer to Electra, Sophocles applies it to Clytemnestra's liaison with Aegisthus.⁴⁵⁸ The metaphor of the Erinys is transferred from the Aeschylean Clytemnestra to her daughter, while the adjective ἄλεκτρος is transferred from Electra to her mother. Thus, mother and daughter are commingled but also juxtaposed in a surprising way in this passage.

⁴⁵⁶ Trans. Sommerstein.

⁴⁵⁷ For Clytemnestra as an Erinys, see Ch. 4 of this dissertation.

⁴⁵⁸ See Ormand 1999: 68-72.

Both Electra and Clytemnestra frame their quarrel with each other in marital terms. Kirk Ormand shows that Clytemnestra places a high value on the “cultural bonds of marriage;” she argues in the *agon logon* that extreme loyalty to one’s biological family, coupled with Agamemnon’s “failure to recognize her maternity” as evidenced by the killing of Iphigeneia, is what destroyed him.⁴⁵⁹

ἐπεὶ πατήρ σός οὔτος, ὄν θρηγεῖς ἀεὶ,	530
τὴν σὴν ὄμαιμον μούνος Ἑλλήνων ἔτλη	
θῦσαι θεοῖσιν, οὐκ ἴσον καμῶν ἐμοὶ	
λύπης, ὅς ἔσπειρ', ὥσπερ ἡ τίκτους' ἐγώ.	
εἶεν, δίδαζον δὴ με τοῦ χάριν, τίνων	
ἔθυσεν αὐτήν· πότερον Ἀργείων ἐρεῖς;	535
ἀλλ' οὐ μετὴν αὐτοῖσι τὴν γ' ἐμὴν κτανεῖν.	
ἀλλ' ἀντ' ἀδελφοῦ δῆτα Μενέλεω κτανῶν	
τάμ', οὐκ ἔμελλε τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ δώσειν δίκην;	
πότερον ἐκείνῳ παῖδες οὐκ ἦσαν διπλοῖ,	
οὓς τῆσδε μᾶλλον εἰκὸς ἦν θνήσκειν, πατρὸς	540
καὶ μητρὸς ὄντας, ἧς ὁ πλοῦς ὄδ' ἦν χάριν;	
ἢ τῶν ἐμῶν Ἄιδης τιν' ἴμερον τέκνων	
ἢ τῶν ἐκείνης ἔσχε δαίσασθαι πλέον;	
ἢ τῷ πανῶλει πατρὶ τῶν μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ	
παίδων πόθος παρεῖτο, Μενέλεω δ' ἐνήν;	545
οὐ ταῦτ' ἀβούλου καὶ κακοῦ γνώμην πατρός;	

Why, that father of yours, whom you are always lamenting,
alone among the Greeks brought himself
to sacrifice your sister to the gods, though he felt less pain
when he begot her than I did when I bore her.
So, explain this! For whose sake did he sacrifice her?
Will you say for that of the Argives?
But they had no right to kill her, who was mine.
But if he killed her who was mine for his brother Menelaus,
was he not to pay the penalty to me?
Had not Menelaus two children,
who ought to have died in preference to her,
since it was for the sake of their father and mother that the voyage took place?
Had Hades a desire to feast on my children
rather than on hers?
Or did your accursed father feel sorrow for the children of Menelaus,
but none for mine?

⁴⁵⁹ Ormand 1999: 65.

Is that not like a father who was foolish and lacked judgment?⁴⁶⁰

Clytemnestra focuses on two separate but related issues: 1) Agamemnon's lack of regard for her as his wife and the mother of his children, and 2) Agamemnon's devotion to his brother over his wife and children. Her motive for the murder thus stems from her appreciation of what Ormand calls the "cultural bonds of marriage."⁴⁶¹ In Clytemnestra's opinion, a husband ought to value his wife and children over his natal family, since it is only by forming this new *oikos* that he can propagate his bloodline. Clytemnestra's liaison with Aegisthus can thus be interpreted as the expected consequence of a husband's failure to recognize the importance of a wife and mother to the *oikos*.

Electra takes the opposite stance: her extreme loyalty to Agamemnon manifests in her extended *partheneia*. Moreover, as Ormand shows, the language she uses to describe her protection of Agamemnon's family line is often sexual.⁴⁶² Ormand argues that Electra defends Agamemnon's bloodline through "her virginal marriage, virginal motherhood, and absolute devotion to the *oikos* as embodied in her father."⁴⁶³ Her *partheneia* is thus both a personal and a political statement: rule, like marriage, should be kept within Agamemnon's family.

Clytemnestra's power as ruler, like her marriage to Aegisthus, is improper, since these were gotten through depriving Agamemnon of his power as king and as husband. Blundell likewise notes the political implications of Electra's rejection of Aegisthus' "usurpation" of Agamemnon as both father and ruler: Aegisthus, figured as a tyrant, "is emphasised not only as the adulterous

⁴⁶⁰ Trans. Lloyd-Jones.

⁴⁶¹ Ormand 1999: 65.

⁴⁶² Ormand cites Electra's connection with Artemis (563-5), her *tropheia* of Orestes (1143-5), and her tending of Agamemnon's burial-chamber (θάλαμος, 190) as instances in which her *partheneia* is figured as a kind of marriage (1999: 65-7). For θάλαμος as a sexual term (i.e., "bridal chamber"), see Ormand 1999: 63-7. On Electra as "mother," see Blundell 1989: 152-3.

⁴⁶³ Ormand 1999: 67. On Electra as an *epiklēros*, see Ormand 1999: 72-8.

lover but as the usurping ruler. This political dimension is enhanced by the use of free citizens for the chorus, rather than the slave women of Aeschylus' *Choephoroi*.⁴⁶⁴ Electra presents Clytemnestra's new marriage and her tyranny as related dangers.

The interrelation of these dangers becomes clear in the *agon*, when Electra expresses disgust at the idea that Clytemnestra and Aegisthus could have children of their own:

εἰ γὰρ θέλεις, δίδαξον ἀνθ' ὅτου τανῦν	585
αἴσχιστα πάντων ἔργα δρῶσα τυγχάνεις,	
ἥτις ξυνεύδεις τῷ παλαμναίῳ, μεθ' οὗ	
πατέρα τὸν ἄμὸν πρόσθεν ἐξάπώλεσας,	
καὶ παιδοποιεῖς, τοὺς δὲ πρόσθεν εὐσεβεῖς	
κάξ εὐσεβῶν βλαστόντας ἐκβαλοῦς' ἔχεις.	590
πῶς ταῦτ' ἐπαινέσαιμ' ἄν; ἢ καὶ ταῦτ' ἐρεῖς	
ὡς τῆς θυγατρὸς ἀντίποινα λαμβάνεις;	
αἰσχρῶς δ', ἐάν περ καὶ λέγῃς· οὐ γὰρ καλὸν	
ἐχθροῖς γαμεῖσθαι τῆς θυγατρὸς οὐνεκα.	

For come, pray explain why
 you are doing the most shameful thing of all,
 you who are sleeping with the guilty one, with whom
 in time past you killed my father,
 and getting children by him, while you have cast out your earlier children
 who are god-fearing and born of a god-fearing father!
 How could I approve of this? Or will you say
 that this too is taken in payment for your daughter?
 If you do say it, it will be a shameful thing to say; for it is not honourable
 to mate with enemies for your daughter's sake!⁴⁶⁵

Electra expresses her disapproval of Clytemnestra in sexual terms: her disloyalty to Agamemnon is literalized by her liaison with Aegisthus, and has the potential to be reified in any offspring produced by this new union. Electra maintains that if Clytemnestra were truly upset about Iphigeneia, she should have expressed this in a way that upheld her *oikos*, not through

⁴⁶⁴ Blundell 1989: 155.

⁴⁶⁵ Trans. Lloyd-Jones.

extramarital sex. By doing so, Electra upholds the value of the natal family over that created by marriage.⁴⁶⁶

When Electra learns of Orestes' supposed death, she realizes that the protection of her father's line rests with her. In her second conversation with Chrysothemis, Electra goads her sister to action by uniting the idea of familial loyalty with the promise of marriage:

<p>ποῖ γὰρ μενεῖς ῥάθυμος, εἰς τίν' ἐλπίδων βλέψασ' ἔτ' ὀρθήν; ἢ πάρεστι μὲν στένειν πλούτου πατρώου κτήσιν ἐστερημένη, πάρεστι δ' ἀλγεῖν ἐς τοσόνδε τοῦ χρόνου ἄλεκτρα γηράσκουσιν ἀνυμέναιά τε. καὶ τῶνδε μέντοι μηκέτ' ἐλπίσης ὅπως τεύξει ποτ'· οὐ γὰρ ὦδ' ἄβουλός ἐστ' ἀνήρ Αἴγισθος ὥστε σὸν ποτ' ἢ κάμὸν γένος βλαστεῖν ἔἴσαι, πημονὴν αὐτῷ σαφῆ. ἀλλ' ἦν ἐπίσπη τοῖς ἐμοῖς βουλευμασιν, πρῶτον μὲν εὐσέβειαν ἐκ πατρὸς κάτω θανόντος οἴσει τοῦ κασιγνήτου θ' ἅμα· ἔπειτα δ', ὥσπερ ἐξέφυς, ἐλευθέρα καλεῖ τὸ λοιπὸν καὶ γάμων ἐπαζίων τεύξει· φιλεῖ γὰρ πρὸς τὰ χρηστὰ πᾶς ὄρᾶν.</p>	<p>960</p> <p>965</p> <p>970</p>
--	----------------------------------

Why, how long will you wait, doing nothing? To what hope that still stands upright will you look? You can lament at being cheated of the possession of your father's wealth, and you can grieve at growing older to this point in time without a wedding and without a marriage. And think no longer that you will ever get these things; Aegisthus is not so stupid a man as to allow your children or mine to come into being, bringing obvious trouble for himself. But if you fall in with my counsels, first you will earn credit for piety from our dead father below,

⁴⁶⁶ As a point of comparison, consider Apollo's argument in *Eumenides* about the mother's lack of blood-relation to her children (657-65). Apollo maintains that the mother is not a parent, but merely a vessel for the father's seed. Sophocles' Electra seems to be aware of this view of parenthood: when she juxtaposes Aegisthus' potential offspring with Agamemnon's (εὐσεβῶν, 590) children who are εὐσεβεῖς (589), she implies that this moral uprightness is a characteristic inherited from the true parent. Therefore, Aegisthus' children will be worse by nature than Agamemnon's since they are born of a worse father. In addition, Electra implies that by marrying Aegisthus, Clytemnestra willingly introduces an enemy into the household.

and also from our brother;
 and further, for the future you will be called free,
 that which you are by nature, and you will obtain a worthy marriage;
 for what is excellent draws the eyes of all.⁴⁶⁷

Here, Electra urges Chrysothemis to join her in reclaiming their inheritance: Agamemnon's wealth and the right to their own families are their birthright. Strikingly, she uses the adjective ἄλεκτρος to describe her sister's plight; with this adjective, she connects Chrysothemis' situation with her own, suggesting that her sister will in time be as disrespected by their *kyrioi* as she is. This pointed adjective is rhetorically effective: it is pointless to yield to Clytemnestra and Aegisthus as Chrysothemis has because, though they may treat her well in the short term, they will eventually deny her her birthright, as they have already done with Electra. Thus, all of the women in the family are ἄλεκτρος: Clytemnestra because of her un-marriage, and Electra and Chrysothemis because of the danger their offspring would pose to their *kyrioi*. It seems, then, that their house is characterized by the inversion of traditional sexual mores, wherein a married woman becomes "unmarried" because of her licentiousness, while her daughters remain *parthenoi* longer than is appropriate.

At the end of her speech (605-9), Electra addresses the issue of her similarity to her mother, reframing Clytemnestra's quarrel with her in terms of inherited traits:

605

τοῦδέ γ' οὔνεκα
 κήρυσσέ μ' εἰς ἅπαντας, εἶτε χρῆς κακὴν
 εἶτε στόμαργον εἶτ' ἀναιδείας πλέαν.
 εἰ γὰρ πέφυκα τῶνδε τῶν ἔργων ἴδρις,
 σχεδόν τι τὴν σὴν οὐ καταισχύνω φύσιν.

So far as that goes,
 proclaim me to all, whether you like to call me bad
 or loud-mouthed or full of shamelessness;
 for if I am expert in such behaviour,

⁴⁶⁷ Trans. Lloyd-Jones.

I think I am no unworthy child of yours!⁴⁶⁸

The idea that one's character, especially an aggressive temperament, can be inherited from one's parents occurs in both Aeschylus and Sophocles.⁴⁶⁹ At *Choephoroi* 418-22, Electra notes that her “harsh” (ὠμόφρων, 421) temperament was inherited from Clytemnestra; therefore, it should be no surprise that Electra reacts to injustice in a manner reminiscent of her mother.⁴⁷⁰ In Sophocles' *Electra*, the titular character expands upon the assertion of her Aeschylean iteration: she learned her stubbornness and refusal to capitulate to her *kyrioi* from her mother. Thus, we might expect Electra to have learned her lack of respect for sexual mores from the likewise ἄλεκτρος Clytemnestra.

The threat that Electra will turn out like Clytemnestra is realized in the murder scene, an eerie reenactment of Agamemnon's death scene. As Electra and Orestes enter the palace, the Chorus connects them with the Aeschylean Erinyes:

ἴδεθ' ὅποι προνέμεται	
τὸ δυσέριστον αἶμα φουσῶν Ἄρης.	1385
βεβᾶσιν ἄρτι δωμάτων ὑπόστεγοι	
μετάδρομοι κακῶν πανουργημάτων ἄφυκτοι κύνες,	
ὥστ' οὐ μακρὰν ἔτ' ἀμμενεῖ	
τοῦμὸν φρενῶν ὄνειρον αἰωρούμενον.	1390

See where Ares advances,
breathing blood born of strife!
Already they have gone beneath the house's roof,
the hounds, not to be fled from, that pursue evil crimes,

⁴⁶⁸ Trans. Lloyd-Jones.

⁴⁶⁹ Finglass 2007 ad 609. See also the Chorus at *Antigone* 471-2: δῆλον· τὸ γέννημ' ὠμὸν ἐξ ὠμοῦ πατρὸς | τῆς παιδός· εἴκειν δ' οὐκ ἐπίσταται κακοῖς (“It is clear! The nature of the girl is savage, like her father's, | and she does not know how to bend before her troubles,” trans. Lloyd-Jones).

⁴⁷⁰ *Cho.* 418-22: τί δ' ἂν φάντες τύχοιμεν ἢ τὰ περ | πάθομεν ἄχεα πρὸς γε τῶν τεκομένων; | πάρεστι σαίνειν, τὰ δ' οὔτι θέλγεται. | λύκος γὰρ ὥστ' ὠμόφρων | ἄσαντος ἐκ ματρὸς ἐστι θυμός (“What can we say that will hit the mark? Should it be | the pains we have suffered, and from a parent, too? | She may fawn on us, but they cannot be soothed; | for like a savage-hearted wolf, | we have a rage, caused by our mother, that is past fawning,” trans. Sommerstein).

so that the vision of my mind
shall not long wait in suspense!⁴⁷¹

The language of this passage is reminiscent of the death scene of Clytemnestra in the *Choephoroi*, where she attempts to dissuade Orestes from the murder by threatening pursuit by the Erinyes.

