DEATH AND THE FEMALE BODY IN HOMER, VERGIL, AND OVID

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ABSTRACT

KATHERINE DE BOER SIMONS: Death and the Female Body in Homer, Vergil, and Ovid
(Under the direction of Sharon L. James)

This study investigates the treatment of women and death in three major epic poems of

the classical world: Homer's *Odyssey,* Vergil's *Aeneid*, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. I rely on

recent work in the areas of embodiment and media studies to consider dead and dying female

bodies as representations of a sexual politics that figures women as threatening and even mon-

strous. I argue that the *Odyssey* initiates a program of linking female death to women's sexual

status and social class that is recapitulated and intensified by Vergil. Both the *Odyssey* and the

Aeneid punish transgressive women with suffering in death, but Vergil further spectacularizes

violent female deaths, narrating them in "carnographic" detail. The *Metamorphoses*, on the

other hand, subverts the Homeric and Vergilian model of female sexuality to present the female

body as endangered rather than dangerous, and threatened rather than threatening. In Ovid's

poem, women are overwhelmingly depicted as brutalized victims regardless of their sexual

status, and the female body is consistently represented as bloodied in death and twisted in

metamorphosis. I argue that Ovid re-reads previous epic and disrupts the gendered system that

uses the female body as a means of enforcing social values. His representations of female death

and suffering expose a vulnerability of the female body that is inherent in the ancient (as well

as the modern) world: women suffer a constant risk of ruin and death because of male desire

and violence. Rather than presenting female sexuality as threatening to male heroes and heroic

projects, Ovid presents male sexuality as threatening to women.

To my parents.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Book 4 of Vergil's *Georgics* tells the story of the double death of Eurydice, wife of

Orpheus. In a long digression, the seer Proteus explains to the hero Aristaeus the reason for

the inexplicable death of his bee colony: Aristaeus has provoked the wrath of Orpheus by in-

advertently causing the death of Eurydice in the course of an attempted rape. In Proteus' ver-

sion, Eurydice fled from her assailant and failed to notice a snake in the grass:

> Illa quidem, dum te fugeret per flumina praeceps,
> immanem ante pedes hydrum moritura puella
> servantem ripas alta non vidit in herba.
> At chorus aequalis Dryadum clamore supremos
> implerunt montes…
>
> She indeed, while she fled you headlong through the rivers,
> the girl, on the verge of death, did not see the huge serpent
> before her feet, guarding the banks in the long grass.
> But the youthful chorus of Dryads filled
> the high mountains with their clamor… (*Geo.* 4.457-461)[1]

Curiously, the narrator skips over Eurydice's death: her imminent demise is indicated by *mo-*

ritura puella (*Geo.* 4.458), yet just as she approaches the snake, the poet shifts to a descrip-

tion of the mourning of her companions (*Geo.* 4.460-463) and husband (*Geo.* 4.464-466),

leaving the reader to infer that death has occurred in the interim.

This jarring transition, in which the poet averts his eyes from the moment of Euryd-

ice's death, fits a pattern in the depiction of dead and dying women in ancient epic. Some,

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[1] All translations are my own.

like Eurydice, die quietly, out of sight of both poet and audience, while others suffer violent and bloody deaths that are narrated in graphic, even fetishistic, detail. In this study, I explore that distinction in the *Odyssey,* the *Aeneid,* and the *Metamorphoses*, arguing that Homer and Vergil index the violence of women's death to their social and sexual status, while Ovid undoes that pattern and destabilizes the previously fixed categories of transgressive and normative women. I uncover a trajectory in epic representations of dead and dying women. Homer normalizes the brutal deaths of transgressive slave-women as part of the violence required for the restoration of order in the *oikos* and the confirmation of Odysseus' political authority. Vergil similarly presents the brutal deaths of transgressive queens as necessary to the establishment of the Roman political future, which is founded in part upon the domestication and control of Roman women. Finally, Ovid rewrites heroic and national epic, upending the patterns and paradigms of Homer and Vergil—including those that punish women for their sexuality and subjectivity. Instead, Ovid highlights the many ways female bodies may be endangered by male sexuality and male heroic endeavors, converting the female body from a *locus* of danger to male heroes into a *locus* of danger to the woman herself.

Methodology

My research is founded on the insight, especially attributed to Foucault, of the body as a social construct, rather than a concrete object or fact of nature.[2] We cannot separate the

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[2] This perception is often traced back to Karl Marx, who argued that economic class had a significant influence on a person's experience of his or her body; however, Bordo (1993: 17-18) shows that Foucault's idea of the "docile body," the body shaped by social control, is well-described by Mary Wollstonecraft in 1792, arguing that female bodies are socially constructed as delicate and domestic, rather than naturally so. De Beauvoir's description of the body as a "situation" ([1949] 1952: 34) and her claim that "one is not born, but rather becomes a woman" ([1949] 1952: 287) are also foundational statements of the cultural and political nature of the body.

body from the social and political discourses imposed on it—just as biological sex is always entwined with cultural gender, so the physical body is always entwined with cultural ideas about what that body means. Foucault was particularly concerned with the ways bodies are "disciplined" by modern political systems (Foucault [1975] 1977),[3] but his discussion of the social construction of the body has proven particularly fruitful for gender studies, with many critics drawing attention to the divergence between real women's embodied experiences and the cultural discourses surrounding the female body. This distinction will be important in Chapter 4 of this study, where I will discuss Ovid's exposure of the divergence between women's embodied vulnerability and previous epic discourses that presented the female body as threatening. As has been frequently shown in twentieth and twenty-first century scholarship since de Beauvoir, femininity is a construct rather than a natural state: the cultural markers that denote femininity are imposed from the outside, rather than being innate qualities of the female body.[4] Further, intersectional theory has demonstrated that the supposedly unified

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[3] "What was then being formed was a policy of coercions that act upon the body, a calculated manipulation of its elements, its gestures, its behavior. The human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down, and rearranges it. A 'political anatomy' which was also a 'mechanics of power,' was being born; it defined how one may have a hold over others' bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed, and the efficiency that one determines. Thus, discipline produces subjected and practiced bodies, 'docile' bodies" (Foucault [1975] 1977: 178). Yet Foucault is entirely indifferent to the distinct coercions that operate on female bodies and does not acknowledge the ways the female body has been particularly disciplined, dating back long before the 18th and 19th century developments he discusses. See Bartky 1988 for a feminist response to Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*.

[4] See Butler 1990 and 1993 for foundational treatments of the way gender identity is performed through the body; see Price and Shildrick (1999) for an overview of feminist theories of embodiment.

and natural category of women is, in fact, riven along multiple fault lines; particularly important for this project will be the intersection of gender and class.[5] Women's bodies are constructed, but as we will see in Chapter 2, on Homer, they are not constructed equally.

Classical studies has recently begun to explore the ways the body is embedded in a variety of ancient discourses and how representations of the body can be used to produce and enforce ideologies, especially gender norms.[6] In addition to the proliferation of work on the construction of the body in antiquity, scholarship on epic has long been interested in the portrayal of the dead and suffering male body.[7] This emphasis is unsurprising given the extraordinary variety and detail of descriptions of male death in epic poetry: men die by the sword, by the spear, facedown in the dust, or upturned toward the sun. Death lays them low, loosens their limbs, covers over their eyes, and sends them down to Hades. The suffering of the male body in epic is, however, mitigated to the extent that both Homer and Vergil portray male death with great sympathy and emotion. Griffin (1980; cf. Griffin 1976) in particular has shown that Homer lends *pathos* to the deaths even of insignificant heroes through the use of

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[5] The term "intersectionality" was introduced by Crenshaw (1989), who argued that feminist and anti-racist political movements were failing black women by subsuming them under the categories of either "black" or "woman" without considering how those identities intersected to produce unique experiences—and unique vulnerabilities (cf. Crenshaw 1993). Similar points had been made (without using the term intersectionality) throughout the 1970's, but the earliest expression of this idea dates back to Sojourner Truth, who famously pointed out that the "privileges" extended by men to women in the 19th century were, in fact, on offer only to white women of particular social classes. As she put it, "Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman?"

[6] Important contributions to the study of the ancient body include the collections of Wyke (1998a and 1998b), Montserrat (1998), Porter (1999), Wyke and Hopkins (2005), and Fögen and Lee (2009); important individual works include Rouselle 1988, Katz 1989, Carson 1990, Dean-Jones 1994, Gleason 1995, Richlin 1997, Stewart 1997, Demand 1998, Holmes 2010, and Lee 2015.

[7] See e.g. Friedrich [1953] 2003; Fenik 1968; Marg 1976; Segal 1971; Griffin 1976, 1980; Schein 1984; Vernant 1991; Morris 1991; Morrison 1991; Heuzé 1985; Neal 2006; Holmes 2007.

motifs such as "bereaved parents," "death far from home," and "beauty brought low."[8] In Vergil's case, the suffering of dying men is consistently elided or accelerated (Heuzé 1985: 11-128; 290-295), and Reed (2007) has argued that some of these deaths are aestheticized to the point of eroticization. On the other hand, the work of Keith (2000: 101-131, on Latin epic) and Fulkerson (2002, on the *Odyssey*) has highlighted the brutality of female death in epic, indicating that the violence directed at female bodies is not mitigated as is the violence directed against males. My project expands upon their work to expose a trajectory in epic representations of the female body and to suggest that the violence of female death is correlated with social and sexual status. Some women do indeed receive the elided and accelerated death elsewhere awarded to male victims of epic violence, but only the women who have been catalogued as virtuous according to the poet's social/sexual norms. On the other hand, brutal, bloody, and shameful deaths are a means of punishing transgressive women with spectacularized violence that focuses the gaze of the reader on the dead and dying female body. Because the elimination of a transgressive woman is a key moment of progress for the epic mission, readers are invited to linger on, and therefore certify, these deaths.

My treatment of the epic gaze is based on recent work in film and media studies, which has adapted Laura Mulvey's insight that modern narrative cinema reproduces gendered power relationships by construing the viewer as male/active and the object of his gaze

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[8] Further, as Holmes (2007: 68) points out, the Homeric poet rarely figures the dead male body as open.

as female/passive (Mulvey 1975).[9] Because the narrative of epic is "omniscient and objective, one that looks down on its characters" (Lovatt 2013: 1),[10] I argue that it triangulates a power dynamic similar to that produced by narrative film and television.[11] Various scholars have observed an affinity between cinematic and epic techniques,[12] yet Fotheringham and Brooker (2013) and Lovatt (2013: 24-25) raise important cautions about the uncritical application of ideas from film studies to ancient texts. Both argue for a more nuanced and contextualized approach, which is what I hope to have undertaken in this study.

In considering how the epic gaze focuses on the spectacle of the dead and dying female body, I make use of scholarship in film and media studies that has investigated the recent proliferation of graphic and sensationalized images of female death in the visual landscape, from movies and TV programs to news stories and advertisements. Clover (1987: 212; cf. 200-201) first pointed out that death in the horror genre is gendered: as she put it, "It is no accident that male victims in slasher films are killed swiftly or off-screen, and that prolonged struggles, in which the victim has time to contemplate her imminent destruction, inevitably figure females." Creed (1993), responding in part to Clover, pointed out that even though

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[9] Mulvey's monolithic view of the gaze has been complicated and contextualized in much subsequent work (including her own), yet as Boyle (2005: 128) argues, her initial work "provides a still-provocative starting point for thinking about the ways in which the act of looking may be structured by power and violently enacted."

[10] Cf. Bakker 1993 on visualization in Homeric poetry.

[11] Various scholars have applied theories of the gaze to ancient epic, including, for example, Fitzgerald (1995: 140-168) on Catullus 64, Eldred (2002), on Lucan, Gordon (2002), on Lucretius, Smith (2005) on the *Aeneid,* Salzman-Mitchell (2005) on the *Metamorphoses,* Lovatt (2006) on Valerius Flaccus and Statius, Hesk (2013) on the *Iliad,* Gervais (2013) on the *Thebaid,* and Lovatt (2013) on epic more broadly. See Lovatt (2013: 24-25) for discussion of the adaptability of film theory to close reading of epic.

[12] E.g. Leglise 1958; Mench [1969] 2001; Malissard 1970; Fitzgerald 1995: 147-148; Winkler 2007: 43-63; Clay 2011: 36-37; Lovatt 2013.

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women are almost always presented as victims within the horror genre, they also emerge as monstrous figures—representations of what Kristeva termed "the abject," that which threatens the symbolic order.[13] This project draws on both these theoretical frameworks to argue that heroic epic presents women as threatening figures, who are then eliminated with graphic violence in order to dramatize the successful erasure of the female threat. Significantly, Clover has emphasized that the female victims of the horror genre are sexualized: as she puts it, "Killing those who engage in unauthorized sex amounts to a generic imperative of the genre" (1987: 200).[14] Similarly, this study will argue that women in heroic epic are marked as transgressive through their misplaced sexuality, which is then punished with graphic and violent death.

Mutilated female bodies are, of course, characteristic of the horror genre, but as Dillman (2014: 12-13) has pointed out, in recent years horrific imagery has "diffused" across genre boundaries, so that graphic images of the female corpse are now ubiquitous throughout the visual landscape. As Jermyn (2004: 154) notes, this cultural fascination with the abject, opened female body runs contrary to early modern representations of the dead woman as a "vision of beautiful repose."[15] In this project, I argue that epic representations of the female

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[13] Kristeva 1982.

[14] Clover emphasizes that men who engage in illicit sex die as well, but argues that their deaths are incidental to their maleness, whereas women die *because they are women*—again and again, the killers of horror films target women specifically, whether out of Oedipal rage (*Psycho, The Eyes of Laura Mars*) or sexual jealousy (*Halloween, Dressed to Kill, He Knows You're Alone*). On the other hand, Creed (1993: 7) argues that woman is "almost always" presented as abject and threatening through her maternal and reproductive qualities, but does acknowledge that sexuality may also play a role.

[15] Bronfen (1992) offers an exhaustive study of aestheticized representations of the female corpse in the early modern period, especially the 19th century. She argues that these idealized images of dead women invite the spectator (implicitly gendered male) to consider death from a safe distance.

body in death share important features with contemporary media images; this is particularly true of Vergil. I focus especially on the way epic represents the transgressive female body as penetrable and penetrated. This imagery of penetrated female flesh has much in common with pornography—Pinedo (1997) in particular has noted the parallels between horrific and pornographic imagery. As she puts it, both genres "expose what is normally concealed or encased to reveal the hidden recesses of the body, porn through carnal knowledge and horror through carnage" (Pinedo 1997: 61).[16] In figuring the open body, excessively horrific and violent imagery can be characterized as "carnography."[17]

I propose that the insights of contemporary film and media studies can be fruitfully applied to the equally "carnographic" imagery of ancient epic. The visual techniques used by current media representations of the dead and dying female body are often eerily reminiscent of the narrative techniques used by epic poets, particularly Vergil, in order to draw attention to the gruesomeness of female death. Epic and contemporary audiences have a similar fascination with the spectacle of the ruined female body, and these spectacles may be doing similar cultural work. As I will suggest, these representations encode similar prurient and punitive attitudes towards the female body, and may function as a means of disciplining and controlling real women.

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[16] In a similar vein, Helman (1991) has argued that "the true parallel of dissection…is pornography. It is the same reduction of the human image into slices of helpless meat, ripped out of context."

[17] The term "gorenography" has also been suggested (Caputi and Russel 1992: 18); I prefer "carnography."

Chapter Overviews

Chapter Two begins with an overview of the *Odyssey*'s dramatization of the danger of uncontrolled female sexuality. I argue that the poet presents women as threats to the hero and the heroic trajectory and that this gender structure is enacted in the representation of dead and dying female bodies. Sexually transgressive slaves (and all transgressive women are transgressive in specifically sexual ways, as I will show) die violently, while sexually virtuous elite women receive a gentle death (μαλακὸν θάνατον, *Od.* 18.202). Sexually transgressive elite women, on the other hand, do not die in the Homeric poems, although the narrator and his characters often hint that they deserve death. Instead, as I will argue, the Homeric poet avoids the spectacle of the elite female body in death. I conclude that the poet is particularly concerned with threats from within the *oikos*, but is reluctant to show elite women—even a ruinously transgressive one—penetrated or suffering in death. Instead, violence is displaced onto the bodies of slave women, who become scapegoats and surrogates for all the sexually transgressive women of the poem.

Chapter Three turns to the *Aeneid* and argues that Vergil translates the *Odyssey*'s preoccupation with the role of the female in the household onto the national stage in an era of imperial politics. While Homer is particularly concerned with the threat posed by subaltern female sexuality to the authority of the master and the integrity of the *oikos*, Vergil is more concerned with the threat posed by female political leadership. Thus, in the *Aeneid* it is not slaves who die to reinforce gender norms, but queens. The *reginae* (Dido, Camilla, Amata) who die violently in the poem are linked to Juno as obstacles to the nascent Roman state, and their deaths permit the poet to resolve the problematic issue of female sexuality and subjectivity, while Juno herself "happily" takes her place in the Roman pantheon (12.841). On the

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other hand, as in the *Odyssey*, normative wives and mothers do not die so much as vanish into thin air (*tenuis in auras,* 2.791). I contrast the disembodied, incorporeal erasures of virtuous women with the gruesome and relentlessly embodied deaths of transgressive women. As I argue, the *Aeneid* eliminates its most powerful female characters with even more sexualized violence than the *Odyssey*.

Yet Vergil departs from the Odyssean model in balancing his carnographic depictions of female death with notes of compassion and regret. Dido, Camilla, and Amata are all appealing figures whose deaths are owed in part to forces outside their knowledge or control. Vergil explores their characters and motivations in much more detail than the Homeric poet does for the transgressive female slaves of the *Odyssey*. This sensitive treatment suggests a certain ambivalence about their deaths: the narrative and political trajectory of the poem requires their elimination, but the reader is invited to sympathize and regret. This ambivalence and hesitation is utterly absent from the *Odyssey*'s treatment of female sexuality and death.

My final chapter turns to the *Metamorphoses*, and argues that Ovid departs even further from the Homeric model than Vergil. The non-narrative—even anti-narrative—structure of the poem allows the narrator to amass an overwhelming number of brutalized female bodies, and to show them suffering regardless of social/sexual status. In the *Metamorphoses*, chaste wives, loving mothers, and pious sisters die horrifically alongside adulteresses and murderesses. I conclude that Ovid subverts the gender system of earlier epic that uses the female body as a means of enforcing social values. His representations of female death and suffering function not to punish women for their sexuality, but to expose a vulnerability that is inherent in the ancient (as well as the modern) world: male sexual attraction puts women at a constant, socially structured risk of ruin and death. In this chaotic poem, female sexuality and

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the female body do not threaten a male hero's achievements and obligations, as in Homer and Vergil, but rather exist in constant danger. I argue that Ovid re-reads the major epics and represents the female body as endangered rather than dangerous, and threatened rather than threatening.

A brief conclusion will draw some general conclusions about the trajectory of epic depictions of the dead and dying female body, including a prospective glance at the adaptation of this motif in Lucan and Silius.

CHAPTER 2: THE *ODYSSEY*

Homeric epic defines its subject matter as "the glorious deeds of men" (κλέα ἀνδρών, *Il.* 9.189, 524; *Od.* 8.73) and both poems dramatize the exclusion of women from the public sphere. In the *Iliad*, Hector dismisses Andromache from the walls of Troy, admonishing her "war will be men's business" (πόλεμος δ᾽ ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει, *Il.* 6.492), and in the *Odyssey*, Telemachus dismisses Penelope from the *megaron* with an almost identical rebuke: "speech is men's business" (μῦθος δ᾽ ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει, *Od.* 1.358).[18] Later, Arete is excluded from assisting with Odysseus' homeward journey, and therefore from the realm of *xenia*, with the same formula (πομπὴ δ᾽ ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει, 11.352). Finally, Penelope is excluded from the contest of the bow—whose object is her hand in marriage—by Telemachus: in this case, "the bow is men's business" (τόξον δ᾽ ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει, 22.353).[19] Penelope and the female servants are banned from the hall during the murder of the suitors—and thus the re-establishment

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[18] Nagler (1993: 249) argues that Telemachus' exclusion of Penelope from social and political activity is a direct response to the importance of women in the household, the territory under negotiation in the poem: "it is in the domestic space of Ithaka…that women are real contenders for influence and power and their place most needs to be defined, not to say confined."

[19] See Nagler (1993: 249-251) on the thematic significance of these four terms, and the importance of these passages, which, he argues, together "constitute[e] a rejection of woman's influence over public life." On the other hand, Rousseau (2015) has recently argued (regarding the Hector and Telemachus passages) that the admonitions to Andromache and Penelope refer specifically to the immediate battle and speech-act, rather than being more generalizing statements about male and female responsibilities in general. Yet he runs into difficulty in accounting for the use of πᾶσι in Telemachus' first speech (μῦθος is the responsibility of *all men*, so how can this refer only to the specific μῦθος Telemachus is about to address to the suitors?).

of social and political order on Ithaca—in what Wohl (1993: 42) calls "a removal of the women from the scene of the political act" (21.234-239, 350-353, 381-385).[20] Yet, while these internal formulations exclude women both from the conduct of war and from the socio-political realm of the *oikos*, female characters are, in fact, inscribed at the center of both. Helen, Chryseis, and Briseis all motivate conflict between men in the *Iliad,* and the consequences of that conflict for women are poignantly seen in the laments that close the poem.[21] Likewise, the question of Penelope's fidelity is the central axis of the *Odyssey*'s plot: as Felson (1994: 16) points out, the narrator assures us at the opening of the poem that the gods have guaranteed Odysseus' return (*Odyssey* 1.15-19), but says nothing about how Penelope will receive him.[22] Female characters are central to the narrative of both poems.

In this chapter, I argue that the central role played by women in the Homeric poems can be further elucidated by an examination of the ways in which they die, or are imagined dying. The sexual politics of both epics revolve around the question of women's fidelity and the consequences of its failure: in the *Iliad*, Helen's infidelity leads to the countless deaths of

[20] As Wohl (1993: 42) continues: "[Penelope], and all the women, are denied the political responsibility for the murder and therefore the political empowerment."

[21] Keith (2000: 66-67) has suggested that Apollonius, in presenting Jason's refusal to include Atalanta in the expedition to Colchis for fear she might inspire amatory conflict among the Argonauts (*Arg.* 1.773), "brilliantly encapsulates the genre's propensity to inscribe woman at the centre of conflict but leave her out of the narrative." As Papaioannou (2007: 105) puts it, "Women and love, and specifically manly women in love, are alien bodies inside the world of ancient epic, and when they appear they release forces that stall or distort the progression of the story as designated by the rules that govern epic composition."

[22] For further reassurances about Odysseus' fate, see *Odyssey* 1.74-79, 1.82-87, 5.23-24, and 5.29-42. On the other hand, while the poet often relates the internal deliberations of male characters, such as Telemachus and Odysseus, he is generally silent about Penelope's true feelings, leaving her motivations open to question. Nor should her verbal expressions of loyalty necessarily be considered reliable: as Murnaghan (1986: 105) has pointed out, since one of Penelope's chief traits is her duplicity "it is not clear whether these speeches are to be taken at face value." For further discussion of the opacity of Penelope's motives see Winkler 1990 and Katz 1991.

the Trojan War, while in the *Odyssey*, Clytemnestra's infidelity leads to her husband's brutal murder and the breakdown of political order in Mycenae.[23] Further, the indeterminacy of Penelope's marital status leads to the collapse of social and political norms on Ithaca.[24] This concern with female sexuality is reflected in the poet's portrayal of female death: sexually transgressive women are punished with violent, ugly deaths. Yet death and transgression are also linked to class: although all the sexually transgressive women in the *Odyssey* are described in similar terms and offer similar threats to the heroic mission, only slave-women die.

This treatment will necessarily focus on the *Odyssey*, since the *Iliad* does not depict any women's deaths.[25] Yet this very point deserves interrogation, since the myth of the Trojan War, as related by other authors, includes several significant female deaths: the slaying of the Amazon queen Penthesilea at the hands of Achilles,[26] and the murders of Iphigenia and

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[23] See further below. On the epics' "scapegoating" of Helen, see Suzuki 1989: 57-90; cf. *Od.* 4.145-146; 11.438; 14.69. On Clytemnestra's role in her husband's murder, see *Od.* 4.91-93, 11.404-456 (esp. 410, 421-439, 452-456), 24.199-202; note that the most accusatory statements against her are voiced by Menelaus and Agamemnon, while other narrators attribute the murder entirely to Aegisthus. The death of Agamemnon interrupts the line of succession, according to which Orestes should inherit his father's place, and allows Clytemnestra's lover Aegisthus to assume the kingship instead. Aegisthus, furthermore, emerges as a despotic ruler—according to Nestor, "he bound the people under him" (δέδμητο δὲ λαὸς ὑπ' αὐτῷ, *Od.* 3.304).

[24] As both the suitors and Telemachus suggest (though with different motives), order could be restored if Penelope would choose a new husband (e.g. 1.245-251, 2.87-128, 16.121-128; cf. 19.530-534).

[25] As Griffin (1980: 44) puts it, "The great theme of the *Iliad* is heroic life and death. What it is to be a hero is brought out by the terrible contrast between 'seeing the light of the sun' and 'having one's limbs full of movement' on the one side, and the cold, dark emptiness of death on the other." The only female death we hear of in the poem is that of Andromache's mother. Nonetheless, as is the case with the elite and sexually normative women of the *Odyssey*, she does not die violently (as do her husband and sons, killed by Achilles: *Il.* 6.414-424). The Greeks carry her off as spoil, but release her for ransom, and she dies at the hands of Artemis (*Il.* 6.428), who in the *Odyssey* offers a merciful death to virtuous women. On Artemis in the *Odyssey*, see further below.

[26] The story of Penthesilea is told in the lost epic *Aethiopis* by Arctinos of Miletus. The tale seemed, even in antiquity, to be a continuation of the *Iliad*: indeed, the Scholia report a variant tradition in which the *Iliad* closes, not with the burial of Hector, but with the arrival of Penthesilea at Troy as a transition between the two poems: ἦλθε δ᾽ Ἀμαζών | Ἄρηος θυγάτηρ μεγαλήτορος ἀνδροφόνοιο (Σ T.

Polyxena, the maidens whose sacrifice enables, respectively, the Greek fleet's departure to and then return from Troy. Though the *Odyssey* repeatedly describes Clytemnestra's role in the plot to murder Agamemnon (1.29-43, 298-302; 3.193-200, 228-316; 4.91-93, 512-549; 11.404-456; 13.383-385; 24.93-97, 191-202), there is no mention of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, which is elsewhere her motive for betraying her husband.[27] It has been suspected since antiquity (Σ T *ad Il.* 1.106b; Σ A. *ad Il.* 9.145) that Iphigenia's death at the hands of her father is not mentioned in Homeric epic because the story did not yet exist or, at least, was unknown to the poet, yet many modern scholars dispute this conclusion.[28] As Dowden (1989: 12) puts it, "There is a problem of what Homer chooses to know, what he rejects, and what he takes as read." Indeed, if Homer does not know the story of Iphigenia, Agamemnon's attack on the prophet Calchas in *Iliad* 1 is problematic:

> μάντι κακῶν οὐ πώ ποτέ μοι τὸ κρήγυον εἶπας·
> αἰεί τοι τὰ κάκ᾽ ἐστὶ φίλα φρεσὶ μαντεύεσθαι,
> ἐσθλὸν δ᾽ οὔτέ τί πω εἶπας ἔπος οὔτ᾽ ἐτέλεσσας.

> Prophet of evil, never yet have you said an agreeable word to me:
> But always it is dear to your heart to prophecy evil;
> Never have you yet spoken a good word, nor brought one about. (*Il.* 1.106-108)

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ad Il. 24.804).

[27] E.g. Aesch., *Ag.* 1415-1420, 1431-1433, 1523-1530; Soph. *Elec.* 525-551; Eur. *Elec.* 1020-1029 (although Euripides' Clytemnestra also says that it was Agamemnon's infidelity that pushed her over the edge: *Elec.* 1030-1033); Eur., *Iph. at Aulis* 1455.

[28] See Kullmann 1960: 198-199, 267-268; Kirk 1985 *ad.* 1.108; Dowden 1989: 9-19; Taplin 1992: 86; Hainsworth 1993: 77; Clark 1998: 21-22. The Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* mentions a daughter, Iphimede, who is sacrificed at Aulis (fr. 23.a.13-30 M-W); this is our earliest source for the story, but the surviving material does not reference Clytemnestra's participation in the murder of Agamemnon. The first source to associate the two acts is Pindar, *Pyth.* 11.22-23.

This rebuke, alluding to a previous conflict with Calchas, seems a veiled reference to his mantic explanation of Artemis' role in stranding the Greeks at Aulis and of her requirement that Agamemnon sacrifice his daughter in order to change the winds.[29]

James (1991: 63; cf. Griffin 1977: 44) suggests that Homer's erasure of Iphigenia is part of a larger poetic project to "play down, disguise, eliminate, or lessen unparental behavior" in favor of a harmonious portrait of parent-child relationships.[30] While this project is certainly a factor in the absence of Iphigenia from both Homeric poems, I argue that it can also be explained by a reluctance on the poet's part to depict innocent women dying violent deaths. Iphigenia and Polyxena are both royal virgins, and post-Homeric depictions of their sacrifice draw attention to their maidenhood.[31] The depiction of their bloody and untimely deaths is unacceptable within the Homeric poet's ideological system, which portrays violent death as an appropriate punishment for deviant and disloyal behavior, specifically in slaves. Women who act according to the poet's norms for female behavior are, on the other hand, rewarded with peaceful and even disembodied deaths.

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[29] James (1991: 57-58) points out that Agamemnon's mistreatment of Chryses in Book 1 may be a further hint that the poet is aware of the Iphigenia story, as his characterization here shows his disregard for the bond between father and daughter. There is elsewhere a reference to Agamemnon's daughter Iphianassa (clearly still alive, as she is offered to Achilles in marriage: 9.145); this daughter has sometimes been identified with Iphigenia, but we know from the scholia on Sophocles' *Electra* (*ad* 157) that the *Cypria* distinguished them.

[30] This view dates back to the scholiasts; see Σ A. *ad Il.* 9.456 (ὡς μηδὲ ἄκοντας ἀδικεῖν γονεῖς διὸ οὐδὲ περὶ φόνου τῆς Κλυταίμηστρας φησίν). James (1991: 65-67) makes the same connection with the poet's failure to describe Orestes' murder of Clytemnestra by more than an oblique hint (3.309-310) despite her narrative prominence and the frequent references to the slaying of Aegisthus (1.40-43, 298-302; 3.193-200, 310-312; 4.548-549); see further below.

[31] For example, of Iphigenia: μιαίνων παρθενοσφάγοισιν | ῥείθροις (*Agamemnon* 209-210); παρθενίου θ᾽ αἵματος (*Ag.* 215); αἰῶνα παρθένειον (*Ag.* 229); ἁγνᾷ δ᾽ ἀταύρωτος αὐδᾷ (*Ag.* 245). Of Polyxena: κόρης ἀκραιφνὲς αἷμ᾽ (*Hecuba* 537); ἡ δὲ καὶ θνῄσκουσ᾽ ὅμως | πολλὴν πρόνοιαν εἶχεν εὐσχήμων πεσεῖν | κρύπτουσ᾽ ἃ κρύπτειν ὄμματ᾽ ἀρσένων χρεών (*Hecuba* 568-570). See Loraux 1987: 31-48 on the sacrifice of virgins in Greek tragedy.

16

I now turn to the portrayal of female death in the *Odyssey*, and will begin by situating Homer's treatment of dead women within the sexual politics of the epic as a whole.

The Sexual Ideology of the *Odyssey*

As an epic whose *telos* is the recovery and reconstitution of the *oikos*, the *Odyssey* shows a deep concern with women's sexual behavior.[32] Penelope's sexual status is a major fulcrum of the plot: the successful resolution of the story requires not only that Odysseus return home, but also that Penelope remain chaste until he does. Uncontrolled female sexuality is repeatedly portrayed as dangerous and destructive: it threatens not only the hero's return home, but also social order more generally. In the human sphere, the negative models of Clytemnestra and Helen demonstrate the disastrous consequences—to individuals and society—of female sexuality run amok. Helen's infidelity is regularly portrayed as responsible for the Greek deaths in the Trojan War: she herself says that the Achaeans came to Troy "for the sake of shameless me" (ἐμεῖο κυνώπιδος εἴνεκ᾽, 4.145). Similarly, Odysseus laments that "many of us died for the sake of Helen" (Ἑλένης μὲν ἀπωλόμεθ᾽ εἵνεκα πολλοί, 11.438; cf. 22.227-229) and Eumaeus wishes that the entire race of Helen had perished, "since she loosened the knees of many men" (ἐπεὶ πολλῶν ἀνδρῶν ὑπὸ γούνατ᾽ ἔλυσε, 14.69). Eumaeus in particular constructs Helen as the subject of an active verb, attributing to her direct responsibility for these deaths. Likewise, the repeated use of πολλοί (11.438, 22.229, 14.69) indicates the scale of the suffering she has

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[32] Suzuki (1989: 90) speaks of "the Odyssey's palpable anxiety concerning female sexuality" and Olson (1995: 139) of its "general tendency to treat female sexuality as a threat which men must confront and control or be destroyed." Foley (1978: 67), Murnaghan (1987: 108), Wohl (1993: 22; 31-32), and Olson (1995: 38) all attribute this anxiety to the nature of exogamous marriage, in which the woman, as a "stranger" without blood ties to the husband's house, is inevitably regarded as suspect. On the sexual ideology of the *Odyssey* in general see, for example, Foley 1978: 7-26; Olson 1989: 387-394; Wohl 1993: 19-50; Felson-Rubin 1994: 43-65; Schein 1995: 17-27.

caused.[33] These formulations suggest that Helen is more than merely a *casus belli*; rather, she is the direct instigator of the war and even the actual destroyer of those who have died. Further, if Helen is to blame for the Trojan War, then she is also to blame for all the "woes" (πήματα, 3.100; 4.243, 330) suffered by the Achaeans in their "grievous return" (νόστον… λυγρόν, 1.325-327; cf. 3.132), and for the long absence of Odysseus—as Penelope implies (ἐξ ἧς πρῶτα καὶ ἡμέας ἵκετο πένθος, 23.224). Helen's sexual misconduct is the ultimate source of all Odysseus' suffering: his travails in war and the long homeward journey, his separation from his wife and son, and the ruination to his home and family at the hands of the suitors.

Clytemnestra's sexual transgression likewise has disastrous consequences, if on a smaller scale: her infidelity is portrayed as the cause of Agamemnon's death at the hands of her lover and the disruption of political order in Mycenae. Indeed, although it is established at the very beginning of the poem that Aegisthus killed Agamemnon (Αἴγισθος…τὸν δ' ἔκτανε νοστήσαντα, 1.37; cf. 1.300), Menelaus and Agamemnon both emphasize that it was done "by the craft of his destructive wife" (δόλῳ οὐλομένης ἀλόχοιο, 4.92; cf. 11.410, 24.97). Over the course of the poem, Agamemnon gradually comes to attribute responsibility to Clytemnestra alone, displacing blame from the male murderer to his female helper. In Agamemnon's first recounting, Aegisthus is the murderer and does the deed with Clytemnestra's help: as Agamemnon says, "Having prepared death for me, Aegisthus slew me with the help of my destructive wife" (ἀλλά μοι Αἴγισθος τεύξας θάνατόν τε μόρον τε | ἔκτα σὺν οὐλομένῃ ἀλόχῳ, 11.409-

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[33] Suzuki (1989: 29-43) argues that the *Iliad* refuses to scapegoat Helen for the war, pointing out that Achilles attributes responsibility to Menelaus and Agamemnon. I would point out also that Diomedes expresses the Greeks' unwillingness to accept her back as a peace-offering (*Il.* 7.399-404). Suzuki further argues that the *Odyssey* reverses the *Iliad*'s tendency to diffuse responsibility by continually blaming Helen (and only Helen) for the war (1989: 67-68, 73-75, 90).

410). As his anger grows, however, the masculine participle (τεύξας) is transformed into a feminine one: "*she* prepared death for her wedded husband" (κουριδίῳ τεύξασα πόσει φόνον, 11.430). By the end of the poem, Clytemnestra has become the active agent of Agamemnon's murder and Aegisthus is not mentioned at all: "*she* killed her wedded husband" (κουρίδιον κτείνασα πόσιν, 24.200). Agamemnon scapegoats his wife for his own death, redirecting responsibility from Aegisthus to his female betrayer. Clytemnestra's sexual infidelity is entwined with, and ultimately becomes indistinguishable from, her lover's murder of her husband.

This act of familial treachery also has serious political consequences: it disrupts the patrilineal line of succession and displaces Orestes from the inheritance of father's kingdom. Instead, Aegisthus assumes the kingship in his place, tyrannically usurping power, as is suggested by Nestor's phrase "he bound the people under him" (δέδμητο δὲ λαὸς ὑπ' αὐτῷ, 3.304). Further, Clytemnestra's (mis)behavior has far-reaching implications: Agamemnon says her crime casts suspicion on all women, "even one who is virtuous" (καὶ ἥ κ' ἐυεργὸς ἔῃσιν, 11.434; 24.202).[34] Agamemnon suggests that even women who act according to social norms may be suspect, and that Clytemnestra, rather than Penelope, should be viewed as a paradigm. According to Nestor, Clytemnestra herself was originally ἐυεργός: at first she refused Aegisthus because "she had a virtuous mind" (φρεσὶ…κέχρητ' ἀγαθῇσι, 3.266), as does Penelope (ἀγαθαὶ φρένες, 24.194). Yet Clytemnestra is eventually overcome and gives into Aegisthus' sexual

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[34] On the concerns about Penelope raised by Clytemnestra's behavior, see Murnaghan 1986: 107-108; Olson 1990, *passim* but esp. 62-65; Katz 1991: 29-53; Felson-Rubin 1994: 95-107. On this passage's interpretive consequences, see Murnaghan (1987: 124): "The *Odyssey*'s unusually sympathetic portrait of an exemplary wife is placed in a wider context of suspicion towards women from which even she cannot altogether escape. Through its presentation of Penelope as an exception to the general rule, the poem self-consciously depicts the formation and authorization of a tradition of misogyny even as it places the counterexample at the center of the story."

charms (cf. θέλγεσκ᾽, 3.264). The poem's characterization of both Helen and Clytemnestra pro-

motes a hostile view of female sexuality as the cause of war, death, betrayal, mariticide, and

significant social and political upheaval. Further, Agamemnon's *sententia* and Nestor's story of

Clytemnestra suggest that all women are corruptible and even a good woman may become dan-

gerous.

Female sexuality on the divine level is portrayed with similar hostility and suspicion.

The unchecked sexuality of Circe and Calypso significantly delays the hero's *nostos*. Odys-

seus remains with Circe for a year and a day, enjoying both her sexual favors and her hospi-

tality (10.467-468), whereas Calypso detains him for seven years (7.259). In both cases, the

women's sexual power is emasculating: Calypso keeps Odysseus as her lover "by force" (καὶ

ἀνάγκη, 5.154; cf. 5.15) and compels him to sleep with her "unwilling, beside the willing

woman" (παρ᾽ οὐκ ἐθέλων ἐθελούσῃ, 5.155). The word order of this phrase, with the mascu-

line participle "trapped" between the preposition and the feminine form, vividly demonstrates

Calypso's sexual menace: it is as if she has engulfed Odysseus.

Likewise, Circe literally causes men to be "unmanned" (ἀνήνορα, 10.301, 341), trans-

forming them into "groveling swine" (σύες χαμαιευνάδες, 10.243). She initiates the sexual

relationship with Odysseus, inviting him into her bed (10.333-335) and encouraging him to

sheath his sword (ἀλλ᾽ ἄγε δὴ κολεῷ μὲν ἄορ θέο, 10.333). Odysseus resists her emasculat-

ing powers only with the help of Hermes, who advises him that to employ normative male

sexual aggression—threatening her with the phallic sword and then taking her to bed

(10.294-298, cf. 10.321-322, 345-347). As Calypso argues, male gods disapprove of female

sexual aggression on the divine level, since they "begrudge" female goddesses the right to

mate with mortal men (ἀγάασθε, 5.119; cf. 5.122, 129). The interventions of Hermes against

Calypso and Circe represent divine endorsement of the traditional dichotomy between male sexual activity and female passivity.

Further, as with Helen and Clytemnestra, the unchecked sexuality of these demi-goddesses is reflected in socio-political terms: both live on islands that are fertile and productive, but uninhabited. As Wohl (1993: 24) puts it, "This topography is an expression of the profound (male) association of women with anti-culture," demonstrating that "[w]ithout men to direct their fertility into socially productive channels, the lavish fruitfulness of the islands can create nothing more civilized than overgrown jungles." Circe's island is occupied only by the animals she has domesticated through her magic: bewitched by "evil drugs" (κακὰ φάρμακα, 10.213), they "fawn around" (περισσαίνοντες, 10.215; cf. 10.219) his men like dogs. The only "society" possible under female authority is the ghastly parody that Circe creates from beasts bewitched into obedience and men bewitched into beasts.[35]

The Sirens represent a similar type of female menace, enchanting (θέλγουσιν, 12.40, 44) the male listener and luring him to his doom. The verb used to describe their bewitching effect links them to Calypso (θέλγει, 1.57) and Circe (θέλξαι, 10.291; cf. 10.318, 326) and has strong sexual connotations.[36] The Sirens demonstrate vividly the deadly potential of this

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[35] Cf. Yarnell (1994: 11) suggests that Odysseus' description of these beasts as "dreadful monsters" (αἰνὰ πέλωρα, 10.219) "expresses the Greek horror at seeing the order of nature overturned." Society on Ithaca under Penelope's control has likewise degenerated to the point where men behave like swine. On the parallels between Penelope's effect on the suitors and Circe's effect on the crew, see Nagler 1977: 77-83; 1990: 342; Zeitlin 1995: 139. While Nagler and Zeitlin attribute the suitors' debasement to Penelope's sexual charms, I think it is equally owed to the absence of a strong male authority figure.

[36] Θέλγειν is also used with sexual connotations of Aegisthus seducing Clytemnestra (3.264) and of Penelope charming gifts from the suitors (18.282), although it does appear in non-sexual contexts of Hermes (5.47, 24.3) and Odysseus (14.387, 16.195, 17.514); Pucci (1998: 176 n. 104) points out that in the *Iliad* θέλγειν is always used of either sexual or magical charms. See further Buxton 1982: 51-52 on the Sirens as *exempla* of "the power of erotic *peitho*," cf. Schein 1995: 21; Doherty 1995a: 84-85; McClure 1999: 62-67 on the sexual menace of the Sirens.

female "enchantment": their meadow is filled with "a great heap of bones of rotting men, and the skin is shriveling around them" (πολὺς δ᾽ ἀμφ᾽ ὀστεόφιν θὶς | ἀνδρῶν πυθομένων, περὶ δὲ ῥινοὶ μινύθουσι, 12.45-46). As with Scylla and Charybdis, the Sirens overpower traditional heroic means of attack and defense; they too unman their victims, leaving them helpless. The Sirens destroy men through their "honey-sweet voice" (μελίγηρυν… ὄπα, 12.187) and also, of course, prevent their return home: if a man hears their song, "his wife and infant children never stand by his side and rejoice on his return home" (τῷ δ᾽ οὔ τι γυνὴ καὶ νήπια τέκνα | οἴκαδε νοστήσαντι παρίσταται οὐδὲ γάνυνται, 12.42-43). The Sirens, like Circe and Calypso, are explicitly set against Odysseus' return home.

Even the monsters Scylla and Charybdis are depicted as feminine and their menace is portrayed in sexual terms.[37] Scylla lives in a "dark cave" (σπέος ἠεροειδές, 12.80), imagery that is suggestive of the womb, thus constructing her as a kind of monstrous anti-mother.[38] She has six heads, each with three rows of teeth, "full of black death" (πλεῖοι μέλανος θανάτοιο, 12.92) and she "fishes" (ἰχθυάᾳ, 12.95) for men, and "devours" them (κατήσθιε, 12.256). As Hopman (2012: 54) puts it, Scylla is a "super-predator" since she eats not only men, but other dangerous beasts, including sea-monsters (12.96-97). The image of Scylla reaching out from her cave to consume men with her three sets of teeth suggests the *vagina*

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[37] See Schein 1995: 18-21; cf. 1996: 25; Doherty 1995b: 136, n. 19 ("A Freudian reading of this passage would emphasize the specifically sexual imagery of the narrow channel, the whirlpool, the cave, and the multiple mouths of Scylla").

[38] The concept of the engulfing/devouring mother is particularly owed to Klein and Lacan; for an overview of psychoanalytic theory on this subject, see Kaplan 1992: 107-123. Irigaray has argued that the gynophobic image of the devouring mother is, in fact, an inverted projection of the male desire to consume the mother (1991 [1980]: 40-41); she further points out that the image of the threatening mother has generally been reproduced rather than critiqued or analyzed by traditional psychoanalytic theory.

dentata, the image of female sexuality as deadly and devouring.[39] Indeed, the vagina is often

regarded in Greek medical literature as the "mouth" (στόμα) of the womb, which may be

conceived of as either hungry or thirsty.[40] Scylla is likened to a dog: she "barks terribly"

(δεινὸν λελακυῖα, 12.85) and she is compared to a new-born puppy (σκύλακος νεογιλῆς,

12.86).[41] The comparison further links her to dangerous female sexuality, since sexually

transgressive women are regularly described as dogs.[42]

Scylla too emasculates men: she cannot be overcome by the normal male methods of

arms and combat, and indeed Circe describes her as "not to be fought with" (οὐδὲ μαχητόν,

12.119) and warns Odysseus against arming himself against her (12.121-123).[43] When he

contravenes her orders and puts on his "glorious armor" (12.228), his efforts prove ineffec-

tive: he fails even to discern her in the cliff, much less to attack her.[44] Odysseus himself fears

that she will emasculate his comrades: he decides not to forewarn them of her, believing that

if they know she is waiting they will be too terrified to row, and instead will huddle in the

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[39] Paglia 1990: 52; Jantzen 2004: 85; Hopman 2012: 138-140.

[40] On the association of women's mouth and genitals, see e.g. Manuli 1983; Hanson 1990; Sissa 1990: 53-70; Carson 1990: 131-133, Dean-Jones 1994: 72-73; King 1998: 27-37 49.

[41] The punning wordplay on Scylla's name and her "doglike" nature has been observed since antiquity.

[42] Helen, Clytemnestra, and Aphrodite are all called "dog-faced" (κυνῶπις, 4.145, 8.319, 11.424) and the maids who sleep with the suitors are called "she-dogs" (αἱ κύνες αἵδε, 19.372; cf. 18.338; 19.91, 154)**.** On the sexual character of comparisons to dogs, cf. Lilja 1976: 13-36; Worman 2001: 21; 28-30; Franco 2003: 30-36; 193-196.

[43] See Hopman (2012: 26-40) on the emphasis on Scylla's invincibility and Odysseus' failure in this passage.

[44] Hopman (2012: 28-31) has noted the particularly Iliadic diction of this passage (including a traditional arming-scene) which, she argues, raises expectations that a battle will ensue between Odysseus and Scylla; the un-heroic outcome of their encounter is therefore particularly ironic. As Circe puts it, ἀλκή, or "heroic might," does no good against Scylla (12.119); see Collins (1998: 109-125) on the *Odyssey*'s modification of the Iliadic understanding of ἀλκή.

hold (12.225). The men she seizes are those "who were best in strength and might" (οἳ χερσίν τε βίηφί τε φέρτατοι ἦσαν. 12.246), yet, like Odysseus himself, they have no defense against her but are devoured "shrieking and stretching out their hands" (κεκληγῶτας χεῖρας… ὀρέγοντας, 12.256-257). Their deaths are the "most pitiful" (οἴκτιστον, 12.258) thing Odysseus has seen in his voyages, a formula usually reserved for womanly or un-heroic deaths.[45] Faced with this creature, Odysseus and his crew are helpless, and their heroic male collective is weakened by her seizure of the strongest, bravest men. Scylla is an "evil monster" (πέλωρ κακόν, 12.87), but she is also explicitly female, and her monstrous qualities are associated with female sexuality.

Charybdis, too, is a devouring female: an enormous vortex that "sucks down" indiscriminately (12.104-106, 236, 240, 431). Like Scylla, she is a specifically feminine monster and her menace is sexualized as a sucking hole that threatens Odysseus and his men with being swallowed, consumed, and engulfed. The depictions of both monsters conflate natural features with human bodies, representing geographic elements as gynomorphic—and savagely vicious—animate beings. Doherty (1995b: 136) has pointed out the preponderance of female threats in this part of Odysseus' journey: even the Planctae, the Clashing Rocks, are gendered feminine, and the sea in this passage is called Amphitrite, a female personification (12.60; 97). The poet—and Odysseus, who is narrating his adventures to the Phaeacian audience—relentlessly feminizes threats to the hero and his mission.[46]

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[45] Cf. 11.381, 412; 24.34 (Agamemnon and his men); 12.342 (death by starvation); 11.421, 22.471 (women's deaths). See further below on piteous deaths.

[46] The Laestrygonians too are represented by a maiden (κούρη, 10.105) who initially appears helpful but proves to be a member of a race that, like the Cyclops, Scylla, and Charybdis, threatens to devour the hero and his crew. The poet also introduces the abhorrent figure of the Laestrygonian Antiphates' wife, who summons her husband to consume Odysseus' men (10.112-115). Schein (1995: 19) suggests that even Polyphemos may represent a sexual menace, since he too dwells in a womb-like cave.

Women and Death in the *Odyssey*

The *Odyssey*'s anxiety regarding unregulated female sexuality is demonstrated by the deaths of female characters. Virtuous women are imagined dying swift, merciful deaths, whereas sexually transgressive women die with suffering and shame. Thus, when Odysseus encounters his mother in the underworld and questions her, he imagines her dying peacefully:

> ἀλλ᾽ ἄγε μοι τόδε εἰπὲ καὶ ἀτρεκέως κατάλεξον·
> τίς νύ σε κὴρ ἐδάμασσε τανηλεγέος θανάτοιο;
> ἦ δολιχὴ νοῦσος, ἦ Ἄρτεμις ἰοχέαιρα
> οἷς ἀγανοῖς βελέεσσιν ἐποιχομένη κατέπεφνεν;
>
> Come, tell me this and tell it truly:
> what fate of woeful death overpowered you?
> Was it long illness, or did Artemis the archer
> assail you with her gentle shafts and kill you? (11.170-173)

The two possibilities that Odysseus proposes for his mother's death are illness or the "gentle shafts" (ἀγανοῖσι βελέσσιν, 11.173) of Artemis.[47] Anticleia, however, explains that she died of longing (πόθος, 11.202) for her son, for his counsel, and his kindness (σά τε μήδεα… σή τ᾽ ἀγανοφροσύνη, 11.202-203). This death is not without suffering— in fact, Eumaeus describes it as "a woeful death, such as I would not wish on any man who dwells here as a friend and does me kindness" (λευγαλέῳ θανάτῳ, ὡς μὴ θάνοι ὅς τις ἐμοί γε | ἐνθάδε ναιετάων φίλος εἴη καὶ φίλα ἔρδοι, 15.359-360). Yet it is, like those of other "good" women I

I would point out that he also represents an anti-culture—in opposition to civilizing, masculine culture—comparable to that of Circe and Calypso.

[47] The arrows of Artemis and Apollo do not inflict violent, penetrative death, as is suggested by Hecuba's lament for Hector in the *Iliad*: his corpse is still fresh and unharmed, "like one whom Apollo of the silver bow has attacked with his gentle shafts and killed" (τῷ ἴκελος ὅν τ᾽ ἀργυρότοξος Ἀπόλλων | οἷς ἀγανοῖσι βελέεσσιν ἐποιχόμενος κατέπεφνεν, *Il.* 24.758-759). On the non-violent quality of these deaths, cf. Holmes 2007: 73. Schretter (1974: 174-215) draws a distinction between the deaths inflicted by the explicitly-gentle βέλεα of Apollo, and those inflicted by the implicitly violent κῆλα, with which he strikes the Achaeans in Book 1 of the *Iliad* (*Il.* 1.53, 383).

shall discuss, a bloodless and disembodied death, one that lacks physical violence, bodily

penetration, or disfigurement. Further, in attributing her death to her love for Odysseus, the

poet offers an appropriately virtuous end for a virtuous woman.

Similarly, Penelope often wishes to die, but she always imagines a peaceful, even in-

corporeal death. After she awakens from a particularly sweet sleep (γλυκὺς ὕπνος, 18.199),

she prays for a sleeplike death:

> ἦ με μάλ᾽ αἰνοπαθῆ μαλακὸν περὶ κῶμ᾽ ἐκάλυψεν.
> αἴθε μοι ὣς μαλακὸν θάνατον πόροι Ἄρτεμις ἁγνὴ
> αὐτίκα νῦν, ἵνα μηκέτ᾽ ὀδυρομένη κατὰ θυμὸν
> αἰῶνα φθινύθω, πόσιος ποθέουσα φίλοιο
> παντοίην ἀρετήν, ἐπεὶ ἔξοχος ἦεν Ἀχαιῶν.
>
> Alas, in my suffering, gentle slumber covered over me.
> Would that holy Artemis might give me so gentle a death,
> without delay, so that I might no longer waste away my life
> bewailing in my heart and longing for the manifold excellence
> of my dear husband, since he was outstanding among the Achaeans. (18.201-205)

Penelope envisions a gentle death (μαλακὸν θάνατον), comparable to the gentle sleep

(μαλακὸν …κῶμα) from which she has just awakened—in other words, a death indistin-

guishable from rest, a reprieve from suffering.[48] There are many parallels between the death

Penelope imagines for herself and the death that Odysseus imagines for Anticleia: both are

gentle, coming at the hands of "holy Artemis" (Ἄρτεμις ἁγνή, 18.202; cf. 11.198).[49] That

death at the hands of Artemis is preferable is suggested by Eumaeus' description of life in his

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[48] Compare the description of Odysseus' sleep as he travels toward Ithaca as "delightful…most sweet, and most like death" (νήδυμος ὕπνος…ἥδιστος, θανάτῳ ἄγχιστα ἐοικώς, 13.79-80). The passage con-cludes that Odysseus "slept in peace, forgetful of all he had suffered" (δὴ τότε γ᾽ ἀτρέμας εὗδε, λελασμένος ὅσσ᾽ ἐπεπόνθει, 13.92). Odysseus and Penelope will eventually enjoy a "sweet sleep" to-gether in their shared bed (23.342).

[49] Compare Artemis' merciful execution of Andromache's mother after the death of her husband and sons (*Il.* 6.428).

idyllic homeland Syrie. There, mortals die not from famine or "hateful disease" (νοῦσος…

στυγερή, 15.408), but instead Apollo and Artemis slay them "with their gentle shafts" (ξὺν |

οἷς ἀγανοῖς βελέεσσιν, 15.410-411) in old age. Penelope also imagines herself dying "from

longing" (ποθέουσα, 18.204) for Odysseus, just as Anticleia did (πόθος, 11.202).[50] Both

women's deaths are connected to their feminine virtue of devotion to son and husband.

Penelope later awakes from "evil dreams" (ὀνείρατ᾽… κακά, 20.87) and again weeps

for her husband and prays for death. Addressing Artemis, she asks either to be shot with an

arrow (20.60-63) or carried off by storm-winds "over the murky ways" (κατ᾽ ἠερόεντα

κέλευθα, 20.64) and deposited in the underworld.[51] In this prayer, Penelope evokes the ob-

scure myth of the Pandareids, who were snatched away just before marriage and given to the

"hateful Erinyes" (20.78) instead.[52] Penelope again connects her death to her fidelity to

Odysseus, as she prefers this fate to remarriage. As she concludes:

ὣς ἔμ᾽ ἀϊστώσειαν Ὀλύμπια δώματ᾽ ἔχοντες,
ἠέ μ᾽ ἐϋπλόκαμος βάλοι Ἄρτεμις, ὄφρ᾽ Ὀδυσῆα

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[50] As Weiberg (2016) has shown, the idea of death—indeed, of suicide—from longing for an absent husband or in preference to marriage to another man is a common *topos* of tragic depictions of the waiting wife. Weiberg discusses Aeschylus' Clytemnestra, who claims that she often attempted suicide as a show of loyalty to her husband (*Ag.* 874-876; see Weiberg 2016: 96-97). Likewise, Euripides' Helen decides to die rather than be forced into marriage with a barbarian (*Hel.* 296) and, in another play, Hecuba mocks Helen for not attempting suicide, as a faithful wife would do "out of longing for her husband" (ἃ γενναία γυνή | δράσειεν ἂν ποθοῦσα τὸν πάρος πόσιν, *Tro.* 1013-1014). Hecuba's use of ποθοῦσα echoes Penelope's (ποθέουσα, 18.204).

[51] This prayer in many respects echoes Helen's wish that she had been carried off by an evil storm wind (οἴχεσθαι προφέρουσα κακὴ ἀνέμοιο θύελλα, *Il.* 6.346; cf. ἀναρπάξασα θύελλα | οἴχοιτο προφέρουσα, *Od.* 20.63-64) before she had left her home and her husband. Both prayers are connected to wifely fidelity, but Penelope's is a wish for the future, and Helen's is a contrafactual wish about the past.

[52] Penelope had earlier compared herself to a specific Pandareid, Aedon/the nightingale, who mourns perpetually for the son she has killed (19.518-524). As McDonald (1997: 3) notes, these are the only mythological *exempla* attributed to Penelope in the poem; they are therefore particularly relevant for her (self) characterization. On these two similes, see Marquardt 1985: 40-42; Felson 1994: 35-36; Johnston 1994; Anhalt 2001; Levaniouk 2008 and 2010: 274-286.

ὀσσομένη καὶ γαῖαν ὕπο στυγερὴν ἀφικοίμην,
μηδέ τι χείρονος ἀνδρὸς ἐϋφραίνοιμι νόημα.

So may the gods who dwell on Olympus blot me from sight
or fair-haired Artemis strike me down, so that with Odysseus
on my mind, I might pass beneath the hateful earth
and never gladden the heart of a lesser man. (20.79-82)

In her earlier prayer, Penelope imagined death as preferable to life without Odysseus, but here she is more specific in imagining it as preferable to sexual betrayal of Odysseus: marriage to a "lesser man" (χείρονος ἀνδρός, 20.82). Unlike Helen and Clytemnestra, Penelope would rather die than betray her husband. Further, like the death Odysseus envisioned for Anticleia, this is a remarkably insubstantial, even non-corporeal end. Using a privative form of εἴδω, Penelope prays that the gods may "blot her from sight" (ἀϊστώσειαν, 20.79). Her prayer thus imagines an invisible death that erases her from the face of the earth and seems to leave nothing behind—no body, no corpse.[53]

While the poem's virtuous female elites die gentle, insubstantial deaths, its sexually transgressive slaves die violently. The most prominent example is the Ithacan maids, whose crimes threaten Odysseus' re-establishment of order in his household and kingdom. Their wrongdoing is overdetermined in that they are both socially and sexually transgressive. In the first place, they ally themselves with the suitors and against Penelope by revealing her trick with the shroud, an act that exposes them as "reckless dogs" (κύνας οὐκ ἀλεγούσας, 19.154).[54] This betrayal not only reveals their mistress' secret, but also works against Odysseus' interests: Penelope is no longer able to delay her progress towards remarriage but must

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[53] This mode of dying is similar to the death of Vergil's Creusa, another faithful wife, discussed in Chapter 3 (*Aen.* 2.790-794).

