"Bitch That I Am!":
An Examination of Women's Self-Deprecation
in Homer and Virgil

"Bitch That I Am!": An Examination of Women's Self-Deprecation in Homer and Virgil

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Abstract

This dissertation is a comprehensive analysis of women's self-image in the canonical epic literature of Classical antiquity. The Homeric epics and Virgil's *Aeneid* are essential starting places for looking at women's self-image because their ideologically central positions in their respective cultural systems provide a necessary baseline for looking at how real women viewed themselves as a response to the socio-cultural conditions of the Greco-Roman world. Chapters on the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Aeneid* analyze the presentation of women's self-image in these works using critical notions of categorical opposition, the gaze, *habitus,* and honor and shame, and drawing heavily on feminist theory, film theory, and post-structuralist anthropology.

This study concludes that a woman's self-image in ancient epic clearly depended on how she measured up to a male-prescribed ideal. The particular characteristics of this ideal – traits like beauty, chastity, modesty, industry, and passivity – worked to bolster male honor, primarily by ensuring women's fidelity. Women tend to self-deprecate when they fail to live up to this ideal, or when their relationship with a male is threatened. Women's expressions of self-image are also influenced by social context: they act with assertiveness and confidence in exclusively women's contexts or when working on behalf of their male relatives, while outside these realms, they are usually silent, hesitant, and passive, a phenomenon I refer to as "The Topography of Shame." According to the logic of the Topography of Shame, these behavioral guidelines were needed because women by nature are inherently weak, unrestrained, and uncontrolled, subject to both verbal and sexual leakage. While the Topography of Shame expected women to subordinate themselves to male authority in order to maintain the self-restraint that enables them to

maximize their feminine virtue, it also needed them to exhibit these negative female traits in order to justify such controls, and to provide a negative standard against which men could measure and define their own identities.

At the same time, however, female characters in epic demonstrate considerable tension with, and resistance to, this system of expectations. For example, some women exert a sort of unofficial power by utilizing the tools that the Topography of Shame made available to them, such as displays of beauty, emotional outbursts, claims of self-pity, and proclamations of loyalty, in order to influence the actions and attitudes of others. While women in epic therefore generally position themselves according to the Topography of Shame, they also self-consciously test its limits. These women thus serve the essential function of questioning the ideological framework socially dictated for them in much the same way that male characters occasionally work to challenge the heroic values generally taken to be fundamental in Greece and Rome. By first examining the broad ideologies and ideals that governed women's behavior in the ancient world and then analyzing how women both accepted these notions and also learned to forge complex strategies of resistance, we can better understand the interior lives of these women, which the lack of more direct evidence have kept at a distance for so long.

This dissertation is approved for
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Since the 1970's, there has been a surge of interest in studying the women of Classical Greece and Rome. This interest, paired with the current emphasis on gender theory, has resulted in great improvements in our understanding of the lives of women in the ancient world, but our knowledge remains severely limited by the absence of direct evidence into these women's perspectives: while numerous male authors offer us insight into what and how men think through fictional works, history, oratory, philosophical treatises, and letters, of women's words there is very little preserved indeed. Although advancements in feminist and gender theory and their application to literary, archaeological, and artistic evidence have undoubtedly enhanced our understanding of the physical and cultural contexts of women in antiquity, there is a huge gap between what we know of what Greek and Roman men thought and why, and what we know of women's interior lives.

One of the fundamental problems in approaching the large issue of women's interiority is the question of how women in classical antiquity viewed themselves: did women, in general, accept the patriarchally-dictated[1] view of them as inferior and then live with an image of themselves as worthless or devalued? Alternately, having accepted the limited roles imposed upon them by male-dominated society, were women able to manifest a positive self-image by cultivating the qualities that men deemed virtuous? Or were women able to divorce themselves more or less from these patriarchal value judgments and develop a separate standard by which they assessed their own value?[2]

Because the bulk of our evidence on women in the ancient world, both literary and material, comes from men, and because in these highly patriarchal societies it was men who more or less shaped the ideologies that prevailed in these cultures, it is important to examine how these men themselves – and thus society at large – understood women's self-image.[3] Only after establishing a shared societal framework can we effectively assess the small body of more direct evidence of women's expressions of attitude towards the self. Once this common view is pinpointed, we can then ask ourselves how this cultural perspective worked to influence and shape the actual self-image of women and how well – or how poorly – it reflected the self-image of female members of society in general. As such, this dissertation is the first step in a broad, on-going research program designed to take a larger body of comparative literary and material evidence into account to better understand how the women of antiquity viewed themselves and felt about the place they occupied in a world that worked to marginalize and devalue them.

Background and Parameters

I first became interested in the topic of women's self-image in classical antiquity after a discussion in my World Literature I class on Helen's self-deprecating speech to Hector in Book 6 of the *Iliad.* In this scene, Hector, bloody from battle, is searching for his brother Paris to find out why he is absent from the very war he himself provoked when he abducted Helen from her husband. Hector enters Paris' bedroom to find that he has just finished making love to Helen, whereupon Helen addresses Hector as follows (*Il.*6.344-48):

δᾶερ ἐμεῖο κυνὸς κακομηχάνου ὀκρυοέσσης,
ὥς μ' ὄφελ' ἤματι τῷ ὅτε με πρῶτον τέκε μήτηρ
οἴχεσθαι προφέρουσα κακὴ ἀνέμοιο θύελλα
εἰς ὄρος ἢ εἰς κῦμα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης
ἔνθα με κῦμ' ἀπόερσε πάρος τάδε ἔργα γενέσθαι.[4]

"Brother-in-law to me, dreadful scheming bitch that I am,
on that day when first my mother brought me into this world,
would that an evil whirlwind had borne me away, carrying me off
into a mountain, or into a wave of the loud-roaring sea!
There that wave would have swept me away before such troubles
came to pass."

When I asked my students what they thought the point of Helen's speech was, a heated debate ensued between those who saw her claim of self-loathing as sincere and motivated by Hector's appearance, which serves as a reminder of the trouble she has caused, and those who saw Helen's speech as manipulative, designed to elicit Hector's sympathy in a tense situation, and motivated by a desire to stay in his good graces so that she may continue to enjoy the pleasures of Paris' bed.[5] Afterwards, I began to look for women's expressions of attitude towards the self in other literary works with an eye to understanding how male authors differ from female authors in their perception of the subtext behind these expressions. At the same time, I started to notice how frequently contemporary women, both in media representations and in ordinary conversation, put themselves down, and I began to think about how the speaker's perception of her own sincerity and the ends she hopes to achieve often seem at odds with the perceptions of others. I became curious as to why, in our ostensibly gender-equal society, where they are undoubtedly more independent, more highly valued, and freer than they were in the ancient world, women are nonetheless beset by self-image problems ranging from general feelings of inferiority to life-threatening disorders such as anorexia and bulimia. I began

to wonder if there is any evidence of similar disorders in the classical world, and if not, whether female self-image issues manifested themselves in another way.[6] Ultimately, these questions led me to direct my research towards this topic in the hopes of better understanding how women in Greece and Rome viewed themselves in relation to the world, and how society's perceptions of their self-image both drew from and contributed to these conceptions.

It was Helen's example that initially directed me towards the topic of women's self-deprecation and boasting; perhaps not surprisingly, the Homeric epics in which Helen appears so prominently are also the logical place to start if we are searching for the prevailing ideological views of women's self-image in antiquity. Homer's epics stand at the beginning of the literary evidence we have for the Greek world.[7] More importantly, these works permeated the fabric of Greek society so thoroughly that it would not stretch the truth too far to assert that every man, woman, and youth from the Archaic period forward was to some extent familiar with both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Not only were readings from both of these epics regular events at festivals and dinner parties, philosophers and wise men regularly quoted Homeric lines to illustrate a moral or punctuate a lesson; poets and writers viewed these epics as the quintessential models of literary achievement; school children were taught to use Homeric heroes, and women Homeric heroines, as models for behavior; politicians and military leaders fashioned themselves after Homeric heroes in order to promote or reinforce their positions in society[8]; and scenes from the Homeric epics were common in vase painting and sculpture. The familiarity of the Greeks in general with Homer's works and their view of these epics as guides to morals and appropriate behavior have been compared not

infrequently to the position of the Bible in modern Western society.[9] While we must bear in mind that these epics are not simple handbooks to cultural ideologies – indeed, they often challenge and question the very values they ultimately promote – the views and perspectives expressed in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* overall represent the foundational ideological tenets that underlie and permeate Greek culture, set forth in "the genre that purports to be universal in significance and value."[10] In order to examine effectively how the views of individuals or minority groups deviate from the norm, these epics and the values they articulate form an important starting point.

Homeric ideologies and values were foundational not only in the Greek world, but in Roman society as well. Throughout the Republican era and well into the Imperial period, Greek literature in general, and the Homeric epics in particular, were looked upon as the acme of artistic literary achievement. Even when authors like Callimachus and Apollonius in Hellenistic period Greece and Catullus and Ovid in Rome started to work against literary norms and subvert audience expectations, Homeric epic was ultimately the standard these writers were obligated to work against.[11] At the same time, even if Homer served as a model for Rome, Roman values and ideologies cannot be reductively equated with Greek ones. In order to determine how Rome took these Homeric principles and adapted them to its own cultural situation, we must look to a Latin literary production that held a similar position in Roman culture as the Homeric epics did in Greek society. Virgil's *Aeneid*, unsurprisingly, fills this role very well: in fact, although Virgil and other Roman authors often used epic to challenge as well as confirm cultural core values,[12] Virgil wrote his masterwork at the prompting of the emperor Augustus, who wanted an epic for Rome that would fill a position and function parallel to those of Homer's works

in Greece. As a result, the *Aeneid* clearly develops an engaged, dialogic relationship with both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey,* but adapts Homeric elements to a hero that embodies values and characteristics that are distinctly Roman, most obviously by emphasizing the virtue of *pietas*, which Virgil saw as the core value of Roman civilization. The *Aeneid* in fact became central in the Roman curriculum in the Imperial period where it was used as a "repository of culturally valued *exempla*," emulation of which was necessary for social and political success.[13] Indeed, while some authors, including Virgil, could use epic to challenge core values, Quintilian (*Inst.* 1.8.4-5) endorsed the prominence of Homer and Virgil in the curriculum, implying that their works functioned to school students in manliness and away from womanliness.[14] The *Aeneid* thus provides one important piece of evidence about basic Roman ideologies and demonstrates how the fundamental Roman view of women's self-image corresponds to and deviates from that of Greece.

While these epics, therefore, are culturally central and each illustrates fundamental perspectives for its own society, at the same time, they demonstrate their openness to conflict and contradiction, often challenging the very norms they elucidate. Scholars have argued that epics from the *Iliad* onward worked to question some of the masculine epic values of honor and courage that they have traditionally been understood to uphold; when looking into female experience, too, the poets might likewise be calling traditional values into question.[15] Women's self-assessment in epic offers a particularly useful lens through which to view this kind of ambiguity and contradiction in the cultural system, because the system itself seems to define women as both inside and outside at the same time.

Problems

While the Homeric epics and Virgil's *Aeneid* thus function as useful representatives of their respective cultures' foundational ideologies, a study of women's self-image that focuses on these works is not without its problems and limitations. To begin with, all three of these works were elite productions that catered primarily to an upper class audience, even if they were read and admired by people of diverse social standing. Additionally, while the representations of women in these works will reflect to a large extent more general societal attitudes towards women, at the same time, these characterizations will be colored by artistic, political, or didactic objectives, in consideration of which the poet might slant or exaggerate behavior considered "normal" for women.[16] Nonetheless, by carefully examining the evidence in these fundamental texts and by keeping in mind the difficulties inherent in research of this kind, the characterization of women's expressions of self-image in these epics can serve as a valuable starting point for the study of women's interiority in antiquity and help us to arrive at some idea of how women in ancient Greece and Rome viewed themselves in relation to the world around them.

In addition to taking these evidentiary problems into account, an analysis of this kind must be diligent in avoiding over-generalization and the temptation to conflate all of antiquity into one uniform "classical culture." Greek and Roman societies are, without a doubt, very different, particularly in respect to the daily lives of women, and Virgil's reliance on Homeric models should not lead us to neglect the important differences in the everyday experience of women in these two societies. In Classical period Greece, women were generally confined to women's quarters[17]; they interacted infrequently with men,

had little freedom of movement, and were taught to equate virtue with silence.[18] Thus, a woman's role in society was primarily a negative one, promoting virtual invisibility.[19] Yet although women in Greece technically occupied a completely disenfranchised position, recent scholars have demonstrated that they could exercise a good deal of influence in more subtle ways. Scholars like John J. Winkler and Nancy Felson-Rubin[20] have shown that women in Greek society like Homer's Penelope – who on the surface appears to be a passive victim entirely subject to male domination – often used resourcefulness and access to information to manipulate events through the agency of their husbands or other male relations.[21] Although Penelope is an individual and an upper class woman, recent anthropological work in 20th century rural Greece demonstrates that similar systems are still in play in the households of common everyday villagers.[22] While, again, we must be careful about projecting modern practices onto ancient cultures, this research suggests a certain amount of cultural continuity in the Greek world and illustrates that both in Homeric times and in the Classical period, it is quite possible that Greek women of all classes might have exercised power and influence in subtle, indirect ways,[23] which would certainly have influenced both their self-perception and how they used expressions of self-image. This possibility must be taken into account.

In contrast to women's fairly restricted and generally "invisible" position in the Greek world, women in Rome were somewhat freer and had the potential for exercising power and influence more directly. First, women interacted a good deal more with men, dining with them and being permitted to go outdoors with fewer restrictions.[24] Additionally, women in Rome had more than one means of fulfilling a positive role in society: for instance, women could demonstrate sternness and discipline while exercising

a good deal of authority in the education of their children[25]; they served an important "public" function in the symbolic display of the conjugal bed and loom in the atrium of the elite Roman house[26]; and elite women in Rome often had the financial resources to act as artistic and architectural patrons.[27] Although recovering the interiority of individual Roman women is still problematic,[28] as a result of these differences, there is an argument to be made that Roman male authors of the early empire, like Virgil, would be more likely to present a reasonably authentic female perspective than would Greek male authors. In Rome, males had more everyday contact with women and women were freer to express themselves to men, resulting, perhaps, in enhanced male insight into female perspectives. With the overturning of the republic, moreover, the elite class to which Virgil and the vast majority of authors belonged found themselves disempowered, subject to the agenda and whims of the emperor. Tacitus tells us that the means to success was *servitio* ("through servitude": *Ann.* 1.1.25) in Augustus' reign, and likewise, in the reign of Tiberius, even the greatest men *ruere in servitium* ("fell into servitude": *Ann.* 1.7.1). While Tacitus likely exaggerates this abasement, he nonetheless captures an emotional truth that describes the feelings the imperial system evoked in the elite if not their actual political situation. This strong sense of disempowerment resulted in a sort of "feminization" of the elite male,[29] a concern which manifested itself in Roman literature.[30] This violent feminization likely resulted in an improved ability of these males to relate to the woman's position of disempowerment.[31] At the same time, although women undoubtedly gained a modicum of power and independence in imperial Rome in comparison to earlier periods, traditional views on gender-based binary oppositions

persisted,[32] providing an important basis for comparison between the women of Greece and Rome.

In addition to the differences between Greek and Roman cultures, discrepancies within each civilization, such as significant disparities in the lived experience of members of different classes and large shifts in political structures (for example, the move from republic to empire in Rome), need to be kept in mind to avoid over-simplification. Nonetheless, while any attempt to look at the interior lives of women in classical antiquity as a whole will necessarily involve generalization, keeping these differences in mind and considering evidence from each of these categories can improve our understanding of how women's interiority functioned and developed in the Greek and Roman worlds.