In response, Orestes cites his fear of Agamemnon's Erinyes:

Κλ. ὄρα, φύλαξαι μητρὸς ἐγκότους κύνας.
Ὅρ. τὰς τοῦ πατρὸς δὲ πῶς φύγω, παρῆς τάδε; 925

Cl.: Take care! Beware your mother's wrathful hounds!
Or.: But how am I to escape my father's, if I fail to do this?⁴⁷²

Sophocles seems to be reminding the reader of the scene's Aeschylean predecessor, especially by referring to the Erinyes as "hounds."⁴⁷³ Interestingly, while the Aeschylean Orestes conceives of his father's Erinyes as external to himself, he himself is presented as the embodiment of Agamemnon's Erinyes in Sophocles' play.

The image of Orestes and Electra as Erinyes echoes an earlier image used by the Chorus to discuss Clytemnestra and Aegisthus:

ὄτι σφὶν ἤδη τὰ μὲν ἐκ δόμων νοσεῖται, 1070
τὰ δὲ πρὸς τέκνων διπλῆ φύ-
λοπις οὐκέτ' ἐξισοῦται
φιλοτασίῳ διαίτῃ.
πρόδοτος δὲ μόνα σαλεύει
ἅ παῖς, οἶτον ἄει πατρὸς 1075
δειλαία στενάχουσ' ὅπως
ἅ πάνδυρτος ἀηδῶν,
οὔτε τι τοῦ θανεῖν προμηθῆς
τό τε μὴ βλέπειν ἐτοίμα,
διδύμαν ἐλοῦσ' Ἐρινύν. 1080
τίς ἂν εὐπατρις ὄδε βλάστοι;

Tell them that their house suffers from a plague,

⁴⁷¹ Trans. Lloyd-Jones.

⁴⁷² Trans. Sommerstein.

⁴⁷³ Compare S. *El.* ἄφυκτοι κύνες (1388) with A. *Cho.* ἐγκότους κύνας (924). See also Ch. 4 of this dissertation.

and that the strife between their children
 is no longer levelled out
 in loving life together!
 But the daughter is betrayed
 and alone tosses on the sea,
 ever lamenting her father's fate
 in sorrow,
 like the ever-grieving nightingale,
 reckless of death
 and ready to renounce the light,
 if she can bring down the twin Erinyes.
 Who could be so loyal to her father?⁴⁷⁴

Here, the Chorus conceives of Electra's isolation as in direct opposition to the unitedness of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, who operate as if twins (διδύμῶν...Ἐρινύων, 1080). In the passage at 1384-90 (above), however, the image of the Erinyes is transferred to Orestes and Electra, who, because of their reunion, have become more powerful than their mother. It is significant that the siblings have waited to act until Clytemnestra and Aegisthus are physically apart from each other: it is by separating the "twin Erinyes" that Electra and Orestes can become Erinyes in their own right. But this, in fact, also suggests that Electra will turn out like her mother: as an Erinyes, it is in her nature to act in retribution, just as Clytemnestra asserts when she uses Iphigeneia's death as a pretext for the murder of Agamemnon (536-47). The siblings replace their mother and stepfather as "twin Erinyes;" the phrase ἄφουκτοι κύνες (1387) is suggestive of the Erinyes and also implies the traits they have inherited from their mother.

In Clytemnestra's death scene, Sophocles uses lines from Agamemnon's death scene in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* to emphasize Electra's similarity to her mother. In a surprising

⁴⁷⁴ Trans. Lloyd-Jones.

engagement with Agamemnon's death scene, Sophocles invites us to connect Clytemnestra with Agamemnon and Electra with Clytemnestra.⁴⁷⁵

Κλ. ὦμοι πέπληγμα. 1415
 Ἡλ. παῖσον, εἰ σθένεις, διπλῆν.
 Κλ. ὦμοι μάλ' αὔθις.
 Cl.: Ah, I am struck!
 El.: Strike twice as hard, if you have the strength!
 Cl.: Ah, again!⁴⁷⁶

The language of this scene is taken directly from Agamemnon's death scene in the *Agamemnon*:

Ἄγ. ὦμοι, πέπληγμα καιρίαν πληγὴν ἔσω.
 Χο. σίγα· τίς πληγὴν αὐτεῖ καιρίως οὐτασμένος;
 Ἄγ. ὦμοι μάλ' αὔθις, δευτέραν πεπληγμένος. 1345
 Ag.: Ah me, I am struck down, a deep and deadly blow!
 Ch.: Hush! Who's that screaming about being struck and mortally wounded?
 Ag.: Ah me again, struck a second time! (trans. Sommerstein)

Moreover, Electra's words at 1416 are reminiscent of Clytemnestra's speech after the death of Agamemnon, where she details the blows she dealt to her husband:

παίω δέ νιν δίς· κὰν δυοῖν οἰμωγμάτοι
 μεθῆκεν αὐτοῦ κῶλα· καὶ πεπτωκότι 1385
 τρίτην ἐπενδίδωμι, τοῦ κατὰ χθονὸς
 Διὸς νεκρῶν σωτῆρος εὐκταίαν χάριν.
 Then I struck him twice, and on the spot, in the space of two cries,
 his limbs gave way; and when he had fallen
 I added a third stroke, in thanksgiving to the Zeus
 of the underworld, the saviour of the dead, for the fulfilment of my prayers.⁴⁷⁷

Electra urges Orestes to strike a second time in order to ensure that Clytemnestra is unable to fight back. Aeschylus' Clytemnestra, on the other hand, needs no prompting to strike twice: she

⁴⁷⁵ Jebb also notes that the Chorus hears Clytemnestra's cry from within the house, just as the Chorus of the *Agamemnon* hears his cry (Jebb 1962 ad 1413).

⁴⁷⁶ Trans. Lloyd-Jones.

⁴⁷⁷ Trans. Sommerstein.

is determined to finish the deed, with or without help. Importantly, in lines 1415-7, Electra emulates Aeschylus' iteration of her mother, while Clytemnestra unwittingly plays the role of the Aeschylean Agamemnon. Sophocles' use of Aeschylean language invites interpretation of Orestes and Electra as a second Aegisthus and Clytemnestra, and underlines the question of the morality of the siblings' vengeance.

Unlike in Euripides' version, the titular character of this *Electra* play remains on uncertain footing at the end. Ormand notes that Orestes' return does not solve Electra's problems: though no longer oppressed by her *kyrioi*, Electra's new *kyrios* (Orestes) promises no hope of a settled future for her. Electra is not promised in marriage, and we hear nothing further from her after Orestes has determined to kill Aegisthus. As Ormand notes, "her potential—for marriage, for childbirth, for action—remains unresolved, and furthermore, Orestes has taken no clear charge of her as her new guardian."⁴⁷⁸ In fact, if Orestes must travel to Delphi and to Athens (as the mythic tradition requires), Electra is perhaps in a worse position than she was at the start of the play: Agamemnon's heir has returned, and his killers are slain, rendering Electra's defiant allegiance to her father unnecessary. At the same time, Orestes lays out no plan for marrying her off, and so she ends the play in much the same predicament: unwed and alone, awaiting her brother's return.⁴⁷⁹ She remains ἄλεκτρος, resigned to this future (and this name) for an indeterminate amount of time.

Sophocles repeatedly invites comparison of Electra with her mother. Although Electra and Clytemnestra represent opposite views on marriage, they are both ἄλεκτρος: Clytemnestra through her indecorous marriage, and Electra as a means of preserving her father's memory.

⁴⁷⁸ Ormand 1999: 78.

⁴⁷⁹ On the rather abrupt end of this play, see Finglass 2007 ad 1442-1504.

Electra is given no particularly happy ending in this play; rather, as Ormand notes, “the paradox of the woman’s role in the (re)generation of [the] *oikos* becomes Electra’s tragedy, just as it was her mother’s nightmare.”⁴⁸⁰

We have seen that Sophocles and Euripides each portray Clytemnestra in different ways in order to draw out the nuances of her character. While Euripides generally paints her in a sympathetic light by having her express regret for her actions and for her estrangement from Electra, Sophocles portrays her as harsh and indifferent to Electra’s plight. Additionally, Sophocles’ Clytemnestra is closely modeled on Aeschylus’, while Euripides’ Clytemnestra represents a marked departure from the Aeschylean source material; the differences between Sophocles’ and Euripides’ versions of Clytemnestra shows an interest in the nuances of her character. Both playwrights experiment with Clytemnestra’s characterization as a way of exploring the circumstances that might drive a wife to murder; while one version arouses sympathy, the other provokes condemnation.

As we have seen in both *Electra* plays, the household’s problems are represented by the sexual dysfunction of its women: both Clytemnestra and Electra defy the expectations of their gender and status. Electra’s status as ἄλεκτρος, coupled with Clytemnestra’s marriage to Aegisthus, are emblematic of the ruination of Agamemnon’s house. We have seen that both Sophocles and Euripides explore the morality of vengeance by associating Electra with her mother and by raising questions of Clytemnestra’s motivation for the murder of Agamemnon. Euripides introduces the possibility that Orestes and Electra are as morally corrupt as Aegisthus and Clytemnestra, leading us to wonder whether retribution is ever ethical. Sophocles likewise

⁴⁸⁰ Ormand 1999: 78.

invites the association of Electra with Clytemnestra by using the adjective ἄλεκτρος of both of them: thus, we might question whether Electra's lack of regard for sexual mores is not in fact harmful to her father's legacy. By repeatedly inviting comparison of Electra with Clytemnestra, Euripides and Sophocles show that *both* are dangerous to patriarchal society, but in opposite ways. Both represent the danger that women pose when not properly controlled by their *kyrioi*; thus, both show that the extremes of female sexuality (lust and prolonged maidenhood) are detrimental to the *oikos* and to society.

CHAPTER 6. EURIPIDES' *IPHIGENEIA AT AULIS*

In this chapter, I will show that through allusion and intertext, *Iphigeneia at Aulis* (*IA*) characterizes Clytemnestra as a divine avenger of her husband's transgressions. By mapping the events of *IA* onto the myth of the rape of Persephone, Euripides invites the audience to imagine Clytemnestra as Demeter Erinys, whose eventual rage is an expected consequence of the premature loss of her daughter. Euripides' Clytemnestra is assimilated to Demeter Erinys, whose rage has enormous consequences for humanity; by associating these two figures, Euripides invites us to understand Clytemnestra's rage as similarly detrimental to society.

I will begin by discussing the evidence for Eleusinian-Orphic allusion and intertext and the interpretative issues posed by *IA*, including textual difficulties and questions of authenticity. I shall then move to discussion of the Athenian understanding of the Demeter and Persephone myth, especially as regards Demeter's wrathful iteration, Erinys or Melaina. Finally, I will examine *IA* in conjunction with the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* (*h.Cer.*) in order to show that Euripides makes pointed references to the *Hymn* as a way of connecting Clytemnestra with Demeter (in particular, with Demeter's wrathful iteration as Demeter Erinys). I will show that the connection of Clytemnestra with Demeter Erinys reframes Clytemnestra's crime as an act of vengeance that is a natural consequence of the loss of her daughter.

6.1. CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE DISCUSSION OF ELEUSINIAN-ORPHIC ALLUSIONS AND INTERTEXTS

Andreas Markantonatos has shown that Euripides' version of the events leading up to the sacrifice of Iphigeneia contains references to the rape of Persephone and the Eleusinian Mysteries, and that these are an examination of the way that the moral framework proposed by

the *Mysteries* provides relief from the horrors of war.⁴⁸¹ Markantonatos argues that Euripides' references to the Eleusinian Mysteries are informed by his immediate political context, and that Euripides maps the practice of the Mysteries during the Peloponnesian War onto the myth of Iphigeneia as a way of problematizing contemporary Athenian issues onstage. This mapping of the Mysteries onto the Iphigeneia myth frames Iphigeneia as Persephone, Clytemnestra as Demeter, Agamemnon as Zeus, and the chorus as the nymphs that accompany Persephone in the meadow.

While Markantonatos deftly handles Euripides' treatment of the practical aspects of the Mysteries as a response to contemporary Athenian politics, he does not deal with Euripides' reception of earlier literary material as an influence on his agenda. Jonah Radding, however, explores the numerous verbal resonances between *IA* and earlier works like the *Cypria*, Semonides poem 7, Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, and the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter (h.Cer.)*.⁴⁸² Radding argues that Euripides' alignment of Clytemnestra with Demeter is a revision of her negative portrayal in earlier sources. In his estimation, Euripides rehabilitates Clytemnestra by connecting her with "more commendable women in the Greek literary canon," including Demeter and Semonides' Bee Wife.⁴⁸³ Radding takes as his premise Clytemnestra's claim that she has been a "blameless wife" to Agamemnon;⁴⁸⁴ he argues that Euripides rehabilitates

⁴⁸¹ Markantonatos 2016.

⁴⁸² Radding 2015.

⁴⁸³ Radding 2015: 833. A similar rehabilitation of Clytemnestra is presented in the USA miniseries *Helen of Troy* (2003), in which Clytemnestra is characterized as a dutiful housewife who ignores Agamemnon's many offenses against her, ultimately deviating from her "obedient housewife" persona and murdering him when overlooking his misdeeds is no longer possible for her (Harrison 2003). Similarly, Euripides goes to great lengths to portray Clytemnestra as a good wife in *IA*, implying that her post-Aulis actions are all the result of her frustrations at the accumulation of Agamemnon's transgressions against her.

⁴⁸⁴ συμμαρτυρήσεις ὡς ἄμειπτος ἦ γυνή ("you will admit that... I was a flawless wife," *IA* 1158).

Clytemnestra by assimilating her to positive female exempla. However, though he does acknowledge that “by recalling the story of Demeter, Euripides... provides a divine model for Clytemnestra’s eventual vengeance,” Radding does not pursue the implications of using the wrathful Demeter, called Erinys or Melaina, as models for Clytemnestra.⁴⁸⁵

In this chapter, I extend the implications of both Markantonatos’ and Radding’s arguments. Markantonatos sees the mapping of the play’s characters onto the rape of Persephone as ancillary to Euripides’ political motivations. I will develop his discussion of the specific implications of aligning the characters of *IA* with characters in *h.Cer.* I will extend Radding’s argument in a similar way. He argues that Euripides’ use of Demeter as a model for Clytemnestra proves her status as a good wife and thus exculpates her. However, I will show that Euripides specifically alludes to Demeter in her wrathful incarnation (Erinys/Melaina) as a way of predicting the events of the *Oresteia*. While Radding argues that the cycle of Clytemnestra’s grief is completed in *IA* when she is likened to the bereaved Demeter, I will show that Euripides only hints at the full magnitude of Clytemnestra’s eventual rage with this assimilation to Demeter; by hinting that she could become like Demeter Erinys or Melaina, Euripides suggests that Clytemnestra’s wrath is an expected consequence of the loss of her daughter. This does not exculpate her, since her behavior is inappropriate for a mortal; rather, her assimilation to Demeter Erinys or Melaina both explains her grief in *IA* and predicts her rage in the *Oresteia*.

We might reasonably expect an Athenian of the fifth century to be broadly familiar with rituals celebrating Demeter and Persephone, which may have included reenactments or retellings

⁴⁸⁵ Radding 2015: 861. Demeter’s identities as Erinys and Melaina are often conflated since they represent the same period in her search for her lost daughter.

of the rape of Persephone and Demeter's search for her lost daughter, the blight put upon crops, the reunion of mother and daughter, and the founding of the Eleusinian Mysteries.⁴⁸⁶ A smaller subset of Athenians may have been familiar with specific allusions to the primary literary source for the myth of Demeter and Persephone, the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*. Euripides demonstrates familiarity with the *Hymn to Demeter* in *Helen* 1301-68.⁴⁸⁷ Angeliki Tzanetou writes that Athenian audiences could easily pick up on theatrical references to religious ritual, since "the traits that religious and theatrical practice share enabled the audience to recognize potential connections between religious rituals and their dramatic representation."⁴⁸⁸ It is likely that Euripides' audience was able to understand broad references to the Demeter and Persephone myth and related rituals, and some audience members may have picked up on more specific allusions to literary sources for the myth.⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁶ Tzanetou 2002: 331–35. She is careful to note that we do not know exactly how the Thesmophoria was conducted, though scholars have reconstructed broad outlines of the ritual from literary sources like *Thesmophoriazusae* (Tzanetou 2002: 333).