[54] It is interesting that both Antinous and Amphimedon say that only one of the women (τις…γυναικῶν, 2.108, 24.144) revealed Penelope's trick to them, whereas Penelope suggests that all the treacherous maids were involved. Penelope is recounting her story to the disguised Odysseus, and

finish the shroud "against her will, by force" (καὶ οὐκ ἐθέλουσ᾽ ὑπ᾽ ἀνάγκης, 2.110; 19.156; 24.146).[55] Melantho, the only maid given a name, is marked out as especially treacherous: although Penelope raised her as her own child (κόμισσε δὲ Πηνελόπεια | παῖδα δὲ ὣς ἀτίταλλε, 18.322-323), nonetheless "she had no sorrow in her heart" for her mistress (ἀλλ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ὣς ἔχε πένθος ἐνὶ φρεσὶ Πηνελοπείης, 18.324).[56] Melantho is the opposite counterpart of Eumaeus, who was also cared for by Anticleia as a son (15.365) and maintains an unwavering loyalty to the family.[57] All twelve maids, but particularly Melantho, are treacherous *qua* slaves: they transfer their loyalties away from their masters to the unworthy suitors.

Yet the maids' transgression is doubled, as will be the case for the transgressive women of the *Aeneid*: they are transgressive not only as slaves, but also as women, for they are repeatedly shown to be sleeping with the suitors (18.325, 20.6-9, 22.37, 22.444-45). Their disloyalty thus takes the same form as that of the poem's female elites, and the same axis that divides Helen and Clytemnestra from Penelope also divides good and bad slave women. In this case, the transgression is not adultery but something quite similar: Thalmann (1998a: 72)

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her use of the plural perhaps further validates his decision to kill all the disloyal maids.

[55] As Foley (1984: 61-62) points out, by the trick of the shroud, Penelope has effectively stopped time on Ithaca in an effort to maintain the social order of things until Odysseus can return. By revealing her deceit, the maids help "re-start" the passage of time and so contribute to the widespread breakdown of social hierarchy that allows the suitors to harass Penelope, threaten Telemachus, and consume Odysseus' property.

[56] Melantho functions as a parallel to her lover, Eurymachus (18.325-326), who was treated by Odysseus as a son (16.441-443) but who betrays this quasi-familial bond. It is particularly repugnant that he adduces this relationship with Odysseus as a reason for his loyalty to Telemachus (16.445-446) when he has, of course, been plotting with the other suitors to murder him (4.669-71, 778-79, 842-47; cf. 2.368; 16.363-392).

[57] Thalmann (1998a: 87-89) points out that Eumaeus' relationship to the royal family is presented in terms identified by Patterson (1982: 62-65) as "fictive kinship," a means of naturalizing slavery by assimilating it to family ties. Unlike Eumaeus, Melantho resists this naturalization.

describes it as "an implicit claim of rival ownership."[58] Indeed, given that a slave-owner had

an absolute sexual right to his slaves comparable to a husband's right to his wife,[59] the com-

parison with adultery is very close. Just as a wife's sexual betrayal diminishes a husband's

honor, so a slave's sexual betrayal diminishes her master's: as Thalmann (1998a: 72) con-

cludes, "No wonder Odysseus is outraged. The danger to his social being is mortal."

Odysseus' reaction to the sight of the women leaving the house to sleep with the suit-

ors the last time vividly demonstrates this sense of outraged possessiveness:[60] he is compared

to a dog barking (ὑλάει, 20.15) at a man who approaches her "tender pups" (ἀμαλῇσι…

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[58] Cf. Alden (1997: 526): "μοιχεία…has already been committed in Odysseus' household by the suit-ors with the maids." Similarly, Dimock (1989: 264) and Russo (1992: 109) attributes Odysseus' rage at the maids to "sexual jealousy" (*contra* Rutherford 1992 *ad* 20.6). Thalmann (1998b: 30-31) seems to raise a distinction between the damage to a man's property caused by the sexual betrayal of his slaves and the damage to a man's honor caused by the sexual betrayal of a wife or daughter: he argues that that, because slaves are "socially dead" (Patterson 1982), they are "by definition, outside this sys-tem of honor." Yet he acknowledges (1998a: 72) that slaves can indeed affect their master's honor, in this case "by becoming sexually available not to their master but to men who are in his house trying to supplant him." I would add that the sexuality of wives and daughters is also considered male prop-erty and sexual damage, whether through adultery or rape, is a property crime, so the distinctions Thalmann draws between elite and slave sexuality are perhaps less well-defined than he suggests.

[59] As is shown by the digression on Eurycleia's history: brought into the house by Laertes, he "hon-ored" (τίεν, 1.432) her, but never slept with her in order to avoid the wrath of his wife (χόλον δ' ἀλέεινε γυναικός, 1.433). Laertes' abstention from sex with Eurycleia is noteworthy, and therefore probably unusual.

[60] As Fulkerson (2002: 346) points out, the maids' action of leaving the house to sleep with the suitors is doubly transgressive, since it demonstrates their active willingness to have sex with the suitors and also their violation of the typical territorial assignments that separate public/male spaces from pri-vate/female spaces. Confinement to the interior of the house signifies appropriately virtuous female behavior—for example, Penelope never leaves the house and only rarely leaves her apartments (1.330-331; 16.409-410; 18.206-211; 21.9-11; 23.85); furthermore, when she does leave she is usu-ally not alone (οὐκ οἴη, 1.331; 18.207) but is accompanied by servants (1.331, 16.413, 18.207, 21.66) and holds her veil in front of her face as a sign of modesty (1.334, 16.416, 18.210, 21.65). The only time these gestures are omitted is when she goes to greet Odysseus after his victory over the suitors in Book 23. Similarly, when Nausicaa leaves the house to do her laundry she is explicitly "not alone" (οὐκ οἴην, 6.84). On the link between women's spatial confinement and sexual restraint in the poem, see Fletcher 2008.

σκυλάκεσσι, 20.14).[61] Odysseus calms himself with the reminder that he has endured something even worse (κύντερον, 20.18: literally, "more doggish") when he saw his comrades eaten by the Cyclops (20.19-21).[62] Graver (1995: 48) suggests that the idea that the maids' behavior is comparable to that of the Cyclops "makes of their conduct something monstrous, a selfishness akin to cannibalism." Their sexual transgression is outrageous, as the comparison to Polyphemus makes clear.

The execution of the maids is directly linked to their sexual transgressions and is construed as an appropriate punishment. Odysseus (18.337-339) and Penelope (19.91-92) both chastise Melantho (in each case apostrophized as "bitch": 18.338; 19.91) with threats to her life. These threats are linked to her scornful speech towards the beggar Odysseus (18.321-336; 19.65-69), mockery that further marks her disloyalty to the household and her disregard for the social codes of hospitality. Moreover, when the maids leave the house to sleep with the suitors, Odysseus considers killing them on the spot (20.10-11), but decides to let them satisfy their desires "for the last and latest time" (ὕστατα καὶ πύματα, 20.13). De Jong (2009: 70) notes the "menacing tone" of these words that foreshadow the imminent death both of the suitors and of their paramours. The poem constructs the maids' deaths as inevitable and warranted punishment for their conduct.

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[61] Although not mentioned in her seminal article on the subject, this comparison belongs to the category defined by Foley (1984) as "reverse similes," in which the gender and social role of the *comparandi* are inverted: in this case, a male is compared to a female, a human is compared to an animal, a master is compared to a subordinate. The simile is especially jarring since the maids are often called "dogs" (18.338; 19.91, 154, 372). On this passage, see e.g. Rose 1979; Graver 1995: 47-48; Curti 2003: 40-42. Rutherford (1992: 205; cf. Rose 1979: 228-229) suggests that the maids are being compared to the unknown man, but I follow W. Beck (1991: 164) and de Jong (2001: *ad* 13-16) in identifying him with the suitors.

[62] This reference is particularly apt since the men about to be eaten by Polyphemus are themselves compared to puppies (ὥς τε σκύλακας, 9.289).

Further, when Odysseus decrees the maids' death he describes it as punishment for their sexual betrayal. He instructs Telemachus, Eumaeus, and Philoetius to take the women outside and kill them:

> θεινέμεναι ξίφεσιν τανυήκεσιν, εἰς ὅ κε πασέων
> ψυχὰς ἐξαφέλησθε καὶ ἐκλελάθωντ᾽ Ἀφροδίτης,
> τὴν ἄρ᾽ ὑπὸ μνηστῆρσιν ἔχον μίσγοντό τε λάθρη.

> Strike them with your long-pointed swords until
> you have taken away the souls of them all and they utterly forget Aphrodite
> whom they had with them when they slept with the suitors in secret. (22.443-445)

Here Odysseus openly links the execution of the maids to their sleeping with the suitors, just as he had linked his killing of the suitors to their sleeping with the maids (22.37).[63] Their deaths, making them forget Aphrodite (22.444), will erase the damage they have done to Odysseus' prestige. The sexual crime is the only wrong mentioned by Odysseus, although the maids have acted disloyally in other ways (as Telemachus will point out: 22.463-464). Odysseus' single-mindedness indicates that the women's sexual infidelity stands in for their infidelity more generally—that they have slept with the suitors is all he needs to know. The execution of the suitors is not enough to restore order in Ithaca: the women who abetted their wrongdoing must also be punished, and punished in a way that targets the sexual transgression that is the core of their offense.

Furthermore, before the execution Odysseus and his men first compel the maids to carry out the bodies of their lovers and clean their blood from hall (22.437-439; 448-453). This final labor is designed to return them to their proper place before death. The depiction of

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[63] Odysseus accuses the suitors of sleeping with the slave-women "violently" (βιαίως, 22.37) and his phrasing has sometimes been thought to suggest that he believes they were raped (e.g. Russo, Fernandez-Galiano, and Heubeck 1992: 137), but I follow Alden (1997: 526, n. 41), who argues that βιαίως refers to the suitors' offense against Odysseus in appropriating his sexual control over the maids, not any alleged offense against the maids themselves.

the women here emphasizes their helplessness: they come into the hall "huddled together"

(ἀολλέες, 22.446),[64] weeping and wailing in fear. Rather than lay out the dead for burial, as

elite wives and mothers would, the maids are forced to pile them up unceremoniously on the

portico "propping them up against one another" (ἀλλήλοισιν ἐρείδουσαι, 22.450). As they

work, Odysseus himself supervises, urging them on (αὐτὸς ἐπισπέρχων, 22.451).[65] He thus

takes this last opportunity to assert his authority over the maids and reduce them to helpless

drudges.

Odysseus had instructed his men to kill the women with their swords (θεινέμεναι

ξίφεσιν τανυήκεσιν, 22.443), but Telemachus emphatically rejects this option:[66]

> μὴ μὲν δὴ καθαρῷ θανάτῳ ἀπὸ θυμὸν ἑλοίμην
> τάων, αἳ δὴ ἐμῇ κεφαλῇ κατ᾿ ὀνείδεα χεῦαν
> μητέρι θ᾿ ἡμετέρῃ παρά τε μνηστῆρσιν ἴαυον.
>
> I would not, then, take away the lives of these women
> by a clean death, since they poured shame on my head
> and my mother's, and they slept with the suitors. (22.462-464)

Instead, he devises a joint hanging "so that they might die most piteously" (ὅπως οἴκτιστα

θάνοιεν, 22.472). The implication is that death by the sword is too good for these women,

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[64] As Russo, Fernandez-Galiano, and Heubeck (1992: *ad loc.*) put it, the adjective "graphically captures the sight of the women clinging to each other in terror."

[65] Russo, Fernandez-Galiano, and Heubeck (1992: *ad loc.*) point out that the only Homeric parallel for this intransitive use of ἐπισπέρχω refers to the spurring of a horse (*Il.* 23.430), "which fits nicely with the imperious treatment of the women-slaves here."

[66] Gottesman (2014) argues that the final books of the poem dramatize Telemachus' gradual mastery of what he terms "the Odyssean grammar of authority" (55). Although he focuses on the murder of the suitors and does not discuss the execution of the maids, this episode would constitute another example of Telemachus' self-assertion. Nagler (1993: 247-248), on the other hand, views Odysseus' dissociation from the killing of the maids (and the mutilation of Melanthius) as evidence of his "executive style" of leadership, arguing that, by delegating these distasteful acts to Telemachus, Odysseus is "insulating himself (to some extent) from the excesses of the violence he occasions, and represents" (247).

perhaps because it is a particularly masculine, and therefore honorable, death: swords are the implements men use to kill other men (cf. Loraux 1989: 7-17). Telemachus is especially concerned that their death**s** should not be clean (μὴ μὲν…καθαρῷ θανάτῳ, 22.462), an idea that, as Fulkerson (2002: 341) suggests, appears paradoxical, as stabbing is usually messier than hanging.[67] Fulkerson (2002: 341; cf. Stanford 1942) suggests that καθαρός in this case has a moral sense: the maids do not deserve to die by a clean death "because they are not themselves clean."

Indeed, hanging seems to have been considered an especially shameful way to die.[68] It is also, as Loraux argues (1989: 7-30), the primary method of female suicide in Greek tragedy, and is the means of the only female suicide mentioned by Homer: Epicaste, who hangs herself when she discovers she has married her son (11.271-280). The narrative of Epicaste's death implies that hanging was an appropriate atonement for her "monstrous deed" (μέγα ἔργον, 11.272) of incest.[69] Hanging is therefore similarly appropriate to the sexual transgression of the maids, constructed by Odysseus and Telemachus as monstrous.[70] Execution by

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[67] In fact, the verb form of this adjective (καθαίρω) has just been used by Odysseus and the narrator to describe the maids' cleaning the bloodstains from the hall (22.439, 453).

[68] E.g. Plato *Laws* 9.873e6; *Antigone* 54; *Supplices* 473; *Helen* 134-136, 200-202, 298-302; 686-687. Cf. Loraux (1987: 9; 1995: 109-110) on the shame of hanging as opposed to the more honorable, masculine death by the sword. Likewise, Amata's suicide by hanging will be described as *informis* (*Aen.* 12.603; discussed in Chapter 3).

[69] The phrase μέγα ἔργον is generally used of impious actions that invite death as punishment, including Aegisthus' murder of Agamemnon (3.261) and the eating of Helios' cattle (12.373). The exception is Eurymachus' description of Telemachus' secret departure as "a monstrous deed, dared insolently" (μέγα ἔργον ὑπερφιάλως ἐτελέσθη, 4.663). This disproportionate description hints at the suitors' hypocrisy: they are the ones who behave "insolently" (1.334, 227; 2.310; 3.315; 4.627; 11.116; 13.374; 14.27; 15.12, 315, 377; 16.271; 18.167; 20.12, 291, 23.356).

[70] Fulkerson (2002: 342) suggests that Telemachus intends to impose on the maids the death they should have inflicted on themselves "if they had the requisite degree of αἰδώς." I would add that hanging is not merely a woman's means of suicide, but typically an *elite* woman's means of suicide: Epicaste and her tragic counterparts Jocasta, Phaedra, Leda, and Antigone, are royalty, and slaves are

the sword can also be construed as "manly" in the sense of phallic,[71] whereas hanging "closes

forever the too-open bodies of women" (Loraux 1989: 9).[72] Thus Fulkerson (2002: 343) sug-

gests that hanging "retroactively corrects" the maids' earlier sexual misconduct. Rather than

a penetrative death that would, in a sense, re-enact their sexual transgression by "opening"

their bodies to the phallic sword, Telemachus inflicts a death that closes and constricts.

The maids' death is certainly not "manly" in any sense; rather, the focus of the narra-

tive is on their powerlessness. Their death is collective and anonymous[73]—only Melantho

has been given a name, and she is not identified here but is rather subsumed into the group.

They die "most piteously" (οἴκτιστα, 22.472), a formula reserved for ugly, inglorious deaths

like those of Agamemnon and his men (11.381, 11.412, 24.34), killed not in battle, but "as

one kills an ox at the manger" (11.411), and the sailors eaten alive by Scylla (12.258).[74] A

"piteous" death is appropriate to the maids, since it is painful and shameful (as opposed to a

"clean death," 22.462). The maids die like birds caught in a net:

> ὡς δ᾽ ὅτ᾽ ἂν ἢ κίχλαι τανυσίπτεροι ἠὲ πέλειαι
> ἕρκει ἐνιπλήξωσι, τό θ᾽ ἑστήκῃ ἐνὶ θάμνῳ,

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not held to the same standards of αἰδώς as elites (Thalmann 1998a: 72, 1998b: 30-31). The suggestion that the maids should have killed themselves therefore seems unlikely. I would argue, rather, that hanging—as a particularly shameful death—is seen as an appropriate punishment for transgressive women more generally, whether it is self-inflicted or not.

[71] Compare the deaths of Dido and Camilla in the *Aeneid*, discussed in Chapter 3 below.

[72] Cf. King 1983: 119; Fulkerson 2002: 343. Since αὐχήν may refer both to the neck and to the cervix (Hipp. *Art.* 55, *Steril.* 230, *Poll.* 2.222; cf. Hanson 1990: 318), constricting the throat through hanging may be viewed as a means of metaphorically constricting the genitals. On the link between the mouth and the vagina, cf. note 23 above.

[73] In contrast to the suitors, many of whom are named and given patronymics as they die (e.g. 22.241, 243, 287, 293-294) and some of whom are even praised as "by far the best of the suitors in valor" (οἱ γὰρ μνηστήρων ἀρετῇ ἔσαν ἔξοχ᾽ ἄριστοι, 22.244). Compare the Phoenician woman (discussed below), who, although described in detail, never receives a name.

[74] It is also used by Eurylochus to describe death by starvation (οἴκτιστον, 12.342).

αὖλιν ἐσιέμεναι, στυγερὸς δ᾽ ὑπεδέξατο κοῖτος,
ὣς αἵ γ᾽ ἐξείης κεφαλὰς ἔχον, ἀμφὶ δὲ πάσαις
δειρῇσι βρόχοι ἦσαν, ὅπως οἴκτιστα θάνοιεν.
ἤσπαιρον δὲ πόδεσσι μίνυνθά περ οὔ τι μάλα δήν.

As when long-winged thrushes or doves
fall into a net that has been set in the shrubbery
when they are seeking their nests, but a hateful resting-place receives them,
so they held their heads in a row, and around all their necks
were nooses, so that they might die most piteously.
Then they writhed with their feet for a little while, but not long. (22.468-473)

The simile comparing the maids to thrushes or doves is, as Rood (2006) demonstrates, part of a network of similes and omens of birds relating to Odysseus' vengeance: predatory birds, like vultures or eagles, stand in for Odysseus killing smaller, weaker birds, like geese or doves.[75] This pattern of bird imagery places the killing of the maids within the larger narrative of Odysseus' (righteous) vengeance, but it also, as in the interlude where the maids are forced to clean the hall, indicates their helplessness in comparison to the pitiless mastery of Odysseus and Telemachus. The final detail of the maids' kicking feet introduces a "carnographic" element that will be expanded upon in Vergil's narratives of female death.[76]

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[75] Rood identifies four bird omens associated with Odysseus' return and revenge (2.147-176; 15.160-178, 525-534; 20.242-246). Penelope's dream of the geese likewise foreshadows Odysseus' revenge on the suitors (19.535-538) and he and Telemachus swoop down on them like vultures preying upon smaller birds (22.302-308). The imagery of birds caught in a snare also evokes an earlier simile comparing the suitors dying in the hall to fish caught in a "many-holed net" (δικτύῳ…πολυωπῷ, 22.386).

[76] Adorno and Horkheimer (trans. 1972 Cumming: 79-80) suggest that, with this detail, Homer "prevents us from forgetting the victims, and reveals the unutterable eternal agony of the few seconds in which the women struggle with death." On the other hand, Thalmann (1998a: 61) "see[s] no *pathos* intended here, only a stern justice."

The simile also links the maids' death to their transgressive sexuality through their "hateful resting-place" (στυγερὸς…κοῖτος, 22.470)—a very different resting-place, presumably, than they enjoyed with the suitors.[77] By contrast, Penelope prays to go "under the hateful earth" (γαῖαν ὕπο στυγερήν, 20.81) rather than marry a lesser man.[78] The maids unwillingly receive the "hateful resting-place" that Penelope would prefer to a relationship with the suitors. It is often suggested that, in their infidelity to Odysseus and his household, the maids function as doubles and even scapegoats for their mistress, particularly Melantho who, as Felson (1994: 56) puts it, "actualizes what in her mistress remains potential," by sleeping with Eurymachus (18.325-326), the suitor considered most likely to win Penelope's hand (15.16-18, 519-522).[79] The incessant male anxiety over Penelope's fidelity—often latent, but sometimes overt (11.440-443, 454-456; 15.14-23, 16.32-35)—is displaced onto the maids. When they are eliminated, Penelope's potentiality for adultery is likewise erased. Further, because they are slaves, the maids are constructed as "killable," as transgressive elite women in the poem—Helen, Clytemnestra, and Aphrodite—are not (see further below). They therefore function as scapegoats both for Penelope's potential infidelity and for the actual infidelity of the unchaste elite women who, according to the poem's social/sexual economy, cannot be killed.

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[77] The imagery of birds caught in a net also evokes the song of Ares and Aphrodite, in which the lovers are caught in a snare made of "bonds unbreakable, unlooseable" (δεσμοὺς | ἀρρήκτους ἀλύτους, 8.274-275). Suzuki (1989: 90) suggests that the net imagery associated with Aphrodite and the maids contrasts them with Penelope: "Here again, Penelope's weaving and unweaving marks her difference as subject from other females who make themselves objects to be ensnared."

[78] She also refers to any marriage with the suitors as "hateful" (στυγερὸς γάμος, 18.272).

[79] As Katz (1991: 130) points out, Melantho is acting out the "Clytemnestra paradigm" since she "become[s] the lover of the husband's chief rival."

The death of the maids in Book 22 is thematically similar to that of another slave woman: Eumaeus' Phoenician nursemaid. According to Eumaeus, he was not born a slave but was the son of a king (15.413-414) until he was abducted by his Phoenician nurse and sold into slavery.[80] The Phoenician woman has many positive qualities—she is "beautiful and tall, and skilled in glorious crafts" (καλή τε μεγάλη τε καὶ ἀγλαὰ ἔργα ἰδυῖα, 14.418)— but she is corrupted by sex.[81] As in the story of the maids, the nurse's crimes arise from her sexual relationship with a Phoenician sailor, for "this beguiles the minds of mortal women, even one who is virtuous" (τά τε φρένας ἠπεροπεύει | θηλυτέρῃσι γυναιξί, καὶ ἥ κ᾽ εὐεργὸς ἔῃσιν, 15.421-422). This generalizing, gnomic statement again extends a single woman's cul-pability to her entire sex. Indeed, the concluding phrase exactly echoes Agamemnon's con-demnation of Clytemnestra, who, he says, has "poured down shame" (κατ᾽ αἶσχος ἔχευε, 11.433) and "brought ill repute" (χαλεπὴν δέ τε φῆμιν ὀπάσσει, 24.201) on all women, even the virtuous (καὶ ἥ κ᾽ εὐεργὸς ἔῃσιν, 11.434; 24.202).

Like Melantho, the nurse functions as both a parallel and a foil for Eumaeus: she also was not born into slavery, but was the daughter of an "abundantly rich" (ῥυδὸν ἀφνειοῖο, 15.426) Phoenician nobleman. Taphian pirates abducted her (ἀνήρπαξαν, 15.427) and sold her to Eumaeus' father. The arrival of Phoenician sailors presents her with an opportunity to return home. Unlike Eumaeus—who mourns more for Odysseus than his own lost parents (14.142-44)—she does not transfer her loyalty to her master and his household, but seeks to

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[80] See Thalmann (1998: 97-99) on the problems that Eumaeus' nobility poses for the ideology of the poem and its naturalization of slave-holding relationships.

[81] As in Nestor's version of Clytemnestra: originally, she had a "virtuous mind" (φρεσὶ…ἀγαθῇσι, 3.265) but was eventually corrupted. Nestor explains her lapse with the loss of a male guardian: it is only after Aegisthus disposes of the bard left behind to supervise Clytemnestra that she is persuaded (3.267-272).

return to her own family.[82] In her desire for νόστος, she parallels Odysseus himself, who is not content to remain on Calypso's idyllic island any more than she is content to live out her life in the utopian Syrie. Yet the poem offers only a negative reading of her desires as treacherous, devious, and transgressive.

Though the story of the Phoenician nurse parallels the lying tale Odysseus tells to Eumaeus, the change in gender of the principal wrongdoer proves significant. Odysseus claims to have fallen in with a Phoenician "rogue" (τρώκτης, 14.289) who plotted to steal his possessions and sell him into slavery. Likewise, the Phoenicians traders in Eumaeus' story are called τρῶκται (15.416), but in this case responsibility for the plots of theft and abduction is displaced onto a woman: after the traders have sworn to bring the nurse home with them, she takes the initiative by suggesting that she bring her nursling and as much gold as she can (15.448-453). The juxtaposition of the nurse's description of Eumaeus tagging along after her (ἅμα τροχόωντα, 15.451) and her conclusion "he would fetch you an immense price" (ὁ δ᾽ ὑμῖν μυρίον ὦνον | ἄλφοι, 15.452-453) casts her as callous and calculating, much like the Phoenician of Odysseus' tale.

Eumaeus contrasts his childish innocence with the nurse's plotting as she leads him by the hand (ἡ δ᾽ ἐμὲ χειρὸς ἑλοῦσα, 15.465) out of the house and into a life of slavery, and he follows obliviously (ἀεσιφροσύνῃσι, 15.470). The detail of her hiding three goblets under her robe (15.469) further contributes to the portrayal of the nurse as scheming and under-

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[82] As Thalmann (1998a: 98-99) notes, the contrast between the behavior of Eumaeus and his nurse "exposes the darker side" of slavery: "Someone torn from country, position, and the relations that define her social being might plausibly feel a primary loyalty to the land and family of her birth and use any means that present themselves to return. The injury inflicted on her master's family will mean nothing to her."

handed. Despite her positive qualities and her backstory as a victim of trafficking and en-

slavement, the Phoenician nurse emerges as the villain of Eumaeus' tale. Again, independent

female sexuality leads to the displacement and suffering of a virtuous male.[83] In addition to

its personal consequences for Eumaeus and his family, the nurse's betrayal also disrupts the

socio-political hierarchy of the kingdom, since Eumaeus is the son and heir of Syrie's ruler.

As with Helen, Clytemnestra, and the Ithacan maids, the nurse's sexual transgressiveness—

extended by Eumaeus to all women, even the virtuous—threatens both individual males and

male-dominated social and political structures.

The nurse's transgressions are swiftly punished. After seven days on board the ship,

she is struck down by divine retribution:

> τὴν μὲν ἔπειτα γυναῖκα βάλ᾽ Ἄρτεμις ἰοχέαιρα,
> ἄντλῳ δ᾽ ἐνδούπησε πεσοῦσ᾽ ὡς εἰναλίη κήξ.
> καὶ τὴν μὲν φώκῃσι καὶ ἰχθύσι κύρμα γενέσθαι
> ἔκβαλον· αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ λιπόμην ἀκαχήμενος ἦτορ·
> τοὺς δ᾽ Ἰθάκῃ ἐπέλασσε φέρων ἄνεμός τε καὶ ὕδωρ,
> ἔνθα με Λαέρτης πρίατο κτεάτεσσιν ἑοῖσιν.
>
> Then Artemis the archer struck the woman
> and she fell with a thud into the hold, plunging like a sea-bird
> and they threw her overboard to be prey for the seals
> and fish. But I was left, grieved at heart;
> and the wind and the wave brought them on to Ithaca
> where Laertes bought me with his wealth. (15.478-483)

This ignominious death, in Thalmann's words, "leaves no doubt of the ethical judgment

passed" (1998: 98). The treacherous nurse is stricken by Artemis and falls "with a thud"

(ἐνδούπησε, 15.479); she is then unceremoniously thrown overboard "to be prey for the seals

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[83] And, in this case, the loss of half his ἀρετή since, according to Eumaeus, this is what befalls a man when he is enslaved (17.322-323).

and fish" (φώκῃσι καὶ ἰχθύσι κύρμα γενέσθαι, 14.480). This last detail is especially signifi-

cant in terms of the Homeric epics' well documented concern for the fate of the body after

death.[84] Even the suitors are mourned and buried by their relatives (24.415-419), but the

Phoenician nurse receives no rites of any kind. The poet insists on the justice of her death by

attributing it to Artemis, in a pointed reversal of the manner of death in the land she has just

abandoned, where Artemis and Apollo offer gentle death in old age (15.411; discussed

above). The nurse's death, by contrast, is untimely and undignified. Artemis again appears as

the monitor and enforcer of female virtue. This role is made explicit in the *Iliad,* where Hera

recounts Zeus' appointment of Artemis as a "lion against women" (λέοντα γυναιξί, *Il.*

21.483) with the right to kill any female she wishes (κατακτάμεν ἥν κ᾽ ἐθέλῃσθα, *Il.* 21.484).

In the *Odyssey,* Artemis is shown rewarding virtuous women like Anticleia and Penelope

with a gentle death (μαλακὸν θάνατον, 18.202; cf. ἀγανοῖς βελέεσσιν, 11.173, 199) and pun-

ishing transgressive women with a shameful one.[85]

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[84] This concern is manifest from the opening lines of the *Iliad*, which lament the corpses left "as spoil for the dogs and birds" (ἑλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν | οἰωνοῖσί τε πᾶσι, *Il.* 1.4-5), and continues into the final books, which depict Hector's impassioned plea that Achilles not leave his body to be devoured by dogs (μή με ἔα παρὰ νηυσὶ κύνας καταδάψαι Ἀχαιῶν, *Il.* 22.339), the subsequent grief of his family when the corpse is abused, and Priam's willingness to risk his life in order to recover his son's corpse. See further Fenik 1968; Segal 1971; Friedrich 1973; Redfield 1975: 183-185; Griffin 1980: 44-50, 120-122; Vernant 1991: 71-74. As Clarke (1999: 157-160) argues, the corpse is viewed as retaining the dead person's identity rather than being merely an empty shell, and so "mutilation of the corpse is mutilation of the man (1999: 165); cf. Holmes (2007: 63 n. 38).

[85] Similar depictions of Artemis punishing sexually transgressive women include the story of Coronis, Apollo's beloved who slept with a mortal when she was pregnant by the god and was struck down by Artemis (*Ehoiai,* fr. 60 M-W; Pindar, *Pyth.* 3.8-46; Ps-Apoll., *Bib.* 3.118; Ovid, *Met.* 2.542-632; Paus. 2.11.7-12.1); this fate was also visited on her innocent neighbors. Similarly, Pausanias relates the story of Comaetho, a priestess of Artemis who slept with her lover in the sanctuary; Artemis responded with a famine and a plague that devastated the entire area until the offending priestess and her lover were sacrificed (Paus. 7.19.1-5). The Iliadic account of Niobe's punishment also depicts Apollo slaying her male children and Artemis the female; in this case, the girls suffer not for any transgression of their own but for their mother's impiety (*Il.* 24.605-607; cf. Ps.-Apoll., *Bib.* 3.46; Diod. Sic. 4.74.3). On Artemis as a vengeful plague-goddess, see Cole 1998: 30-3, 2004: 201-209;

Strikingly, the Phoenician woman is punished for her crime in abducting Eumaeus, but the male traders are not. This plot point contradicts the parallel of Odysseus's lying tale, in which Zeus strikes the Phoenician ship in mid-ocean, killing the entire crew (ἅπαντες, 14.307), not merely the treacherous rogue who had plotted against Odysseus. Verbal echoes link the two episodes: both Odysseus and Eumaeus follow their captors (ἑπόμην, 14.298; 15.470), and both ships initially receive a fair wind (14.299; 15.475). The abrupt appearance of "Zeus son of Cronus" (15.477) in Eumaeus' tale may thus initially suggest that he is about to smite the Phoenician ship as he did in Odysseus' (14.303), but he is in fact responsible only for bringing about the seventh day. Instead, divine retribution is displaced onto Artemis, as punishment is displaced from the male traders onto the female nurse. The Phoenician sailors escape and are even rewarded for their misdeeds when they receive Laertes' payment for Eumaeus (15.482-483).

There are many similarities between the Ithacan maids and Eumaeus' nurse, and these correspondences indicate that the two narratives can be read as a pair. In both cases, slave-women betray their masters with failures of loyalty and of sexual restraint. The sexuality of the Phoenician woman is the property of Eumaeus' father, just as the sexuality of the maids is the property of Odysseus, and so her liaison with the trader is a crime of fidelity similar to their affairs with the suitors. The transgressions in both cases are doubled: the women are shown to be untrustworthy both *qua* slaves and *qua* women. In each case, the women's actions threaten the male family line and the royal line of succession since the Ithacan maids

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collude with the suitors who are plotting Telemachus' death[86] and the Phoenician nurse abducts the son and heir of Syrie's ruler.

There is also an association between the slave-women's betrayals and their transgressive speech: Melantho twice "berates" (ἐνένιπεν, 18.326; 19.65) the disguised Odysseus, and the Phoenician woman initiates the plot to steal Eumaeus (15.440-453).[87] As noted above, the major difference in the two stories is that in Book 22 both suitors and maids are punished, whereas in Book 15, the Phoenician rogues escape and only the nurse dies for their collective crime. Indeed, Douglas Olson (1995: 137) has suggested that the paired massacres of Book 22 "fulfill the domestic pattern left incomplete on Syrie earlier," since all the participants in the transgressive liaisons are punished.[88] I would add that the execution of the maids further corrects the story of Eumaeus' nurse in that the wronged parties carry it out: Odysseus and Telemachus exact vengeance for the maids' crimes personally, while retribution for the nurse's misdeeds was inflicted by a divine agent.

The behavior of the maids and the nurse endorses male anxieties about women more generally—indeed Eumaeus' gnomic statement about the effects of sex on "female women" (θηλυτέρῃσι γυναιξί, 15.422) suggests that the Phoenician nurse (significantly nameless) may be read as a paradigm for women in general. The women's treachery also plays into elite

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[86] Cf. 4.669-71, 778-79, 842- 47; cf. 2.368; 16.363-392.

[87] Additionally, as D. Beck (2012: 41) points out, the nurse's speech is quoted directly whereas the speech of the traders is generally reported in indirect discourse, a dichotomy that increases her prominence in the plot. On the association between unrestrained female speech and unrestrained female sexuality, see Fletcher 2008; on the gendering of speech in Greek poetry more generally, see Bergren [1983] 2008.

[88] Yet, while both suitors and maids must die for Odysseus to restore order on Ithaca, the transgressive maids receive a more ignominious death than the suitors, who are killed in battle, given names, epithets, and patronymics, and eventually buried by their families (cf. n. 56 above). Indeed, the suitors receive the καθαρὸς θάνατος that is explicitly denied to the maids (22.462).

anxieties about slaves. As Thalmann (1998a: 98) points out, the nurse's behavior "reveals slavery's arbitrary nature, which makes the bond between master and slave tenuous." Yet those anxieties are alleviated to a certain extent by the steadfast loyalty of characters like Eumaeus and Philoetius, who function as foils for the faithless female servants. An even more pointed comparison can be drawn between the Phoenician woman and Eurycleia, who nursed Odysseus and Telemachus: both "tend" (ἀτιτάλλω, 15.450; ἀτίταλλε, 19.354) the sons of their royal masters, but the Phoenician nurse's betrayal is contrasted with Eurycleia's fidelity.[89] Similarly, the treachery of the Ithacan maids is contrasted by the devotion of the unnamed female servants who appear after the hanging of their disloyal counterparts and joyfully welcome Odysseus (ἀμφεχέοντο καὶ ἠσπάζοντ᾽, 22.498).[90]

In addition to emphasizing Eurycleia's loyalty to Odysseus and his family, the narrator makes the absence of sexual transgression in her story explicit by announcing that Laertes never slept with her (εὐνῇ δ᾽ οὔ ποτ᾽ ἔμικτο, 1.433).[91] The narrator explains that "he shunned the wrath of his wife" (χόλον δ᾽ ἀλέεινε γυναικός, 1.433), hinting, as Thalmann (1998b: 29) notes, that "the sexuality of even a 'good' slave is seen as potentially disruptive to the family she serves." Laertes' self-control prevents this disruption and maintains Eurycleia's status as

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[89] Yet, just as Odysseus does not trust Penelope with his secret, he does not trust Eurycleia either: although the male servants Eumaeus and Philoetius are told the beggar's true identity, Eurycleia discovers it on her own and Odysseus immediately threatens her with death if she exposes him (19.485-490). See Doherty 1995b: 153; Thalmann 1998a: 79-80 on Odysseus' latent mistrust of Eurycleia.

[90] Cf. Thalmann (1998a: 61), who argues that this reunion "erase[s] the bitterness of that scene and… fix[es] the benevolent guise of slavery back in place."

[91] Fletcher (2008: 82-83) has argued that Eurycleia's asexuality—which is, within the poem a metonym, for loyalty to the household—is what guarantees her trustworthiness and authorizes Odysseus to confide in her, alone among women in the household, the details of the plot.

a trustworthy retainer rather than a transgressive rival, like the faithless maids. Yet sexual abstinence is attributed entirely to Laertes; Eurycleia has no say either way. The poem thus downplays elite concerns about general slave treachery by juxtaposing the transgressive slaves with numerous examples of loyal ones, while ratifying male concerns about female treachery: although Penelope provides a counter-example of female fidelity, her loyalty is repeatedly represented as the exception rather than the rule. Rather, it is the behavior of the treacherous, transgressive women that is presented as archetypal.[92]

One other female slave dies in the *Odyssey*, and hers is the most problematic death of the poem. Cassandra, Agamemnon's concubine, is murdered by Clytemnestra over her master's body and dies with a "most piteous cry" (οἰκτροτάτην…ὄπα, 11.421). As an ill-starred captive—a victim of fate and the laws of war—Cassandra may well appear as an innocent,

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[92] I diverge from Thalmann here, who argues that, as opposed to slave women, who are naturally bad, "an aristocratic woman is seen as naturally good...A Helen or a Clytemnestra in that case betrays the standards of her class and challenges this fundamental class distinction" (1998b: 31). Yet it is Clytemnestra whom Agamemnon holds up as a paradigm for all women (11.434, 24.202); he hints that even Penelope should be viewed with suspicion (11.440-456). While Penelope is eventually exonerated (24.193-198), this exculpation, at least in Agamemnon's view, extends to her alone, whereas Clytemnestra's actions extend an evil repute to all women, even the virtuous (χαλεπὴν δέ τε φῆμιν ὀπάσσει | θηλυτέρῃσι γυναιξί, καὶ ἥ κ᾿ εὐεργὸς ἔῃσιν, 24.201-202). Agamemnon is hardly an unbiased narrator, yet the poem repeatedly dramatizes what he puts in more vitriolic terms by presenting numerous examples of sexually transgressive women of every status—slave, elite, and even divine—and by dwelling on these examples at length; the presence of virtuous women, on the other hand, is more circumscribed. Cf. Murnaghan 1987: 124-125 on the poem's representation of Penelope as exceptional. Nestor is a more neutral narrator (for example, he says that Clytemnestra originally had a virtuous mind: φρεσὶ…ἀγαθῇσι, 3.266) yet even she is eventually "beguiled" (θέλγεσκ᾿, 3.264) once she is released from male supervision (3.267-262).

virtuous woman whose death is undeserved.[93] Yet although she has been raped and ab-

ducted,[94] the loss of Cassandra's virginity and status transforms her from a sexually norma-

tive female into a ruined woman, a woman no longer useful or acceptable to her family and

community.[95] No longer a virgin daughter and potential wife, she is damaged goods and has

no value as an object of exchange between men.[96] Her fate, indeed, runs parallel to the Phoe-

nician woman's and Eumaeus': the children of nobleman or kings (15.413-414, 426; 11.421),

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[93] Indeed, the same could be said of the Ithacan maids and the Phoenician nurse, all victims of the "ar-
bitrary nature" of Homeric slavery (Thalmann 1998a: 98; see above on the abductions of the nurse
and Eumaeus) who may well experience "natural resentment…leading to treachery" (Donlan 1989:
10 n. 15). It may, perhaps, be easier to sympathize with the fate of Cassandra (captured in war) or
even the nurse (stolen from a wealthy family and sold into slavery) than with that of Melantho (the
daughter of slave, raised with love and care by Penelope), yet the maids, as female slaves, are mem-
bers of a highly vulnerable and marginalized group and may understandably find it easier to reach an
accommodation with those currently in power than to put themselves at risk for the sake of a man
who may never come home (a fictional reconsideration of the maids has been offered by Atwood
2005). Cf. Scodel 1998 on the dilemma faced by women enslaved in war, whose best chance of sur-
vival lies in accommodation with the men who have murdered their husbands and brothers.

[94] This is not narrated by the poet, but may be inferred from Nestor's description of the Greek depar-
ture from Troy: "we loaded on board our goods and the deep-girdled women" (κτήματά τ᾽
ἐντιθέμεσθα βαθυζώνους τε γυναῖκας, 3.154); that the women are figured as property and spoils of
war no different from the κτήματα is suggested by the parallel structure of the line. Cassandra's fate is
similar to the nameless woman described in a simile on Odysseus' grief: he weeps like a woman cap-
tured in war "and behind her the men strike her back and shoulders with their spears and lead her off
to bondage, to endure toil and woe" (οἱ δέ τ᾽ ὄπισθε | κόπτοντες δούρεσσι μετάφρενον ἠδὲ καὶ ὤμους
| εἴρερον εἰσανάγουσι ι, πόνον τ᾽ ἐχέμεν καὶ ὀιζύν). Compare *Iliad* 2.354-354 where Nestor urges the
Greeks not to sail for home until they have bedded down with a Trojan wife (πρίν τινα πὰρ Τρώων
ἀλόχῳ κατακοιμηθῆναι, *Il.* 2.355). This is the fate that has befallen Chryseis and Briseis and the one
Hector anticipates for Andromache (*Il.* 6.450-456).

[95] This transformation is vividly demonstrated by the fates of Leucothoe and Perimele in the *Meta-
morphoses* (discussed in Chapter 4): raped by divinities, they are murdered by their own fathers, de-
spite Leucothoe's explicit protest *vim tulit invitae* (*Met.* 4.239). This practice remains alive and well
today in certain parts of the world (as is shown by the cases of Aisha Ibrahim Duhulow, Hena Akhter,
and others).

[96] Cf. James (forthcoming) on Lucretia: "She codifies the longstanding value that a woman ruined,
even against her will, is a *useless* woman, no longer part of her own community. She must remove
herself from her community in order to make that community whole and functional." Likewise, Joplin
(1990: 63) similarly describes the rape-victim's role as "as a source of dangerous and confusing pol-
lution" to the group. Yet it should be noted that the *Iliad* includes an example of a father who is will-
ing, even desperate, to retrieve a rape-captive in Chryses (*Il.* 1.11-21; note that Agamemnon implies

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they all lose a measure of their human worth in slavery (cf. 17.320-321). Yet Cassandra and the Phoenician woman are disadvantaged by slavery in a way that Eumaeus is not because their sexuality becomes the property of their masters. Cassandra assumes the role of the disruptive female slave avoided by Eurycleia, since Agamemnon, unlike Laertes, does not "shun the wrath of his wife" (1.433) and brings his concubine home from war.[97] This, then, is the fate of the raped captive: like many modern victims of rape, she is automatically viewed as complicit, compliant, and even promiscuous.[98] Indeed, Aeschylus' Clytemnestra calls Cassandra Agamemnon's "bed-sharer" (κοινόλεκτρος, *Ag.* 1441) and "faithful bedfellow" (πιστὴ ξύνευνος, *Ag.* 1442), while Euripides' Hecuba calls her son his brother-in-law (κηδεστήν, *Hec.* 834).[99] These formulations elide the initial violence of their relationship and suggest that it is based on consent rather than force.[100] While not explicit in the *Odyssey*, this view is perhaps implied by the fact that Cassandra is killed at Agamemnon's side (ἀμφ᾽ ἐμοί, 11.423; translated by LSJ s.v.v. ἀμφί as "clinging to me"). This "blurring of the distinction between

that Chryseis has already been raped: 1.31; 113-115).

[97] Thalmann (1998b: 29) remarks that Laertes avoids "horrific family situations" such as those described by Phoenix's story in the *Iliad* (9.447-457) and Deianeira in *Trachiniae* where a slave-concubine disrupts the family relationships between father and son and husband and wife. I would add the Cassandra/Clytemnestra/Agamemnon triangle (described briefly in the *Odyssey* and at much greater length in the tragic corpus) to his list.

[98] Aeschylus' Clytemnestra describes Cassandra as "equally familiar with the seamen's benches" (ναυτίλων δὲ σελμάτων | ἰσοτριβής, *Ag.* 1442), implying that she has had sex with the common sailors of the Greek fleet.

[99] Indeed, the Cassandra of *Troades* celebrates her "marriage" with Agamemnon (307-341), but in this case it is because she knows it will contribute to his death and their marriage will be "worse than Helen's" (Ἑλένης…δυσχερέστερον γάμον, *Tro.* 357).

[100] As Scodel (1998) has shown, Greek tragedy frequently dramatizes what she calls "the captive's dilemma," the grim reality that sexual compliance with the murderers of her husband and children is the captive woman's best chance for survival. These texts thus frequently juxtapose language of consent (even marriage) and of rape; for examples and detailed discussion see Scodel 1998 and Rabinowitz 2011: 14-16.

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rape and a consensual relationship" (Scodel 1998: 138) dramatizes the ancient view of the victim as somehow complicit in her own rape and in need of punishment. Cassandra's murder thus fits in with the general pattern of female slave deaths in the poem.

As noted above, Cassandra's situation as a former noblewoman parallels that of the Phoenician nurse. Thematic similarities also link Cassandra's death to the transgressive maid-servants and indicate that the two episodes may be read as a pair. According to Agamemnon, Cassandra dies with "a most pitiful cry" (οἰκτροτάτην…ὄπα, 11.421) and the maid-servants also die "most piteously" (οἴκτιστα, 22.472), suggesting that they suffer in death. Furthermore, the slaughter of Agamemnon and his men is linked to the execution of the suitors: both occur at a feast (δειπνίσσας, 11.411; cf. δαιτυμόνεσσι, 22.12) and the Argives lie dying "amidst the wine-bowls and the full tables" (ἀμφὶ κρητῆρα τραπέζας τε πληθούσας, 11.419) as do the suitors.[101] The two slaughters are explicitly linked by the words, repeated by both Agamemnon and Amphimedon, that "the whole floor ran with blood" (δάπεδον δ' ἅπαν αἵματι θῦεν, 11.420; cf. 24.185). Cassandra is linked to the maids and Agamemnon to the suitors: in both cases, slave-women die alongside their paramours, a death that is their due according to the sexual politics of the Homeric world, which do not permit women to choose.

The disparity between the deaths envisioned for Anticleia and Penelope and those visited on the maids, the nurse, and Cassandra, on the other, is significant. The poem's virtuous elite women are depicted with deaths that are "gentle" (μαλακόν, 18.202; ἀγανοῖσι, 11.173,

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[101] Eurymachus in particular falls sprawling over a table and spills the food and the cup on the floor (22.84-86).

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199) while its transgressive subaltern women die abruptly, ignominiously, violently, and pite-

ously. The deaths of Penelope and Anticleia are described nebulously, via circumlocution:

death from longing, death like sleep, death carried off by the wind, death blotted from sight.

These formulations leave no place for the physicality of death—for bodily suffering and vio-

lence or the fate of the corpse. The deaths of the poem's transgressive women, by contrast,

are described in explicitly, even brutally, physical terms: the dull thud of the nurse's corpse

hitting the deck and the casual indifference of the sailors who toss it overboard, the final

twitching of the maids' feet as they hang, Cassandra's desperate shriek as she falls on the

blood-soaked floor. These images, emphasizing the violence of the women's death, look for-

ward to the carnographic bloodshed that will be inflicted on transgressive women in the *Ae-*

neid. The poet thus creates a paradigm in which chaste women are rewarded while unchaste

women are punished with painful, violent deaths that reinforce the poem's sexual ideol-

ogy.[102]

 Ironically, two of the women who do not die in the *Odyssey* are the ones who, accord-

ing to this paradigm, might be thought especially deserving of death: Clytemnestra and

Helen. As discussed above, their infidelity has devastating consequences, both for the Greeks

in general and their husbands in particular.[103] Clytemnestra's betrayal of Agamemnon, in

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[102] On the punishment of the maids in relation to the poem's concern with unchecked female sexuality
and its emphasis on the need for its restraint, see Olson 1995: 34-37; Fulkerson 2002: 344-347.

[103] Cf. Odysseus' statement to the shade of Agamemnon: "Truly far-seeing Zeus has visited terrible
hatred on the offspring of Atreus from the first through the counsels of women: many of us lost our
lives for Helen's sake and, as for you, Clytemnestra prepared a snare for you although you were far
away" (ἦ μάλα δὴ γόνον Ἀτρέος εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς | ἐκπάγλως ἤχθηρε γυναικείας διὰ βουλὰς | ἐξ ἀρχῆς·
Ἑλένης μὲν ἀπωλόμεθ᾽ εἵνεκα πολλοί,| σοὶ δὲ Κλυταιμνήστρη δόλον ἤρτυε τηλόθ᾽ ἐόντι, 11.436-
439).

fact, forms a *leitmotiv* in the *Odyssey*: it is mentioned no fewer than fifteen times[104] and has a prominent place at the opening of the poem (1.29-43). The harsh epithets used for Clytemnestra (οὐλομένη: 4.93, 11.409; στυγερή: 3.310, 24.200) and Agamemnon's conclusion that "there is nothing more terrible or more shameless" than such a woman (ὣς οὐκ αἰνότερον καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο γυναικός, 11.429) would seem to earn her, in particular, a place alongside the Ithacan maids.[105] Indeed, Agamemnon casts Clytemnestra's guilt as paradigmatic, justifying suspicion and hostility towards all women—even Penelope (11.454-456); "even one who is virtuous" (καὶ ἥ κ᾽ ἐυεργὸς ἔῃσιν, 11.434; 24.202).

Yet, while Clytemnestra's bloody death at the hands of her son is a frequent topic of Greek tragedy,[106] Homer does not narrate it in detail. Although the poet frequently describes Orestes' vengeance on Aegisthus,[107] there is only a faint allusion to his murder of Clytemnestra: as Nestor says, Orestes "gave a funeral feast among the Argives | for his hateful mother and cowardly Aegisthus" (ἦ τοι ὁ τὸν κτείνας δαίνυ τάφον Ἀργείοισιν | μητρός τε στυγερῆς καὶ ἀνάλκιδος Αἰγ-ίσθοιο, 3.309-310). James (1991: 67) has suggested that the poet's reluctance to describe the matricide is best understood in terms of the Homeric epics' "pattern of suppressing the elements of tragedy in the families of epic." According to this reasoning, the

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[104] 1.35-43, 298-300; 3.193-98, 234-35, 255-312; 4.90-92, 512-37, 546-47; 11.387-89, 409-34, 452-53; 13.383-84; 24.19-22, 96-97, 199-200.

[105] The comparative κύντερον (literally, "more doggish") suggests the link, since it echoes Odysseus' reflection when the maids go to sleep with the suitors (20.18).

[106] It is treated in detail by all three major tragedians: in Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers* and *Eumenides* and in the *Electra*'s of both Sophocles and Euripides; there are additional references in many other plays.

[107] 1.29-43, 1.298-302, 3.193-200, 3.307-312, 4.548-549.

narrator censors Orestes' murder of his mother for the same reason that he censors Agamem-

non's murder of his daughter: the *Odyssey* is a poem about rebuilding a family and renewing

familial bonds, and so avoids stories of murder within the natal family.[108] Yet I would add

that the avoidance of Clytemnestra's murder is also related to the collocation of death, status,

and gender in the poem: the women who receive horrific deaths are all slaves, whereas the

women who receive gentle deaths are all queens. Painful, violent death is considered appro-

priate for transgressive slaves—even the loyal Eurycleia is threatened by Odysseus with the

same death meted out to the treacherous maids (19.479-490).[109] Yet the poet is unwilling to

display the elite female body penetrated by violence or suffering in death. The veiled refer-

ence to Clytemnestra's murder indicates the poet's awareness of the matricide-story and sug-

gests that she does indeed deserve death, but the narrator assiduously avoids the bloody de-

tails of tragic versions.[110]

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[108] Homer's unwillingness to discuss the matricide is paralleled by the internal narrator as well: Nestor, telling the story to Telemachus in order to encourage him to kill the suitors if necessary, would probably wish to avoid suggesting that he may have to kill his mother as well. On the implications for the relationship between Telemachus and Penelope brought out by Nestor's version of the story, see Olson 1990: 64-66.

[109] Eurycleia herself suggests that, if she is lying about Odysseus' return, Penelope should kill her by a "most pitiful death" (οἰκτίστῳ ὀλέθρῳ, 23.79), echoing the hanging of the maids (οἴκτιστα, 22.472) and Cassandra's shriek (οἰκτροτάτην…ὄπα, 11.421). Doherty (1995: 177) has noted how Odysseus' treatment of slave women, including both the transgressive maids and the loyal Eurycleia, "contrasts sharply with his deferential treatment of Arete and Penelope," encouraging identification with an elite perspective. Odysseus' deference is recapitulated by the poet, who portrays slave bodies as subject to violence, while elite female bodies are inviolable.

[110] So too, Epicaste's death is narrated briefly and somewhat elliptically: "she went down to the house of Hades…having tied a noose on high from a tall roof-beam" (ἡ δ᾽ ἔβη εἰς Ἀίδαο…ἀψαμένη βρόχον αἰπὺν ἀφ᾽ ὑψηλοῖο μελάθρου, 11.277-279). Compare the absence of detail to the extended description of the maids' death, including the simile of birds caught in a net and the detail of their twitching feet. For a similar description of an elite woman's suicide by hanging, compare Apollonius' Cleite; this narrative also suggests the shame of death by hanging (κακῷ δ᾽ ἐπὶ κύντερον ἄλλο | ἤνυσεν, ἀψαμένη βρόχον αὐχένι, *Arg.* 1.1064-1065).

Likewise, Helen is shown living out her life as Menelaus' queen despite her ruinous sexual transgressions: as she herself says, the Trojan War was fought "for the sake of shameless me" (ἐμεῖο κυνώπιδος εἵνεκ', 4.145; cf. εἵνεκ' ἐμεῖο κυνός, *Iliad* 6.355).[111] Other characters also regularly blame the war and its harrowing aftermath on Helen, sometimes in terms that suggest she deserves death: Eumaeus in particular wishes "that the race of Helen had been utterly destroyed, since she loosened the knees of many men" (ὡς ὤφελλ' Ἑλένης ἀπὸ φῦλον ὀλέσθαι | πρόχνυ, ἐπεὶ πολλῶν ἀνδρῶν ὑπὸ γούνατ' ἔλυσε 14.68-69). His formulation attributes to Helen active responsibility for the deaths of the Trojan War, as if she herself had killed the many men who died in the fighting.[112] In the *Iliad*, Helen herself wishes that she had chosen "evil death" (θάνατός… κακός, 3.173; cf. 6.345-347) rather than follow Paris to Troy.[113] Yet Helen does not suffer for her misdeeds with a violent death—or, indeed, with any death at all.[114] Helen's "unkillability" (Blondell 2013: 42) arises, on the one hand, from

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[111] Helen's use of the term κυνώπης to describe herself is intensely derogatory: as Graver (1995: 41) points out, it is the worst thing any Homeric character ever says about him or herself. This insult is also sexually charged: it is directed at the adulterous Clytemnestra and Aphrodite and the maids are often compared to dogs (Clytemnestra: 11.424; Aphrodite: 8.319; the maids: 18.338; 19.91, 154, 372). Cf. Lilja 1976: 13-36; Worman 2001: 21; 28-30; Franco 2003: 30-36; 193-196.

[112] Similar statements are made by Odysseus (11.438, 22.227-229). On the poem's "scapegoating" of Helen see Suzuki 1989: 57-90.

[113] In Euripides' *Troades,* Hecuba argues not only that Helen deserves death, but that she should have committed suicide "as a noble woman would do, out of longing for her husband" (ἃ γενναία γυνή | δράσειεν ἂν ποθοῦσα τὸν πάρος πόσιν, *Tro.* 1013-1014). On ποθοῦσα here, cf. note 32, above.

[114] The only narrative of Helen's death is an obscure local variant, related by Pausanias, in which she is murdered by the wife of a man who died in the Trojan War (3.19-20). Yet that her crime was considered punishable by death is demonstrated by Menelaus' frequent attempts to kill her (e.g. *Ilias Parva* fr. 13; Stesichorus fr. 201; Arist. *Lys.* 155-156; Eur. *Troad.* 860-879, 903-905, 1039-1041, 1055-1059; *Andr.* 627-630). This motif is often depicted in vase-painting (for an overview of this evidence, see Edmunds 2015: 71-72). Helen is also the object of murderous intent from Orestes and Pylades (Eur. *Orest.*) and from Aeneas (*Aen.* 2.567-587; on this episode see Chapter 3). Despite the monumental ill-will against her, Helen nevertheless appears indestructible: none of her would-be murderers ever succeeds.

her divine status as a daughter of Zeus.[115] Yet I would suggest that her untouchability in the Homeric context is also related to her social status: as an elite woman, Helen, like Clytemnestra, cannot suffer the violent death she deserves. Both women are therefore comparable to another unfaithful but unpunished female in the poem: Aphrodite, whose adultery with Ares is humorously presented in Book 8. Aphrodite is caught in a compromising position through her husband's cunning, yet the story ends in laughter (8.343). Nonetheless, the thematic relationships between the tale and the larger narrative of the *Odyssey* are well established.[116] Indeed, Fulkerson (2002: 344 n. 7) suggests that the hanging of the maids "may be particularly welcome to the *Odyssey*'s audience" because Aphrodite and Helen have gone unpunished.

The Homeric poet apportions violent death to women based not only on their sexual status, but also on their social status. The narrative trajectory of the poem and the epic trajectory of the hero's mission require Odysseus's return home and his re-establishment of order and authority within his household. Indeed, Odysseus is portrayed as the defender of the *oikos*; the man "to ward off ruin from the household" (ἀρὴν ἀπὸ οἴκου ἀμῦναι, 2.59, 17.538). In his absence, social norms are turned upside down: subjects lord it over the household of their king and plot the murder of his son; slaves defy their mistress and betray her secrets to her enemies. The poet's concern with the properly-constituted *oikos* is reflected in his concern for the role of women within it and his continued emphasis on the threat of independent

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[115] This special status is made explicit by Proteus: not only is Helen exempt from death, but Menelaus is as well—he will be sent by the immortals to the Elysian plain, "where life is easiest for men" (τῇ περ ῥηίστη βιοτὴ πέλει ἀνθρώποισιν, 4.565) because he is Helen's husband and so the son-in-law of Zeus (4.569).