Purpose

Through careful analysis of the evidence found in Homer and Virgil, this study aims to recover broad societal notions about women's self-image in Greece and Rome, which will in turn form an important baseline for looking at how real women in classical antiquity viewed themselves as a response to the socio-cultural conditions of the Greco-Roman world. We might expect that women in Greece and Rome would adopt the minority attitude towards the self typical of women in other patriarchal societies: this attitude, identified by feminist critics like Kate Millett, includes a view of the self as an inferior being who lacks sufficient autonomy; a tendency to identify and attach value to the self primarily in terms of connections with male relatives; and a perception of one's own virtues and vices in terms of the traits that men value or scorn in women.[33] To what

extent do the women written by Homer and Virgil reflect this trend? Where do they deviate, and in what kinds of situations? What sorts of women reject this attitude entirely, and how is the audience expected to feel about these women? Despite the small number of female characters in Homer and Virgil, the women who are included constitute a useful pool for this sort of examination precisely because they function as positive and negative exempla for real women, both in terms of their behavior and in terms of their interior attitudes and motivations.

Another important consideration is the extent to which women's expressions of self-image are presented by the authors and interpreted by male characters as authentic. One important means of assessing this will be looking at the internal evidence from these texts on how women's emotional interiority corresponds with external indicators of self-image. This analysis in turn will permit examination of the connection between evidence for verbal self-expression and indications of attitude towards the self that are communicated visually in consideration of Bourdieu's concept of *habitus,*[34] which is frequently used to posit a correlation between exterior indications and emotional interiority for men.[35] Bourdieu posits that *habitus* is a learned way of negotiating social situations, but that this mode of operating becomes unconscious and instinctive, and thus cannot be unlearned. In this way, one can "read" an individual's interiority by careful observation of details like stance and gesture. If deportment, dress, and other physical indicators can accurately signify authentic emotional interiority, then an author's descriptions of clothing, facial expression, and behavior and how these correspond with verbal indications can offer us clues as to how the prevailing ideology in these cultures framed, and as a result molded, the self-image manifested by real women.[36]

State of the Field and Theoretical Background

In the mid-20th century, feminist critics began to recognize and work to correct the male-centered perspectives of traditional scholarship. In the field of classics in particular, Sarah Pomeroy initiated the study of women's history with her groundbreaking 1975 book *Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity*, the first systematic study of women in ancient Greece and Rome. Although in this work Pomeroy tends to reduce men and women to binary categories, this influential text was one of the first to highlight the issue of women in the ancient world and was a necessary precursor to developments in feminist and gender theory in the field of classics. Since then, women's studies and gender theory have progressed a great deal. While contributions in this area in the past thirty years have been numerous and varied, some of the more influential works include Helene Foley's *Reflections of Women in Antiquity* (1981); Suzanne Dixon's *The Roman Mother* (1988); John J. Winkler's *The Constraints of Desire: The Anthropology of Sex and Gender in Ancient Greece* (1990); David Halperin, John Winkler, and Froma Zeitlin's *Before Sexuality: The Construction of Erotic Experience in the Ancient Greek World* (1990); Amy Richlin's *The Garden of Priapus* (1992) and *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome* (1992); Laura McClure's *Sexuality and Gender in the Ancient World* (2002); David Fredrick's *The Roman Gaze: Vision, Power, and the Body* (2002); and Kristina Milnor's *Gender, Domesticity, and the Age of Augustus: Inventing Private Life* (2005).[37] Since a comprehensive synopsis of the development of this field is beyond the scope of this investigation, what follows is instead intended as a general overview of the theoretical concepts which will be utilized in this study.[38]

Gender Theory: Constructionalism vs. Essentialism

While early feminist theory and work on women's history was useful in de-centralizing male perspectives in scholarship and in laying the groundwork that was necessary to the evolution of women's studies, much of this early work was highly politicized and historically naïve, downplaying the role of men entirely. In the last thirty years, there has been a shift away from radical feminist perspectives in favor of a focus on gender theory. This approach is less reductionist and more complex, comprehensive, and analytical. Early feminist theory approached women's history with the goal of changing not only the way we read ancient texts, but also women's positions in the modern world. In doing so, feminist criticism presented women's history as half of a binary, and discounted factors like class, race, status, urban versus rural, and trans-gendered categories. Gender theory, on the other hand, sees gender as a social construct and is thus able to take these categories into consideration rather than simplistically viewing society as divided along gender lines.[39]

The emergence of gender theory has not been without its problems, and has in fact ignited intense controversy among classicists.[40] Scholars outside of classics tend to attribute the constructionist position – and thus the emergence of gender theory for classics – to Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, published in three volumes beginning in 1985. Many classicists in the constructionist camp – scholars such as David Halperin and John J. Winkler[41] – subscribe to the basic tenets of Foucault's work, but nonetheless criticize Foucault's neglect of feminine sexuality and his failure to recognize the constructed character of gender[42]; these scholars have since refined and improved the

ideas they credit Foucault with initiating, producing much that is of value to classicists interested in gender theory and feminist perspectives alike.

Despite the seminal position Foucault is generally conceded, Amy Richlin and David Fredrick have pointed to numerous problems which make his work methodologically substandard: his near-exclusive focus on male subjective sexuality, his belief that sexuality itself did not exist prior to the 18th or 19th century CE, the omission of large amounts of source material focused on obscene, homophobic, or misogynistic subjects, his general lack of knowledge about Greece and Rome, his tendency to collapse disparate cultures and historical periods, and his predilection for generalizing about "classical antiquity" from the example of Athens while virtually erasing the individualism of Rome.[43] Additionally, feminist scholars working in classics have objected to the tendency to locate the initiation of gender theory with Foucault, and take proponents of the constructionalist position like Halperin and Winkler to task for ignoring the contributions of feminists to the idea of gender as a social construct.[44] Some thirty years earlier, Simone de Beauvoir was one of the first to call attention to the tendency in patriarchal societies to reduce gender divisions to categorical binaries: in *The Second Sex,* de Beauvoir demonstrates the presentation of woman as the categorical "other" in relation to man in Western literature and society[45]; moreover, de Beauvoir's famous assertion that one is not born but becomes a woman gives her claim to primacy as a social constructionist.[46] In addition, Amy Richlin demonstrates that many of these Foucauldian texts replicate the arguments from earlier feminist works in the field of classics in particular without appropriate scholarly recognition; instead, these works tend to assign

primary credit to Foucault and other male scholars, effectively reproducing the silencing of women's voices that took place in the ancient world.[47]

The movement towards the idea of sexuality and gender as a cultural construct, furthermore, has not been all-inclusive: Richlin and others have questioned the validity of Foucault's social constructionism entirely, arguing that certain characteristics are essential to either male or female nature. While acknowledging the historical abuses of the essentialist position – where some have taken the idea to mean that women's essential nature is inferior to that of men – Richlin goes on to argue on the contrary that the constructionist viewpoint is detrimental to women, leading to the conclusion that feminine attributes are learned and can be unlearned; therefore, women can learn to be more like men, whose attributes are more valuable. In this way, Richlin believes that constructionism devalues what women do naturally. Richlin's gender-based essentialism is highly political, aiming to increase the value of female attributes and to rectify historical abuses of essentialism which have posited women as worse by nature than men.[48] Richlin's position has ignited fierce debates, which indicate that the movement away from feminist theory and towards gender studies has not been universally accepted. This opposition has been thoroughly argued elsewhere, and I will not digress by repeating it here,[49] since my analysis will not address this conflict directly. However, the nature of gender and sexuality is relevant to any examination of women in the ancient world, and my own perspective on the issue will likely color my analysis, so it is relevant and important to state my position in brief.

I am working from a moderate constructionist perspective. I would agree with Richlin that certain characteristics that predominantly follow gender divisions are

ingrained by nature, so that women are in general more inclined to traits like nurture and compassion. However, I would also argue that culture and society have much to do with shaping the development of these characteristics.[50] As such, my investigation assumes that though nature predisposes some differences roughly based on gender categories, the basic character of an individual has the potential to manifest itself in a broad spectrum of personality traits, attitudes, and sexual inclinations, which are to a large extent shaped by the ideologies and assumptions of society.[51] While most women, then, can be supposed to have a tendency towards certain general innate characteristics, their self-image will be for the most part shaped by social considerations.

Woman as the Anti-Man

> Q: Why do women use make-up and perfume?
> A: Because they are ugly and they smell bad.[52]

In view of the cultural influence on the development of ideologies and on the particular manifestations of more general character traits in an individual, society's fundamental view of female nature and character will undoubtedly have had a profound effect both on how a woman viewed herself in relation to the world and on the precise ways in which her natural inclinations manifested themselves into particular attitudes and personality traits. Thus, the binary categories into which the patriarchal societies of the Western world have tended to reduce men and women are relevant to the shaping of a woman's self-image. Aristotle (*Metaph.* 1.5.6),[53] following the Pythagorean thinkers,[54] demonstrates this dichotomy in a list of ten categories of corresponding pairs, where he aligns θῆλυ (female) with principles like ἄπειρον, κινούμενον, καμπύλον, σκότος,

and κακόν (unbounded/unlimited, moving, bent, dark, and evil), while associating ἄρρεν (male) with their opposites: πέρας, ἠρεμοῦν, εὐθύ, φῶς, and ἀγαθόν (bounded/limited, calm, straight, light, and good). Anne Carson's "Putting Her in Her Place: Woman, Dirt and Desire" provides a cogent analysis of how these categories functioned in ancient Greece. Carson demonstrates that women were viewed as wet beings with leaky boundaries who were therefore unable to keep themselves adequately under control, sexually or otherwise.[55] These characteristics are diametrically opposed to the traits that were seen as ideal for men: dryness, moderation, self-containment, and self-control. Catharine Edwards, in *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome,* demonstrates a similar principle at work in Roman society: because the qualities thought to be undesirable in a male member of the Roman elite were deemed "feminine," women came to be seen as timid, lazy, self-indulgent, and sexually compliant.[56] The tendency of both Greek and Roman societies to see gender divisions as indicative of positive or negative attributes in this way suggests that women's views about themselves and how they relate to the dominant male society in these cultures will be somewhat comparable; thus, while the many differences between Greek and Roman societies must be kept in mind, this commonality gives us a solid starting point for looking at women's self-image in classical antiquity.

Honor and Shame

In addition to the tendency in both Greek and Roman cultures to define women in terms of what is not-male, the highly gendered system of honor and shame that operated in both Greek and Roman societies provides further common ground that suggests a valid

basis for comparison on the issue of women's self-image. The honor and shame model for Mediterranean societies was first posited in the mid-1960's by Jean Peristiany, who argued that honor and shame function as the primary regulators of behavior in Mediterranean basin[57]; Julian Pitt-Rivers refined this model in the mid 1970s to concentrate on the role of sex, whereby the woman's chastity is principal and reflects entirely on the honor of the male and of the family.[58] As such, males are justified in controlling the behavior of women, and women's chastity in turn becomes a kind of currency.[59] David Halperin, John J. Winkler, and Froma Zeitlin[60] have applied these ideas more specifically to the ancient world, where similar systems of honor and shame that hinged upon the chastity and virtue of women were in place.[61] The honor and shame model's applicability to ancient Greece is supported by Anne Carson's work, which argues that in Greek culture, ensuring the purity of one's line is crucial to one's honor and very identity, thus making male status dependent on female chastity.[62] Because they play a crucial role in the transfer of economic and social status through their childbearing abilities, women, then, serve in many ways as commodities. The view of women as weak and leaky therefore permits men to justify imposing external controls on them, such as gender segregation and restrictions on clothing and hair.[63] A similar system was in place in Rome as well, where we also see a concern with female chastity, restrictions on female appearance and behavior,[64] and a commodification of women, who were often betrothed by male relatives in order to further political or economic interests.

The application of the honor and shame system Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers proposed for the Mediterranean basin to the classical past once again suggests a cultural continuity which would enable modern scholars to use observation, interviews, and other

information from and about the contemporary Mediterranean to fill in the many gaps in our knowledge about the ancient world, especially in the areas of anthropology, sociology, and psychology. However, there are a number of problems with the honor and shame model that need to be taken into consideration before simplistically collapsing the Mediterranean area to a single geographical unit area undifferentiated in time.[65] To begin with, Peristiany's model neglects to take class into account.[66] Since class considerations were paramount in both Greece and Rome, to neglect the effect of class standing in looking at attitudes of honor and shame is profoundly reductionist. Another related consideration is that class is treated differently in different Mediterranean communities: as David Fredrick has pointed out, in ancient Greece, class divisions were very rigid, while in Rome, where movement between classes and large shifts in station were possible,[67] social position was far more complex.[68] Another oversimplification of the honor and shame system is that it is based on the model of a small Mediterranean village. While classical Athens, though a cosmopolitan city for its time, functioned in ways similar to a small village, Rome was a much more sophisticated and urban environment, and to reduce models for behavior to one uniform system ignores the profound differences between urban and relatively rural environments. Nonetheless, by keeping these difficulties and limitations in mind and applying the honor and shame model with care and discretion, this theory constitutes a useful general principle that will help complete our picture of the fundamental ideological perspectives towards women's self-image found in the predominant culture-systems in the Mediterranean: the cultures of Greece and Rome. Additionally, by recognizing that Greek and Roman societies functioned as "shame cultures," where public and externally visible components of

morality take precedence over internal convictions,[69] we are better positioned to examine self-image in the ancient world, a somewhat anachronistic concept to start with, as much more closely associated with reputation and public standing than we are accustomed to consider it in our modern estimation, where self-image is more closely aligned with interior assessment of self-worth.

Body Theory

In recent years, much scholarly attention has focused on applying gender theory to the study of bodily evidence.[70] Anthropologists like Mary Douglas have demonstrated that the body in most cultures works as a model for another bounded system, such as that of society itself, with the function of different parts and their relation to each other working as symbols,[71] a phenomenon also noted by early feminists.[72] In classical antiquity too, meaning became attached to various body parts,[73] both male and female, and the implications of these associations will certainly bear upon the issue of women's self-image.[74] As a result of this same system of logic, details of deportment become indicators of personality and moral character, as do physical features such as the set of the eyes or the prominence of the chin.[75] For this reason, studying the use of and attitude towards clothing, make-up, jewelry, and other means of adornment can enlighten us into how society valued or devalued various physical aspects of both women and men in consideration of these associations.[76]

Closely related to these ideas about the importance of deportment and physical features to innate character and emotional interiority are Pierre Bourdieu's views on the concept of *habitus*, outlined briefly above. In *Distinction,* Bourdieu adopts a social

constructionist position, but goes on to argue that learned behavior becomes instinctive and cannot be unlearned. As such, *habitus* is an instinctive mode of navigating societal situations which shapes the way individuals act and react in an unconscious way. As a result, external indicators like stance, gait, and gesture are indicative of the individual's interiority.[77] Because *habitus* is initially constructed, in Mediterranean cultures where the honor and shame system is in place women develop a *habitus* that includes shame, while men develop a *habitus* that includes entitlement. While Bourdieu focused his ideas primarily on modern cultures, classicists are enthusiastically applying this model to Greece and Rome. In his later *Logic of Practice*, which analyzes North African cultures such as the Kabyle, Bourdieu aligns himself more closely with the binary male/female model and neglects the attention to significant distinctions in class he had demonstrated in *Distinction*, where he focuses on 1970s French society. Foucauldians utilizing Bourdieu's work have therefore privileged *Logic of Practice* over *Distinction*, assuming Greece and Rome to be like the eternal rural Mediterranean, in order to support the penetrator/penetrated binary. As noted above, however, such class distinctions likewise functioned in Rome, undercutting Foucault's notion of Roman "otherness" and further complicating the constructionalist vs. essentialist debate.[78] Bourdieu himself sees certain universal features in patriarchy, but argues that the particulars manifest themselves in different ways; as such, *habitus* has its own specificity in various cultures, but he does not see these as incomparable. Bourdieu's nuanced view in *Distinction*, where he takes various segments of society into account, allows for the possibility of movement between these segments, acknowledges blurred edges, and considers specific differences between cultures, makes his theories attractive for their application to this study of self-image.

Bourdieu's *habitus* will therefore provide a useful model for examining the external indications of women's self-image in Homeric epics and the *Aeneid* and then analyzing their correspondence or non-correspondence with the emotional interiority these women present verbally.