⁴⁸⁷ Friedman 2007: 204. For other discussion of the link between *h.Cer.* and *Helen*, see especially Golann 1945, Foley 1992, and Stavrinou 2015.

⁴⁸⁸ Tzanetou 2002: 338. On the connection between theater and ritual, see also Wiles 2000: 29–30. Tzanetou is writing about the representation of the Thesmophoria in Aristophanes, but her discussion of onstage allusions to ritual can easily be extended to tragedy.

⁴⁸⁹ Markantonatos likewise believes that ancient theatrical audiences could recognize both verbal and thematic allusions to Eleusinian Orphism, arguing that some language that was strongly associated with mystery religions was ubiquitous enough to be openly used in tragic performances. For example, the *makarismos* formula that is a hallmark of mystery religion is used in ancient popular culture to evoke "the Eleusinian-Orphic promise of future happiness in the world below" (Markantonatos 2016: 235). Markantonatos also maintains that more general Eleusinian-Orphic themes are present in tragedy, including "*post mortem* bliss and heroic transcendence... [and] fundamental moral arguments and ethical postulations" (Markantonatos 2016: 227). For more on this, as well as on the interweaving of Eleusinian, Orphic, and Bacchic cult in the Athenian cultural imaginary, see Markantonatos 2016: 229–30. I have chosen to adopt the term "Eleusinian Orphism" in this context because of the way in which we see a connection between the Eleusinian Mysteries, which memorialize the rape of Persephone, and Orphism, which promises the initiand life after death; this connection is most apparent in the figure of Iphigeneia, who is cast as a double for Persephone and who also survives death because of her adherence to a moral code with Orphic overtones (see *IA* 1211ff).

Pre-classical literary sources for the rape of Persephone include Hesiod's *Theogony* and the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*. Hesiod briefly mentions the rape of Persephone in his enumeration of Zeus' partners and children (*Theogony* 912-14); even in this brief reference, the theme of Persephone's abduction and subsequent separation from her mother is evident.⁴⁹⁰ This is explicated more fully in the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*, which was likely composed around 650 BCE.⁴⁹¹ According to Robert Parker, "The *Hymn to Demeter* tells of the rape and recovery of Persephone, and of how Demeter came to earth during her daughter's absence and founded the Mysteries at Eleusis."⁴⁹² More generally, the *Hymn* treats the relationship between mother and daughter, and how that relationship changes as the daughter nears marriageable age. The anxiety of "losing" a daughter when she leaves the natal household is played out in a literal way in the rape of Persephone. It is very likely that these literary versions of the myth would have been familiar to Euripides, and possibly to members of his audience.

Radding argues that Euripides' audience would likely have been familiar enough with the *Hymn to Demeter* to recognize allusions to it in *IA*.⁴⁹³ Radding also points out correspondences between *IA* and Semonides poem 7, concluding that Euripides' allusions to *h.Cer.* and

⁴⁹⁰ αὐτὰρ ὁ Δήμητρος πολυφόρβης ἐς λέχος ἤλθεν· | ἦ τέκε Περσεφόνην λευκώλενον, ἦν Αἰδωνεύς | ἦρπασεν ἧς παρὰ μητρός, ἔδωκε δὲ μητίετα Ζεὺς ("Then bounteous Demeter came to his bed; | she bore white-armed Persephone, whom Aïdoneus | snatched away from her mother—but the counsellor Zeus | gave her to him," trans. Most).

⁴⁹¹ Some scholars believe the *Hymn to Demeter* is originally of Attic provenance (cf. Parker 1991 for a summary of the scholarship).

⁴⁹² Parker 1991: 4.

⁴⁹³ Radding points to a similar use of the Demeter and Persephone myth, including direct allusions to the *Hymn to Demeter*, in Euripides' *Helen* as proof that a 5th-century Athenian audience would have recognized Euripides' references (Radding 2015: 833-7). For evidence of Euripides' use of the Demeter and Persephone myth in the *Helen* (originally produced in 412 BCE), see especially Friedman 2007. Friedman convincingly argues that Euripides uses the myth as a thematic template for *Helen*, thereby associating Helen with Persephone and Menelaus with Demeter.

Semonides 7 connect Clytemnestra with literary “good wives,” which constitutes a revision of Aeschylus’ Clytemnestra in particular.⁴⁹⁴ He also argues that the audience would have recognized allusions to the *Oresteia*, since “much of Euripides’ audience had the opportunity to become acquainted with Aeschylus at one of two venues: the city Dionysia, where revivals of the *Oresteia* may have occurred in the late fifth century; and the various rural Dionysia, where the reproduction of older tragedies was almost certainly the norm.”⁴⁹⁵ Additionally, he notes that allusions to the *Oresteia* were quite common among playwrights of Euripides’ period, which “strongly suggests that the dramatic poets expected their audiences to be familiar with the trilogy.”⁴⁹⁶ This is certainly true of Euripides: scholars generally agree that his *Electra* makes pointed reference to the *Oresteia* in the recognition scene between Electra and Orestes. It is probable that Euripides’ audience would have been familiar with Aeschylus’ *Oresteia* in some form; thus Radding’s argument that Euripides’ Clytemnestra is a reaction against her Aeschylean iteration is sound.

6.2. THE TEXT OF *IA*

The authenticity of *IA* has been a persistent question in scholarship on the play, which poses a number of interpretative difficulties for readers. First, it was produced posthumously by

⁴⁹⁴ Aspasia Skouroumouni Stavrinou argues that Euripides’ audience would have understood allusions both to other plays and to other genres, since “the institutional nature of ancient drama (generic identity prescribed by festival context) facilitated experimentation with generic convention. Cross-generic responsiveness reached its peak in the latter part of the fifth century. Cross-boundary play on the level of performance—performative intertextuality—is a key feature of inter-generic osmosis in this period” (Stavrinou 2015: 108).

⁴⁹⁵ Radding 2015: 836.

⁴⁹⁶ Radding 2015: 835. He notes that “the most famous of these [*Oresteia* reception passages] are: Ar. *Ach.* 9-11, *Ran.* 866-870, and Euripides’ lampooning of the *Choephoroi* in *Electra* 518-544” (Radding 2015: 835).

Euripides' son or nephew, Euripides Minor, in 405 BCE.⁴⁹⁷ This has led some scholars to question the authenticity of the text, since it may have been revised or even finished after Euripides' death, and some scholars, like M.L. West, argue that Euripides Minor is responsible for most of the play.⁴⁹⁸ Second, *IA* is rife with textual difficulties which have sparked substantial editorial revisions, both ancient and modern. Mary-Kay Gamel writes that editors have revised significant portions of *IA* because of the play's numerous "problems in meter, citations of this play by other authors which do not appear in existing manuscripts, and apparent illogicalities and inconsistencies."⁴⁹⁹ These problems have led many editors to bracket, remove, or rearrange chunks of the play, and have resulted in translations which omit large portions of the text.⁵⁰⁰ Because of this, Sean Gurd counts no fewer than 34 distinct editions of *IA*, and argues for the importance of considering all 34 versions in order to properly understand the play, and that "in dealing with Euripides' last play we should speak not of a single, unique text, but of a differential set, a multiplicity or plurality of texts."⁵⁰¹ While Gurd's position allows for a wider and perhaps more "objective" understanding of the play,⁵⁰² for the purposes of the present

⁴⁹⁷ Pietruczuk 2012: 565. She cites the scholiast on Aristophanes' *Frogs* 67 as the source of this anecdote.

⁴⁹⁸ West 1981: 73.

⁴⁹⁹ Gamel 1999: 327.

⁵⁰⁰ Colin Teevan notes that "this textual uncertainty has been considered by previous translators, some of whom have tackled the subject squarely, arguing that the job of the theatrical translator is to translate an effective piece of theatre, which the standard text is (if extraordinarily melodramatic as Greek tragedy goes)" (Teevan 1996: 99).

⁵⁰¹ Gurd 2005: 9. Gurd's count of 34 separate editions of *IA* excludes "several manuscripts, a few papyrus fragments, and a host of essays, dissertations, commentaries, and articles touching on questions of text" (Gurd 2005: 9). He notes that "the significant MSS are Laurentianus pl. 32, 2 (L); Palatinus gr. 287 (P)" and that "several papyrus witnesses are now known: P Leiden inv. 510, P Köln II 67; POxy 3719" (Gurd 2005: 9 n.8).

⁵⁰² With "objective," I refer to the idea advanced by feminist scholars that true objectivity comes not from elimination of "distortion, bias, error, self-interest, and caprice" from research (a problematic, nearly impossible claim), but from the inclusion of multiple sources of evidence in

chapter I have not consulted all 34 editions of *IA*, instead relying on Gurd as my guide to the questions raised by the differences among these editions.

James Diggle's 1994 critical edition of *IA* has been the primary text that I have used, largely because of Diggle's innovative editorial process, which draws upon a methodology developed by Denys Page. This methodology, which Gurd calls "probabilism," allows editors to include with the extant text their conjectures about the authenticity of certain passages.⁵⁰³ Gurd argues that this allows for increased editorial rigor because it allows textual critics some flexibility in handling wildly divergent versions of a text (Gurd 2005: 155-6). He notes that Page's methodology for textual criticism constitutes a radical acknowledgement of an editor's active, often politically loaded, role in shaping the text. Diggle, following Page's methodology, transmits the play in its entirety but divides the text into four categories, including sigla in the margins to indicate the likelihood of a given passage's authenticity. He assigns the sigla as follows: 1) fortasse Euripidei (perhaps Euripides', designated by the symbol ○), 2) fortasse non Euripidei (perhaps not Euripides', designated by the symbol ⊖), 3) vix Euripidei (hardly Euripides', designated by the symbol ⊗), and 4) non Euripidei (not Euripides', designated by the symbol ●).⁵⁰⁴ His allowance for editorial uncertainty is important because it preserves the text in its entirety, not excising anything but simply making notes of editorial conjectures in the margins. Similarly, Gamel gives the literary scholar permission to treat (or not treat) *IA* as a

order to approach the truth (Hawkesworth 2006: 9). For a summary of how feminist scholars have redefined "objectivity," see Hawkesworth 2006.

⁵⁰³ Gurd 2005: 155. Page suggests dividing a text into four categories: 1) "certainly interpolated, probably by actors," 2) "more or less probably interpolated," 3) "where the case for interpolation is not yet strong enough," and 4) "where interpolation is more or less certain, but not histrionic" (Page 1934: 24-9).

⁵⁰⁴ Diggle 1994: 358.

unified text, and to interpret the text as we have it, treating all parts as valuable for study.⁵⁰⁵

Because of this, I have relied on Diggle's critical edition and Gamel's translation of *IA*, since I view their goals as complementary.

I have largely confined my analysis of *IA* to those sections which Diggle labels as "fortasse Euripidei" (perhaps Euripides', designated by the symbol \odot) and "fortasse non Euripidei" (perhaps not Euripides', designated by the symbol \ominus). This is because, as Jonah Radding notes, these are "the two categories that Diggle believes most likely to be authentic... While by no means perfect, this system should provide the best chance of understanding Euripides' methodology in his reconstruction of Clytemnestra."⁵⁰⁶ Examination of intertexts between *IA* and *h.Cer.* requires reasonable belief in a passage's authenticity, though in this chapter I try to mitigate this problem by examining not only specific intertexts, as characterized by marked verbal references to *h.Cer.* about which I am reasonably certain, but also broader thematic resonances with the myth of Persephone and Demeter that do not necessarily require Euripides to have borrowed specific language from *h.Cer.* to evoke the myth.

6.3. EVIDENCE FOR DEMETER ERINYS

The loss of Persephone provokes Demeter's transition from benevolent to vengeful, that is, from simply Demeter to Demeter Erinys or Demeter Melaina. Although *h.Cer.* certainly alludes to this vengeful Demeter, all of the extant literary sources which explicitly name "Demeter Erinys"

⁵⁰⁵ Gamel 1999: 327.

⁵⁰⁶ Radding 2015: 832.

or “Demeter Melaina” are post-classical.⁵⁰⁷ In the Hellenistic poem *Alexandra*, Lycophron tells the story of Demeter’s accidental ingestion of Pelops’ shoulder, listing the epithet Ἐρινός alongside four of her other epithets (Ἐνναία, Ἐρκυννα, Θουρία, and Ξιφηφόρος); all five of these epithets convey some aspect of Demeter’s rage at Persephone’s rape.⁵⁰⁸ Simon Hornblower notes that “Demeter was Erinys at Arkadian Thelpousa [also called Tilphousa, Telpousa, and Thilpousa]... [she] appears on the city’s coins,” and seems to agree with Pausanias’ aetiology of the wrath of Demeter Erinys, discussed below.⁵⁰⁹ Apollodorus reports

⁵⁰⁷ Two Linear B tablets from Knossos suggest early worship of Demeter Erinys. Alan H. Sommerstein writes,

The earliest known references to a deity named Erinys are on two Linear B tablets from Knossos, where the name appears in the dative singular (in the forms *e-ri-nu* and *e-ri-nu-we*) in lists of recipients of offerings; but the singular form of the name, the company it keeps [it is listed alongside “Enyalios, Paiawon (the later Apollo Paeon) and Poseidon”], and the very fact of offerings being made to an Erinys, strongly suggest that we have here an ancestor, not of the Erinyes of Homer, Hesiod and Aeschylus, but of the goddess later worshipped in Arcadia as Demeter Erinys, consort of Poseidon and mother of the marvelous horse Arion (Sommerstein 1989: 6).

Sommerstein’s assertion that the Erinys mentioned on the tablet is Demeter is convincing, especially since the tablets suggest that she was worshipped alongside her consort, here either Poseidon or Ares (Enyalios). The scholiast on Sophocles, *Antigone* 125-6 [πάταγος Ἄρεος, ἀντιπάλου | δυσχείρωμα δράκοντος] posits a conjugal connection between Ares (=Enyalios) and Erinys: δράκων ἐγγεγόνει ἐξ Ἄρεως καὶ Τιλωφώσεως Ἐρινύος (quoted in Pfeiffer 1949: 434). Similarly, Walter Burkert argues that “Erinys, in the singular, brings to mind the Demeter Erinys in Arcadia, the mother of the horse Areion, rather than the band of avenging furies” (Burkert 2013: 44).

⁵⁰⁸ Hornblower notes that Ennaia “is the ethnic of Enna in central Sicily [which Zeus gave “to Persephone as a wedding-present], and alludes to the abduction of Demeter’s daughter Persephone by Hades” (Hornblower 2015 ad 152–3). Herkynna is perhaps the name of one of Persephone’s companions at the time of her abduction, while Thouria refers to “Demeter’s frenzied (θοῦρος) grief for her daughter” (Hornblower 2015 ad 152–3). Hornblower believes that Xiphophoros connotes a martial or wrathful Demeter, perhaps referring to “the way the god was depicted in the relevant Boiotian sanctuary, wherever exactly this was” (Hornblower 2015 ad 152–3).