[116] See e.g. Edinger 1980; Braswell 1982; Olson 1989; Alden 1997.

female sexuality to male social control. The crimes of women in the *Odyssey* are thus generally directed inward, towards household, husband, or master (unlike the crimes of women in the *Aeneid*, to be explored in the next chapter).[117] Though these transgressions violate the bonds of household and family, they nonetheless are shown to have wide-ranging political and military consequences, emphasizing the broader importance of order within the *oikos*. Yet, although both elite women and slave women violate male authority over the *oikos,* only slave women's bodies are treated violently within the poem. The narrative validates, even normalizes, extreme violence against slaves, particularly female slaves, who become surrogates for unfaithful women in general. The murders of the Phoenician nurse and the Ithacan maids permit the poet to resolve the problematic issue of female sexuality with satisfying examples of transgression punished, and to avoid the socially disturbing spectacle of violence against the elite female body.[118] Gender and social status thus entwine to produce a complex system of sexual politics that presents violence against slave bodies as justified—even obligatory—and violence against elite female bodies as taboo.

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[117] Cf. Nagler (1993: 249) on the significance of Telemachus' repeated exclusion of Penelope from social and political activity (which he explicitly genders male: 1.356-359, 21.350-354; discussed above): "it is in the domestic space of Ithaka….that women are real contenders for influence and power and their place most needs to be defined, not to say confined."

[118] As Nagler (1990) has pointed out, there are disturbing qualities to Odysseus' deployment of violence against male elites as well: many of the suitors are his subjects, and their murder in a sense violates his responsibilities as leader. Hence, their deaths are "elaborately prepared" (1990: 342) by the poet, who is at pains to stress both the legitimacy and inevitability of the *mnēstērophonia*.

CHAPTER 3: VERGIL'S *AENEID*

In the *Aeneid*, Vergil adopts many of the motifs and structures of Homer's gender system, but adapts them to his distinctly Roman purposes. Like the *Odyssey*, the *Aeneid* tells of a journey home, but its hero is seeking a place he has never seen and a wife he has never met. Vergil's main point of departure from Homer can be found in the element of fate (*fato profugus*, 1.2). While the Homeric hero's goal is his safe return home, Aeneas is (despite his evident reluctance) charged with founding a new civilization according to the will of the gods—a civilization destined, in Jupiter's words, to be "masters of the universe" (*dominos rerum,* 1.282). In the *Aeneid* as in the *Odyssey*, female sexuality is represented as a threat to the epic mission, but because the mission is of cosmic importance, the consequences of fail-ure—and the punishments for those who interfere—are even more profound. The deaths of the women who disrupt Aeneas' goal are therefore politicized in a way not found in the *Od-yssey*. Indeed, the *Aeneid* reverses the Homeric nexus of gender, class, and death: the women who die brutal deaths in the *Aeneid* are queens (*reginae*), rather than slaves and subalterns. Where the Homeric poet is particularly concerned by the threat posed to the οἶκος by the transgressive female slave, Vergil is more concerned with the threat posed to the state by fe-male social and political leadership. Over the course of the poem, the word *regina* emerges as an epithet for the transgressive women of the *Aeneid*, and most of the women who bear it

die as surrogates for the divine *regina*, Juno, who despite her relentless opposition to the Roman future cannot be punished with death.[119]

In this chapter, I will show that the *Aeneid* eliminates its most powerful female agents with even more sensationalized violence than in the *Odyssey*'s portrayals of female transgression and death. Yet Vergil also departs from the Homeric model in portraying even transgressive female characters as sympathetic figures. Dido, Camilla, and Amata are often admirable characters, highly regarded by other characters in the poem and often presented as appealing to readers. Their assumption of (male) authority is initially portrayed as extraordinary, rather than deviant. Nevertheless, even their earliest appearances contain a negative subtext that gradually becomes more explicit as their transgressive behavior becomes more overt. This strain of criticism suggests that female leadership is incompatible with the Roman future. Dido, Camilla, and Amata are opponents both of Aeneas and of the nascent Roman state, and the political ideology of the poem requires their elimination. Yet by portraying these women as sympathetic characters, often corrupted by forces outside their control, the poet suggests an ambivalence about their deaths that is utterly absent from the *Odyssey*'s narratives of the Phoenician nurse or the Ithacan maids.

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[119] Keith (2000: 67-74) has noted the conjunction of women with warfare and opposition to the heroic mission of the *Aeneid*. As she points out, "A series of *reginae* instigate war in the *Aeneid*" (2000: 67), of whom the most prominent is Juno. To this insight, I would add that most of those *reginae* die brutally as scapegoats for Juno, who cannot. In addition to Dido, Camilla, and Amata, Helen is called *regina* just as Aeneas plans to kill her as "deserved punishment" (*merentis…poenas*, 2.585-586) for her crimes (the textual status of this passage is debated; see note 201 below). Likewise, Cleopatra appears as *regina* on the shield of Aeneas (8.696, 703), where she is shown leading the forces of Eastern disorder against the gods of Rome. Even Creusa is in some sense a *regina*, since her name means "ruler," and she too will die to enable the Roman mission, although as an abettor rather than an opponent of it. These women will be discussed further below.

Like Homer, Vergil constructs a gendered system that associates threats and delays to the hero with women and their sexuality. As in the *Odyssey,* the principal opponents of the hero's mission are female: Juno emerges as the poem's primary antagonist in the fourth line (*saevae memorem Iunonis ob iram*, 1.4) and most of the secondary antagonists will be her female minions and pawns (Dido, Iris, Allecto, Amata, and Juturna).[120] Threats to the hero and his mission are consistently sexualized. For example, Juno's wrath towards Aeneas and the Trojans is largely based on sexual insults and jealousies: the judgment of Paris and Jupiter's infidelity with the rapes of Ganymede and, perhaps, Electra (1.27-28).[121] Likewise, the episode of the storm in *Aeneid* 1 is closely modeled on *Odyssey* 5.282-332, but the gender of the adversary has been reversed: the anger of Homer's Poseidon (*Od.* 5.284) becomes the resentment of Vergil's Juno (*Aen.* 1.4, 1.36). Similarly, whereas in Homer's storm-narrative it is Athena who lulls the winds (*Od.* 5.383-385), in Vergil's it is Neptune, whose maleness is marked by the comparison with a Roman masculine ideal (*pietate gravem ac meritis…virum*,

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[120] Cf. e.g. Keith 2000: 67-81. Suzuki (1989: 92-149), on the other hand, views the female opponents of Aeneas as surrogates for Helen. As Nugent (1999: 260) puts it, while Aeneas assents, "The great female characters of the *Aeneid,* by contrast, refuse. They refuse in various ways their traditional roles of passivity, domesticity, and subordination; they refuse the mission of Rome; they even refuse to give credence to the pronouncements of the gods." Yet this dichotomy is problematized when Aeneas and later Turnus takes on characteristics of Juno, including her *saevitia, dolor,* and *furor*: "The final act of the *Aeneid* links forever the foundation of Rome and the enraged, murderous passion that had previously characterized not the city's founder and the poem's hero, but his chief opponent, Juno" (James 1995: 625). Putnam in particular has explored this issue in detail; see e.g. Putnam 1999, 2001b, 2011: 101-117.

[121] *iudicium Paridis spretaeque iniuria formae | et genus invisum, et rapti Ganymedis honores* (1.27-28). The phrase *genus invisum* is usually taken as a reference to Jupiter's rape of Electra, since it produced Dardanus, the ancestor of the Trojan race (e.g. *ad loc.* Ganiban 2012, Austin 1971, Williams 1972). Yet see Fowler ([1990] 2000: 49; citing Henry 1873: 217-218) for the view that *genus invisum* does not have a specific referent, but rather is an expression "in mimetic *oratio obliqua*" of Juno's thought process: "the judgment of Paris, and I hate them, and the rape of Ganymede…."

1.51) and the weighty term *genitor* (1.155).[122] Further, Juno relies on female sexuality to persuade Aeolus to free the winds and cause the tempest: she offers him a bride "with an exceptional body" (*praestanti corpore*, 1.71); the loveliest (*pulcherrima*, 1.72) of her attendant Nymphs.[123] This initial episode will prove paradigmatic: again and again throughout the poem, women are shown resisting and impeding the Roman mission, and their opposition is often linked to their sexuality.[124]

Creusa and Caieta

As in the *Odyssey*, the poem's anxiety about female obstruction of the heroic mission is reflected in its narratives of female death. The women who oppose the Roman future die violently, while the women who abet it die disembodied, incorporeal deaths—and sometimes barely seem to die at all. This is especially true of Creusa, Aeneas' first wife. Her death is necessary for the narrative and political trajectory of the poem, which requires Aeneas' marriage to Lavinia and the mingling of Trojan and Latin blood (12.835); yet the poet elides her death to the point that the very fact of her dying becomes debatable.

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[122] On the importance of the father-son relationship, see e.g. Lee 1979, James 1991, Oliensis 1997, Farrell 1999a, Eidinow 2003.

[123] Note that Homer's version of Aeolus is already married within the narrative of the *Odyssey* (10.1-12). Mitchell (1991: 225) suggests that the ramifications of Juno's proposal "warn of the danger inherent in the fusion of the sexual and political."

[124] As Spence (2002: 49) puts it, "The text establishes a clear dichotomy between the raging forces of the winds, the storm, and the mob of the simile and the ordering powers of the authority figures who control the rage." The forces of chaos are marked as feminine and the forces of order are marked as masculine. On the "feminine" associations of these disorderly natural forces, see Quartarone 2002; cf. Pöschl 1962: 16-18; Otis 1963: 69, 76, 93; Anderson 1969: 13; Oliensis 1997: 303; Van Nortwick 2013: 137.

As the poem's transgressive women will be presented both as socially/sexually deviant and as opponents of the Roman mission, so its virtuous women are presented both as socially/sexually normative and as allies of Aeneas and his fate. Creusa is characterized as a model of correct female behavior: as Grillo (2010: 57) puts it, "the typical virtues of a Roman wife…perfectly match Virgil's characterization of Creusa."[125] As Troy falls, she begs Aeneas either to take his family to face death with him (*et nos rape in omnia tecum*, 2.675), or to remain and guard the house (*hanc primum tutare domum*, 2.677). Creusa here recalls the Andromache of *Iliad* 6, another virtuous wife who advises her husband to stay close and protect what is dear to him (*Il.* 6.433-434).[126] Like Andromache, Creusa holds out her son to Aeneas to remind him of his familial obligations (2.674; cf. *Il.* 6.399-401, 466-470). Her first concern is her family, especially her child. Her last words encapsulate her position as wife and mother and her concern for Rome's dynastic future: she instructs Aeneas to "preserve the love of our shared son" (*nati serva communis amorem,* 2.789).[127]

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[125] Cf. Miller 1982: 51-52. Grillo cites Treggiari (1991: 229-253), whose list of wifely virtues includes sexual fidelity (*castitas/pudicitia*), loyalty more generally (*fides*), respect and co-operation (*obsequium*), kindness (*comitas*), partnership (*societas*), and agreement (*concordia*); most of these can, as Grillo argues, be attributed to Creusa to one extent or another. Treggiari also lists various domestic virtues (including thrift, skill at wool-working, etc.) which Creusa does not have an opportunity to demonstrate in Book 2. Cf. Sharrock (2013: 165): "Chastity, modesty, frugality, obedience, wool working, not getting drunk, bringing up children who look like their father – these things constitute the good woman and the good wife; their opposites straightforwardly constitute its opposite."

[126] For the parallels between Creusa and Andromache, see e.g. Hughes 1997; Grillo 2010: 47. Hughes views the allusion to *Iliad* 6 as positive, while Grillo argues that it reflects negatively on Aeneas by comparison with Hector's affectionate concern for his wife.

[127] As Henry (1989: 41) points out, Creusa's last words emphasize her common interests with Aeneas; she views it as evidence of "an intense concern to preserve a link that is already broken." Cf. Wiltshire (1989: 111) on this line: "Creusa is permanently lost, but her legacy resides in the last word she will ever speak, in the love that affirms family, that is respected for its own sake, that is motivated by nothing beyond itself."

Creusa is dutiful and obedient: she silently acquiesces to Aeneas' plan to protect his son and father above all, while she follows behind (*longe servet vestigia coniunx*, 2.711; *pone subit coniunx*; 2.725). When this arrangement has its predictable result and she is separated from her family and left behind (2.735-740), her shade does not reproach Aeneas. Instead, she forbids him to throw his life away in pursuit of her. She assures Aeneas that everything has occurred according to the will of the gods (2.777-779) and predicts his arrival in Italy, where a royal bride awaits him (2.780-784). Creusa not only foretells Aeneas' happy future (*res laetae*, 2.783), but authorizes it, instructing him to "banish his tears" for her (*lacrimas dilectae pelle Creusae,* 2.784).[128] As O'Hara (1990: 88-90) points out, this prophecy is especially well-designed to encourage Aeneas at his lowest point, as it looks forward to a happy future without dwelling on the struggles that will be required to reach that point.[129]

Creusa is in a sense the "first casualty" of the epic's mission—she cannot survive if Aeneas is to forge the future Roman people through his marriage to Lavinia.[130] Yet Creusa accepts her fate, and urges Aeneas to accept it. Her tone throughout her final speech is reassuring, even uplifting: she addresses him as her "sweet husband" (2.777), gently chides him for "indulging" in his grief (2.776), and repeatedly says that he is not to blame for her death:

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[128] Smith (2005: 80-82) suggests that the close parallels between this passage and *Odyssey* 11.204-209, Odysseus' encounter with the shade of his mother in the Underworld, indicate that Creusa "has acquired some maternal characteristics" and has metamorphosed from a wife/lover figure into "an advice-giving mother-figure." The importance of Creusa's maternal role—which Dido so emphatically regrets that she does not share (cf. 4.327-330)—is certainly clear in her last words to Aeneas (*nati serva communis amorem,* 2.789) and the allusion to Anticleia may serve to distance her still further from Dido and Camilla, neither of whom are or will ever be mothers.

[129] As O'Hara points out (1990: 89) "a prophecy of future war would be particularly disheartening for one whose city is being sacked after ten years of warfare." Servius (*ad* 2.776) likewise views Creusa's speech as a *consolatio*.

[130] Keith 2000: 118. Dido is also figured as a victim of Aeneas' destiny; see further below.

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it was not lawful (*nec…fas*) for her to leave Troy and Jupiter did not allow it (2.779). These formulations direct blame away from her husband and onto the remote forces that have been directing Aeneas' destiny from the beginning of the poem.[131] Nor does Creusa express any resentment or bitterness for her abandonment, death, and future supplanting. She will remain Aeneas' wife beyond death (2.787), but he will become another woman's husband (2.783-784). Creusa thus becomes a representative and spokeswoman for the *fatum* that requires her death, endorsing the very narrative and political trajectories that render her disposable and replaceable.[132]

Creusa's role as a virtuous woman who affirms and enables the epic mission is reflected in her death. While the deaths of Dido, Camilla, and Amata are described in detail, Creusa's is not narrated at all. Because Aeneas loses sight of her in the escape from Troy (*nec…respexi*, 2.741),[133] her fate is unclear (*incertum*, 2.740). Neither husband nor reader knows what happened to Creusa, and her corpse vanishes as mysteriously as she does herself. Likewise, when her ghostly image appears to console her husband, she describes her disappearance in oddly ambiguous terms: in her words: "the great mother of the gods detains me

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[131] She thus implicitly validates Aeneas' own failure to acknowledge his responsibility for her isolation and his earlier blaming of the gods (*quem non incusavi amens hominumque deorumque*, 2.745).

[132] On the replaceability of Creusa (as opposed to, say, Penelope), see Quartarone 2002: 147-148. Cf. Joplin 1990: 55, 63 (on Lucretia).

[133] It has often been noted that the deaths of Eurydice in *Georgics* 4 and of Creusa in *Aeneid* 2 function as parallels, or rather as mirror images of each other: Aeneas loses his wife because he fails to look back, whereas Orpheus loses his because he does look back (*respexit*, *Geo.* 4.491). Likewise, both women vanish into thin air (*in auras*: *Geo.* 4.499; *Aen.* 2.791), leaving behind their husbands, who are both described as grieving and "wishing to say more" (*et multa volentem | dicere*, *Geo.* 501; *Aen.* 790). On the close relationship between the two accounts, see Heurgon 1931; Putnam 1965: 41-48; Briggs 1979; Petrini 1997: 37-47; Oliensis 1997: 304; Gale 2003: 333-347; Grillo 2010. Additionally, in earlier versions of the Aeneas-story, his first wife was also called Eurydice (Pausanias10.26.1; Ennius fr. 36); on the implications of Vergil's use of the name Creusa rather than Eurydice, see Gall 1993: 8-15; 51-62.

on these shores" (*sed me magna deum genetrix his detinet oris*, 2.788). The details of this account are obscure, but it seems to hint at a version of the Aeneas-legend, recorded by Pausanias, in which the mother of the gods (ἡ θεῶν μήτηρ) and Aphrodite rescue Creusa from enslavement (δουλείας ἀπὸ Ἑλλήνων αὐτὴν ἐρρύσαντο, 10.26.1). Pausanias' brief account leaves several questions open: did this rescue involve "detaining" Creusa in Troy, as in the *Aeneid*'s version, or simply snatching her from harm's way, as often occurs in the *Iliad*?[134] Certainly, some commentators have interpreted Creusa's words as an admission that she has not really died at all, but has been transformed into a demi-goddess in order to serve Cybele/Magna Mater.[135] The poet, however, leaves the question unresolved: what happened to Creusa after she was separated from Aeneas is unknown (*incertum*) and deification does not preclude death.[136] The ambiguities surrounding Creusa's disappearance further indicate the poet's reluctance to describe the death of a virtuous woman: as we will see below, with Dido, Camilla, and Amata it could not be clearer that they have died, but with Creusa, even the actuality of her death is uncertain.[137]

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[134] The Iliadic gods frequently intervene in battle to save their favorites: Aeneas himself is rescued twice, first by his mother (*Il.* 5.311-318) and then by Poseidon, who saves him in order to preserve the Trojan race (ὄφρα μὴ ἄσπερμος γενεὴ καὶ ἄφαντος ὄληται | Δαρδάνου, *Il.* 20.303-304).

[135] E.g. Hughes 1997: 421; Horsfall 2008 *ad* 2.772. In Nugent's words, she "seems to exist in some interstitial niche" (1999: 266). On the other hand, many commentators are equally convinced, and often take it as a given, that Creusa has died (e.g. Perkell 1981; Keith 2000: 117-118; Thomas 2001: 214; Grillo 2010); certainly Ovid's Dido leaves no room for ambiguity (*occidit a duro sola relicta viro*, *Her.* 7.84). Thomas (2001: 80) describes Dido's representation as "an activation of a reading already possible in the model" (cf. Desmond 1994: 39-40; Knox 1995: 21-22; Casali 1995: 59-62). In any event, whether Creusa is dead or deified, certainly, as Perkell (1981: 207) puts it, "Creusa—and what she represents to Aeneas of family, love, and personal values—is definitively lost to him and to the poem."

[136] Julius Caesar is a prominent contemporary example.

[137] This may explain the unusual use of *simulacrum,* in addition to the more usual *imago* and *umbra*, to describe the shade of Creusa (*Aen.* 2.772; *imago, umbra,* and *anima* are all used to describe shades

As a ghostly prophet and adviser, Creusa resembles Hector, who appears in Aeneas'

dreams to warn him of Troy's impending doom (2.270-297).[138] Both Hector and Creusa are

children of Priam who return to Aeneas from beyond the grave with similar messages (2.289-

295; 776-789).[139] It is significant, then, that there is a marked difference in the appearance of

the two shades. Hector appears to Aeneas still bearing the wounds he suffered at Achilles'

hands (2.272-273; 2.277-279). His appearance is grotesque: he is "black with bloody dust"

(*aterque cruento | pulvere*, 2.272-273), his beard is matted, and his hair clotted with blood

(*squalentem barbam et concretos sanguine crinis*, 2.277). Hector's shade remains relent-

lessly corporeal even after death, but Creusa's, on the other hand, seems to bear no marks of

violence or suffering. The only detail we hear about her appearance is that she is now larger

than life (*nota maior imago*, 2.773).[140] Though the sequence of events makes it likely that

Creusa was killed by the rampaging Greeks, the poet suppresses any details that would hint at

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in the underworld in *Aeneid* 6, but *simulacrum* is conspicuously absent**).** On Vergil's use of *simula-
crum*, see Heinze 1915: 34; Felton 1999: 29-33; Horsfall 2008 *ad* 2.591-592; Grillo 2010: 62.

[138] E.g. Highet 1972: 97, 102; Kyriakou 1999: 326-327; Smith 2005: 95; Dufallo 2007: 105. Hughes
(1997: 416) describes the resemblances between Creusa and Hector as "superficial" without further
comment and prefers to link her with Venus (cf. Grillo 2010: 62-63 on the similarities between the
speeches of Creusa and Venus in Book 2). The resemblance to Venus further hints at Creusa's unu-
sual status, between ghost and divinity.

[139] As Dufallo (2007: 105) and Grillo (2010: 63) note, Creusa offers a much more detailed glimpse of
Aeneas' future than does Hector (who only tells Aeneas that he will build "great walls"
(*moenia…magna*, 2.294-295) for the Penates after his journey. Creusa on the other hand specifies that
he will come to Hesperia, where the Tiber flows, and promises him a kingdom and a royal wife
(2.781-784). Kyriakou (1999: 326-327) views Hector's apparition as communicating the public and
political side of Aeneas' future, while Creusa's focus is on the private and personal.

[140] In this, Creusa may resemble the "great figures of the gods" (*numina magna deum*, 2.623) who ap-
pear to Aeneas during the sack of Troy and whose supernatural size and strength is evident: Neptune
is digging up the walls of Troy with his trident (2.608-612), Juno is holding open the Scaean gates for
the oncoming Greeks (2.612-614), and Minerva is sitting on a cloud (2.615-616). Horsfall 2008: *ad*
2.591-592 and Felton 1999: 29-33 discuss the implications of Creusa's superhuman size.

the cause of her death or lead the reader to visualize her fate. By contrast, Dido appears in the underworld "fresh from her wound" (*recens a vulnere*, 4.450), a description that activates the reader's memory of her agonizing death (*infixum stridit sub pectore vulnus,* 4.689). Likewise, the shade of Eriphyle—an infamously transgressive woman—still shows her wounds in the underworld (*crudelis nati monstrantem vulnera*, 6.446). These ghosts, and others—including Sychaeus (1.355-356) and Deiphobus (6.494-497)—continue to bear the marks of their suffering in death, but Creusa does not.

Creusa's disappearance, indeed, has much in common with the deaths, real and imagined, of the virtuous women of the *Odyssey*. As in Penelope's prayer for death, Creusa has been blotted from sight (cf. ἀϊστώσειαν, *Od.* 20.79), disappearing in uncertain circumstances and leaving behind no corpse. Penelope wishes to die so that she may never "gladden the heart of a lesser man" (μηδέ τι χείρονος ἀνδρὸς ἐΰφραίνοιμι νόημα, *Od.* 20.82), and Creusa reassures Aeneas that she will not go as a slave to Greece (2.785-786), a hint that she has avoided the fate of Cassandra, Andromache, and the other Trojan Women as female prizes of war and rape-captives. Instead, she declares that she remains Aeneas' wife, the daughter-in-law of Venus (*divae Veneris nurus*, 2.788). As is well-established, there is also a significant parallel between Vergil's Creusa and Homer's Anticleia: Aeneas' vain threefold attempt to embrace Creusa (*ter…ter*, 2.793-794) closely echoes Odysseus' equally futile attempt to embrace Anticleia in the underworld (τρὶς… τρίς, *Od.* 11.206-207). [141] Indeed, Smith (2005: 81-

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[141] See e.g. Segal 1973-1974; Briggs 1979; Gale 2003; Smith 2005: 80-82. As Kyriakou (1999: 326) points out, "The fact that Anticleia's ghost vanishes after admonishing her son to tell his wife everything when they reunite adds special poignancy to Vergil's adaptation in the context of the farewell of a couple that will never reunite." Of course, there is also an echo of Achilles' attempt to embrace his dream-vision of Patroclus (23.99-101) and another echo will occur in Book 6, with Aeneas' attempt to embrace Anchises in the underworld (6.700-702).

82) has argued that Creusa in some sense becomes a surrogate mother for Aeneas, a role that is appropriate for her as representative of the Magna Mater. Creusa's final departure is a peaceful evaporation: "she faded away into thin air" (*tenuisque recessit in auras,* 2.791).

A similar pattern is found in the very brief mention of Aeneas' nurse, Caieta who "in dying, gave eternal fame to our shores" (*litoribus nostris…aeternam moriens famam, Caieta, dedisti*, 7.1-2). As "the nurse of Aeneas" (*Aeneia nutrix*, 7.1), Caieta is a normative figure, defined by fulfilling a quintessentially female role. Mitchell (1991: 226) suggests that, by invoking Caieta at the beginning of Book 7, the poet implicitly contrasts her with the "the virgins, Amazons, and crazed mothers-in-law" of the Iliadic half of the poem: she is the archetypal nurturing female, whereas virginity is associated with sterility and violence. Her death is more like Creusa's than the deranged and dangerous women of the poem. In the first place, it is not described in any detail—there is no indication of how or why she died. Instead, like Creusa, she appears simply to vanish and her body is not exposed in death, but is rather inscribed into the landscape as a mark of *honos* and *gloria* (7.3-4).[142] Keith (2000: 47-48) argues that Caieta's burial on Italian soil assimilates her to "the ancient mother, with fertile breast" (*ubere laeto…antiquam matrem*, 3.96-97) that Aeneas is commanded to seek: her female body is absorbed into, and becomes indistinguishable from, the land itself.[143] Like Creusa, Caieta is disembodied in death.

Creusa and Caieta both die insubstantial, incorporeal deaths that evoke the *Odyssey*'s Anticlea and Penelope. Their bodies are not penetrated by violence and their corpses are not

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[142] As Nugent (1999: 268) puts it, Caieta's death-narrative encapsulates "the distillation of the woman's body into pure signification."

[143] Cf. Mack (1999: 137): "a character from the Trojan past becomes a piece of Italian geography."

exposed in death; instead they simply disappear. As Nugent (1999: 266) puts it, Creusa and Caieta seem to go through "a process of etherealization, an abstraction from…an embodied woman to a disembodied concept or relation." This abstraction in death contrasts with their physicality in life: both are mothers who carried and nourished children, and Caieta, as κουροτρόφος, is particularly identified by her corporeality as the woman who physically sustained the infant Aeneas. Yet when they die, their bodies vanish and they are transmuted from flesh and blood into relics of Aeneas' past. Both women are left behind—Creusa in Troy and Caieta on the shore of Italy—while the hero soldiers on without them. Their narrative disappearance parallels their physical evaporation. These deaths are not narrated at all, and the reader can only imagine how or why either woman died. This pattern forms a significant contrast to the death-narratives of the transgressive women of the poem: their deaths are described in often excruciating detail, and their dying bodies become spectacles for scrutiny, objects of both revulsion and fascination.

Dido

While the virtuous women of the *Aeneid* are represented as aiders and abettors of the Roman imperial mission, the poem's transgressive women are shown to resist both the cultural scripts for normative female behavior and the masculine epic trajectory of the Roman future. The most profound threat to the Roman mission is Dido, who delays Aeneas in Carthage with both sexual and political charms. Dido functions as a parallel to several characters from the *Odyssey*, but in this respect she most closely resembles Calypso and Circe—yet she is more dangerous than either since she threatens not only the progress of the hero but the fu-

ture of the nascent Roman state.[144] Dido is a particularly troubling figure because she mani-

fests a variety of different threats to Aeneas and his mission: she is an independent woman

who has usurped traditional masculine roles, she is a seductive *femme fatale* who threatens to

ensnare her lover, and she is a representative of Carthage, Rome's great military nemesis.

These threats interact and entwine with one another to construct a figure of transgression and

deviance that must be eliminated if Aeneas is to continue on his fated journey. Dido is pre-

sented as a problem to which the solution is death.

Dido emerges as a potential threat in the first reference to her in the poem: Jupiter

sends Mercury to Carthage to ensure a warm welcome for the Trojans, "lest Dido, ignorant of

fate, should bar them from her borders" (*ne fati nescia Dido | finibus arceret,* 1.299-300).

The implication that Dido and the Carthaginians may be hostile to the Trojans is borne out

when Mercury must persuade them to put aside their "warlike hearts" (*ferocia…corda*,

1.302-303) and when Ilioneus lists the wrongs his shipwrecked men have suffered from this

barbara patria (1.539-541). Dido is also "ignorant of fate" (*fati nescia*, 1.299), unaware of

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[144] She also, unlike Circe and Calypso, never reconciles herself to Aeneas' departure and in fact re-
verses the trajectory of Circe who begins as a threat, but eventually provides key assistance; even Ca-
lypso, who lets Odysseus go with regret, assists him in his departure (cf. Hexter 1992: 337; Khan
1996: 1-2; Syed 2005: 167). The number of literary antecedents for Dido is vast; on the major Ho-
meric parallels (Calypso, Circe, Nausicaa, Alcinous, Arete), see e.g. Pease 1935: 11-29; Anderson
1963b; Gordon 1998: 198-200; Gibson 1999. In resisting the advances of importuning suitors, Dido
also resembles Penelope (e.g. Kopff 1977, Polk 1996, Starr 2000). A negative Homeric parallel is the
Cyclops Polyphemus, who curses Odysseus as Dido curses Aeneas (e.g. Moskalew 1982: 157-158;
O'Hara 1990: 98; Quint 1993: 106-113). Recently Burbidge (2009) has suggested that Dido and Anna
evoke the Sirens, who also attempt to divert a hero from his mission. Non-Homeric parallels include
the Medeae of Euripides and Apollonius and Catullus' Ariadne (e.g. Heinze 1957: 1957: 136 n. 2;
Abel 1960; Gonnelli 1962; Oksala 1962: 189-90; Kilroy 1969; Collard 1975; Clausen 1987: 53;
O'Hara 1990: 98; Pavlock 1990: 81-82; Nappa 2007a); Moorton (1989) has also linked Dido to Apol-
lonius' Aeetes. There are also many allusions to characters from tragedy, especially Ajax (Panoussi
2009 is the most thorough study; see also Wigodsky 1972: 95-97; Lefèvre 1978). Muecke 1984: 144
offers a comprehensive list of most of these parallels, with further bibliography.

the importance of Aeneas' mission and his future destiny.[145] Her ignorance – and her refusal to accept and defer to Aeneas' *fatum* – will have deadly consequences both for her and for the future Roman state.

Dido's early appearances, however, emphasize her positive qualities as a leader. Venus' initial history of Dido describes her holding *imperium* (*imperium Dido…regit*, 1.340) in Carthage and represents her as the leader of her people's escape from tyranny (*dux femina facti*, 1.364).[146] Although the juxtaposition of Dido's name and gender with words freighted with strongly masculine connotations is surprising, the implications are complimentary rather than critical.[147] When Dido herself appears, she is described admiringly by the narrator as "exceedingly beautiful" (*forma pulcherrima,* 1.496) and compared to Diana (1.498-502).[148]

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[145] On Dido as *fati nescia* and, hence, a victim of Jupiter's *fatum,* see Commager 1981: 105-106; Suzuki 1989: 103-104. Muecke (1983: 145-146) points out the irony that, even after Dido is no longer *fati nescia* (having heard the many prophecies of Aeneas' future in Latium in the course of Books 2-3), she nonetheless acts as if she were, deluding herself that marriage with Aeneas is possible. The characterization of Dido as *fati nescia* links her to Turnus, whom Virgil apostrophizes *nescia mens hominum fati sortisque futurae* (10.501). As Turnus will live to regret the murder of Pallas, so Dido will live to regret her welcome of Aeneas and the Trojans. Yet Aeneas too is often described as ignorant of what is to come (esp. 8.730; cf. 2.106; 3.338, 569; 4.72); cf. Chew 2002.

[146] Hexter (1992: 348) suggests that with this line Vergil plays on the tradition (cf. Servius *auctus, ad* 1.340, 4.335; Servius *ad* 4.36, 4.674) that Dido meant "virago" (cf. O'Hara 1996: 153).

[147] The unexpectedness of the juxtaposition *dux* and *femina* has been noted since antiquity: as Servius remarks regarding this passage, "this should be recited as if astonishing" (*pronuntiandum quasi mirum*, *ad* 1.364). Nugent (1999: 260) suggests that the thrust of this tag is that Dido's leadership is "paradoxical and fundamentally unnatural."

[148] This simile echoes Homer's description of Nausicaa and her maids (*Od.* 6.101-109) and has been considered inappropriate for Dido since antiquity (Aul. Gell., *NA* 9.9.12-17; cf. Heinze 1915: 120, n. 1, Cartault 1926: 123, Pöschl 1962: 63, Austin 1971 *ad.* 1.498, Thornton 1985: 617-619, Pigon 1991: 46, Nappa 2007b: 311-312, and Fratantuono 2007: 20; cf. 2006: 30. Yet this interpretation minimizes Dido's wish to live a life "free of the marriage-bed" (*thalami expertem*, 4.550); on Dido's desire to live a Diana-like life without sexual entanglements, see Nappa 2007b: 307-313. For more nuanced readings of the simile, see e.g. Hornsby 1965: 338; Wilhelm 1987: 45; Polk 1996: 46-49; Perkell 1999: 47; Spence 1999: 83. On the Homeric and Apollonian history of the simile, see Nelis 2001: 82-86.

The Diana simile highlights Dido's qualities of leadership, as the goddess is shown leading

her chorus (*exercet Diana choros*, 1.499).[149] Vergil's initial portrait of Dido picks up on this

aspect of Diana: she is a responsible ruler, presiding over the building-work of her future

city. She is just and fair, laying down laws (1.507) and handing out tasks "in equitable

shares" (*partibus…iustis*, 1.508). When Ilioneus approaches to ask for assistance, she re-

ceives him kindly, promising aid (1.571) and even offering a permanent settlement (1.572-

574). As Cairns (1989: 39-43) argues, Dido here exemplifies many traits of the "good king,"

including piety, hard work, foresight, justice, kindness, generosity, and mercy.

There are, however, hints of negativity even in her initial appearance. As many critics

have noted, Dido's arrival directly follows the description of the Amazon Penthesilea in-

scribed on the doors of Carthage's temple of Juno.[150] Penthesilea is called *bellatrix* and *virgo*

(1.493), descriptors that link her to Dido's *comparanda* Diana. Further, Penthesilea is por-

trayed as "raging" and "on fire" (*furens…ardet*, 1.491), language that will frequently be used

of Dido.[151] The link with Penthesilea hints at Dido's defiance of traditionally feminine modes

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[149] Diana's leadership of her *choroi* is further linked to the work at Carthage by the repetition of the
verb *exercet*, which occurs earlier in a simile comparing the city-building labor of the Tyrians to the
labor of bees (*exercet…labor,* 1.431); when her infatuation with Aeneas takes over, her leadership
suffers, as is shown when the young men no longer practice their military drills (*arma…exercet,* 4.86-
87).

[150] For the association of Penthesilea and Dido, see e.g. Lewis 1961; Conte 1986: 194-195; Lyne
1987: 136 n. 57; La Penna 1988: 222-226; Segal 1990a: 3-4, 7; Suzuki 1989: 107; Putnam 1998a: 36-
38; Perkell 1999: 47; Keith 2000: 68; Clausen 2002: 34; Van Nortwick 2013: 141-142. The associa-
tions here are complex: as many critics (e.g. Pöschl 1966: 147; Casali 1995; Hardie 1998: 78-79; Put-
nam 1998: 40-41; Perkell 1999: 47) point out, the parallel also assimilates Aeneas to Achilles, who
loved Penthesilea but killed her. Penthesilea will be linked to Camilla, both by the epithet *bellatrix*
(1.493; cf. 7.805) and a direct simile (11.662). The connection between Dido and Penthesilea thus ex-
pands to include Camilla; see further below (cf. Genovese 1975: 26; Stanley 1965: 275-276; Miller
1982: 52; Gransden 1984: 186-188; Whilhelm 1987; Clay 1988: 204 n. 25; Lowenstam 1993: 42-44;
Keith 2000: 27; Putnam 2001a: 172-173).

[151] *Furens*: 1.659; 4.65, 69, 283, 298, 465 (cf. 4.101, 376, 433, 474, 501, 548, 697); *ardet*: 4.101, cf.

of conduct. Penthesilea fights with one breast bared (*exsertae…mammae*, 1.492), an indica-

tion of her transgressive sexuality: she has broken the taboo that requires the female body to

remain covered in public.[152] Indeed, as will be discussed further in this chapter's treatment of

Camilla, Amazons in general are considered incarnations of disorder, antitheses of the ideal

wife and mother whose very presence in the male territory of arms (*arma virumque*?) emas-

culates the men around them.[153] Penthesilea is visualized invading the masculine sphere of

warfare: she is "a girl who dares to fight with men" (*audetque viris concurrere virgo*,

1.493).[154] Dido, too, has colonized traditionally masculine territory by assuming the role of

leader and lawgiver.[155] Additionally, when Dido first approaches the temple she is described

as "intent on the work and on the future kingdom" (*instans operi regnisque futuris*, 1.504).

While contributing to her characterization as a dedicated ruler, Stanley (1965: 276) points out

that the phrase also has "a menacing double meaning," for her future kingdom will one day

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1.713; in addition, Dido is often described with the language of fire and flames (4.23, 54, 66, 68), im-
agery that will be literalized in her funeral pyre.

[152] Cohen (1997: 70-77) views the motif of the exposed breast in artistic depictions of Amazons
alongside depictions of captives and rape victims as "an intentional symbol of violent defeat" (74).
Havelock (1982: 47) suggests that these images work as an implicit form of social control, displaying,
often on a monumental scale, the retribution that can be inflicted on women who transgress the
boundaries of acceptable female behavior.

[153] As Wyke ([1992] 2002: 219) puts it, "Within Roman discursive systems, a militant woman was
traditionally and persistently a transgressive figure, a non-woman or a pseudo-man, who overturned
all the established codes of social behavior."

[154] The juxtaposition of *viris* and *virgo* in this line is reminiscent of the paradoxical description of
Dido as *dux femina facti*; the contrast is emphasized by the assonance. Indeed, Penthesilea too is a
leader (*ducit,* 1.490). The line may be considered a translation of the Homeric epithet for Amazons,
ἀντιάνειραι (*Il.* 3.189; 6.186) and indeed Seymour, in his commentary on *Iliad* 3, refers to this line
(Seymour 1891 *ad Il.* 3.189). On the etymological association of *vir* and *virgo* in ancient thought, see
O'Hara 1996: 126, with references.

[155] For example, when she lays down laws, she is expressly said to be giving them to men (*viris*,
1.507); as Austin (1971 *ad loc.*) suggests, the wording may hint at the confounding contrast between
female ruler and male subjects.

emerge as Rome's great opponent in the struggle for Mediterranean domination.[156] Vergil's

initial portrait of Dido, while largely positive, introduces some troubling associations, and

these problematic elements will be picked up and reinforced throughout the Dido episode.

The transformation of Dido from capable ruler to vengeful madwoman is initiated by

Venus, who sends Cupid "to inflame the raging queen" (*ut…furentem | incendat reginam*,

4.659-660).[157] The proleptic participle looks forward to Dido's madness in Book 4, but also

backward to the raging Penthesilea (*furens*, 1.491), suggesting that Dido has always had

some qualities of *furor*. Venus tells Cupid to trick Dido with poison (*fallasque veneno*,

1.688), vividly suggesting the destructive effects of the passion he will inspire.[158] As is some-

times noted, Venus' intervention here is narratively unnecessary:[159] she tells Cupid that she is

worried about the results of this "Junonian hospitality" (*Iunonia…hospitia,* 1.671-672), but

Jupiter has already sent Mercury to inspire Dido with a "benevolent attitude" (*mentemque be-*

nignam, 1.304) toward the Trojans. Venus' intrusion, rather, emphasizes Dido's helplessness

in the face of forces (Cupid, Juno, Jupiter, fate) over which she has no control.

As Keith (2012: 393) points out, the discomfort engendered by Dido's assumption of

masculine political authority is redirected in Book 4 towards her sexual choices.[160] Dido is

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[156] Cf. Lewis and Short, s.v.v. *insto*: "to draw nigh, to approach, to impend, threaten."

[157] This scene is based upon *Argonautica* 3.6-166, with important differences. For a discussion of the Apollonian parallels, see Nelis 2001: 93-96.

[158] On the language of *defixio* and *devotio* used in this passage, see Khan 2002, who argues that the magico-religious associations here "brand Dido's passion from the very start as an unholy thing" (187).

[159] E.g. Williams 1972: 207-208.

[160] Keith (2012: 393): "As a woman operating in the public sphere, Dido necessarily constitutes and is constituted as a disruptive force in the *Aeneid* and, in accordance with Roman discursive codes about the female, the focus of the narrative 'naturally' narrows to Dido's sexuality, so that her deviant polit-ical and military ambitions come to be recast as inappropriate erotic desires." Cf. Syed 2005: 130-

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transmuted from *virago* to *femme fatale* and her political deviance is conflated with and redefined as sexual deviance. The admiration expressed in Book 1 for Dido's beauty, leadership, and dignity is abandoned in favor of a prurient focus on her erotic obsession with Aeneas. The narrative first emphasizes her refusal to re-marry, a refusal she expresses in strong language: she has determined not to be bound by "the marriage fetter" (*vinclo…iugali*, 4.16) and claims that the marriage bed and nuptial torches are "repellent" to her (*pertaesum thalami taedaeque fuisset*, 4.18).[161] Her reluctance to remarry is linked to her fidelity to her first husband, Sychaeus, but also places her in opposition to the Augustan moral narrative that associated social disorder—including adultery, failure to marry, and childlessness in the upper classes—with the political upheaval of the late Republic.[162] The Augustan marital legislation encouraged marriage, including the re-marriage of widows like Dido, and the production of children, giving special rewards to women who had more than three.[163] Dido therefore also

133; 188-190. A similar trope occurs in Augustan representations of Cleopatra, that depict her as an oversexed *femme fatale* rather than a political or military opponent; see further below.

[161] Nappa 2007b has connected this speech with Dido's complaint, after Aeneas' departure, that she was not able to live "like an animal" (*more ferae,* 4.551), which he interprets to mean "as a virgin huntress," like her *comparanda* Diana. As he concludes, "Dido does not merely wish she could have been left as a *univira* but that she could have fully entered the symbolic imagery so often associated with her, that of the huntress in the wild, a woman separate entirely from the world of men" (2007: 308). This interpretation further suggests Dido's failure to conform to traditional social roles.

[162] See Edwards (1993: 35-36, 42-47; cf. Wyke [1992] 2002: 216; Dixon 2001) on "uncontrolled female sexuality as an emblem of the general breakdown of social order (43)." Edwards points to literary narratives of Fausta, Sempronia, Servilia, Fulvia, and Clodia as instances of the historiographic tradition's association of female sexuality with socio-political collapse. Similarly Horace famously links sexual immorality to the "disaster" of the Roman Republic (*hoc fonte derivata clades | in patriam populumque fluxit*, *Carm.* 3.6.19-20).

[163] Dido initially seems to fulfill the Roman ideal of the *univira* (cf. *unimarita* and *unicuba*), the "one-man woman," in her refusal to marry after the death of Sychaeus. On the ideal of *univiratus*, see e.g. Williams 1958: 23; Treggiari 1991: 235. It is frequently expressed in Latin epitaphs, which praise women for lifelong fidelity to one man; for example, with variations of the phrase *uno contena marito, solo contenta marito,* or *uni devota marito* (e.g. *CIL* 455, 548.5, 643.5, 736.4, 968.3, 1523.7, 1693.1, 2214). Though, as Henry and James (2012: 93) point out, the Julian Laws "effectively did away with the long-valued *univira*," the (inaccurate) praise of Livia in these terms by Horace (*Carm.*

falls short of Augustan values in her inability to produce a child (which she herself laments at

4.327-330).[164] Unlike Lavinia, who is destined to fulfill her mandate as *regia coniunx* and

bear Aeneas a son (6.763-765),[165] Dido can enjoy only a phantom motherhood through her

affection for Ascanius (1.718, 4.84-85, 5.538).[166] As Nugent (1999: 260) has noted, voices

internal to the poem offer perspectives on Dido's choices as "specific *rejections* of more nor-

mal roles" (emphasis original): Anna (4.33-34) and Iarbas (4.213-214) view her chastity and

childlessness as anomalous and implicitly dangerous.[167] As a single, childless woman, Dido

represents the subversive potential of uncontrolled female sexuality: she is not under the su-

pervision of any man, and her sexuality is therefore able to run wild—as it does, with disas-

trous consequences.

3.14.5) and Ovid (*Trist.* 2.161-164) demonstrates that the idea still had cultural currency. On the Jul-ian Laws, see e.g. Galinsky 1981; Wallace-Hadrill 1981; des Bouvrie 1984; Cohen 1991; Treggiari 1991: 277-298; Edwards 1993: 34-62; McGinn 1998: 70-104, 140-215; 2002; Severy 2002: 52-56; Hallett 2012: 373-375.

[164] As Wyke ([1992] 2002: 205-208) points out, Cleopatra's motherhood disappears in Augustan rep-resentations, even though it is prominent in her own propaganda. Similarly, Dido's childlessness ena-bles the poet to masculinize her and suggest that she is unnatural by comparison with normative wives and mothers, such as Creusa and Lavinia. So too Cleopatra was implicitly contrasted with Oc-tavia and Livia in Augustus' propaganda.

[165] And unlike Creusa, who has already done so.

[166] Lyne (1989: 25-28) suggests that the phrase *concepit furias* (4.474), used of Dido's decision to die, is meant to suggest that Dido is pregnant with Furies in a perverse inversion of her desire to conceive Aeneas' heir.

[167] Neither are particularly reliable narrators (Anna is entirely mistaken in her expectation of the glory that will accrue to Carthage from association with the Trojans [4.47-49] and Iarbas is presented as a sore loser in the competition for Dido's hand [4.211-218]), but they nevertheless give voice to the normative view that women are most properly wives and mothers.

After Anna overcomes Dido's reluctance, the narrative focus shifts from Dido's transgressive rejection of sexuality to her transgressive embrace of it.[168] Dido is caught in a double-bind: her refusal to remarry violates Augustan social codes that value women only as wives and mothers, but her relationship with Aeneas violates the more traditional cultural script that praised women for life-long fidelity to a single man.[169] The change in Dido's values is made explicit in the poet's description of defensive structures abandoned half-built while Dido focuses all her attention on her guest:

> non coeptae adsurgunt turres, non arma iuventus
> exercet portusve aut propugnacula bello
> tuta parant: pendent opera interrupta minaeque
> murorum ingentes aequataque machina caelo.
>
> The half-built towers no longer rise, the youth do not practice
> their arms or work to make the gates and bulwarks
> safe for war: the work hangs interrupted, and the huge,
> menacing walls, and the winches that reach toward the sky. (4.86-89)

Vergil suggests the correlation between Dido's sexual pursuit of Aeneas and her failure of leadership by using the same verb to describe both her fascination with him and her neglected public works: as she "hangs" on his words (*pendet…narrantis ab ore*, 4.79) so the work "hangs interrupted" (*pendent opera interrupta*, 4.88).[170] Her relationship with Aeneas

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[168] Vergil's emphasis on Dido's erotic fascination with Aeneas is particularly striking given her historiographical reputation for chastity: Timaeus and Pompeius Trogus (as epitomized by Justin) both portray her committing suicide in order to remain unmarried (Timaeus: *FGrH* 3.566 F82; Justin 18.4-6). Even in antiquity, it seems, readers were surprised by Vergil's "rewriting" here—Macrobius' Eustathius decries "the story of a lustful Dido, which all the world knows to be false" (*fabula lascivientis Didonis, quam falsam novit universitas*, Macr. *Sat.* 5.17.5). On Vergil's revisionism here, see Hexter 1992: 338-342; Desmond 1999: 24-29.

[169] As James (2012: 370) points out, Dido is also caught in "the ancient sexual double standard" that figures sexual activity in women as a "fault" (*culpa*), whereas in Aeneas' case it is simply unwise.

[170] In Suzuki's view, the Diana simile in Book 1 "insists upon the necessary connection between Dido's chastity and her success as ruler of her city" (1989: 107). This idea is reinforced by the description of the building projects forgotten in Dido's infatuation with Aeneas.

also leads to a breach with her own citizens, as she acknowledges (*te propter…infensi Tyrii,* 4.320-321).[171] The narrator hints that female rule is inherently problematic since Dido's sexuality prevails over her sense of responsibility and her city suffers the consequences.[172]

Dido's love is shown to be excessive through the use of descriptors like "weighty," "immoderate," and "unspeakable" (*gravi…cura,* 4.1; *impenso…amore,* 4.54, *infandum…amorem,* 4.85).[173] The deviant character of her passion is also suggested by her fondling of Ascanius as a substitute for his father (*gremio Ascanium…detinet,* 4.84-85).[174] Her feelings are marked as irrational in the the narrator's description of her as "out of her mind" (*demens,* 4.78; *inops animi,* 4.300) and in the simile comparing her to a Bacchant, the embodiment of dangerous female madness (4.300-303).[175] Like the Amazon, the Bacchant is portrayed as inverting social norms, abandoning the appropriate female sphere of the household and assuming almost feral qualities. As Panoussi points out, maenadism in tragedy is generally linked to erotic frustration and often leads to the murder of the erotic partner.[176]

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[171] Their estrangement is vividly illustrated by Dido's dream of seeking the Tyrians in the wilderness (*Tyrios deserta quaerere terra,* 4.468).

[172] We might think of Eumaeus' comment about the corrupting effects of sex on women, "even one who does well" (καὶ ἥ κ᾽ εὐεργὸς ἔῃσιν, *Od.* 15.422).

[173] Hardie (2006) has argued that the relationship between Dido and Aeneas is further portrayed as transgressive through similes that link them to Diana and Apollo, respectively: "Dido's love for Aeneas may be *infandus…*for the reason that, figuratively, it leads to brother-sister incest" (2006: 26).

[174] Cf. 1.718 (*gremio fovet*), where Dido is, of course, actually embracing the disguised Amor (and see 4.193, for *fovere* used in an erotic context). On the sexual connotations of Dido's behavior with Ascanius, see e.g. Reckford 1995; Oliensis 1997: 305-307, 2009: 63-64; Khan 2002: 201-203; Hardie 2006: 26; McAuley 2016: 59.

[175] On this simile, see e.g. Hershkowitz 1998: 36-37; Syed 2004: 96-97; Panoussi 2009: 133-136. Weber 2002 has shown that Aeneas also has Dionysiac qualities.

[176] In Suzuki's view (1989: 115), this simile "insists upon the grotesqueness of Dido's hysteria, thereby justifying Aeneas' abandonment of her." Panoussi (2009: 133) points to Sophocles' Deianeira and Euripides' Phaedra, who are represented as Maenads when their frustrated desire leads them to

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Dido is also compared to tragic figures who are characterized by madness, including Pentheus and Orestes (4.469-473).[177] The tragic comparisons are picked up in Dido's internal ravings, when she imagines herself tearing Aeneas limb from limb or murdering Ascanius and serving him to his father for dinner (4.600-602).[178] These shocking images recall transgressive women from Greek tragedy, including Medea, Agave, Procne, and Philomela and further demonstrate Dido's descent from reasoned, regal queen to irrational Fury.[179] After Aeneas refuses to stay, Dido turns to magic, both to curse Aeneas and to disguise her preparations for suicide. Her use of magic, as Panoussi points out, violates Roman taboos and "signal[s] ritual corruption and perversion of religious custom and law" (2009: 50).[180] Through-

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destroy their mates. Dido's characterization as a Maenad therefore "indicates the potentiality of female aggression against the male" (2009: 135).

[177] Hershkowitz (1998: 27) argues that the comparison emphasizes the "multidimensionality" of Dido's frenzy: she is both Pentheus and the Bacchant who murders him, both Orestes and the Fury who pursues him. Khan (1996: 15) argues that the comparison between Dido and Pentheus focuses on "the duality of Dido's gender roles" through Pentheus' transvestism; cf. Panoussi 2009: 135 on the maenadic blurring of gendered territories and gender roles. On the other hand, Oliensis (2009: 64-66) focuses on the role of the mother-son relationship in the two *comparandi*: one is a son who kills his mother and the other a son who is killed by his.

[178] The impulse to murder Ascanius is particularly startling given Dido's affection for him elsewhere (4.84-85; 5.572). Syed (2005: 131) suggests that Dido here "expresses the desire to destroy Aeneas along with all the constituent elements of his *pietas*."

[179] Serving children to their father is also the crime of Atreus, but the focus on Dido's specifically female deviance suggests that Procne is the most immediate *comparanda*. Panoussi (2009: 134) also sees hints of Deianeira and Phaedra who are responsible for the horrific deaths of Heracles and Hippolytus, respectively. Starks (1999: 147) suggests that the imagery is meant to evoke the Carthaginian practice of child sacrifice, a custom that was particularly abhorrent to the Romans (Ennius *fr.* 221 V = 214 Sk.; on this practice see Brown 1991).

[180] On Roman legislation against magic, see e.g. Graf 1997: 46-60; Kippenberg 1997; Dickie 2001: 137-155; Rives 2003; cf. Servius *ad* 4.493.

out Book 4, Dido is portrayed as irrational and transgressive and her love is described as excessive and dangerous. The resulting image is one of aggressive, unrestrained female sexuality.

Scholarly debate on Book 4 has often centered on Dido's and Aeneas' union in the cave, their first sexual encounter, and the question of whether it can be considered a legitimate marriage.[181] Certainly Juno is present as "maid of honor" and goddess of marriage (*pronuba,* 1.644) and Heaven is a witness to the union (*conscius aether | conubiis*, 4.167-168). Dido herself calls it a marriage (*coniugium vocat*, 4.172), but Aeneas will claim that it was not (4.338-339). His position is undermined somewhat by Mercury's contemptuous epithet *uxorius* (4.266) and many readers would agree that he acts in a husbandly fashion by helping to build Dido's city (4.260-261; see further below). Yet the narrator seems to suggest that their relationship is unsanctioned by concluding that, in calling it a marriage, Dido "hid her fault" (*hoc praetexit nomine culpam*, 4.172). These contradictory viewpoints suggest that Vergil has left the question of marriage deliberately ambiguous: even the participants cannot agree on what exactly happened in the cave, and both have some right on their side.[182] The issue of whether their relationship is "really" a marriage is, then, less significant than the fact that it is not sanctioned by the narrative trajectory of the poem or the fated trajectory of the

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[181] Williams 1958 has suggested that Roman marriages were made official not by any particular ceremony, but simply by the consent of both parties; on the other hand, Feeney ([1983] 1990: 204) points out that, while formal ceremonies may not have been required *de iure*, they were expected for persons of Dido's and Aeneas' status (particularly given the dynastic implications of such a marriage). More recently Hersch (2010: 51-55) has argued that consent had to be formalized by public declaration. I think that—as with so many other issues—it is precisely Vergil's point that reasonable people could see both sides. On the question of Dido and Aeneas' marriage, see e.g. Beaujeu 1954; Williams 1972 *ad* 129f., 166f.; Monti 1981: 30-36; 44-48; Perkell 1981: 365; Moles 1984; Green 1986; Lyne 1989: 46-48; Wiltshire 1989: 90-93; Feeney [1983] 1990; Rudd [1976] 1990; Wlosok 1990: 336-343; Marin 1993; Horsfall 1995: 128-130; Gibson 1999; Gutting 2006; Caldwell 2008.

[182] Cf. Johnson 1976: 163, n. 42; Desmond 1994: 29.

Roman future: Aeneas is destined to marry Lavinia, not Dido.[183] Hence Jupiter's interven-

tion: he sends Mercury to admonish Aeneas, complaining that "he is not thinking of the cities

granted him by fate" (*fatisque datas non respicit urbes,* 4.225). Both Jupiter and Mercury

frame Aeneas' dereliction in terms of his obligation to Ascanius, "to whom the kingdom of

Italy and the Roman land is owed" (*cui regnum Italiae Romanaque tellus | debetur*, 4.275-

276; cf. 4.234).[184] Dido's relationship with Aeneas not only deflects him from his immediate

duty, but has dynastic consequences that stretch forward into the next generation and those to

come. The relationship must therefore end, and the threat it poses to the Roman future must

be eliminated.

The poet further suggests Dido's opposition to the Roman future through two nega-

tive historical parallels. In the first place, as a foreigner and a female ruler, Dido is linked to

Cleopatra, whose exercise of political power is regularly marked in Augustan literature as de-

viant and dangerous.[185] In wielding civil and military authority, both women are violating

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[183] It may be significant, then, that Dido is associated with Helen in Book 1: Aeneas gives her a cloak and a veil that had belonged to Helen, and which she brought to Troy "when she sought her forbidden marriages" (*cum peteret inconcessosque hymenaeos*, 1.651). The phrase *inconcessosque hymenaeos* is reminiscent of Dido's plea *per inceptos hymenaeos* (4.316; both unusual quadrisyllabic line-endings). Perhaps the marriage between Dido and Aeneas was not so much imaginary, demonic, or informal as it was forbidden.

[184] On the importance of Aeneas' obligation to Ascanius, see Eidinow 2003. Moorton (1990: 158) suggests that Vergil has introduced a "subtle doublet" here: as affection for the false Ascanius in-spired Dido's love for Aeneas, so affection for the real Ascanius inspires Aeneas to leave Dido and Carthage.

[185] As James (2002: 141) puts it, Dido, like Cleopatra, is "exactly the sort of woman not to be allowed in the Roman future." On Cleopatra's assumption of male power, see e.g. Wyke [1992] 2002; Quint 1993: 21-49; Edwards 2007: 184-185; Hamer 2008: 29. As Wyke ([1992] 2002: 210-214) points out, the invective against Cleopatra participates in a long tradition, dating back to Attic drama, in which female power is a mark of despotism and barbarity. On the identification of Dido as Cleopatra and its implications, see e.g Pease 1935: 24-28; Quint 1993: 28-29; Desmond 1994: 32-33; Tarrant 1997: 178; Spence 1999: 89-90; Bertman 2000; Keith 2000: 68, 78; Reed 2007: 88; Gurval 2011: 69-70; James 2012: 370-371.

culturally sanctioned scripts, and their transgression is "doubled" through the suggestion that their sexuality, too, is deviant and excessive (cf. n. 41 above).[186] The idea of a female leader whose political deviance is transmuted into sexual depravity is summed up in Propertius' description of Cleopatra as a "whore-queen" (*meretrix regina*, Prop. 3.11.39).[187] As both foreigner and female, Cleopatra is portrayed in the Augustan poetic tradition as "a dangerous anomaly who represents the 'otherness' of the East" (Wyke [1992] 2002: 215). Dido, too, inhabits both categories of foreign and female and therefore, as Desmond puts it, "figures difference writ large" (1994: 7).[188]

The comparison between Dido and Cleopatra naturally casts Aeneas in the role of Antony, a man undone by passion for a foreign queen. Just as his relationship with Cleopatra emasculates Antony, Aeneas' relationship with Dido is portrayed as feminizing him, a predictable corollary of her assumption of masculine roles.[189] When Mercury arrives to spur Aeneas to leave Carthage, he finds him playing the part of Antony "laying the foundations for

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[186] As Hamer (1993: 29) puts it regarding Cleopatra: "The construction of her as a seductress, the delimitation of her power, and its redefinition in terms of female sexuality…began almost immediately." Cf. Keith 2012: 393 on Dido (quoted in n. 20 above). Wyke ([1992] 2002: 198) points out that the prurient focus on Cleopatra's sex life (rather than her political and military life) has continued in modern scholarship: "Twentieth-century historians of ancient Rome have structured the queen as erotic object both for the male author of the narrative and for the male reader which that narrative has presupposed."