The Topography of Shame

Another model for studying women and gender relations in the ancient world stems from my own observation that women's individual expressions of self-image are generally a function of the gendered context of the situation in which they occur. This model posits that a woman's self-image depended to a large extent on how she measured up to a male-prescribed ideal. The particular characteristics of this ideal – traits like beauty, chastity, modesty, industry, and passivity – worked in one way or another to bolster male honor, primarily by ensuring women's fidelity. Although these male-dictated considerations affected women's overriding views of female virtue and vice, women's attitudes about the self were nonetheless significantly influenced by the particulars of the individual social context. Ancient evidence suggests that women were assertive and self-assured in women's contexts – such as in the domestic realm or at women's festivals[79] – or when their actions served to bolster male status, but when they acted in typically male arenas or in situations where their appearance, actions, or behavior potentially threatened to undercut the honor of their male kin, women generally demonstrated silence, hesitance, and insecurity. As a result, women's boasting typically occurred in an exclusively female context, but her conceit naturally stemmed in most cases from the parameters set down by male considerations of honor and shame. Women's expressions

of self-deprecation, on the other hand, tend to appear when women fail to live up to this ideal or when their relationship with a male is threatened. I refer to this supposition as "The Topography of Shame."[80]

This model for women's behavior and self-assessment draws heavily on ideas from the theoretical schools of thought elucidated above. First, it works from a moderate social constructionist position in that it assumes that although biological gender might produce a predisposition to certain character traits, these "gendered" qualities are exaggerated, set in opposition, and evaluated by society, which in turn affects how these traits manifest themselves in individuals. As such, women in the ancient world learned, if not explicitly, then certainly through the implication of social practice and cultural ideologies, that their natures were, in accordance with the ideas of Aristotle and the Pythagoreans, diametrically opposed to those of men – they were inherently weaker, less capable, and inferior. The Topography of Shame also draws upon the honor and shame model in working from the position that women's chastity reflected so entirely on male honor that the weaknesses inherent in women's natures justified controls and restrictions on their behaviors, so that female virtue came to be identified with the characteristics which enabled these male controls.[81] This model also takes current ideas about body theory into account by considering the female body as an extension or reflection of her virtue, which view in turn makes her physical appearance, habits of adornment, and *habitus* a reflection of her inner character.

In addition, examining women's self-image as situationally variable adds another layer to these views of women in antiquity by considering how power and gender contexts affected their behavior and their expressed evaluation of their own self-worth.

Recent developments in women's studies scholarship show that gender binaries in the ancient world are part of a larger system of hierarchical polarities such as race, age, sex, and nationality, and as such, the role of gender within a given social situation is only one of a constellation of factors.[82] For example, unlike Foucault's work, which presents the penetrator/penetrated binary as essentially unmediated, the work of structuralists Detienne, Vernant, and Vidal-Naquet[83] take the intermediary position between binaries into account, a crucial consideration in a culture with considerable class mobility, such as Rome. While these variables must be kept in mind, the contextual component of the Topography of Shame model allows tensions deriving from alternate differences in identity into consideration.

The Topography of Shame model finds a supporting parallel in Sharon James' observations on women's language in Roman comedy and elegy[84]: James' findings suggest that the engendering of language is itself a social construct which is not static, but varies according to the complexities and nuances of the specific situation, particularly in consideration of power structures. Because the "female Latin" – characterized by the use of polite modifiers, terms of endearments, and words of deference[85] – which women in comedy and elegy generally use when speaking to freeborn men tends to disappear when women speak to slaves, and because women's language is also subject to great variation in female-only conversations depending on purpose, James concludes that these are to some extent "*performances* of stereotypes and expectations of female speech."[86] Women's self-image was in a comparable state of flux: while women's views of themselves were generally based on the ideal developed for the advancement of patriarchal values, at the same time, the baseline from which a woman evaluated her

worth at any given time was to some extent dependent on the specific gender and power structures of the particular situation.[87]

At first glance, the Topography of Shame model may seem to conflict with the view of women's self-deprecation as a manipulative tool that women used to negotiate their position with men, as some readers have interpreted Helen's statements in *Iliad* 6. However, the view that women used self-deprecation insincerely in order to exert control through manipulation works well with the ideas of John Winkler and Nancy Felson-Rubin, who have shown that women in constrained positions in Greece had to use the tools at their disposal in order to influence events and empower themselves to the extent possible. This view for Rome is again supported by James' study of Roman comedy, where she finds that women use deference, polite modifiers, endearments, and timidity in order to manipulate or placate an angry husband.[88] While men seemed to view these techniques as duplicitous, dangerous, or threatening, we will see that again, they often occur in the context of imminent erotic disaster or are otherwise related to the status of the woman's relationship to men.

As this introduction suggests, the difficulties with looking at women's self-image in classical antiquity are numerous and varied. I am hopeful, however, that by using the epics of Homer and Virgil as a basis for determining the cultural baseline for women's interiority, by keeping in mind the limitations on what we can recover, and by utilizing a broad theoretical scope, we will be one step closer to finding out how the women of Greece and Rome felt about themselves and their positions as women in society. By utilizing the Topography of Shame, which capitalizes on the insights that the various

schools of theory provide while taking their weaknesses into account, I hope to analyze different types of literary evidence, such as women's speech, men's opinions, and descriptions of body language and physical indicators to arrive at a nuanced view of how the representative male elite in Greece and Rome understood women's perspectives on their own self-worth in antiquity.

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[1] "Patriarchy," along with its related terms, is problematic, as Amy Richlin 1992a.xviii points out, "first, when theorists imply it is adequate to describe all cultures; second, when theorists imply that the oppression of women by men takes precedence over all other forms of oppression, or when they ignore other types of oppression altogether; third, and more generally, it is the kind of construct that obscures differences and implies that all women are members of one class." My use of this term to describe Greek culture from the Bronze Age to the Classical period, the Roman Republic and Empire, and our own American culture today is admittedly reductive, and may seem to ignore or elide these important differences. At the same time, all these cultures are distinctly male-dominated in that legal, social, and political structures generally work to promote male interests at the expense of those of women. Thus, although the precise nature of the patriarchal system and its relation to other forms of oppression in these various cultures may differ considerably, they are nonetheless comparable. While I therefore use "patriarchy" and related terms in this paper as a means of describing the common overarching tendency in these societies to promote male interests over female concerns, I would remind the reader to bear in mind that each of these societies manifests these patriarchal aspects in differing ways and degrees.

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[2] For further insight into women's emotional or psychological interiority in antiquity, see Carson 1990, Winkler 1990a, Felson-Rubin 1994, Foley 1995, Keith 2000, Lardinois and McClure 2001, and Milnor 2005; for more on how women in modern society deal with patriarchal oppression, see Miller 1976, Dinnerstein 1976, Lerner 1986, Bordo 1993, Orenstein 1994, and Meyers 2002.

[3] Similar issues exist when looking at the interiority of other marginalized groups, such as slaves or, to a lesser extent, freedmen – any group, in fact, that was not the literate elite.

[4] All Greek text for the *Iliad* is based on the following: Homer. 1920. *Homeri Opera in Five Volumes.* Oxford (obtained from http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Hom.+Il.+1.1). All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

[5] Critics note that internal evidence too is contradictory. Sue Blundell 1995.49, for instance, argues that Helen is "both blameless and blameworthy" since, although it is her presence that is the cause of the war, her abduction is repeatedly attributed to divine agency. See "Helen" in Chapter 2 for more on this issue.

[6] See Bordo 1993 for more on the prevalence of eating disorders in today's world and its relation to gender and patriarchy. Bordo 1993.149 and 321 n.14 also suggests a link between ancient attitudes and modern eating disorders.

[7] The Homeric epics likely date to the second half of the 8th century BCE, shortly after the introduction of alphabetic writing to Greece (ca. 750 BCE). For a brief discussion of the dating of these epics, see Graham 1995.3-7.

[8] Most famously, Alexander the Great traveled with a copy of the *Iliad* and promoted himself as an Achilles-figure. Allison Keith 2000.3-4 reports that Homeric heroes like

Achilles and Odysseus were used as explicit models for student behavior well into the Byzantine period.

[9] In 1951, classicist H. D. F. Kitto observed that "*The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* have been called the Bible of the Greeks. For centuries these two poems were the basis of Greek education, both of formal school education and of the cultural life of the ordinary citizen" (qtd. in P. Davis et al. 2004.279). That the ancients recognized the ideological centrality of Homer's epics is suggested in Xenophon's *Symposium* (3.5), where Antisthenes reports that his father saw familiarity with the Homeric poems as the basis of the good man's character. Despite the gender bias, Antisthenes' statement illustrates the use of Homeric poetry as a model for virtuous behavior (noted in Keith 2000.3).

[10] Suzuki 1989.4.

[11] Latin epicists from Ennius to Statius "aspired to a place in the classical curriculum on the model of Homer, whose poetry enjoyed pride of place in education throughout antiquity" (Keith 2000.9). Ennius' *Annales*, the first hexameter epic composed in Latin, earned its author the title of *Homerus Alter*; this epic enjoyed a foremost place in Roman education in the Republican era until Virgil's *Aeneid* superseded it as the "national epic" in the early Imperial period (Keith 2000.9-10). Ovid's own work, like that of the other Latin elegists and the poets of the Hellenistic period, explicitly recognizes the epic genre as the standard against which they are obligated to work in the *recusatio* that regularly defines the stance of the elegists by contrasting it with that of the epic poets.

[12] For more on Virgil's epic as a challenge to core values, see Johnson 1976. esp.136-41. In his *Pharsalia*, similarly, Lucan writes a sort of "anti-epic" which, although initially framing itself as imperial propaganda (as in the dedication to the emperor Nero at 1.33-

66), in later books challenges and undercuts the imperial system (see Leigh 1997.2 and Eldred 2002 esp. 59-60 and 62-63ff).

[13] Keith 2000.11.

[14] Noted in Keith 2000.14-15. For more on the role of epic in schooling Roman students in the conventions of manliness and gender difference, see Keith 2000.8-35.

[15] See, for instance, Perkell 2002.166 on Keith 2000.

[16] The question of authorship is complicated in the case of the Homeric epics, which are the products of an oral tradition. Modern scholars have long debated "The Homeric Question," which asks whether "Homer" should be considered a single author who crystallized the oral epic into a form that reflects his own personal artistic vision and agenda, or whether the epics should be considered amalgamations of the visions of a long line of bards (for more on this issue, see the discussion of the debate between unitarians and analysts in "Penelope," Chapter 3). Because the epics would have been known to Classical period Greeks more or less in the form which they have come down to us, and because these people considered these epics more or less unified wholes produced by a single artist called "Homer," for the purposes of examining the ideologies these works represent to 5th century Greeks, it is convenient and apposite to refer to the author simply as "Homer" while not overlooking the fact that the question of authorial intent is a bit different with the Greek epics than it is with the *Aeneid.* Thus, I am using the term "Homer" in this study to refer to both the poet and the poems' primary narrator. See Felson-Rubin 1994.10-11 for a short discussion of the problems with this attribution.

[17] See Pomeroy 1975.80-83 and Blundell 1995.135.

[18] i.e. Thuc. 2.45.2; also see in particular Carson 1995.

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[19] Because of the unique social system in Sparta, Spartan women were far more "independent, powerful, and outspoken" (Blundell 1995.157) than women in classical Athens, and therefore they constitute a minor exception to this rule. For a brief discussion of Spartan women's social roles, see Blundell 1995.150-58.

[20] Winkler 1990b; Felson-Rubin 1994.

[21] While the presentation of women in drama would make an interesting corollary study, I am unaware of any critical examination of women in tragedy that makes a similar use of cultural anthropology in analyzing women's behavior. Scholarly examination of women's agency and emotional interiority in drama has generally focused on active women who transgress gendered categories either in working on behalf of or against the interests of their closest male kin rather than working within the limitations imposed on them by the patriarchal system (see, for example, Winningham 1948, Foley 1989, and Segal 1981). The applicability to women in tragedy of the broad parameters of the Topography of Shame that I will be discussing in this paper is suggested, however, by Lefkowitz 1983, who demonstrates the continuity of ideals regarding virtuous wives from Homeric times through the Roman Empire, an examination which utilizes characters like Alcestis from Greek tragedy (see esp. 32ff).

[22] See Friedl 1986 *et al.*

[23] While evidence that historical women exercised such indirect power is scarce, one suggestion that they did indeed capitalize on avenues available to them is found in Lysias' speech *On the Murder of Eratosthenes*, where Euphiletus' wife arranges for a meeting with her lover by feigning jealousy over his flirtations with the maid and making a "joke" of locking him in his bedroom (noted in Blundell 1995.143-44). Helen King

1995.144-45, in addition, demonstrates how real women might have "worked the system" in the realm of women's gynecology in order to exert some control over their treatments. Sue Blundell 1995.144 also notes that additional evidence of this sort of manipulation is found in comedy: a report at *Thesmophoriazusae* 407-09, for instance, suggests that infertile women would simulate pregnancy and then sneak babies into the house to produce a legitimate heir for their husbands, while the sex strike in *Lysistrata* suggests an additional means by which a woman might exert control over her husband.

[24] Kleiner and Matheson 1996b.11.

[25] Dixon 1988.168-203.

[26] Milnor 2005.3-4 and108-110; Wallace-Hadrill 1996.107-09.

[27] Kleiner 1996.28-39.

[28] For more on these problems in Rome, see Finley 2002.

[29] For more on the relationship between politics, power, and feminization see Fredrick 2002b.

[30] In "Taking the Woman's Part: Engendering Roman Love Elegy" (1994a), Maria Wyke argues that the genre of elegy as a whole developed an overriding concern with male alienation from positions of power.

[31] This argument has been applied specifically to Ovid, who, as an exile whose poetry was (unsuccessfully) banned by Augustus, may have felt a special empathy for the silenced rape victims in the *Metamorphoses* (see Curran 1984; for an opposing view, see Richlin 1992c).

[32] For more on these polarities in the ancient world, see below ("Woman as the Anti-Man"). Konstan 2001.2ff provides literary exempla demonstrating the perseverance of

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these polarities well into the Imperial period; Du Boulay's anthropological studies (1974.101-04), moreover, suggest that these diametrically opposed gender categorizations persisted, at least in rural areas of the Mediterranean, through the better part of the 20th century.

[33] Millet 1970.54-58. Recent studies support Millet's arguments: in a 1984 survey of 33,000 women conducted by *Glamour* magazine, three-quarters of women aged 18-35 considered themselves "too fat," while only 25% were characterized as overweight by standard weight tables (Feb. 1984. "Feeling Fat in a Thin Society." *Glamour*. 198-201 and 251-52; noted in Bordo 1993.55-56 and Leroy 1993.64); a study by Kevin Thompson found that out of 100 women who exhibited no symptoms of eating disorders, more than 95% overestimated their body size, judging on average that they were one-quarter larger than they were (Apr. 1986. "Larger Than Life." *Psychology Today*. 39-44; noted in Bordo 1993.56); and in a 2007 BBC Radio 1 Newsbeat and 1xtra's TXU survey of 25,000 people, for the most part aged 17-34, half of the women said there was much they would like to change about their bodies, and more than ten percent said they "hated" what they look like (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/6376367.stm). Modern scholars link the focus of today's women on the physical self to their desire to be attractive to men: Armstrong 1987.208 argues that "the ostensible reason for attempting to make oneself beautiful is first to attract men, then to get or hold a man in marriage or other lasting relationship" (quoted at http://www.cwrl.utexas.edu/~ulrich/femhist/self_image.shtml) while Leroy 1993.262 points out that "[t]he equation of female sexuality with glamour is a major public theme in our own culture. It's there in our fairy stories, the little girl's first lessons in romance: a kitchen girl, she learns, can only win a prince if she has a

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comprehensive make-over and some glamorous new clothes" (quoted at http://www.cwrl.utexas.edu/~ulrich/femhist/self_image.shtml).

[34] Bourdieu 1984.52-65 and 1990.169-225. Also see below under "Body Theory."

[35] See Corbeill 2002 for uses and critiques of Bourdieu in the field of classics.

[36] For more on this topic, see "Body Theory" below.