⁵⁰⁹ Hornblower 2015 ad 152-3. The scholiast on Lycophron directs the reader to Callimachus fr. 652 [τὴν μὲν ὃ γ’ ἐσπέρμηεν Ἐρινύϊ Τιλωφωσαίῃ] for the connection of Erinys with Thelpousa

that Demeter Erinys was the mother of the horse Arion by Poseidon, who was conceived when Poseidon raped Demeter in the form of an Erinys, but gives no explanation for Demeter's form or her wrath in this myth.⁵¹⁰ Pausanias gives the fullest explanations of Demeter Erinys and of Demeter Melaina in two distinct myths. In the first, Demeter is called Erinys because of her rage at her violation by Poseidon; in the second, she is not called Erinys, but her rage results in her donning black clothing. Both versions give crucial information about the wrathful Demeter's iconography: she carries a torch or torches, and wears black. In what follows, I will explore how Pausanias' accounts correspond with the wrath of Demeter in *h.Cer.*

In *h.Cer.*, the beginning of Demeter's mourning period following the loss of Persephone is marked by the donning of dark robes (42-4):

κυάνεον δὲ κάλυμμα κατ' ἀμφοτέρων βάλετ' ὤμων,
σεύατο δ' ὥστ' οἰωνός, ἐπὶ τραφερήν τε καὶ ὑγρὴν
μαιομένη·

She cast a dark cloak on her shoulders
And sped like a bird over dry land and sea,
searching.⁵¹¹

There is no question that Demeter's dark cloak indicates her mournful state. It also marks her transition from benevolent goddess to wrathful avenger of her daughter's rape: that is, her transition from Demeter to Demeter Melaina.⁵¹² In Pausanias' account of the cult of Demeter Melaina, he explicitly connects Demeter's wrath and her black robes:

(Hornblower 2015 ad 152-3). For commentary on Callimachus fr. 652, including information on the deity "Thelpousan Erinys," see Pfeiffer 1949.

⁵¹⁰ Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* 3.6.8: Ἄδραστος δὲ μόνον ἵππος διέσωσεν Ἀρείων· τοῦτον ἐκ Ποσειδῶνος ἐγγένησε Δημήτηρ εἰκασθεῖσα ἐρινύι κατὰ τὴν συνουσίαν ("Adrastus alone was saved by his horse Arion. That horse Poseidon begot on Demeter, when in the likeness of a Fury she consorted with him," trans. Frazer 1921).

⁵¹¹ Trans. Foley.

⁵¹² Both Foley and Richardson note in this passage a potential allusion to the cult of Demeter Melaina in Arcadia (Richardson 1974: 163 and Foley 1994: 37).

Scholars have interpreted Demeter's torches in a variety of ways. N.J. Richardson argues that they provide an aetiology of the torches used in the rites at Eleusis.⁵¹⁵ Helene Foley connects the torches with both the Eleusinian Mysteries and the marriage ceremony. She notes that torches were a central part of the nighttime activities at Eleusis, and "initiates imitated the experiences of Demeter in the rites at Eleusis, probably including a search (possibly exclusive to women) for Kore/Persephone by torchlight... Torches may have been tossed at the conclusion of the rites to celebrate Persephone's return."⁵¹⁶ Nanci DeBloois argues that Demeter's torches are paired with Hecate's torch, and that both serve dual purposes: they are "both nuptial and funereal."⁵¹⁷ She argues that Demeter's encounter with Hecate replicates the marriage procession, wherein the bride was welcomed into her new home by the mother of the groom, also holding torches.⁵¹⁸ Both Demeter's and Hecate's torches underscore the ambiguity of Persephone's rape. DeBloois notes that each of the characters in *h.Cer.* seems to perceive the rape differently: male figures

⁵¹⁵ Richardson 1974: 165–69. He writes that torches served a number of purposes in the Eleusinian Mysteries. First, they provided light during the pannychis; second, they had a purificatory function in the preliminary ceremony; and third, they could have been used in a reenactment of Demeter's search for Persephone. Richardson also discusses the torch as a manifestation of divinity (Richardson 1974: 26). On the Dadouchos, or torch-bearer, who was the second in command at Eleusis, see Richardson 1974: 168 and Mylonas 1961: 232.

⁵¹⁶ Foley 1994: 38.

⁵¹⁷ DeBloois 1997: 253.

⁵¹⁸ DeBloois writes, "In a traditional ancient Greek wedding, Demeter, as mother of the bride, would accompany the nuptial procession, torch in hand, from the home of the bride's father to that of the groom, where she would be met by the groom's mother, also torch in hand. In this case, Hecate takes the place of the groom's mother. But Demeter is not part of the nuptial procession... her wanderings with the torch present an ironic twist of her expected role..." (DeBloois 1997: 153–4). Mercedes Aguirre reads a similar irony in the scene between Demeter and Hecate, noting that torches are often used in a similar way in both weddings and funerals (Aguirre 2010: 137). In *h.Cer.* 48, Demeter carries one torch in each hand; James Redfield notes that this is typical of the bride's mother, who "follows the wedding procession with a torch in each hand" (Redfield 1982: 189).

view it as a legitimate marriage, while female characters like Demeter, Hecate, and even Persephone view it as a death.

Demeter's torches, like her dark clothing, mark her transition from benevolent to wrathful. In her incarnation as Demeter Erinys, she carries a torch and a chest, as Pausanias reports:

καλοῦσι δὲ Ἐρινὺν οἱ Θελοπούσιοι τὴν θεόν... τῇ θεᾷ δὲ Ἐρινὺς γέγονεν ἐπὶ κλησὶς· πλανωμένη γὰρ τῇ Δήμητρι, ἠνίκα τὴν παῖδα ἐζήτει, λέγουσιν ἔπεσθαι οἱ τὸν Ποσειδῶνα ἐπιθυμοῦντα αὐτῇ μιχθῆναι, καὶ τὴν μὲν ἐς ἵππον μεταβαλοῦσαν ὁμοῦ ταῖς ἵπποις νέμεσθαι ταῖς Ὀγκίου, Ποσειδῶν δὲ συνήσεν ἀπατώμενος καὶ συγγίνεται τῇ Δήμητρι ἄρσενι ἵππῳ καὶ αὐτὸς εἰκασθεὶς. τὸ μὲν δὴ παραυτίκα τὴν Δήμητρα ἐπὶ τῷ συμβάντι ἔχειν ὀργίλως... τὸ μὲν [ἀγάλμα] δὴ τῆς Ἐρινύος τὴν τε κίστην καλουμένην ἔχει καὶ ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ δᾶδα, μέγεθος δὲ εἰκάζομεν ἑννέα εἶναι ποδῶν αὐτήν.

The Thelpusians call the goddess Fury...the goddess has the surname Fury for the following reason. When Demeter was wandering in search of her lost daughter, she was followed, it is said, by Poseidon, who lusted after her. So she turned, the story runs, into a mare, and grazed with the mares of Oncius; realising that he was outwitted, Poseidon too changed into a stallion and enjoyed Demeter. At first, they say, Demeter was angry at what had happened... The image of Fury holds what is called the chest, and in her right hand a torch; her height I conjecture to be nine feet.⁵¹⁹

The iconography of Demeter Erinys as reported by Pausanias is similar to that of the Erinyes, who can also be portrayed holding torches, and who are also clad in black.⁵²⁰ Both the torch-bearing Demeter Erinys and the Erinyes represent fury, pursuit, and retribution.

⁵¹⁹ *Description of Greece* 8.25.4-7; trans. Jones. Pausanias reports that this union of Demeter and Poseidon produced two offspring, the horse Arion, and “a daughter, whose name they are not wont to divulge to the uninitiated” (θυγατέρα, ἧς τὸ ὄνομα ἐς ἀτελέστους λέγειν οὐ νομίζουσι, *Description of Greece* 8.25.7; trans. Jones). Wilamowitz-Moellendorff connects the name Ἀρείων with the verb ἐρινύειν, since he is the son of Erinys (Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1931: 391). For further discussion of Pausanias' accounts of Demeter Erinys/Demeter Melaina, see Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1931: 391-400.

⁵²⁰ See *Eum.* 1022-3, in which the Erinyes-Eumenides are escorted offstage by “the light of light-bringing torches” (πέμψω τε φέγγει λαμπάδων σελασφόρων | εἰς τοὺς ἔνερθε καὶ κάτω χθονὸς τόπους, *Eum.* 1022-3). Of course, this is a description of peaceful goddesses; nevertheless, it might suggest a visual connection between the onstage Erinyes-Eumenides and those of vase-

Pausanias also explicitly connects Persephone with Iphigeneia in his discussion of Megara, apparently the location of a shrine to Iphigeneia. According to Pausanias, the Megarians worshipped Iphigeneia as a heroine because she was sacrificed there; however, he also makes note of the tradition in which Iphigeneia was saved by Artemis.⁵²¹ Immediately following this account, Pausanias describes a rock located near Megara's *prytaneion* which the people call Anaclethis ("Recall").⁵²² As an aetiology of this name, Pausanias reports that Demeter stood upon the rock when she called out for the missing Persephone.⁵²³ He then returns to discussion of Agamemnon's family, noting that Agamemnon's son Hyperion was "the last king of Megara."⁵²⁴ The structure of these anecdotes suggests that Iphigeneia, and indeed the family of Agamemnon, was associated with Demeter and the story of Persephone's disappearance in the ancient imaginary.

Although the evidence for Demeter Erinys and Demeter Melaina is scant, what exists suggests that Demeter transitions from benevolent to wrathful following the rape of her daughter.

painting, who are often depicted carrying torches. Aguirre hypothesizes that this is both because the Erinyes are the daughters of Night (and so the torches represent their dark origins), and because their vengeance includes pursuit of their victims (Aguirre 2010: 135-7). She notes that torches seem to be associated with hunting and can be interpreted as menacing, since both Artemis and Lyssa are occasionally depicted as huntresses brandishing torches to frighten their prey (Aguirre 2010: 136 and 140). Aeschylus describes the Erinyes as μέλαιναι, "black" (52), which probably refers to their black robes, since this corresponds to a description of them in the *Choephoroi* as φαιοχίτωνες, "dark-robed" (1049), and later in the *Eumenides* as μελανείμονες, "black-robed" (370).

⁵²¹ *Description of Greece* 1.43.1. The Megarian tradition also holds that Agamemnon built a sanctuary to Artemis at Megara, whence Calchas apparently hailed.

⁵²² Trans. Jones.

⁵²³ *Description of Greece* 1.43.2: Ἀνακληθρίδα τὴν πέτραν ὀνομάζουσιν, ὡς Δημήτηρ, εἴ τῳ πιστά, ὅτε τὴν παῖδα ἐπλανᾶτο ζητοῦσα, καὶ ἐνταῦθα ἀνεκάλεσεν αὐτήν ("They name [the rock] Anaclethis [Recall], because Demeter (if the story be credible) here too called her daughter back when she was wandering in search of her," trans. Jones).

⁵²⁴ οὗτος γὰρ Μεγαρέων ἐβασίλευσεν ὕστατος, *Description of Greece* 1.43.3. He was apparently assassinated because of his "greed and violence" (διὰ πλεονεξίαν καὶ ὕβριν, 43.3). Megara subsequently became a democracy. Pausanias is the only source of this myth.

The separation of mother from daughter through a “marriage to death” and the threat posed by the mother’s rage will be a theme that Euripides treats in *IA*.

6.4. REFERENCES TO THE MYTH OF DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE IN *IA*

In this section, I will show that Euripides strategically deploys Eleusinian-Orphic motifs in *IA* in a way that casts Clytemnestra as Demeter and Iphigeneia as Persephone.⁵²⁵ I will look at instances in which Euripides connects Clytemnestra with Demeter and Iphigeneia with Persephone, or uses language reminiscent of the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* at key points in the play as a way of suggesting these parallels. The effect is to endow Clytemnestra with a divine wrath at the loss of her daughter. By connecting Clytemnestra with a divine mother who is rightfully angry at the loss of her daughter, Euripides “predicts” the events of the *Oresteia*, foreshadowing her destructive rage that threatens patriarchal society.

In order to make the argument that Clytemnestra is associated with Demeter Erinys in *IA*, I analyze three categories of passages: 1) those which allude to the rape of Persephone through description of offstage scenery reminiscent of the meadow in which Persephone was abducted; 2) those in which Clytemnestra is associated with Demeter; and 3) those in which Iphigeneia is associated with Persephone. These three categories all strongly imply Clytemnestra’s connection with Demeter, either through direct allusion or via Iphigeneia’s association with Persephone.⁵²⁶ I will begin by analyzing the first category of passage and move into analysis of the second two categories, since the latter two are often intertwined.

⁵²⁵ The characters of *IA* correspond fairly neatly to characters in *h.Cer.*: Agamemnon is likened to Zeus, Clytemnestra to Demeter, Iphigeneia to Persephone, and Odysseus (?) to Hades.

⁵²⁶ Jonah Radding argues that it is important to consider Iphigeneia’s assimilation to Persephone as evidence for Clytemnestra’s assimilation to Demeter; evidence for Iphigeneia’s similarity to Persephone lies in descriptions of Iphigeneia as well as in descriptions of the setting of the play (Radding 2015: 857).

The marriage and death of a maiden at marriageable age are often paired in both literary and visual sources.⁵²⁷ On the frequent pairing of such disparate rites as a wedding and a funeral,

Rush Rehm writes,

This pairing may reflect nothing more than a poetic attraction of opposites and the lure of the oxymoron. However, in some tragedies the juxtaposition proves so forceful that one ritual seems to engender the other. On occasion, weddings and funerals intermingle to such an extent that the two rites become inseparable. Characters conceive of their deaths in terms of a marriage to a loved one already dead, or as a union with Hades, where the god of the underworld takes the place of a living bride or groom.⁵²⁸

Helene Foley notes several key points in *IA* in which the similarities between sacrifice and marriage are exploited, including Iphigeneia's entrance wearing a wreath upon her head and her arrival in a chariot (905; 1477-9), Agamemnon's emphasis on familial separation (668-80), and his ambiguous replies to Clytemnestra's questions about the preparations for the ceremony (718-36). Additionally, Iphigeneia's sacrifice is framed as a perversion of the *proteleia*, or preliminary sacrifices before a marriage ceremony: her "marriage" and her sacrifice are one and the same.⁵²⁹ Foley suggests that the similarities between Iphigeneia as a bride and Iphigeneia as a sacrificial victim would have been apparent to the audience, and that Euripides purposefully exploits the ambiguities of each ceremony in order to increase the tension of the lead-up to Iphigeneia's death.

⁵²⁷ See Rehm 1994: 29 for an in-depth list of the "overlapping elements" in both weddings and funerals, including cutting the hair, ritual bathing, and nighttime processions indicating transition to a new phase of being.

⁵²⁸ Rehm 1994: 4.

⁵²⁹ Tragedy routinely depicts the sacrifice of maidens "to save family or city or nation in a situation of social crisis (usually war)," (Foley 1985: 65). It is worth noting that, in Euripidean tragedy, this sacrifice is voluntary: the maiden willingly agrees to die "as an act of piety in response to a supernatural command or pronouncement voiced by an oracle, prophet, or ghost" (Foley 1985: 65). In *IA*, Iphigeneia agrees to be sacrificed so that she may win honor through Greece's victory over the Trojans.

Iphigeneia’s sacrifice, framed as a marriage, connects her with Persephone, whose marriage results in her relegation to the Underworld. Euripides makes reference to this connection in a number of instances; my primary focus will be those in which Iphigeneia’s assimilation to Persephone casts Clytemnestra as a Demeter-figure. I will argue that by framing Iphigeneia as a Persephone-figure, Euripides invites the association of Clytemnestra with the wrathful incarnation of Demeter, as opposed to her benign identity.