[187] Cf. Wyke [1992] 2002. In this ode, Propertius also describes Cleopatra as "worn out" by sex with her own slaves (*famulos inter femina trita suos,* 3.11.30).

[188] Cf. Hexter (1992: 332): "Dido…as Phoenician and queen of Carthage, represented that which was most foreign to Roman hero, poet and reader…the most otherly of Vergil's epic *personae*." Cf. also Quint 1993: 80; on the other hand, Reed (2007: 84) argues that, while Cleopatra represents "a crystallization of the ethnic Other," Dido is only ambivalently so characterized.

[189] See Lyne 1989: 189; Quint 1993: 29; Syed 2005: 184-193; Reed 2007: 85-87. The danger posed to Aeneas by this sojourn is suggested by Anchises in Book 6 (*quam metui ne quid Libyae tibi regna nocerent,* 6.694). Dido here plays the role of Calypso, who emasculates Odysseus: while on Ogygia, he has no masculine activities but rather sits passively weeping (5.81-84; cf. 156-159); instead, Calypso is dominant, even forcing him to sleep with her "an unwilling man, beside a willing woman"

citadels and raising new buildings" (*fundantem arces ac tecta novantem*, 4.260). Aeneas is

wearing a jasper-hilted sword and purple-dyed cloak (4.261-264), "gifts that wealthy Dido

had made" (*dives quae munera Dido | fecerat,* 4.263). These luxury items are markers of a

feminized Eastern extravagance and dissipation[190]—as Thomas (2001: 166) puts it, Aeneas

has "gone native"[191]—and the image is especially striking when read in comparison with Ju-

piter's description of the Romans as "the toga-wearing people" (*gentem togatam*, 1.282).

Mercury contemptuously dismisses Aeneas as *uxorius* (4.266), a term that further emascu-

lates him by suggesting *obsequium* to a woman.[192] The image of Aeneas devoting himself to

a foreign city and a foreign wife, rather than his Roman future, evokes Augustan propaganda

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(παρ᾽ οὐκ ἐθέλων ἐθελούσῃ, 5.155). This formulation well encapsulates their reversal of male and fe-
male roles.

[190] On luxury and decadence as characteristically feminine and foreign traits, see e.g. Dench 1998,
Edwards 1993: 92-97, Benjamin 2001: 301-324; Williams [1999] 2010: 137-176. Dido's association
with wealth and luxury is indicated here with the epithet *dives* (4.263; cf. *dives opum* of Carthage:
1.14). Cf. Boyle (1999: 152): "The *luxuria* of Dido, Cleopatra, and Antony are [*sic*] implicitly con-
demned as non-Roman and antithetic to the establishment of a moral, civilized community." In Au-
gustan poetry, the excessive luxury of Cleopatra and the Egyptianized Antony is indicated by their
use of mosquito nets (Hor. *Ep.* 9.15-16, Prop. 3.11.45).

[191] Reed (2007: 200) similarly describes Aeneas here as "Carthaginianized." Elsewhere in the *Aeneid*,
Aeneas and his men are mocked for their foreign clothes, and their style of dress is explicitly associ-
ated with the Oriental and the effeminate (4.215-217, 9.614-620); cf. Reed 2007: 85-87. Indeed, it is
precisely these Oriental traits that must be purged for Rome to come into being, while Italian lan-
guage and customs remain (12.821-842); cf. Wigodsky 1972: 78; O'Hara 1990 83-84; Reed 2007: 87.
As Dench (1998: 142) points out, Augustus' propaganda made much of Antony's appropriation of
Asiatic dress as an indicator of his "un-Romanness." Starks (1999: 273) agrees that Aeneas' appear-
ance conveys "the ultimate in Punic excess and effeminacy," yet he argues that this is another in-
stance of the transference of Punic qualities to Aeneas. Yet these are gifts that the Punic Dido has
made—a fact that Starks does not mention (tellingly, he says "Aeneas has emasculated himself"
(274), without any reference to Dido). Aeneas does become "Carthaginized" here, but he does so un-
der Dido's influence—just as Antony assumed Eastern dress and habits under the influence of Cleo-
patra.

[192] Lyne 1989: 46; cf. Edwards (1993: 85): "Erotic distraction, dependence on a woman (even one's
wife) were felt to divert a man from his public responsibilities. In neglecting the public good for the
pursuit of his private desires he became like a woman, in Roman eyes."

that painted Antony as "enslaved to a woman" (*emancipatus feminae,* Hor. *Ep.* 9.12).[193] In-

deed, Antony himself is pictured accompanied by "barbarian wealth" (*ope barbarica*, 8.685)

on the shield of Aeneas, where his dependence on his Cleopatra is portrayed as "unspeaka-

ble" (*sequiturque nefas Aegyptia coniunx*, 8.688).[194] Moreover, the portrait of Aeneas laying

the foundations for Carthage's citadels (*fundantem arces,* 4.260) is especially troubling in

light of the Roman destiny to overturn those very citadels (*verteret arces*, 1.20).[195] Carthage

is threatening precisely because of its attractiveness, and Dido poses a threat to Aeneas both

as an ally, and later as an antagonist.[196] Aeneas' destiny is to found the future Rome, not Car-

thage, and his actions in Book 4 are perversely aiding and abetting the greatest threat to his

descendants—a point that Jupiter makes clear in his proleptic description of Carthage as an

"enemy people" (*inimica…gente,* 4.235).[197]

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[193] Horace continues that the *Romanus miles* (probably Antony, but perhaps referring more generally to the soldiery under Antony's command) "was able to act the slave to wrinkly eunuchs" (*spadonibus | servire rugosis potest, Ep.* 9.13-14). This phrasing is echoed by Dio 50.26.5 (τῇ δὲ γυναικὶ δουλεύων); cf. 48.24.1; 49.33.4-34.1; 50.5.1. Plutarch (*Ant.* 58.5) relates a story that Antony rubbed Cleopatra's feet in public.

[194] On the Orientalizing and un-Romanizing of Antony in this passage, see Toll 1997: 45-50.

[195] Thus Aeneas' help with the building of Carthage is singled out as especially offensive by both Jupiter (*quid struit*, 4.235; cf. 4.271) and Mercury (*uxorius…exstruis,* 4.266-267). Mercury also echoes the epithet, *alta*, used of Rome in the proem (*altae moenia Romae*, 1.7) but applies it to Carthage (*Karthaginis altae | fundamenta*, 4.265-266), further hinting that Aeneas, by working to build Carthage, may divert Rome's future "height" from Italy to Africa. This is, of course, precisely Juno's intent in arranging the relationship between Dido and Aeneas (*quo regnum Italiae Libycas averteret oras*, 4.106).

[196] Cf. Reed (2007: 88): "From the very beginning of her story, Dido threatens to forestall Roman identity and meld it with the Other" by offering the Trojans not just safe harbor but long-term settlement (1.572-574).

[197] Cf. *fera Karthago* (10.12; also in Jupiter's words).

This point leads to the second troubling historical allusion in Vergil's characterization of Dido.[198] The opposition between Carthage and Rome is made paradigmatic early in Book 1, where it is given as the pre-eminent *causa* of Juno's hostility towards the Trojans (1.12-22) and Dido then forges an explicit link between herself and the future antagonism of Carthage and Rome in her final curse on Aeneas and his people. She prays for an unhappy future for Aeneas himself and concludes with a demand for eternal enmity between Tyrians and Trojans:[199]

> tum vos, o Tyrii, stirpem et genus omne futurum
> exercete odiis, cinerique haec mittite nostro
> munera. nullus amor populis nec foedera sunto.
> exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor
> qui face Dardanios ferroque sequare colonos,
> nunc, olim, quocumque dabunt se tempore vires.
> litora litoribus contraria, fluctibus undas
> imprecor, arma armis: pugnent ipsique nepotesque.
>
> Then you, O Tyrians, hound his stock and all his race to come
> with hatred, and give this as an offering to my
> ash: there must be no love, no treaties between our peoples.
> Rise up from my bones, avenging spirit,
> to harry with fire and sword the Dardan colonists,
> now, one day, whenever the opportunity befalls you.
> Let shores be opposed to shores, I pray, waves to waves,
> arms to arms: let them fight themselves, and their children's children. (4.622-629)

Dido here calls for hatred not only towards Aeneas and his family but "all his race to come" (*genus omne futurum*, 4.622), offering an *aition* for the Punic conflict. In summoning an

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[198] As Desmond 1994: 33 puts it, "In Dido, Hannibal and Cleopatra are eerily conflated to evoke an imperial vision of the enemy from the periphery who threatens centralized Roman power." Cf. Dench 1998: 125 on the conflation of female and foreign: "in ancient thought, the categories of female and barbarian are frequently elided into a composite Other against which masculine success and power may be articulated." Syed (1995: 136-176) has discussed the gendering of the ethnic "other" in the *Aeneid*.

[199] This prayer bitterly inverts Dido's earlier offer of alliance, even of union, between Tyrians and Trojans (1.572-574).

avenger (*ultor*) from her very bones, Dido also portrays herself as the impetus for Hannibal

and so emerges as the *genetrix* for Rome's greatest nemesis,[200] a figure who is often por-

trayed as a monstrous archetype of cruelty and cunning.[201] The curse closes with Dido's wish

that the fighting should continue *ad infinitum*, as expressed through the final hypermetric line

(*pugnent ipsique nepotesque*, 4.629).[202] Dido, in addition to impeding Aeneas' mission to

found the Roman state, is thus made responsible for the greatest threat to that state's fu-

ture.[203] Here, she is unambiguously cast as a threat, not merely to the forward progress of Ae-

neas, but to the forward progress of Roman civilization.

Finally, Dido's transgressiveness and her antagonism to fate and the gods are encap-

sulated in her association with the poem's negative value, *furor*.[204] The opposition between

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[200] Lyne (1989: 27-28) suggests that the Furies Dido has conceived (*concepit furias*, 4.474) are given (figurative) birth through this curse: "Hannibal was the eventual flesh of the Furies conceived by the Queen of Carthage." Quint (1993: 106) also sees the imagery of birth here: "As her curse begets Hannibal, the otherwise barren, sexually frustrated Dido takes on the uncontrolled, diseased fertility of an Africa that is always producing monsters." Cf. McAuley 2016: 60.

[201] On Hannibal see e.g. Cicero, *Laelius* 28; *de Officiis* 1.38, 1.108; *de Divinatione* 1.48, *Philippics* 5.25; Livy 21.4.5-9, Horace, *Odes* 3.6.361; 4.4.42. On Punic stereotypes in the *Aeneid*, see e.g. Vicenzi 1985; on Dido as a Carthaginian, see e.g. Horsfall (1973-74), Hexter (1992), Syed (2005: 142-176). On the other hand, Starks (1999) has argued that Vergil problematizes an anti-Carthaginian reading of Book 4 by applying characteristically Punic stereotypes to Aeneas instead of to Dido (cf. Gruen 2011: 134-136); similarly Monti (1981: 18-19, 77) argues that Dido is presented more as Roman than Carthaginian. Both Horsfall and Starks ignore or downplay key passages and their readings are therefore one-sided.

[202] Hill (2004: 117) considers the curse "out of all proportion to the original offence." As he continues, the irony that her curse will result in the destruction, not of Rome but of her own people "only underscores the utter untenability of her claims upon Aeneas" (119). On the other hand, Starks (1999: 278) argues that "No Roman could really blame Dido for such a curse in her current state"; this seems an overstatement to me. In Quint's view (1993: 112), the curse "completes [Dido's] dehumanization."

[203] As Syed (2005: 170) puts it, "It is this historical dimension that puts Dido's dangerousness ahead even of Medea's. No other disappointed lover of mythology has the force of reaching down into the recorded history of the Romans of Vergil's time and exacting vengeance for her thwarted desire on their direct descendants." Cf. Panoussi 2009: 134.

[204] 4.65, 69, 101, 283, 298, 433, 474, 501, 548, 646, 697. Of course, Aeneas himself is also linked to *furor* at times, particularly in Books 2, 10, and 12, and especially in the closing lines of the poem

furor and Roman values is summed up in the statesman simile in Book 1, in which the *furor* of the mob is tempered by the *pietas* of the leader (1.150-153). *Furor* is also unambiguously opposed to the fated Roman future by Jupiter, whose prophecy of the Roman empire culminates with the image of *Furor impius* enchained and locked away (1.294-296). *Furor* is strongly associated with Juno, the self-affirmed adversary of Aeneas and Rome, who "wages war" (*bella gero*, 1.48) with the Trojans even when she knows her cause is lost (7.313-322) and summons up a Fury, the embodiment of *furor*, to delay the peaceful settlement of Rome at the cost of as many Trojan and Latin lives as possible (7.323-340).[205] As Hardie (1993: 41) has noted, Dido envisions herself as a Fury in her promise to pursue Aeneas from beyond the grave (4.384-386) and in her final curse on him and his people (4.607-629).[206] Dido's association with *furor* indicates her opposition both to the Roman values articulated by Jupiter and to the epic mission imposed by fate.

Dido's death reflects her social/sexual deviance and her role as an obstacle to the Roman future: it is both gruesome and prolonged. In a sense, the narration of her death is extended throughout Books 1-4 since it repeatedly foreshadowed: as early as Book 1, Dido is described as "doomed to future destruction" (*pesti devota futurae*, 1.712). Her death is also

when he kills Turnus "inflamed by *furor* and terrible in his anger" (*furiis accensus et ira | terribilis*, 12.946-947); there is an explicit echo here of Dido, who dies "inflamed by sudden *furor*" (*subito accensa furore,* 4.697) This conclusion may lend itself to a pessimistic interpretation of the poem, but does not negate the problematic implications link between Dido and *furor*.

[205] Juno is also shown throwing open the doors to the Latin temple of war (*Aen*. 7.620-622), reversing the image of the gates closed in Book 1 (*claudentur Belli portae*, 1.294) with the personification of *Furor* locked inside.

[206] Cf. Keith 2000: 69. Newman (1986: 158) has suggested that Dido does indeed return as a Fury in the second half of the poem through Allecto, Amata, and Turnus.

hinted at throughout Book 4. As is often noted, Dido's passion for Aeneas is repeatedly described in terms of fire and wound, metaphors that become fatally literal in the sword and the pyre with which she accomplishes her suicide, and that thus link her death to her transgressive sexuality.[207] Likewise, in her erotic raving (*furens,* 4.68) Dido is compared to a deer wounded by a "deadly shaft" (*letalis harundo*, 4.73)[208] and the day of her first sexual liaison with Aeneas is called her "first day of death" (*ille dies primus leti*, 4.169). The poet regularly signals Dido's impending death after Aeneas' decision to depart through the repetition of the epithet *moritura* (4.308, 415, 519, 604; cf. *moribunda*, 4.323). Dido decides to die at line 475 (*decrevitque mori*), yet her preparations encompass nearly two hundred lines. This recurrent foreshadowing creates a sense of anticipation, and Dido's looming death becomes a dramatic hook for the narrative. Further, it paradoxically denies her agency in her own suicide by creating an impression of inevitability rather than autonomy: her future has already been erased by the narrative. Dido is often viewed as a striking example of female agency in an epic world that typically genders subjectivity as masculine, yet the repeated signs of her imminent death diminish that agency.[209]

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[207] Love as fire: 4.2, 23, 54, 66-67, 68; as wound: 4.1-2, 67, 69-73. On this imagery see, e.g., Newton 1957; Pöschl 1962: 60-91; Ferguson 1970; Rudd: 1976: 53 [=1990: 164-165]; Edgeworth 1977; Gillis 1983: 37-52; Lyne 1989: 179-181; Moorton 1990. Keith (2000: 112-113) notes that Juno's hostility towards the Trojans is described in terms of wounding (e.g. 1.8, 1.36), imagery that further links her and Dido (cf. Putnam 1995: 37). Both Dido's and Juno's wounds are located "under the chest" (*sub pectore vulnus,* 1.36, 4.67, 4.689).

[208] The animalization of Dido in this simile is picked up in her wish to have lived "like a wild beast" (*more ferae*, 4.551; cf. Nappa 2007). The simile of the deer also hints at Aeneas' innocence of (deliberate) wrongdoing in his relationship with Dido since his *comparandus*, the hunting shepherd, is portrayed as "unaware" (*nescius,* 4.72) that the doe has been struck. On the animalization of Dido, see Quartarone 2002: 153-154.

[209] Cf. Hill (2004: 120): "Dido's death, then, is…in a sense not even *Dido*'s act, and in the night before her suicide the queen becomes an almost passive character."

The protracted prelude to Dido's suicide is recapitulated in the long duration of the death itself. Following her final curse on Aeneas, Dido bursts into her inner chambers and climbs onto her pyre. Although her death seems imminent, it is again delayed by two speeches, which serve to build suspense and tantalize the reader.[210] As the tension mounts, the poet initiates a series of verbal echoes that link Dido's transgression of social norms and obstruction of the Roman mission to her death. She is described as *effera* (4.642) and *furibunda* (4.646), language that reiterates her associations with Carthage's savagery (*fera Karthago,* 10.72)[211] and Juno's *furor*. Dido's final speech reviews her accomplishments as queen, including the building of Carthage (*urbem praeclaram statui,* 4.655). While recalling the impressive, regal Dido of Book 1, this speech also suggests her defiance of normative gender roles; further, this city is, of course, Rome's future nemesis.[212]

Dido's death is clearly linked to her sexuality when she builds her pyre on the bed she shared with Aeneas (and which she explicitly calls their "marriage bed": *lectum iugalem,* 4.496). When she first sees their familiar bed (*notumque cubile,* 4.648), she pauses to "brood over" it (*incubuit toro,* 4.650, echoing her brooding over the empty couches in the banquet hall after Aeneas' narration of his history (*stratisque relictis | incubat,* 4.82-83). The bed is

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[210] Hence Alfred Hitchcock's definition of horror: "There is no terror in the bang, only in the anticipation of it." The technique is comparable to Homer's narration of Hector's death, in which the battle between him and Achilles is repeatedly delayed by speeches, similes, and other interjections (*Il.* 22.131-329).

[211] Cf. *ferocia Poeni | corda* (1.302-303); note that both statements attributing savagery to the Carthaginians are focalized by Jupiter (cf. his proleptic description of Carthage as an enemy people: *inimica…gente,* 4.235).

[212] As the reader has just been reminded by Dido's final curse, calling for eternal enmity between Carthage and the Aeneadae (4.622-629).

piled with "sweet mementoes" of Aeneas (*dulces exuviae*, 4.651; cf. 4.496, 507)[213] and be-

fore she dies, she kisses it (*os impressa toro,* 4.659). Dido stabs herself with Aeneas sword

(4.507, 4.646-647), in a gesture whose phallic overtones have often been noted.[214] The poet

sets up a series of vivid verbal connections between Dido's suicide and her social and sexual

deviance: Dido has violated the culturally sanctioned scripts for female behavior and she has

placed herself in opposition to the divinely-ordered Roman future; she is therefore punished

with death.

The brutality of that death is indexed to Dido's transgressiveness. As Heuzé (1985)

and Keith (2000) have demonstrated, Dido (like Camilla, discussed later in this chapter) suf-

fers in death beyond any of the major male characters in the poem. The poet focuses particu-

lar attention on the bloodiness of her last moments: the sword and her hands are "spuming

and spattered with gore" (*ensemque cruore | spumantem sparsasque manus*, 4.664-665).[215]

Several critics have discussed Vergil's use of cinematic techniques,[216] and here he seems to

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[213] *Exuviae* ("things stripped off") often refers to battle-spoils, and Lyne (1987: 21-23) notes the irony in describing the remnants of Aeneas this way, as if Dido had been the "victor" in their relationship.

[214] See e.g. Vance 1973: 138; Gillis 1983: 48; Suzuki 1989: 116; Moorton 1990: 161-164; Desmond 1994: 31; Keith 2000: 115; McAuley 2016: 61. Khan (1996: 15) and Panoussi (2009: 52) note that the use of Aeneas' sword symbolically puts Aeneas in the position of Dido's murder. The verb used of her drawing Aeneas' sword (*recludit,* 4.646) repeats one of the verbs used to describe her deeds in the original flight from Tyre (*recludit,* 1.358), perhaps suggesting another link between her suicide and her incongruous assumption of the role of *dux.*

[215] The alliteration of the two synonyms *spumantem* and *sparsas,* and the chiastic word order that closely juxtaposes them, suggest an excess of blood.

[216] E.g. Leglise 1958; Mench 1969, repr. 2001; while Malissard (1970: 157, 163) viewed Vergil as "irréductible au [langue du] cinema." Fotheringham and Brooker (2013) offer a sustained and persua-sive critique of the problems with these early approaches, emphasizing the multiplicity of possible representations, and how a wide variety of directorial choices (including camera angles, framing of shots, transition between shots, eyeline, etc.) will influence the reader's reception of any representa-tion in ways not accounted for by Mench and Malissard. I follow them in "see[ing] the process of *im-agining* filmic representations of individual passages as a form of *close reading*" (171; emphasis orig-inal) rather than claiming that any particular passage could or should be easily transferred to film. For

"zoom in," focusing attention on Dido's bloody hands and sword. The effect is amplified by the unexpected reference to companions who, we discover, are "gazing at" Dido (*aspiciunt comites,* 4.664). Nowhere during the speeches leading up to her suicide has there been any suggestion that she is not alone, and in fact, her earlier crossing of the "more secluded thresholds," (*interiora limina,* 4.645) might imply that she was seeking seclusion; the presence of others is therefore startling. The poet has chosen the precise moment of Dido's death to mark her as an object of the gaze, and as Keith (2000: 115) points out, these companions are stand-ins for the reader/audience, providing a vantage point from which to observe Dido's death. The poet explicitly offers the reader a subject position in relation to Dido, while she is construed as the object of a prurient gaze.

The narrative of Dido's dying is, again, delayed when the poet pauses to describe the reaction to her death. This sequence offers another example of Vergil's "cinematic" technique: after the close-up on Dido's hands and sword, the "camera" pans away to show the city's shocked response to her death. As opposed to a static picture, the language of sound conveys a sense of animation, both in terms of verbs (*fremunt*; *resonat*, 4.668) and nouns (*clamor,* 4.665; *lamentis gemituque et femineo ululatu*, 4.667; *magnis plangoribus*, 4.667).[217] The narrator then cuts to an image comparing Dido's death to the sack of Carthage (4.669-

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an overview of the applicability of film theory to epic poetry, see Lovatt 2013: 24-25.

[217] The poet continues his technique of repeating significant words from Dido's sexual and social transgression in the context of her death: Rumor "runs wild" (*bacchatur,* 4.666) just as Dido did in her rage at Aeneas (4.301) and the howling of Carthage's women (*femineo ululatu,* 4.667) echoes the howling of the nymphs during Dido's "marriage" to Aeneas (*ulularunt,* 4.168). As Panoussi (2009: 137) points out, the link between the specifically female wailing and the fall of the city "suggests the dangers that female lamentation may pose to the integrity of the state." The dangerous quality of female mourning is reiterated in the narrative of Euryalus' mother: womanly wailing (*femineo ululatu,* 9.477) undermines the Trojans' morale (*torpent infractae ad proelia vires*, 9.499); cf. 12.604-611 on the Italian women's reaction to the death of Amata. On the motif of "womanly wailing" in the *Aeneid,* see Sharrock 2011.

670); a long, panning shot shows the flames rolling in waves over the roofs of shrines and houses (4.671).[218] The poet then again "zooms in" on a single actor: Anna, who rushes through the city (*ruit,* 4.674; repeating the verb used of Carthage's fall at 4.669), beating her breast and tearing her cheeks (4.673). This delaying sequence culminates in an impassioned monologue of grief and reproach, in which Anna openly blames Dido for destroying them both, along with the entire city (*exstinxti te meque, soror, populumque patres | Sidonios ur-bemque tuam,* 4.682-683). Anna repeats explicitly the charges that have been implicitly leveled against Dido by the narrator throughout Book 4: that her actions have doomed her city.[219] Dido's death destroys her city, and her death has been systematically linked to her sexuality. The poet endorses Roman cultural norms that associate female political authority with aggressive sexuality and that demonize that sexuality as destructive to the male political community.

After this protracted delay, the narrator returns to Dido and focuses on the pathetic tableau of Anna cradling her half-dead sister (*semianimem…germanam*, 4.686) in her lap and attempting to dry the "black blood" (*atros…cruores,* 4.687) with her clothes. In these final moments, the poet again "zooms in" on Dido in order to provide a detailed, and gruesome, description of her death throes:

> illa gravis oculos conata attollere rursus
> deficit; infixum stridit sub pectore vulnus.
> ter sese attollens cubitoque adnixa levavit,
> ter revoluta toro est oculisque errantibus alto
> quaesivit caelo lucem ingemuitque reperta.

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[218] As has been recognized since antiquity, Virgil borrows this simile from *Iliad* 22.410-413, where the Trojans grieve for Hector as if the city had (already) fallen (cf. Macr. *Sat.* 4.6).

[219] Cf. Higgonet (1986: 73) on the way the suicide of female rulers "ironically undercuts" their qualities of leadership. In addition to Dido, she mentions Plutarch's Cleopatra as another woman whose "professional" accomplishments are undermined by the motif of "dying for love."

"She tries to lift her heavy eyes again
but fails; the deep wound hisses under her chest.
Three times she tried to raise herself and prop herself up on her elbow,
three times she rolled back on the bed and with her wandering eyes
sought the light of the sky above and groaned when she found it." (4.688-692)

The narrator thus creates what Tait (2006: 51) describes as "a carnographic spectacle of the ruined body." The term "carnographic," coined by Pinedo, expresses the parallel functions of pornographic and horrific imagery: like pornography, the horror film "dares not only to violate taboos but to expose the secrets of the flesh, to spill the contents of the body" (1997: 61).[220] Likewise, Vergil figures Dido's body as open through the grotesque idea of the gaping wound "hissing" in her chest (*stridit sub pectore vulnus*, 4.689). As well as adding an auditory element to the vivid visual description of her death,[221] this line contains a close verbal echo of the earlier description of her amatory wound (*tacitum vivit sub pectore vulnus*, 4.67), again linking Dido's suffering in death to her sexuality: as her body was made sexually open to Aeneas, now it is made literally open through the penetrative (*infixum,* 4.689) wound.[222]

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[220] Cf. Helman (1991: 121): "the true parallel of dissection…is pornography. It is the same reduction of the human image into slices of helpless meat, ripped out of context." On the overlapping imagery of horror, forensic crime drama, and pornography, see e.g. Clover 1987, 1992: 21-22; Williams 1991; Jermyn 2007: 88; Weissman and Boyle 2007. This type of imagery has also been termed "gorenographic" (Caputi and Russel 1992: 18).

[221] Weissman (2007: 26) discusses how forensic crime drama combines sound and sight in illustrations of death through the so-called "*CSI*-shot," used to "zoom in" on the wound by means of a CGI image that shows the site of death in hyperrealistic detail. This shot is usually accompanied by "thud, squelch, slurp, and rupturing sounds which highlight the fleshiness of the body and add to its abject qualities." Cf. Lury (2007: 112) on the "shocking" and "disturbing" soundscape of the *CSI* shot.

[222] *Infixum* also echoes the description of Dido's erotic fascination with Aeneas (*haerent infixi pectore vultus*, 4.4), again linking her death to her sexual transgression. On the opening of Dido's body, cf. Joplin (1990: 67) on the wounds of Lucretia and Verginia: "The stab to the heart, the showable wound serves as a double for the vagina, the natural opening that must be covered."

The narrator also exposes Dido's agony through the extended description of her futile attempts to raise her eyes and lift herself up. The anaphora of *ter* and its emphatic placement at the beginning of subsequent lines highlights Dido's struggling (*luctantem*, 4.695) in her last moments. The image encourages what Jermyn calls "*to-be-looked-away-from-ness*" (2004: 163; emphasis original):[223] a reaction of horror, discomfort, and denial; a rupture in identification that, in the context of film, causes the spectator to look away.[224] Bronfen (1992) has argued that the cultural proliferation of images of dead women allows the male spectator to displace his anxiety about death onto the feminine. In Dido's case, the vividly imagined horrors of her death invite the (male) reader to distance himself from her as subject from object, while the violation of the boundary between the inside and outside of her body encourages both revulsion and fascination.[225]

Keith (2000: 117; cf. Heuzé 1985: 132) views Dido as an example of the motif of the "beautiful female corpse," in which the dead woman is transformed into an "erotic and aesthetic object" (117). Her analysis is based on the work of Bronfen (1992), who catalogs numerous examples from the literary and visual arts in which women in death are depicted as

[223] Reversing Mulvey's "to-be-looked-at-ness" (1975: 11).

[224] Cf. Creed 1993: 28-29; Weissman 2007: 1.

[225] Dido's body fits Kristeva's definition of the "abject," that which disturbs established order and threatens identity. The corpse is, in her words, "the utmost abject" (1982: 4) – it creates disruption through its "in-betweenness," its position between human and non-human, life and death, subject and object. Dido's body here especially fulfills that role since she is in the process of dying (a process that is drawn out, suspending her between death and life), and her gaping wound disrupts the normally stable binary of inside/outside the body. As Jermyn (2004: 154) points out, the female corpse is "doubly abject" as it "brings together two strands of the abject, femininity and mortality." Since the abject disrupts stability and identity, it poses a threat to subjectivity and the reader/viewer thus responds with horror and disgust.

eroticized and desirable. Yet Vergil's narrative of Dido's dying focuses on the grotesque ra-

ther than the aesthetic and makes no attempt to elide the horrors of death; the reader does not

view a beautiful, peaceful female corpse but rather a grisly, horrific one.[226] This is in contrast

to the deaths of young men such as Euryalus, whose body is explicitly called "beautiful" at

the moment of his death (*pulchros…artus,* 9.433) and who is compared to a flower cut by the

plough or a poppy weighed down by the rain (9.435-437). Likewise, Pallas in death is com-

pared to a violet or a hyacinth that has been plucked by a young girl, but "whose brightness

and beauty still remain" (*cui neque fulgor adhuc nec dum sua forma recessit,* 11.70).[227] In

the case of Euryalus and Pallas, the reader is invited to consider the tragedy of their lost

youth and beauty from a distance, through the mediation of the similes, and the narrator em-

phasizes that they remain beautiful in death. On the other hand, in the narrative of Dido's dy-

ing, the reader views the death directly through the close-up technique that focuses attention

on the details of her bloody hands and gaping wound. Weissman (2007: 8; 21) points out that

the camera technique of forensic drama "tends to emphasize the mutilations of the body by

giving close-ups and extreme close-ups of the bloody wounds rather than presenting the body

in distanced long shots." This tactic diminishes the victim's humanity and renders her more

object than person.

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[226] By contrast, such an elision often occurs in glamorized depictions of female death in contemporary advertising and similar media. For example, an episode of "America's Next Top Model" posed the models as murder victims in a supposed recreation of crime scene photographs (episode 8:05, aired 3/28/07). Similar glamorizing of the female corpse occurs in Kanye West's music video for *Monster* (2010) and in advertising campaigns for designers such as Jimmy Choo (2006) and Marc Jacobs (2014). On the advertising trend of models posed as corpses, see Jhally, Kilbourne, and Rabinovitz 2010; cf. Cochrane 2014.

[227] Cf. Heuzé 1985: 290-295.

Thus I would argue that Vergil's representation of female death has more in common with contemporary horror and forensic drama than with the images of perfect, peaceful dead women in post-Enlightenment art discussed by Bronfen.[228] Numerous recent studies have investigated the treatment of the female corpse in these genres and have shown that it is figured as the site of body horror and gruesome violence – violence inflicted both in death and decomposition, and in the autopsy suite, where the dead female body is scrutinized in detail.[229] Yet the dead body is rendered less abject through the discourses of law and order and science, which authorize the gaze of the viewer as necessary to solving the crime; the dead body is re-signified as a victim who must be avenged or a scientific puzzle that must be solved.[230] In Dido's case, however, there are no such mediating discourses and her dying body is exposed to the gaze of the reader without any negotiation.

Nevertheless, in the last moments of the book the narrator again invites sympathy with Dido through Juno, who pities her "long suffering" (*longum miserata dolorem*, 4.693) and sends Iris to end her agony.[231] According to the narrator, Juno intervenes because Dido is dying "by neither fate nor a deserved death" (*nec fato merita nec morte*, 4.696). This interjection reminds us that Juno herself (as well as Venus) is at least partially at fault for Dido's ac-

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[228] See Jermyn (2004: 154) on the contrast between idealized depictions of female death in the Romantic and Victorian eras and the graphic images of contemporary media: "recent cinematic manifestations undo the once-popular vision of beautiful repose."

[229] E.g. Jermyn 2004, Tait 2006, Weissman 2007, Glynn and Kim 2009, Dillman 2014.

[230] Weissman 2007; cf. Tait 2004, Weissman and Boyle: 2007: 93; Glynn and Kim 2009: 105-107.

[231] Keith (2000: 113), noting Vergil's ascription of the language of wounding to Juno's figurative injuries (e.g. *aeternum…volnus*, 1.36), suggests that Juno's sympathy with Dido "may be in some sense motivated by recognition of the displacement of the deadly effect of her own eternal wound on to her protegée." Cf. Syed 2005: 122-125; 129.

tions throughout Book 4 and her subsequent suicide. Vergil has avoided legitimizing an une-quivocally critical view of Dido by attributing her excessive passion to divine intervention, and the closing lines of the book suggest that pity and sympathy are appropriate reactions to her death. Yet Juno's perspective contradicts Dido's own view that she dies "as she de-served" (*ut merita*, 4.547)[232] and, in Keith's words (2000: 116), the "repeated ascription of the language of choice and agency to Dido" undermines a simplistic view that her behavior is entirely the goddess' fault. The poem again presents two contradictory views (*ut merita* and *nec merita*) without explicitly resolving them. Yet the phrase *merita nec morte* presents a strong contrast with the narratives of the Ithacan maids and the Phoenician woman in the *Od-yssey*, where the women's deaths are overtly figured as justified, even obligatory. Dido has been punished for her social and sexual transgressions, but the narrator's closing vignette re-minds us that the transgressiveness ascribed to her in Book 4 was not all her own doing. The focalization of these lines through Juno invites the reader to identify with her perspective and pity Dido as well.[233]

Dido, like Creusa, is often viewed as a sacrifice to Aeneas' mission: she is an obstacle that must be eliminated if he is to move forward.[234] Both women's deaths are required by the narrative and political trajectory of the poem, which necessitates Aeneas' marriage to Lavinia and the mingling of Trojan and Latin blood (12.835). The impression of sacrifice is increased

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[232] Servius seems to support Dido's judgment against herself when he describes her death as just, ow-ing to the breaking of her vows to Sychaeus (*iustus interitus post amissam castitatem, ad* 4.1). On the other hand, Austin (1955, *ad* 4.696) argues that Vergil is "explicit" in exonerating Dido at this point.

[233] Even if Juno is not a reliable sign of the reader's response at this point, Aeneas echoes her judg-ment when he encounters Dido in the underworld (*miseratus,* 6.332).

[234] E.g. Genovese 1975: 24-25; Perkell 1981, esp. 361-370; Heuzé 1985: 164-166; Nugent 1992: 273-278; Suzuki 1989: 117; Hardie 1993: 29; Panoussi 2009: 45-46.

by the regular foreshadowing of Dido's death discussed above, which gives an impression of inevitability rather than agency: Dido is sacrificed by the narrative as well. Yet, as Keith (2000: 115-116) notes, Dido must also die so that her transgressiveness may be expiated and eliminated: "Roman societal norms are proleptically confirmed and secured over the dead body of a Carthaginian woman whose political activity poses a profound challenge to the nascent Roman order." Dido is therefore a scapegoat; she is sacrificed in order symbolically to exorcise the problem of the sexually/socially deviant female from the poem. A powerful, politically and sexually active woman is replaced by a lifeless corpse. In a culture that values female passivity, death converts deviant women into models of ideal femininity. Over the course of her story, Dido is transformed from an active (and happy) queen into a woman so helpless that she cannot fully accomplish her own suicide.[235] The *Aeneid*'s most talkative woman is silent in death, unable to respond to Anna's final speech.[236] Our last glimpse of the living Dido is of her pathetic struggles to lift herself and her rolling eyes; finally, with Iris' help, her life "slips away into the winds" (*in ventos vita recessit*, 4.705).[237] Dido has been domesticated in death as she could not be in life, and her brutal death implicitly reassures Augustan readers that even unruly women can be tamed and silenced.

The differences between the final narratives of Dido and Creusa, Aeneas' first wife, are profound. Creusa's body is never shown penetrated by violence or bloodied in death; she

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[235] Cf. *laeta*, 1.503; *laetissima* 1.685.

[236] She will remain silent in the underworld, where she refuses to respond to Aeneas' pleas (6.469-471).

[237] On the Epicurean context of this death, echoing Lucretius (*DRN* 3.128-129, 214-215, 400-401, 455-456), see Gordon (2012: 67-71), who argues that these Epicurean qualities lend something "redemptive" (2012: 71) to the portrait of Dido's suicide.

dissolves into thin air (2.791), while Dido is wracked by agony. Further, Creusa maintains her subjectivity after death, speaking more as a dead woman than she did in life. This contrast parallels the contrast in their responses to Aeneas' mission: Dido mocks his explanation of his divine marching-orders (4.376-380) while Creusa encourages—indeed commands— him to pursue the will of the gods (*numine divum,* 2.777). The disparity of their responses is thrown into relief by a close verbal parallel: both women leave Aeneas wishing to say more (Creusa: *multa volentem | dicere desuerit,* 2.790-791; Dido: *linquens…multa parentem | dicere,* 4.390-391), but Creusa has left him after a speech of reassurance and benediction, while Dido leaves him after a speech of anger and recrimination. The distinction is encapsulated in their addresses to Aeneas: Creusa calls him her "sweet husband" (*o dulcis coniunx,* 2.777), while Dido addresses him only with insults (*perfide,* 4.366; *improbe,* 4.386). Yet, despite the differences in their life and in death, there is one distinct similarity: both "fade away" into the air at the end of their death-narratives (Creusa: *tenuisque recessit in auras,* 2.791; Dido: *in ventos vita recessit,* 4.705).[238] Yet Dido's disappearance comes after a prolonged period of agony (*longum…dolorem,* 4.693); it is a release from her suffering body (*teque isto corpore solvo,* 4.703), while Creusa has already left her body behind. Dido's death has been difficult (*difficilisque obitus,* 4.694), while Creusa's remains mysterious (*incertum,* 2.740), but certainly without any evidence of pain or suffering.

A further contrast can be drawn between Creusa's and Dido's actions after death. When Aeneas encounters Dido in the underworld in Book 6, she remains his enemy (*inimica,* 6.472) and is unwilling to accept Aeneas' explanation—repeated from Book 4—that he left

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[238] Dido's final line is often compared to Camilla's and Turnus' (*vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras,* 11.831 = 12.952; see e.g. Williams 1972 and O'Hara 2011 *ad* 4.705) but the parallel with Creusa's is closer.

Carthage unwillingly (*invitus*, 6.460; cf. *non sponte,* 4.361). Creusa, on the other hand, holds

no grudge against Aeneas, although he bears some responsibility for her death (cf. 2.725). In

contrast to Creusa's comforting speech, Dido remains silent in response to Aeneas' pleas, re-

fusing even to look at him (6.469-471). Creusa endorses the Roman future, while Dido main-

tains her opposition to Aeneas and his mission beyond the grave (6.467-474). Her appearance

in the underworld—still "fresh from her wound" (4.450)—reinforces her role as obstacle and

opponent, yet just as her death-narrative concluded with Juno's sympathy (*miserata*, 4.693),

so her postmortem appearance concludes with Aeneas' (*miseratus,* 6.332). Even at her most

antagonistic, the narrator invites us to pity Dido and to consider what is lost by her death.

Camilla

Camilla, the Italian *bellatrix*, further demonstrates the correlation between female so-

cial/sexual transgression and violent death. Camilla is, indeed, often paired with Dido and

viewed as a second incarnation of her in the "Iliadic" half of the poem.[239] Like Dido, Camilla

is a female leader: in her first appearance in the poem, she is leading a troop (*agmen agens,*

7.804; cf. 11.433), and like Dido she is called *dux* (11.519) and *regina* (11.499, 703, 801).

Even more than Dido, however, Camilla annexes masculine territory in her assumption of the

quintessentially male role of warrior: she takes up arms, thereby disturbing the pairing of

arma virumque that is programmatic both for the poem and the future Roman state.[240]

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[239] On the similarity (and difference) of Dido and Camilla, see e.g. Gransden 1984: 188; Lyne 1987: 136-137; Wilhelm 1987: 43-48; Putnam 1989: 52-53; Mack 1999: 147. As Fulkerson (2008: 21) suggests (speaking more generally), it is probably more accurate to speak of "multiple strands of repetition" rather than a simple pattern in Vergil's character doublets. On the similarities between Dido, Camilla, and Amata, see further below.

[240] Also expressed by Turnus: *bella viri pacemque gerent quis bella gerenda* (7.444). He echoes Hector's admonition to Andromache in the *Iliad* (πόλεμος δ' ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει, *Il.* 6.492).

Camilla, like Dido, is initially presented as a positive figure. She first appears in the catalogue of Latin warriors in Book 7, where she arrives last, the placement normally considered especially honorific.[241] The poet describes her astonishing physical prowess in detail: she can outrun the winds, skim over the top of a grain-field without bruising the plants, and run on water without wetting her feet (7.807-811). Crowds flock to watch and admire her (*miratur*, 7.812-813). Yet even in this first appearance, there are hints of negativity, as there were with Dido. Camilla arrives for battle extravagantly dressed in a purple cloak and with her hair twined with gold (7.814-816), garments that invite comparison with Dido's hunting-dress in Book 4 (4.138-139)[242] and suggest Orientalized luxury and effeminacy (cf. above n. 72).[243] Further the poet's first description of her emphasizes her rejection of conventional female modes of behavior:

> bellatrix, non illa colo calathisve Minervae
> femineas adsueta manus, sed proelia virgo
> dura pati…
>
> A warrior woman, she had not accustomed her female hands
> to the distaff or the baskets of wool, but rather, a virgin, she was
> hardened to endure battle... (7.805-807)

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[241] Though Servius (*ad* 7.803) suggests that it is rather an indication of "prudence" on the poet's part to relegate women to the end "after the full commemoration of the men" (*prudenter post inpletam commemorationem virorum transit ad feminas*). Similarly, Williams (1961: 149; cf. Horsfall 2000 *ad* 7.803) argues that Turnus should technically be considered last and hold the place of honor, while Camilla is "a sort of pendant, bringing the book to close on a note of strange beauty." Boyd 1992, on the other hand, argues that Camilla is presented in terms of the ethnographic tradition of the "foreign marvel," and the vividness/visuality of ecphrastic description.

[242] Cf. Boyd 1992: 228; D'Alessio 1993: 139; Fratantuono 2006: 32, 2007: 346; Reed 2007: 84.

[243] Cf. Boyd 1992: 219-221; she draws a parallel with the catalogue of Trojan allies in the *Iliad*, where the Carian leader arrives wearing gold "like a girl, fool that he was" (ἠΰτε κούρη | νήπιος, *Il.* 2.872-873). As she concludes, Camilla is "marked by her garb as a harbinger of doom for the Italian cause" (1992: 221). Cf. Nelis (2001: 309), drawing on the Apollonian parallels of the Lemnian and Phaeacian women: "She is an example…of feminine excess, of perverted eroticism, a dangerous but attractive sexuality."

The poet emphasizes Camilla's unwillingness to participate in wool-working, typically a marker of virtuous womanhood. The ideal of the woman spinning or weaving appears as early as Homer[244] and is particularly prevalent in Latin literature and epigraphy: funerary inscriptions often include praise of the wife as *lanifica,* "woolworker," and wool-working is often linked to chastity and marital devotion.[245] In rejecting "the distaff and the baskets of wool" (7.805),[246] Camilla is rejecting traditional female behavior, and the dichotomy between her gender and her activities is made explicit by the adjective *femineas* (11.806): her hands are womanly but she does not use them in conventionally womanly ways.[247] Similarly, Camilla herself is hard (*dura,* 7.807), in contrast to typically feminine softness and pliancy (*mollitia*).[248]

Camilla is repeatedly linked to Dido through verbal echoes that recall her initial appearance in Book 1. Camilla's epithet *bellatrix* (7.805) implicitly associates her with Penthesilea (*bellatrix,* 1.493) and she is later called "Amazon" (11.648) and explicitly compared to

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[244] Penelope is the obvious example; her weaving is closely linked to her sexual fidelity (*Od.* 2.93-110, 19.137-156, 24.129-198). Andromache, too, is weaving when she hears the news of Hector's death (*Il.* 22.437-446).

[245] As is the case with Lucretia (*deditam lanae*, Livy 1.57). On the theme of wool-working in epitaphs, where it is often linked to chastity and other feminine virtues, see e.g. Lattimore 1942 [1962]: 294-300; Forbis 1990; D'Ambra 2007: 59-60; Riess 2012; Sharrock 2013: 163. On Camilla, cf. Boyd (1992: 216): "Her lack of interest or skill in spinning and weaving precludes her from any association with the faithful passivity so valued by Roman men in their women."

[246] Vergil seems to echo Herodotus, who has the Amazons say "we have not learned women's handiwork" (ἔργα δὲ γυναικήια οὐκ ἐμάθομεν, *Hist.* 4.114.3).

[247] Keith (2000: 27) notes that this line "begins and ends with gender-marked diction," reinforcing Camilla's nonconformity. A similar trope occurs in Propertius' description of Cleopatra, who "foully hurled spears from her womanly hand" (*pilaque feminea turpiter acta manu*, Prop. 4.6.22).

[248] Varro derived *mulier* from *mollis* (*apud* Lact. *Opif.* 12.17; cf. Isid. *Orig.* 11.2.18). See Edwards 1993: 63-97 on *mollitia* as an insult implying effeminacy when directed against men.

both Penthesilea and Hippolyta (11.661-662). Camilla is also a devotee of Diana, Dido's *comparanda* in Book 1 (1.498-502). These reminiscences of Dido suggest that Camilla too will transgress gendered boundaries. Yet Dido's militancy, suggested by the comparison with Penthesilea, is more tacit than Camilla's: Camilla is a literal *bellatrix* and literally fights against men.[249]

Further, Camilla does not deviate from patriarchal norms through an excessive or irrational sexuality, but rather by refusing it altogether, an equally anomalous and unconventional position. While Dido had a husband in Sychaeus and participates in a sexual relationship with Aeneas, Camilla, as *virgo,* rejects the normative feminine role of wife and mother, and the only acceptable outlet for female sexuality.[250] She runs contrary to contemporary Augustan social and political discourses that encouraged marriage and childbearing, as Dido did in her original vow of celibacy.[251] As is the case with Dido, Camilla's chastity and childlessness place her in opposition to the virtuous women of the poem, including Creusa, Caieta,

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[249] Egan (1983: 19-26) argues that the name Camilla/Casmilla is connected to the Greek Κάδμος, supposedly meaning "armor, arms." "Camilla" would then mean "armor-woman," an etymology that is stressed by the "pervasive importance of armor in the Camilla episode" (1983: 23); cf. O'Hara 1996: 231-232. The name is more traditionally connected with the cult-names *camillus* and *camilla*, used for acolytes in certain religious ceremonies (Williams 1973, *ad* 803-817; Anderson 1999: 205; Horsfall 2003: *ad* 11.803; Ratti 2006: 412). Egan (1983: 25) comments that his suggestion complements rather than contradicts this etymology. We might then consider Metabus' dedication of Camilla to Diana as a *famula* (11.558) a gloss on her name. On the other hand, Ratti (2006: 417-418) focuses on Camilla's naming from her mother Casmilla, *mutata parte* (11.543). She argues that Metabus, in consecrating Camilla to Diana and subtracting a letter from her mother's name, has turned her into a "fille estropiée, amputée" and "la condamne sciemment à ne jamais être mère" (418).

[250] *Virgo* used of Camilla: 7.806, 11.507, 508, 565, 604, 664, 676, 718, 762, 778, 791, 804, 808. On the similarity and difference of Dido and Camilla in their sexual status, see McAuley 2016: 60.

[251] Ratti (2006: 414-415) argues that the epithet *infelix*, applied to Camilla by Diana (11.563) refers to her sterility; she suggests that the adjective also has this meaning when used of Dido, and that Camilla is therefore "une autre Didon" (416; *contra* Zieske 2008). Interestingly, Ratti also points out that Aeneas is never called *infelix* in the *Aeneid*, despite his many misfortunes; she concludes that this is "pour la raison simple qu'il est le père de la dynastie augustéenne" (415). Cf. Mitchell 1991 on the pattern of "sexuality, sterility, and destruction" (219) in the latter half of the poem; he argues that

and Lavinia, whose primary roles are as wives and/or mothers. Like Dido, Camilla is sought by many (11.581-582), but she remains "content with Diana alone" (*sola contenta Diana,* 11.582).

Camilla rejects not only her expected social role, she rejects society itself. Raised "in the lonely mountains" (*solis…montibus,* 11.569) by her father and nourished by the milk of a wild mare (11.571-572), she is taught to use "boys' weapons" from an early age (*tela…puerilia,* 11.578). The story of Camilla's escape, tied to her father's spear and flung across the Amasenus river,[252] introduces an element of the miraculous but also of aberration: from infancy, Camilla's life has prepared her to be an anomaly.[253] Like Dido, Camilla is also linked to *furor* (*furens*: 11.709; 762) and her bloodthirsty enthusiasm in battle (suggested by *exsulat,* 11.648; cf. 663) indicates, in Suzuki's words, a "primitive ferocity" (1992: 138). Likewise, Camilla rejects customary female clothing such as the *palla*, but rather wears a tiger-skin (11.576-577). In abandoning female clothes, Camilla literally "wears" her transgressiveness on her body and marks herself as deviant.[254] Camilla is later pictured fighting with one breast

"virginity is transformed from a state of pure, innocent completeness to an agency of destruction" (223).

[252] The narrative of Metabus' flight with Camilla appears to echo Aeneas' flight from Troy, but reverses the strict gender division of *pietas* displayed in Book 2: where Aeneas' primary concern is for his male relatives, for whom he "fears" (*comitique onerique timentem*, 2.729), Metabus fears for his (female) daughter (*caroque oneri timet*, 11.550).

[253] This ambivalence is well expressed by the adjective *horrenda* applied to Camilla by the narrator (and focalized through Turnus; 11.507): "awful," both in the sense of "awe-inspiring" and "horrific." Horsfall (2003: *ad loc.*) suggests that Juno is evoked here (*horrenda,* 7.323).

[254] Garber (1993: 32) has discussed the destabilizing effect of cross-dressing and the ways in which it causes discomfort, anxiety, even fear: "the transvestite…incarnates and emblematizes the disruptive element that intervenes, signaling not just another category crisis, but—much more disquietingly—a crisis of 'category' itself." Cf. Butler 1988: 527.

bared (*unum exserta latus*, 11.649), imagery that again links her to Penthesilea (*ex-sertae...mammae,* 1.492) and sexualizes her while at the same time asserting her transgression of sexual norms (cf. page 17 above). Camilla, like Dido, is construed as doubly transgressive through her annexation of a male sphere (warfare, politics) and her inappropriate (a)sexual behavior. The implicit link between these two facets of deviance is neatly expressed by the perfectly chiastic line *aeternum telorum et virginitatis amorem* (she cultivated "eternal love of weapons and virginity," 11.583).

By entering the battlefield, Camilla confounds the normally distinct categories of warrior/*vir* and woman/*virgo* and violates the generic codes that define epic subject matter as "the famous deeds of men."[255] The incongruity of her presence in battle is emphasized by the frequent appearance of words indicating her gender.[256] Further, Camilla brings even more women onto the battlefield: she leads a force of like-minded *bellatrices*, themselves conspicuously marked as feminine (*lectae,* 11.655; *Italides*, 11.657; *ministras,* 11.658; *Amazones,* 11.660; *feminea...agmina*, 11.663).[257] As Keith (2000: 28) notes, the presence of these

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[255] κλέα ἀνδρῶν, *Il.* 9.189, 524; *Od.* 8.73; cf. *maxima facta patrum,* Enn. *Epig.* 45.2 Court. Indeed, Penthesilea and her Amazons do not appear in the Homeric epics, although she was a prominent figure in the lost *Aethiopis*, which picked up the story of the Trojan War where the *Iliad* left off.

[256] *Virgo*:11.507, 508, 565, 604, 664, 676, 718, 762, 778, 791, 808); *femina:* 11.705, 734; *virgineus*: 11.804; *femineus*: 11.663, 782. Cf. Keith (2000: 28): "Virgil signals her transgression of gender norms by drawing attention to her sex."

[257] Alessio (1993: 159) suggests that these women, with their *ululante tumultu* (11.662), "present a horrifying picture" and notes that their names are connected to malevolent female figures in Roman legend and history: Larina (11.655) evokes Larentina, one of the *Di Inferi*; Tulla (11.656) evokes Tullia, the daughter of Servius Tullius who murdered her sister and father; and Tarpeia (11.656) has the same name as the traitor who betrayed Rome's citadel to the Sabines. On the other hand, Horsfall (2003: *ad* 11.656) connects Tulla to Tullus Hostilius, a much more positive connection. Cf. Sharrock (2015: 165): "[Vergil] is at pains to stress the native Italianness of the women as characters who...will be not wholly rejected but transformed into Romans."

women "coheres uneasily with earlier references to her presumably male Volscian troops."[258]

The inconsistency in references to the gender of Camilla's troops suggests that the poet uses

the vignette of Camilla's "Amazons" fighting alongside her to further emphasize her disrup-

tion of normal gender-coded spheres: male/battlefield, female/household. Similarly, the Ital-

ian *matres* come to the aid of their menfolk after Camilla's death (11.891-895) and their zeal

is explicitly linked to her example (*ut videre Camillam,* 11.892); thus, Camilla may be seen

to propagate her gender disorder even after death.

In Camilla's early battle scenes, the poet emphasizes her competence and leadership

in such a way as to mark her reversal of gender norms. When Camilla and Turnus discuss

their battle plans before re-entering the fray, she suggests a plan in which she takes the lead

and he stays behind to guard the city:

> audeo et Aeneadum promitto occurrere turmae
> solaque Tyrrhenos equites ire obvia contra.
> me sine prima manu temptare pericula belli,
> tu pedes ad muros subsiste et moenia serva.'
>
> I dare and I promise to oppose the troop of the Aeneadae
> and, alone, to fight against the Tyrrhenian horsemen.
> Let me be the first to test the dangers of war,
> you station the foot-soldiers at the walls and guard the fortifications. (11.503-506)

Camilla's instructions bear some resemblance to Andromache's advice to Hector in *Iliad* 6:

she advises him to "station his men" (λαὸν δὲ στῆσον, *Il.* 6.433) in the area where the city is

vulnerable and the wall may be overrun (ἔνθα μάλιστα | ἀμβατός ἐστι πόλις καὶ ἐπίδρομον

ἔπλετο τεῖχος, *Il.* 6.433-434). In the *Iliad*, however, Hector sends Andromache back to the

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[258] Keith cites *agmen equitum* (7.804) and *Volscorum acie* (11.498); I would add *caesis Volscorum milibus* (11.167) and *Volscorum…maniplis* (11.463). Further, Camilla's companions are masculine at the moment of her death (*cuncti…Volsci,* 11.801), yet they become feminine only a few lines later (*trepidae comites*, 11.805) and then again revert to masculinity afterwards (*deletas Volscorum acies,* 11.898).

house with the famous instructions to "busy yourself with your own tasks, the loom and the distaff" (τὰ σ᾽ αὐτῆς ἔργα κόμιζε | ἱστόν τ᾽ ἠλακάτην τε, *Il.* 6.490-491), concluding "war is men's business" (πόλεμος δ᾽ ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει, *Il.* 6.492). In other words, the Iliadic parallel upholds the normative division of male and female spheres, banishing Andromache to "the loom and the distaff," the womanly pursuits explicitly rejected by Camilla.

Vergil has already called attention to this Iliadic line, with Turnus' rebuke of the disguised Allecto in Book 7: "men—by whom wars are to be fought—will be responsible for both war and peace" (*bella viri pacemque ferent quis bella gerenda*, 7.443-444). Yet in Book 11, Turnus embraces Camilla's leadership and participation in battle. He addresses her as "the glory of Italy" (*decus Italiae,* 11.508) and, while suggesting an alternative to her plan, nonetheless invites her to "share the task" (*mecum partire laborem*, 11.510). He even gives her the role of leader (*ducis et tu concipe curam,* 11.519) while he prepares an ambush (11.515-516). Camilla, like Dido, will take on the role of *dux*—a role for which she initially appears eminently qualified. Yet her leadership, like Dido's, will eventually be undermined by a passion that is characterized as stereotypically feminine—thus leading to her death.[259]

Camilla's *res gestae* on the battlefield are impressive, but the narrator also hints at her unsettling disruption of gender norms. The transition to her *aristeia* is marked by an apostrophe that echoes the Homeric address to Patroclus (*Il.* 16.692-693)[260] but ends with the voca-

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[259] And the potential of Camilla as leader has already been undermined by Dido's fate earlier in the poem, in which, as discussed above, she destroys not only herself but her city as well.

[260] ἔνθα τίνα πρῶτον τίνα δ᾽ ὕστατον ἐξενάριξας | Πατρόκλεις; cf. *quem telo primum, quem postremum, aspera virgo, | deicis?* (11.664-665). Cf. *ad loc.* Williams 1973, Horsfall 2003, Fratantuono 2009. Williams and Horsfall also link the passage to *Il.* 5.703 (of Hector), but this is in third-person narrative rather than direct address.

tive *aspera virgo* (11.664), again indicating her paradoxical straddling of masculine and feminine roles: she is compared to a man but explicitly marked as female.[261] As a woman who kills men, Camilla inverts the accepted binary of male dominance and female subordination. The men she kills are shamed by dying at a woman's hands: Camilla herself mocks Ornytus for falling to "womanly arms" (*muliebribus armis,* 11.687) and Orsilochus, despite being one of the greatest Trojan warriors (*maxima Teucrum | corpora,* 11.690-691), nonetheless dies begging her for his life (*oranti et multa precanti*, 11.697). The Ligurian is so frightened (*territus*, 11.699) at the sight of her that he attempts to trick Camilla into dismounting in order to fight him on foot; he then plans to flee on horseback (11.701-714). Yet she is so swift-footed (cf. 7.808-811) that she overtakes the horse and "exacts the penalty" (*poenasque…sumit*, 11.720) from his rider. The resulting simile, in which Camilla is compared to Jupiter's eagle (*accipiter…sacer ales,* 11.721; gendered masculine) eviscerating a dove (*columbam*, 11.722; gendered feminine) vividly illustrates her reversal of gender roles and her emasculation of the Trojans and their allies.[262]

The poet draws special attention to this issue through the speech of the Etruscan Tarchon who is roused (*suscitat,* 11.728) by Jupiter to reiterate the normative gender hierarchy at a moment when it has become frighteningly unstable. Jupiter is not named but is instead called *sator* (11.725) and *genitor* (11.727), language that suggests that he is directing his

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[261] Further, the adjective *aspera* echoes descriptions of Allecto (*pestis…aspera,* 7.505), Juno (*aspera Iuno,* 1.279) and Carthage (*asperrima,* 1.14).