[37] Foley's *Reflections of Women in Antiquity*, Richlin's revised edition of *The Garden of Priapus*, and McClure's *Sexuality and Gender in the Ancient World* each offers an excellent introduction to the subject of women in antiquity and provides an overview of the state of research in the field of feminist criticism and gender theory in classics at the time of publication. Dixon's *The Roman Mother* directed welcome attention to the positive and active roles that women could play in the Roman world. Both *The Constraints of Desire* and *Before Sexuality* bring cultural anthropology, feminist theory, and French structuralism to bear in responding to and challenging Foucault's notion of sexuality as a modern construct (see also Halperin 1990). Richlin's *Pornography and Representation* initiated changes in feminist theories of pornography by redefining the pornographic in terms of power relations constituted by the domination of the male gaze (see also Eilberg-Schwartz and Doniger 1995 for more on the fragmenting effects of the male gaze on the female body). Fredrick's introduction to *The Roman Gaze* overviews recent debates sparked by Foucault's work and effectively refutes the notion that Foucault "invented" gender theory for classics, while the essays collected in this volume provide further applications of vision theory to classics. Milnor's *Gender, Domesticity, and the Age of Augustus* is a recent contribution that usefully explores how views of what constituted "correct" female behavior were redefined in the Age of Augustus in order to

promote the dominant political ideology, and how these changes in turn affected broader cultural transformations.

[38] For an overview of the development of the study of women's position in antiquity and its relation to modern ideological movements, see Katz 1995.

[39] See Richlin 1991 and 1992a.

[40] For an overview of this controversy, see Skinner 1996.

[41] Halperin, Winkler, and Zeitlin 1990b and Winkler 1990a.

[42] i.e., Edwards 1993.75-76.

[43] Richlin 1991.169-71 and 1992a.xiv-xvii; Fredrick 2002a.

[44] Richlin 1991.167-68.

[45] de Beauvoir 1961.38-60.

[46] de Beauvoir 1961.3-37.

[47] Richlin 1991.167-68 and 172ff.

[48] Richlin 1992a.xviii-xx; see also Bordo 1993.36ff. Richlin's argument can be taken to suggest that homosexuality may also be "essential."

[49] See Karras 2000 for a basic overview of the development of the study of sexuality in modern scholarship. An excellent, if not entirely objective, overview of the history of the debates between the constructionist and essentialist camps can be found in Skinner 1996. For more on these issues, see also Fredrick 2002a.

[50] The moderate constructionist position I am taking accords well with ancient views of character development advanced by Cicero in *De Officiis* 1, where he suggests that the individual *persona* is composed of four parts (the first being the universal one of the human self; the second that of individual skills and capacities; the third arising from

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circumstances; and the fourth being the choice of how one reacts to circumstances). Additionally, ancient terminology for the personality, such as *mores* (Greek ἤθεα), seem to be describing characteristics that are innate, but which at the same time are able to be influenced by education. Also, *natura* refers to innate character, while *persona* (Greek πρόσωπον) would be the "mask" or role one assumes in life (discussed in Braund 1998.137ff).

[51] While Richlin works from a fundamentally essentialist perspective, she acknowledges that the controversy between the essentialist and constructionist positions is "needlessly binary," and points out that both positions have their uses and drawbacks (1992a.xix), problems which I hope to minimize with this moderate constructionist approach.

[52] Richlin 1992a.xvi has shown that humor itself is often a tool of patriarchy; jokes like this all-too current one work to oppose male and female natures in much the same way they were opposed in Greek and Roman societies as outlined in this section. In this example, by objectifying and humiliating women and associating them with disgust, men are associated with what is clean, straightforward, and superior by implication.

[53] Arist. *Metaph.* 1.5.6. In a similar same vein, in *Generation of Animals*, Aristotle describes woman as ἄρρεν...πεπηρωμένον – a deformed or imperfectly developed male (2.3.25). For more on these categorizations, see Lloyd 1966.15-85 and 1983.94-105.

[54] See Philip 1966.44-53.

[55] Carson 1990. Attention to these binary oppositions arose out of a fruitful overlap of French structuralism with feminism, as in Carson's work and in that of Marilyn Skinner, and is not really indebted to Foucault, who claimed not to be a structuralist, but who nonetheless frequently receives the bulk of the credit for these movements.

[56] Edwards 1993.78-84. As de Beauvoir's work demonstrates, the tendency to exaggerate gender divisions setting up one as good and opposing it to the other, which takes on negative characteristics, persists even today, as the current joke at the head of this section demonstrates. That similar divisions persist in the modern Mediterranean is evident in Pierre Bourdieu's observations of the Kabyle people of northeastern Algeria (1973.100ff).

[57] Peristiany 1966.9-11.

[58] Pitt-Rivers 1977.78-80.

[59] Gilmore 1987b. This principle, too, is evident among the Kabyle among whom "'[s]hame,' it is said, 'is the maiden,' and the son-in law is called 'the veil of shames' since the man's point of honour is the protective 'barrier' of female honour" (Bourdieu 1973.100).

[60] Halperin, Winkler, and Zeitlin 1990b.

[61] Halperin, Winkler, and Zeitlin's tendency to draw upon the essentially structuralist ideas of Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers, who predate Foucault by more than a decade, undercuts their claim that Foucault more or less "invented" the whole field they are working in, since structuralism has always assumed that social behaviors are socially conditioned and culturally determined, a position Claude Levi-Strauss argued for as early as 1949 in *Elementary Structures of Kinship*. I might additionally point out that Winkler's tendency to draw both on the work of Foucault, who argued that past and present ideas of sexuality were categorically different, and on modern anthropology, which is based on the assumption of fundamental cultural continuity, is also problematic.

[62] See also Wohl 1993.20ff.

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[63] See Pomeroy 1975.79-84 and Myerowitz Levine 1995.

[64] See Pomeroy 1975.150ff and Alexiou 2002.14-18.

[65] Considerations that detract from the validity of applying modern anthropological observations to ancient cultures but which do not significantly affect the applicability of the honor and shame model to the ancient world itself include the profound changes in philosophies and beliefs that have occurred in the past three thousand years – the emergence of Christianity and Islam, for example, has produced lasting, across-the-board changes in the way Mediterranean populations view the universe and the very purpose of their lives. Additionally, the development of television, radio, and the internet have permitted the influx of entertainment, values, and ideas from all over the world into the Mediterranean on a daily basis. Anthropological studies reveal a number of practices and ideologies that indicate continuity from ancient times, such as the presence in most homes of a central hearth and a household shrine, the importance of hospitality, the persistent belief in fate and the power of spells and divination, Pythagorean/Aristotelian categorizations of male and female, gendered divisions of labor, and the reliance of male honor on societal status and female honor exclusively on modesty, shame, and sexual chastity (see especially du Boulay 1974 and Dubisch 1986b). At the same time, the intervention of technological innovations and religious movements has resulted in the simultaneous disruption of many of these cultural practices and ideas. For example, households in the ancient world often contained a shrine to a patron god or goddess. In modern Greece, most homes contain an *iconostasi*, consisting of icons and religious artifacts, which in effect designates an area of the home, as in the ancient world, as a sort of temple. However, the ancient Greeks and Romans worshipped pagan gods and/or

ancestors, and their relationship to their deities was basically one of reciprocity. In modern times, Greek orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism prevail in these geographical areas; these religions center on a relationship with a deity which is based on faith and forgiveness rather than reciprocity. Therefore, although a number of practices and customs from the ancient world are still in place, the beliefs, values, and ideas associated with them have undergone important changes in the past 2000-3000 years. As such, caution needs to be exercised when applying modern anthropological information to the classical world.

[66] Maureen Giovannini 1987.61-62 has taken class and regional differences into consideration when using the honor and shame model; however, her examination of the issue of class is rather superficial and dismissive, and she ultimately argues that on the basis of broad similarities such as "the emphasis on female chastity as an indicator of social worth for individuals and their respective kin-groups" and "male control over female sexuality" (1987.61), a pan-Mediterranean approach is methodologically sound for the purposes of comparative investigation.

[67] In the "Trimalchio's Dinner" episode from Petronius' *Satyricon*, we see a former slave, now a freedman, who has become incredibly rich and revels in his power and wealth. Although this is a fictional episode, it illustrates the fact that movement between classes and large shifts in station were possible in Rome, a situation that would have been unheard of in Greece. Like Peristiani and Pitt-Rivers, Foucault completely ignores freedmen and class mobility in Roman society.

[68] Fredrick 2002a.9-10.

[69] For more on this, see Bartsch 2006.132-36.

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[70] Good overviews of the study of body history can be found in Richlin 1997 and Fredrick 2002a.7-13. See also Bordo 1993.16-17 for the tendency of modern scholars to elide the contribution of feminists to the development of body theory, as we have seen done in the area of the construction of sexuality and gender, attributing its inception instead, once again, to Foucault.

[71] Douglas 1966.116-22.

[72] Wollstonecraft 1989.

[73] See duBois 1988 for a basic overview of metaphors that were attached to the female body in classical antiquity.

[74] Important sources on the symbolic function of body parts can be found in Stewart 1997 and Richlin 1997.

[75] Kleiner and Matheson 1996b.18.

[76] Significant works include Wyke 1994b, Myerowitz Levine 1995, Richlin 1995, and Kleiner and Matheson 1996a.

[77] Bourdieu 1984.52-65 and 1990.169-225.

[78] Fredrick 2002a.20-21.

[79] Eva Keuls (1985.391ff) suggests that it was the women of Athens, who were celebrating the Adonia, who were responsible for the mutilation of the Herms in the late 5th century. If so, it is significant that it is within a women's context which was additionally a festival of inversion that these women took this bold and assertive action.

[80] Many thanks to David Fredrick for his considerable contributions in the development of this model.

[81] To take an example from literature, we see Euripides' Medea capitalizing on this notion when she pretends to accept her husband Jason's new marriage, excusing her earlier outrage by saying, ἀλλ' ἐσμὲν οἷόν ἐσμεν, οὐκ ἐρῶ κακόν,/ γυναῖκες· οὔκουν χρῆν σ' ὁμοιοῦσθαι κακοῖς,/ οὐδ' ἀντιτείνειν νήπι' ἀντὶ νηπίων ("But we are such as we are, I will not say evil, but women; and it is necessary that you [men] not be like us in these evils, nor give back foolishness in return for our foolishness": *Medea* 889-91); this self-deprecation in the relatively "public" context that Jason and his attendants represent contrasts sharply with the boast she has just made in a private, all-female context: νῦν καλλίνικοι τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν, φίλαι,/ γενησόμεσθα κεἰς ὁδὸν βεβήκαμεν·/ νῦν [δ'] ἐλπὶς ἐχθροὺς τοὺς ἐμοὺς τείσειν δίκην ("Now we will become triumphant over our enemies, friends, and we have set our foot on the road; now there is hope that my enemies will pay the penalty": *Medea* 765-67). Here, Medea demonstrates her recognition that in order to successfully navigate her precarious situation, she must appear to abide by the principles of the Topography of Shame by suggesting to Jason her feminine weakness and her deference to his superior wisdom in order to bolster his sense of male honor. (Greek in this footnote is based on that found in Oxford University Press' 1969 edition of Euripides' *Medea*, Alan Elliott, ed. London.)

[82] See Friedman 1996 and Konstan 2001.1-2.

[83] See Vidal-Naquet 1986; Vernant and Vidal-Naquet 1988; Vernant 1988; and Detienne and Vernant 1989.

[84] McClure 2001.3-4 notes that the Greeks too viewed women's language as categorically different from men's, citing the scenes of cross-dressing and "verbal impersonation" in Aristophanes' *Ecclesiazusae* and *Thesmophoriazusae.*

[85] Scholars like Robin Lakoff (1973. "Language and Woman's Place." *Language and Society* 2.45-81; and 1975. *Language and Woman's Place.* New York), who have identified gendered patterns in speech in our own culture, argue that typical female linguistic strategies like "...intensification ('so' and 'such'), restriction of negative emotion, avoidance of obscenity, diminutives, tag questions, and hedging... because they convey uncertainty and deference, reflect the secondary social status of women in the United States" (noted in McClure 2001.7).

[86] James 2005.3. James draws on Adams' identification of female speech patterns in Roman comedy, but whereas Adams argues that determinants – such as roles, sex, and context – influencing variation in methods of address cannot be separated out (1984.70), James argues that some of these determinants can be identified (and in fact subordinates the role of gender to that of power dynamics). James 2005.11 argues that despite the problems with using male-authored women's speech as evidence, poets in particular paid close attention to language and presumably offered "relatively realistic representations of [women], given generic limitations."

[87] Evidence and support for the validity of the Topography of Shame model to the real women of classical antiquity will be developed throughout this paper.

[88] James 2005.21-22.

Chapter 2: Homer's *Iliad*

The *Iliad* centers on the world of war, a world in which women are very much on the margins. This marginality is emphasized by an explicit contrast between the domestic realm of the city, which is largely cast as feminine,[1] and the masculine realm of the battlefield. At the same time, the conflict on which the epic focuses was provoked by the abduction of Helen from her rightful husband Menelaus, a circumstance which underscores the significance of women in war as symbols of men's *kleos*. The objectification of women is highlighted from the outset, as the *Iliad* opens with a quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles over rights to women who are little more to them than booty, and whose importance derives only from the honor that they represent to the men who "own" them.

The *Iliad*'s focus on war and its tendency towards the marginalization and objectification of women contribute to a relatively small amount of "screen time" for the women who make appearances in this epic. As a result, when women like Hecuba, Andromache, or Helen do appear, their words and behaviors are particularly important as representative epic roles for women, roles which in turn served as models of behavior for mothers, wives, and mistresses in Classical period Greece. Although Homer's use of feminine exempla is somewhat limited by the narrative context, he is much freer to insert female divinities, who, unlike mortal women, were able to interfere directly in martial affairs. While mortal women are the primary focus of this study, Homer's depiction of goddesses and the background mythology on which he draws work to define broad societal perspectives on the character of women in general. By first examining his use of

goddesses and analyzing how they interact both with mortals and within their own social context, we can glean a good deal of information about how epics not only reflect ideological perspectives, but also promote and reinforce them, challenge them, or even reveal contradictions inherent within the cultural system. Using this analysis as a lens through which to view the roles of mortal women, we can then turn to the examples of the mothers, wives, and mistresses who make up the world of the *Iliad*, shedding further light on these roles with an examination of the women who have been stripped of their native male attachments – war captives like Chryseis and Briseis. Examination of the interrelationship between these categories, and of the places at which the boundaries between them are occasionally blurred, will provide a comprehensive overview of the male view of women's self-image in Greek society and of how women's views of themselves relate to the Topography of Shame.

As this analysis will show, Homer's depiction of women in the *Iliad*, from goddesses to mothers and wives to war captives, supports the broad tenets of the Topography of Shame model by illustrating a prevailing view of women's self-worth and identity itself as a function of their standing with male relations, while casting patriarchal dominance and female submission as natural and inevitable. Women's self-deprecation and self-pity occur in situations where a woman has failed to live up to male ideas of feminine virtue or where a woman's relationship with a male is threatened. Additionally, we will see that women in this epic can be assertive not only in women's contexts, but also with men when they see themselves as acting on behalf of their male kin or in defense of their ties with them, as the Topography of Shame would lead us to expect. Even the actions and attitudes of women who do not conform to this model are shaped by

the particular gendered context: while women like Helen are seen as dangerous and manipulative, they too regularly act and speak almost exclusively in consideration of preserving or cementing their standing in relation to males. In this way, the *Iliad* illustrates many of the stereotypes we would expect to find regarding women in antiquity; yet at the same time, Homer shows how women accept these ideas, internalize them, exploit them, and occasionally, challenge and reject them.