6.4.1. *Eleusinian-Orphic Framing of IA*

The setting of *IA* is reminiscent of the meadow in which Persephone was abducted. Euripides alludes to this setting at several key points in the play, ostensibly in order to call to mind the mythical trope of the rape of a maiden playing in a pastoral space. The chorus of women from Chalcis enters singing about their awe at seeing the Greek fleet. Their route runs through the grove of Artemis:

πολύθυτον δὲ δι’ ἄλσος Ἄρ-	
τέμιδος ἤλυθον ὀρομένα,	185
φοινίσσουσα παρῆδ’ ἐμὰν	
αἰσχύναι νεοθαλεῖ,	
ἀσπίδος ἔρυμα καὶ κλισίας	
ὄπλοφόρους Δαναῶν θέλους’	190
ἵππων τ’ ὄχλον ιδέσθαι.	

I ran through the grove of Artemis
 where many sacrifices are held,
 blushing like a girl,
 because I’m embarrassed
 by how much I want to see the shields,
 the tents full of armor,
 the throng of horses.⁵³⁰

Though the precise age of these women is unclear, Andreas Markantonatos argues that they “serve as mirror images of Iphigenia, a young virgin unsuspecting of horrible worldly

⁵³⁰ Trans. Gamel.

realities.”⁵³¹ The pastoral setting, the emphasis on the chorus members’ blush, and the playful movement of the chorus of young women call to mind Persephone’s account of her rape in *h.Cer.*, in which Persephone and the “chorus” of her companions are seen playing and plucking flowers in the meadow immediately preceding her rape.⁵³² Claude Calame has argued that the setting of Persephone’s rape, and especially the chorus of nymphs playing with her (named in *h.Cer.* 405-33), is strongly suggestive of “adolescent choruses dedicated to Artemis.”⁵³³ Calame believes that the chorus of Oceanids present for Persephone’s rape was performing, or preparing to perform, a ritual in honor of Artemis. Similarly, the chorus of *IA*, seemingly composed of women near Iphigeneia’s age, conducts its first choral activities of the play in the grove of Artemis. Markantonatos notes the heavy irony in the fact that the chorus’ path runs through the grove of Artemis, who has, unbeknownst to them, recently demanded the sacrifice of their peer.⁵³⁴ The fact that Artemis is the cause of the “marriage to death” of a maiden, either indirectly as in the case of Persephone, or directly as with Iphigeneia, connects the respective settings of the rape of Persephone and *IA*. Markantonatos also points out that “the scene with the Messenger bringing news of the arrival of Clytemnestra and Iphigenia [*IA* 414-39] keeps in the

⁵³¹ Markantonatos 2016: 231. Whereas Markantonatos believes that the chorus is made up of virgins on the threshold of marriage, Gamel believes them to be newly married—i.e., slightly older than Iphigeneia, and no longer virgins (Gamel 1999: 318, 456).

⁵³² *h.Cer.* 414-33, esp. 417-30. In line 425, Persephone says that she was “playing and picking lovely flowers” with her companions (παίζομεν ἡδ’ ἄνθεα δρέπομεν).

⁵³³ Calame 1997: 92. For information on the participation of Athena and Artemis in this chorus, see Richardson 1974: 290-1. He notes that “this line [*h.Cer.* 424] has been suspected by various critics, on the grounds that Athena and Artemis do not belong to the original version [*h.Cer.* 5], which mentions only the Oceanids” (Richardson 1974: 290). However, Richardson concedes that “it is possible that the presence of Athena and Artemis was already a traditional feature before the *Homeric Hymn*,” and seems to have been part of the Orphic version of the myth (Richardson 1974: 290). Although *h.Cer.* “is concerned to remove all divine or human witnesses to the Rape, except Hecate and Helios,” Richardson argues that this may be an allusion to Orphic tradition (Richardson 1974: 291).

⁵³⁴ Markantonatos 2016: 231-2.

foreground the notion of the tranquil grassy field enclosing the Achaean campsite.”⁵³⁵

Iphigeneia’s arrival at Aulis thus calls to mind the setting of Persephone’s rape.

Radding argues that an additional instance in which Iphigeneia is aligned with Persephone through pastoral imagery is in her monody at 1294-8. He concedes that the monody seems “only vaguely reminiscent of the *Hymn*... and Iphigeneia’s monody—a song about Ida nurturing Paris and, as a result, her own death—seems unrelated [to *h.Cer.*],” but finds Iphigeneia’s description of the pastoral setting to be suggestive of the meadow in which Persephone was abducted.⁵³⁶ Iphigeneia performs a miniature catalogue of flowers, naming the plants that grow in the meadow on Mount Ida:

ἀμφὶ τὸ λευκὸν ὕδωρ, ὅθι κρήναι	
Νυμφῶν κεῖνται	1295
λειμών τ’ ἔρνεσι θάλλων	
χλωροῖς καὶ ῥοδόεντ’	
ἄνθε’ ὑακίνθινά τε θεαῖς δρέπειν...	

By the shining water
where lie the springs of the Nymphs,
the meadow blossoming with tender green shoots,
with flowers of hyacinth and roses
for goddesses to cull.⁵³⁷

Radding argues that Iphigeneia’s flower catalogue constitutes a “reclamation” of “a number of words [from *h.Cer.*] in her monody.”⁵³⁸ Crucially, he notes that “the only prior reference to

⁵³⁵ Markantonatos 2016: 232. *IA* 420-4: ἀλλ’ ὡς μακρὰν ἔτεινον, εὔρυτον παρὰ | κρήνην ἀναψύχουσι θηλύπουν βάσιν, | αὐταῖ τε πᾶλοί τ’· ἐς δὲ λειμώνων χλόην | καθεῖμεν αὐτάς, ὡς βορᾶς γευσαίατο (“They’ve made a long journey, so they’re refreshing | themselves beside a bubbling spring, cooling the women’s feet. | The mares too—we turned them loose | in a grassy meadow, so they could graze,” trans. Gamel). In her note on this passage, Gamel points out that “myth and literary tradition associated girls in meadows with rape and death,” and connects the setting of *IA* with the meadow in *h.Cer.*

⁵³⁶ Radding argues that the description of the springs of the nymphs is an intertextual image that references both the *Cypria* and *h.Cer.*

⁵³⁷ Trans. Gamel.

⁵³⁸ Radding 2015: 857.

Her coming uninvited, on top of the problems
 I have already, has destroyed me! And yet...
 It's understandable that she'd come along,
 To see her daughter married, to give her all the sweetest
 things...
 And so she'll find me out as the criminal I am.
 And then the poor girl... Girl?
 Soon she'll be a bride—of Death, that is!
 How I pity her!⁵⁴²

Agamemnon's distress at losing his daughter is twofold. First, he laments Iphigeneia's loss of virginity that will occur through this "marriage to death;" this is emphasized through the repetition of *παρθένον* in line 460 and the nuptial context of the passage. Second, Agamemnon reframes the false marriage to Achilles, mentioned in 457-8, as a real marriage to Hades: Iphigeneia *will* be married, but her husband will not be Achilles. The pairing of Iphigeneia's "marriage to death" with the pretext of the marriage to Achilles calls to mind the trick of the flowers in the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*, which distract Persephone until Hades comes to abduct her. Both the flowers in *h.Cer.* and the pretext of the marriage to Achilles are tricks engineered by the girl's father to keep her "marriage to death" secret from both the girl and her mother. Gaia creates the flowers in *h.Cer.* specifically at Zeus' behest to trick Persephone in lines 8-9: *φῦσε δόλον καλυκώπιδι κούρη | Γαῖα Διὸς βουλῆσι χαριζομένη Πολυδέκτη* ("Earth grew [them] as a snare for the flower-faced maiden in order to gratify by Zeus's design the Host-to-Many").⁵⁴³ Similarly, Agamemnon's insistence throughout the play that the sacrifice be carried out without Clytemnestra's knowledge is reminiscent of Helios' account of the rape of

⁵⁴² Trans. Gamel.

⁵⁴³ Trans. Foley.

Persephone at *h.Cer.* 75-87.⁵⁴⁴ In this passage, Helios confirms that Zeus betrothed Persephone to Hades without informing Demeter:

...οὐδέ τις ἄλλος
αἴτιος ἀθανάτων, εἰ μὴ νεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς,
ὅς μιν ἔδωκ' Αἴδη θαλερὴν κεκληῖσθαι ἄκοιτιν
αὐτοκασιγνήτω· ὃ δ' ὑπὸ ζόφον ἠερόεντα
ἀρπάζας ἵπποισιν ἄγεν μέγала ἰάχουσαν. 80

... No other
of the gods was to blame but cloud-gathering Zeus,
who gave her to Hades his brother to be called
his fertile wife. With his horses Hades
snatched her screaming into the misty gloom.⁵⁴⁵

DeBlois notes that Zeus' arrangement of a marriage for Persephone is well within his purview as her father; however, his failure to allow Demeter to perform her role in the marriage causes her to become wrathful. We see the beginnings of the same kind of wrath in Clytemnestra's lament that Agamemnon "hands you over to Hades, and runs away" (φεύγει σε πατὴρ Ἄϊδη

⁵⁴⁴ Agamemnon alludes to Iphigeneia's "marriage to death" and the need for keeping Clytemnestra unaware of this in *IA* 540:

ἔν μοι φύλαξον, Μενέλεως, ἀνὰ στρατὸν
ἐλθὼν, ὅπως ἂν μὴ Κλυταιμῆστρα τάδε
μάθῃ, πρὶν Ἄϊδη παῖδ' ἐμὴν προσθῶ λαβῶν,
ὡς ἐπ' ἐλαχίστοις δακρύοις πράσσω κακῶς. 540

Do one thing for me, Menelaos: as you go among the troops
make sure Klytemnestra doesn't learn of this
till I get hold of my child and send her to Hades,
so I can carry out this ugly deed with as few tears as possible (trans. Gamel).

Markantonatos notes that Agamemnon's language is suggestive of the marriage ritual: "the use of the verb *προστίθημι*, a familiar term denoting the consigning of women to their future husband, deepens the hint of mystical irony, thereby making our vision of the staged events deliberately fraught with Eleusinian-Orphic connotations and correspondences" (Markantonatos 2016: 233).⁵⁴⁴ Agamemnon's language thus suggests a "marriage to death" that aligns Iphigeneia with Persephone.

⁵⁴⁵ Trans. Foley.

παραδούς).⁵⁴⁶ This mirrors the statement in *h.Cer.* that “Aidoneus seized [her]; Zeus, heavy-thundering and mighty-voiced, gave her” (ἦν Αἰδωνεύς | ἦρπαξεν, δῶκεν δὲ βαρύκτυπος εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς, *h.Cer.* 2-3). The idea that the maiden’s father secretly hands his daughter over to Hades and then absents himself from the fallout caused by her “marriage” is a plot device common to both *h.Cer.* and *IA*. By making this association, Euripides invites us to align Agamemnon with Zeus, Clytemnestra with Demeter, and Iphigeneia with Persephone.

Clytemnestra’s insistence that she fulfill the traditional functions of the mother of the bride further aligns her with Demeter. Her preoccupation with correctly performing her role in the marriage ceremony is evident in the first lines she speaks, and grows more obvious as she discusses the marriage with Agamemnon. Clytemnestra opens by referring to herself as Iphigeneia’s νυμφαγωγός, “conductor of the bride,” and Gamel notes that “the procession that brings Iphigeneia to Aulis resembles that which conducted a bride to her bridegroom’s house”.⁵⁴⁷

ἐλπίδα δ’ ἔχω τιν’ ὡς ἐπ’ ἐσθλοῖσιν γάμοις
πάρειμι νυμφαγωγός...

610

I too have some hope that I’m coming here
conducting a bride to a good marriage...⁵⁴⁸

Clytemnestra’s insistence on properly performing the marriage ceremony calls to mind Demeter’s search for Persephone: Demeter performs her role as the νυμφαγωγός who leads her daughter to the groom’s house through her search for her lost daughter.⁵⁴⁹ The connection between Clytemnestra and Demeter and their respective focus on performing their motherly duties grows more apparent as Clytemnestra questions Agamemnon about the logistics of the

⁵⁴⁶ Trans. Gamel.

⁵⁴⁷ Gamel 1999: 464.

⁵⁴⁸ Trans. Gamel.

⁵⁴⁹ ἐννήμαρ μὲν ἔπειτα κατὰ χθόνα πότνια Δηῶ | στρωφᾶτ’ αἰθομένας δαΐδας μετὰ χερσὶν ἔχουσα, *h.Cer.* 47-8.

wedding, insisting upon a proper ceremony despite the rushed circumstances of the marriage (*IA* 691-741), just as Demeter persists in performing a perverse marriage procession in her search for Persephone (*h.Cer.* 40-50).

The absence of the mother from the marriage ritual constitutes a disavowal of the mother's role in raising the child to maturity. In *h.Cer.*, Demeter, deprived of her role as torch-bearer in the marriage ceremony, uses what were supposed to be nuptial torches to light her way as she searches for her lost daughter. Clytemnestra's fixation on filling the traditional role of mother of the bride mirrors Demeter's own insistence on correctly completing the marriage ritual, even in her daughter's absence. As we saw above in the description of the iconography of Demeter Erinys/Melaina, Demeter's transition from benevolent to vengeful is marked by the donning of black clothing, and the carrying of torches as she goes in search of her lost daughter. The fact that the torch-bearing Demeter is met by Hecate, also carrying a torch, strengthens the nuptial undertones of this scene. In a typical wedding ritual, the bride's mother led the nuptial procession, torches in hand, from the bride's natal home to the groom's, where the mother of the groom, also holding torches, met the procession.⁵⁵⁰ James Redfield notes that the exclusion of a mother from her child's wedding ceremony could result in her entering a period of mourning similar to that endured by mothers whose children had died.⁵⁵¹ By taking up torches to seek her

⁵⁵⁰ Redfield 1982: 189.

⁵⁵¹ See Redfield 1982: 189 and Euripides, *Phoenissae* 337-49 on the consequences of a mother's exclusion from her child's wedding ceremony. Redfield suggests that it is crucial for a mother to participate in the ceremony, especially if her child is a daughter, because this participation eases the transition for both mother and daughter. He notes that the marriage rite, wherein a daughter transforms from *parthenos* to *gynē*, has already been undergone by her mother: it is necessary, therefore, for the mother to take part in the ceremony as a guide for her daughter (Redfield 1982: 187-8). Moreover, Redfield suggests that because of this, the separation of a daughter from her natal family is less "absolute" for her mother than for her father: once a father has given away his daughter, his duty to her is often done, while a mother's relationship with her married daughter may continue as she guides her daughter into life as a *gynē* (187-8). Thus, for Agamemnon to

lost daughter, Demeter both fulfills her expected role in Persephone's wedding and embodies the mourning of a mother denied her role in her child's nuptial ritual.

Clytemnestra, too, displays a great deal of resistance when confronted with her exclusion from Iphigeneia's wedding. She continues to speak of her role in the impending wedding ceremony throughout her interrogation of Agamemnon about her new son-in-law. Clytemnestra grants some circumstantial concessions about the role of women in the performance of Iphigeneia's wedding ceremony (since the wedding will take place in the army camp), but resists when Agamemnon suggests that he will perform Clytemnestra's role so that she may return to Argos. In lines 731-37, they argue about Clytemnestra's presence at the wedding, with Agamemnon denying her right to perform the traditional role of mother of the bride. In this scene, Clytemnestra's concern about the correct performance of the marriage ritual is most evident in her insistence that she be present to carry the nuptial torch for her daughter:

Αγ. χάρει πρὸς Ἄργος παρθένους τε τημέλει.
 Κλ. λιποῦσα παῖδα; τίς δ' ἀνασχίσει φλόγα;
 Αγ. ἐγὼ παρέξω φῶς ὃ νυμφίοις πρέπει.
 Κλ. οὐχ ὁ νόμος οὗτος οὐδὲ φαῦλ' ἡγητέα. 735
 Αγ. οὐ καλὸν ἐν ὄχλῳ σ' ἐξομιλεῖσθαι στρατοῦ.
 Κλ. καλὸν τεκοῦσαν τὰμά μ' ἐκδοῦναι τέκνα.