[262] As noted by Servius. There may be an echo of Horace's Octavian and Cleopatra (*accipiter velut | mollis columbas, Carm.* 1.37.17-18). Fratantuono (2009: *ad* 721-724) suggests that Camilla is being compared to a female hawk, yet *sacer* is usually first/second declension and always so in Vergil (cf. in Book 11 alone: *sacra caterva,* 11.532; *sacrum…corpus,* 11.591), so the adjective here must indicate that the hawk is male.

masculine, paternal authority towards the reestablishment of gender hierarchy.[263] Tarchon

mocks his men's fear of Camilla in overtly sexual terms:

> quis metus, o numquam dolituri, o semper inertes
> Tyrrheni, quae tanta animis ignavia venit?
> femina palantis agit atque haec agmina vertit!
> quo ferrum quidve haec gerimus tela inrita dextris?
> at non in Venerem segnes nocturnaque bella,
> aut ubi curva choros indixit tibia Bacchi.

> "What fear, my Tyrrhenians—never shamed, ever feeble—
> what great cowardice comes over your hearts?
> A woman drives you in rout and turns back these battle lines!
> What good are your swords; why do we carry these vain weapons in our hands?
> But you are not slow when it comes to Venus and her nighttime skirmishes,
> or when Bacchus' curved flute of calls you to the dance. (11.732-737)

The adjective *iners* (11.732) often means "impotent" (e.g. Cat. 67.26; Hor., *Ep.* 12.17; Ovid,

Am. 3.7.15; cf. Cat. 61.124); on the other hand, the Etruscans are "not sluggish" (*non segnes*,

11.736) in the field of love. Tarchon accuses his troops both of a shameful failure of mascu-

linity on the battlefield and a feminine sexual voracity in the bedroom.[264] This emascula-

tion/effeminacy is clearly linked to Camilla's prowess (*femina…haec agmina vertit,* 11.734):

her *aristeia* humiliates the men around her by contrast. Tarchon then makes good on his re-

buke by an act of martial skill comparable to Camilla's defeat of the Ligurian: he swoops

down on the Latin warrior Venulus, drags him onto his own horse, and carries him off

(11.741-744). That Tarchon is reinstating the proper order of things is made clear by the

poet's description of him "bearing arms and the man" (*arma virumque ferens,* 11.747), thus

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[263] Cf. *genitor* used of Neptune calming the storm: *Aen.* 1.155. As Fratantuono (2009: *ad* 725-767) points out, Jupiter's intervention here is especially noteworthy: it is the only time he intercedes without being asked to by someone else.

[264] The language of *nocturna bella* evokes the elegists (Prop. 2.1.45, 3.8.32): according to Tarchon, his men are behaving like elegiac playboys, not warriors.

echoing the first line of the poem and reasserting the programmatic association of man and war.

The Etruscans respond by following their leader's example (*ducis exemplum…secuti*, 11.758) and it is at this point that the narrator introduces Arruns and his plan to kill Camilla.[265] The sequence of events links Jupiter, Tarchon, and Arruns: as the divine *genitor* inspired Tarchon to reiterate gender norms, so Tarchon inspires Arruns, who prays to Apollo that he may succeed in eliminating "this disgrace" (*hoc…dedecus,* 11.789). This formulation reverses Turnus' praise of Camilla as *decus Italiae* and suggests, as Tarchon had, that her success as a woman on the battlefield discredits the men she faces. Anderson argues that Apollo grants this request "without necessarily agreeing with the pejorative terminology" (1999: 207), yet the narrator indicates that it is precisely this part of Arruns' prayer that Apollo does accede to (11.794-798). That Apollo implicitly endorses Arruns' description of Camilla as *dedecus* is at least hinted at by his assent to that half of the prayer (*adnuit oranti*, 11.797), just as Jupiter's instigation of Tarchon hints at his endorsement of Tarchon's rhetoric against Camilla.

Apollo's assent to Arruns' prayer recalls the narrative of Dido's suicide: again, the transgressive woman's death is signaled well in advance. In fact, Camilla's impending doom is announced by Diana over two hundred lines before it occurs[266] and is foreshadowed by the

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[265] Fratantuono (2007: 364-375, n. 71; cf. 2009: 247-248) has suggested that Arruns here is meant to evoke the L. Arruntius who fought at Actium; this historical parallel would then cast Camilla, like Dido, in the role of Cleopatra. See D'Alessio 1993 for the argument that Camilla is an allegory for Cleopatra.

[266] Diana's speech of regret for Camilla is reminiscent of Heracles' proleptic mourning for Pallas in Book 10 (464-465), yet that episode occurs immediately before Pallas' death and so lacks the same sense of anticipation and suspense.

comparison to Hippolyte and Penthesilea (11.661-662), both of whom were killed in battle. This foreshadowing again creates a mounting tension as the readers' expectations of imminent death are repeatedly frustrated. Likewise, Arruns is able to stalk Camilla because she has been distracted by her "womanly desire" (*femineo…amore*, 11.782) for the Trojan Chloreus' beautiful gear. As with Dido, her excessive passion—considered "typically" feminine—leads directly to her death.[267] Her obsession with loot is so great that she neglects everything else: she is blind and heedless (*caeca*; *incauta*, 11.782), allowing the lurking Arruns to take her by surprise. The adjective *incauta* is also used of Dido in the simile comparing her to a deer struck "unawares" (*incautam,* 4.70) while *caeca* echoes the "blind fire" (*caeco…igni,* 4.2) of Dido's love for Aeneas. Camilla pursuing Chloreus is also called "huntress" (*venatrix,* 11.780), an epithet that links her to both Diana and Dido and alludes to her lifestyle as a virgin huntress and devotee of the goddess.[268] Camilla is again associated with Dido in the narrative immediately leading to her death, and the verbal echoes suggest that her death, like Dido's, is in some sense her own doing—and it is specifically owed to her aberrant pursuit of glory in the male sphere.

Like Dido's, Camilla's death is delayed and drawn out through the poet's use of cinematic techniques:

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[267] As many critics have noted, the adjective *femineo* is puzzling in this context, since an interest in spoils is hardly unusual in the male warriors of epic; comparisons are often made to Euryalus (e.g. Suzuki 1989: 140; Keith 2000: 30-31; Reed 2007: 24), who is killed after the gleam from a looted helmet gives him away to the pursuing Rutulians (9.373-374) and Turnus, who is killed because the belt he stripped from Pallas reminds Aeneas of his lost friend at the worst possible moment (12.941-944). Sharrock (2011: 58-60) has noted the pejorative sense of *femineus* and indeed Servius glosses it here as *inpatienti, inrationabili* (*ad* 11.782; cf. Keith 2000: 29-30; Sharrock 2013: 59-60).

[268] Of course, the huntress Camilla is also being hunted by Arruns (*hac Arruns subit et tacitus vestigia lustrat*, 11.763). This role reversal again offers a parallel with Dido, who is also transformed from huntress (in the simile comparing her to Diana in Book 1) to hunted (in the simile comparing her to a wounded deer in Book 4).

ergo ut missa manu sonitum dedit hasta per auras,
convertere animos acris oculosque tulere
cuncti ad reginam Volsci. nihil ipsa nec aurae
nec sonitus memor aut venientis ab aethere teli,
hasta sub exsertam donec perlata papillam
haesit virgineumque alte bibit acta cruorem.

"Then as the spear, hurled from his hand, whistled through the air,
all the Volscians focused their attention and turned their eyes
to their queen. But she herself noticed nothing, neither the movement of the air
nor the sound nor the weapon hurtling from above,
until the spear plunged in under her exposed nipple;
it clung there and, driven deeply, drank her virgin blood. (11.799-804)

Reed (2007: 19) suggests that the progressive description of the spear's trajectory creates an impression of slow-motion.[269] The epic gaze appears to "zoom in" on the spear at the moment it departs Arruns' hand and then tracks to a close-up of the horrified Volscians, before coming to rest on the oblivious Camilla.[270] Camilla, like Dido, is figured as the object of the gaze at the moment of her death; further, that gaze is explicitly gendered masculine (*cuncti…Volsci*, 11.801). The use of the masculine noun and adjective is particularly striking given the previous emphasis on Camilla's female followers (*feminea agmina*, 11.663; cf. pages 52-53 above).[271] The male Volscian viewers can again be read as stand-ins for the (male) poet and readers, and the poet once again marks the male as subject and the female as object at the moment of death.[272]

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[269] As he puts it, this technique "exacerbates the helplessness of the Volscians" (2007: 19); it also creates a sense of tension and anticipation for the reader.

[270] The emphatic *nihil ipsa nec* (11.801) and the list of all the things Camilla fails to notice (*nec aurae | nec sonitus…aut venientis…teli*, 11.802) again suggests Camilla's culpability in her own death. The auditory element of the spear (11.799, 802) is reminiscent of Dido's wound "hissing" in her chest (*stridit*, 4.689). Interestingly, a form of *strido* is also used of Camilla: when she is hurled over the Amasenus by her father, she is tied to a "whistling spear" (*in iaculo stridente,* 11.563).

[271] As noted above (n. 138), the *comites* again revert to the feminine a few lines later: *trepidae comites,* 11.805.

[272] Reed (2007: 19) notes that Camilla's perspective is "emphatically negated." It is significant, as

The means of Camilla's death likewise reflects her social and sexual transgression. The spear penetrates her exposed breast (*exsertam…papillam,* 11.803), piercing her at a *locus* of her deviance, a point emblematic of her rejection of conventional female behavior.[273] Heuzé (1985: 176) points out that the lurid image of the spear drinking Camilla's "virgin blood" (*virgineum…cruorem*, 11.804) suggests "la forme pervertie" of a nursing infant[274] and Fowler (1987: 195) further links the imagery to defloration.[275] Camilla is therefore killed in a way that "corrects" her failure to conform to the proper roles of wife and mother.[276] The sexualization of Camilla's death is also expressed by Diana's description of it as "violating" (*violarit*) her "pure body" (*sacrum…corpus,* 11.591; cf. 848); she is, in a sense, raped by the spear.[277] The narrative thus employs the same kind of "carnographic imagery" described

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Morello (2008: 56) and Sharrock (2015: 166) point out, that Camilla does *not* play the role of Penthesilea in death: she is not an erotic object for her killer. As discussed above regarding Dido, transgressive women are not eroticized or aestheticized in death, but they *are* figured as objects of the gaze. Yet that gaze is horrified and disgusted—not desiring.

[273] As Suzuki notes, the bared breast is a "paradoxical sign of her Amazon ferocity…and female vulnerability." Heuzé (1985: 332-334) notes that *papilla* is quite explicit in comparison with *latus,* used earlier (11.649). Penthesilea was also wounded in the breast (Quint. Smyrn. 1.594).

[274] Reed (2007: 19) describes the spear as a "vampire baby"; cf. McAuley 2016: 60.

[275] Cf. Oliensis 1997: 308; Reed 2007: 24. Mitchell (1991) identifies a pattern of death-as-defloration in the second half of the poem, but does not discuss Camilla specifically.

[276] *Pace* Fowler (1987: 196), who argues that this imagery should not be read as a "reproach to her way of life" since similar ideas of defloration are present in the deaths of Euryalus and Pallas. Yet Fowler neglects the elision of violence and suffering in male death noted by Heuzé (1985: 129-34; 290-295). The deaths of Euryalus and Pallas are indeed figured as symbolic deflorations, but both remain beautiful in death (*candida pectora,* 9.432; *pulchros artus,* 9.433; *cui neque fulgor adhuc nec dum sua forma recessit,* 11.70) and the reader is distanced from the gruesome imagery by the similes that evoke defloration through the idea of flowers cut by a plow or bowed by a rain storm (9.435-437), or nicked by a virgin's thumb (11.67). Cf. pages 41-42 above.

[277] Cf. Heuzé 1985: 172-177; Horsfall 2003: *ad* 11.848; Ratti 2006: 416. Fratantuono 2009: *ad* 11.804 notes that this passage is imitated by Ausonius (*Cen. Nupt.* 118), where it is used of the penis "drinking" virgin blood in defloration.

above in the case of Dido. As Dido was penetrated in death by a man's sword, so Camilla is penetrated by a man's spear.

The progress of Camilla's death is, again, paused as the "camera" pans away to focus on Arruns, fleeing like a wolf with his tail tucked between his legs (11.809-813). The description of the reactions of her *comites* (11.805-806) and Arruns (11.806-815) further draws out Camilla's death agonies, as the reactions of Carthage and Anna delayed Dido's. When the narrator returns to the dying Camilla, it is with a grisly close-up of the spear-point standing fixed in her ribs and her deep wound (*alto…vulnere,* 11.817). Numerous verbal echoes link this moment to the death of Dido: like her, Camilla is called *moriens* (11.816; cf. *morientem* 4.674), *exsanguis* (11.818) echoes *exanimis*, describing Anna (4.672), and the anaphora of *labor* (*labitur…labuntur,* 11.818) is reminiscent of the anaphora of *ter* in Dido's final struggles (4.690-691). The spear clings (*haesit,* 11.804) in her side, just as the fatal shaft clung (*haeret*, 4.73) in the simile likening Dido to a wounded deer. The verbal similarities are continued in Camilla's address to a hitherto-unknown *soror* named Acca; the homophony with the name of Dido's sister Anna is striking.[278] Further, both Dido and Camilla are aided in death by their patron goddesses: Diana sends Opis to avenge Camilla (11.836-867), as Juno had sent Iris to release Dido from torment (4.693-705). Finally, both women's deaths inspire panic in their followers: the *clamor* (11.832) following Camilla's death echoes the *clamor* (4.665) in Carthage after Dido's suicide.

Yet there are significant differences between the two death-narratives. In the first place, Camilla speaks after she is mortally wounded, and this speech emphasizes her valor:

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[278] Several of Camilla's companions were named earlier (11.655-657) but Acca was not among them. Reed (2007: 83) notes the "gratuitousness" of this reference and how the address *Acca soror* "eerily echoes" Dido's *Anna soror* (cf. Fratantuono 2009: *ad* 11.820).

she sends Acca to give her final instructions (*mandata novissima,* 11.825) to Turnus.[279] In

Reed's words, although objectified at the moment when she is struck by the spear, "she alone

revives to subjectivity" (2007: 85). If this is so, she regains her agency only to immediately

let it slip away in death, just as she abandons her arms as she falls (*arma relinquens,* 11.830).

This moment is suggestive: in death, Camilla leaves behind the marks of her deviance, the

arma that gave her her name.[280] Like Dido, she is tamed and domesticated in death. She too

becomes a perfect model of female passivity: in death, she is cold (*frigida*, 11.828) and slow

(*lenta,* 11.829), whereas in life she was fiery (*ignea,* 11.718; cf. *ardebat*, 11.782) and swift

(*velocem,* 11.760; cf. *celeris,* 11.811; *pernicibus,* 11.718). Camilla's transgressiveness is dou-

bled as Dido's was: she resists both the fated Trojan colonization of Italy and the proper

place of women in the nascent Roman society. The threat must be punished (and indeed Opis

describes Camilla's death as a punishment: *nimium crudele…supplicium,* 11.841-842), but it

must also be shown to be punished. Both ends are accomplished by Camilla's graphic, grisly

death.

To be sure, men die bloody deaths in the *Aeneid* as well, particularly in the battle

scenes of the Iliadic half of the poem. For example, the king and augur Rhamnes is decapi-

tated by Nisus during his night-raid on the sleeping Italians, and his headless trunk is left

spurting blood (*truncumque relinquit | sanguine singultantem*, 9.332-333). The poet specifies

that Rhamnes' couch was warm and wet with "thick gore" (*atro…cruore,* 9.333). In another

battle, the warrior Dryops is struck in the throat in mid-speech (10.347); as he falls, he spews

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[279] As Sharrock (2015: 167) puts it, "Dido's last words (spoken alone) cursed Aeneas and bemoaned her abandoned state, whereas Camilla's thoughts and words are only for the war." Yet both women are determined that war against the Trojans should outlive them (cf. 4.622-629).

[280] Egan 1983; see note 130 above.

"thick gore" from his mouth (*crassum vomit ore cruorem,* 10.349). Yet, as Heuzé (1985: 111-128) has pointed out, these bloody male deaths are subjected to a rapidity that does not occur in Camilla's. Her death-narrative lasts over thirty lines and is also, as discussed above, prolonged throughout Book 11 by frequent foreshadowing and by the narrative techniques that delay and draw out the action. By contrast, the deaths of male characters—particularly those whom we might call "cannon fodder," warriors who are mentioned only at their deaths—are quite brief, spanning five to ten lines at most. Nor do these warriors have the opportunity to reflect on their impending death, as does Camilla (and Dido).[281]

In addition, most male deaths are not sexualized, as is Camilla's. The details of the spear penetrating her flesh and "drinking" her blood introduce gruesome, sexualized imagery not typically found in narratives of male death. There are exceptions: Pallas, as is often noted, dies a symbolically sexual death.[282] Turnus' removal of the "immense weight" of his sword-belt (*immania pondera,* 10.496) symbolically castrates Pallas,[283] while the poet's interjection that Turnus will one day wish Pallas "intact" (*intactum,* 10.504) suggests that his death has been a symbolic defloration as well. Yet the actual narrative of Pallas' dying is much less detailed and drawn-out than Camilla's: it encompasses only eight lines, and the emphasis is on the spear's penetration of Pallas' shiled and breastplate, rather than his

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[281] As Clover (1987: 212) puts it regarding the dichotomy in representations of male and female deaths in the horror genre, "It is no accident that male victims in slasher films are killed swiftly or off-screen, and that prolonged struggles, in which the victim has time to contemplate her imminent destruction, inevitably figure females."

[282] Cf. Gillis 1983: 65-77; Fowler 1987: 194-197; Mitchell 1991: 227-230.

[283] Cf. Gillis 1983: 70.

body.[284] Further, as discussed above, Pallas' body is aestheticized in death by the simile that compares his body to a flower "knicked by a virgin's thumb" (*virgineo demessum pollice florem,* 10.68). While this imagery of defloration contributes to the sexualization of Pallas' death, it also presents his dead body as a beautiful and erotic object, "whose brightness and beauty still remain" (*cui neque fulgor adhuc nec dum sua forma recessit,* 11.70). There are no such similes to aestheticize or mediate Camilla's death.

It is significant that Camilla is the only woman in the *Aeneid* who is (explicitly) killed by a man.[285] In her case, male agents (both Arruns and Apollo) intervene to restore the normative order disrupted by her subversive agency.[286] Arruns himself is insufficiently manly: he stalks Camilla from afar rather than engaging with her in combat and his stealth is repeatedly emphasized (*tacitus,* 11.763; *furtim,* 11.765; *ex insidiis,* 11.783). He is called "shameful" (*improbus,* 11.767) in his lurking and flees "in terror" (*exterritus,* 11.806) after accomplishing the deed.[287] Opis says he will die by a "deserved death" (*merita morte,* 11.849), echoing Dido's judgment of herself (*ut merita,* 11.547).[288] Arruns' death narrative contains ech-

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[284] Four lines describe the passage of the spear through Pallas' armor, while only three words describe the piercing of his body (*pectus perforat ingens,* 10.485).

[285] We can probably assume that Creusa was killed by a (male) Greek but this is left entirely to the imagination, as discussed above.

[286] As Arruns makes explicit in his prayer to eliminate "this disgrace" (11.789).

[287] Pursuing him, Opis is notably unafraid (*interrita,* 11.837) by contrast. Rosenmeyer (1960: 162) shockingly describes Arruns as "patriotic, humble, sensitive" and "gentle as a lamb." He concludes that "At the court of Augustus, Arruns would have been decorated for his efforts" (164); his characterization has no basis in the text.

[288] But reversing Juno's judgment (*merita nec morte,* 11.696); it is interesting that both these verdicts are focalized through female divinities.

oes of Camilla's: unlike her, he *does* hear the arrow as it whistles toward him (*aurasque sonantis | audiit,* 11.863-864; cf. *nec aurae | nec sonitus memor*, 801-802) and it clings to him as the spear did to her (*haesit,* 11.864, cf. 804). Likewise, they are both described "breathing their last" (*exspirantem,* 11.865; cf. *exspirans,* 11.820) and both groan in death (*gementem,* 11.865; cf. *cum gemitu,* 831). Yet, unlike Camilla—surrounded by her companions and mourned by both human and divine figures (11.805-806, 832-833)—Arruns dies alone, abandoned by his friends, who do not even notice his death (*obliti,* 11.866).

Arruns' inglorious death may seem to "compensate" for the loss of Camilla: as she "paid" for her transgression (*luisti,* 11.841), so he "pays" (*luet,* 11.849) for her death. Yet, like the warriors discussed above, his death is treated with the rapidity that Heuzé has identified as a technique for occluding male suffering in death. Indeed, Arruns' swift dispatch (in only four lines) and its relatively mundane language contrast sharply with the prolonged narrative of Camilla's death and its grotesque imagery. This dichotomy has also been noted in forensic crime drama, in which the villain is eliminated by a swift and anticlimactic death, after inflicting protracted horrors on his victim(s). As Dillman (2014: 93) puts it, "the reinstatement of order at the end of a [television] show by the swift killing of a perpetrator is an obligatory, inadequate gesture; it does not compensate the viewer for the traumas the images have enacted." Similarly, the description of Arruns abandoned by his friends does not contain or neutralize the much more graphic image of the spear drinking Camilla's blood in a monstrous parody of a nursing baby.

The belittling of Camilla's murderer also serves to diminish her: unlike Turnus, Lausus, or Pallas, she is not bested by a hero in combat. Rather, she dies at the hands of a coward, her death is inflicted at a distance, and she does not even notice the approaching spear.[289] Camilla has been given the position of co-commander by Turnus (11.510; 519), but unlike other pre-eminent Italian warriors, including Lausus, Mezentius, and Turnus, she does not die in battle with Aeneas.[290] Instead, she never even encounters him and is killed by a nobody.[291] Similarly, her final opponent, the Trojan Chloreus, is an overdressed eunuch.[292] The paltry nature of Arruns and Chloreus hints at the ultimate futility of Camilla's *aristeia* and, indeed, the entire Italian war: it is a tragic and pointless waste of life, engineered by Juno in order to exterminate (*exscindere,* 7.316) as many Trojans and Latins as possible. Camilla, although not directly influenced by Juno as are Dido and Amata, is nonetheless another representative of her: a *regina* (11.499, 703, 801) dedicated to the defeat of Aeneas and acting contrary to the trajectory of fate. She, like these other queens, functions as a scapegoat whose sacrifice

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[289] Cf. Suzuki 1989: 139; Fulkerson 2008: 226 describes her as "cheated." In this sense, Camilla's death parallels Achilles, who also dies a death wholly out of proportion to his heroism in life: he too dies at the hands of a coward (Paris) who inflicts death at a distance. Further, the arrow of Paris was guided by Apollo (6.55-57; cf. *Il.* 22.358-360), as was Arruns' spear (11.794-796).

[290] Indeed, Lausus in particular is honored by Aeneas, who seems to see something of himself in the young man (10.821-826, esp. *pietatis imago*, 10.824). On the blurring of distinctions between Aeneas and Lausus, Trojan and Latin, victor and victim and the evocation of civil war in this episode, see Stover 2011.

[291] Keppler (1976) suggests that, given the parallels between Camilla and Turnus, Arruns should be seen as a stand-in or *alter ego* for Aeneas, and notes several verbal echoes linking the two. He concludes that Arruns' ignominious death at the hands of Opis suggests that Aeneas himself will die in recompense for his killing of Turnus, and so fulfill Dido's final curse. However, this interpretation conflicts somewhat with other prophecies in the poem (e.g. 1.259-260, 265-266; 6.763-765), but see O'Hara (1990: 91-102) on the misleading nature of these prophecies.

[292] As West (1985: 22) points out, since Chloreus is a priest of Cybele (*sacer Cybelo,* 11.768), he would inevitably have been subject to castration (cf. Anderson 1999: 206-207; Reed 2007: 87).

grounds the Roman future. Her *aristeia* and death are given such length and prominence (indeed, this section of Book 11 is sometimes called the "Camilliad") precisely because the deaths of the male Italian warriors are displaced onto her: her death is figured as macabre and prolonged in order that theirs may be swift and aestheticized.

Amata

The final queen to die in the poem, Amata is often neglected in comparison with her counterparts Dido and Camilla, whose death-narratives are longer and more graphic.[293] Yet she is a significant antagonist to Aeneas and his mission: she stands in the way of his destined marriage to Lavinia, a marriage that has been guaranteed since Book 2 (*regia coniunx | parta tibi*, 2.783-784).[294] Amata prefers the native-born Turnus as a son-in-law, again—like Dido—flouting the gods, who have decreed that Lavinia must go to a foreigner (7.96-101).[295] Like Dido, Amata is subject to forces beyond her understanding and control when she is goaded to extremes by the Fury Allecto (7.341-353). Yet her hostility to the Trojans and her opposition to her husband's decision has already been established:[296] Allecto discovers

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[293] For example, Edwards (2007: 183) writes that Dido and Camilla are "the only two women who die in the poem," thus erasing Creusa and Caieta as well as Amata.

[294] Cf. *Lavinia coniunx,* 6.764; 7.314.

[295] Fantham (2009: 142), in her sensitive treatment of Amata, points out that by advocating an endogamous marriage to a man of known status, parentage, and resources—rather than an outsider with nothing to recommend him besides vague prophecies—Amata is "acting in what she sees as the best interests of the family and its continuity." The same could also be said of Dido, who recognizes that the Trojans could be a resource for the protection and continuity of Carthage.

[296] Turnus too is infected by Allecto, but he is more resistant: he is sleeping calmly before she arrives, and responds to her initial attempt to rouse him with mocking reassurances and the conclusion that "men will make both war and peace" (*bella viri pacemque gerent*, 7.444); she then transforms into a terrifying Erinys and forcibly inflames him with her torch (7.445-474). Keith (2000: 72-73) discusses this passage as representative of the displacement of warmongering from male onto female characters. On Amata's susceptibility compared to Turnus' resistance, see Feeney 1991: 167-168. Amata

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Amata "burning" (*ardentem,* 7.345) with wrath over the proposed marriage and "cooked" by her anger (*femineae…curaeque iraeque coquebant*, 7.345).[297] The description of Amata's anger as feminine resonates with Camilla's *femineo amore* for Chloreus' beautiful garments.[298] These feelings will eventually lead to Amata's suicide, and so the poet again attributes a woman's specifically "feminine" passions to her death.

Amata's transgression, like Dido's and Camilla's, is doubled: not only does she opposes Aeneas' fate and the Roman mission, she is also characterized as socially and sexually deviant. Although, unlike Camilla and Dido, Amata is a wife and mother, she is nonetheless marked as transgressive by her excessive passion for Turnus: it is described as an "extraordinary love" (*miro…amore*, 7.57)[299] and she resolves (in words recalling Dido's pleas to Aeneas in Book 4) to die if he dies (12.61-63).[300] The latent sexual quality of Amata's love for Turnus is suggested by the vividly sensual imagery of her infection by Allecto: the Fury hurls one of her snakes at the queen, which then slips under her clothes and slithers between her

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here is again reminiscent of Dido, who is infected by Cupid with a passion to which she is already disposed.

[297] These *femineae…irae* also associate Amata with Juno, whose *memorem…iram* (1.4; cf. 1.11, 25, 130) is programmatic to the poem. Juno's anger might well be considered *feminea*, since it is based largely on sexual insults and jealousies (1.26-28).

[298] In fact, Servius' gloss 11.782 cites the Amata passage: *inpatienti, inrationabili, ut 'femineae ardentem curaeque iraeque coquebant*. Cf. Sharrock 2011: 58-60, noting the pejorative sense of *femineus* (cf. n. 146 above).

[299] On Amata's excessive passion for Turnus, see Zarker 1969: 7-8; Lyne 1987: 13-19; Panoussi 2009: 128; Oliensis 2009: 63.

[300] Amata: *moritura tenebat* (*Aen.* 12.55); Dido: *nec moritura tenet* (*Aen.*4.307); Amata: *per has ego te lacrimas* (*Aen.* 12.56); Dido: *per ego has lacrimas* (*Aen.* 4.314). Cf. Lyne 1983: 56. On the other hand, Fantham (2009: 147-148) argues that Amata's pleas are so overwrought because she is playing the role of Hecuba to Turnus' Hector.

breasts (*ille inter vestis et levia pectora lapsus,* 7.349).[301] The snake transforms itself into a

gold necklace and "wanders sinuously over her limbs" (*membris lubricus errat*, 7.353). This

"plague" (*lues,* 7.354) causes symptoms identical to Cupid's infection of Dido in Book 1: it

"weaves fire into her bones" (*ossibus implicat ignem,* 7.355; cf. *ossibus implicet ignem,*

1.660).[302] The verbal echo suggests that Amata's transgressive desire for Turnus can be read

as a parallel for Dido's passion for Aeneas, initially displaced onto Ascanius: notably, both of

these loves are described as aberrant (*miro…amore,* 7.57; cf. *infandum…amorem,* 4.85).[303]

Again, a woman's motives are sexualized, as Amata's political and maternal concerns are re-

signified as erotic.[304]

Amata initially acts like a normal mother (*solito matrum de more,* 7.357) in attempt-

ing to persuade Latinus to choose Turnus as Lavinia's bridegroom: she speaks to her husband

"rather gently" (*mollius,* 7.357), she weeps (*lacrimans,* 7.358), and she asks him to pity her

and her daughter, suggesting that Aeneas will carry Lavinia off as Paris did Helen (7.360-

364).[305] She concludes that Faunus' demand for a foreign son-in-law may be satisfied by

Turnus, who is of Argive descent (7.367-372). Yet when persuasion fails, she acts "without

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[301] Cf. *inque sinum praecordia ad intima subdit*, 7.347.

[302] Cf. also the description of both "infections" in terms of deception (*fallit,* 7.350; *fallas*, 1.688) and poison (*veneno,* 7.354; 1.688). On the many affinities between Amata and Dido, see La Penna 1967.

[303] Cf. Suzuki 1989: 131. Lyne (1989: 80; cf. Mitchell 1991: 231) describes her as a "Phaedra figure" in her passion for her stepson, and this perhaps hints at another link to Dido, since Phaedra is found among the heroines wandering with Dido in the Underworld (6.445). For the erotic undertones of Dido's affection for Ascanius, cf. note 55 above.

[304] Cf. pages 19-20 and note 41 on Dido, above.

[305] Amata calls Aeneas *perfidus* (7.362), again evoking Dido in Book 4 (4.305, 365). Her protest that Latinus is ignoring his pledge to Turnus (*quid…totiens data dextera Turno,* 7.365-366) also echoes Dido's complaint to Aeneas (*nec te data dextera quondam…tenet*, 4.307-308). The likeness between Dido and Amata is therefore reinforced in her first speech in the poem.

propriety" (*sine more,* 7.377), reversing her previous practice (*de more*, 7.357) and going far

beyond the appropriate female sphere of influence. In language that again recalls Dido,

Amata "rages maddened through the city" (*furit lymphata per urbem*, 7.377)[306] and snatches

Lavinia off to the woods, pretending to be under the influence of Bacchus (*simulato numine*

Bacchi, 7.385).[307] Amata's behavior also links her to Helen, who, according to Deiphobus,

feigned Bacchic possession (*chorum simulans*, 6.517) in order to signal the Greeks on Troy's

last night. Helen's actions at the fall of Troy—which, according to Deiphobus, include ar-

ranging his murder at the hands of Menelaus (6.523-529) are considered a "deadly crime"

(*scelus exitiale,* 6.511). Likewise, the narrator explicitly describes Amata's actions as "a

greater crime" (*maius…nefas*)[308] and "a greater madness" (*maiorem…furorem*, 7.386); the

polyptoton of the repeated comparatives suggests the excessiveness of Amata's transgres-

sions.[309]

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[306] Amata is also "roused by great portents" (*ingentibus excita monstris,* 7.376), echoing the poet's comparison of Dido to a Bacchant "aroused by the sacred rites" (*commotis excita sacris*, 4.301).

[307] There has been considerable debate over the meaning of *simulato* here: Amata is indeed possessed, so why say her madness is feigned? Many critics prefer to translate the participle simply as "false," since Bacchus is not the deity involved. Yet this meaning is not typical of *simulo*, and it seems more likely that Amata (while really influenced by Allecto) is also *pretending* to be influenced by Bacchus in order to remove Lavinia from her husband's control and so prevent the marriage to Aeneas from going forward. So, for example, she shouts that only Bacchus is worthy of her daughter (*solum te virgine dignum*, 7.389) when really she thinks that Turnus is quite worthy of Lavinia as well.

[308] The description of Amata's deed as *nefas* links her to other transgressive women in the poem: Helen (2.585, if the Helen episode is Vergilian; cf. n. 201 below) and Cleopatra (8.688). Significantly, Aeneas plans to kill Helen for her crimes (2.571-587) and Cleopatra is haunted by her impending death (8.697, 710). See further below.

[309] Since Books 7-12 represent the poet's *maius opus* (7.45) in comparison to Books 1-6, the comparatives may also suggest that Amata's *nefas* and *furor* will be greater than those presented in the first half of the poem—and so greater than Dido's?

Like Camilla leading a female troop into battle, Amata also corrupts other women to confound traditional gender roles. The Latin mothers follow her example by abandoning their homes in order to run wild in a Bacchic frenzy:

> fama volat, furiisque accensas pectore matres
> idem omnis simul ardor agit nova quaerere tecta.
> deseruere domos, ventis dant colla comasque;
> ast aliae tremulis ululatibus aethera complent
> pampineasque gerunt incinctae pellibus hastas.
>
> "Rumor flew, and the same passion drove the mothers,
> aroused in their hearts by *furor*, to seek new homes.
> They abandoned their houses, the freed their necks and hair to the winds;
> but others filled the air with wailing howls
> and, girded with animal-skins, they carry leaf-covered spears. (7.392-396)

Amata incites a breakdown of the social order: the Latin women, inspired by her, forsake their homes and husbands.[310] They are transformed into monstrous caricatures of female militancy, dressing in skins (like Camilla: cf. 11.576-577) and carrying spears; they embrace disorder rather than civilization and (male) order. Keith (2000: 70) points out that the language here is evocative of civil discord, as if the women have gone to war against their men.[311] Verbal echoes also link the women to Dido: they are "aroused by *furor*" as she was (*furiisque accensas*, 7.392; cf. *accensa furore*, 4.697)[312] and their Bacchic flight echoes Dido's raging

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[310] Oliensis (2009: 71) calls Amata an "Agave-figure" here; as she concedes, no Pentheus turns up to be dismembered by the Latin bacchants at this point. Yet Amata will indeed be figured—will figure herself—as her "son's" murderer, when she hears the false report that Turnus is dead: *se causam clamat crimenque caputque malorum* (12.600).

[311] This division is reflected in the language that, as Fantham (2009: 142) points out, seems to convert the single city (*immensam per urbem,* 7.377) into multiple cities and peoples (*per medias urbes…populosque ferocis*, 7.384).

[312] As is often noted, this phrasing is also used of Aeneas in the murder of Turnus (*furiis accensus*, 12.946); cf. n. 2 above.

(*bacchatur,* 4.301), in which she is explicitly compared to a Bacchant (4.301-303). Their actions violate the "traditional territorial assignments"[313] of gender, which confine women to the domestic sphere. Amata is last pictured roaming "amid the woods, amid the desolate haunts of beasts" (*inter silvas, inter deserta ferarum*, 11.404): like Camilla, she has abandoned society and civilization in order to pursue her transgressive desires, yet as a married woman, her departure from her husband's house is even more inappropriate.

As a militant woman, Amata emasculates the men around her. Her actions in carrying off Lavinia and inciting the Italian mothers to rebellion effectively "overturn the plan and the whole house of Latinus" (*consiliumque omnemque domum vertisse Latini*, 7.407). She stands in the way of Latinus' plans for their daughter and so resists the patriarchal order that gives the father alone control over his daughter's sexual destiny. Amata initiates social collapse and disrupts the male control of the kingdom, rendering Latinus ineffectual and impotent: he is unable to resist the Italians when they clamor for war against the Trojans and, in his last appearance in Book 7, he flees and hides (*refugit*, 7.618; *se condidit*, 7.619) in response to their demands. As is the case with Dido and Camilla, male and female power are inversely indexed to one another: when women are strong, men become weak.

Amata must therefore, like Dido and Camilla, be eliminated in order to restore male authority and the proper order of things.[314] As Dido's death is caused by her excessive passion for Aeneas, Amata's is linked to her aberrant desire for Turnus: mistakenly believing

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[313] Keith 2000: 70-71 (quoting Higgonet 1989: 81); cf. Panoussi 2009: 127: "women who resort to maenadic activity by defying the spatial differentiation between male and female also defy traditional gender roles and blur gender distinctions."

[314] Cf. Genovese 1975: 25, but he is most concerned with Amata as a symbol of "the incompatibility of old and new" and "a misguiding past," rather than her transgressions against normative female behavior.

him dead, she blames herself and cries out that she is "the cause and the crime and the source of his misfortune" (*se causam clamat crimenque caputque malorum*; 12.600).[315] Maddened (*demens*) by grief, she hangs herself (12.601-603). Her actions are reminiscent of tragic women and place her within the traditionally gendered space of female mourning; Amata therefore, like Camilla, reverts to "typical" female behavior before her death.[316] As with Dido and Camilla, the narrator signals Amata's death long before it occurs, calling her *moritura* (12.55) almost six hundred lines before her suicide. The narration of Amata's death is not as long or grisly as Dido's or Camilla's, but it is detailed: she tears a purple cloak (*purpureos…amictus,* 12.602)[317] and ties it to a beam, fashioning "a knot of hideous death" (*nodum informis leti*, 12.604).[318] The adjective *informis* signifies that Amata's death—like those of Dido and Camilla before her—is ugly, even shameful. In fact, according to Servius' note on this passage, suicide by hanging was considered so discreditable that the corpse was to be thrown away unburied (*insepultus abiceretur*, Serv. *Ad* 12.603).[319] Amata's suicide recalls the hanging of the maids in Book 22 of the *Odyssey*: the description of it as *informis*

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[315] The striking alliteration of this line suggests Amata's frantic amassing of the charges against herself.

[316] On suicide by hanging in tragedy, see Loraux 1987: 7-30. For the gendering of mourning within the *Aeneid* alone, see 2.488-489 (*plangoribus…femineis*), 4.667 and 9.477 (*femineo…ululatu*); cf. Sharrock 2011.

[317] Another link to Dido, who wears a purple cloak to her hunting party with Aeneas (*purpuream…vestem,* 4.139; cf. 7.814-815, of Camilla).

[318] Loraux (1987: 10) has noted the predisposition of tragic women to hang themselves with "those adornments with which they decked themselves and which were also the emblems of their sex." Here, the *purpurei amictus* may also remind us of Dido: she sets off for her hunting trip with Aeneas decked in a purple garment (*purpurea…vestis, Aen.* 4.139), she has woven the purple cloak Aeneas wears while supervising Carthage's building projects (*Aen.* 4.261-264), and the one which he drapes over Pallas in death (11.76).

[319] See Van Hooff (1990: 65-66); Hill (2004: 190); Edwards (2007: 107-108) on the Roman aversion

evokes Telemachus' mandate that the maids die "not by a clean death" (μὴ…καθαρῷ θανάτῳ, 22.462) but rather "most piteously" (οἴκτιστα, 22.472).[320]

Amata's death, like Camilla's and Dido's provokes specifically female mourning: the Latin women (*miserae…Latinae*, 12.604) and Lavinia in particular, respond by "raging" (*furit,* 12.607); their grief is then communicated to the entire city, including Latinus (12.608-611). Amata, in death, continues to rouse other women to *furor* as she did in life—even Lavinia, previously represented as a model of female passivity and silence, now leads (*prima,* 12.605) the others in mourning for her mother.[321]

Significant verbal echoes link Amata's death with those of Camilla and Dido. She is twice called *moritura* (12.55, 602) just as Dido was (4.308, 415, 519, 604); likewise, both Amata and Dido are described as *demens* (12.601; cf. 4.78, 469). All three women are described using the verb *ardeo* and the imagery of fire (Dido: *ardet*, 4.101, cf. 6.467; Amata: *ardentem*, 7.345; Camilla: *ardebat*, 11.782). Amata is also, like Dido and Camilla, repeatedly linked to *furor* (7.350; 375; 377; 386; 392; 406) and is again at the moment of her death, when she is inspired "by sorrowful frenzy" (*per maestum…furorem*, 12.601). Finally, all three are called *infelix*, unfortunate, at significant moments leading up to their deaths (Dido: 4.67, 450, 529, 596; Camilla: 11.563; Amata: 12.598; cf. 7.367). The close verbal correspondences between all these women are linked to the transgressions for which they must

to suicide by hanging.

[320] Likewise, Livy describes the suicide of Fulvius Flaccus by hanging as a "foul" death (*foeda morte,* 42.28.10).

[321] Suzuki (1989: 134) suggests that this final glimpse of Lavinia "does not bode well for the future of the Roman empire."

suffer in death: their female sexuality and subjectivity, which, when left unchecked, is so threatening to Roman *mores* and the Roman imperial mission.

Most importantly, however, all three women are queens: Dido is called *regina* repeatedly throughout Book 4 (4.1, 133, 283, 296, 334, 504, 586), and Camilla is called *regina* at the moment of her death (11.801, cf. 499, 703), as is Amata (12.595). This descriptor is appropriate to their militancy and political power, yet the emphasis on the specifically *sexual* transgressions of these women works to contain their subversive political agency, to neutralize it and redirect it towards something appropriately 'female.' All these women are marked as typically feminine—Dido by her aggressive sexuality and the narrative of a "woman scorned," Camilla by her "womanly" pursuit of finery (*femineo…amore,* 11.782), and Amata by her "womanly" passion and anger (*femineae…curaeque iraeque,* 7.345). As *reginae,* these women are also linked to Juno and die as scapegoats for the divine *regina,* who cannot. Indeed, *regina* becomes almost a dirty word throughout the *Aeneid* and the women described by it are almost invariably transgressive.[322]

While Helen cannot be killed, both because of her divine ancestry and because of the tradition that finds her living out her life in Sparta with Menelaus, the extended narration of

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[322] In addition to Helen and Cleopatra (discussed below), Pasiphae is called *regina* in a passage that gestures to her monstrous passion for the bull (*magnum…amorem*, 6.28). The only mortal *regina* who is not a clearly transgressive figure is Ilia/Rhea Silvia (*regina sacerdos*, 1.273), and even she may be viewed as unchaste according to certain traditions (e.g. Livy's remark that she said she was raped by Mars *seu ita rata seu quia deus auctor culpae honestior erat*, 1.4.2), and is often portrayed as dying as a result. For a discussion of Ilia/Rhea Silvia's rape and death, see Keith 2000: 41-42, who suggests that her death by drowning may be considered an early incarnation of the fallen Vestals' death by suffocation. *Rex* might also be considered a "dirty word" in Roman political discourse (consider, for example, Caesar's refusal to accept the title*, Suet. Div. Jul.* 79.2), yet it is not so in the *Aeneid*, where many kings, both mortal (Acestes, Latinus, Evander) and immortal (Jupiter) are portrayed as positive figures.

Aeneas' desire to kill her substitutes for her death.[323] Helen is called *regina* a the very moment when Aeneas plans to kill her for her crimes; significantly he imagines her leading a triumphal parade (*partoque ibit regina triumph*, 2.578), another intrusion of the militant female into the political/military sphere. The description of Helen's death as "wiping out a *nefas*" (*exstinxisse nefas*, 2.585)[324] and as "deserved punishment (*merentis…poenas*, 2.585-586; cf. *feminea…poena*, 2.584) suggests that her death, like those of the other transgressive *reginae* in the poem, would be a just punishment for her wrongdoing, even though Aeneas will ultimately be prevented from inflicting it. Like other *reginae* in the poem, Helen may be viewed as a surrogate for Juno in her destructive power, especially as it is directed towards Troy. Aeneas views her as "a Fury, both for Troy and her homeland" (*Troiae et patriae communis Erinys,* 2.573), language that links her to Allecto, the Fury whom Juno summons to provoke war between Trojans and Latins and therefore wipe out both peoples (*amborum populos exscindere regum*, 7.316). Helen is another transgressive *regina* who, as Aeneas' monologue

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[323] This meditation on the murder of Helen appears in the so-called "Helen episode" in Book 2 (2.567-588). Although it does not appear in M or P, Servius Auctus prints it, with the note that it was removed by Vergil's early editors for two reasons: *nam et turpe est viro forti contra feminam irasci, et contrarium est Helenam in domo Priami fuisse illi rei, quae in sexto dicitur, quia in domo est inventa Deiphobi* (*ad* 2.592). While the objections of Servius are now generally considered worthless even by opponents of the passage, its authenticity remains debatable on linguistic, stylistic, metrical, and syntactic grounds. Important arguments against the authenticity of the passage include Heinze 1915, Goold 1970, Murgia 1971 and 2003, and Horsfall 2008; important arguments in favor of it include Austin 1964, Reckford 1981, Conte 1986 and 2006; Berres 1992, Egan 1996, Syed 2005, Delvigo 2006. My view is that the passage is authentic, but represents a less polished stage in Vergil's editorial process (cf. Austin 1961; Highet 1972, Conte 1986 and 2006). It is certainly difficult to explain the dialogue with Venus that immediately follows (2.589-623) without the Helen episode, as is often noted (but see Goold 1970: 139-140, arguing that these very lines inspired the supposed forger to fill a *lacuna* with the Helen Episode). For an ingenious (although ultimately implausible, cf. Horsfall 1995; Harrison 1996) argument in favor of the passage, see Gall (1993: 72-79), who argues that it is authentic but properly belongs later in Book 2, directly before Aeneas' encounter with the shade of Creusa.

[324] Compare Arruns' prayer "that this disgrace be destroyed" (*hoc aboleri…dedecus,* 11.789).

makes clear, deserves to die for her crimes but, as in the *Odyssey*, cannot be made to suffer as she ought.

Likewise, while Cleopatra's death is not explicitly described, it is more than implicit: she appears on Aeneas' shield "pale with death to come" (*pallentem morte futura,* 8.709)[325] and unaware of the serpents lurking behind her (*necdum etiam geminos a tergo respicit anguis,* 8.697).[326] These references to Cleopatra's imminent death are closely associated with instances of the word *regina* (8.696, 703) and with her intrusion into the male-dominated military/political sphere. On the shield, she is shown following Antony to war, and her participation is characterized as "unspeakable" (*sequiturque nefas Aegyptia coniunx,* 8.688).[327] She is accompanied by cultural markers of deviance and difference, including a *sistrum* (8.696) and the "monstrous figures" of her bestial gods (*omnigenumque deum monstra,* 8.697).[328] In addition to her transgressive militancy, Cleopatra is acting in direct opposition

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[325] A description that also links her to Dido (*pallida morte futura,* 4.644).

[326] Gurval (2011: 69) argues that the reference to Cleopatra's suicide "has no logical function or place" at Actium. In my view, however, it is required by the sexual politics of the poem, which demand Cleopatra's death: the narrator signals her suicide at the same time as her transgression to indicate that she will not go unpunished. Cleopatra's failure to notice the serpents is suggestive of Camilla's failure to notice Arruns or to hear his spear whizzing towards her; Gurval (2011: 69) also links Cleopatra here to Dido as *fati nescia* (1.299).

[327] The epithet *nefas* links Helen (2.585) and Cleopatra; neither are named in the poem but referred to only in circumlocutions. On the suppression of Cleopatra's name here, and possible etymological wordplay, see Chaudhuri 2012.

[328] As is the case with Helen in Book 6, the image of Cleopatra summoning her soldiers with the *sistrum* (*vocat,* 8.696) recalls Juno summoning (*vocat,* 2.614) the Greeks from the ships to the destruction of Troy—yet another intrusion of the militant female into the male sphere of war and combat.

to the Roman and Augustan state, and it is significant that Augustus on the shield is repre-

sented in terms that evoke Aeneas elsewhere.[329] The death of Cleopatra will inaugurate the

Augustan order of things, preserving the Roman world from the horrors of female rule, just

as the deaths of Dido, Camilla, and Amata restore the normative gender hierarchy and reform

these active women as passive objects.[330] Juno herself, the divine *regina* and divine antago-

nist, cannot die, so she must be persuaded, pacified, and bargained with (12.791-843). The

poem thus presents the reader with a series of *reginae* whose transgressiveness is ruthlessly

eliminated through death, until the most aggressive *regina* of all is finally mollified and rec-

onciles herself to the Roman future (12.840).[331]

In life and in death, Dido, Camilla, and Amata form the greatest possible contrast to

Creusa and Caieta. The transgressive women's deaths are narrated in grim and graphic detail,

with an emphasis on blood, pain, and shame. The narrator zooms in on their suffering bodies

with camera-like precision, exposing them to the gaze of internal and external audiences

alike. On the other hand, Creusa's and Caieta's deaths are elided and the narrator averts his

eyes, preventing the reader from viewing their ends. There is no bloodshed, no suffering, no

corpse. These death-narratives therefore function to reaffirm the poet's culture's social and

sexual norms: as in the *Odyssey,* normative female behavior is rewarded with an easy death,

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[329] *Stans celsa in puppi,* 8.680; cf. 4.554; 10.261; 12.564; cf. Lee 1979: 76; Moskalew 1983: 137; Put-nam 1995: 23; Gurval 1998: 233-234; Keith 2000: 76.

[330] In a sense, Cleopatra on the shield is the ultimate object, since she is a bronze figure, created by a masculine hand; cf. Wyke ([1992] 2002: 208): "Cleopatra's failing body is distanced as a work of art created for the voyeuristic pleasure of her Roman spectators."

[331] Though, as Feeney ([1984] 1990) points out, her reconciliation will be short-lived and her prefer-ence for Carthage will again threaten the Roman future.

while deviant behavior is punished with an agonizing one. This dichotomy is emphasized by the fate of the body in death: Creusa's and Caieta's corpses vanish without a trace, while Dido's, Camilla's, and Amata's are exposed to the gaze of audiences internal and external to the poem. Their deaths are a spectacle, while the image of the dead Creusa or Caieta is repeatedly suppressed. Thus, as I have argued, the transgressive *reginae* of the poem function as surrogates for Juno, as the transgressive slaves of the *Odyssey* function as surrogates for Helen, Clytemnestra, and Aphrodite, who also cannot die. The deaths of Dido, Camilla, and Amata likewise resolve the problem of female militancy, while Juno happily takes her place in the Roman pantheon (*laetata,* 12.841).

Yet, as I have suggested, the poet also signals some ambivalence about the deaths of Dido, Camilla, and Amata. Their transgressions of Roman norms and their opposition to Aeneas' mission require that the poet eliminate them, yet Vergil acknowledges that, in so doing, he is also eliminating something extraordinary, even wonderful. Dido's initially successful leadership and Camilla's near-miraculous military ability suggest that female power can flourish in ways usually considered constructive. Even Amata originally plays a culturally sanctioned role in Latinus' peaceful kingdom (7.46-47) as his wife and queen. The imperial ideology of the poem—set forth by Jupiter as *fata* (1.228)[332]—demands that these women die to exorcise the problem of female agency, but the poet invites the reader to regret their deaths and to question the system that necessitates them.

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[332] See Commager (1981) on Fate in the *Aeneid* as "something spoken by Jove" (105).

CHAPTER 4: OVID'S *METAMORPHOSES*

This chapter takes up the *Metamorphoses* to explore the ways in which Ovid departs from earlier epic poets' treatments of the dead and dying female body. Bodies are at the core of Ovid's poem, as he announced in its first lines (*corpora,* 1.2), and his special interest in female bodies will be the subject of this chapter. Unlike the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*, the *Metamorphoses* has no *telos* and no hero. It is an epic of disorder and chaos, with no linear narrative and no plot-driven trajectory. The poem constantly dramatizes the breakdown of previous epic norms and violates the expectations raised by its epic predecessors. In particular, as I will show, the poet resists the binary pattern of reward and punishment found in Homer and Vergil's narratives of female death. Ovid deconstructs the epic model that figures women and female sexuality as threatening and monstrous. His representations of female death and suffering function not to punish women for their sexual choices, but to expose the vulnerability of the female body.

In this chapter, I will argue that Ovid alters the patterns of heroic and patriarchal epic in two interrelated ways. In the first place, he avoids the punitive violence inflicted on transgressive women in the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid* and instead rewrites notoriously transgressive figures to be more sympathetic. Carnographic imagery is displaced in some cases onto the female body in metamorphosis and in other cases onto the male subjects of violence. The metamorphic female body becomes the site of the "body horror" inflicted on dying women in earlier epic, and women's bodies are dismembered and objectified in metamorphosis in ways

reminiscent of the *Aeneid*'s narratives of transgressive female death. Similarly, male deaths are not elided or accelerated as in Vergilian epic. The poet upends previous patterns of carnographic violence and demonstrates the breakdown of epic norms surrounding the female body and female sexuality.

In the second place, the poet reverses the gendered system of Homer and Vergil that represents women as opponents of the epic mission and the epic hero. In Ovid's chaotic poem—with no epic mission and no hero to carry it out—the female body appears in a new light: threatened rather than threatening, endangered rather than dangerous. The non-narrative—even anti-narrative—structure of the poem allows the poet to amass an overwhelming number of brutalized and victimized women. In a pointed reversal of the paradigm of earlier epic, women suffer horrific violence despite being unambiguously innocent of sexual transgression, and some of the most gruesome female deaths in the poem are inflicted on virtuous and virginal women. Ovid depicts example after example of female bodies bloodied in death or twisted in metamorphosis, portraying women in constant danger from male sexuality and subjectivity. By reconsidering the role of the female body and presenting women as victims rather than victimizers, Ovid exposes the disturbing brutality of Homer's and Vergil's punishment of female transgression.

Terminal Metamorphosis

I begin with the poem's "terminal metamorphoses," transformations into wood, rock, or stone, because Ovid himself foregrounds such metamorphoses in the early books of the poem. I use this term because there is a qualitative difference between transformation into another animate form, in which victims are shown to retain their original consciousness, and

transformation into an immobile object that ceases to be human in any way.[333] Indeed, the

poet often indicates that human beings may retain their consciousness and mental capacity

despite being imprisoned in animal bodies. For example, Io, Callisto, and Actaeon keep their

original personalities—Callisto remains pathetically afraid of bears despite being one herself

(2.494)—and are tortured by futile attempts to express themselves as humans (1.637-638,

2.488, 3.229-230). Indeed, the narrator explicitly notes that Callisto and Actaeon retain their

former consciousness (*mens antiqua…mansit*, 2.485; cf. *mens…pristina mansit*, 3.203).[334] On

the other hand, when Myrrha is transformed into a tree the poet makes clear that "she lost her

former awareness along with her body" (*amisit veteres cum corpore sensus*, 10.499). Trans-

formation into an animal is reversible, and a small number of characters are eventually re-

turned to their human forms,[335] yet no metamorphosis into an inanimate object is ever re-

versed in the poem—hence my label "terminal."[336]

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[333] Yet the poet makes clear that transformations into animals are also horrific and may be perceived by loved ones as little better than death. For example, when Anius' daughters are transformed by Liber into birds, he bitterly wonders whether "destroying them in a miraculous fashion" can be called "bringing help" (*si miro perdere more | ferre vocatur opem*, 13.670-671; see further below.

[334] Though when Picus is transformed into a woodpecker, "nothing of his former self remained except the name" (*nec quicquam antiquum Pico nisi nomina restant,* 14.396). Likewise, Ocyrhoe seems to lose her *mens antiqua* in metamorphosis, as she is overtaken by a desire to eat grass and run free on the wide meadows (2.662-663)—unlike Io, for example, who, despite being in cow-form, is uncomfortable (*infelix*, 1.634) sleeping on the ground and drinking muddy water.

[335] Io (by Jupiter: 1.738-746) and Odysseus' men (by Circe: 14.302-305). See Murray (1998: 81) on how the permanence of metamorphosis "paradoxically introduces an element of fixity into an otherwise constantly changing world."

[336] As Hardie (2002: 81), commenting on metamorphosis in general, puts it, "Metamorphoses as a process that closes the narrative of a human life takes the place of death." Cf. Reed (2013 *ad* 10.132) on how Cyparissus' desire to die will be satisfied by (terminal) metamorphosis—which, as he concludes, "assimila morte a metamorfosi."

This type of transformation comes to the fore early in the poem with the narratives of Daphne and Syrinx.[337] Ovid raises the issue of ownership of the female body through these early tales of rape and terminal metamorphosis, which depict innocent women threatened by male desire. In both cases, the women's bodies attract an instantaneous, unthinking male response. Apollo "loves and desires a union with the seen Daphne" (*Phoebus amat visaeque cupit conubia Daphnes*, 1.490), whereas Pan simply sees Syrinx (*Pan videt hanc*, 1.699) and his desire is assumed.[338] The participle *visae* is picked up in the series of verbs casting Apollo as spectator and Daphne as object of his desiring, objectifying gaze (*spectat,* 1.497; *videt,* 1.498; *videt,* 1.499, *vidisse,* 1.500; *laudat,* 1.500; *putat,* 1.502).[339] Apollo's gaze is autoptic, focusing on individual parts of Daphne's body rather than the woman as a whole: he begins with her hair[340] and neck (1.497), then her eyes (1.498-499), then her mouth (1.499), and then, in swift succession, her fingers, hands, arms, and bare legs (1.500-501).[341] This

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[337] The parallels between these stories are often noted (e.g. Galinsky 1975: 174; Knox 1990: 199-200; Heath 1991: 236; Anderson 1997 *ad* 1.702-704; Farrell 1999b: 135; Wheeler 1999: 2; Barchiesi 2005 *ad* 689-712; Feldherr 2010: 25) but see Myers (1994: 77-78) on the motif of invention in the story of Syrinx.

[338] Enterline 2000: 32 has called attention to the confluence of vision and rape in the poem, "as one scene after another tells the story of rape as the accident 'one day x saw y.'" Cf. Fowler (2000: 163) on the way "sight of the beloved is immediately and inappropriately translated into violent action." Examples of this motif are listed in note 164.

[339] Cf. Salzman-Mitchell 2005: 29-31; Feldherr 2010: 94. The asymmetrical power dynamic of Apollo's gaze is suggested by a simile later in the poem: Tereus watches Philomela like a predatory bird watches its prey (*spectat sua praemia raptor,* 6.518). On the correspondences between Philomela and Daphne, see Jacobsen 1984. Bömer 1984 notes several specific parallels, including the male predator's lascivious imagining of the desired woman's body (1.502, 6.492; cf. Bömer 1984: *ad* 6.492).

[340] Although Apollo's praise of Daphne's hair is immediately undercut by his speculation "what if it were styled" (*quid si comantur*, 1.498); cf. Feeney (1998: 72) on Apollo's "radical lack of interest in [Daphne] and his obsession with his own kind of order."