Goddesses

While Helen's abduction provided the direct impetus for the Greek attack on Troy, the roots of the conflict can be traced back to the Judgment of Paris. This episode in many ways encapsulates fundamental cultural views of women's nature and sexuality and how these relate to male honor and shame, and therefore provides a good starting point for this study. The Judgment of Paris is but briefly referred to in the *Iliad*, when Homer tells us that saving Hector's body from Achilles' abuse was pleasing to all the other gods, οὐδέ ποθ' Ἥρῃ/ οὐδὲ Ποσειδάων' οὐδὲ γλαυκώπιδι κούρῃ,/ ἀλλ' ἔχον ὥς σφιν πρῶτον ἀπήχθετο Ἴλιος ἱρὴ/ καὶ Πρίαμος καὶ λαὸς Ἀλεξάνδρου ἕνεκ' ἄτης,/ ὃς νείκεσσε θεὰς ὅτε οἱ μέσσαυλον ἵκοντο,/ τὴν δ' ᾔνησ' ἥ οἱ πόρε μαχλοσύνην ἀλεγεινήν ("but never to Hera nor to Poseidon, nor to the grey-eyed girl, but they held fast: just as from the beginning, they hated sacred Ilion, and Priam, and his people on account of the folly of Alexander, who vexed the goddesses when they came to his inner court, and who approved the one who gratified his destructive lust": 24.25-30). Nonetheless, the passing nature of this reference suggests that the story was widely known at the time,[2] and so would have formed the accepted mythological background of the Trojan cycle to its ancient audience.

In this episode, the three goddesses Hera, Aphrodite, and Athena all lay claim to an apple addressed καλλίστῃ ("To the fairest"), which the goddess Eris (Discord), angry that she has been excluded from the festivities, tosses in to the wedding of Peleus and Thetis in order to stir up trouble. After Zeus wisely recuses himself, the hapless Trojan Paris is appointed as judge of the matter. While all three goddesses attempt to influence Paris' decision with bribes, it is Aphrodite's offer of the most beautiful woman in the world – Helen of course – that succeeds in clinching his vote. This myth is ripe with implications about women's primary function as sexual objects, and demonstrates that even goddesses – even relatively masculinized virgin goddesses like Athena – have a tendency to view their worth as a function of their beauty and sexual attractiveness as measured by a male standard, a view supported by the intensity of the hatred attributed to Hera and Athena in Homer's allusion to the episode. The story also illustrates the ancient view of women as mentally weak and unstable creatures both through Eris' pettiness in provoking a conflict out of sheer spite and through the vanity the three goddesses display in quarreling over a mere symbol of external beauty: as Henry Staten notes, the relentless wrath of Hera and Athena against Aphrodite and the Trojans is not a function of the inherent worth of the apple, but due to the positive value Aphrodite acquires partly through the "diminution of their own value," despite the fact that Paris' decision is based on the goddesses' bribes rather than on their own inherent merit.[3] Not insignificantly, Paris' rejection of Hera and Athena's offers of kingly status and might or military wisdom and power in favor of a woman whom he had never before seen also illustrates the danger women's sexuality represents to the elite male, as it prompts him to choose sexual gratification over political advantage.

The wrath Paris' decision provokes in Hera in particular is depicted as so savage and excessive that Zeus even speculates that it might only be assuaged if ὠμὸν βεβρώθοις Πρίαμον Πριάμοιό τε παῖδας/ ἄλλους τε Τρῶας ("[she] might eat Priam raw, and the sons of Priam, and all the other Trojans": 4.35-36), an impulse which connects her with Achilles in the deepest throes of his rage, as he threatens to do the same to Hector (22.346-47). Yet while Achilles' wrath is eventually mollified and his humanity restored, Hera's is "a permanent, demonic imbalance with neither noble origin nor foreseeable end."[4] The relentlessness of Hera's rage likewise sets her in opposition to Zeus, demonstrating notions about the dichotomy between male and female natures so prevalent in the ancient world.[5]

Also in accordance the negative nature of females implied in this binary view, goddesses in the *Iliad* are portrayed as petty, vindictive, meddling, and manipulative. In Book 1, suspecting correctly that Zeus has been persuaded by Thetis to favor the Trojans while Achilles sits out of battle, Hera pesters Zeus to tell her the topic of their conversation. Hera is somewhat comically characterized here as a nagging wife meddling in her husband's affairs, and whom Zeus appropriately attempts to put into her place first verbally, and then with threats of physical violence (1.561-67). As such, from the very beginnings of Greek literature, the need for patriarchal control over the female is not merely illustrated, but even divinely sanctioned. This theme is reinforced in Book 8, where Hera and Athena arm themselves and ready a war-chariot in preparation for battle despite Zeus' orders that the gods stay out of the fighting. No sooner do they set out, however, than does Zeus send Iris down to threaten them with physical violence if they do not bend to his wishes (8.399-408). While Hera and Athena concede, they both remain

angry, and Hera makes another attempt to assert herself by objecting to Zeus' constraints verbally (8.462-68). Once again, Zeus puts her in her place (8.477-83):

> σέθεν δ' ἐγὼ οὐκ ἀλεγίζω[6]
> χωομένης, οὐδ' εἴ κε τὰ νείατα πείραθ' ἵκηαι
> γαίης καὶ πόντοιο, ἵν' Ἰάπετός τε Κρόνος τε
> ἥμενοι οὔτ' αὐγῇς Ὑπερίονος Ἠελίοιο
> τέρποντ' οὔτ' ἀνέμοισι, βαθὺς δέ τε Τάρταρος ἀμφίς·
> οὐδ' ἢν ἔνθ' ἀφίκηαι ἀλωμένη, οὔ σευ ἔγωγε
> σκυζομένης ἀλέγω, ἐπεὶ οὐ σέο κύντερον ἄλλο.
>
> "I don't care a bit that you
> are angry, not even if you try to go to the lowest places
> of earth and sea, where Iapetus and Kronus,
> sitting there, enjoy neither the light of Hyperion Helios
> nor the wind, but Tartarus is deep all around them:
> not even if you, wandering about, go there, should I care
> that you are angry, since there is nothing more dog-like than you."

By publicly discounting her opinions and feelings and verbally denigrating her loss of emotional control, Zeus re-establishes his superior position and, with the patriarchal order now reconfirmed, the episode comes to a close.

At the same time, however, the epic also works to cast doubt upon the patriarchal order's "unquestioned" supremacy, as it is Agamemnon's abuse of his patriarchal prerogatives in "feminizing" Achilles by stripping him of honor that leads to his fall from respect. In addition, despite the epic's prevailing message that proper order is ensured through the assertion of dominant male authority, the goddesses of the *Iliad* are far from powerless or colorless beings. As goddess of war, Athena is a fearsome fighter, and both Greeks and Trojans view her as a powerful ally who brings success to her favorites – as when she assists Achilles in pushing back the Trojans by amplifying his war-cry and haloing him with supernatural light (18.203ff) – and trouble to her enemies – as when she tricks Hector into standing his ground with Achilles by masquerading as his brother

Deiphobus (22.226ff). Athena's prowess in battle is emphasized by a contrast with Aphrodite, whose attempt to interfere in the war in Book 5 is comically cut short when Diomedes wounds her wrist and she goes crying to her mother Dione (5.311ff). Aphrodite's inadequacy is underscored by the fact that this minor injury causes her to drop her son Aeneas, whom she was trying to save (and whom, fortunately, Apollo subsequently rescues), while she focuses instead on her own superficial wound. The contrast between the two goddesses becomes explicit when Homer bookends this episode with direct statements juxtaposing these two goddesses. As he pursues Aphrodite ὃ δὲ Κύπριν ἐπῴχετο νηλέι χαλκῷ/ γιγνώσκων ὅ τ' ἄναλκις ἔην θεός, οὐδὲ θεάων/ τάων αἵ τ' ἀνδρῶν πόλεμον κάτα κοιρανέουσιν,/ οὔτ' ἄρ' Ἀθηναίη οὔτε πτολίπορθος Ἐνυώ ("[Diomedes] approached Cypris with pitiless bronze, knowing that this was a god without strength, not one of the goddesses who command the affairs of men in war – not Athena, nor city-sacking Enyo": 5.330-33); then Zeus, comforting Aphrodite, advises her οὔ τοι τέκνον ἐμὸν δέδοται πολεμήια ἔργα,/ ἀλλὰ σύ γ' ἱμερόεντα μετέρχεο ἔργα γάμοιο,/ ταῦτα δ' Ἄρηι θοῷ καὶ Ἀθήνῃ πάντα μελήσει ("My child, the works of warfare are not alloted to you; you just dabble in the lovely works of marriage, and let all these things be a concern for swift Ares or Athena": 5.428-30). Yet despite the clear respect granted to Athena in the masculine realm of war, even here she is not exempt from womanly pettiness: with Hera as her ally, Athena cannot resist making snide remarks belittling Aphrodite – ἦ μάλα δή τινα Κύπρις Ἀχαιϊάδων ἀνιεῖσα/ Τρωσὶν ἅμα σπέσθαι, τοὺς νῦν ἔκπαγλα φίλησε,/ τῶν τινα καρρέζουσα Ἀχαιϊάδων ἐυπέπλων/ πρὸς χρυσῇ περόνῃ καταμύξατο χεῖρα ἀραιήν ("Cypris indeed was rousing on some one of the Achaean women to follow at once after the Trojans, whom she loves so much, and stroking this well-robed Achaean lady, she

scratched her tender hand on a golden brooch": 5.422-25). In Book 21, Athena actually goes so far as to punch Aphrodite in the breast as she tries to lead a wounded Ares, whom Athena has just bested, off the field, and follows this injury with another gloat: τοιοῦτοι νῦν πάντες ὅσοι Τρώεσσιν ἀρωγοὶ/ εἶεν, ὅτ' Ἀργείοισι μαχοίατο θωρηκτῇσιν,/ ὧδέ τε θαρσαλέοι καὶ τλήμονες, ὡς Ἀφροδίτη/ ἦλθεν Ἄρῃ ἐπίκουρος ἐμῷ μένει ἀντιόωσα·/ τώ κεν δὴ πάλαι ἄμμες ἐπαυσάμεθα πτολέμοιο ("Now may all the ones aiding the Trojans be such as these, whenever they should fight against armored Argives, as courageous and stout-hearted as Aphrodite when she came as an ally to Ares, contesting my might: then we would have ended this war long ago": 21.428-32). In this way, although Athena, as a goddess, is able to cross over into an area that was viewed as fundamentally masculine,[7] she nonetheless exhibits many of the negative characteristics that were seen to define the feminine nature.

Like Athena, Hera is depicted as a formidable goddess, but she too exhibits typical negative feminine traits. As we have seen, Hera is remarkably persistent in her attempts to defy Zeus' orders when they contradict her own inclinations, and as Zeus suggests to Iris in the aforementioned episode, her tenacity is not entirely unproductive: ...ἰδῇ γλαυκῶπις ὅτ' ἂν ᾧ πατρὶ μάχηται./ Ἥρῃ δ' οὔ τι τόσον νεμεσίζομαι οὐδὲ χολοῦμαι·/ αἰεὶ γάρ μοι ἔωθεν ἐνικλᾶν ὅττί κεν εἴπω ("The grey-eyed girl should understand when she fights with her father. But I am not at all so upset or angry with Hera: for she has always been accustomed to oppose whatever I say": 8.406-08). Yet while Hera retains some autonomy by consistently resisting Zeus' authority, her constant opposition is often cast as comic, subversive, or petty, and her attempts to achieve her own objectives are regularly trumped in the end by Zeus' will. Joan O'Brien points out the discrepancy between the depiction of a sometimes comic, often savage Hera and her

role as divine protectress in early Greek cult. O'Brien argues that her characterization here "derives from an ideological reshaping of a regional earth goddess" as Homer attempts to reconcile her to his view of her appropriate role in the Olympian family,[8] a reshaping that coincides with what many scholars see as a shift to the more profoundly patriarchal cultures of the historical period. The tension inherent in this shift is apparent not only in Hera's attempts to thwart Zeus' will, but also in Zeus' repeated threats to smite his wife.[9]

While Hera's efforts are regularly trumped by Zeus and his patriarchal authority, she does help to illustrate the limits on Zeus' power: for instance, Hera and Athena both insist on the total destruction of Troy, an eventuality from which Zeus tries to back away. Yet even Zeus himself is bound to abide by fate, which in this case will eventually accord with the goddesses' wishes. This point is driven home when Zeus' own mortal son, Sarpedon, engages in combat with Patroclus. Zeus knows Sarpedon will lose and considers rescuing him (16.433-38), but Hera talks him out of it, arguing, αἰνότατε Κρονίδη ποῖον τὸν μῦθον ἔειπες./ ἄνδρα θνητὸν ἐόντα πάλαι πεπρωμένον αἴσῃ/ ἂψ ἐθέλεις θανάτοιο δυσηχέος ἐξαναλῦσαι;/ ἔρδ'· ἀτὰρ οὔ τοι πάντες ἐπαινέομεν θεοὶ ἄλλοι ("Most dread son of Cronus, such a speech you have spoken! A mortal man, long since having been allotted his destiny – do you wish to free him again from hateful death? Do it: but all the rest of we gods will not applaud you": 16.440-43). Occasionally, therefore, Hera does get her way, but her success is due more to the fact that her desires happen to coincide with the precepts of fate than to her own ability to impose her will. Nonetheless, she does serve as a reminder to Zeus of his own limitations – a significant role, particularly in light of the ancient conception that women were unable to impose

appropriate limits on their own behavior[10] – and to remind the audience that patriarchal authority is far from absolute.

In addition to being cast as a nagging, disobedient wife who needs to be restrained and controlled, Hera suggests the dangerous nature of women through her manipulative tendencies and the power of her sexuality. In Book 14, for example, having enlisted the help of Aphrodite and the god Sleep, Hera seduces Zeus and then puts him to sleep to distract him from the action on the battlefield so that, contrary to his wishes, she can give her beloved Greeks some breathing space. Zeus responds to her overtures by providing a long list of his amorous conquests, "flattering" Hera by saying that she tops them all (14.315-28), an ill-advised strategy which must test the limits of Hera's self-restraint, and which thereby emphasizes to the audience the calculated nature of Hera's seduction. When Zeus awakens in Book 15, he recognizes that he has been victimized by the double-threat of women's sexuality and deceit, and again chastises Hera, calling her κακότεχνος ("evil-scheming": 15.14), threatening her with physical violence, and reminding her of previous abuse he has inflicted on her in order to keep her in line (15.14ff). As in the past, Hera backs off in response to Zeus' diatribe and concedes obedience to his authority. At the same time, she has, temporarily at least, managed to trump Zeus' will and impose her own, though she does so through trickery and machinations rather than by asserting any sanctioned power. Thus, like Athena, Hera, as a goddess, manages to conduct herself with a latitude that would be unthinkable for mortal women; yet also like Athena, she nonetheless exhibits characteristic feminine faults that work to justify women's ultimate subjugation to male authority, authority

which even in the divine realm is envisioned as providing the necessary restraint and control that keeps female behavior within appropriate boundaries.

Although Athena and Hera each exhibit power and autonomy in excess of that found in mortal women, their attitudes and behavior stem from motives consistent with the Topography of Shame theory in that they are both concerned with measuring up to the male-dictated ideal which prizes female beauty as the primary means by which a woman externally demonstrates the honor that so wholly reflects on her male relations. Thus, while both goddesses often seem to be working at cross-purposes to their closest male kin – Zeus, as Athena's father and Hera's brother-husband – their tenacious defense of the Greeks and their hostility towards the Trojans and Aphrodite are rooted in the slight both incurred as a result of the Judgment of Paris. As females, even goddesses such as these understand that their primary value to their male kin is located in their sexual identity: though they take action in opposition to the will of Zeus, they do so in defense of the characteristic that most concretely enriches the status of Zeus, their closest male ally. This impulse is further illustrated by Hera's jealousy over Zeus' extramarital liaisons: in reacting to these, Hera expends all her energy tenaciously trying to punish his mistresses or curtail his affairs rather than pursuing her own, suggesting that her concern is primarily with the slight Zeus' wandering eye implies to her desirability. Thus, she responds with misguided attempts to repair the insult to her beauty rather than further undercutting how well she measures up to the feminine ideal by compromising her chastity through infidelity to her husband.

Elsewhere in this epic, we find more straightforward examples of female deities whose behavior illustrates the Topography of Shame theorem. The goddess Thetis actively works to promote her son Achilles' interests by first interceding with Zeus to help the Trojans while Achilles sits out of battle, and later by procuring immortal armor for him when he is ready to fight once again. Thetis takes these actions in response to Achilles' stated wishes and requests and despite her knowledge that, since immortal glory and early death go hand in hand for Achilles (1.414ff), the result will be grief and suffering for her. Thetis, therefore, is a divine model of an ideal mother: she is obedient to her son's wishes, acts exclusively on his behalf, and supports him emotionally even at the expense of her own happiness.