Ag. Go back to Argos and take care of your daughters.
 Cl. Leaving the child? Who will hold the wedding torch?
 Ag. I will provide the light which is appropriate for the couple.
 Cl. That's not our custom! Do you think these things are so unimportant?
 Ag. It's not appropriate for you to be mixed up with a crowd of soldiers.
 Cl. It's appropriate for me to give away my children. I bore them.⁵⁵²

For Agamemnon to deny Clytemnestra the right of bearing the torch at Iphigeneia's wedding is an affront to her labor of child-rearing and a denial of her privilege as mother; further, as we saw

sacrifice Iphigeneia denies Clytemnestra the continuation of her mother-daughter relationship as Iphigeneia transitions from *parthenos* to *gynē*.

⁵⁵² Trans. Gamel.

earlier, a mother's exclusion from her child's wedding ceremony could result in her entering a mourning period as if the child were dead. Rehm writes that Clytemnestra's anger at the possibility of being deprived of her role is echoed in similar concerns expressed by numerous Euripidean wives and mothers.⁵⁵³ He notes that Euripidean women reference the nuptial torch as a way of discussing their duties to their children, and that the absence of the mother from the wedding ceremony suggests that the ritual is not conducted properly or that there is something "wrong" with the marriage.⁵⁵⁴

Language associated with both rape and marriage is used to describe both Persephone's and Iphigeneia's "marriage to death." In *h.Cer.*, this language appears in lines 19-20 to emphasize the ambiguity of Persephone's marriage:

ἀρπάξας δ' ἀέκουσαν ἐπὶ χρυσεόισιν ὄχοισιν
ἦγ' ὀλοφυρομένην· ἰάχησε δ' ἄρ' ὄρθια φωνῆ... 20

He snatched the unwilling maid into his golden chariot
and led her off lamenting. She screamed with a shrill voice...⁵⁵⁵

In line 19, we see that Hades takes Persephone without her consent (ἀρπάξας δ' ἀέκουσαν), which underscores the fact that the arrangement of her marriage was done in secret. However, in line 20 we see that Hades leads her away in a way that suggests a lawful marriage ceremony. DeBlois notes that "forms of the verb ἄγω, usually with νύμφην (nymph or bride), are commonly used in Homer and Hesiod for marriage... this 'leading' of the bride is well-attested in the vase paintings of Greek weddings, which clearly show the groom grasping his new bride

⁵⁵³ Rehm 1994: 102. He cites as examples Medea in *Medea*, Jocasta in *Phoenissae*, Clytemnestra in *IA*, Alcestis in *Alcestis*, and Creusa in *Ion*.

⁵⁵⁴ For example, the bride is being "married to death," as in the case of Iphigeneia, or the "marriage" is actually a rape, as in the case of Creusa.

⁵⁵⁵ Trans. Foley.

by the wrist.”⁵⁵⁶ DeBloois argues that Hades’ golden chariot is also reminiscent of the marriage ceremony, in which the groom transports the bride from her home in a cart or chariot.⁵⁵⁷ The ambiguity of Persephone’s rape is emphasized in *h.Cer.* 19-20 through the close succession of terms which denote abduction and terms which denote marriage.

This collapsing of the division between rape and marriage occurs once again at line 81, in which Helios describes the rape of Persephone:

ὁ δ’ ὑπὸ ζόφον ἠερόεντα
ἀρπάξας ἵπποισιν ἄγεν μεγάλα ἰάχουσαν. 80

With his horses Hades
led her into the misty gloom, having snatched her away as she screamed.⁵⁵⁸

The line between rape and marriage is blurred once more with the juxtaposition of rape (ἀρπάξας) and Persephone’s resistance (encoded in μεγάλα ἰάχουσαν) with the groom’s role in the marriage ceremony (ἄγεν). In his account of Persephone’s disappearance, Helios also presents Hades as a rightful groom rather than an abductor: he recounts the agreement between Zeus and Hades which betrothed Persephone to Hades, and refers to Hades as a γαμβρός (84), “bridegroom; son-in-law.” DeBloois notes that, for Helios, Persephone’s abduction is unambiguously a lawful marriage, and that he “apparently considers as unimportant the violence, Persephone’s unwillingness, and the fact that the marriage amounts to death.”⁵⁵⁹ His presentation of Hades as a γαμβρός, a term reserved for male marriage-relations or bridegrooms, emphasizes that he conceives of the abduction as a legitimate marriage.⁵⁶⁰

⁵⁵⁶ DeBloois 1997: 250. At *h.Cer.* lines 20, 30, and 81, Hades is described as “leading” Persephone away as his new bride.

⁵⁵⁷ DeBloois 1997: 250.

⁵⁵⁸ Trans. after Foley.

⁵⁵⁹ DeBloois 1997: 257.

⁵⁶⁰ Liddell and Scott 1996 s.v. γαμβρός.

In *IA*, the conflation of murder and marriage comes to a head in Clytemnestra's conversation with Achilles at 1345-71. Achilles reports the intention of the army, headed by Odysseus, to sacrifice Iphigeneia despite Achilles' vow to protect her from this fate. Odysseus is an invisible threat throughout the play: he is one of four characters who know Agamemnon's true purpose in summoning Iphigeneia, and the threat that he will reveal the oracle to the army and force Agamemnon's hand lurks in the background of the play's action from the beginning.⁵⁶¹ In Clytemnestra's conversation with Achilles at 1345-71, he tells her that Odysseus will come to retrieve Iphigeneia for sacrifice, taking her by force if necessary:

	Κλ. ἤξει δ' ὅστις ἄψεται κόρης;
Ἀχ. μυρίοι γ', ἄξει δ' Ὀδυσσεύς.	Κλ. ἄρ' ὁ Σισύφου γόνος;
Ἀχ. αὐτὸς οὗτος.	Κλ. ἴδια πράσσω, ἢ στρατοῦ ταχθεὶς ὑπο;
Ἀχ. αἰρεθεὶς ἐκῶν.	Κλ. πονηράν γ' αἶρεσιν, μαιφονεῖν.
Ἀχ. ἀλλ' ἐγὼ σχήσω νιν.	Κλ. ἄξει δ' οὐχ ἐκοῦσαν ἀρπάσας; 1365
Ἀχ. δηλαδὴ ξανθῆς ἐθείρας.	
	Cl. Will someone come to take my daughter?
Ach. Thousands. Odysseus will lead them.	Cl. The offspring of Sisyphos!
Ach. That very one.	Cl. On his own initiative? Or commanded by the army?
Ach. Chosen, but willing!	Cl. A wicked choice, to commit murder!
Ach. But I'll hold him back!	Cl. Won't he seize her and drag her off against her will?
Ach. Yes, by her golden hair! ⁵⁶²	

The language used here echoes that used to describe the rape of Persephone in *h.Cer.* In particular, Clytemnestra's words in line 1365 correspond chiastically to *h.Cer.* 19-20: ἀρπάξας-

⁵⁶¹ Siegel 1981: 259-61.

⁵⁶² Trans. Gamel.

ἀέκουσαν-ἤγ’ (*h. Cer.* 19-20)—ἄξει-οὐχ ἐκοῦσαν-ἀρπάσας (*IA* 1365). Achilles answers Clytemnestra’s question about whether or not Iphigeneia’s consent is required for the sacrifice with the phrase δηλαδὴ ξανθῆς ἐθείρας, “by her golden hair,” indicating that Odysseus will drag the girl by her hair if he encounters resistance. By using language strongly associated with the rape of Persephone to describe Odysseus, Euripides invites us to see Odysseus as a double for Hades.

Iphigeneia, seemingly aware of the similarities between herself and Persephone, explicitly instructs Clytemnestra *not* to model herself on Demeter.⁵⁶³ Iphigeneia exhorts Clytemnestra not to mourn like Demeter; this suggests her awareness that Clytemnestra could imitate Demeter’s wrath. Iphigeneia begins by discouraging Clytemnestra from conducting the traditional mourning ritual for her by donning black robes and cutting her hair (1437-8):

μήτ’ οὖν γε τὸν σὸν πλόκαμον ἐκτέμης τριχός,
μήτ’ ἀμφὶ σῶμα μέλανας ἀπίσχη πέπλους.

Don’t cut off a lock of your hair.
Don’t wrap black garments around your body.⁵⁶⁴

Reading this scene in the context of the alignment of Clytemnestra with Demeter as discussed above suggests a further parallel with the goddess. Iphigeneia urges Clytemnestra not to mourn her death by donning black (μέλανας) *peploi*; later, in line 1454, she asks her mother not to “hate” Agamemnon (πατέρα τὸν ἀμὸν μὴ στύγει, πόσιν γε σόν). In Iphigeneia’s final scene, then, it seems that she is aware of the possibility that Clytemnestra might model herself upon Demeter Erinys, donning black robes and expressing her devastating rage at her husband’s actions. Although she dissuades her mother from becoming wrathful, Iphigeneia’s prediction is

⁵⁶³ *IA* 1433 and following.

⁵⁶⁴ Trans. Gamel.

exactly correct, at least in the *Oresteia*'s version of events: Clytemnestra cites the sacrifice of Iphigeneia at *Agamemnon* 1415-18 as one of the principal reasons for the murder of her husband.⁵⁶⁵ Despite Iphigeneia's protestations, Clytemnestra *will* model herself upon Demeter Erinys, expressing her wrath at the premature death of her daughter by killing her husband. The separation of mother and daughter, brought about by the father's trickery, causes devastation for the world in *h.Cer.* and disaster for Agamemnon's household in the *Oresteia*.

As I have shown in this chapter, Euripides assimilates Clytemnestra to Demeter Erinys throughout *IA* in order to presage her vengeful actions in the *Oresteia*. Euripides mobilizes the structural similarities between the abduction of Persephone and the death of Iphigeneia to characterize Clytemnestra as a mother who becomes vengeful after her daughter's "marriage to death." Further, the father's trickery which results in his daughter's death causes the mother to react in a way that threatens patriarchal society. For Demeter, this results in a blight of crops which ends when Persephone returns to her. For Clytemnestra, this results in her liaison with Aegisthus, the murder of Agamemnon and Cassandra, and the ensuing risk to Orestes, which threatens Agamemnon's patriarchal line. Euripides' presentation of Clytemnestra in *Iphigeneia at Aulis* predicts her transformation from good wife into wrathful avenger. It is crucial, then, that we see Clytemnestra as a dutiful wife and mother in *IA*, who is adamant that she correctly perform the social functions of mother of the bride. Similarly, Demeter is presented in *h.Cer.* as a mother who expects that she should fulfill her role as mother of the bride, despite Persephone's abduction. Her wrathful vengeance is incited by the denial of her role in Persephone's marriage

⁵⁶⁵ As I have shown in Chapter 3, we also see treatment of the revenge motive (i.e. that Clytemnestra kills Agamemnon as revenge for the sacrifice of Iphigeneia) in Stesichorus, Simonides, and Pindar.

ceremony. Similarly, Clytemnestra's wrath is a direct consequence of her exclusion from the betrothal and marriage of Iphigeneia. We observe her beginning to transform into an avenger of Iphigeneia's death through her assimilation to Demeter, who likewise transforms into her wrathful iteration of Erinys or Melaina. By presenting Clytemnestra as a dutiful wife and mother in *IA*, and by assimilating her to Demeter who transforms into Erinys or Melaina, Euripides predicts her transformation into a wrathful avenger. While this does not exculpate Clytemnestra, it does characterize her post-Aulis actions as an expected consequence of Agamemnon's trickery and the untimely death of Iphigeneia. Moreover, by aligning Clytemnestra with a divine force whose rage is detrimental to humanity, Euripides shows that her wrath should not be taken lightly: though Clytemnestra is mortal, her assimilation to Demeter in *IA* implies that her rage cannot be ignored without disastrous consequences to the fabric of male society. Despite Clytemnestra's mortality, aligning her with the wrathful Demeter hints at the dangerous, destructive nature of her rage.

CONCLUSION: CLYTEMNESTRA'S ENDURING APPEAL

Clytemnestra is both terrifying and captivating; as we have seen, she fascinates ancient authors and artists across time and genre. The blending of the revenge motive with the lust motive in the sources that we have examined has illuminated ancient male fears about uncontrolled women: without proper male supervision, any woman might become a Clytemnestra. Moreover, as much as Clytemnestra reflects these fears, she also titillates and entertains with her brazenness, making her an enticing subject for authors to treat again and again.⁵⁶⁶ Part of Clytemnestra's enduring appeal lies in the fact that her sexuality and her viciousness are inextricable from one another; this sexualized dangerousness makes her particularly compelling, as we can see from the numerous revisions of her character in archaic and classical Greece.

While the intrigue of Clytemnestra can provide one explanation for the Oresteia myth's persistent popularity, we must also recognize the viability of the myth as a tool for confirming the validity of the patriarchy and for exploring the role of women within a patriarchal society. The myth must always end with the vanquishing of the monstrous mother and the reestablishment of the order of patriarchal society—a happy ending for everyone except Clytemnestra, who in *Eumenides* is reduced to a literal shade of her former self. Orestes' defeat of his mother represents the idea that male society will always prevail, no matter how powerful its female opponents (and no matter how milquetoast, or even morally reprehensible, its male champions). However, as we have seen, ancient authors adapt, innovate, and question the myth and its meaning time and again, and in every iteration of the myth we see ancient authors

⁵⁶⁶ The human propensity for morbid fascination with destructive women, especially sexually alluring ones, is evident from both ancient and modern sources. Moreover, a quick online search for “female murderers,” where such articles as “Hottest Women ever Accused of Murder” and “10 Beautiful but Shockingly Brutal Female Killers” are among the top results, reveals that interest in women who kill is heavily correlated with their performance of sexuality.

grappling with the social contract between men and women. While Clytemnestra is never an *exemplum* for wifely conduct, authors often frame her as responding to Agamemnon's abuse of his role as husband and *paterfamilias*. He repeatedly disrespects Clytemnestra and disregards her status as legitimate wife and mother, and it is only reasonable for her to act to protect herself and her children. Thus, the myth, while reaffirming the validity of the patriarchy, also reminds husbands not to act like Agamemnons, lest their wives become Clytemnestras.