[341] As Hardie (2002: 46) has noted, his blazon of Daphne's body is reminiscent of a passage in Ovid's *Amores* 1.5, in which the *amator* admiringly lists the beautiful parts of Corinna, including her shoulders, arms, breasts, stomach, side, and thigh, but stops short of her genitals (*Am.* 1.5.19-22). As Cahoon (1988: 296) points out, this inventory omits Corinna's head and face, rendering her strangely

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breaking down and inventorying of the female body looks forward to the blazons of early Renaissance literature, in which parts of the body are praised without reference to the whole. As Vickers (1985: 96-97) has shown, the blazon "triangulates" a power relationship in which the female is placed as a passive object between an active describer and active listener. Parker (1987: 131), expanding on Vickers' work, argues that the "inventorying or itemizing impulse" of the blazon further commodifies the female body, making it the passive *materia* of exchange. The poet's inventory of Daphne's beautiful body parts effectively adds a fourth member to this already-imbalanced power dynamic: the female is displayed by the poet to the gaze both of the excited Apollo and to the reader/listener who is also invited to enjoy the "sight" of Daphne's flesh.[342] As is the case with Shakespeare's Lucrece, discussed by Vickers and Parker, this display has disastrous consequences for the woman so described.[343]

Although Daphne hopes to enjoy eternal virginity (1.486-487), in the poet's words, her own *decor* and *forma* thwart her (1.488-489).[344] This formulation (which also eliminates Cupid's agency in shooting both Daphne and Apollo) suggests, by what Joplin (1990: 57) calls "a twist of symbolic reasoning we now recognize as sacrificial," that the woman is to blame for what is to come. Similarly, the narrator describes how the wind exposes Daphne's

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anonymous. Apollo, on the other hand, admires Daphne's eyes "shining with fire like the stars" (*igne micantes | sideribus similes oculos*, *Met.* 1.498-499) and her mouth/kisses (*oscula, Met.* 1.499), yet his blazon nonetheless reifies Daphne, reducing her to an inventory of parts. As Sawday (1996: ix), puts it, the blazon's purpose is "to hack [a body] into pieces, in order to flourish fragments…as trophies."

[342] Cf. Richlin 1992: 158-163.

[343] Vickers 1985: 102; Parker 1987: 132.

[344] The narrator addresses this remark to Daphne in, as Barchiesi (2005: *ad* 1.488-489) points out, the first apostrophe in the poem (*te,* 1.488). As Barchiesi concludes (*ibid.*), "l'effetto coinvolge chi legge nel punto vista maschile e suggerisce una reificazione di Dafne, da soggettivo attivo a donna oggetto."

body (*nudabant corpora venti*, 1.527), concluding "her beauty was increased by her flight" (*auctaque forma fuga est*, 1.530).[345] Daphne is trapped in an impossible situation, when even her extreme resistance and reluctance contributes to her desirability.[346] She is compared to a hare fleeing a hound and barely escaping its snapping jaws (*tangentia ora,* 1.538) in an extensive simile that, as von Glinski puts it, "stretch[es] out the agonizing pursuit for maximum suspense" (2012: 101).

This simile also indicates Daphne's vulnerability, especially since it corrects Apollo's own characterization of his pursuit. In his pleas to her to slow down, Apollo had claimed "I do not pursue as an enemy" (*non insequor hostis*, 1.504) and chided Daphne for fleeing "as the lamb flees the wolf, as the doe flees the lion, as doves flee the eagle on fluttering wings" (*sic agna lupum, sic cerva leonem | sic aquilam penna fugiunt trepidante columbae*, 1.505-506). The narrator's simile undercuts Apollo's characterization of himself, and exposes the violence and aggression of his pursuit.[347] The poet makes the contrast between Apollo as predator and Daphne as prey clear when he describes the god breathing down her neck (*tergoque fugacis | inminet et crinem sparsum cervicibus adflat*, 1.541-542), while Daphne's strength is spent (*viribus absumptis*, 1.543) and she is "defeated by the effort" (*victa labore*, 1.544). The narrator foregrounds the threat posed by male desire to the vulnerable female body.

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[345] Cf. Arethusa, who is surprised by her rapist while bathing and is forced to flee without her clothes: "because I was naked I seemed readier for him" (*et quia nuda fui, sum visa paratior illi*, 5.603).

[346] On this theme in stories of rape in the poem, see Curran 1978: 27; Richlin 1992: 162. Cf. Feldherr (2010: 93) on Daphne's attractive blush (*pulchra verecundo suffuderat ora rubore,* 1.484): "the very physical effect that invites desire springs from the impulse to avoid such desire."

[347] Cf. von Glinski (2012): 101-102 on the narrator's "correction" of Apollo here. As she points out, the simile of hound and hare is especially suggestive because it "reflects an artificial environment controlled by humans for their pleasure," and therefore hints at Cupid's role in directing the scenario.

The connection between Apollo's admiration of Daphne's body and its eventual destruction is indicated when the admiring blazon of her body in flight is recapitulated in metamorphosis. Daphne prays to her divine father to "transform and destroy the form with which I have too well pleased" (*qua nimium placui, mutando perde figuram*, 1.546). Her prayer immediately receives a response:

> vix prece finita torpor gravis occupat artus,
> mollia cinguntur tenui praecordia libro,
> in frondem crines, in ramos bracchia crescunt,
> pes modo tam velox pigris radicibus haeret,
> ora cacumen habet: remanet nitor unus in illa.

> Her prayer scarcely over, a heavy torpor seizes her limbs,
> her soft vitals are surrounded by thin bark,
> her hair grows into leaves, her arms into branches,
> her foot—just now so swift—clings to static roots,
> the treetop has her face: only her bright glow remains. (1.548-552)

Just as the narrator had earlier catalogued Daphne's beautiful body parts, he again inventories their transformation, listing her limbs, vitals, hair, arms, feet, and mouth.[348] The woman is fragmented into a series of parts, objectified and dehumanized at the very moment that she loses her human form and becomes a literal object. The narrator here demonstrates what Daphne herself has articulated: that male desire of the female body leads to its destruction (cf. *perde,* 1.546).[349] This dismemberment of the female body in metamorphosis evokes previous epic's carnographic depictions of the female body in death: as Helman (1991: 121) puts

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[348] Note the similarities in the two inventories: *capillos* (1.497) is picked up by *crines* (1.550), *bracchia* appears in both catalogues (1.501, 1.550), *digitosque manusque bracchiaque et…lacertos* (1.500-501) is picked up by *artus* (1.548), and *oscula* (1.449) is picked up by *ora* (1.552).

[349] On the motif of the (female) body as the cause of its own destruction, compare, for example, the stories of Callisto (*adimam tibi namque figuram…quaque places, importuna, marito,* 2.474-475), Cornix (*forma mihi nocuit,* 2.572), and Arethusa (*nec mea me facies…iuvabat,* 5.582).

it, "the true parallel of dissection…is pornography. It is the same reduction of the human image into slices of helpless meat, ripped out of context." Similarly, Mulvey (1975: 43) has discussed the filmic impulse to reify the female body: "stylized and fragmented by close-ups," it becomes an object of containment and control.[350] The itemizing of Daphne's beautiful body—first in admiration, then in transformation—invites the fetishistic gaze described by Mulvey.

Daphne is, in many respects, a mythological double of Lucretia: she too is victimized by a male rivalry about which she knows nothing (cf. Joplin 1990: 60). Both become the casualty of a homosocial battle between two (closely related) males:[351] in Daphne's case, she is the means by which Amor proves his superiority over Apollo (1.463-480).[352] Yet after shooting both Apollo and Daphne, Amor disappears from the story and the narrative appears to become a more conventional tale of thwarted male desire.[353] Daphne's victimization is therefore "doubled" as is Lucretia's: she is a casualty both of uncontrolled male sexuality and of selfish male competition, a victim not only of Apollo but of Amor as well. The poet thus

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[350] This hugely influential article argues that modern Hollywood cinema is enmeshed in the patriarchal structures that gender dominance as masculine and submission as feminine; the very act of looking thus becomes an exertion of power and control. Mulvey's arguments have been complicated and contextualized in much subsequent work (including her own); in particular, she has been criticized for not addressing the female gaze or the possibility of male masochism. Yet as Boyle (2005: 128) argues, her initial work "provides a still-provocative starting point for thinking about the ways in which the act of looking may be structured by power and violently enacted."

[351] As Joplin (1990: 59) points out, it is seldom remembered that Collatinus' family name is Tarquinius and he is a cousin of Sextus, his wife's rapist (cf. Livy 1.38; 1.57.4).

[352] As Salzman-Mitchell (2005: 29) notes, this competition is "a battle over masculinity where Apollo and Cupid dispute over who is more penetrative."

[353] Cf. Anderson *ad* 1.452-567 on the poet's use of elegiac motifs "to develop a thematic representation of male erotic desire." On Apollo as a (failed) elegiac lover, see e.g. Nicoll 1980; Solodow 1988: 21; Knox 1986: 14-17; Hardie 2002: 128-130; Harrison 2002: 88; Sharrock 2002: 97-98; Armstrong 2015: 142-143.

dramatizes the different ways in which the female body is at risk from male desire for mastery.

Daphne's solution—to destroy her *figura*—proves ineffective because she also loses her power of self-determination, her ability to flee and resist.[354] Apollo is able to touch and kiss her as a tree as he could not in human form (1.553-556) and, although she shrinks from him (*refugit*, 1.556), she can no longer escape.[355] Her helplessness is further emphasized in Apollo's final appropriation of Daphne/the laurel as his eternal symbol:

> cui deus 'at, quoniam coniunx mea non potes esse,
> arbor eris certe' dixit 'mea! semper habebunt
> te coma, te citharae, te nostrae, laure, pharetrae;
> tu ducibus Latiis aderis, cum laeta Triumphum
> vox canet et visent longas Capitolia pompas;
> postibus Augustis eadem fidissima custos
> ante fores stabis mediamque tuebere quercum,
> utque meum intonsis caput est iuvenale capillis,
> tu quoque perpetuos semper gere frondis honores!'
> finierat Paean: factis modo laurea ramis
> adnuit utque caput visa est agitasse cacumen.
>
> To her the god said, "but since you cannot be my wife,
> you assuredly will be my tree! My hair, my lyre, my quiver
> will always wear you, laurel:
> you will adorn the Latin generals, when the happy voice
> sings the triumphal song and the Capitol watches the long processions;
> you will stand, the same most faithful guardian,
> at the door-posts of Augustus and you will guard the oak between you,
> and just as my head is youthful with unshorn hair,
> you also must bear the eternal honor of foliage!
> Paean had finished speaking; the laurel nodded with its new-made branches
> and seemed to shake its treetop like a head. (1.557-567)

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[354] As is indicated by the poignant contrast between her former swiftness (*pes modo tam velox*, 1.551) and current immobility (cf. Feldherr 2010: 40). Solodow (1988: 189) argues that Daphne's "rootedness" in tree form "is virtually a symbol of the person's inability to grow, develop, alter" and so emphasizes her dehumanization.

[355] As Segal suggests (2005: xlii), this passage highlights the contrast between male subjectivity and female passivity.

As Ginsberg (1989: 227) puts it, Apollo now "drops all pretense" of amatory devotion and reveals that his primary desire is simple possession.[356] Daphne's human body is first dehumanized in metamorphosis, and then further transmuted into a symbol of her would-be rapist, a piece of adornment for (male) Roman *duces* and their doorposts. Her radical objectification is hinted at by the god's anaphora of *te* in line 559:[357] she is the literal object of the verb, and the object that will decorate Apollo's attributes, a sign no longer of herself but of her persecutor.[358]

Daphne appears to consent to her role (*adnuit*, 1.567), but the conclusion to the line makes clear that this apparent agreement is focalized through the watching god: the laurel "seemed to shake its treetop like a head" (*utque caput visa est agitasse cacumen*, 1.567).[359] A similar uncertainty occurs in the narrative of Syrinx: transformed into reeds, the wind blowing through her makes "a soft sound, like a complaint" (*sonum tenuem similemque querenti*, 1.708).[360] Something of Daphne and Syrinx may still exist in their new forms, but they have lost their human bodies and their power of movement and speech.[361] The ambiguity of

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[356] As Ginsberg concludes, this "flourish of absolute rhetorical power" is "meant to cover or compensate for the fact that Daphne has escaped him" (*ibid.*). Cf. Miller (2004: 171) on the "masking" of Apollo's erotic failure here.

[357] Hardie (2002: 48) views this anaphora as hymnic.

[358] Though Salzman-Mitchell (2005: 30) suggests that the laurel will also "by its presence be a symbol of Daphne's absence." On the "semioticization" of Daphne's body here, see Hardie 2002: 46 (citing Brooks 1993: 5-6; 25).

[359] See Ginsberg (1989: 226-228) on the indeterminacy of Daphne's "response." As he concludes, "The laurel says nothing; the 'yes' or 'no' we give her is our own." Cf. Myers 1994: 62; Farrell 1999b: 135-136; Barchiesi 2005 *ad* 1.564-567; Feldherr 2010: 40-41.

[360] We might also think of Meleager's bough: "it either gave a groan, or seemed to" (*aut dedit aut visus gemitus est ille dedisse*, 8.513).

[361] The contrast between Daphne's former mobility and her current fixity is made clear in the poet's juxtaposition of her "just recently so swift foot" (*pes modo tam velox*) and her now "sluggish roots"

Daphne's new status is made clear by the rivers, who are "unsure whether to congratulate or console her father" (*nescia, gratentur consolenturne parentem*, 1.578). Daphne has gained "eternal honor" (*perpetuos…honores*, 1.565), but at the price of everything that made her human.

Ovid continues to foreground threats to the female body in the latter half of Book 1. Though not itself a tale of death or terminal metamorphosis, the story of Io well illustrates the risks posed by male desire. Io, like Daphne and Syrinx, becomes a victim of near-instantaneous divine lust, triggered merely by sight (*viderat*, 1.588), and all three women suffer transformations that put them at the mercy of selfish gods. Juno receives Io as a gift (*munus*, 1.616, 620), while Apollo and Pan appropriate Daphne and Syrinx as their symbols. Io's metamorphosis alienates her from her own body: she no longer has arms to stretch out in supplication (1.635-636), and she cannot speak her complaints, only moo (1.637-638). When she catches sight of her new appearance in the river, she is terrified and flees her own reflection (*seque exsternata refugit*, 1.641).[362] The verb *refugit* recalls Daphne: even after her transformation, the wood of the laurel still "flees" Apollo's kisses (*refugit tamen oscula lignum*, 1.556). Both stories capture women's helplessness in the face of male power: raped, transformed, and trafficked, Io cannot even communicate with her captor, while Daphne, although she seems to have evaded rape, can no longer escape her rapist; in fact, she will be with him always (*semper,* 1.558).

(*pigris radicibus*, 1.551). On this motif in the narrative of Camilla's death, see Chapter 3, above.

[362] Cf. 14.63, on Scylla fleeing the dogs barking around her waist: *sed quos fugit, attrahit una*.

Unlike Daphne, however, Io will regain her original form. Ovid highlights the contrast with another pair of verbal echoes: when Daphne is transformed "only her bright complexion remained" (*remanet nitor unus in illa*, 1.552), whereas when Io returns to her human form "nothing of the cow was left, except the brightness of her beauty" (*de bove nil superest formae nisi candor in illa*, 1.743). The repetition of this detail in two very different situations—Daphne's loss of human form and Io's recovery of it—reinforces the permanence of Daphne's fate. Unlike Io, she will be a laurel forever.

These early tales of rape and metamorphosis raise several motifs that will recur throughout the poem. Women are repeatedly victimized by men and gods in ways that highlight the vulnerability of the female body. It is no accident that the first victim of terminal metamorphosis in the poem is a woman: Ovid presents significantly more instances of female terminal metamorphosis than of male, and accounts of these transformations tend to be lengthier and more detailed for women than for men. I count sixteen narratives of male terminal metamorphoses, compared to twenty-seven narratives of female terminal metamorphosis, with almost twice as many lines of poetry devoted to female victims than to males.[363] In fact,

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[363] Male victims of terminal metamorphoses include Battus (2.704-707), Daphnis' shepherd (4.276-278), Celmis (4.281-282), Crocus (4.283-284), Smilax (4.283-284), Atlas (4.653-662), the victims of Perseus and the Gorgon (5.181-259), Haemus (6.87-89), Philemon (8.711-720), Lichas (9.211-229), the man who saw Cerberus (10.64-67), Olenos (10.68-71), Attis (10.103-105), Cyparissus (10.134-142), the judge in the gods' debate (13.714-715), and Apulus the *pastor* (14.521-526); these male transformations total 163 lines. Female victims of terminal metamorphosis include Daphne (1.543-556), Syrinx (1.703-712), the Heliades (2.346-366), Aglauros (2.818-832), Echo (3.396-399), Clytie (4.259-270), Salmacis (4.369-379), the Theban women (4.548-562), Cyane (5.425-437), Rhodope (6.87-89), the daughters of Cinyras (6.98-100), Niobe (6.301-312), Hyrie (7.380-381), the Echinades (8.580-589), Perime (8.590-610), Baucis (8.711-720), Lotis (9.346-348), Dryope (9.349-393), Byblis (9.655-665), Lethaea (10.69-71), Propoetides (10.238-242), Myrrha (10.483-502), Menthe (10.729), the Bacchants (11.67-84), Canens (14.426-434), Anaxarete (14.754-758), and Egeria (15.547-551), for a total of 301 lines. It should be noted that I have counted collective metamorphoses as a single narrative; these include the victims of Perseus and the Gorgon's head (the only male group metamorphosis), and the Heliades, Theban women, Cinyreids, Echinades, Propoetides, and Bacchants.

many narratives of male terminal metamorphosis are brief, with over half comprising five lines or fewer. Many are fleeting references, whether contained in a *recusatio* or a simile.[364]

By comparison, over half the narratives of female terminal metamorphosis are ten lines or longer and almost all are narrated directly, rather than mentioned in passing.[365] These numbers suggest that Ovid is particularly interested in transformations of the female body, especially those that effectively destroy that body, burying it under wood or stone, and hence erase the victim from the human community.[366] The poet engages with the tendency of Greek myth to portray the female body as "changeable in a distinct, *essential* way,"[367] but to quite different effect: whereas women's changeable bodies are usually portrayed harming or hindering male heroes, in Ovid they are represented being harmed.

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[364] These brief references include the *pastor* (4.26-278)*,* Celmis (4.281-282), Crocus (4.283-284), Smilax (4.283-284); Olenos (10.68-71), and the man who saw Cerberus (10.64-67). Indeed, the only really extensive narrative of male terminal metamorphosis is the battle scene of Ovid's "Perseid" narrative (5.181-259), in which Perseus uses the head of Medusa to defeat Phineus and his adherents in the face of overwhelming odds. There are nine victims, and, at over seventy lines, this scene represents the longest account of terminal metamorphosis in the poem (although it also includes many instances of more traditional bloodshed). It is striking that, even including this entire battle as an instance of male terminal metamorphosis, lines devoted to female terminal metamorphosis still outnumber those devoted to male by almost two to one.

[365] The exceptions are Lethaea (10.69-71) and Menthe (10.729).

[366] Of course, transformations into animals also erase the victim from the human community, but in a qualitatively different way. For example, Io is able to communicate who she is to her father and sisters (1.649-650). Further, it is significant that transformations into animals do not include pathetic family farewells, such as often follow female terminal metamorphoses (see further below).

[367] James (2010: 3), arguing that Greek myth portrays the female body as "inherently unstable and mutable" in contrast to the male body (cf. Richlin 1992: 165; Segal 1998: 38). Carson (1990) connects women's mutability in Greek myth to ancient views of the female body as wet, leaky, porous, permeable, and therefore lacking in fixed or reliable boundaries. Cf. Keith (1999: 233) on Ovid's story of Cycnus: "in [the heroes'] fascination with Cycnus' inviolable body….they implicitly distinguish male bodily integrity from the porous openness that characterizes the female body in the ancient imagination."

Ovid's interest in the female body in transformation is demonstrated by his carno-graphic narratives of female terminal metamorphoses in which, as in the story of Daphne, the woman's body is dissected and fragmented, reduced to a collection of parts. Ovid seldom evinces such an interest in the details of male terminal metamorphosis.[368] Some paired narratives of male and female transformation illustrate this point. For example, in Book 2, both Battus and Aglauros are transformed into stone for defying Mercury.[369] Yet the male victim's transformation is narrated in only four lines:

> risit Atlantiades et 'me mihi, perfide, prodis,
> me mihi prodis?' ait periuraque pectora vertit
> in durum silicem, qui nunc quoque dicitur index,
> inque nihil merito vetus est infamia saxo.

> "The descendant of Atlas laughed and said "traitor,
> do you really betray me to myself?" and turned his lying heart
> into hard stone, which now also is called "informant"
> and the ancient calumny remains on the undeserving rock." (2.705-707)

The poet does not focus on the male body in the throes of metamorphosis; indeed, the only body part mentioned is Battus' "lying heart" (*periura pectora*, 2.706).

> On the other hand, Aglauros' transformation is described in excruciating detail:

> …at illi,
> surgere conanti partes, quascumque sedendo
> flectimur, ignava nequeunt gravitate moveri:
> illa quidem pugnat recto se attollere trunco,
> sed genuum iunctura riget, frigusque per ungues
> labitur, et pallent amisso sanguine venae;
> utque malum late solet inmedicabile cancer
> serpere et inlaesas vitiatis addere partes,
> sic letalis hiems paulatim in pectora venit

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[368] Although such anatomical details sometimes occur in other kinds of transformations—for example, Actaeon turned into a stag by Diana (3.193-197) or the boy transformed into a lizard by Ceres (5.455-458). Even these, however, are less lengthy than many narratives of female terminal metamorphosis, and the authorial gaze does not linger on the suffering male body as it does on the female.

[369] See Davis 1969: 32 on the relationship between these two stories as tales of *indicium*.

vitalesque vias et respiramina clausit,
nec conata loqui est nec, si conata fuisset,
vocis habebat iter: saxum iam colla tenebat,
oraque duruerant, signumque exsangue sedebat;
nec lapis albus erat: sua mens infecerat illam.

…but as for her,
as she tried to raise her limbs and the joints that we bend
when sitting, she found them immobile with deathly heaviness:
indeed she fought to lift herself upright
but the joints of her knees hardened and a chill slipped
over her fingers and her veins went pale from loss of blood
and as a cancer, that cureless bane, is accustomed to slither in
everywhere and to infect the healthy parts as well as the sick,
so the deadly cold little by little came over her heart
and closed off her vital passages and her lungs.
She did not try to speak, and if she had tried
she would have found no path for her voice: rock was covering her neck
and her mouth had hardened, and she sat, a bloodless statue—
nor was the stone white: her mind had corrupted her body. (2.819-831)

The narrator lists a striking number of limbs and organs, including Aglauros' joints, torso, ligaments, fingernails, veins, chest, lungs, neck and face.[370] The lengthy catalogue and the focus on each individual petrifaction in turn slows the pace of the narrative, exposing Aglauros' body in metamorphosis to the horrified/fascinated gaze of the reader, in a way reminiscent of the extended narration of Dido's death in the *Aeneid* (see Chapter 3 above). The poet also dwells in lurid detail on Aglauros' struggles as the rock closes over her body: she is weighed down by a "sluggish heaviness" (*ignava gravitate,* 2.821) and fights to move (*pugnat,* 2.822), but is helpless.[371] The parallel forces of hardness (*riget,* 2.823), cold (*frigus,*

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[370] The cataloguing of Agalauros' body in metamorphosis again recalls an earlier catalogue: Envy had earlier infected her chest (*pectus,* 2.798), heartstrings (*praecordia,* 2.799), bones (*ossa,* 2.800), and lungs (*pulmone,* 2.801). The poet again demonstrates his interest in the physical details of the female body subjected to change—in both cases from external forces. On the physicality of Envy's infection of Aglauros, see Segal 1998: 14-15.

[371] This motif is repeated in another account of female terminal metamorphosis and metaphorical dis-memberment: the story of Anaxarete, turned into stone after spurning the love of Iphis. She too tries

2.823) and blood-loss (*pallent amisso sanguine,* 2.824) join forces to turn her into something

inhuman: "a bloodless statue" (*signum exsangue*, 2.830).[372] Like Daphne, transformed into

wood (*lignum,* 1.556), Aglauros is no longer even female.[373]

A similar contrast occurs in the paired narratives of Cyparissus and Myrrha, who are

both turned into trees in Book 10. Both are suffering from guilt, although Cyparissus' re-

morse for the accidental killing of a pet deer may appear extreme, especially in comparison

to Myrrha's guilt over seducing her father.[374] Nonetheless, Cyparissus is so grief-stricken that

he asks Apollo to allow him to mourn forever (*ut tempore lugeat omni*, 10.135). Apollo re-

sponds by turning him into a cypress tree:

> iamque per inmensos egesto sanguine fletus
> in viridem verti coeperunt membra colorem,
> et, modo qui nivea pendebant fronte capilli,
> horrida caesaries fieri sumptoque rigore
> sidereum gracili spectare cacumine caelum.
>
> And now, with his blood drained by unending tears,
> his limbs began to change their color to green
> and the hair that was just now hanging from his snowy brow
> became a bristly crest and, as it hardened,

to move (*conata…conata*, 14.755-756; cf. *conanti*, 2.820, *conata…conata,* 2.829), but cannot.

[372] See Fredericks (1977: 246-247) on Mercury's cleverness and "verbal dexterity" here: Aglauros has refused to move from her post in front of Herse's door and Mercury mocks her resolve by making her more immovable than she had ever imagined (cf. Keith 1992: 132; Barchiesi 2005 *ad* 2.817). The description of Aglauros as *signum* may also be considered part of a pattern, observed by Segal (2005: xxxii-iiivii), of "l'immagine del corpo femminile immobilizzatto," often as a statue—e.g. Andromeda and Galatea—which, in his view, "aiuta a legittimare la contemplazione erotica maschile nell'ambito artistico" (xxxvi). On the silencing of Aglauros here, see Keith 1992: 132-133.

[373] It is interesting that, even as a tree, Daphne remains feminine in Apollo's eyes: whereas she is called *lignum* by the narrator, Apollo calls her by the feminine *arbor* (1.558); cf. *eadem fidissima custos*, 1.562).

[374] See Anderson (1972 *ad* 10.86-147) on the story of Cyparissus' grief as an "obvious parody" of Orpheus' grief for Eurydice; cf. Makowski 1996: 34-36. *Contra* Hill 1992: 131, who does not view the depiction of Cyparissus as parodic, but simply as one in a chain of tales whose themes are "unorthodox love and/or excessive mourning."

faced the starry sky with its slender peak. (10.136-140)

Although more detailed than the transformation of Battus, Cyparissus' metamorphosis is nonetheless brief, stylized, and general compared to narratives of female terminal metamorphosis. His body parts are not inventoried exhaustively; rather, the focus is on his hair stiffening into the "bristly crest" (*horrida caesaries*, 10.139) of the cypress.

On the other hand, the story of Myrrha is much longer and more detailed, as is the narrative of her metamorphosis. Distraught by the outcome of her incestuous passion for her father, Myrrha wanders the world, until, trapped "between fear of death and weariness of life" (*inter mortisque metus et taedia vitae*, 10.482) she asks to remain suspended between life and death forever (10.485-487). Her wish is granted, and she is transformed into a tree:

> …nam crura loquentis
> terra supervenit, ruptosque obliqua per ungues
> porrigitur radix, longi firmamina trunci,
> ossaque robur agunt, mediaque manente medulla
> sanguis it in sucos, in magnos bracchia ramos,
> in parvos digiti, duratur cortice pellis.
> iamque gravem crescens uterum perstrinxerat arbor
> pectoraque obruerat collumque operire parabat:
> non tulit illa moram venientique obvia ligno
> subsedit mersitque suos in cortice vultus.
>
> …For as she spoke, the earth
> came over her legs and a sloping root stretched out
> over her ruptured nails—supports for a tall trunk—
> her bones turned into hardwood, and with the inner marrow unchanged,
> her blood turned into sap, her arms into large branches,
> her fingers into twigs, and her skin hardened into bark.
> The growing tree had strained over her gravid womb and
> had overwhelmed her chest and was preparing to cover her neck—
> she could bear no further delay, and sank forward into the
> approaching wood and plunged her face into the bark. (10.490-498)

Like Aglauros and Daphne, Myrrha is dissected and catalogued in her metamorphosis, broken down into a collection of parts, including legs, nails, bones, blood, arms, fingers, skin,

womb, chest, neck, and face.[375] The narrator also includes grotesque details, such as the

bursting of her nails by tree-roots (*ruptos…ungues*, 10.491) and the bark straining itself (*per-strinxerat*, 10.496) to cover her pregnant womb.[376] The grotesquery is recapitulated in the account of Adonis' birth from the myrrh-tree. She swells (*tumet*, 10.505) and is stretched (*tendit*, 10.506) by the growing child; she cannot speak to call on Lucina, but nonetheless groans "like a woman in labor" (*nitenti…similis*, 10.508).[377] The tree must crack and split open to release Adonis (*arbor agit rimas et fissa cortice*, 10.512). This violent rupture of body/bark recalls the rupture of Myrrha's nails in metamorphosis. Schmidt (1991: 69) suggests that the horrific details of Myrrha's history are mitigated by the etiological aspects, in which her tears continue to fall as myrrh (10.500-502).[378] Yet the poet appends the narrative of Adonis' birth to the etiological myth, ensuring that the reader's final view of Myrrha is of her suffering in the throes of delivery/fracture.[379] The story of Myrrha's transformation (and

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[375] As is also the case with Aglauros and Daphne, Myrrha's transformation continues the narrator's prurient interest in the physical details of her body: the incest-narrative is relentlessly physical, focusing on the fearful response of Myrrha's body to the horror she is about to commit (*poplite succiduo genua intremuere, fugitque | et color et sanguis*, 10.458-459) and lingering on the physicality of the crime with explicit and graphic vocabulary (*devotaque corpora iunxit*, 4.464; *accipit…genitor sua viscera,* 4.465; *inpia diro | semina fert utero,* 4.469-470).

[376] On the element of the horrific in Myrrha's transformation, see Richlin 1992: 165.

[377] See Theodorakopoulos (1999: 149-150) on the apparent contradiction between the loss of Myrrha's *sensus* (10.499) and her subsequent suffering (*dolores,* 10.506), though she does not discuss the distinction between physical *sensus* and mental/emotional *sensus*. In my view, it is possible for Myrrha to have lost her human consciousness but to retain the capacity for physical pain. On the narrator's emphasis on Myrrha/the myrrh tree's suffering in childbirth, see Segal 1998: 30.

[378] "Auch die Tränen, die Myrrha als Baum weint, sind nicht Zeichen ewigen Schmerzens -- nicht eine Trauende wurde verwandelt – sondern der Lösung. Myrrha wird von sich befreit, sie wird in eine neue Form erlöst."

[379] Myrrha's rupture in Adonis' birth harks back to an earlier simile, in which she is tortured by her forbidden love and is compared to a tree, felled by an ax, and swaying in both directions (10.372-374). This tree is wounded (*saucia*, 10.373), as Myrrha/the myrrh tree will be by Adonis' birth.

its aftermath) is not only more specific and anatomically detailed than that of Cyparissus, it is also more gruesome.[380]

Another significant contrast between narratives of male and of female terminal metamorphosis occurs in the poet's description of the social consequences of such transformations. Strikingly, narratives of female terminal metamorphosis tend to focus on the victims' erasure from the human community and the severing of their social and family ties, whereas narratives of male terminal metamorphosis do not.[381] For example, when the Heliades are transformed into trees (in another instance of dismemberment in metamorphosis: see 2.348-355), the only body parts left after their limbs have been consumed by bark are "their mouths, calling for their mother" (*et exstabant tantum ora vocantia matrem*, 2.355).[382] The narrator then lingers on the reaction of the horrified Clymene, who rushes helplessly from one daughter to another:

> quid faciat mater, nisi, quo trahat inpetus illam,
> huc eat atque illuc et, dum licet, oscula iungat?
> non satis est: truncis avellere corpora temptat
> et teneros manibus ramos abrumpit, at inde
> sanguineae manant tamquam de vulnere guttae.
> 'parce, precor, mater,' quaecumque est saucia, clamat,
> 'parce, precor: nostrum laceratur in arbore corpus
> iamque vale'—cortex in verba novissima venit.

What could their mother do except run here and there, wherever

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[380] For other brief and/or stylized narratives of men transformed into trees, see 10.103-105 (Attis) and 14.523-526 (an Apulian shepherd, transformed into an olive tree).

[381] As Theodorakopoulos (1999: 142) puts it, "metamorphosis is what happens to human bodies, because they are human bodies and therefore subject to violence and change" (cf. Segal 2005). I would add that the greater number and extent of female terminal metamorphoses indicates that female bodies are especially subject to this violent transformation, in a way that male bodies are not. See further below on the story of Caenis as paradigmatic for establishing female bodily vulnerability to violence.

[382] Barchiesi (2005 *ad loc.*) suggests that "la metrica accentua il *pathos* fantastica della scena con l'incontro vocalico fra tantum e ora, proprio nel punto del testo in cui la voce umana sta per essere sigillata dalla scorza dell'albero."

the urge took her, and, while it was possible, kiss her daughters?
It wasn't enough: she tried to tear their bodies from the trunks
and broke their slender branches with her hands—and
bloody drops ran from them, as from a wound.
'Mother, spare us, please!' they each cried as they were wounded,
'spare us please! It is our bodies being mangled in the tree.
And now farewell'—and the bark closed over their last words. (2.356-363)

In this episode, the narrator makes plain that mother and daughters are being separated for-
ever—Clymene's dismay at their metamorphosis is no less than her sorrow for Phaethon's
death (2.333-339). Her frantic attempts to kiss the girls one last time (*dum licet*, 2.357) and
her futile efforts to rescue them from the trees that appear to be engulfing them (2.359-360)
introduce an element of realism that adds to the *pathos* of the scene: even within the fantastic
unreality of Ovid's mythological world, Clymene reacts as any mother would to the loss of
her daughters. Their last words (*verba novissima*, 2.363) are a farewell to her as the bark
overwhelms their mouths. The emphasis in this scene is on familial loss and suffering, as
both mother and daughters grieve at their impending separation.

An even more extensive account of familial farewell is found in the tale of Dryope,
narrated by her sister Iole. Like Daphne, Dryope is a victim of Apolline lust (*vimque dei pas-
sam*, 9.332), but, unlike other women in the poem, she is not metamorphosed as a result of
rape. Instead, she appears to be unusually fortunate for a rape victim: she is married (9.333)
and has a young son (9.338). These markers of good fortune are precisely what the poet will
emphasize in his account of her transformation from wife and mother to inanimate tree. Dry-
ope unwittingly (*nescierat*, 9.349) plucks a flower that is in reality the metamorphosed Lotis,
who was transformed in order to escape rape by Priapus (*fugiens obscena Priapi*, 9.347). Sig-
nificantly, she does so only to entertain her son (*oblectamina nato*, 9.342), yet the flower

bleeds and shudders (9.344-345) and Dryope finds herself unable to move (9.349-351).[383]

Like Aglauros, she struggles against her transformation (*pugnat,* 9.351; cf. *pugnat,* 2.822) but

is trapped. The narrative includes some motifs common to tree metamorphoses,[384] but the

poet introduces a new aspect in the presence of Dryope's infant son who "felt his mother's

breasts harden" (*materna rigescere sentit | ubera,* 9.357-358) and her milk stop flowing. Iole,

the narrator of the episode, is also present, a narrative technique that allows the poet to detail

her emotional reaction to her sister's transformation from her own perspective[385]:

> spectatrix aderam fati crudelis, opemque
> non poteram tibi ferre, soror, quantumque valebam,
> crescentem truncum ramosque amplexa morabar,
> et, fateor, volui sub eodem cortice condi.
>
> I was a witness of this cruel fate, and
> I could not bring you aid, sister, however much I tried—
> I tried to delay the growing trunk and the branches by my embrace
> and, I confess, I wanted to be buried in the same wood. (9.359-362)

Like Clymene, Iole desperately attempts to intervene, but to no avail. Her desire to join Dry-

ope in metamorphosis is poignant, and again suggests the permanence of her loss. Iole is

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[383] Salzman-Mitchell (2005: 199) argues that "The dripping blood clearly symbolizes the loss of Lotis' virginity and performs, figuratively, the act of rape from which she was escaping." On the other hand, Segal (1969: 36) argues that the plucking of the flower "involves no sexual violence." Yet Salzman-Mitchell is certainly correct that flower-plucking is often a metonym for defloration (e.g. Sappho L-P 105c; Cat. 11.21-24, 62.39-47). This passage recalls Aeneas' inadvertent discovery of Polydorus' corpse (*Aen.* 3.27-30); as Fabre-Serris (1995: 86-87) points out, Dryope suffers a much worse fate for the same crime.

[384] For example, the "clinging" of feet transformed into roots (cf. 1.551 of Daphne, 2.349 of Lampetie, 4.269 of Clytie) and the transformation of hair into leaves (cf. 1.449 of Daphne, 1.350-351 of the Heliades, 10.38-39 of Cyparissus).

[385] On Iole as witness and the female gaze, see Salzman-Mitchell 2005: 197-198. As Fabre-Serris (1995: 86) puts it, the focalization of the story through Iole "est construit de façon à susciter deux sentiments: l'indignation et la compassion."

joined by Dryope's husband and father, who arrive in time to say farewell. Again, like Cly-

mene, Dryope's family kiss and embrace the wood (9.365-366). As Hardie (2002: 252) notes,

the verb used for their embrace (*haerent*, 9.366) is the same used of Daphne's feet clinging to

the earth in the first sign of her metamorphosis (*haeserunt*, 9.351). In Dryope's last moments,

her family "striv[es] to achieve fusion with the object of the beloved" (Hardie 2002: 252), yet

the force of transformation is inexorable.[386]

Only Dryope's face remains human (9.367), and this allows for an extensive speech

of farewell. She first insists on her innocence (9.371-374),[387] but then turns to focus on the

loss of her family. She gives her husband instructions on the care of their son and asks that

they bring him to play under her tree (9.376-377).[388] Like the Heliades, she is able to articu-

late her goodbyes (9.382) and her last request is that her son be lifted up for a final kiss

(9.385-387). She is finally cut off by the bark creeping (*serpit,* 9.389) over her and covering

her "dying eyes" (*morientia lumina*, 9.391). The story causes both Iole and her auditor, Alc-

mene, to weep (9.395-396). The poet again focuses on a woman's tragic loss of her family

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[386] As in so many of Ovid's narratives of metamorphosis, this force is impersonal and indeterminate. The refusal to identify a clear agent of transformation further hints that the vulnerability to change is somehow inherent in the female body and it is, perhaps, significant that the Heliades' transformation (discussed above) is similarly unmotivated.

[387] Segal (1969: 38) describes this as "perhaps the most arbitrary of the metamorphoses of an 'inno-cent'"; cf. Fabre-Serris 1995: 86-87. As Kenney (2011 *ad* 9.371-391) points out, Dryope's explicit condemnation of the injustice of her punishment (*sine crimine poenam,* 9.372) is unusual: "Il carat-tere arbitrario dell'operato del fato e di ciò che passa per giustizia divina è normalmente dato per scontato nel poema." Cf. Solodow (1988: 169 n. 22) on the usually neutral terminology for metamor-phosis in the poem, in contrast to the more candid use of *poema* here.

[388] Her other requests—that her family protect her from the pruning-hook and the flock (9.383-384)—appear humorous to some critics (e.g Segal 1998: 29; Fantham 2004: 68-69), but as Dryope's own ex-perience with Lotis suggests, she will still be subject to pain and injury in her new form.

through metamorphosis, but reverses the perspective of the Heliades: in this case, the mother is transformed before her child.

Even the brief narrative of the transformation of the daughters of Cinyras, which occupies the last corner of Arachne's tapestry, focuses on familial loss and separation. Cinyras is shown "embracing the temple-steps, his daughter's bodies" (*gradus templi, natarum membra suarum | amplectens*, 6.99-100) and "lies weeping on the stone" (*saxoque iacens lacrimare*, 6.100).[389] In this image, as in the stories of the Heliades and Dryope, the poet dwells on the victims' relationships with their families, to whom they are utterly lost in their metamorphoses. Significantly, there are no such descriptions of familial farewells in the narratives of male terminal metamorphoses.[390] By this contrast the poet suggests the vulnerability of women to changes that forcibly remove them from their families and communities, and he connects this change to bodily transformation. This is a significant inversion of a pattern in Greek myth in which women themselves enact the destruction of their families—as when Clytemnestra, Deianeira, and the Danaids kill their husbands or when Medea, Agave, and Procne kill their children. Here, Ovid demonstrates that women cling to their family ties even in metamorphosis, but they are torn from their loved ones by these devastating transformations. James (2016) has connected the confluence of rape and metamorphosis in the poem to the ruination, the "state of social and personal uselessness in her community" suffered by ancient rape victims.[391] These narratives of terminal metamorphosis further emphasize

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[389] Feldherr (2010: 303, n. 28) sees this scene as "an exact mirror image" of Niobe's weeping over her children's corpses later in the book.

[390] The closest example is the mutual farewell of Baucis and Philemon as they are transformed into trees (*vale…o coniunx dixere simul*, 8.717-718).

[391] This state of ruination is dramatized in the tales of Leucothoe (buried alive by her father for being

woman's potential for social erasure. The female body, in Ovid's reconsideration of Greek myth, is not a locus only for physical change,[392] but for social obliteration, inflicted against a woman's will and despite her desperate attempts to preserve her family ties.

Reconceiving the Carnographic

I turn now to Ovid's narratives of female deaths to demonstrate how the poet reverses the patterns of reward and punishment found in earlier epic. In the first place, the poet rewrites stories of female transgression in order to increase sympathy for the transgressors. Infamous characters from Greek mythology are given a more balanced portrayal than in earlier sources, and the poet refrains from describing their deaths in carnographic detail. In the second place, the poet displaces carnographic imagery from female bodies onto males: in narratives of "paired" violence, in which men and women die together, the male victim tends to receive the bloodier death. This gendered pattern is the opposite of that found in narratives of terminal metamorphosis, and it also transposes the paradigm of violence in the *Aeneid*, where men's deaths are elided or accelerated and women's are narrated in gruesome detail. By refusing to punish women with carnographic death, the poet upends, and therefore invites a reconsideration of, the deployment of death in earlier epic.

raped by Helios: 4.237-240) and Perimele (thrown off a cliff by her father for being raped by Achelous; she is then transformed by her rapist into an island: 8.592-610). On these stories, see further below.

[392] Cf. note 35 above; we might think of Mercury's pronouncement "a variable and ever-changing thing is woman" (*varium et mutabile semper | femina. Aen.* 4.569-570).

The first woman to die in the poem is Coronis, a notoriously "bad" woman: beloved by Apollo and pregnant with his child, she slept with another man and is killed in punishment. Pindar's version, the most extensive surviving account prior to Ovid's,[393] leaves no doubt of the narrator's moral judgment: Coronis "slighted" (ἀποφλαυρίξαισα, *Pyth.* 3.13) Apollo "in the error of her mind" (ἀμπλακίαισι φρενῶν, *Pyth.* 3.14) and agreed to "another marriage" (ἄλλον…γάμον, *Pyth.* 3.14). This formulation casts Coronis as an unfaithful wife and Apollo as a wronged husband, though of course mortal/immortal sexual relationships are typically brief liaisons.[394] The speaker emphasizes that Coronis was not yet legitimately married to her lover,[395] suggesting that she is doubly transgressive in her exercise of sexual agency. Her action is described as an "impious deception" (ἄθεμιν…δόλον, *Pyth.* 3.32) and she herself as a member of "a most foolish tribe among men" (φῦλον ἐν ἀνθρώποισι ματαιότατον, *Pyth.* 3.21). At every step, the Pindaric speaker emphasizes Coronis' wrongdoing and guilt.

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[393] There is a brief account in Apollodorus (3.118-120); other versions survive only in fragments (the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*: fr. 59-60 M-W; Callimachus' *Hecale*: fr. 260 Pf. = fr. 74 Hollis; Pherecydes F 3a = Schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 3.59). The Hesiodic and Callimachean versions apparently included the classic aetiology of the raven's color, while Pindar omits the raven in order to focus on Apollo's divine omniscience as "watcher" (σκοπόν, *Pyth.* 3.27); see further below. On variations among the sources for the Coronis-myth, see West 1985: 69; Hollis 1990: 250-251. Callimachus is usually considered Ovid's major source (Hollis 1990 *ad* 74.14; Keith 1992: 43-45; Tissol 1997: 158-162; Gildenhard and Zissos 2004; Barchiesi 2005 *ad* 531-835) but see Ziogas 2013: 113-129 on Ovid's use of the Hesiodic version.

[394] Cf. Park (2009: 96-97, n. 164): "Of course Apollo, as a god, never formally marries Koronis, but the possessive authority he exercises over her represents the closest approximation to marriage that can occur between a god and a mortal."

[395] οὐδ᾽ ἔμειν᾽ ἐλθεῖν τράπεζαν νυμφίαν, *Pyth.* 3.16. Pindar seems to have altered an earlier version of this myth that appeared in the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women,* where Coronis did indeed marry Ischys. In fact, Pindar reverses the emphasis of the *Ehoiai,* which stresses Ischys' culpability by making him the subject of an active verb: Ἴσχυς γῆμε Κόρωνιν (fr. 60 M-W). As Park (2009: 97) puts it, the Pindaric speaker "plays down [Ischys'] agency in the affair" in order to transfer blame to Coronis.

While Ovid's narrator, like Pindar's, characterizes Coronis' betrayal as adultery (*adulterium,* 2.545) and wrongdoing (*culpam,* 2.546), there is no general moralizing commentary as in the Pindaric version. The poet also departs from Pindar in painting Apollo, yet again, as a ridiculous figure. When he hears of Coronis' crime, "the laurel slipped off his head" (*laurea delapsa est,* 2.600).[396] This is the first reference to the laurel since Daphne's transformation in the previous book, and may remind the reader of the buffoonish figure Apollo cut there as well.[397] Moreover, Ovid's Apollo is not the "watcher" (σκοπόν, *Pyth.* 3.27) of *Pythian* 3, who perceived Coronis' crime thanks to his "all-knowing mind" (πάντα ἰσάντι νόῳ, *Pyth*. 3.29). Instead, as in the Hesiodic version, Apollo is informed by the raven and so appears as a typical cuckold, always the last to know. Unlike Pindar's Apollo, whom "neither god nor mortal deceives in either deeds or designs" (κλέπτει τέ νιν | οὐ θεὸς οὐ βροτὸς ἔργοις οὔτε βουλαῖς, *Pyth.* 3.29-30), Ovid's Apollo is very much a dupe.

Apollo responds to the news of Coronis' betrayal with "swelling anger" (*tumida…ira,* 2.602) and immediately turns his bow against "the heart so often joined with his own" (*illa suo totiens cum pectore iuncta...pectora,* 2.604-605). Ovid again contradicts the Pindaric version, in which Coronis is struck down by Artemis (τόξοισιν ὕπ᾽ Ἀρτέμιδος, *Pyth.* 3.10) rather than Apollo and so increases the *pathos* of the situation. Coronis is helpless in the face of the god's "inescapable weapon" (*indevitato…telo,* 2.605). The adjective, an apparent Ovidian coinage and a *hapax legomenon*, draws attention to the woman's defenselessness in contrast

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[396] He also drops his lyre (*deo plectrumque…excidit*, 2.601-602). Kenney (2002: 47) suggests that the phrasing is designed to draw attention to "the immediate substitution in Apollo's hand of the death-dealing bow for the pleasure-giving lyre."

[397] On the humorous characterization of Apollo in this passage, see e.g. Feeney 1991: 236; Keith 1992: 54; Miller 1999: 413, Barchiesi 2005 *ad loc.*

with the merciless *vis* of the god.[398] Coronis dies a violent death, but her final speech is both

pathetic and powerful:

> icta dedit gemitum tractoque a corpore ferro
> candida puniceo perfudit membra cruore
> et dixit: 'potui poenas tibi, Phoebe, dedisse,
> sed peperisse prius; duo nunc moriemur in una.'
> hactenus, et pariter vitam cum sanguine fudit;
> corpus inane animae frigus letale secutum est.

> Stricken, she groaned and, with the spear-point drawn from her body,
> her white limbs were bathed in crimson blood.
> And she said: "I could have paid the penalty to you, Phoebus,
> after giving birth; now two will die in one."
> Thus far, and she poured out her life along with her blood;
> her body, void of its spirit, followed the deadly cold. (2.606-611)

Coronis' death is bloody, but the narrator does not linger on her death throes as Virgil did in

the death-narratives of Dido and Camilla. The details of drawing out the weapon in particular

recalls Camilla,[399] but Vergil's narrative is more detailed:

> illa manu moriens telum trahit, ossa sed inter
> ferreus ad costas alto stat vulnere mucro.

> Dying, she drew the weapon out with her hand, but the iron spear-point
> stayed fixed between her rib-bones in the deep wound. (*Aen.* 11.816-817)

As discussed in Chapter 3, this gruesome close-up exemplifies Vergil's use of "carno-

graphic" imagery in his narratives of transgressive female deaths. Ovid, on the other hand,

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[398] Cf. the *inevitabile fulmen* (3.301) with which Zeus strikes Semele and the *non evitabile telum* of Apollo (6.234). As Keith (1992: 54) points out, "the inevitable finality of Coronis' death is movingly evoked" by the spondaic adjective. Barchiesi (2005 *ad* 2.605) points out that the weapon is *indevitato* both for Coronis and her killer: neither can avoid its consequences.

[399] It occurs also of Pyramus (4.120) and one of the Niobids (6.252-253). Other verbal echoes link the narratives of Coronis and Camilla: the word *hactenus* (*Aen.* 11.823; *Met.* 2.610) and the emphasis on the warm body growing cold in death (*frigida leto*, *Aen.* 11.818; cf. *frigus letale*, *Met.* 2.611). The phrase *pariter vitam cum sanguine fudit* evokes Dido: "I pour out this last speech along with my blood" (*vocem extreman cum sanguine fundo, Aen.* 4.621).

treats the same material in a brief ablative absolute (*tractoque a corpore ferro*, 2.606) and turns to the most sympathetic element of his Coronis-narrative: her touching speech on behalf of her child.

Ovid's Coronis acknowledges her fault, saying "I could have paid the penalty" (*potui poenas…dedisse*, 2.608), but "gently and powerfully rebukes"[400] Apollo for killing his innocent child. As she points out, "now two will die in one" (*duo nunc moriemur in una*, 2.609).[401] Here, Ovid again offers an alternative to the Pindaric version, in which Coronis does not speak at all and concern for the child is attributed only to Apollo (*Pyth.* 3.40-42).[402] Far from Pindar's silent Coronis, Ovid's version is, as Ziogas (2013: 126) has noted, an effective speaker: she successfully changes Apollo's mind and persuades him to rescue his

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[400] Anderson 1997 *ad loc.*

[401] This line echoes poem 2.13 of Ovid's *Amores*, in which the *amator* begs for the life of his beloved after an abortion, concluding "spare two in one!" (*et in una parce duobus, Am.* 2.13.15). This allusion may indicate that Apollo's execution of Coronis is as unnatural as Corinna's abortion attempt, threatening the life of both the guilty mother and the innocent fetus. Cf. Barchiesi 2005 *ad* 607-610.

[402] As Ziogas (2013: 126) points out, Hesiodic heroines do not speak in any of the extent fragments of the *Catalogue*, so Ovid is likely also breaking with his Hesiodic material here; as he concludes, "the voice of the Ovidian Coronis resonates vigorously as she breaks the poetic tradition along with her silence."

child.[403] Immediately after this speech and Coronis' death, Apollo regrets his "cruel punishment" (*paenitet…poenae crudelis*, 2.612)[404]; the adjective, focalized both through the narrator and the god,[405] condemns Apollo's mercilessness. He attempts to revive Coronis, cradling her lifeless body (*conlapsamque fovet*, 2.617),[406] and applying his medicinal skills (*medicas…artes*, 2.618) but too late (*seraque ope,* 2.617; cf. *sero,* 2.612).[407] Here Ovid may again be offering a corrective to Pindar's version, in which Coronis descends to Hades "through the skills of Apollo" (τέχναις Ἀπόλλωνος, *Pyth.* 3.11). While Pindar's Apollo uses his skill only to destroy Coronis, Ovid's uses his to save her.

Realizing that his attempts are in vain (*frustra temptata…vidit*, 2.619-620), Apollo mourns for Coronis like a heifer watching a calf sacrificed (2.623-625).[408] This image, comparing the groaning male deity to a bellowing cow, contributes to the farcical portrait of the

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[403] Keith (1992) has argued that the stories of 2.531-835 are all concerned with the appropriate use of speech; though she does not discuss Coronis' last words, they too may be seen as part of this general meditation on the efficacy of language. As Ziogas (2013: 126) points out, Coronis' use of speech "contrasts both with the crow's failure to dissuade the raven and the raven's failure to win Apollo's favor." As he concludes, "Ovid makes the brief speech of the dying Coronis the force which drives the rest of the narrative."

[404] On Apollo's *paenitentia* in this passage, see Fulkerson (2006: 391-393); she emphasizes Apollo's inability to take responsibility for his actions and his vindictive punishment of the messenger for his own crime.

[405] Cf. Miller 1999: 414.

[406] The language here again evokes Dido, who in death also collapses (*conlapsam, Aen.* 4.664; in the same metrical position as Ovid's *conlapsam*) and is similarly embraced by her sister (*fovebat, Aen.* 4.686).

[407] On the emphasis on Apollo's ineffectiveness in this passage, see Miller (1999: 415); in addition to the language of *sero/sera,* cf. *inaniter* (4.618) and *frustra*, 4.619). Barchiesi (2005 *ad* 2.617-618) points out that "il fallimento delle arti mediche complete in negative la ricapitolazione degli attribute di Apollo" in the story, including the laurel, the lyre, and the bow. As von Glinski (2012: 29) argues, this failure "mock[s] his divine identity" as god of healing; see below on a similar trope in the story of Leucothoe where Sol, the god who sees everything (*omnia qui video,* 4.227) fails to see her stretching her hands to him (4.238) until it is too late to save her.

[408] See von Glinski (2012: 69-74) on the multi-layered intricacy of this simile "that makes possible a

god,[409] but also puts Coronis in the place of the sacrificial offering, the victim of an implacable divinity.[410] Furthermore, while the heifer is merely watching (*spectante iuvenca*, 2.623), Apollo is directly responsible for Coronis' fate.[411] The god prepares Coronis' pyre himself, pouring out "thankless incense" (*ingratos…odores,* 2.626) and performing "unrighteous rites" (*iniusta iusta,* 2.627). The adjectives introduce a narrative perspective that encourages the reader to sympathize with Coronis and indicates that her punishment did not fit her crime. Finally, Apollo decides to rescue Aesculapius from his mother's womb: as the narrator says, "Phoebus did not endure for his own seed to perish in those same ashes" (*non tulit in cineres labi sua Phoebus eosdem | semina,* 2.628-629). The phrase *non tulit…labi* echoes Pindar's οὐκέτι | τλάσομαι… ὀλέσσαι, *Pyth.* 3.40-41),[412] yet Ovid has transformed a first-person speech into a third-person report, further dissociating Apollo from responsibility for the rescue of Aesculapius. Ovid thus rewrites the Pindaric Coronis, changing the thrust of the story from the just punishment of impiety and sexual transgression into a much more sympathetic portrait. Coronis' death is unjust (*iniusta,* 2.627) and comes at the hands of a cruel god (cf. *poenae crudelis,* 2.612) who misuses his power. The irony is that even Apollo realizes that he

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multiplicity of perspectives, animal, human, and divine" (70).

[409] *Contra* Galinsky (1975: 144), who argues that the god's remorse "leaves nothing to be desired in seriousness."

[410] Cf. Barchiesi (2005 *ad* 2.623-625). Von Glinski (2012: 74) argues that this simile "reinforces…the god's connectedness to the human species in his tragic error" (cf. Miller 1999: 413 on Apollo's "humanity" in this passage), but in my view it rather ironizes Apollo's perspective and emphasizes the gulf between the mortal victim and the immortal god, who can never really appreciate Coronis' suffering. Note, for example, the poet's interjection that immortal beings cannot cry: 2.621-622).

[411] Cf. Anderson 1997 *ad loc.*; von Glinski 2012: 71.

[412] The use of *semina* also echoes Pindar's use of σπέρμα, both for the "pure seed of the god" (σπέρμα θεοῦ καθαρόν, *Pyth.* 3.15) and the destructive seed of fire (πῦρ ἐξ ἑνὸς | σπέρματος, *Pyth.* 3.36-37), to which Coronis is compared.

has gone too far—but his "inescapable weapon" (*indevitato…telo,* 2.605) has already done its work. Ovid again portrays the female body at risk from divine male passion, but in this case the passion is not sexual but wrathful (*tumida…ira,* 2.602) and the woman is not raped or transformed, but killed.

The story of Chione contains many of the same motifs of the Coronis-narrative, and also borrows some elements from the story of Niobe.[413] Chione is also, like Callisto, victimized by three different gods.[414] Being "most richly endowed with beauty" (*dotatissima forma,* 11.301), she attracts the attention of both Mercury and Apollo in another instance of near-instantaneous male lust (*videre hanc partier,* 2.305). Chione is only fourteen (11.302),[415] and the gods' means of accomplishing their rape of this child are particularly brutal. Mercury puts Chione to sleep with his wand, with the result that "she lies prostrate from his powerful touch" (*tactu iacet illa potenti,* 11.308). The word order of this phrase, with *iacet illa* "trapped" between the noun and adjective, vividly suggests the contrast between vulnerable girl and powerful god. Asleep and helpless, Chione "suffered the god's rape" (*vimque dei patitur,* 11.309). Apollo then approaches her in the guise of an old nurse (11.310), a tactic

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[413] Like Coronis, Chione offends one of the children of Leto and is stuck down by her arrow (we might also think of the Phoenician nurse in the *Odyssey*; see Chapter 2 above). Like Niobe, her punishment is a result of inappropriate boasting, but in the case of Niobe, vengeance is displaced from the actual offender onto her innocent children (see further below on the Niobids).

[414] Callisto is raped by Jupiter, banished by Diana, and metamorphosed by Juno (2.417-495). Nor does her mistreatment end there—after Jupiter transports Callisto and her son to the heavens as constellations, Juno intervenes to prevent her from setting and being "bathed in pure water" (*ne puro tinguatur in aequore paelex,* 2.530). Cf. Johnson 1994 on Callisto's victimization by multiple gods.