Aphrodite, too, despite being mocked as a weakling goddess, consistently works to protect the men who are closest to her. As noted above, she attempts at her own peril to rescue her son Aeneas in Book 5, just as earlier she had interceded in the duel to save Paris from death at Menelaus' hands (3.373ff). Although Paris is not related to Aphrodite, he is special to her for several reasons: first, by awarding her first prize in the divine "beauty contest," he has served in the past to bolster her status among gods and men; and secondly, Aphrodite seems to view him as a potential sexual partner, as Helen implies when, in response to Aphrodite beckoning her to Paris' bed, she suggests to Aphrodite, ἧσο παρ' αὐτὸν ἰοῦσα, θεῶν δ' ἀπόεικε κελεύθου,/ μηδ' ἔτι σοῖσι πόδεσσιν ὑποστρέψειας Ὄλυμπον,/ ἀλλ' αἰεὶ περὶ κεῖνον ὀίζυε καί ἑ φύλασσε,/ εἰς ὅ κέ σ' ἢ ἄλοχον ποιήσεται ἢ ὅ γε δούλην ("You, going there yourself, sit beside him, withdraw from the road of the gods, tread Olympus with your feet no longer, but trouble yourself about him and protect him, until that time when he'll make you his wife, or perhaps his maidservant": 3.406-09).[11]

A goddess' favor is not always cast as maternal or sexual – as it does not seem to be, for instance, with Athena's protection and support of Achilles[12] – but these factors do form an important part of the preferential treatment most heroes receive from divine patronesses, as is suggested by the fact that male gods do not promote mortal favorites to the same extent as do female deities. In Book 20, for instance, Poseidon intervenes in battle on behalf of Aeneas, and Apollo rescues Hector, yet neither exhibits a central or sustained allegiance to one warrior in particular in the same way that Thetis supports Achilles or Aphrodite does Paris. Even Zeus' pity for his son Sarpedon (16.433-38) is cast as a more distant concern, both in the lack of direct interaction between the two and in the fact that in Zeus' isolated verbal expression of anxiety on his son's behalf, he half-heartedly contemplates but does not even begin to attempt any preventative action.

While goddesses in the *Iliad* undoubtedly form a separate category from mortal women in the divine powers they possess and in their immunity from the sorts of serious long-term repercussions facing mortal women, they nonetheless illustrate many of the faults and flaws that were attributed to the female nature more generally in Homeric society, and thus serve as divine examples of the need for a controlling patriarchal authority to keep these negative traits in check. With the possible exception of Ares – ἔχθιστος...θεῶν οἳ Ὄλυμπον ἔχουσιν ("most hateful of the gods who hold Olympus": 5.890) – male gods simply do not exhibit the same excesses of emotion and tendency towards irrationality as goddesses do. In addition, these immortal females illustrate the Topography of Shame theory by working on behalf of male kin or by defending, either directly or indirectly, their status as sexual beings, the primary trait through which

women bring men honor. Aphrodite represents a possible exception to this rule, in that she alone of goddesses makes a practice of adultery, and her primary mortal attachments further symbolize sexual transgression – Paris as a potential illegitimate lover, and Aeneas as the product of an illegitimate union with Anchises; yet at the same time, the sexuality which identifies her, and by virtue of which she won the contest over Hera and Athena, arguably places her outside the family structures within which women can hope to exercise power in the ways delineated by the Topography of Shame. Therefore, in some ways her sexual trangressions serve to illustrate the rule. Athena, in contrast, despite her concern with defending the beauty which confers honor upon her male kin, remains a virgin, rejecting the sexual role that Aphrodite embraces. While on the surface this might seem to be a rejection of the patriarchal system, Athena in fact represents just the opposite: her birth from Zeus' head "indicates her dual role as an embodiment of 'male rationality' and a potent champion of patriarchal order,"[13] and additionally involves a usurpation of the female reproductive role – a privileging Athena herself reinforces in Aeschylus' *Eumenides* (736-38), when she rules in Orestes' favor, explicitly placing the male role in the reproductive process over that of the female – and maintaining exclusive allegiance to Zeus himself rather than dividing her loyalty through a marriage connection. In this way, the *Iliad*'s goddesses serve to illustrate the fundamental gendered framework on which the lives of mortal women are based, and their ultimate subjugation to male authority works to divinely sanction the patriarchal system as both natural and inevitable.

Book 6

Expectations for mortal women's attitudes and behavior are set forth most explicitly in Book 6, where Hector leaves the field of war in order to ask the women to supplicate Athena and to seek the whereabouts of his absent brother Paris. In this book, the masculine world of the battlefield and the largely feminine world of the city, now devoid of its warriors, come together briefly, providing important insights into masculine and feminine roles and into the dynamics of the most important relationships women have with men – those of mother, mistress, and wife.

When Hector enters the city, he finds his mother Hecuba, appropriately, in the inner chambers of the palace and in the company of her daughter Laodice. Hecuba immediately greets Hector with typical maternal concern, attending to his physical well-being, characterizing his Greek enemies as bullies, and encouraging him to attend to the gods by pouring a libation (6.254-62). While Hecuba's fretting and care-taking situates her as a positive character and a good mother, Hector's response reveals her lack of true understanding: he tells her that it would be inappropriate for him to supplicate Zeus while spattered with gore, and points out that the wine she offers him would, in addition, weaken his constitution and detract from his fighting ability. He then instructs his mother to choose appropriate gifts, and, taking a band of women with her, to present them as an offering to Athena in the hopes that the goddess will mitigate the rage of the Greek hero Diomedes; Hecuba immediately obeys. This episode, the first centering on domestic relations between mortal men and women in the epic, thereby works to establish the proper gendered order: while women should strive to care for their male kin, it is the man's place to designate what is proper, and the woman's role to obey. This scene also

develops a dichotomy between male and female roles in war: the blood-splattered Hector belongs to the world of the battlefield, while Hecuba's function is limited to supplication of the gods within the walls.

Hector next goes to his brother Paris' house to find out why he has disappeared from the battlefield after losing a duel with Menelaus. He finds his brother in his bedchamber, fresh from making love with Helen, while Ἀργείη δ' Ἑλένη μετ' ἄρα δμῳῇσι γυναιξὶν/ ἧστο καὶ ἀμφιπόλοισι περικλυτὰ ἔργα κέλευε ("Argive Helen sat with her maidservants and directed the glorious works of her attendants": 6.323-24). While this seems a perfectly legitimate, even virtuous, activity for a woman in the ancient world, from Hector's perspective, the tranquil domestic scene upon which he comes is perverse in light of the fact that he has been compelled to retreat from the battlefield in order to recall his brother from Helen's bed to a war that the couple themselves initiated when Paris took Helen from her rightful husband Menelaus. From the audience's viewpoint, the idyllic bedroom scene seems additionally unnatural in consideration of the fact that when she first found him at home, Helen had greeted Paris with contempt, protesting that she preferred to return to her first husband. Now, having just made love, she is acting the wife, attending to the domestic duties of Paris' household, while the betrayal of Menelaus is highlighted, not only be her own fickle attitude, but also by Hector's blood-spattered presence. Moreover, while Paris' declaration to Hector that νῦν δέ με παρειποῦσ' ἄλοχος μαλακοῖς ἐπέεσσιν/ ὅρμησ' ἐς πόλεμον ("Even now, my wife, persuading me with gentle words, was urging me into battle": 6.337-38) may be to her credit,[14] here it is the woman who exhorts the proper behavior in the male, a striking contrast with the more idealized gender dynamic we have just seen at play between

Hector and Hecuba, where the male designated what is proper while the female was expected to obey. Thus, from the beginning of the scene, the relationship between Helen and Paris is cast as aberrant, while Helen herself occupies the ambiguous position we will see is characteristic of her where gender relations are concerned.

Hearing the verbal interchange between the two brothers and Hector's reprimand of Paris for lingering in bed while a war is being fought over their affair, Helen is made very aware of the repercussions of her behavior – it was her abandonment of her husband and attachment to Paris that caused this war in the first place. Hector's weariness and frustration, along with his gory appearance would also remind Helen, who was dependent on and maintains a seemingly genuine affection for Hector, of the actual cost of her actions to those for whom she cares. Helen's denigration of herself as κυνὸς κακομηχάνου ὀκρυοέσσης (a "dreadful scheming bitch": 6.344)[15] and her subsequent death wish[16] are, therefore, triggered by a very real crisis where her failures in measuring up to female sexual ideals are pointed up and her relationship with a significant male alliance is threatened, as the Topography of Shame would suggest.[17] Some scholars, therefore, see Helen's self-deprecation as rooted in actual feelings of guilt and shame for her role in the situation.[18] Margaret Graver's examination of κύων and related "dog-insults" in Homer, for instance, suggests that Helen's self-directed use of these terms implies a recognition of her sexual misconduct as a form of greed which shows "a disregard specifically for societal norms of *meum et tuum.*"[19]

At the same time, however, the same "crisis" conditions which point out Helen's shortcomings also make her position here precarious, and her self-deprecation can thereby be seen as a manipulative tool designed to safeguard her well-being: above all,

Helen needs to stay in Hector's good graces if she is to remain secure among the Trojan people, whose peace and safety she has compromised with her presence. Hector's evident irritation at the fact that Helen and Paris have been making love while he and his men fight on their behalf makes this a critical moment for Helen, one in which she is motivated to provoke Hector's sympathy rather than his anger. Her self-deprecation and the implication that Zeus himself has engineered this war work to diffuse Hector's anger by positioning Helen as a pitiable and unfortunate victim of fate rather than as a callous and self-serving adulteress. In addition, Helen's self-deprecation can also be read as an indirect boast, and one that is ironically ennobling, in that it "marks a rejection of past misdeeds – just as to call oneself 'shameless' implies that one (now) feels a becoming sense of shame for one's actions."[20]

The view that Helen is using manipulation here is strengthened by the fact that Helen's death wish (ὥς μ' ὄφελ' ἤματι τῷ ὅτε με πρῶτον τέκε μήτηρ/ οἴχεσθαι προφέρουσα κακὴ ἀνέμοιο θύελλα/ εἰς ὄρος ἢ εἰς κῦμα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης – "on that day when first my mother brought me into this world, would that an evil whirlwind had born me away, carrying me off into a mountain, or into a wave of the loud-roaring sea!": 6.345-47) is not a simple desire to die: rather, it refers to a sort of rapture that suggests being seized by a god,[21] a notion that hints at self-importance as much as it does self-loathing. Moreover, after acknowledging the burden that Hector in particular bears in this war, Helen coaxes him to sit down beside her, ostensibly to soothe his frustration and help him ease for a moment the enormous weight on his shoulders; on another level, however, she is actually flirting with her brother-in-law, using her charm and sexual allure to remind him of her femininity.[22] Here, as often, "Helen's apparent tone…does not match her ultimate intention."[23] She therefore serves to highlight the

pleasures and dangers of woman as a sexual being in the ancient world: as Paris' mistress, she is both beautiful and sexually satisfying, but at the same time, fickleness, temptation, manipulation, and danger go hand in hand with her positive attributes. She is, in addition, successful: although Hector resists her attempted seduction, neither does he speak to her harshly, suggesting that her self-defamation "ultimately serves an apotropaic function."[24]

The image of Helen as a dangerous seductress is fittingly sandwiched between the portrait of Hecuba as an ideal mother and Hector's encounter with Andromache, who provides a model for the ideal wife. When Hector leaves Paris' rooms, he seeks his wife Andromache at home, but finds that she is not there. The questions he poses to the servants as to her whereabouts suggest the sorts of activities she habitually engages in and the places she normally frequents, all of which are appropriate to a virtuous wife and mother: εἰ δ' ἄγε μοι δμῳαὶ νημερτέα μυθήσασθε·/ πῇ ἔβη Ἀνδρομάχη λευκώλενος ἐκ μεγάροιο;/ ἠέ πῃ ἐς γαλόων ἢ εἰνατέρων ἐυπέπλων/ ἢ ἐς Ἀθηναίης ἐξοίχεται, ἔνθά περ ἄλλαι/ Τρῳαὶ ἐυπλόκαμοι δεινὴν θεὸν ἱλάσκονται; ("Come then, tell me without fail, handmaidens, where has white-armed Andromache gone, leaving our halls? To one of my sisters, or my brothers' well-robed wives, or to the temple of Athena where all the other Trojan women appease the terrible goddess?": 6.376-80). The servants respond that Andromache has gone to none of these places: instead, having heard that the Trojans were hard-pressed, she ran to the wall μαινομένῃ ("raving": 6.389) out of concern for his safety (but appropriately accompanied by a female companion, a nurse carrying their son Astyanax). Hector therefore meets his wife, here for the last time, near the Western Gate, a location which marks the boundary

between the feminine domestic world and the masculine zone of the battlefield.[25] By emphasizing Andromache's temporary dislocation from normal feminine spheres of the home, the company of her female relations, and ritual activity,[26] Homer demonstrates the rift that the war has caused in her life and effectively foreshadows the later more permanent estrangement from her idealized feminine identity that will come with Hector's death.

Andromache greets her husband in tears, and grasps his hand (6.405-06) so that her body language clearly signals that she, like Hecuba, views her identity as entirely dependent on Hector's well-being. Her opening words support this reading (6.407-13):

> δαιμόνιε φθίσει σε τὸ σὸν μένος, οὐδ' ἐλεαίρεις
> παῖδά τε νηπίαχον καὶ ἔμ' ἄμμορον, ἣ τάχα χήρη
> σεῦ ἔσομαι· τάχα γάρ σε κατακτανέουσιν Ἀχαιοὶ
> πάντες ἐφορμηθέντες· ἐμοὶ δέ κε κέρδιον εἴη
> σεῦ ἀφαμαρτούσῃ χθόνα δύμεναι· οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' ἄλλη
> ἔσται θαλπωρὴ ἐπεὶ ἂν σύ γε πότμον ἐπίσπῃς
> ἀλλ' ἄχε'...
>
> "Madman, your strength will destroy you, and you take no pity
> on your infant son and on wretched me, who will presently be
> your widow: for soon, all the Achaeans, having been roused up,
> will kill you: and for me, being deprived of you, it would be best
> to sink into the earth: for there will be no other comfort for me
> when you have met your destiny, only sorrows..."

Like Hecuba, Andromache shows little concern for Hector's role in battle; her primary interest is in his safety, since it is only through him that she herself derives a sense of value and purpose. Andromache then describes how she has lost her entire natal family: her father and seven brothers were killed by Achilles, and her mother enslaved and ransomed, but soon destroyed by grief (6.413-28). With the remainder of her male kin gone, Andromache's reliance on Hector is intensified: Ἕκτορ ἀτὰρ σύ μοί ἐσσι πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ/ ἠδὲ κασίγνητος, σὺ δέ μοι θαλερὸς παρακοίτης ("But Hector,

you are father to me, and my noble mother, and my brother, and you are my vigorous husband": 6.429-30).[27] Without him, and with her son being yet an infant, Andromache will have no male kindred to rely on for protection and from whom to derive her sense of worth and identity.