As I have shown in the preceding chapters, Clytemnestra reflects ancient male anxieties about women. Her cultural relevance endures across time and genre: as we have seen, authors and artists manipulate her character as a means of discussing the danger of the female. But as we have also seen, the degree of sympathy with which she is portrayed varies widely, which shows that ancient authors were interested in exploring the nuances of the Oresteia myth, particularly the morality of vengeance. The persistent question of Clytemnestra's motives has allowed her character to be visited and revisited in numerous cultural contexts and with a variety of purposes, each time revealing new insights into ancient views on women.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aguirre, Mercedes. 2010. "Erinyes as Creatures of Darkness." In *Light and Darkness in Ancient Greek Myth and Religion*. Lanham: Lexington Books.
- Anderson, Graham. 1977. "Lucian and the Authorship of *De Saltatione*." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 18 (3): 275–86.
- Arnott, W. Geoffrey. 1981. "Double the Vision: A Reading of Euripides' *Electra*." *Greece & Rome* 28 (2): 179–92.
- Arrowsmith, William. 1959. "The Criticism of Greek Tragedy." *The Tulane Drama Review* 3 (3): 31–57.
- Bakola, Emmanuela. 2018. "Seeing the Invisible: Interior Spaces and Uncanny Erinyes in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*." In *Gaze, Vision, and Visuality in Ancient Greek Literature*, 163–86. Berlin: De Gruyter, Inc.
- Barber, Elizabeth Wayland. 1995. *Women's Work: The First 20,000 Years*. London: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Beazley, J.D. 1963. *Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters*. 2nd ed. 3 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Beekes, Robert. 2009. *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill.
- Berger, John. 1972. *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin Books.
- Bergren, Ann. 1989. "The Homeric *Hymn to Aphrodite*: Translation and Rhetoric, Praise and Blame." *Classical Antiquity* 8 (1): 1–41.
- . 2008. *Weaving Truth: Essays on Language and the Female in Greek Thought*. Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies.
- Blondell, Ruby. 1999. "Medea." In *Women on the Edge: Four Plays by Euripides*, edited by Ruby Blondell, Mary-Kay Gamel, Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz, and Bella Zweig. New York: Routledge.
- . 2009. "'Third Cheerleader from the Left': From Homer's Helen to Helen of Troy." *Classical Receptions Journal* 1 (1): 4–22. <https://doi.org/10.1093/crj/clp003>.
- . 2013. *Helen of Troy: Beauty, Myth, Devastation*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Blundell, Mary Whitlock [Ruby Blondell]. 1989. *Helping Friends and Harming Enemies: A Study in Sophocles and Greek Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Blundell, Sue. 1995. *Women in Ancient Greece*. London: British Museum Press.
- Bowra, C.M. 1936. "Pindar, *Pythian XI*." *The Classical Quarterly* 30 (3/4): 129–41.
- Bremer, Jan M. 1975. "The Meadow of Love and Two Passages in Euripides' *Hippolytus*." *Mnemosyne* 28 (Fasc. 3): 268–280.
- Burkert, Walter. 2013. *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical*. Translated by John Raffan. Hoboken, UNITED KINGDOM: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/washington/detail.action?docID=1365057>.
- Cairns, Douglas L. 1993. *Aidōs*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Calame, Claude. 1992. *The Poetics of Eros in Ancient Greece*. Translated by Janet Lloyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- . 1997. *Choruses of Young Women in Ancient Greece: Their Morphology, Religious Role, and Social Function*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Campbell, David A., ed. 1991. *Greek Lyric III: Stesichorus, Ibycus, Simonides, and Others*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

- Carey, Chris. 2015. "Stesichorus and the Epic Cycle." In *Stesichorus in Context*, edited by P.J. Finglass and Adrian Kelly, 45–62. Cambridge.
- Carruesco, J. 2017. "The Invention of Stesichorus: Hesiod, Helen, and the Muse." In *Authorship and Greek Song: Authority, Authenticity, and Performance*, edited by Egbert J. Bakker. Vol. 3. Leiden: Brill.
- Chantraine, Pierre. 2009. *Dictionnaire Étymologique de La Langue Grecque: Histoire Des Mots*. Paris: Klincksieck.
- Clark, W. P. 1940. "Iliad IX. 336 and the Meaning of ἄλοχος in Homer." *Classical Philology* 35 (2): 188–190.
- Clarke, Michael. 1999. *Flesh and Spirit in the Songs of Homer*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Clay, Jenny Strauss. 1993. "The Generation of Monsters in Hesiod." *Classical Philology* 88 (2): 105–16. <https://doi.org/10.2307/269890>.
- Coccagna, Helene A. 2014. "Manipulating *Mastoi*: The Female Breast in the Symptotic Setting." In *Approaching the Ancient Artifact: Representation, Narrative, and Function*, edited by Amalia Avramidou and Denise Demetriou, 399–412. Berlin: De Gruyter, Inc.
- Combella, Frederick M. 1982. "Two Blameless Homeric Characters." *The American Journal of Philology* 103 (4): 361–72. <https://doi.org/10.2307/294517>.
- Cropp, M.J., ed. 2013. *Euripides: Electra*. Oxford: Aris & Phillips Classical Texts.
- Curtius, Ernst Robert. 1948. *Europäische Literatur Und Lateinisches Mittelalter*. Bern: A. Francke AG.
- Dalfen, Joachim. 1984. "Οὐδὲ ἔοικε: Eine ‚homerische‘ Art, Menschliches Verhalten Zu Beurteilen." *Wiener Studien* 97: 5–26.
- Davies, Malcolm, and Patrick Finglass. 2014. *Stesichorus: The Poems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Davies, Mark I. 1969. "Thoughts on the *Oresteia* before Aischylos." *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 93 (1): 214–60. <https://doi.org/10.3406/bch.1969.2185>.
- De Lacy, Phillip H., and Benedict Einarson, eds. 1959. *Plutarch: Moralia, Volume VII*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- DeBlois, Nanci. 1997. "Rape, Marriage or Death?: Gender Perspectives in the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*." *Philological Quarterly* 76 (3): 245–62.
- DeForest, Mary. 1993. "Clytemnestra's Breast and the Evil Eye." In *Woman's Power, Man's Game: Essays on Classical Antiquity in Honor of Joy K. King*. Waconda: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers.
- Denniston, John Dewar, and Denys Page, eds. 1957. *Aeschylus: Agamemnon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Devereux, George. 1976. *Dreams in Greek Tragedy: An Ethno-Psycho-Analytical Study*. University of California Press.
- Diggle, James, ed. 1994. *Euripidis Fabulae*. Vol. III. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Doyle, Andrea. 2010. "Monstrous Motherhood and Its Mythological Antecedents: Clytemnestra in *Libation Bearers*." *Ekklesiastikos Pharos* 92 (1): 143–60.
- Düring, Ingemar. 1943. "Klutaimestra--Νηληϊς Γυνά: A Study of the Development of a Literary Motif." *Eranos* 41: 91–123.
- Dyer, R. R. 1969. "The Evidence for Apolline Purification Rituals at Delphi and Athens." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 89: 38–56. <https://doi.org/10.2307/627464>.
- Easterling, P. E. 1991. "Men's Κλέος and Women's Γόος: Female Voices in the *Iliad*." *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 9 (2): 145–51. <https://doi.org/10.1353/mgs.2010.0267>.

- Edwards, Anthony T. 1985. *Achilles in the Odyssey*. Königstein/Ts.: A. Hain: Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie; Heft.
- Einarson, Benedict, and Phillip H. De Lacy, eds. 1967. *Plutarch: Moralia, Volume XIV*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Evelyn-White, Hugh G. 2000. "Homeric *Hymn to Aphrodite*." In *Hesiod, Homeric Hymns, Epic Cycle, Homeric*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Feldman, Thalia. 1965. "Gorgo and the Origins of Fear." *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 4 (3): 484–494.
- Ferrari, Gloria. 1990. "Figures of speech: the picture of Aidos." *Mètis. Anthropologie des mondes grecs anciens* 5 (1): 185–204. <https://doi.org/10.3406/metis.1990.955>.
- Finglass, Patrick, ed. 2007a. *Pindar: Pythian Eleven*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- , ed. 2007b. *Sophocles: Electra*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2018. "Stesichorus and Greek Tragedy." In *Paths of Song: The Lyric Dimension of Greek Tragedy*, edited by Rosa Andújar, Thomas R.P. Coward, and Theodora A. Hadjimichael, 19–38. Berlin/Boston, GERMANY: De Gruyter, Inc.
- Finley, M.I. 1981. *Economy and Society in Ancient Greece*. London: Chatto and Windus Ltd.
- Foley, Helene P. 1978. "'Reverse Similes' and Sex Roles in the *Odyssey*." *Arethusa* 11 (1/2): 7–26.
- . 1981. *Reflections of Women in Antiquity*. New York: Routledge.
- . 1985. *Ritual Irony: Poetry and Sacrifice in Euripides*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- . 1992. "Anodos Dramas: Euripides' *Alcestis* and *Helen*." In *Innovations of Antiquity*, edited by Daniel L. Selden and Ralph Hexter, 133–60. London: Routledge.
- . 1994. *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Fowler, Barbara Hughes. 1991. "The Creatures and the Blood." *Illinois Classical Studies* 16 (1/2): 85–100.
- Fowler, H.N., ed. 1939. *Plato: Cratylus, Parmenides, Greater Hippias, Lesser Hippias*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Fraenkel, Eduard. 1950. *Aeschylus: Agamemnon*. 3 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Franco, Cristiana. 2014. *Shameless: The Canine and the Feminine in Ancient Greece*. Translated by Matthew Fox. Oakland: University of California Press.
- Frazer, Sir James George, ed. 1921. *Apollodorus: The Library*. London: William Heinemann.
- Freese, J.H. 1959. *Aristotle: The "Art" of Rhetoric*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Friedman, Rachel D. 2007. "Old Stories in Euripides' New *Helen*: Παλαιότης Γὰρ Τῷ Λόγῳ Γ' Ἐνεστί Τίς (*Hel.* 1056)." *Phoenix* 61 (3/4): 195–211.
- Frontisi-Ducroux, Françoise. 1997. "Actéon, Ses Chiens, et Leur Maître." In *L'animal Dans l'antiquité*, edited by Barbara Cassin and Jean-Louis Labarrière. Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. VRIN.
- . 2007. "The Invention of the Erinyes." In *Visualizing the Tragic: Drama, Myth, and Ritual*, 165–76. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gamel, Mary-Kay. 1999. "Iphigenia at Aulis." In *Women on the Edge: Four Plays by Euripides*, edited by Ruby Blondell, Mary-Kay Gamel, Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz, and Bella Zweig. New York: Routledge.
- Garvie, A.F. 1986. *Aeschylus: Choephoroi*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gellie, George. 1981. "Tragedy and Euripides' *Electra*." *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 28: 1–12.

- Godley, A.D. 1926. *Herodotus, The Persian Wars*. Vol. 1. 4 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Golann, Cecil Paige. 1945. "The Third Stasimon of Euripides' *Helena*." *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 76: 31–46.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/283323>.
- Gordesiani, Rismag. 1997. "Liebe Im Homerischen Epos." *Philologus* 141 (2): 173–83.
- Graver, Margaret. 1995. "Dog-Helen and Homeric Insult." *Classical Antiquity* 14 (1): 41–61.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/25000142>.
- Griffith, Mark, ed. 1999. *Sophocles: Antigone*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gross, Nicolas P. 1976. "Nausicaa: A Feminine Threat." *The Classical World* 69 (5): 311–17.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/4348437>.
- Gurd, Sean Alexander. 2005. *Iphigenias at Aulis: Textual Multiplicity, Radical Philology*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Guzmán, Helena. 2009. "El Doblete Ἄκοιτις/Ἄλοχος En La *Iliada*: Un Punto Oscuro Del Vocabulario Homérico." *Myrtia* 24: 15–27.
- Guzzo, Víctor Adrián. 2015. "Entre las sábanas de Medea: Análisis e interpretación de las referencias al lecho en *Medea* de Eurípides." 7* Coloquio Internacional Centro de Estudios Helénicos.
- Halliwell, Stephen W., W. Hamilton Fyfe, Doreen C. Innes, and Roberts, W. Rhys, eds. 1995. *Aristotle: Poetics. Longinus: On the Sublime. Demetrius: On Style*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Harder, M.A. 1995. "'Right' and 'Wrong' in the *Electras*." *Hermathena* 159 (Winter): 15–31.
- Harmon, A.M. 1925. "Lucian: *Imagines*." In . Vol. 4. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Harrison, John Kent. 2003. "Helen of Troy." Miniseries. USA.
- Hawkesworth, Mary. 2006. *Feminist Inquiry*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Herington, John. 1984. "Pindar's Eleventh Pythian Ode." In *Greek Poetry and Philosophy: Studies in Honour of Leonard Woodbury*, edited by Douglas Gerber. Chico: Scholars Press.
- Higbie, Carolyn. 1995. *Heroes' Names, Homeric Identities*. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.
- Hirsch, Marianne. 1989. *The Mother/Daughter Plot: Narrative, Psychoanalysis, Feminism*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Hopman, Marianne Govers. 2012. *Scylla: Myth, Metaphor, Paradox*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hornblower, Simon. 2015. *Lykophron: Alexandra*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Immerwahr, Henry R. 2008. "Aspects of Literacy in the Athenian Ceramicus." *Kadmos* 46 (1–2).
<https://doi.org/10.1515/KADMOS.2007.009>.
- Jacoby, Felix. 1950. *Die Fragmente Der Griechischen Historiker*. Leiden: Brill.
- Jebb, R.C., ed. 1907. *Sophocles: Oedipus Coloneus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1962. *Sophocles: Electra*. Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert.
- Johnston, Sarah Iles. 1992. "Xanthus, Hera and the Erinyes (*Iliad* 19.400-418)." *Transactions of the American Philological Association (1974-)* 122: 85–98.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/284366>.
- Jones, W.H.S., ed. 1959. *Pausanias: Description of Greece*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- , ed. 1960. *Pausanias: Description of Greece*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