[415] Despite her age, Chione already has "a thousand suitors" (*mille procos habuit,* 11.302), owing to her beauty. The motif of "many suitors" is a prominent theme in narratives of rape or attempted rape, including those of Daphne (1.478), Cornix (2.579), Medusa (4.795), Deianeira (9.10), and Caenis (12.192); cf. Bömer 1980 *ad* 11.301-302, Tissol 1997: 112-113. Griffin (1997: *ad* 11.302) points out that Chione's age is expressed as *bis septem…annis* and, as *bis* often appeared in the notation of age on tombstones, "This description of Chione has something of the pathos of an inscription on a grave."

that recalls Helios' rape of Leucothoe in disguise as her own mother (2.219; see further below). Apollo overcomes Chione with equal ease, as is suggested by the brief and matter-of-fact half-line describing the rape (*praereptaque gaudia sumit,* 11.310). The narrative emphasizes the vulnerability of the female body: Chione is assaulted twice in the same day by two different men, whose divine powers give them a variety of means to access to her. She has no means of resistance in either situation. As is often the case in the poem (cf. note 17 above), the female is endangered by her own body/beauty, which in this case invites the gaze of two divine rapists.[416]

The narrator (Chione's uncle, Ceyx) suggests that she should have gained some benefit (*quid…prodest,* 11.318-320) for having attracted and born children to two gods. Yet Chione instead becomes overconfident and, like Niobe, aggrandizes herself at the expense of a divinity—in this case, Diana, whose beauty she criticizes in comparison to her own (11.321-322). Diana—like Apollo in the story of Coronis—is predictably enraged (*ira ferox mota est,* 11.323) and turns her bow against Chione, piercing her "deserving tongue" (*meritam…linguam,* 11.325). Diana successfully silences Chione's bragging (*lingua tacet,* 11.326), although she nonetheless struggles to speak (*conantemque loqui,* 11.327).[417] The phrase echoes the narrative of Philomela, whose tongue is cut out by her rapist "still struggling to speak" (*luctantemque loqui*, 6.556, in the same metrical position as *conantemque loqui*). The allusion to Philomela—an innocent girl brutalized by a ruthless tyrant (*tyrannus*: 6.436, 449,

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[416] On Chione's victimization here, cf. Segal 1998: 37.

[417] As in other narratives, the poet emphasizes the capacity of metamorphosis to silence its victims. This story also recalls the narrative of Lala/Lara in the *Fasti*, in which the talkative nymph is silenced by Jupiter for revealing his plans for rape: the god is enraged and "snatches away the tongue that she had used immodestly" (*quaque est non usa modeste | eripit huic linguam*, *Fast.* 2.607-608).

581)—undermines a simplistic reading of Chione as *merita*.[418] Chione may have bragged un-

wisely, but does she really deserve death? What responsibility do the gods who raped her

bear for her overconfidence?

Like Coronis, Chione loses her life in a welter of blood (*cum sanguine vita reliquit*,

11.327; cf. *et pariter vitam cum sanguine fudit*, 2.610), but again, the death-narrative is brief

and does not dwell on the carnographic spectacle of the dying female body. Ceyx has implied

that Chione invited her fate, but his portrait of his brother's reaction highlights the cruelty of

the gods who mete out death in punishment for minor slights:

> quam miser amplexans ego tum patriumque dolorem
> corde tuli fratrique pio solacia dixi,
> quae pater haut aliter quam cautes murmura ponti
> accipit et natam delamentatur ademptam;
> ut vero ardentem vidit, quater impetus illi
> in medios fuit ire rogos, quater inde repulsus…
>
> Embracing her in sorrow, I then shared her father's grief
> in my heart and I spoke words of comfort to my pious brother,
> but he hard them no more than a cliff hears the murmurs
> of the sea and bewailed the daughter stolen from him;
> indeed, as he saw her burning, he tried four times to
> hurl himself on the pyre and, four times was driven back… (11.328-333)

Ceyx paints a picture of family tragedy reminiscent of the heartbroken familial farewells fol-

lowing terminal metamorphoses discussed above. The aggregation of words for grief (*miser,*

dolorem: 11.128; *delamentatur*, an Ovidian coinage: 11.131) suggests the depth of both

brothers' emotion. Daedalion—previously described as "harsh and ferocious in war and well-

prepared for violence" (*acer erat belloque ferox ad vimque paratus*, 6.294)—is now called

pius (11.329). This transformation demonstrates that even a brutal figure can be devastated

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[418] Compare the contradictory viewpoints of Dido in *Aeneid* 4: she believes she deserves death
(*merita*, 4.547) but Juno's intervention suggests that she does not *(merita nec morte*, 4.696). See
Chapter 3 above.

by the loss of a child. Chione was "stolen" from him (*ademptam,* 11.331), language that hints at the injustice and malice of the gods' actions. Daedalion's maddened rush to join his daughter on her pyre is a poignant demonstration of the depth of his grief.

Prevented from suicide, Daedalion rushes off like a bull maddened by a hornet's sting (11.334). The simile again evokes the death of Coronis and the narrator's comparison of Apollo to a cow watching a calf slaughtered (*spectante iuvenca*, 2.623). The repeated allusions to Coronis make her and Chione a pair: both commit crimes against a god, but are punished with careless cruelty, far beyond their deserts. Impelled by his death wish (*cupidine leti,* 11.338), Daedalion attempts to hurl himself from the peak of Mount Parnassus, but Apollo pities him (*miseratus Apollo*, 11.339) and transforms him into a hawk. It is a bitter irony that Apollo intercedes to save Chione's father, but allows her, the mother of his son, to die without interference. Chione, despite her hubris, emerges as a pitiable figure. She is the only woman in the poem raped by two gods, and the only one raped while asleep; both circumstances suggest the vulnerability of the female body to a ruthless male sexual impulse. Ceyx makes clear that Chione's extreme vanity was caused by the *gloria* (11.320) of "having pleased two gods" (*dis placuisse duobus*, 11.318). Her twofold rape leads to her death at the hands of Diana—but neither of her rapists intervenes to save her.

Althaea, another transgressive woman, is also re-written by Ovid as a more sympathetic character. Meleager, her son, has killed his uncles in an argument over the awarding of the spoils of the Calydonian boar. The span of his life is tied by the Fates to a brand of wood (8.454-455),[419] and Althaea, when she discovers Meleager has killed her brothers, throws

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[419] As Segal (2002: 7) notes, the detail of Althaea's original rescue of the brand from the fire at Meleager's birth (8.504-505), which is not included in other versions of the tale, "makes the magical talisman a symbolical extension of…maternal love." Cf. Segal 1999: 325-326.

this "fatal wood" (*lignum fatale,* 8.479) into the fire, murdering her own son. In Aeschylus'

Choephoroi, Althaea is adduced as an example of "the shameless passions of hard-hearted

women" (καὶ γυναικῶν φρεσὶν τλαμόνων καὶ | παντόλμους ἔρωτας, *Choe.* 596-597) and

called a "wretched, child-destroying woman" (ἁ παιδολυμὰς τάλαινα, *Choe.* 604-605).[420] Yet

Ovid dramatizes Althaea's desperate dilemma, as she is trapped between her love for her

brothers and her love for her son. She repeatedly attempts to burn the brand and then checks

herself (*tum conata quater…coepta quater tenuit*, 8.461-462)[421] and is compared to a boat

being tossed in two directions by the wind and the tide (8.471-472).[422] Segal (1999: 320)

points out that the emphasis placed on Althaea's inner conflict contrasts sharply with the ver-

sions of Homer (*Il.* 9.529-599) and Bacchylides (5.68-154), which evince no interest in un-

tangling Althaea's motives. The narrator's sensitive treatment of her internal debate is highly

sympathetic by comparison.

Althaea's conflict is between two loves, two relationships, two identities: as the nar-

rator puts it, "mother and sister were battling" (*pugnat materque sororque*, 8.463).[423] Althaea

feels compelled "to sooth the shades of kindred blood with blood" (*consanguineas ut san-

guine leniat umbras*, 8.476); the repetition of *sanguis* here vividly suggests the close ties she

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[420] Cf. *Il.* 9.572; Bacch. 5.136-139.

[421] Cf. Daedalion's fourfold attempt to hurl himself onto the fire (*quater…quater*, 11.332-333). As Hollis (1970 *ad loc.*) points out, this is a variation on the usual motif of three attempts.

[422] Althaea's internal debate is one of a number of desperate monologues from women torn over is-sues of family (e.g. Medea: 7.11-71, Scylla 8.44-80, Byblis 9.487-516, and Myrrha 10.320-355). Male characters do not tend to debate or reflect on their choices in this manner. On this pattern, see e.g. Heinze [1919] 1960: 389-401; Solodow 1988: 19; Tissol 1997: 152; Hershkowitz 1998: 165; Curley 2013: 136-137; 148-149.

[423] Procne's conflict is similarly presented as a choice between motherhood and sisterhood (*quam vocat hic matrem, cur non vocat illa sororem*, 8.633).

feels to her natal family. "Pious in her impiety" (*inpietate pia est,* 8.477),[424] she is caught in a

double bind: *pietas* towards one branch of her family means *inpietas* towards another.[425] As

she herself says, "I both avenge and I commit a *nefas*" (*ulciscor facioque nefas*, 8.483).[426]

This set of paradoxes vividly demonstrates the impossibility of Althaea's situation. She re-

peatedly changes her mind, saying "I both want to and cannot" (*et cupio et nequeo*, 8.506),

but at the climax of her internal monologue she is confronted, as Hardie (2002: 243) notes,

with a conflict between *imago* (8.507) and *nomina* (8.508):

> … modo vulnera fratrum
> ante oculos mihi sunt et tantae caedis imago,
> nunc animum pietas maternaque nomina frangunt.
>
> …Now before my very eyes
> are the wounds of my brothers and the image of that terrible slaughter,
> now *pietas* and the name of "mother" break my heart. (11.506-508)

Imago proves more powerful than *nomina* and "the vivid images of her dead brothers crowd

out the mere names that appear as advocates for her son" (Hardie 2002: 243).[427] Althaea de-

cides for her brothers with an expressive *me miseram* (8.509) and throws the brand into the

fire.

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[424] See Gildenhard and Zissos (1999: 170) on Althaea's "inability to establish viable patterns of se-
mantic differentiation," as expressed in the frequent use of paradox in the speech; cf. Pavlock 2009:
74.

[425] Her situation is therefore parallel to, for example, Orestes', who must kill his mother in order to
avenge his brother. It is perhaps ironic that Althaea is presented as a negative *exemplum* in the
Choephoroi, a play whose hero carries out a similar mission. Within the *Metamorphoses*, Alcmaeon
offers another close parallel: he kills his mother to avenge his father and is therefore "pious and
wicked in the same deed" (*facto pius et sceleratus eodem,* 9.408).

[426] Cf. *nefando…ferro* (8.439-440) of Meleager's murder of his uncles.

[427] Yet as Anderson (1963b: 20) points out, it will prove "impossible for Althaea to alter the name of
mother," as she will die under that name (*de matre,* 8.531).

Meleager dies "an ignoble, bloodless death" (*ignavo…et sine sanguine leto,* 8.518)—the death that, his mother feels, he deserves (*merito…tuo*, 8.503). As Segal (1999: 323) puts it, he "is thus alienated from his heroic identity": Bacchylides' Meleager is overcome by the burning brand in the midst of battle (5.144-148), but Ovid's is simply "away and unknowing" (*inscius et absens,* 8.515).[428] When the brand catches fire, the hero "feels his innards scorching" (*torreri viscera sentit*, 8.516),[429] echoing Althaea's wish that her own *viscera,* the child born from her womb, should also burn in her brother's funeral pyre (8.478). Althaea herself completes the cycle by plunging a sword into her own innards (*acto per viscera ferro*, 8.532) to expiate her crime and avenge her son. The "dread hand" (*manu dira,* 8.479) that threw the brand into the field is aware of its guilt (*manus diri…conscia fati*, 8.531) and she therefore "pays the penalty to herself" (*sibi…exegit poenas*, 8.531-532). She thus receives the heroic, manly death explicitly denied to Meleager, but acts specifically as a mother (*de matre,* 8.531) and drives the sword into the maternal body that she had earlier equated with her son (*rogus iste cremet mea viscera,* 8.478).

Yet, although Althaea is an infamously transgressive woman, the poet does not linger on her death, or describe it in carnographic detail; rather it is Meleager whose pain is emphasized (*dolores,* 8.517; *dolor,* 8.522). The treatment of Althaea's death is comparatively brief (two lines, as opposed to ten for Meleager) and matter-of-fact. The poet overturns the gen-

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[428] Cf. Segal 1999: 323 on the "mood of passivity" conveyed by the adjectives. As he continues, "What for Bacchylides is the high point of pathos as the hero feels his life ebbing away at the climax of martial success is here reduced to puzzlement by a hero oddly detached from his own death" (*ibid*.).

[429] This description echoes the symptoms of those suffering from the Theban plague (*viscera torrentur primo,* 7.554).

dered pattern of death found in earlier epic, as he reverses the gendered patterns of epic mas-

culinity throughout this episode.[430] It is likely that in previous versions of the story, Althaea

committed suicide by hanging,[431] so Ovid has altered the received version to emphasize the

contrast between Meleager's *ignavus* death and Althaea's heroic suicide.[432] Further, the nar-

rator increases sympathy for Althaea through her own acknowledgement and expiation of

wrongdoing. Rather than a paradigmatic narrative of black and white, right and wrong, the

poet offers shades of grey.

Other narratives of female death reverse the paradigms of violence in earlier epic by

gendering carnographic death as male rather than female. This pattern is common in tales of

suicide for love: in these narratives, women carry out their deaths by the traditionally "mas-

culine" means of the sword rather than the hanging associated with tragic women. These

women recall Vergil's Dido (and indeed she appears among those who died for love in Ver-

gil's underworld [6.442-451]), yet Ovid does not portray them suffering a lingering or carno-

graphic death that would punish them for their misplaced sexuality. Instead, their suicides are

narrated briefly and matter-of-factly, while the poet emphasizes instead their lost love and the

heroic bravery that impels them to follow their beloveds in death. Carnographic violence, on

the other hand, is inflicted on the male victims, and the poet inverts the Vergilian pattern in

which male death is elided or aestheticized while female death is treated as spectacle.

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[430] On epic masculinity in the Meleager episode, see Keith (1999: 223-230). It is perhaps ironic that Althaea's brothers are killed for their attempt "to reduce female identity to objecthood" (Keith 1999: 230), while she, in her determination to avenge them, reaches such heights of female subjecthood.

[431] As it appears from the surviving examples of Apollodorus (1.8.3) and Diodorus (4.34.71); cf. Bömer 1977 *ad* 9.531-532, Segal 1999: 328, Kenney 2011 *ad* 9.531-532.

[432] On death by hanging as traditionally "feminine" (and shameful) in comparison to "masculine" death by the sword, see Loraux 1987: 7-30; 1995: 88-115. Cf. the discussions of the hanging of the Ithacan maids and the suicide of Amata, in chapters 2 and 3.

For example, Pyramus and Thisbe, a Babylonian Romeo and Juliet, both kill them-selves for love, but the poet paints a nuanced and sensitive picture of Thisbe's death. The star-crossed lovers plan to meet and escape their families together—in other words, Thisbe intends to exercise sexual choice against the will of her father, who should be the sole arbiter of her sexual destiny. Yet Ovid does not draw upon any of the motifs common to female sex-ual transgression in Homer and Vergil; instead, his narrative is suggestive of elegiac rather than epic love, and it is not parents that will be tricked, but the guards that often thwart the lovers of elegy (*fallere custodes,* 4.85).[433]

After Thisbe's departure from her house, the narrative follows a predictable pattern of mischance and misunderstanding.[434] She is put to flight by a lion before Pyramus' arrival, but leaves behind her cloak, which the beast tears with his bloody jaws. Pyramus, discovering the blood-stained cloth, is convinced that Thisbe is dead and, overcome with grief and guilt, kills himself with his own sword (4.119).[435] Pyramus' immediate, instinctual response to Thisbe's (supposed) death is to mourn that she was more worthy of long life than he (4.109). He ad-dresses her with lengthy apostrophes that, as Perraud (1984: 137) puts it, "echoes in a void of

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[433] On the elegiac motifs in this episode, see Due 1974: 126; Bömer 1976 *ad* 4.73; Knox 1986: 34-37, Perraud 1983; Anderson 1997 *ad* 4.81-85 (on *fallere custodes*); Keith 2001: 310, 2002: 356; Salz-man-Mitchell 2005: 65-66. Barchiesi and Rosati (2004) note the numerous elegiac *topoi* that Ovid draws on at each point, with references. Keith (2002: 358) points out that Ovid also draws on themes of the ancient romance novel.

[434] Keith (2002: 256) points out that "when…the young lovers abandon the conventional urban setting of elegy for the world of untamed nature outside the city walls, their love takes a tragic turn," sug-gesting that it is their rejection of the generic conventions of elegy—including paradigmatically thwarted love—that leads to their death.

[435] Anderson (1997, *ad* 4.55-166; 108-112) has drawn attention to the contrast between the selfish, transitory desires of the gods and the devoted love of the two mortals. Cf. Barchiesi and Rosati (2004: 258) on "una tipologia di eros alternativo a quelli illustrate in precedenza…un amore tutto terreno."

absence, loss, and guilt."[436] He stabs himself with his sword (*demisit in ilia ferrum,* 4.119) and then "dying, drags it out from the seething wound" (*ferventi moriens e vulnere traxit,* 4.120).[437] The description of the "seething wound" (*ferventi..vulnere*) evokes Dido's wound "hissing" (*stridit…vulnus, Aen.* 4.689), and Pyramus' death is similarly bloody (*cruor emicat alte,* 4.121; cf. *Aen.* 4.664, 687).[438] The blood spurting from his wound is compared to water spurting from a faulty pipe (*vitiato …plumbo*, 4.122) in an unusually mundane and anachronistic simile.[439] As many critics have noted, the imagery of this simile is highly erotic,[440] and so it also draws on the carnographic motif that associates violent and sexual penetration.[441]

When Thisbe returns to find Pyramus, she searches for him "with eyes and heart" (*oculis animoque*, 4.129) but instead sees only "trembling limbs beating the bloody ground" (*tremebunda cruentum | membra solum*, 4.133-134). Recognizing Pyramus, she is compared

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[436] As Perraud (1983: 137) further points out, the metonymy by which Pyramus treats Thisbe's scarf as a surrogate for her body—kissing it, weeping over it, and even addressing it (4.115-118)—vividly suggests his sense of loss and his horror at what (he believes) he has caused: he does not even have a corpse to mourn over.

[437] Schmitzer (1992: 531, n. 64) suggests that *ferventi*—in its sense of warmth, boiling, or burning— may indicate a pun on Pyramus' name (from πῦρ, "fire").

[438] Anderson (1997 *ad* 4.118-121) compares Pyramus here to Pallas pulling Turnus' spear from his chest (*Aen.* 10.486-487) though, as is typical of Vergil's male deaths, the imagery is less graphic.

[439] Barchiesi and Rosati (2004 *ad* 4.122-124) view this simile as "il più clamoroso anacronismo del poema;" cf. Keith 2001: 312.

[440] See e.g. Segal 1969: 50; Newlands 1986: 143; Shorrock 2003: 625-626; Salzman-Mitchell 2005: 154-156. Commentators have also tended to criticize the plumbing imagery as "unforgivable bathos at the dying Pyramus' expense" (Janan 1994: 431, with references), yet Janan considers it within the overall context of the Minyeids as narrators as an example of "a 'feminine' desire that evinces little concern for the public meaning their stories 'should' have and instead reappropriates storytelling for private pleasure" (1994: 431-432). The passage is also important in motivating the metamorphosis of the story, since it is Pyramus' spurting blood that turns the mulberry red (4.125-127); see Keith 2001 on the etymological wordplay that closely associates *mora* (mulberry)/*mora* (delay)/*amor/mors* in the episode, and that here specifically plays with the Greek derivation of μόρα from αἱμόροα.

[441] And again evokes the phallic overtones of Dido's suicide; see Chapter 3 above.

to the sea "trembling" (*tremit*, 4.136) under a breeze; the repetition of forms of *tremo* closely associates the two lovers. Thisbe mourns with tears, embraces, and kisses and calls her lover's name; he does not at first react, but when she cries "your Thisbe is calling you" (*tua te, carissime, Thisbe | nominat*, 4.143-144) he briefly opens his eyes. In a tragically romantic detail, the Minyeid narrator makes clear that Pyramus is responding to Thisbe's name, not his own (*ad nomen Thisbes,* 4.145). Pyramus' struggle to life his eyes, "weighed down by death" (*oculos a morte gravatos,* 4.145) recalls Dido's attempts to lift her "heavy eyes" (*gravis oculos*, *Aen.* 4.688).[442]

Recognizing her cloak and realizing the reason behind Pyramus' death, Thisbe too is stricken with guilt and resolves on suicide. Her last speech is longer than Pyramus' and profoundly pathetic: she declares that her hand is brave "in this alone" (*est…fortis in unum | hoc manus*, 4.149-150) and that her love will give her strength for what is to come (*amor dabit…in vulnera vires,* 4.150). She and Pyramus will be joined in death (*iunxit,* 4.156), fulfilling their wishes in life (*ut sineres toto nos corpore iungi*, 4.74).[443] Her last requests are that she and Pyramus be buried together and that the fruit-tree stained with Pyramus' blood may preserve its new color as a monument to their love (4.155-161). Her prayers are fulfilled (*vota tamen tetigere deos, tetigere parentes,* 4.164), suggesting both divine and human sympathy with the two lovers. As Anderson (1995: 268) puts it, "she defines the meaning of her act, invokes both their parents and the gods to solemnize their devotion, and thus brings about the metamorphosis…. Hers is one of the most effective voices for mutual love in the

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[442] Cf. Perraud 1983: 138; Barchiesi and Rosati 2004 *ad* 4.142-146.

[443] Cf. Perraud (1983: 138-139) on how Thisbe's final act successfully overcomes the barriers that have separated the two lovers. On the other hand, Fowler (2000: 161) views the story as a paradigm of human inability to escape the realm of the symbolic, i.e. of language.

poem." In a poem that repeatedly dramatizes the ineffectiveness of speech and the silencing

of the human voice, Thisbe's ability to achieve her desires through speech alone is remarka-

ble.[444]

Her death narrative, unlike Pyramus', is brief and to the point and does not employ

any of the same the carnographic details:

> dixit et aptato pectus mucrone sub imum
> incubuit ferro, quod adhuc a caede tepebat.

> "She spoke and, with the point fitted below her breast,
> she fell on the sword still warm from slaughter." (4.162-163)

Here alone, Thisbe's suicide echoes the Dido-narrative, where the same verb is used of

Dido's "brooding" over the bed she had shared with Aeneas (*incubuit, Aen.* 4.650).[445] In

Salzman-Mitchell's view (2005: 156), both lovers are symbolically deflowered in death, and

indeed Thisbe's penetrative suicide will, as discussed above, join (*iunxit,* 4.156) her to Pyra-

mus.[446] Yet, as we have seen, it is Pyramus' death that shares the bloody and grotesque im-

agery reminiscent of Dido's suicide. Displacing the carnographic death of transgressive epic

women onto the male beloved, Ovid upends the paradigm of his epic predecessors.[447] This

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[444] Cf. Hallett 2009 on Thisbe as a successful communicator, especially in the elegiac mode. Barchiesi
and Rosati (2004 *ad* 142-146) suggest that the two failed monologues of the lovers (Pyramus' address
to Thisbe, who is absent, and hers to Pyramus, who is dead) function "a confermare fino alla fine un
destino di impossible contatto tra i due amanti." Cf. Perraud (1983: 183) on "the pathetic irony of
their meeting only at the moment of their separation." The repeated frustration of Thisbe's attempts to
communicate with Pyramus highlights the surprising success of her communication with gods and
parents.

[445] This verb emerges as paradigmatic for female suicide in the poem: it is used both of Hylonome's
death (12.428) and Dido's (14.80); see further below.

[446] Cf. Fowler (2000: 163) on "the obvious sexual symbolism of the crack and the sword, [and] the
move from the labial dualism of the separated lovers to the phallic unity they achieve in death."

[447] This reversal of the deployment of death in earlier epic suggests the narrator's sympathy with
Thisbe, and it may be significant, then, that this particular narrator is a woman (the first Minyeid, cf.

paired death-narrative demonstrates the poet's refusal to replicate previous epic patterns and attitudes towards the female body.

Like Thisbe, the centaur Hylonome kills herself in order to join her beloved Cyllarus in death. This episode, embedded within the bloodiest battle in the poem,[448] both shares in and offers a counterpoint to that bloodshed. Hylonome is introduced as an extraordinarily well-groomed centaur (12.408-415), in a passage that shares in the elegiac overtones of the story of Pyramus and Thisbe.[449] As DeBrohun (2004: 434-437) points out, the poet makes no reference to Hylonome's status as *biformis* in his description of her; rather, she is "human-ized" (434, 438), presented more as woman than monster. This humanistic portrayal of Hy-lonome contrasts with the narrative in which it is embedded, where Nestor (the narrator) re-peatedly emphasizes the centaurs' hybrid and subhuman character.[450] Further, Cyllarus and Hylonome are presented as the perfect couple: they have "an equal love" (*par amor est illis*, 12.416) and they do everything together (*una,* 12.416, *simul,* 417, *pariter pariter*, 418).[451]

4.36). Yet the same reversal will occur in stories narrated by a man (Nestor on Hylonome and Cylla-rus) and by the epic narrator (on the Niobids).

[448] Cf. DeBrohun 2004: 420; Mader 2013: 87.

[449] DeBrohun (2004: 433-437) specifically connects this passage to Ovid's own *Ars* 3. Cf. Mader (2013: 107-108).

[450] Cf. Keith (1999: 236) on the centaurs' "elemental bestiality." See also DeBrohun (2004: 420-421), Papaioannou (2007: 97; 110-116), and Mader (2013) on the emphasis on the centaurs' hybridity and inhuman qualities.

[451] De Brohun (2004: 440) remarks on their "extraordinary concord"; cf. Sharrock 2015: 171.

The brief vignette of their life together before the battle is shattered when Cyllarus is struck and wounded "in his whole body" (*corpore cum toto*, 12.422).[452] He dies in Hylonome's arms, while she tries desperately to save him, embracing him (*fovet,* 12.424) as Apollo embraced the lifeless Coronis (*fovet,* 2.617) and Hyacinth (*refovet,* 10.187).[453] Yet, unlike the god, Hylonome can follow her beloved in death. In a gesture that echoes Thisbe's, she turns on herself the weapon that killed Cyllarus (*telo quod inhaeserat illi incubuit*, 12.428) and dies embracing her beloved, significantly called her husband (*moriensque suum conplexa maritum est*, 12.428).[454] DeBrohun (2004: 419) has remarked that Cyllarus is "feminized" in his representation as the object of the active desire of women (*multae illum petiere*, 12.404),[455] including Hylonome, who "carried him off" (*abstulit,* 12.405).[456] The lovers' mutual death perpetuates their gender reversal, as Cyllarus is struck from afar with a "slight wound" (*parvo…vulnere*, 12.421) that nonetheless proves fatal, while Hylonome continues to assert her agency and subjectivity by choosing, like Thisbe and Althaea, a masculine and heroic suicide.

Further, as with Thisbe and Althaea, Hylonome's death is not portrayed as a carnographic spectacle, even though it occurs within the most carnographic narrative of the poem.

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[452] This phrase echoes the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, who wish to be united "with our whole bodies" (*toto…corpore,* 4.74).

[453] Cf. Reed 2013 *ad* 12.423-427. The verb also occurs in other contexts of mourning, including Clymene for Phaethon (2.339) and the Meleagrides for their brother (8.539).

[454] The synchesis of this line parallels the entwining of the lover's bodies, conjoined in death as they so often were in life. Hylonome's gesture of falling on her beloved's body recalls Nisus with Euryalus (*tum super exanimum sese proiecit amicum, Aen.* 9.444).

[455] This phrase exactly reverses the typical gendering of erotic desire, as presented in the story of Daphne: *multi illam petiere* (1.478).

[456] Cf. Reed (2013: *ad* 423-427) on Cyllarus' characterization as ἐρώμενος to Hylonome's ἐραστής.

Mader (2013) in particular has drawn attention to the gruesome and horrific violence of the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs, including "bodies mutilated beyond recognition, organs leaping (or seeping) out of their proper place, entrails uncoiling onto the ground tripping up their unfortunate owner, split heads and spilt innards" (113).[457] Papaioannou (2007: 106) has also pointed out the frequent references to the narrator's presence as spectator (12.172, 183, 187, 327, 429, 444, 526),[458] a motif that recalls the marked reference to spectators at the deaths of transgressive women in the *Aeneid* (*Aen.* 4.664; 11.800-801). Yet Nestor's report of Hylonome's suicide contains none of the grisly details that characterize the battle-narrative elsewhere and, although he does observe her death, he is also distanced from it, as is suggested by his inability to hear her last words to her lover (12.426-427). As a centaur—a representative of the forces of order and chaos,[459] fighting to disrupt a human marriage and rape a human woman (cf. *fera bella gerebant,* 12.4.18)—and, moreover, as a woman who defies the normative gendered coding of male/activity and female/passivity, Hylonome might be expected to die a carnographic death according to the conventional pattern of heroic epic.[460]

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[457] In particular, Mader argues that the overkill (pun intended) of this "splatterfest" (2013: 113) exceeds, and therefore constitutes a parody of, its Homeric and Vergilian predecessors. As Fabre-Serris (1995: 102) points out, "La blessure légère dont Cyllare meurt contraste avec les coups terribles échangés autour de lui."

[458] Cf. Mader 2013: 87.

[459] As is indicated by their anomalous collocation of animal and human forms. See Keith 1999: 236; DeBrohun 2004: 437-439; Papaiaoannou 2007: 107; Mader 2013: 106.

[460] Cf. Papaioannou (2007: 105), on how this couple "invert[s] the epic politics of gender and genre." As a woman in war, Hylonome, like Camilla, overturns the traditional pairing of *arma virumque* (cf. Chapter 3 above), but she does not share in Camilla's aberrant rejection of sexuality/marriage.

But Ovid again undoes this pattern, and portrays Hylonome with great sympathy by empha-

sizing the selfless love that impels her first to attempt to save Cyllarus and then, when she re-

alizes it is hopeless, to courageously join him in death.[461]

The story of Hylonome and Cyllarus in many respects recalls that of Pyramus and

Thisbe.[462] Their conjoined death-narrative also employs sexual language and imagery (*fovet,*

12.424; *inhaeserat,* 427; *incubuit*, 428; *conplexa,* 428),[463] yet in this case they share not a

symbolic sexual initiation, but a "tragically beautiful…marriage in death" (DeBrohun 2004:

445; cf. *maritum,* 12.428). It is also striking that both Thisbe and Hylonome—and, indeed, all

the female suicides in the poem—kill themselves by traditionally masculine means, penetrat-

ing themselves with sword or spear, the weapons men use to kill other men.[464] Thisbe and

Hylonome both fall on the weapon that killed their beloved (*incubuit*: 4.163, 12.428), while

Dido too falls on the sword (*incubuit ferro*, 14.81), and Althaea dies "by a sword driven

through her innards" (*acto per viscera ferro*, 8.532). Ovid's women aspire to, and achieve,

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[461] As Fabre-Serris (1995: 102) puts it, the behavior of Cyllarus and Hylonome is "le plus éloigné de l'animalité." Cf. Papaioannou 2007: 109-110; Sharrock 2015: 171.

[462] On the parallels between the two narratives, see Bömer (1982 *ad* 393-428). As he puts it, both stories share the motif of "gemeinsamen (gewaltsamen) Todes zweier Liebender"; he also adduces as a parallel Athis and Lycabas, two male lovers killed in the battle between Perseus and the Phineids (5.46-73).

[463] DeBrohun 2004: 445

[464] See the discussion of Althaea, above. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, hanging is the traditional means of female suicide in Greek myth (Loraux 1987), yet in the *Metamorphoses*, no woman employs it. Arachne (6.134-135) and Myrrha (10.378-381) both attempt suicide by hanging, but are arrested in the process. We hear of general suicides by hanging during the plague at Thebes (*pars animum laqueo claudunt,* 7.604), but the poem's only successful individual suicide by hanging is that of Iphis, a man (14.733-738). Ovid therefore exactly reverses the paradigm of male and female death discerned by Loraux and gives his female heroines suicides that are not only not feminine but not shameful or degrading. I therefore disagree with Hill's claim (2004: 124) that Ovid's treatment of suicide is unoriginal. See Van Hoof (1990: 65-66); Hill (2004: 190); Edwards (2007: 107-108) on the Roman aversion to suicide by hanging.

suicides of heroic proportions. Yet, while their deaths employ the weapons and vocabulary common to male suicides in Roman literature,[465] their motivations are characteristically feminine: all die for love, whether romantic (Thisbe, Hylonome, Dido) or maternal (Althaea). Further, the poet avoids portraying these suicides in the graphic and extensive detail that characterized the deaths of transgressive women in the *Aeneid*. His sympathetic treatment of even the most horrific transgressions (filicide) and the most anomalous characters (a vain but bellicose female centaur) is reflected in his sensitive treatment of their deaths, which deliberately omits the carnographic detail found in earlier epic.

A dramatic reversal of the gendered deployment of carnographic death occurs in the story of the Niobids. Niobe had boasted that Latona was "barren" in comparison to her (*orba,* 6.200), so first Apollo and then Diana set out to make her barren in turn (*orba,* 6.301). They murder Niobe's children in a highly gendered execution: first Apollo executes the sons, and then Diana the daughters.[466] As in the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs, the poet portrays the male deaths in in grisly detail. Niobe's sons are killed while practicing their military exercises, and the narrator takes advantage of this scenario to contrast the boys' mastery of their animals (e.g. *moderantur,* 6.223; *rector,* 6.232) with their helplessness against the god's weapons, and to devise a number of inventive portraits of death.[467]

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[465] For *incumbere* in narratives of male suicide, see e.g. Val. Max. 3.2.ext.1, 3.2.14, 4.6.3, 6.5.ext.4; Phaed. 3.10.33; Suet., *Otho* 10.1; Tac., *Ann.* 6.7, 11.5; *Hist.* 2.49; Sen., *De. Tranq.* 16.1; Luc., *Phars.* 4.278, 4.500. On suicide as an expression of *virtus* in its specifically masculine sense, see Van Hoof 1990: 21; Hill 2004: 40-41; Edwards 2007: 187-191.

[466] The representation of the female Artemis killing the female children and the male Apollo killing the male children dates back to the *Iliad* (*Il.* 24.605-607). In the *Odyssey* as well the children of Leto inflict gendered deaths; cf. *Od.* 15.410-411 (discussed in Chapter 2 above). See also the *Iliad*'s description of Artemis as "a lion against women" λέοντα γυναιξί, *Il.* 21.483) with the right to kill any female she wishes (κατακτάμεν ἥν κ᾽ ἐθέλησθα, *Il.* 21.484).

[467] Cf. Rosati (2004 *ad* 6.248-253) on this sequence as a "serie di 'variazioni sulla morte.'"

Indeed, the boys die particularly carnographic deaths, in that the narrator focuses in on the penetration and violation of their bodies. An arrow protrudes from Siplyus' throat (*exstabat nudum de gutture ferrum*, 6.236); falling, he "befouls the earth with his warm blood" (*calido tellurem sanguine foedat,* 6.238). Phaedimus and Tantalus are struck by the same arrow while wrestling, and die "conjoined" (*iuncti,* 6.244).[468] Alphenor dies rushing to embrace his brothers (6.248-249), and the brutality of his death contrasts with the *pietas* of his actions (cf. *pio…officio,* 6.250): a piece of his lung is "rooted out" on the arrow's barb (*pars et pulmonis in hamis | eruta,* 6.252-253) and his blood pours out "along with his life" (*cumque anima cruor est effusus in auras,* 6.253).[469] Damasicthon's wounds are described in clinical and anatomical detail: he is first struck in the knee (*qua crus esse incipit et qua | mollia nervosus facit internodia poples,* 6.255-256) and then in the throat (*per iugulum,* 6.258). According to the narrator, the gushing blood actually drives the arrow out of his flesh and then "spurts high" (*in altum | emicat,* 6.259-260) and "drills through" the air (*terebrata…aura,* 6.260).[470] Finally, the last brother, Ilioneus, begs for mercy (6.264) and receives only a "slight wound"

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[468] The insistence on the simultaneity and mutuality of the brothers' deaths (*simul* is repeated four times in three lines: 6.245-247) looks forward to Hylonome and Cyllarus in Book 12. Cf. Rosati (2004 *ad* 6.243) on how the polyptoton and the "eccezionale la quadruplice ripetizione" of *simul* "describe la *iuncta mors*…in termini tali da assimilarli quasi a due amanti." In particular, he links the mention of their last breath (*animam simul exhalarunt,* 6.247) to Procris' dying face to face with Cephalus (*nostroque exhalat in ore,* 7.861). I would suggest that there is also a parallel with Hylonome, who brings her face close to Cyllarus' (*oraque ad ora | admovet,* 12.424-425) and attempts to prevent his soul from escaping his body (*animae fugienti obsistere temptat,* 12.425). Lyne (1984: 14) emphasizes how the rhetorical devices "mirror in style the grotesque facts of the context."

[469] Cf. *pariter vitam cum sanguine fudit* (2.610; Coronis); *cum sanguine vita reliquit* (11.327; Chione).

[470] As Lyne (1984: 13) puts it, this "hyperbole grotesquely, and divertingly decorates basic content." These lines closely echo of Pyramus' death: cf. *cruor emicat alte* (4.121), and the imagery of the water gushing from the broken pipe into the air (*ictibus aera rumpit,* 4.124). Rosati (2004 *ad* 6.259-260) also links Damasicthon's death to Ajax's (the blood forces out the spear: *expulit ipse cruor,* 13.394) and Nessus' (*sanguis…emicuit*, 9.129-130).

(*minimo…vulnere,* 6.265-266), a mercilessly futile act of mercy.[471] As with Vergil's Dido, the narrative of the boys' deaths emphasizes the violation of the boundary between inside and outside the body, and the poet varies each vignette with a bizarre, grotesque, or pathetic detail.[472] Lyne (1984: 15) has argued that the gratuitous—and often physically impossible—violence of the sequence "cannot elicit, nor does it mean to elicit" a true emotional response. Instead, it uses the same level of carnography found in the deaths of transgressive women in the *Aeneid* to generate both revulsion and fascination.

On the other hand, the account of the daughters' deaths is much briefer and more stylized. It encompasses only sixteen lines (as opposed to forty-nine for the boys), and none of the girls are named.[473] They are struck down at their brothers' funeral (6.288-289), and, as with Alphenor, the poet draws an ironic contrast between their piety and the brutality of their deaths. The first one plucks at an arrow clinging to her innards (*haerentia viscere tela,* 6.290) and collapses onto her brother's body (*inposito fratri…relanguit ore,* 6.291). Another dies while attempting to comfort her mother (6.292); a third falls on her sister (*illa sorori | inmoritur*, 6.295-296).

As the tightly-condensed narrative progresses, the sisters become aware of what is happening and try to flee or hide (*haec frustra fugiens,* 6.295; *latet haec,* 6.296). Finally, only the youngest is left, whom Niobe tries pathetically to hide her with her cloak (*tota veste*

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[471] Cf. Fulkerson (2006: 399): "the death of Niobe's final son is not much mitigated by being a more gentle deadly wound than the rest." Compare the description of Ilioneus' wound as *minor* with that of Cyllarus' wound as *parvus* (12.421); both are nonetheless fatal.

[472] On Dido's gaping wound, see Chapter 3 above.

[473] Although their names are given elsewhere (Ap., *Bib.* 3.5.6; Hyg., *Fab.* 11.69; Schol. *ad.* Eur. *Phoen.* 159). The names of both daughters and sons vary in each account. Ovid has also deviated from tradition in having the boys killed first.

tegens, 6.299) while begging in vain for her life.[474] The entire family is killed, and the poet

draws special attention to the injustice of the girls' deaths by having them die while mourn-

ing their brothers.[475] They are engaged in a morally irreproachable act, and the poet empha-

sizes their innocence with the pathetic portrayal of their terror (*illam trepidare videres*,

6.296). While the narrative of the boys' murder had focused on gruesome spectacle and in-

ventive *variatio* in the wounds of each brother,[476] the swift and succinct recounting of the ex-

ecution of the sisters avoids such carnographic imagery and presents, rather, a tragic tableau

of brothers and sisters lying together in death (*exanimes*, 6.302). The verb *relanguit*, applied

to the first sister (6.291) evokes the deaths of Euryalus (*languescit moriens, Aen.* 9.436) and

Pallas, compared to a drooping flower (*languentis hyacinthi, Aen.* 11.69).[477] The poet has

again inverted the patterns of previous epic, giving the female victims a less spectacular and

gory death.

This inversion indicates the poet's refusal to engage with the gendered patterns of

death found in previous epic, particularly the aestheticization and eroticization of male death

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[474] In some other versions, Niobe is left with this single daughter (Meliboea/Chloris), or with one son and one daughter (Ap., *Bib.* 3.5.6, Hyg., *Fab.* 9-10). As Anderson (1972 *ad* 297-300) puts it, "Ovid prefers to have his Niobe utterly crushed." Cf. Rosati (2004 *ad* 6.298-300) on this vignette as "una delle vette di *pathos* del poema."

[475] A similar motif occurs in the story of Ino: driven mad by Juno, she has leapt into the sea. Her attendants are transformed into stone as they grieve for their mistress and are frozen in their postures of pious mourning (4.556-560), becoming monuments to Juno's cruelty (*saevitiae monimenta*, 4.550). This tale combines two motifs from the Niobe-story: the punishment of pious innocents and the monumentalization and semioticization of the victims, as their very bodies—like Daphne's, Aglauros', and Niobe's—become symbols of a divinity's malice.

[476] The poet simply announces that the sisters have suffered "various wounds" (*diversa…vulnera passis*, 6.297) rather than actually describing them, thus drawing attention to the contrasting account of the brothers' deaths, where each wound is described in grisly detail.

[477] Cf. Rosati (2004 *ad* 6.288-291).

characteristic of Vergil. Thisbe and Hylonome, although also dying bloody and penetrative

deaths, do not become objects of a prurient gaze as in Homeric and Vergilian epic; rather, the

narrative emphasizes their fortitude and fidelity. Likewise, Ovid refuses to punish female

transgression—whether the "adultery" of Coronis, the boasting of Chione, or the filicide of

Althaea—with carnographic death. These reversals of earlier epic models of death are sur-

prising, and invite the reader to reconsider the patterns of death found in Homer and Vergil.

In his sympathetic treatment of female death and suicide, Ovid demonstrates that women

cannot be categorized according to a simple binary of normative and non-normative behav-

ior. The punitive violence inflicted on transgressive women in Homer and Vergil elides the

complexity of their circumstances and their motives. For example, the *Odyssey*'s narratives

of the Phoenician woman and the Ithacan maids emphasize their perfidy and disloyalty and

refuses to consider the complex reality that often places the slave's self-interest in conflict

with the pose of affectionate fidelity demanded of them. Ovid exposes these elisions, demon-

strating that the issue of female transgression is more complicated than is suggested by ear-

lier epic.

Women as Victims, Not Villains

As Ovid distances himself from the epic paradigm that punishes transgressive women

with violent deaths, so he also presents women suffering in death despite their overt, even ex-

treme, innocence of any wrongdoing.[478] The poet refuses to avert his gaze—and the gaze of

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[478] I discuss Leucothoe, Perimele, Hesperia, Cyane, Iphigenia, Polyxena, and the Orionids. Other in-
nocent women also die brutal deaths in the poem, including Procris (7.838-862), Ceres' nymph
(8.761-776), and Eurydice (10.10-63). While I do not treat these women in detail for reasons of space,
it is significant that all of them are, in one way or another, victims of males: Procris dies a bloody, if
accidental, death at her husband's hands, Eurydice's second death is owed to her husband's failure of

the reader—from the deaths of virtuous women, and in some cases even constructs innocent women as eroticized objects, much like Dido or Camilla. These women are threatened by male sexuality and male violence, reversing the gendered structure of earlier epic, in which female sexuality was constructed as a threat to the epic hero and his mission. Indeed, in the narratives with which I conclude this chapter, innocent virgins are violently sacrificed for the good of the male heroic community. The poet thus exposes an essential truth about Greek mythology that is evaded by Homer and Vergil: heroic and foundational narratives of male achievement are grounded in violence against women—a population explicitly excluded from the perquisites of the male community.[479] In the first part of this section, I will discuss women exposed to violence through male sexual desire; in the second part, I will discuss women exposed to violence in the interests of the male community.

Rape and Death:

Ovid regularly dramatizes the victimization of the female body by male sexuality, especially in narratives of instantaneous, unthinking male desire.[480] In this section, I will explore how Ovid represents female helplessness in the face of sexual assault and subsequent

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self-control, and Ceres' nymph is killed by a monstrous caricature of purposeless male violence.

[479] Girard ([1972] 1977) has noted the paradoxical dualism of the sacrificial victim: "The proper functioning of the sacrificial process requires not only the complete separation of the sacrificial victim from those beings for whom the victim is a substitute but also a similarity. This dual requirement can be fulfilled only through a delicately balanced mechanism of associations" (1977: 39). As Rabinowitz (1993: 33-35) points out, virgin females are particularly appropriate subjects of sacrificial violence: they are linked to the (male) in-group without being full members, and since they are not wives/mothers of in-group members their connections to it are limited; they are therefore "marginalized" and can be safely sacrificed without incurring retaliatory violence.

[480] The poet inverts this gendered pattern twice: Salmacis sees Hermaphroditus and instantaneously desires him (*cum puerum vidit visumque optavit habere,* 4.316); similarly, Aurora sees Cephalus (*videt,* 7.703) and immediately carries him off against his will (*invitumque rapit,* 7.704).

violence. While Greek myth often portrays women as complicit in or otherwise at fault for their own rapes, Ovid emphasizes female resistance to sexual assault—yet resistance is always in vain. The stories of Daphne, Syrinx, and Lotis, discussed above, demonstrate that women are able to evade their rapists only by destroying their own bodies and identities.[481] The women discussed below attempt to resist rape, yet not only do they fail, they are brutally punished for their failure. The poet thus draws attention to the injustice of punitive and hypercritical attitude toward the female body, in which women are blamed for assaults that they cannot prevent.[482]

For example, Leucothoe—like Daphne—is a double victim of two warring gods. Venus, angry with the Sun for exposing her affair with Mars, causes Sol to fall hopelessly in love with Leucothoe (4.190-193).[483] Again, the poet casts the woman as spectacle and the male as spectator with a series of verbs of seeing—here with an ironic twist: Sol, "who should see everything" (*quique omnia cernere debes*, 4.195; cf. 4.172, 227), watches only Leucothoe (*virgine figis in una…oculos*, 4.197). The narrator (Leuconoe, one of the Minyeids[484]) lists Sol's now-neglected beloveds, including Clymene, Rhodes, Perse, and Clytie,

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[481] See below on Caenis, who, already a victim of rape, forestalls future *iniuria* by erasing her femininity and transforming herself into a man.

[482] Ovid poignantly expresses the futility of female resistance to sexual assault in the narrative of Callisto: "indeed, she fought, but how could a girl overcome anyone, and how could anyone overcome Jupiter?" (*illa quidem pugnat, sed quem superare puella | quisve Iovem poterat,* 2.436-437).

[483] As Amor caused Apollo to fall in love with Daphne (1.463-480). Both divinities act to avenge themselves on an opponent without regard to the consequences for the innocent female, who is caught in the middle of a conflict of which she has no knowledge, and no power to escape.

[484] The similarity of the names of narrator and subject is striking; Salzman-Mitchell (2005: 109) suggests that "Leuconoe…rewrites herself (and her sisters) in the figure of Leucothoe, who acts as a fantasy about what they believe a good and desirable woman would be like in the eyes of the male viewer." Cf. Newlands (1986: 149), Anderson (1997 *ad* 4.194-197), Barchiesi and Rosati (2004: 269-270) on the homophony of Leuconoe and Leucothoe.

suggesting the fickleness and inconstancy of the god's affection.[485] Clytie, who actually desires him (*petebat | concubitus*, 4.206-207) is spurned (*despectata*, 4.205), while Sol pursues his rape of Leucothoe.

In this tale, as in others, Leucothoe is endangered by her own body: she is exceedingly beautiful (4.210) and her beauty attracts the watching god. Like Jupiter in the tale of Callisto and Apollo in the tale of Chione, the Sun gains access to Leucothoe by a particularly underhanded trick: he disguises himself as her mother (*versus in Eurynomes faciem genetricis*, 4.219). Leuconoe dwells on the grotesque elements of Sol's playacting: he kisses Leucothoe "as a mother does her dear daughter" (*ceu mater carae dedit oscula natae*, 4.222) and rids himself of witnesses by telling the servants that he has secret matters to discuss with his "daughter" (4.223-224).

Anderson (1997 *ad* 219-221; 222-224) notes the contrast with the prototypically chaste behavior of Leucothoe and her servants, who—like Lucretia and Penelope—are staying up late weaving (4.219-221).[486] When he has gotten the girl alone (*thalamo…sine teste relicto,* 4.225), Sol proceeds to proposition her (still in disguise as her mother), bragging, like Apollo with Daphne and Jupiter with Io, about his divine status and powers (4.226-228). Leucothoe is terrified (*pavet illa*, 4.228) and immediately drops her distaff and spindle. Yet her fear only encourages the rapist (*ipse timor decuit*, 4.230).[487] Although still frightened (*quamvis…territa*, 4.232), Leucothoe is powerless to resist: she endures the rape (*vim passa,*

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[485] There is perhaps a hint of irony here in that the fickle god was so quick to expose the infidelity of Venus and so "grieved at the deed" (*indoluit facto*, 4.173).

[486] Cf. Barchiesi and Rosati 2004 *ad* 4.219-221.

[487] On this theme in stories of rape in the poem, see Curran 1978: 27; Richlin 1992: 162; and cf. on Daphne above.

4.233) but does not protest (*posita…querella,* 4.233). The repeated emphasis on her fear

(4.228, 230, 232) demonstrates both Leuothoe's unwillingness and her powerlessness.[488] She

is another victim (cf. *victa,* 4.233) of male lust and divine resentment—both Venus and Sol

have used her as an instrument of their own gratification, without regard to the potential con-

sequences.

And the consequences for Leucothoe are deadly. The jilted Clytie so resents Leu-

cothoe that she exposes the relationship and tells Leucothoe's father that she has been "ru-

ined" (*diffamatam,* 4.236).[489] Orchomenus responds violently:

> …Ille ferox inmansuetusque precantem
> tendentemque manus ad lumina Solis et 'ille
> vim tulit invitae' dicentem defodit alta
> crudus humo tumulumque super gravis addit harenae.
>
> …That cruel and savage man buried her alive,
> mercilessly, in the deep earth, despite her begging and stretching
> her hands toward the rays of the sun and crying "he raped me
> against my will," and he piled a mound of heavy sand above her. (4.237-240)

This passage draws a stark contrast between female helplessness and male power, exempli-

fied both by the ruthless father and the oblivious god. The repetition of accusative participles

referring to Leucothoe (*precantem, tendentem, dicentem*) emphasizes her status as object in

the face of uncompromising male authority.[490] The *pathos* of Leucothoe's desperate appeals

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[488] As Barchiesi and Rosati (2004 *ad* 4.231-233) point out, the violence is also stressed by the recurrence of embedded forms of *vis* (**virgo***…quam**vis**...**vis**u **vic**ta…**vim**).

[489] Clytie is "goaded by anger at her rival" (*stimulata paelicis ira,* 4.235); sexual jealousy also motivates Juno's cruelty toward Io (cf. *paelice donata,* 1.6220) and Callisto (cf. *ne puro tinguatur in aequore paelex*, 2.530).

[490] Cf. Anderson 1997: *ad* 237-240. Gildenhard and Zissos (1999: 165) point to a "quirky syntactic pattern" that draws together many narratives of brutality in the poem (including the murders of Pentheus, Learchus, and Itys, and the amputation of Philomela's tongue): "Each time [the poet] places the victim in the object position and describes his or her struggling against the upcoming fate in a series of present participles," thus creating "the temporal plateau for the climactic pitch of violence." Although the authors do not include the narrative of Leucothoe among the stories they survey, it accords

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is contrasted with the brutality of her father: in comparison to the three participles expressing his daughter's pleas, he receives three adjectives conveying his cruelty (*ferox, inmansuetus, crudus*). Not content with burying her in the "deep earth" (*alta…humo*, 4.239-240), he adds a mound of "heavy sand" (*gravis…harenae*, 4.240).

Ironically, the god who had just boasted of seeing everything (*omnia qui video*, 4.227) does not notice Leucothoe's plight until it is too late.[491] He attempts to rescue her, but she is already a "bloodless corpse" (*corpus exsangue*, 4.244).[492] The narrator apostrophizes Leucothoe directly, involving the reader in her plight. Like Apollo with Coronis, Sol belatedly tries to revive Leucothoe, but death is irrevocable. He therefore causes her body to melt (*corpus | delicuit*, 4.252-253) and frankincense to sprout from it. The narrator's emphasis on the word *corpus* (4.244, 250, 252) is suggestive: as Anderson (1997: *ad* 252-255) puts it, "the body, so much desired and so selfishly abused, now dissolves into liquid." This tale has repeatedly dramatized the vulnerability of the female body, first to male lust and then to male cruelty. God and father, though with very different motives, have the same attitude towards Leucothoe: she is an object, subject to both possession and punishment.

The same *topos* occurs in the story of Perimele, the daughter of Hippodamas. She was beloved (*dilectae*, 8.592) by Achelous, who "took away her virgin status" (*virgineum…nomen ademi*, 8.592). The rapist himself is narrating this tale and so does not use a more direct

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with most of the principles they identify.

[491] Cf. Anderson 1997 *ad* 4.237-240; Barchiesi and Rosati 2004 *ad* 4.238; Salzman Mitchell 2005: 100.

[492] Cf. Coronis: *corpus inane animae frigus*, 2.611. Anderson (1997 *ad* 4.241-242) notes that the narrator at first seems to hint that a miraculous rescue may occur, but the reader's hopes are frustrated by the end of the apostrophe.

word for rape, yet *adimo*, with its connotations of seizing, stealing, or depriving (cf. *natam ademptam,* of Chione: 11.331, above), suggests that Perimele was unwilling. Nonetheless, her father again reacts violently (*aegre tulit,* 8.593) and throws her off a cliff into the sea (8.593-594). At the moment of her imminent death, Perimele is—like Coronis (2.611) and Leucothoe (4.244)—reduced to a body alone: Achelous calls her "the body of the daughter about to die" (*periturae corpora natae*, 8.594). Perimele survives the fall and seems to have been rescued by Achelous, who catches her still swimming (*excepi nantemque ferens*, 8.595) and prays to Neptune for aid.[493] His request is peculiar: "either give her a place or let her be a place herself" (*da…locum, vel sit locus ipsa licebit*, 8.602). The latter option takes effect, and Perimele is swallowed by earth in a way that eerily recapitulates Leucothoe's death: her "swimming limbs" (*artus…natantes*, 8.609) are embraced (*amplexa est,* 8.609) by the new land and "a heavy island grew over her transformed body" (*gravis increvit mutatis insula membris,* 8.610).[494] Rather than a reprieve, this terminal metamorphosis appears much more like being buried alive, as is suggested by the detail of Perimele's still-moving body (*natantes*) and the fact that the island is "heavy" (*gravis,* cf. *gravis …harenae*: 4.240).[495] Leucothoe's and Perimele's deaths are similar: both are victimized by divine rapists and pitiless

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[493] Some manuscripts include a more detailed passage (8.603-608), which, if genuine, would add a further element of objectification to Perimele's metamorphosis in the god's "fondling" of her body as she transforms (*pectora tangebam,* 606; *ea contrecto*, 607), despite her terror (*extimuit*, 605). The lines were excised by Magnus and are usually not considered authentic (see Anderson 1972 *ad* 8.607; Bömer 1977: 182-184; Kenney 2011 *ad* 8.595-610 for discussion; Anderson 1977 and Tarrant 2004 both print these lines in brackets).

[494] Feldherr (2010: 55) comments on the etymological wordplay here, as the land growing around Perimele's limbs recalls the meaning of her name (περί-μέλη).

[495] As Kenney (2011 *ad* 602) notes, it is ironic that Perimele, despite her innocence, is treated no better than the Echinades, the nymphs who failed to honor Achelous and were therefore transformed into islands as punishment (8.573-589); we might also recall the irony that Chione's father is rescued from death by one of her rapists but she is not (discussed above). On the other hand, Borca (2000: 158) views Perimele's metamorphosis as an example of "una valenza opposta" to that of the Echinades,

fathers (cf. *feritate paterna.* 8.601). As women, their bodies are vulnerable to sexual aggression and murderous violence, as is emphasized by the characterization of both women *as* bodies (*corpus,* 4.244; *corpora*, 8.594), and therefore as objects for male appropriation and abuse.

Another woman also dies as a result of rape: Hesperia, who is not killed by her father in punishment, but whose rape nonetheless leads directly to her death. In another instance of seeing as a motive for rape, Aesacus "spies" Hesperia (*aspicit*, 11.669) drying her hair on the riverbank and pursues her; "seen, she flees" (*visa fugit,* 11.771).[496] In a pair of similes that evoke Apollo's pursuit of Daphne,[497] Hesperia is compared to a deer fleeing a wolf and a water-bird fleeing a hawk (11.771-773); again, the emphasis is on the prey's fear (*perterrita,* 11.771).[498] Like Daphne, Hesperia is "swift from fear" (*celeremque metu*, 11.774; cf. 1.539) while Aesacus is "swift from love" (*celer…amore*, 11.774).[499] The allusions to Daphne prepare the reader for another instance of metamorphosis as an escape from rape, but instead the

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but also draws out many similarities in the two tales, the major difference being that in one Achelous constitutes "il soggetto censore" and in the other "il soggetto riparatore" (2000: 160). Cf. Boyd (2006: 201-202) on the "narrative doubling" here.

[496] Another instance of sight engendering immediate lust and pursuit; cf. 1.490 (Daphne), 1.588 (Io), 1.699 (Syrinx), 2.422 (Callisto), 2.574 (Cornix), 4.196 (Leucothoe), 4.316 (Hermaphroditus), 4.673 (Andromeda), 5.395 (Proserpina), 6.455 (Philomela), 7.703 (Cephalus), 11.305 (Chione), 13.220-221 (Hippodameia).

[497] Bömer (1980 *ad* 11.771-773) notes a number of other parallels in rape-narratives of the *Metamorphoses* (Orithyia, Arethusa) and the *Fasti* (Chloris).

[498] The participle *perterritus*, with its intensifying prefix, is unusual in the *Metamorphoses*, as is the closely related *exterritus*. Yet when these forms do appear, they almost always describe female terror, including Io's horror at her own mooing (*exterrita*, 1.637), Ino driven mad by Tisiphone (*exterrita,* 4.488), Proserpina carried off by Dis (*exterrita,* 5.418), Deianeira's fear of losing Heracles (*perterrita,* 9.141, and Dryope's terrified reaction to the bleed ing lotus (*perterrita,* 9.349).