Although Andromache's concern for and reliance upon Hector cast her as a positive character and a "good" wife, Andromache transgresses typical gender roles by offering Hector advice on military strategy: λαὸν δὲ στῆσον παρ' ἐρινεόν, ἔνθα μάλιστα/ ἀμβατός ἐστι πόλις καὶ ἐπίδρομον ἔπλετο τεῖχος./ τρὶς γὰρ τῇ γ' ἐλθόντες ἐπειρήσανθ' οἱ ἄριστοι ("Station your men beside the fig-tree, where the city is most vulnerable and the wall is able to be scaled. For three of their best men, coming to that place, have already tried it": 6.433-35). This bold and unusual step for a woman would have been striking: Aristarchus, in fact, considered her advice so inappropriate that he rejected these lines as spurious.[28] As with her physical location on the borderline between the domestic and military realms, Andromache pushes behavioral boundaries here,[29] but her purpose in doing so is revealing. Her intention, clearly, is to encourage Hector to take up a more defensive, and therefore safer, position rather than fighting in the forefront where the battle is most dangerous. Thus, she tests the limits of what is acceptable for a woman, but in accordance with the Topography of Shame, she does so in the interests of the safety of her closest male kin. At the same time, Andromache's advice, while sound from a strategic standpoint, places a higher value on her husband's survival than on his *kleos*, a valuation that runs contrary to the heroic code. Like Hecuba, Andromache's sense of self is so entirely tied to her husband that she sees her life as worth nothing if he is gone – a live husband is preferable to a dead one, even if it means sacrificing a portion of his glory. Still, Andromache does not ask Hector to withdraw

from battle altogether, or to act the coward: since her honor is partially a function of his, she crafts her advice in a way that will allow him to "honor his commitment to her and his responsibility as the defender of Troy" at the same time.[30] Thus, while men's honor in ancient Greece was undoubtedly important to women, it necessarily ranked second, since though a noble husband raised a wife's status, a dead husband deprived her of the very means by which she defined the self.[31]

Hector naturally rejects Andromache's proposal, citing shame before Τρῶας καὶ Τρῳάδας ἑλκεσιπέπλους ("the Trojans and the Trojan women with long, trailing robes": 6.442) and the reputation he has earned for bravery, and thereby repositioning honor, status, and *kleos* as his priority over his own life and, indeed, over his wife's peace of mind and well-being.[32] He knows that one day Troy will fall, and τις Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων/ δακρυόεσσαν ἄγηται ἐλεύθερον ἦμαρ ἀπούρας·/ καί κεν ἐν Ἄργει ἐοῦσα πρὸς ἄλλης ἱστὸν ὑφαίνοις,/ καί κεν ὕδωρ φορέοις Μεσσηΐδος ἢ Ὑπερείης/ πόλλ' ἀεκαζομένη, κρατερὴ δ' ἐπικείσετ' ἀνάγκη·/ καί ποτέ τις εἴπῃσιν ἰδὼν κατὰ δάκρυ χέουσαν·/ Ἕκτορος ἥδε γυνὴ ὃς ἀριστεύεσκε μάχεσθαι/ Τρώων ἱπποδάμων ὅτε Ἴλιον ἀμφεμάχοντο ("someone of the bronze-clad Achaeans would lead you away in tears, having robbed you of your day of freedom. And in Argos, you might weave at another woman's loom, or you might carry water from Messeis or Hypereia, much against your will, but strong necessity will be laid upon you: and then someone might say, seeing you shedding a tear, 'Here is the wife of Hector, who was the best of the horse-taming Trojans in battle when they fought around Ilion'": 6.454-61). Thus, whereas the interchange between husband and wife here situates her identity as entirely reliant on her husband's safety and security, it positions his identity as a function of individual accomplishment. Indeed, although Hector says that he hopes that

he will be dead before he hears her cries indicating that she is being dragged away to such a fate (6.464-65), he derives solace from the thought that his wife, although suffering, humiliated, and miserable after his death, will continue to serve as a reminder to people of his glorious name.[33]

Before he leaves, Hector stretches his arms out to pick up his son, who recoils in fear, not recognizing his father with his helmet on. Hector therefore removes it, distancing him from his warrior identity and bringing him, like Andromache, to the edge between masculine and feminine, where he is able to coddle his son and laugh together with his wife. It is in this context, significantly, that Hector addresses a few words to the gods, where he envisions an idealized scene of gendered harmony (6.476-81):

> Ζεῦ ἄλλοι τε θεοὶ δότε δὴ καὶ τόνδε γενέσθαι
> παῖδ' ἐμὸν ὡς καὶ ἐγώ περ ἀριπρεπέα Τρώεσσιν,
> ὧδε βίην τ' ἀγαθόν, καὶ Ἰλίου ἶφι ἀνάσσειν·
> καί ποτέ τις εἴποι πατρός γ' ὅδε πολλὸν ἀμείνων
> ἐκ πολέμου ἀνιόντα· φέροι δ' ἔναρα βροτόεντα
> κτείνας δήϊον ἄνδρα, χαρείη δὲ φρένα μήτηρ.
>
> "Zeus and all the other gods grant that this son of mine
> become as I am, most distinguished among the Trojans,
> thus great in strength, and that he rule mightily over Ilion:
> and someday may someone say that this boy, coming from the fight,
> is better by far than his father: and having killed his enemies, may he
> bear off the blood-stained spoils, and may his mother's heart rejoice."

As Marilyn Katz has pointed out, the picture Hector draws here contrasts with the reality demonstrated in Andromache's pleas and advice: in Hector's vision, the mother would support her son's martial exploits and revel in his battlefield achievements rather than encouraging him to hold back and remain safe. In Hector's idealized picture, the priorities of men and women are as one: rather than opposition and tension between the feminine and masculine objectives, there is support and cooperation: men's *kleos* is as

important to the wife's identity as it is to her husband's.[34] However, this idealized unity between masculine and feminine realms dissolves into the reality of their "divided worlds" shortly thereafter when Hector puts his helmet back on in preparation for battle, returns his son to Andromache, and orders his wife, ἀλλ' εἰς οἶκον ἰοῦσα τὰ σ' αὐτῆς ἔργα κόμιζε/ ἱστόν τ' ἠλακάτην τε, καὶ ἀμφιπόλοισι κέλευε/ ἔργον ἐποίχεσθαι· πόλεμος δ' ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει/ πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ' ἐμοί, τοὶ Ἰλίῳ ἐγγεγάασιν ("Going back into the house, see to your own work, the loom and the distaff, and direct your handmaidens to tend to their tasks: war is the concern of all the men born in Ilion, but most of all for me": 6.490-93). Although the interchange between husband and wife has involved transgressions of boundaries, Hector, like Zeus, ultimately reasserts patriarchal authority, ordering Andromache back to her loom and delineating the spheres of concern proper to men and to women. At the same time, Hector's later death on the battlefield while Andromache attends to her weaving within demonstrates the consequences of this rigid division and to some extent calls it into question.[35] Nevertheless, Hector's exchange with his wife provides a model for gendered relations in the ancient world where the woman supports her man in line with the tenets of the Topography of Shame, and he, in return, responds with tenderness and concern for her as a subjective individual, an attitude that, as we shall see, contrasts with the typical male stance that prevails towards the generic category of women, represented in this epic by war captives who have been divested of their male kinship connections.

In an epic that is focused almost exclusively on war, Book 6 offers a rare and valuable glimpse at the roles and expectations which the epic had for women in a domestic context. By juxtaposing Hector's interactions with Hecuba, with Helen, and

with Andromache, Homer offers a paradigmatic view of how Greek women were expected to function as mothers, as temptresses, and as wives. Like immortal females, Hecuba and Andromache illustrate the Topography of Shame by working on behalf of their male kin, and the deference and obedience that both women show Hector reinforce patriarchal power as the ideal. Helen's case is more complex: as daughter of Zeus and most beautiful woman in the world, she has the ability to shift her allegiance from Paris to Menelaus and back again, an inconsistency which makes her dangerous. Nonetheless, Homer presents her as conforming to the Topography of Shame as she works to maintain her ties to these men through both seduction and self-deprecation. At the same time, the danger Helen represents through her machinations and fickleness reinforces the need for the patriarchal authority exemplified in the more idealized relationships presented by Hecuba and Andromache.

Briseis and Chryseis

While female deities occupy relatively empowered positions, and wives and mothers, if not empowered, at least have a positive value and (limited) function in relation to males, women who stand outside these roles are presented at the epic's outset as no more than objects, possession of which represents an accumulation of *kleos* for the male characters. This perspective stands in ironic contrast with the subjectivity and individuality the poet himself, as we will see, eventually attributes to some of these women. In a world of war, the number of women detached from primary male ties is not inconsiderable, made up, as it is, of war captives. Two such women, Chryseis and Briseis, play a central role in the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles in Book 1, a dispute

which touches off the action of the epic as a whole. Yet while they now figure primarily as symbols of men's honor rather than as individuals with needs and desires of their own, Homer does give us an indication that they once occupied the same roles filled by Hecuba and Andromache in Book 6: they were once the beloved daughters, wives, and sisters of noble men (see 1.446-47 and 19.291-94). Similarly, as Hector predicted to his own wife in Book 6 (6.454-61), Andromache herself will be reduced to a similar state once Hector is dead,[36] as will Hecuba and the other Trojan women.[37] Once deprived of this primary connection with male kin, these women are reduced to mere signifiers of masculine honor, a situation which underscores the absolute reliance of women's value on their relationship to men and which effectively illustrates the reasons behind the crisis in identity and resulting self-deprecation or boasting provoked when a woman's relationship with her male kin is threatened.

The quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles originates in Agamemnon's harsh refusal to allow Apollo's priest Chryses to ransom his daughter Chryseis, whom Agamemnon has been awarded as a battle-prize. Chryses prays to the god to avenge his honor, and Apollo responds by inflicting a plague upon the Greeks. Achilles calls an assembly where the seer Calchas reveals the reason for the god's wrath. When Achilles demands that the god be appeased, Agamemnon becomes angry: asserting his particular partiality to Chryseis, he "rates" her using his own wife as a yardstick: καὶ γάρ ῥα Κλυταιμνήστρης προβέβουλα/ κουριδίης ἀλόχου, ἐπεὶ οὔ ἑθέν ἐστι χερείων,/ οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν, οὔτ' ἄρ φρένας οὔτέ τι ἔργα ("For I even prefer her to my wedded wife Clytemnestra, since she is no worse than her in build, or in stature, in mind or in any skill": 1.113-15). While Agamemnon implies a modicum of individual value through this comparison, his itemized list is composed of "conventional, if not purely arbitrary,

markers of distinction,"[38] so that it has, in effect, as G. S. Kirk puts it, "the suggestion of a cattlemarket."[39] Agamemnon's implied devaluation of his own wife, moreover, illustrates that despite the relatively privileged position of women like Hecuba and Andromache, the value placed even on wives and mothers is conditionally based on how well these women serve to bolster male honor through traits like beauty, physique, and domestic skill. Additionally, as the audience knows, Clytemnestra will eventually engineer Agamemnon's death; by undercutting the traits that give his wife value and identity in relation to him, Agamemnon here strips his wife of her feminine worth and ironically foreshadows his own death at her hands. Agamemnon then further weakens his claim of attachment to Chryseis when he turns around and agrees to give her back, but stipulates, αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γέρας αὐτίχ' ἑτοιμάσατ' ὄφρα μὴ οἶος/ Ἀργείων ἀγέραστος ἔω, ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ ἔοικε ("However, make ready for me immediately another prize, lest I alone of the Argives be without a gift of honor, since that would not be fitting": 1.118-19). Agamemnon's refusal to be left without a battle-prize, even temporarily, in turn angers Achilles, and in the end, Agamemnon strips Achilles of his prize, the girl Briseis. By taking Briseis, Agamemnon transfers the dishonor he would accrue at being the only Greek leader without a *geras* to Achilles, making Briseis, in effect, into "the equivalent of the apple of discord,"[40] regarded more for her value as a symbol than for any inherent qualities she possesses as an individual.

Although Chryseis does seem to be valued as an individual by Chryses, who tries to ransom his daughter and even seems to feel some paternal tenderness towards her (as suggested at 1.446-47), her very name positions her as an appendage to her patriarchal guardian, as was the case for most women in both Greece and Rome, including Briseis as

well: indeed, the similarity between Chryseis' name and that of Briseis "indicates the interchangeability of the two women in the operative system of exchange."[41] Despite his apparent affection for her, Chryses' grudge against the Greeks seems to be located as much in the slight Agamemnon has made to his honor as it is in his grief over the loss of his daughter, as he implies when, after welcoming his daughter back, he asks Apollo to lift the plague, saying, κλῦθί μευ ἀργυρότοξ', ὃς Χρύσην ἀμφιβέβηκας/ Κίλλαν τε ζαθέην Τενέδοιό τε ἶφι ἀνάσσεις·/ ἦ μὲν δή ποτ' ἐμεῦ πάρος ἔκλυες εὐξαμένοιο,/ τίμησας μὲν ἐμέ, μέγα δ' ἴψαο λαὸν Ἀχαιῶν·/ ἠδ' ἔτι καὶ νῦν μοι τόδ' ἐπικρήηνον ἐέλδωρ·/ ἤδη νῦν Δαναοῖσιν ἀεικέα λοιγὸν ἄμυνον ("Hear me, Silverbow, you who protect Chryse and holy Cilla, and who rule over Tenedos with might: as before you heard me praying, and honoring me, you oppressed the army of the Achaeans greatly, now again grant me this wish: ward off now at last the dreadful plague from the Danaans": 1.451-56). Moreover, throughout Book 1, Chryseis is given no voice, no particular volition: she is wholly discussed in regards to external qualities and valued primarily as an object of exchange representative of male honor. Once the issue of men's "rights" to her has been settled, she disappears, never to be seen again.

In much the same way, Achilles' prize Briseis is here given little sense of subjectivity: like Chryseis, she is discussed chiefly in regards to external qualities and valued as an object of exchange.[42] The only hint we receive of Briseis' interiority in Book 1 is the poet's comment that when Patroclus led her out of Achilles' tent and gave her over to Agamemnon's heralds, she was ἀέκουσ' ("unwilling": 1.348). Unlike Chryseis, however, Briseis does not disappear so early in the epic, but remains important as a pawn traded back and forth between Achilles and Agamemnon; yet while Homer will eventually give us some insight into Briseis' perspective as an individual, this opening

book of the epic positions her almost exclusively from the perspective of the elite male characters. Indeed, throughout Book 1, Briseis, like Chryseis, is referred to by the neuter noun γέρας ("gift of honor": i.e. 1.356 and 507), illustrating her dehumanized state.[43]

After Agamemnon's initial confiscation of the girl leads Achilles to withdraw from battle, the Trojans get the upper hand, and it becomes clear to the Greek leaders that they need Achilles' help. In Book 9, Agamemnon sends an embassy to Achilles to offer to return the girl, along with a long list of gifts, in exchange for leaving off his anger and returning to battle, again positioning Briseis as a pawn, and underscoring her objectification. The particular importance of women's sexuality as a measure of their worth in relation to men's honor is suggested by Agamemnon's offer that ἐπὶ δὲ μέγαν ὅρκον ὀμεῖται/ μή ποτε τῆς εὐνῆς ἐπιβήμεναι ἠδὲ μιγῆναι/ ἣ θέμις ἐστίν, ἄναξ,[44] ἤτ' ἀνδρῶν ἤτε γυναικῶν ("he will swear a great oath that not ever did he approach her bed or mingle with her in love, as is the custom, my lord, between men and women": 9.274-76). Achilles at first asserts some regard for Briseis as an individual (ὅς τις ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἐχέφρων/ τὴν αὐτοῦ φιλέει καὶ κήδεται, ὡς καὶ ἐγὼ τὴν/ ἐκ θυμοῦ φίλεον δουρικτητήν περ ἐοῦσαν – "...any man who is good and sensible loves his woman and cares for her, as I loved this one from the heart, although she was spear-won": 9.341-43), so that in some ways, Briseis "functions on the level of both social and libidinal economy."[45] Yet Achilles ultimately rejects Agamemnon's offer, undermining his claim of affection and underscoring her function as a symbol, since "far from accepting a substitute or equivalent for Briseis, [he] refuses to accept *Briseis herself* as reparation for herself."[46] Nor does this interchange limit women's objectification to Briseis: Agamemnon's offer also includes ἑπτὰ γυναῖκας ἀμύμονα ἔργα ἰδυίας/

Λεσβίδας ("seven Lesbian women knowing skills without fault": 9.270-71), Τρωϊάδας δὲ γυναῖκας ἐείκοσιν.../ αἵ κε μετ' Ἀργείην Ἑλένην κάλλισται ἔωσιν ("twenty Trojan women...who after Argive Helen are most beautiful") once Troy is taken (9.281-82), and the hand in marriage of whichever of his own three daughters Achilles prefers (9.286-90). When Achilles rejects Agamemnon's offer, these women, along with Briseis, are summarily dismissed along with tripods, racehorses, gold bars, and cauldrons in one fell swoop.