- Kamerbeek, J.C. 1974. *The Plays of Sophocles: Commentaries (The Electra)*. Vol. V. Leiden: Brill.
- Kardulias, Dianna Rhyan. 2001. "Odysseus in Ino's Veil: Feminine Headdress and the Hero in *Odyssey 5*." *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 131 (1): 23–51. <https://doi.org/10.1353/apa.2001.0011>.
- Katz, Marilyn A. 1991. *Penelope's Renown*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Konstan, David. 1985. "'Philia' in Euripides' *Electra*." *Philologus* 129: 176–85.
- Kovacs, David. 2002. *Euripides: Helen, Phoenician Women, Orestes*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Kubo, Masaaki. 1967. "The Norm of Myth: Euripides' *Electra*." *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 71: 15–31.
- Kurke, Leslie. 2013. "Pindar's Pythian 11 and the *Oresteia*: Contestatory Ritual Poetics in the 5th c. BCE." *Classical Antiquity* 32 (1): 101–75.
- Larson, Jennifer. 1995. *Greek Heroine Cults*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Leaf, Walter. 1892. *A Companion to the Iliad*. London: Macmillan and Co.
- Lebeck, Anne. 1971. *The Oresteia: A Study in Language and Structure*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Lee, Mireille M. 2004. "'Evil Wealth of Raiment': Deadly Πέπλοι in Greek Tragedy." *The Classical Journal* 99 (3): 253–79.
- Levaniouk, Olga. 1999. "Penelope and the Pēnelops." In *Nine Essays on Homer*, edited by Olga Levaniouk and Miriam Carlisle. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- . 2011. *Eve of the Festival: Making Myth in Odyssey 19*. Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies. <https://chs.harvard.edu/CHS/article/display/3764>.
- . 2012. "Sky-Blue Flower: Songs of the Bride in Modern Russia and Ancient Greece." In *Donum Natalicium Digitaliter Confectum Gregorio Nagy Septuagenario a Discipulis Collegis Familiaribus Oblatum: A Virtual Birthday Gift Presented to Gregory Nagy on Turning Seventy by His Students, Colleagues, and Friends*. Online: Center for Hellenic Studies. <https://chs.harvard.edu/CHS/article/display/4647>.
- Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*. 1981. Zurich: Artemis.
- Liddell, H.G., and R. Scott, eds. 1996. *Greek-English Lexicon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lloyd-Jones, Hugh, ed. 1994a. *Sophocles: Ajax, Electra, Oedipus Tyrannus*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- . 1994b. *Sophocles: Antigone, Women of Trachis, Philoctetes, Oedipus at Colonus*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Loraux, Nicole. 1995. *The Experiences of Tiresias: The Feminine and the Greek Man*. Translated by Paula Wissing. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Louden, Bruce. 1995. "Categories of Homeric Wordplay." *Transactions of the American Philological Association (1974-)* 125: 27–46. <https://doi.org/10.2307/284344>.
- Lyons, Deborah. 2012. *Dangerous Gifts: Gender and Exchange in Ancient Greece*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- . 2014. *Gender and Immortality: Heroines in Ancient Greek Myth and Cult*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- MacLeod, Leona. 2017. *Dolos and Dike in Sophocles' Elektra*. Leiden: Brill.
- Mannack, Thomas. 2001. *The Late Mannerists in Athenian Vase-Painting*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Marchant, E.C., ed. 2013. *Xenophon: Memorabilia, Oeconomicus, Symposium, Apology*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Marchant, E.C., and G.W. Bowersock, eds. 1968. *Xenophon: Scripta Minora*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Markantonatos, Andreas. 2016. "Mystical Morality and Heroic Transcendence: Eleusinian Orphism and Political Ethics in Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis*." *Trends in Classics* 8 (2). <https://doi.org/10.1515/tc-2016-0013>.
- Marquardt, Patricia. 1985. "Penelope 'Polutropos.'" *The American Journal of Philology* 106 (1): 32–48. <https://doi.org/10.2307/295050>.
- . 1992. "Clytemnestra: A Felicitous Spelling in the *Odyssey*." *Arethusa* 25 (2): 241–53.
- Matheson, Susan B. 1997. "Hounded by Furies." *Yale University Art Gallery Bulletin*, 18–29.
- Maxwell-Stuart, P. G. 1973. "The Appearance of Aeschylus' Erinyes." *Greece & Rome* 20 (1): 81–84.
- McClure, Laura. 1996. "Clytemnestra's Binding Spell (*Ag.* 958-974)." *The Classical Journal* 92 (2): 123–40.
- McWhorter, Ashton Waugh. 1910. "A Study of the So-Called Deliberative Type of Question (Τί Πουήσω;) as Found in Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides." *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 41: 157–67.
- Merkelbach, R., and M.L. West. 1967. *Fragmenta Hesiodica*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Miller, Frank Justus, ed. 2004. *Ovid: Metamorphoses*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Millett, Kate. 1970. *Sexual Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Montuoro, Paola Zancani. 1938. *Heraion Alla Foce Del Sele*. Roma: Tipografo della R. Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei.
- Most, Glenn W., ed. 2006. *Hesiod: Theogony*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- , ed. 2018. *Hesiod: The Shield, Catalogue of Women, Other Fragments*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Motte, André. 1973. *Prairies et Jardins de La Grèce Antique: De La Religion à La Philosophie*. Vol. 61. Palais des Académies.
- Mulvey, Laura. 1992. "Visual Pleasure and the Narrative Cinema." In *The Sexual Subject: A Screen Reader in Sexuality*, 22–34. London: Routledge.
- Murray, A.T., ed. 1995. *Homer: Odyssey*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- , ed. 1999. *Homer: Iliad*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Mylonas, George. 1961. *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Nagy, Gregory. 1974. *Comparative Studies in Greek and Indic Meter*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- . 1979. *The Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- . 1990. *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- . 2004. *Homer's Text and Language*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- . 2006. "The Epic Hero." 2006. <https://chs.harvard.edu/CHS/article/display/1302>.
- . 2007. "Homer and Greek Myth." In *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Mythology*, edited by R.D. Woodard, 52–82. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://chs.harvard.edu/CHS/article/display/2486>.

- . 2008. *Homer the Classic*. Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies.
http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.ebook:CHS_Nagy.Homer_the_Classic.2008.
- . 2013. *The Ancient Greek Hero in 24 Hours*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
<https://chs.harvard.edu/CHS/article/display/5943>.
- . 2017. "Iphigeneia and Iphianassa." *Classical Inquiries*. January 12, 2017.
<https://classical-inquiries.chs.harvard.edu/iphigeneia-and-iphianassa/>.
- North, Helen F. 1977. "The Mare, the Vixen, and the Bee: 'Sophrosyne' as the Virtue of Women in Antiquity." *Illinois Classical Studies* 2: 35–48.
- O'Donald, Megan. 2019. "Repetition and Iconicity in Homer." Dissertation, Seattle: University of Washington.
- Olson, S. Douglas. 1990. "The Stories of Agamemnon in Homer's *Odyssey*." *Transactions of the American Philological Association (1974-)* 120: 57–71. <https://doi.org/10.2307/283978>.
- , ed. 2007. *Athenaeus: The Learned Banqueters*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Ormand, Kirk. 1999. *Exchange and the Maiden: Marriage in Sophoclean Tragedy*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- . 2014. *The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women and Archaic Greece*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2017. "Helen's Phantom in Fragments." In *Poetry in Fragments: Studies on the Hesiodic Corpus and Its Afterlife*, edited by Christos C. Tsagalis. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, Inc.
- Page, Denys. 1934. *Actors' Interpolations in Greek Tragedy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Palaima, Thomas G. 2006. "Wanaks and Related Power Terms in Mycenaean and Later Greek." In *Ancient Greece from the Mycenaean Palaces to the Age of Homer*, edited by Sigrid Deger-Jalkotzy and Irene S. Lemos, 53–71. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Parker, Robert. 1991. "The 'Hymn to Demeter' and the 'Homeric Hymns.'" *Greece & Rome* 38 (1): 1–17.
- Parry, Anne Amory. 1973. *Blameless Aegisthus*. Leiden: Brill.
- Pemberton, Elizabeth Gummey. 1966. "A Note on the Death of Aegisthos." *American Journal of Archaeology* 70 (4): 377–78.
- Peradotto, John. 1990. *Man in the Middle Voice: Name and Narration in the Odyssey*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Petropoulos, J.C.B. 2003. *Eroticism in Ancient and Medieval Greek Poetry*. London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd.
- Petrovic, Andrej. 2013. "An Epigram and a Treasury: On Sim. FGE Xxxiiib." *The Classical Quarterly* 63 (2): 885–88.
- Pfeiffer, Rudolfus. 1949. *Callimachus*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Pietruczuk, Katarzyna. 2012. "The Prologue of *Iphigenia Aulidensis* Reconsidered." *Mnemosyne* 65 (4/5): 565–83.
- Pomeroy, Sarah B. 1975. *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity*. New York: Schocken.
- Prag, A.J.N.W. 1985. *The Oresteia: Iconographic and Narrative Tradition*. Chicago: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers.
- Pulleyn, Simon. 1997. "Erotic Undertones in the Language of Clytemnestra." *The Classical Quarterly* 47 (2): 565–567.
- Race, William H., ed. 1997. *Pindar: Olympian Odes, Pythian Odes*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

- Radding, Jonah. 2015. "Clytemnestra at Aulis: Euripides and the Reconsideration of Tradition." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 55 (4): 832–862.
- Raeburn, David, and Oliver Thomas, eds. 2011. *The Agamemnon of Aeschylus*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rank, Louis Philippe. 1951. *Etymologiseering En Verwante Verschijnselen Bij Homerus*. Assen: Bibliotheca Classica Vangorcumiana.
- Redfield, James. 1979. "The Proem of the *Iliad*: Homer's Art." *Classical Philology* 74 (2): 95–110.
- . 1982. "Notes on the Greek Wedding." *Arethusa* 15 (1/2): 181–201.
- Rehm, Rush. 1994. *Marriage to Death: The Conflation of Wedding and Funeral Rituals in Greek Tragedy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Richardson, N.J. 1974. *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Rogers, Brett M. 2020. "Electra-Style: Reception(s) of Aeschylus' *Oresteia* in Aristophanes' *Clouds*." In *Greek Drama V: Studies in the Theatre of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries BCE*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
- Rojcewicz, Stephen. 2018. "How to Kill a Sphinx." *Delos: A Journal of Translation and World Literature* 33 (2): 116–34.
- Rose, Gilbert P. 1969. "The Unfriendly Phaeacians." *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 100: 387–406. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2935923>.
- Rosenmeyer, Patricia A. 2004. "Girls at Play in Early Greek Poetry." *The American Journal of Philology* 125 (2): 163–78.
- Sartre, Jean-Paul. 1976. *L'Être et Le Néant: Essai d'ontologie Phénoménologique*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Schein, Seth L. 1984. *The Mortal Hero: An Introduction to Homer's Iliad*. University of California Press.
- Schwartz, Edward. 1887. *Scholia in Euripidem*. Vol. 1. Berlin: G. Reimer.
- Segal, Charles Paul. 1962. "The Phaeacians and the Symbolism of Odysseus' Return." *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 1 (4): 17–64.
- Siegel, Herbert. 1981. "Agamemnon in Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis*." *Hermes* 109 (3): 257–65.
- Simas, Anna. 2020. "Aeschylus and the Iconography of the Erinyes." In *Greek Drama V: Studies in the Theatre of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries BCE*, edited by C. W. Marshall and Hallie Marshall, 145–59. London: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
- Simelidis, Christos. 2006. "Honouring the Bridegroom like God: Theodore Prodromos *Carm. Hist.* 6.46." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 46 (1): 87–100.
- Solmsen, Friedrich. 1981. "The Sacrifice of Agamemnon's Daughter in Hesiod's *Ehoëae*." *The American Journal of Philology* 102 (4): 353–58.
- Sommerstein, Alan H. 1980. "Notes on the *Oresteia*." *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, no. 27: 63–75. <https://doi.org/10.2307/43646640>.
- , ed. 1989. *Aeschylus: Eumenides*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- , ed. 2008a. *Aeschylus: Fragments*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- , ed. 2008b. *Aeschylus: Oresteia*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Stanford, W.B. 1963. *The Ulysses Theme*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Stavrinou, Aspasia Skouroumouni. 2015. "The *Opsis* of *Helen*: Performative Intertextuality in Euripides." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 55: 104–32.
- Steiger, Hugo. 1897. "Warum Schrieb Euripides Seine *Elektra*?" *Philologus* 56 (1): 561–600.

- Steiner, Deborah. 2001. *Images in Mind*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Stewart, Andrew. 1983. "Stesichoros and the François Vase." In *Ancient Greek Art and Iconography*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Stieber, Mary. 1994. "Aeschylus' Theoroi and Realism in Greek Art." *Transactions of the American Philological Association* (1974-) 124: 85. <https://doi.org/10.2307/284287>.
- Storey, Ian C., and Arlene Allan. 2005. *A Guide to Ancient Greek Drama*. Malden: Blackwell.
- Sullivan, Shirley Darcus. 1988. *Psychological Activity in Homer: A Study of Phrēn*. Ottawa: Carleton University Press.
- Swift, Laura. 2015. "Stesichorus on Stage." In *Stesichorus in Context*, edited by Patrick Finglass and Adrian Kelly, 125–44. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Taplin, Oliver. 1978. *Greek Tragedy in Action*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- . 1983. "Sophocles in His Theatre." Edited by Jacqueline de Romilly. *Entretiens Sur l'Antiquité Classique* 29: 155–83.
- . 2007. *Pots and Plays*. Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum.
- Teevan, Colin. 1996. "A Barbarian Activity: The Process of Translation of Euripides's *The Iphigenia in Aulis*." In *Stages of Translation*, edited by David Johnston, 95–107. Bath: Absolute.
- Thury, Eva M. 1985. "Euripides' *Electra*: An Analysis through Character Development." *Rheinisches Museum Für Philologie* 128 (1): 5–22.
- Topper, Kathryn. 2007. "Perseus, the Maiden Medusa, and the Imagery of Abduction." *Hesperia* 76 (1): 73–105.
- Trendall, A.D., and T.B.L. Webster. 1971. *Illustrations of Greek Drama*. London: Phaidon.
- Tsagalis, Christos C. 2003. "Odyssey 24, 191 – 202: A Reconsideration." *Wiener Studien* 116: 43–56.
- Tsitsibakou-Vasalos, Evanthia. 2009. "Chance or Design? Language and Plot Management in the *Odyssey*." In *Narratology and Interpretation: The Content of Narrative Form in Ancient Literature*, edited by Jonas Grethlein and Antonios Rengakos, 177–212. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, Inc.
<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/washington/detail.action?docID=453851>.
- Tzanetou, Angeliki. 2002. "Something to Do with Demeter: Ritual and Performance in Aristophanes' *Women at the Thesmophoria*." *American Journal of Philology* 123 (3): 329–67.
- Van Keuren, Frances Dodds. 1989. *The Frieze from the Hera I Temple at Foce Del Sele*. Roma: G. Bretschneider.
- Vermeule, Emily. 1966. "The Boston Oresteia Krater." *American Journal of Archaeology* 70 (1): 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.2307/501412>.
- . 1979. *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Vögler, A. 1967. *Vergleichende Studien Zur Sophokleischen Und Euripideischen Elektra*. Heidelberg: C. Winter.
- Von der Mühl, Peter. 1958. "Wurde Die Elfte *Pythie* Pindars 474 Oder 454 Gedichtet?" *Museum Helveticum* 15 (3): 141–46.
- Vout, Caroline. 2007. *Power and Eroticism in Imperial Rome*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Waldo, Christopher J. 2019. "Emergent Genre: Innovation and Experimentation in the Victory Odes of Pindar and Bacchylides." ProQuest Dissertations Publishing: University of California, Berkeley.
- Warr, G.C.W. 1898. "Clytemnestra's Weapon." *The Classical Review* 12 (7): 348–50.
- West, M.L. 1971. "Stesichorus." *Classical Quarterly* 21 (2): 302–14.
- . 1981. "Tragica V." *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, no. 28: 61–78.
- , trans. 2003. "Homeric Hymn to Demeter." In *Homeric Hymns, Homeric Apocrypha, Lives of Homer*, 32–71. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Whallon, William. 1958. "The Serpent at the Breast." *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 89: 271–75. <https://doi.org/10.2307/283680>.
- . 1980. *Problem and Spectacle: Studies in the Oresteia*. Heidelberg: Bibliothek der klassischen Altertumswissenschaften.
- Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, Ulrich von. 1883. "Die Beiden *Elektren*." *Hermes* 18 (2): 214–63.
- . 1922. *Pindaros*. Berlin: Weidmann.
- . 1931. *Der Glaube Der Hellenen*. Vol. 1. 2 vols. Basel: Benno Schwabe & Co.
- Wiles, David. 2000. *Greek Theatre Performance: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wilk, Stephen R. 2000. *Medusa*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wilson, Donna F. 2002. *Ransom, Revenge, and Heroic Identity in the Iliad*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wilson, Nigel G., ed. 1997. *Aelian: Historical Miscellany*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Winnington-Ingram, R. P. 1948. "Clytemnestra and the Vote of Athena." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 68: 130–47. <https://doi.org/10.2307/626303>.
- . 1980. *Sophocles: An Interpretation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Young, D.C. 1968. *Three Odes of Pindar: A Literary Study of Pythian 11, Pythian 3, and Olympian 7*. Leiden: Brill.
- Zeitlin, Froma I. 1965. "The Motif of the Corrupted Sacrifice in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*." *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 96: 463–508. <https://doi.org/10.2307/283744>.
- Zuntz, G. 1955. *The Political Plays of Euripides*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

VITA

Anna E Simas received her Bachelor of Arts in Classical Languages from the University of California, Berkeley in 2013 and a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Classics from the University of Pennsylvania in 2014. She then entered graduate school at the University of Washington, Seattle, where she earned an M.A. in Classics in 2015, a Graduate Certificate in Feminist Studies from the Department of Gender, Women and Sexuality Studies in 2018, and a Ph.D. in Classics in 2020.