[499] As Reed (2013: *ad loc.*) puts it, the polyptoton "sottolinea le loro diverse motivazioni ancora più nitidamente di quanto facc io in I 539 (Apollo e Dafne)."

narrator introduces a new element: a snake in the grass (*latens herba coluber*, 11.775).[500] The

snake bites Hesperia as she flees (*fugientis*, 11.775; cf. 771) and "her flight is ended along

with her life" (*cum vita suppressa fuga est*, 11.777).[501] The repeated references to Hesperia's

flight leave no doubt of the cause of her death, and Aesacus too is explicit in blaming himself

(11.778-782). He resolves to die as a "consolation" for Hesperia's death (*mortis solacia*,

11.782). In this respect, Aesacus is more sincere than Apollo who also regrets killing Coronis

(*paenitet*, 2.612; cf. *piget, piget*, 11.778), but does not accept responsibility and instead pun-

ishes the crow.[502]

Yet Aesacus is not permitted to die: although he throws himself off a cliff, he is saved

by Tethys who "pities" him (*miserata*, 11.784) and turns him into a bird. Aesacus' rescue by

Tethys parallels Daedalion's by Apollo—ironically, they are saved by the gods but Chione

and Hesperia are allowed to die.[503] The language of Tethys' intervention echoes Achelous'

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[500] The death by snakebite recalls Ovid's Eurydice (*occidit in talum serpentis dente recepto*, 10.10) but Vergil's Eurydice is, in fact, a closer parallel: she is also bitten by an unseen snake (*non vidit, Geo.* 4.459; *latens, Met.* 11.775) and, moreover, her death is caused by a rape-pursuit (*Geo.* 4.457), while Ovid's Eurydice is simple "wandering" with friends (*vagatur, Met.* 10.9). In this sense, it is sig-nificant that Aesacus is a Trojan hero (*Troius heros*, 11.773), an identification that recalls Vergil's Aeneas (6.451; 8.530l 10. 585, 886; 12.502; cf. Bömer 1980 *ad* 11.773-774, Griffin 1997 and Reed 2013 *ad* 11.769). Given the significance of Hesperia's name, Fratantuono (2014: x) views this story as "the climax of the ethnographic theme of how Troy will never capture Italy." He elsewhere (2015: 13) links the tale more specifically to *Aeneid* 12, suggesting "there is a powerful commentary here on the end of the *Aeneid* and the reconciliation of Juno and Jupiter, where we learn that the future Rome will in effect be Italian and not Trojan."

[501] A variation on the motif of simultaneous departure of life and blood (cf. *pariter vitam cum san-guine fudit* (2.610; Coronis); *cum sanguine vita reliquit* (11.327; Chione).

[502] Cf. Fulkerson (2006: 393) on Apollo's displacement of responsibility for Coronis' death from himself to the hapless crow. She compares him to Cyparissus, who accepts full responsibility for the death of his deer, concluding "he thereby shows himself to be more fully a moral agent than Apollo" (2006: 399). I would suggest that the same can be said of Aeacus here.

[503] The involvement of Tethys, "che agisce sena un ovvio motivo" (Reed 2013 *ad* 11.784) makes the contrast particularly incongruous.

"rescue" of Perimele: she "received him gently" (*molliter excepit*, 11.785; cf. *excepi,* 8.595), and he too is swimming (*nantem,* 11.785; cf. 8.595), yet instead of a terminal metamorphosis that bears a significant resemblance to being buried alive, Aesacus is transformed into an animate bird—despite his active preference for death (*optatae…mortis*, 11.786; *invitum vivere*, 11.787). He is so angry at his metamorphosis that he repeatedly attempts to carry out his failed suicide by hurling himself into the sea, but in vain (11.792). Ovid thus develops an ironic contrast between Aesacus and his victim: he wants to die, yet is saved while she is killed. The contrast between Aesacus' fate and Perimele's is also suggestive: both are "rescued" through metamorphosis, but Perimele's transformation seems less an escape from death than another form of it. The woman is transformed into an object, while the man retains his memory and consciousness—and therefore his status as subject.

The confluence of male sexual aggression and female victimization is also found in Calliope's story of Cyane, transformed from a water-nymph into actual water. Her fate, like those of Leucothoe and Perimele, demonstrates the futility of female resistance to male aggression. She protests Dis' rape/abduction of Proserpina, arguing "the girl should be requested, not raped" (*roganda | non rapienda fuit*, 5.416). Dis is enraged, and his response, as many scholars have noted, constitutes a symbolic rape of Cyane:[504] "with his mighty arm, he thrusts in his royal scepter" (*valido sceptrum regale lacerto | condidit,* 5.422-423), and forces open a path to the underworld (5.424).[505] The narrator's emphasis on the overwhelming

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[504] Cf. Segal 1969: 54; Curran 1978: 222; Cahoon 1996: 53; Zissos: 1999: 100; Fantham 2004: 64; Rosati 2004 *ad* 5.425-437; Salzman-Mitchel 2005: 172; Johnson 2008: 68-69.

[505] As Cahoon (1996: 53) puts it, Cyane has been "described almost blatantly as a vagina"—a pool enclosed by two narrow "horns" (5.410)—so the "thrust" of Dis' scepter into her "body" is even more sexualized than it may initially appear. Bömer (1976 *ad* 5.422) points out that the idea of the "mighty arm" is elsewhere used of Hercules hurling Lichas (*validis…lacertis,* 9.223), another instance of a

strength of the god's arm and the phallic penetration of his scepter suggests Cyane's helpless-ness: the god plunges headlong into her pool/body, chariot and all (*pronos…currus,* 5.424). He literally rides roughshod over her.

Cyane is grief-stricken both for herself and for the raped Prosperina (5.425-426). Her "inconsolable wound" (*inconsolabile vulnus,* 5.426), as Segal (1998: 22) points out, repre-sents both the physical and the psychological injuries inflicted by Dis. She wastes away (*ex-tenuatur,* 5.429) in her sorrow and is swallowed up by her own tears (*lacrimisque absumitur omnis,* 5.427). As in the terminal metamorphoses discussed earlier in this chapter, her trans-formation into water is rendered in excruciating detail, and is marked by an emphatic invita-tion to the reader to look on:[506]

> …molliri membra videres,
> ossa pati flexus, ungues posuisse rigorem;
> primaque de tota tenuissima quaeque liquescunt,
> caerulei crines digitique et crura pedesque
> (nam brevis in gelidas membris exilibus undas
> transitus est); post haec umeri tergusque latusque
> pectoraque in tenues abeunt evanida rivos;
> denique pro vivo vitiatas sanguine venas
> lympha subit, restatque nihil, quod prendere possis.
>
> …You would see her body going soft,
> her bones becoming bendable, her nails losing their hardness,
> and first those parts that were already very slight were liquefied,
> her sea-blue hair and her fingers and her legs and her feet
> (for it's a slight transition from thin parts into cool water);
> after those parts, her shoulders and back and sides
> and her chest vanished into thin rivulets
> and finally, in place of her living blood, water flowed
> into her ruined veins, and nothing was left that you could catch hold of. (5.429-437)

(semi-) divine figure inflicting violence on a helpless mortal.

[506] Cf. Rosati (2004 *ad* 5.425-537) on "il carattere spettacolare" of this passage.

Cyane's metamorphosis breaks her body down part by body part, and construct this dismemberment as a spectacle to be viewed both by Minerva (Calliope's internal audience) and Ovid's external readers.

Victimized by Dis, Cyane is again victimized by a transformation that, like many metamorphoses in the poem, destroys her ability to communicate: from the impassioned advocate of the raped Proserpina, she becomes a silent, helpless pool of "nothingness" (5.437).[507] Her silencing is reinforced when Ceres returns to Sicily to find the pool incommunicado: "if she had not been transformed, she would have told her everything" (*ni mutata fuisset | omnia narasset*, 5.465-466), but she now lacks a mouth or tongue or anything to speak with (5.466-467).[508] Cyane thus, as Zissos (1999: 99) puts it, "become[s] the primary victim of rape in the narrative." As an advocate for the raped innocent, a victim of (not-so-) symbolic rape herself, and a victim of a terminal metamorphosis that silences her protests against both these assaults, she provides a telling demonstration of the vulnerability of the female body in the face of overpowering male and divine aggression. She is no match for Dis' brawny arm and divine scepter, and her inconsolable grief and subsequent dissolution offer a suggestive commentary on the psychological effects of rape and violence.

In these stories, Ovid demonstrates the vulnerability of the female body through the association of rape and death, and thus offers another perspective on the ways men threaten women's bodies. Women have no control over their own bodies: they are helpless to resist first the gods who rape them, and then the parents who murder them in retaliation. Leucothoe

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[507] Cf. Segal (1998: 22): "In her metamorphosis she becomes just what Pluto has made of her body, a yielding passage to his force and his will."

[508] The silencing of Cyane is emphasized by Johnston (2008: 68-69), who compares her to Philomela and Io.

and Perimele bear some resemblance to Cassandra, who also loses her virtue and status because of rape, and thereby emerges as one of the transgressive victims of the *Odyssey*. Yet Ovid repeatedly exposes the cruelty and hypocrisy of blaming innocent women for being raped. The reader is aware from the detailed narration of the circumstances of Leucothoe's rape (4.228-233) that she was helpless to prevent it, and indeed all the women of the poem are helpless against the assaults of men and gods. Her pathetic protests that she was unwilling (*invitae*, 4.239) and that she was raped (*vim tulit,* 4.239; cf. *vim passa,* 4.233) are of no avail against the patriarchal system that values daughters only as marriageable virgins and gives fathers absolute rights over their daughters' bodies. Likewise, Cyane's impassioned advocacy for women's self-determination is futile in the face of Dis' male strength and divine power. In the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid,* women's transgressions are "doubled," as they are represented violating both social and sexual codes. In the *Metamorphoses,* it is women's victimization that is doubled, and women's bodies are shown to be at risk from rape, wrath, and—in the case of Hesperia—pure chance. The overlapping motifs and echoes from earlier stories of women's death and metamorphosis demonstrate the continuity of this theme throughout the poem: wherever we look, we find female bodies penetrated, buried, transformed, or otherwise destroyed.

Sacrificial Victims:

I turn now to the women who are sacrificed in Ovid's retelling of the epic cycle. As discussed in Chapter 1, the Homeric poet avoids any explicit reference to the sacrifices of the virgins Iphigenia and Polyxena, whose deaths bracket the Trojan War. Vergil is similarly cir-

cumspect: both women are referred to only very briefly and ambiguously. Sinon reports a fictitious speech of Calchas that describes Iphigenia's death in vague terms: "You have placated the winds with blood and a slaughtered virgin" (*sanguine placastis ventos et virgine caesa*, *Aen.* 2.116). Here, Iphigenia is not named and the details of her story must be inferred, much as the details of Clytemnestra's death must be inferred from the very brief mention of her funeral feast in *Odyssey* 3 (*Od.* 3.309-310; see the discussion in Chapter 2 above). Further, Calchas quickly moves on to the key point of his speech: another sacrifice is needed, but this time the victim will be male (*Aen.* 2.118-119). The narrative passes over Iphigenia in order to focus on the (supposed) male victim. Likewise, the real "sacrifice" will also be male, when Laocoon and his sons are devoured by serpents, symbolically taking on the role of the sacrificial bull (*Aen.* 2.223-224).[509] The text figuratively replaces the innocent virgin sacrificed with a trio of slaughtered men.

Similarly, Polyxena is mentioned only briefly in the *Aeneid* and not by name. Andromache invokes her as the *Priameia virgo* who was "lucky above all others" (*felix una ante alias*, *Aen.* 3.321) in that she was ordered to die at Troy (*iussa mori*, *Aen.* 3.323). Polyxena avoids the war-captive's fate of "touching the bedchamber of a victorious master" (*nec victoris heri tetigit captiva cubile*, *Aen.* 3.324).[510] Her death is presented as an escape from sexual violation and is not narrated in any detail—in contrast to Catullus' version, which describes Achilles' tomb wet with her blood (*Carm.* 65.368) and her beheaded corpse collapsing to the ground (*Carm.* 64.370).[511]

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[509] See Hardie 1984: 407-409 on the echoes of Lucretius' Iphigenia in Vergil's Laocoon, especially the "similarly gruesome play on the reversal of sacrificial role" (407).

[510] As does Creusa (*Aen* 2.785-787); see Chapter 3 above.

[511] As Oliensis (2009: 118) remarks the implication that she is beheaded makes this an "unusually

On the other hand, Ovid narrates the deaths of both women in some detail, with emphasis on their purity and virginity. While the poet often rehabilitates obscure myths or even invents new ones, here he is working within a long tradition, and his interaction with his sources is particularly pointed.[512] For example, Ovid draws on Lucretius' version of the sacrifice of Iphigenia only to subvert it: as Keith (2000: 108) points out, Lucretius makes her blood a source of defilement when he describes the Greek leaders "foully staining the virgin's altar with Iphianassa's blood" (*virginis aram | Iphianassai turparunt sanguine foede*, *DRN* 1.84-85).[513] Yet Ovid describes her blood as chaste (*castum…cruorem,* 12.30) and virginal (*sanguine virgineo*, 12.28), highlighting Iphigenia's innocence.[514] This idea is reiterated in Ulysses' retelling in Book 13, when he describes her as "undeserving" (*inmeritam*, 13.185) and thus hints at the irony that a chaste woman is being sacrificed in order to ensure the recovery of a transgressive one.[515]

The poet further portrays Iphigenia as a victim of overwhelming (masculine) political forces by explaining that "public good conquered *pietas* and the king conquered the father"

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grisly version" of Polyxena's story. Cf. Putnam 1961: 193; Papaioannou 2007: 234.

[512] On Ovid's use of tragic model, see Bömer 1982 *ad loc.,* Curley 2013: 153-160, 185-200. As Papaioannou (2007: 230) puts it, discussing Polyxena specifically, "Set inside a self-conscious literary environment with characters that switch roles and even identities, Polyxena in the *Metamorphoses* develops into a convincing personality, standing on a 'borrowed' past of diffused but intelligently enmeshed origins."

[513] Nugent (1994), while not specifically treating the Iphigenia passage, has argued that Lucretius persistently associates the female with dirt and death throughout *De Rerum Natura.*

[514] Ovid's language echoes Aeschylus' description of "streams of slaughtered maiden's blood" (παρθενοσφάγοισιν ῥείθροις, *Ag.* 209-201) and "virgin blood" (παρθενίου θ᾽ αἵματος, *Ag.* 215).

[515] Made explicit by Aeschylus (*Ag.* 62) and Euripides (*IA*, 1168-69). As Rabinowitz (1993: 51) points out, Euripides introduces a further irony that the war is supposedly being waged to prevent the seizure (ἁρπαγάς, *IA* 1266; cf. ἁρπάζειν, 1381; ἀνήρπασεν, 1382) of Greek women, but Iphigenia herself is to be seized against her will (ἄξει δ᾽οὐχ ἑκοῦσαν ἁρπάσας, *IA* 1365.

(*pietatem publica causa | rexque patrem vicit*, 12.29-30).[516] This brief and balanced *sententia*

evokes Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis,* in which Agamemnon is persuaded to sacrifice his

daughter by political and practical concerns, with the intention of appeasing his restive troops

more than Artemis (*IA* 511-542).[517] In Euripides' version, Iphigenia becomes a form of cur-

rency that will buy the support of the Greek army. A similar impression is created by Ulys-

ses' retelling in *Metamorphoses* 13, where he boasts of overcoming Agamemnon's parental

ingenium "to the public advantage" (*ad publica commoda,* 13.188; cf. *utilitas populi*,

13.192). The focus on "public good" indicates Iphigenia's function as a scapegoat for the

Greek male community and, as Papaioannou (2007: 41) suggests, it is deeply ironic that their

heroic project will be founded on a destructive act of violence against an innocent.[518] Ulysses

concludes that the result of his persuasions was that Agamemnon resolved "to buy praise

with blood" (*laudem ut cum sanguine penset*, 13.192), economic language that clarifies Iphi-

genia's role as commodity. Her objectification allows the male community to reconstitute

themselves as subjects.

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[516] Ulysses in Book 13 attributes this conquest to his own influence (*atque in rege tamen pater est, ego mite parentis | ingenium verbis ad publica commoda verti*, 13.187-188). Cf. Tissol (1997: 56-57) on Agamemnon's "cleavage of identity" here.

[517] As Rabinowitz (1993: 38) puts it, both Menelaus and Agamemnon emerge in their *agon* as "mor-ally bankrupt" and generally self-serving. Rabinowitz argues that Iphigenia's eventual willingness to die is required by the play's earlier destabilization of heroic values: "In effect, she shores up the status quo within the plays." Like Livy's Lucretia, Iphigenia becomes "a mouthpiece for the convictions of [her] persecutor" (Joplin 1990: 55; cf. Rabinowitz 1993: 52), authorizing the male sexual rivalry that has led to her death and rationalizing her sacrifice as a means of protecting Greek women from rape (*IA* 1379-1382) and of "liberating" Greece (*IA* 1384). As Rabinowitz 1993: 51 puts it, "She dies 'freely' to protect not her freedom, but male freedom to possess women."

[518] As she puts it, "the projection of victimized innocence as a catalyst for the accomplishment of *kleos* signals the systematic destruction of the traditional heroic ethos."

Ovid reinforces Iphigenia's victimization by isolating her in a crowd of male onlookers, including the weeping attendants (*flentibus…ministris*, 12.31) and the throng of officiants (*turbam sacri vocesque precantum*, 12.33).[519] The word order of line 12.31, which literally surrounds Iphigenia with the *flentibus…ministris* dramatizes her place in the scene. Like Dido and Camilla in the *Aeneid*, Iphigenia becomes a spectacle for the male gaze at the (supposed) moment of her death. Ovid therfore exposes an innocent virgin to the kind of treatment reserved by Homer and Vergil for transgressive women. In fact, it is Iphigenia's very virtue that makes her vulnerable: her virginity is what makes her a valuable commodity to her father, both as a daughter to be exchanged in marriage and as a sacrifice whose purity is required for the ritual to be effective.[520] Unlike the tragic Iphigenia who protests (*Ag.* 228, 235-238; *IA* 1211-1252) or eventually accepts (*IA* 1369-1401) her fate, Ovid's Iphigenia is silent. A mute pawn who stands waiting at the altar (*ante aram stetit,* 12.31), she appears more as object than person, more as signifier than subject.

Yet the poet's conclusion subverts the expectations raised by *sanguine virgineo* and *castum cruorem* when he introduces the version, familiar from Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris*, that the girl was rescued by the last-minute substitution of a hind (*supposita mutasse cerva*, 12.34).[521] Ovid, however, refuses to lend this story his poetic authority, instead describing it in indirect discourse after the inspecific *fertur* (12.34). As discussed with the use

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[519] On this motif in other versions, see Keith (2000: 109-110) on Lucretius and Marsh (1992: 275-276) on Aeschylus.

[520] See Scodel 1996 on the sacrifice of the virgin daughter as "a wasteful form of overconspicuous consumption" (112). Scodel shows that Iphigenia in the *Agamemnon* and Polyxena in the *Hecuba* are represented as precious commodities (ἀγάλματα δόμων) that are wasted and recklessly destroyed by their sacrifices. On the implications of the programmatic verb *mutare* (1.1-2), cf. Tissol 1997: 17; Reed 2013 *ad loc.*; Papaioannou 2007: 41-42.

of *videor* elsewhere, this construction leaves open the possibility that Iphigenia's murder is indeed carried out, and it is therefore, perhaps, significant that Ulysses does not mention the substitution in his brief recapitulation of the incident (13.181-195). In fact, the use of *fertur*, coupled with the digression on Rumor that immediately follows (12.39-63) hints that the story of the hind is more *fama* than *factum*.[522] The confluence of virtuous virginity and bloody death (whether fulfilled or forestalled) subverts earlier epic's tendency to avoid the topic of Iphigenia and anticipates the more extensive and graphic description of Polyxena's sacrifice in Book 13.

Indeed, the two victims are so similar that they are often regarded as "mirror images" (Curley 2013: 187) of each other: both royal daughters, both innocent virgins, both sacrificed in the interests of the Greek male collective.[523] Yet there is also a significant difference: as a war captive, Polyxena has (like Cassandra, see Chapter 2, on the *Odyssey,* above) lost her marriageability and therefore her status.[524] She is emphatically an outsider, while Iphigenia is emphatically an insider. Polyxena has no one to protect her, but a central part of Iphigenia's

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[521] As Keith (2000: 122) puts it, "Ovid occludes the real physical violence entailed in the sacrifice to titillate his audience by tendering and then withdrawing a display of sacrificial female flesh."

[522] Reed (2013 *ad loc.*) suggests that the use of *fertur* here "anticipa la natura incerta di Fama." Cf. Curley (2013: 187) on the use of "Alexandrian footnote" to obscure any authorial authorization of Iphigenia's substitution: "It is the reader's part to decide whether or not Iphigenia lives on."

[523] But see Thalmann (1993: 136-148) on the "critical differences" between the two stories. He concludes that there are two facets of Polyxena, one as a female object of male violence (like Iphigenia) but one that, unlike Iphigenia, aspires to a heroic masculinity (148). Another significant difference is that there is no question of Polyxena's being rescued by substitution.

[524] Scodel (1998: 144; cf. 1996: 124) has noted the anomaly that Polyxena is still a virgin after the sack of the city and apparently has not been apportioned to one of the Greek leaders.

tragedy is that the men who are responsible for protecting her—her father, her uncle, her fellow Greeks—have turned against her.[525] Yet Ovid, as Curley (2013: 193-200) has argued, associates the two characters through a series of intertextual echoes between his Polyxena and the Iphigenias of earlier tragedy.[526] In reinforcing the link between the two characters, the poet encourages us to read back the violence of Polyxena's death into the much briefer account of Iphigenia's sacrifice.[527] The two women become links in a chain exemplifying the violent and threatening potential of the male body politic, which is willing to inflict suffering and death on innocent women for the sake of its own *utilitas*.

The narrative of Polyxena's sacrifice begins, like Iphigenia's, with the demand that she die in order to appease (*placet*, 13.448; cf. *placandam*, 12.28) an angry figure. Yet in this case, that figure is Achilles, not Diana, and so Polyxena functions, even more than Iphigenia, as a form of currency exchanged between men. Unlike Ovid's Iphigenia, however, Polyxena makes herself an active participant in her sacrifice and insists on her subjectivity in death:

> fortis et infelix et plus quam femina virgo

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[525] As is hinted by Segal (1990b: 111), comparing Iphigenia in the *Agamemnon* and *IA* with Polyxena in the *Hecuba*. Polyxena's sacrifice brings the Greek community together, by allowing the Greeks to propitiate their dead comrade. Iphigenia's initially drives the community apart, yet the conflicts—between Agamemnon and the other Greeks, between *rex* and *pater*—are eventually resolved. In *Iphigenia at Aulis*, she herself resolves them by volunteering to die in order to prevent further discord: as Rabinowitz (1993: 52) puts it, "she thus facilitates loyalty between men by not demanding or accepting loyalty to herself,"

[526] For example, Curley argues that *rapta sinu matris* (13.450) evokes Euripides' Iphigenia, that *crudelibus aris* (13.453) are out of place in the Polyxena episode (her blood was spilled directly on the ground), but are prominent in representations of Iphigenia's sacrifice, and that Polyxena's ignorance that it is Achilles who demands her sacrifice (cf. *quisquis is est,* 13.468) echoes Iphigenia's inability to identify Achilles, whom she has never met, in the *IA* (1338). Most importantly, the tears shed by Neoptolemus (*flens,* 13.475) seem more appropriate to the Iphigenia episode (cf. *flentibus…ministris*, 12.31; δάκρυε, *IA* 1549) since she is being sacrificed by her family and countrymen. For a thorough overview of the tragic intertexts in the Polyxena episode, see Bömer 1982 *ad loc.*

[527] Cf. Dippel 1990: 24-25, n. 8 on how the extensive treatment of Polyxena balances the much briefer discussion of Iphigenia.

ducitur ad tumulum diroque fit hostia busto.
quae memor ipsa sui postquam crudelibus aris
admota est sensitque sibi fera sacra parari,
utque Neoptolemum stantem ferrumque tenentem;
inque suo vidit figentem lumina vultu,
'utere iamdudum generoso sanguine' dixit
'nulla mora est; at tu iugulo vel pectore telum
conde meo' iugulumque simul pectusque retexit. (13.451-459)

The virgin—unhappy and brave and greater than woman—
is lead to the mount and becomes a victim on that dreadful tomb.
But she remained aware of herself even after she approached
the cruel altars and realized that the savage rites were being prepared for her,
and as she saw Neoptolemus standing there and holding the knife
and fixing his eyes on her face,
she said: "make use of my noble blood at once;
there is no delay, but bury your weapon either in my throat
or my chest"—and she uncovered both her throat and her chest.

The poet is explicit about the cruelty and savagery of the sacrifice (cf. *diro,* 13.452; *crudelibus*, 13.453; *fera* 13.454). The gruesomeness of Polyxena's death is indicated by her repeated references to bloodshed (13.457, 468, 469) and the narrator's gory description of Hecuba's hair clotted with her daughter's blood (*canitiem…concretam sanguine,* 13.492).[528]

Nor does the poet avert his eyes or direct the reader's gaze from the actual moment of death but describes it I detail. Neoptolemus "broke open the proffered chest with a thrust of the knife" (*praebita coniecto rupit praecordia ferro*, 13.476) and she falls "slipping down on her faltering knee" (*defecto poplite labens,* 13.477).[529] Echoing the version of Euripides, Polyxena offers her murderer the choice of stabbing her in the heart or slitting her throat (*at tu iugulo vel pectore telum | conde meo,* 13.458-459; cf. Eur. *Hec.* 563-565). Yet Ovid's Neoptolemus makes a different choice from Euripides': in the play, he cuts her throat (*Hec.* 567),

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[528] Cf. Vergil's Hector: *concretos sanguine crinis* (*Aen.* 2.277).

[529] Cf. Catullus on Polyxena (*proiciet truncum sum misso poplite corpus,* 64.370).

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but in the epic he stabs her in the heart (*rupit praecordia*, 13.476). Loraux (1987: 60) suggests that Ovid makes this change in order to emphasize Polyxena's manliness: the chest is the *locus* of male death, and Ovid has described Polyxena's bravery as making her "more than a woman" (*fortis…et plus quam femina virgo*, 13.451).[530] Yet this gesture also highlights Polyxena's victimization: the only heroism she can aspire to is one in which she becomes the passive object of male violence.[531]

Further, as we have often seen, death by the sword can have erotic overtones, and Polyxena herself seems aware of this possibility. The assimilation of death to defloration is already suggested when she is "snatched from the lap of her mother" (*rapta sinu matris,* 13.450), language that evokes rape.[532] The sexual imagery is highlighted when Polyxena bares her upper body (13.459) and invites Neoptolemus to penetrate her with his sword (*telum* 13.458-459).[533] This pornographic image presents Polyxena as an erotic object for the

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[530] Cf. *animae tam fortis,* 13.488. Hecuba's speech also compares Polyxena's death to those of her brothers, who also died by the sword and at the hands of Achilles (13.498-499). Hardie (2002: 42) views Polyxena's bravery in death as a "very Roman" instance of courage in the face of "the tyrant's arbitrary control over the body." Papaioannou (2007) goes further, arguing that the episode "revers[es] the gender roles between the warrior and his female victim" (208) and that Polyxena "appropriates Achilles' values and Achilles' heroic personality" (230). Cf. Michelakis 2002: 66 on Polyxena's assumption of the heroic role and her displacement of Achilles as the agent of her own sacrifice in the *Hecuba.*

[531] Scodel (1996: 122) points out regarding the Euripidean version that Polyxena's actions ultimately highlight her difference from male heroes on the battlefield, who do not tend to uncover themselves and invite their opponents to kill them (cf. Mossman 1995: 160).

[532] Cf. Keith 2000: 123; Papaioannou 2007: 238.

[533] Ovid echoes Euripides, *Hecuba* 557-565. As James 1995 points out, the use of *condere* to mean "bury a weapon" in a person is unattested before the *Aeneid*, where it is used conspicuously of both the founding of the future Roman city (*dum conderet urbem,* 1.5) and of the killing of Turnus (*ferrum adverso sub pectore condit,* 12.950). As she argues, the innovative use of *condere* "shows Rome's founding as partly accomplished by and dependent upon the violent death of one of Rome's ancestors" (1995: 636). Ovid's use of this construction here hints at the politicization of the female corpse in Latin epic identified by Keith (2000: 101-131). Polyxena's death, like Iphigenia's, is carried out for the benefit of the male military/political community of Greek allies (*sociis,* 13.449), as is indicated by her command to Neoptolemus to "make use of" her blood (*utere… sanguine*, 13.457). Likewise,

gaze of the male spectators,[534] and, indeed, as she approaches the tomb she sees Neoptolemus "fixing his eyes" on her (*inque suo…figentem lumina vultu*, 13.456).[535] Polyxena herself acknowledges the erotic potential of her actions when she warns the Greeks to "withdraw your masculine hands from touching the virgin" (*tactuque viriles | virgineo removete manus*, 13.466-467). She therefore seems "uneasily aware"[536] of the thematic overlap between death and defloration and insists that she reach the underworld "free" (*libera*, 13.465; cf. 13.469), by which she seems to mean *virgo intacta*.[537] She explains her wish in terms of her worth as sacrifice: her blood will be "more pleasing" (*acceptior*, 13.467) if it is free.[538] Polyxena correctly locates her own value in her virginity and purity and is concerned to maintain it by resisting the erotic implications of her sacrifice. In a gesture that ironically reverses her earlier self-exposure, she takes care even in death to "cover the parts that ought to be covered" (*partes velare tegendas*, 13.479).[539]

Ulysses' describes Iphigenia's death as contributing to the *utilitas populi* (13.191). Cf. Rabinowitz 1993: 57; Michelakis 2002: 65-66 on the *Hecuba*.

[534] Cf. Rabinowitz (1993: 54), on Euripides' Polyxena as "involved in a quasi-pornographic script that work[s] out the dynamic of active/passive, dominant/submissive, male/female by rendering them objects for the male gaze as well as of the knife (which also stands in for the phallus and the law)."

[535] On the erotic overtones of this expression, see Hardie (2015: *ad* 13.454-45). He cites 4.196-197 (Sol sees Leucothoe), 7.87 (Medea sees Jason), and 10.601 (Hippomenes sees Atalanta) for *figo* used of the desiring gaze. As Hardie puts it regarding the scene in general (2015: *ad* 465-469), "L'episodio è imbevuto di tensione sessuale."

[536] Keith 2000: 123. Cf. Papaioannou 2007: 238.

[537] Cf. Euripides' repetition ἐλευθέραν…ἐλευθέρα, *Hec.* 550. In the *Aeneid*, Andromache considers Polyxena "blessed above all other women" (*felix una ante alias*, *Aen.* 3.321) because she escaped the fate

of concubine and rape-captive.

[538] On the other hand, Euripides' Polyxena wishes to maintain her freedom in order to avoid shame of being called a slave (δούλη κεκλῆσθαι…αἰσχύνομαι, *Hec.* 552).

[539] Cf. κρύπτουσ᾽ ἃ κρύπτειν ὄμματ᾽ ἀρσένων χρεών, Eur. *Hec.* 570. As Scodel (1996: 125) puts it,

In baring her breast and covering her genitals, Polyxena demonstrates an acute aware-

ness of the performative aspects of her death and her role as spectacle. Her death-scene has

much more in common with those of Dido, Camilla, or the Ithacan maids, all of whom are

positioned as objects of a collective male gaze in their last moments, than with the invisible

deaths of virtuous women. In the narrator's words, Polyxena covers herself "to preserve the

glory of her chaste *pudor*" (*castique decus servare pudoris*, 13.480). Her last act exemplifies

her concern for virtue, and it is ironic that the poet showcases her virtue at the very moment

of her death.[540] In Polyxena, Ovid dramatizes the reverse of the Homeric and Vergilian para-

digm, exposing the bloody death of an innocent woman in a way that relentlessly dramatizes

that innocence.

The poet reinforces the tragedy of Polyxena's fate and increases sympathy for her

with his description of the effect of her death on others. As with Iphigenia, the watching

crowd weeps at her death (*at populus lacrimas…non tenet*, 13.474-475; cf. *flentibus…minis-

tris,* 12.31).[541] Ovid has again subtly altered the Euripidean version, where the people shout

approval of Polyxena's heroism (λαοὶ δ᾽ ἐπερρόθησαν, *Hec.* 553).[542] Even Neoptolemus

weeps as he murders her and is called "unwilling" (*ipse etiam flens invitusque sacerdos,*

Euripides' Polyxena "invites the voyeuristic gaze for rhetorical effect and then reminds the voyeurs
that it is not right for them to see." Cf. Zeitlin (1991: 74): Polyxena's action is "a provocative gesture
that is both an erotic display and a show of untouchability." Ovid's Lucretia is similarly concerned to
to preserve her modesty in death (*tum quoque iam moriens ne non procumbat honeste | respicit: haec
etiam cura cad entis erat, Fasti* 2.833-834).

[540] Cf. Papaioannou 2007: 244.

[541] As is also the case with Lucretius' Iphigenia: *lacrimas effundere civis* (*DRN* 1.91).

[542] Talthybius admits to weeping at her death (*Hec.* 520) and both he and Neoptolemus pity Polyxena
(οἴκτῳ, *Hec.* 519; 566), but there is no mention of tears from the general spectators, only admiration
for her bravery (cf. *Hec.* 571-580).

13.474-475). This is another intensification of the Euripidean version, in which Neoptolemus is both willing and unwilling (ὃ δ᾽ οὐ θέλων τε καὶ θέλων, *Hec.* 566). In Ovid's retelling, even Polyxena's persecutors believe her death is inappropriate and unjust.

Hecuba's impassioned speech of mourning adds further *pathos* to Polyxena's death, as Anna's (*Aen.* 4.675-685) and Opis' (*Aen.* 11.841-849) did for Dido and Camilla.[543] She also highlights the paradox that these (masculine) wounds have been inflicted on a woman:

> tu quoque vulnus habes; at te, quia femina, rebar
> a ferro tutam: cecidisti et femina ferro.
>
> "You also have a wound; but you, because you are a woman, I thought
> safe from the sword, but though you are a woman you have fallen by the sword as
> well." (13.497-498)

Papaioannou (2007: 243) has noted the effective alliteration of these lines and the interlocked structure of *femina* and *ferro,* "representing not only opposite genders but also opposite gen-res." Hecuba highlights the paradox of Ovid's treatment of female death: she, like the experienced reader of Homer and Vergil, does not expect to see her daughter die—as a royal virgin (13.523), she should be "safe from the sword." This expectation will continue to be subverted by the poet, who has demonstrated over the course of the entire poem that all women—regardless of their sexual status—are vulnerable to violent and sexualized deaths.

The story of the daughters of Orion, also told in Book 13, shares many thematic similarities with the narrative of Polyxena. This tale is told in an ecphrasis embedded in the larger

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[543] Indeed, several intertextual echoes link the reactions of Anna and Hecuba: *semianimemque sinu germanam amplexa fovebat* (*Aen.* 4.686) // *quae corpus conplexa animae tam fortis inane* (*Met.* 13.488); *exstinxti te meque, soror* (*Aen.* 4.682) // *tuum, mea vulnera, vulnus* (*Met.* 13.495); *date, vulnera lymphis | abluam* (*Aen.* 4.683) // *quid moror interea crudelia vulnera lymphis | abluere* (*Met.* 13.531-532); *extremus si quis super halitus errat | ore legam* (*Aen.*4.684-685) // *oscula ore tegit* (*Met.* 13.491).

narrative of Aeneas' visit to Anius, king of Delos. Anius' own daughters were once appropriated by Agamemnon, who intended to use their miraculous ability to turn anything into food and drink to supply his troops (13.650-659). The girls flee to their brother, but Agamemnon threatens war (13.622) and "*pietas* was overcome by fear" (*victa metu pietas*, 13.663).[544] Again, the lives of innocent women are made subordinate to male interests, in a story that conflates Iphigenia and Polyxena: the daughters are given up by their own brother, as Iphigenia is sacrificed by her family, and handed over to foreigners who intend to foster their communal interests at the girls' expense, as the Greeks use Polyxena to placate Achilles' shade. The daughters of Anius are "rescued" by being transformed into birds—if, as their father bitterly remarks, "to destroy them in a marvelous fashion" (*miro perdere more,* 13.670) can be considered a rescue. The verb *perdo* is also used by Hecuba of Polyxena's murder earlier in the book (*perdidit*, 13.499), and its appearance here strongly suggests that these women are linked as victims of an overwhelming male collective that has no qualms about using female bodies for its own ends.

The presence of the daughters of Orion within the Anius-narrative suggests, as Keith (2000: 125) points out, that the two stories should be read as a pair. Anius gives Aeneas a cup engraved with the sacrifice of the Orionids. Like Polyxena, these women went willingly to their deaths and are pictured in the act and aftermath of their sacrifice:

> ecce facit mediis natas Orione Thebis
> hac non femineum iugulo dare vulnus aperto,
> illac demisso per fortia pectora telo
> pro populo cecidisse suo pulchrisque per urbem
> funeribus ferri celebrique in parte cremari.

Look, in the midst of Thebes he makes the daughters of Orion:

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[544] The language here closely echoes Agamemnon's own decision to give up Iphigenia (*pietatem public causa…vicit,* 12.29-30).

on one side, a girl is receiving an unwomanly wound in her open throat,
on the other, here sister has fallen with the spear piercing her brave chest,
fallen for her people, and they are being carried through the city
in a beautiful funeral, and are being burned amid the throng. (13.692-696)

The Orionids die a "manly" death on behalf of their city: one receives an "unwomanly wound" (*non femineum…vulnus,* 13.693) and the other offers her "brave chest" (*fortia pectora,* 13.694) to the spear.[545] They die "for their people" (*pro populo…suo*, 13.695) and are displayed "in a beautiful funeral" (*pulchris…funeribus,* 13.695-696). The daughters of Orion are, in death, doubly marked as objects of the male gaze. Within the ecphrasis, their lifeless bodies are carried through the city and burned "amid the throng" (*celebrique in parte,* 13.696), and they are also literal objects, engraved on the cup presented by Anius to Aeneas.[546] The reader too is invited to view their deaths through the demonstrative *ecce* that opens the sequence (13.692). As Iphigenia and Polyxena are subjected to the gaze of a crowd of spectators, so are the Orionids, yet their objectification is overdetermined by the multiple layers of looking embedded within the narrative. While Homer and Vergil averted the gaze of the reader from the sight of an innocent woman in death, Ovid concentrates multiple gazes on the Orionids and explicitly constructs them as spectacle.

The objectification of the Orionids is compounded when twin boys are born "from the virginal ash" (*de virginea…favilla,* 13.697) and proceed to lead the funeral procession for their 'mothers' (*cineri materno ducere pompam,* 13.698).[547] The female victims are literally

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[545] As Hardie (2015: *ad* 13.692-695) points out, the two modes of death for the two sisters significantly echo the Polyxena episode "distribuendo fra le due la scelta di bersagli offerta da Polissena al suo uccisore."

[546] As Keith (2000: 126) puts it, "Memorialised on Alcon's cup, Orion's daughters die quite literally for the viewing pleasure of the epic hero Aeneas and his readers."

[547] Papaioannou (2005: 39-40) suggests that the youths—significantly named "Coroni"—should be

erased, replaced with male offspring who are explicitly created "so that the race may not per-

ish" (*ne genus intereat,* 13.698). Papaioannou (2005: 22-32; cf. Galinsky 1975: 221) suggests

that the story is ultimately positive: the birth of the Coroni from the women's ashes looks for-

ward to the birth of Rome from the ashes of Troy. This may be so, yet it is problematic that

the continuity of the family and community, explicitly gendered male, is, once again,

grounded in the deaths of innocent women. The miraculous replacement of female children

with male "so that the race may not perish" suggests that women's bodies are valueless ex-

cept as vessels for male offspring.

The Orionids bear some resemblance to Euripides' Iphigenia and Polyxena, who die

willingly on behalf of the heroic community. Rabinowitz (1993: 61) has argued that the Eu-

ripidean victims attempt to assert some subjectivity in their voluntary deaths, but ultimately

succeed only in justifying their objectification.[548] Likewise, the self-sacrifice of the Orionids

absolves the Thebans of their murder and enables the maintenance of a comforting fiction,

that the women are heroes who have given their lives, rather than casualties of inexorable

forces that they are powerless to resist.[549] Ovid's version of epic—his "Little *Iliad*" and "Lit-

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linked to Coronis and the rescue of Aesculapius from her ashes in Book 2. It is an important differ-
ence, however, that this metamorphosis is an instance of true parthenogenesis (*virginea,* 13.697)
whereas Coronis is already pregnant with Aesculpaius when she dies.

[548] Cf. Segal (1990b: 316) on Polyxena: her self-assertion is "ultimately paradoxical, resting as it does
on female submission to male violence." On the other hand, Papaioannou (2007: 239) speaks of "Po-
lyxena's successful effort…to gain some control over the role that has been prescribed for her by
Achilles' ghost."

[549] Hardie (2015: *ad* 13.692-695) suggests that the language of dying *pro populo* evokes the idea of
devotio, the ritualized practice in which a Roman leader would vow himself to the gods and ride into
the thick of battle, determined to die in order to secure victory. On *devotio,* see van Hooff 2002: 126-
128; Edwards 2007: 25-28. The most significant difference, in my view, is that *devotio* occurs in bat-
tle, with the leader voluntarily taking upon himself the deaths of his troops (cf. *pro exercitu,* Livy,
AUC 9.9; *luendis periculis publicis, AUC* 10.28.13) and also, as Versnel (1976) emphasizes, offering

tle *Aeneid*"—includes a sequence of women—Iphigenia, Polyxena, the Aniads, and the Orionids—who are used and abused by the male community for their own ends, and it is significant that these women are mentioned barely or not at all by his epic predecessors. Homer and Vergil either ignore or downplay the female sacrifices that bookend the Trojan War, whereas Ovid brings them to the fore, refusing to play along with the epic program's erasure of the women whose victimization grounds male heroism and heroic endeavors. These narratives represent the logical conclusion of the pattern initiated in the first book of the poem according to which selfish and thoughtless male desires repeatedly expose the female body to danger, death, and metamorphosis. Throughout the *Metamorphoses* women have suffered and died because of the actions of individual males, but in Ovid's revision of Homeric/Vergilian epic, women die for the good of the male collective that excludes them. By including Iphigenia and Polyxena and adding the Aniads, and Orionids to his version of epic, Ovid emphasizes the irony that male heroic projects are founded on the exploitation and sacrifice of innocent females.

Conclusion

I want to conclude with a woman who does not die (as a woman), but whose story offers a commentary on Ovid's portrayal of the female body and female vulnerability throughout the poem. Caenis, like many of the women discussed in this chapter, is extremely beautiful (12.190) and desired by many suitors (12.192); she is therefore, as so often in the poem, a

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the lives of the enemies he will kill. Further, the general is a valued member of the community, while the female virgin is not fully integrated into the group (as discussed above, note 148; cf. Rabinowitz 1993: 33-35 and Girard [1972] 1977).

victim of sexual violence.[550] Raped by Neptune, she is offered any boon she chooses in recompense, and she requests an extraordinary favor:

> 'magnum' Caenis ait 'facit haec iniuria votum,
> tale pati iam posse nihil; da, femina ne sim.'

> "This injury," said Caenis, "provokes a great prayer:
> that I may never endure such a thing again; grant that I no longer be a woman."
> (12.201-202)

Caenis' prayer constructs the female body as particularly vulnerable—to penetration, to violence, to *iniuria*—just as does Ovid's poem. Her request juxtaposes female victimhood and passivity (expressed by *pati,* 12.202; cf. *vim passa* of her rape: 12.197) with masculine potency and activity, as represented by the "manly pursuits" (*studiis virilibus,* 12.208) to which Caeneus devotes himself after his transformation. Neptune adds a further gift, in addition to the sex-change: Caeneus will also be invulnerable to wounds and impenetrable by sword or spear (12.206-207). Caeneus' invulnerability is overdetermined: in becoming a man, he is not only invulnerable to sexual violence, the *iniuria* inflicted by Poseidon, but also to violence inflicted by other men; the violence of heroic warfare.

Yet Caeneus, despite his masculinity and invulnerability, will eventually die a woman's death.[551] In battle with the centuars, he is mocked as a perpetual woman (*tu mihi*

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[550] Cf. note 83, above.

[551] Cf. Keith (1999: 238): "Nestor's narrative implicitly denies the possibility of the metamorphosis of gender." The unchangeability of Caenis/Caeneus' gender identity is suggested by a passage from Vergil: she appears as a female in the underworld, having reverted to her original gender in death (*nunc femina, Aen.* 6.448). On the other hand, Papaioannou (2007: 122-123) reads the story of Caeneus' end as confirmation of his maleness, owing to the centaurs' "repeated and impressive failures to conquer Caeneus' body in conventional battle" and argues that Ovid's version "corrects" Vergil's presentation of Caenis' reversion to femininity in the underworld.

femina semper…eris, 12.470-471) and a "half-man" (*semimari…ab hoste,* 12.499). The centaurs cannot penetrate Caeneus' body, but they eventually overcome him by burying him under a mound of trees and stones, crushing him and suffocating him (12.510-521). Paradoxically, Caeneus' miraculous impenetrability functions to deny him a masculine and honorable death by the sword or the spear. He dies like the woman he was, and his death indicates that even if a woman can erase her penetrability, her vulnerability remains.

In this tale Ovid brings together a number of the themes and gender issues that have been of concern to this study. Caenis' response to her rape emphasizes that penetrability and vulnerability are innate features of the female body, while the male body is constructed as a privileged site that is safe from the kind of *iniuria* suffered by women. Yet even the masculinized Caeneus cannot escape the innate violability of his originally-female body—he has not evaded *iniuria,* only transmuted it. This story proves paradigmatic for the fate of the female body in the *Metamorphoses*: it is a *locus* of great vulnerability—whether to sexual assault, death, or disfiguring metamorphosis—and its vulnerability cannot be erased even in transformation. The pathetic attempts of Daphne and Syrinx to escape their would-be rapists by destroying their human bodies have the same result, as they remain subject to male possession in their new forms. Polyxena and the Orionids attempt to resist their victimization and vulnerability by taking control of their deaths, but succeed only in legitimating the violence of their persecutors. Throughout the poem, women are subject to violence, death, and assault, regardless of their innocence or virtue—and often, in fact, because of it. As Ovid shows, each of these female characters might well say, with Dryope, "I suffer punishment without a crime" (*patior sine crimine poenam*, 9.372).

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This dissertation brings together three interrelated poems in order to show how

Homer and Vergil use the female body as a means of enforcing social values, and how Ovid

exposes this pattern by subverting it. Epic is a genre particularly concerned with the con-

struction of masculine social and political identity and, I argue, the ways women die in heroic

and national epic poems are indices of their compliance with or resistance to that construction. This study begins by demonstrating that Homer, our earliest extant author of Greek mythology, establishes a pattern according to which resistant women are punished with brutal and shameful deaths. Yet punishment is inflicted only on slave women, who are figured as scapegoats, and this tactic allows the poet to avoid the disturbing spectacle of violence inflicted on elite female bodies. Vergil, Homer's Roman adapter, adapts this model to suit the national character of the *Aeneid*; inverting it to inflict violence *only* on elite female bodies. I conclude by demonstrating the way Ovid draws upon the entire corpus of Greek mythology to subvert the paradigms of heroic and national epic. By amassing so many stories of the victimization of women and by relentlessly calling attention to their vulnerable bodies, Ovid exposes what is latent in earlier epic and Greek myth in general: namely, that violence and trauma are far more likely to be inflicted on women by men than inflicted on men by women.

A significant pattern emerges from the overview of women's deaths in the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*: transgressive women are always transgressive sexually, whether by excessive enthusiasm for or excessive hostility to sexuality, and they thereby resist male, patriarchal control over their bodies. For the transgressive slaves of the *Odyssey*, their sexuality is the property of their master and its only legitimate exercise is under his control and with his authorization. Further, women are expected to be passive objects of that control, as is shown when the possibility of Eurycleia's sexuality is raised only to be discarded: she might have been enjoyed by Laertes, but was not—and she had no agency in the matter at all. For the transgressive queens of the *Aeneid*, their sexuality is properly directed only towards wifehood and motherhood and only within the context of the Roman political future guaranteed by Jupiter and the Fates. Women who pursue or prefer sexual relationships unauthorized by

the epic trajectory (Dido and Amata) or who reject all sexual relationships, resisting male ownership of their bodies (Camilla) cannot fit into the gendered social and political system of the Roman future, and must therefore be eliminated. Like the slave-women of the *Odyssey*, they are scapegoats, but in this case for Juno, whose relentless opposition to Aeneas and the Trojans repeatedly threatens their mission. The divine Juno cannot be killed, but the deaths of her surrogates and pawns permit the poet to resolve the issue of female opposition to the Roman mission, as the deaths of slave-women did in the *Odyssey*.

Ovid's revision of earlier epic is prominently demonstrated by his inversion the demonization of female sexuality in Homer and Vergil. His predecessors portray female bodies as legitimately objects of male control, but Ovid demonstrates the many ways that men and gods exercise illegitimate control over women's bodies, to the point of destroying them. Dangerous female sexuality is not an overt concern of the *Metamorphoses*. Rather, the poet regularly dramatizes the dangers of *male* sexuality, particularly to female bodily integrity and self-determination. Men and gods attempt to wrest control of the body from women through rape, metamorphosis, and violence, and even when they fail, the woman often loses her (human) body nonetheless. With this repeated, emphatic pattern, Ovid exposes the fallacy that undergirds Homer and Vergil's representations of female sexuality: far from endangering male heroes and heroic projects, women are constantly endangered by both.

My future work on this project will expand my discussion of Ovid to provide a more detailed account of the intricacies and complexities of his treatment of female death. I will therefore include discussions of individual women whose narratives did not fall within the scope of my current project. For example, the dismembering of the female body in metamorphosis occurs in tales not treated here, including Niobe (*Met.* 6.301-312) and the Bacchants

(*Met.* 11.67-84); in discussing these tales, I will also consider whether the motif of dismemberment changes when metamorphosis is used as a punishment. I will also expand my treatment of innocent and virtuous women in order to discuss the variable ways women are endangered by men, as when Procris and Eurydice are put at risk by their husbands' carelessness, despite their fidelity and mutual affection. In such stories, the poet demonstrates that women's bodies are vulnerable to a variety of dangers.

In expanding this project for publication, I will also discuss the treatment of female death in Latin historical epic, particularly Lucan and Silius. Although the *Pharsalia* and the *Punica* participate in the epic trajectory of Homer and Vergil, their authors depart from earlier epic poets by refraining from including any prominent examples of carnographic female death. Instead, the poets treat women *ex post morte,* and their deaths are preludes to, and causes of, male death and suffering. Thus, Julia—like Helen—is positioned as the active instigator of war between Caesar and Pompey when she, by dying, "takes away the pledges of their shared blood" (*pignora iuncti | sanguinis… abstulit, Phars.* 1.111-114).[552] Likewise, Silius' Hannibal embarks on his war against the Romans in Dido's temple, built on the site of her death (*Pun.* 1.85-86) and housing the sword she used to take her life (*Pun.* 1.91). He swears on Dido's ghost (*per manes, regina, tuos, Pun.* 1.119) to continue the war she instigated, in words that evoke the Vergilian Dido's final curse (*Romanos… ferro ignique sequar, Pun.* 1.115; cf. *qui face Dardanios ferroque sequare colonos, Aen.* 4.626). Dido is represented as Hannibal's ancestress (*genetrix,* 1.81), and, as Augoustakis (2010: 94-95, 98-99)

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[552] Keith (2000: 86) points out that this depiction reverses the Virgilian sequence by which Lavinia's marriage is the issue of the war: Julia's marriage joined Pompey and Caesar, and her death dissolves them.

has argued, becomes a surrogate mother for him.[553] Silius thus picks up and expands upon Vergil's image of Dido summoning Hannibal from her bones to avenge her death (*Aen.* 4.625), associating her even more closely with the outbreak of war. In these poems, dead women instigate the wars that men must fight.

Lucan and Silius revive the Homeric/Vergilian project of blaming a transgressive woman for a destructive conflict. In the *Aeneid,* Dido's call for eternal war between Rome and Carthage implicitly justified her death. Silius evokes but alters this structure. As Keith (2000: 127) has noted, the poet again constructs Dido's suicide as spectacle: like the death of the Orionids, discussed in Chapter 4 above, it is presented in an ecphrasis. Hannibal's breast-plate is engraved with Dido's history in Carthage, culminating in the image of her standing wounded on her pyre and demanding the war that will avenge her (*ipsa pyram super ingentem stans saucia Dido | mandabat Tyriis ultricia bella futuris*, *Phars.* 2.422-423). Dido is positioned as an object of the reader's gaze through the programmatic *ecce* that announces the ecphrasis (*Pun.* 2.395), as an object of Hannibal's gaze as he "surveys" (*lustrat …oculis, Pun.* 2.405) the breastplate, and finally as an object of the internal audience's gaze, as Aeneas views her pyre from his ship (*spectabat, Pun.* 2.424). Yet, despite the "spectacularizing" of Dido's death, unlike Vergil, Silius does not depict the suicide in carnographic detail. Instead, he abruptly cuts short his narration just before her death: the epic gaze pans away from Dido standing atop her pyre to the Trojan ships watching it burn; the actual moment of Dido's death is elided in a way that recalls the treatment of virtuous women's deaths in earlier epic.

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[553] As Augoustakis (2010: 99) points out, this imagery is paradoxical since Vergil's Dido is emphatically *not* a mother; she has never born children.

Similarly, Tiburna's death—although it re-enacts, in many respects, Dido's suicide in the *Aeneid*[554]—is not described carnographically. She kills herself on her husband's tomb and with his sword, but her death is narrated much more briefly and with less detail than Dido's: the thrust of the sword is described with a brief ablative absolute (*ense recepto,* 2.679) and she then "falls over the arms" (*arma super ruit,* 2.680). The use of *ruo* is unusual, and evokes rushing into battle (cf. *in media arma ruamus, Aen.* 2.353), and indeed Tiburna is portrayed more as Fury than woman throughout. First, Tisiphone assumes Tiburna's appearance to spur the Saguntines to mutual destruction (2.553-579), but then Tiburna herself, in her last rush to her husband's tomb, is compared to Allecto (2.671-674). Her grotesque appearance—hair standing on end, arms bare, breasts livid with bruises (2.667-668)—adds to her monstrous qualities. Conflated with two Furies, she becomes more monster than human, and the overlap between her and Tisiphone again inscribes woman as the cause of horrific slaughter.[555]

Lucan too, although he often refers to Julia's death as the impetus for civil war, avoids describing it in any detail. Rather than appearing as a living woman and virtuous wife who suffers and dies in childbirth, Julia emerges as a ghastly Fury who hounds her husband from beyond the grave.[556] She is thus a horrific inversion of Vergil's Creusa: another *imago*

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[554] Cf. Augoustakis 2010: 134.

[555] Cf. Keith 2000: 92-93 on the gendered structure of epic warfare as represented by this passage.

[556] See Chiu 2010: 354 on Julia's warmongering as a reversal of her previous role preventing war between Caesar and Pompey; her threat to pursue Pompey "in the midst of the battle-lines" is a perverse inversion of Book 1's image of her as a Sabine throwing herself in the middle of a battle to prevent war between husband and father (1.114-119). See Keith (2000: 86-88) on Julia as Fury.

(*Phars*. 3.9, *Aen*. 2.773) who returns to her husband with a final message.[557] Yet her message is one of despair rather than hope: she promises death and disaster for her former husband, concluding "civil war will make you mine" (*te faciet civile meum, Phars.* 3.34). Julia confounds Roman gender roles by declaring that Pompey is her possession, rather than she his. She remains a *casus belli* even after death: Pompey responds to this terrifying vision by rushing even more forcefully into battle (*maior in arma ruit, Phars.* 3.37). Because of the civil war, Julia takes up a new place among the "guilty" shades (*ad…manesque nocentis | post bellum civile trahor, Phars.* 3.14-15).[558] She, like Silius' Dido, is made responsible for the wars to come.

I will argue, then, that Lucan and Silius, by erasing the female body in death, open up a new space for the construction of gender in epic poetry. The authors replace the punishment of the female body with images of the destructive effects of women on the bodies of men. Whereas the execution of the maids in the *Odyssey* and the deaths of Dido, Camilla, and Amata in the *Aeneid* resolved the dangers of female sexuality and subjectivity by eliminating problematic women from the poem, in the *Pharsalia* and the *Punica*, the threat of the militant female extends beyond the grave. Dead women are invested with the power to spur conflict between living men, and male death comes to the fore as a dramatization of the consequences

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[557] Cf. Narducci 1979: 23–24; Hübner 1984; Thompson 1984: 210; Rossi 2000: 578; Chiu 2010: 350; Bernstein 2011: 262-263.

[558] Although Cornelia does not die, she too is presented as bringing doom and destruction to men, particularly her husbands (3.22; 8.88-90, 639-640; cf. Keith 2000: 88-90). Because both Crassus and Pompey are military leaders, Cornelia also considers herself the cause of death for their soldiers: as she puts it, "I brought down Assyrian disasters on the camps of my countrymen, I drove my people headlong and drove away the gods from the better cause" (*Assyrios in castra tuli ciuilia casus,| praecipitesque dedi populos cunctosque fugaui | a causa meliore deos*, 8.92-94) She therefore considers herself worthy of death (8.97-105, 8.653).

of female warmongering. These poets thus recast male homosocial and political conflict as male victimization at the hands of a woman, and inscribe women at the center of war-narratives, from which Homeric and Vergilian epic had labored to exclude them.

As Ovid's reconsideration of heroic epic shows, Homeric and Vergilian epic dramatizes and underwrites prurient and punitive attitudes towards female sexuality and the female body—attitudes that persist in our contemporary culture, and often find violent expression in the carnographic horrors inflicted on the female body in film and television. Dillman (2014: 103), in fact, has argued that these gendered representations of violence are a response to women's increasing power and agency in American culture: they function as a means of social control and conditioning, implicitly threatening women with dramatic evidence of the deadly consequences of social/sexual deviance. In a similar vein, Alison Keith (2000: 78-81) has argued that the *Aeneid*'s representations of transgressive women are a response to the increased political and military prominence of women in the late Republic and early Empire.[559] One important question that this study raises—without being able to answer it—is the effect of these discourses of transgression and violence on female readers. Doherty (1995), employing feminist reader response theory,[560] has shown that the implied audience for the *Odyssey* includes women, and of course literate women throughout ancient history would have read

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[559] But see Edwards (1993: 36), arguing that representations of politically active women are a trope signifying the Republic's moral and political decay: "These colourful characters are not real people but resonant metaphors for social and political disorder." It should be noted, however, that real men may have felt themselves threatened by what they perceived as women's increasing political prominence, and that real women may have suffered the consequences of this perception. For example, the sexually charged threats leveled against Antony's wife Fulvia (treated by Hallett 1977) graphically demonstrate the vehemence of contemporary male responses to politically and militarily active women.

[560] Feminist reader response criticism, pioneered by Millett (1969) endeavors to read "as a woman" and to recover female responses to male-authored texts. Examples of feminist reader-response criticism within Classical scholarship include Rabinowitz 1986, Doherty 1992, and James 2003.

and enjoyed epic narratives. For example, Juvenal describes a caricaturized version of the literate woman who "pardons" Dido at her death (*periturae ignoscit Elissae*, *Sat.* 6.435). Many women would no doubt have sympathized with Dido, Camilla, and Amata—and, perhaps, absorbed the latent message that female power and sexual agency are punishable by death. The authority of the epic genre functioned to reinforce and normalize that message, but Ovid undermines it by demonstrating the fundamental vulnerability of the female body. I hope that this study will contribute to a continued conversation on the cultural work performed by epic depictions of the female body, and the ways in which women, then and now, are punished for their sexuality and subjectivity.

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