Despite his initial refusal to rejoin the fight, after Patroclus is killed, Achilles decides to return to battle to avenge his death. Having lost his closest companion, Agamemnon's slight to his honor becomes less important to him, and along with it, the woman who symbolized that honor. Reconciling with Agamemnon, Achilles drives home the function of women as pawns in the political games of men when he asks (19.56-62):

> Ἀτρεΐδη ἦ ἄρ τι τόδ' ἀμφοτέροισιν ἄρειον
> ἔπλετο σοὶ καὶ ἐμοί, ὅ τε νῶΐ περ ἀχνυμένω κῆρ
> θυμοβόρῳ ἔριδι μενεήναμεν εἵνεκα κούρης;
> τὴν ὄφελ' ἐν νήεσσι κατακτάμεν Ἄρτεμις ἰῷ
> ἤματι τῷ ὅτ' ἐγὼν ἑλόμην Λυρνησσὸν ὀλέσσας·
> τώ κ' οὐ τόσσοι Ἀχαιοὶ ὀδὰξ ἕλον ἄσπετον οὖδας
> δυσμενέων ὑπὸ χερσὶν ἐμεῦ ἀπομηνίσαντος.
>
> "Son of Atreus, was this at all the better course for us both,
> for you and for me, that we, grieving in our hearts,
> raged in heart-destroying strife on account of a girl?
> Would that Artemis had slain her aboard the ships
> On that day I took her, destroying Lyrnessus! Then, so many
> Achaeans had not seized the unspeakable earth with their teeth
> at the hands of enemies while my anger seethed."

Along with the implication that they had quarreled over a mere trifle rather than a human being, Achilles' implicit displacement of responsibility for the deaths of Greek warriors onto Briseis speaks volumes, reflecting a more generalized tendency to blame women for

any negative repercussions resulting from the patriarchally-imposed system of gendered relations in the Homeric world.[47] At the same time, as noted above, the quarrel over Briseis, like that over Chryseis, reflects the larger cause of the war, the theft of Helen: in each case, a woman serves as a symbol of damaged male honor, a role which overshadows any individuality or subjectivity she might possess.

When Achilles rejoins the battle, Agamemnon makes good on his offer by sending Briseis and other reparations to Achilles' camp. At last, Homer gives us a somewhat more subjective view of Briseis when she breaks out in mourning upon seeing Patroclus' mangled body (19.287-300):

> Πάτροκλέ μοι δειλῇ πλεῖστον κεχαρισμένε θυμῷ
> ζωὸν μέν σε ἔλειπον ἐγὼ κλισίηθεν ἰοῦσα,
> νῦν δέ σε τεθνηῶτα κιχάνομαι ὄρχαμε λαῶν
> ἂψ ἀνιοῦσ'· ὥς μοι δέχεται κακὸν ἐκ κακοῦ αἰεί.
> ἄνδρα μὲν ᾧ ἔδοσάν με πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ
> εἶδον πρὸ πτόλιος δεδαιγμένον ὀξέι χαλκῷ,
> τρεῖς τε κασιγνήτους, τούς μοι μία γείνατο μήτηρ,
> κηδείους, οἳ πάντες ὀλέθριον ἦμαρ ἐπέσπον.
> οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδέ μ' ἔασκες, ὅτ' ἄνδρ' ἐμὸν ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεὺς
> ἔκτεινεν, πέρσεν δὲ πόλιν θείοιο Μύνητος,
> κλαίειν, ἀλλά μ' ἔφασκες Ἀχιλλῆος θείοιο
> κουριδίην ἄλοχον θήσειν, ἄξειν τ' ἐνὶ νηυσὶν
> ἐς Φθίην, δαίσειν δὲ γάμον μετὰ Μυρμιδόνεσσι.
> τώ σ' ἄμοτον κλαίω τεθνηότα μείλιχον αἰεί.
>
> "Patroclus, most dear to my wretched heart,
> when I left this hut you were living, but now,
> coming back again, I find you, leader of the people,
> dead. So for me, evil always follows on evil.
> The husband to whom my father and noble mother gave me
> I saw before the city pierced through by sharp bronze.
> And three brothers, whom one mother bore with me,
> Beloved ones, they all found destruction in a day.
> But you did not let me, when swift Achilles killed
> My husband, and sacked the city of godlike Mynes,
> You did not let me cry – but you said that you would make me
> The wedded wife of godlike Achilles, that you would carry me
> In the ships to Phthia, to celebrate a marriage among the Myrmidons.
> And so I weep ceaselessly for you dying, you who were always kind.

Here, we get a glimpse of Briseis as an individual with a past and a family who loved her, and whom she loved, a view through which Homer "subtly criticizes Achilles' and Agamemnon's objectification of Briseis as scapegoat by endowing her with subjectivity and a voice."[48] Briseis' description of the annihilation of her family is strongly reminiscent of Andromache's point about the destruction of her own kin in Book 6, an allusion which reminds us that Briseis once occupied a position not unlike that of Hecuba or Andromache, while at the same time, forecasting to the audience the fact that Hecuba and Andromache are destined to occupy a position similar to that of Briseis once the war had ended.[49] In highlighting Briseis' private pain and reminding us of the heavy price women pay for the wars of men, Homer complicates the status of women as mere war prizes by temporarily repositioning Briseis, who has so long functioned as a mere signifier, as a thinking and feeling subject. But while Briseis' recollection of the consolation Patroclus offered her when Achilles killed her husband and led her away into captivity gives the modern audience a significant picture of a heroic male acting with tender concern for a woman's emotional pain and treating her as more than just war booty, at the same time, the comfort she derives from his reassurances illustrates the principles of the Topography of Shame: although she is grieved at losing her husband, Briseis' pain is soothed by the prospect of receiving a noble and worthy replacement, despite the fact that her future husband is to be the very man that killed her first one. This would suggest that Briseis' grief stemmed at least in part from the loss of position she derived from her attachment to a male guardian. Although we should not assume that her grief was entirely assuaged by Patroclus' promise to make sure she became Achilles' wife, Briseis' speech implies that Patroclus' words did indeed provide at least some

measure of reassurance by offering her another heroic male on whom she can base her identity.

At the same time, we might consider the possibility that Briseis' words are directed at least in part towards the nearby Achilles and the practical goal of solidifying her position with him. Through her lament, Briseis cleverly conveys to Achilles that she had the support of his much-loved friend, and that his desire was for her to not only become Achilles' wife, but also to be received and treated honorably among the Myrmidons. In doing so, Briseis bolsters her chances that such a marriage will come about and that respectful treatment will accompany it. Rather than judging Briseis' lament as either sincere, as suggested in the former reading, or calculated, as in the latter, I would submit that both interpretations are intended simultaneously. In this way, Briseis' lament exemplifies the extent to which women viewed their identities as a function of their male relations and the tendency of women towards self-expression at moments of erotic crisis with an eye towards buttressing their position in relation to their male protectors.

As *gerata*, Chryseis and Briseis illustrate the dehumanization of women in war, and their example anticipates the fate that awaits the women of Troy as well.[50] While Homer does give some indications of women's subjectivity and individual worth, the overarching value system the treatment of these women suggests is one in which a woman's value depends entirely on her ability to bolster male status and honor, so that when stripped of the role of wife, daughter, or mother, she is more or less reduced to the status of object or prize. This dependence, along with the mutability of women's

positions suggested through references to the natal ties of both Chryseis and Briseis and through allusions to the fate that awaits women like Hecuba and Andromache, gives insight into the mechanics behind the Topography of Shame, where a perceived threat to a woman's relationship with her male kin produces the crisis of identity that results in expressions of self-image either as manifestations of sincere anxiety or as a means of exerting subtle and indirect influence in a situation where she would otherwise be wholly disempowered. The reducibility of women to mere objects and signifiers is a perspective we must keep in mind when analyzing the roles of all women in Homeric society, even those whose primary ties have not yet been severed.

Hecuba

As one of these women who still occupy a legitimate familial connection to an elite male, Hecuba appears throughout the epic, as she did in Book 6, as an ideal mother whose actions and attitudes are determined by her position in relation to her son as the Topography of Shame dictates; yet with the death of Hector, we shall begin to see the degradation and loss of identity that results from the violent severance of these male ties. After her meeting with Hector in Book 6, Hecuba does not reappear until Book 22, where we hear her pitiful plea to her son as she calls to him from the city walls in a futile attempt to prevent him from engaging in combat with Achilles. Holding out her bare breast and weeping, she begs (22.82-89):

> Ἕκτορ τέκνον ἐμὸν τάδε τ' αἴδεο καί μ' ἐλέησον
> αὐτήν, εἴ ποτέ τοι λαθικηδέα μαζὸν ἐπέσχον·
> τῶν μνῆσαι φίλε τέκνον ἄμυνε δὲ δήιον ἄνδρα
> τείχεος ἐντὸς ἐών, μὴ δὲ πρόμος ἵστασο τούτῳ
> σχέτλιος· εἴ περ γάρ σε κατακτάνῃ, οὔ σ' ἔτ' ἔγωγε
> κλαύσομαι ἐν λεχέεσσι φίλον θάλος, ὃν τέκον αὐτή,
> οὐδ' ἄλοχος πολύδωρος· ἄνευθε δέ σε μέγα νῶιν

Ἀργείων παρὰ νηυσὶ κύνες ταχέες κατέδονται.

"Hector my child, respect these, and pity me,
If ever I held out a soothing breast to you:
Remember these things, dear child, and fend off
This destructive man from within the walls. Don't, like a stubborn hero,
Make a stand against him. For if he should kill you, I will no longer
Mourn you on the bier, dear scion, my own child,
Nor will your richly-dowered wife: but with us far apart from you,
The swift dogs will devour you beside the ships of the Argives."

Paired with the details of her short speech, Hecuba's striking gesture of exposing her breast to her son serves as a poignant reminder of a woman's position in the world: Hecuba's identity is inextricable from her role as wife and mother. While her dramatic appeal is designed to remind Hector of these primal ties, it cannot have the intended visceral effect because his identity is not dependent on his relation to women as subjective beings, but is instead a function of the *kleos* that derives from external factors such as his behavior on the battlefield, a hierarchy which we have seen at play even in his relationship with his wife Andromache. Hecuba's speech additionally touches on another important role for women: mourning the dead. If Hector dies and Achilles refuses to concede the body to his parents, Hecuba and Andromache will both be cheated of their womanly roles in their inability to mourn him properly. By bringing up Hector's infancy and death and connecting both to the part she herself plays in them, Hecuba underscores the degree to which her view of herself relies on her attachments to male relations.

Hecuba's reaction when Hector is killed confirms this reading. Tearing off her veil, she screams, and addresses Hector's dead body: τέκνον ἐγὼ δειλή· τί νυ βείομαι αἰνὰ παθοῦσα/ σεῦ ἀποτεθνηῶτος; ὅ μοι νύκτάς τε καὶ ἦμαρ/ εὐχωλὴ κατὰ ἄστυ πελέσκεο ("My child, I am desolate! How shall I go on now, suffering dreadfully, with you dead? You, who day and night were my pride and joy in the city…": 22.431-

36). Hecuba verbally links her peace of mind and security to Hector's well-being while at the same time signaling the devastation his death represents to her feminine identity through the non-verbal sign of tearing off her veil. This gesture, moreover, as an exposure of the body demonstrates the emotional rupture Hector's death represents for her in much the same way as did her earlier exposure of her breast. In her interactions with Hector, therefore, Hecuba serves as a model for maternal virtue: she not only works to nurture and protect her son, but she envisions her very identity as dependent on his.

In Book 24, Priam informs his wife that he intends to approach the Greek camp in an attempt to ransom Hector's body (24.194-199). Hecuba, in fear for her husband's safety, tries to object, but Priam rebukes her: μή μ' ἐθέλοντ' ἰέναι κατερύκανε, μὴ δέ μοι αὐτὴ/ ὄρνις ἐνὶ μεγάροισι κακὸς πέλευ· οὐδέ με πείσεις ("Don't detain me when I want to go, and don't you be a bird of evil-omen in my halls. You will not persuade me": 24.218-19). Once he asserts his authority, Hecuba silently concedes, and later sees to it that he pours a libation to Zeus and offers up a prayer in order to ensure the successful completion of his mission (24.287-98). Despite her misgivings, Hecuba here continues to exemplify idealized feminine behavior: she looks out for her husband's safety, acts in support of his decision despite the evident grief and anxiety it causes her, and attends to the appropriate religious rites and duties.

Although Hecuba's behavior exhibits the principles of the Topography of Shame in relation to her husband as we have seen it did with her son, her attachment to Priam does not compensate entirely for the loss of identity she incurred with the death of Hector. In her initial response to Priam's announcement, Hecuba expressed violent hostility towards Achilles, grotesquely commenting, τοῦ ἐγὼ μέσον ἧπαρ ἔχοιμι/

ἐσθέμεναι προσφῦσα· τότ' ἄντιτα ἔργα γένοιτο/ παιδὸς ἐμοῦ ("Would that I might take hold of the middle of his liver, fastening on it, to eat it up: then, at least, some vengeful deed would come about for my son": 24.212-14). Hecuba's statement recalls Zeus' earlier allusion to Hera's desire to eat Priam and the other Trojans raw at 4.35-36, while hinting at the erosion of her humanity that begins with the loss of her son and culminates, according to one mythic variation, after the death of her husband, the murder of her grandson Astayanax, the sacrifice of her daughter Polyxena, the news of the murder of her son Polydorus, and the fall of her city, with her transformation into a yapping dog.[51] Hecuba's eventual metamorphosis is emblematic of the loss of identity she suffers once she is deprived of her male kin and thus stripped of the feminine roles that define her.

Our final glimpse of Hecuba occurs in Book 24, where she delivers the traditional *goos*, a formal lament by the kinswomen of the dead, after Priam brings Hector's body back to Troy. Her short speech, which is fairly formulaic and ritualized, focuses largely on Hector himself and on his death rather than explicitly on her own grief, resulting in an "unexpected sense of wonder, comfort, and something verging upon 'joy' in the midst of the mother's lament."[52] Yet at several points her words suggest how closely she connects her identity to his. For instance, she addresses him as ἐμῷ θυμῷ πάντων πολὺ φίλτατε παίδων ("by far dearest to my heart of all my children": 24.748), integrates his very existence with her own (ἦ μέν μοι ζωός περ ἐὼν φίλος ἦσθα θεοῖσιν – "Truly, you were dear to the gods when you were alive *for me*" (my emphasis): 24.749), and views his current state as a function of her own interest as well (νῦν δέ μοι ἑρσήεις καὶ

πρόσφατος ἐν μεγάροισι/ κεῖσαι – "now, dewy and freshly-slain, you lie here in the halls *for me*" (my emphasis): 24.757).

As such, from start to finish Hecuba presents the image of an idealized, if tragic, woman, faithfully fulfilling her role as wife and mother by viewing her very identity as intimately and inextricably connected to the fate of her male kin. The rift Hector's death represents and Hecuba's own foreshadowing of her degeneration into a dehumanized state remind us that, like Chryseis and Briseis, women who are bereft of their significant male ties are ultimately stripped of value and individual identity. Once Hecuba is deprived of male ties completely, she is thrust outside the bounds of the Topography of Shame: as Homer's allusion to her later transformation suggests, without a male onto whom both her honor and shame reflect and around whom they revolve, a woman ceases to be a woman altogether.

Andromache

Like Hecuba, Andromache's subsequent appearances in the *Iliad* reinforce the initial view of her as an idealized wife and mother. As noted above, as Hector took his leave in Book 6, he ordered Andromache to return to her rooms, attend to her weaving, and leave the concerns of war to men (6.490-93). As a good, obedient wife should, Andromache apparently takes Hector's commands to heart: in Book 22, while the rest of the Trojans watch from the wall as Hector makes his final stand against Achilles, Andromache alone remains unaware of the situation; instead, entrenched deep within her domestic space, she works the loom and anticipates Hector's needs when he returns home from battle, a circumstance that emphasizes once again the contrast between the

masculine sphere of war and the feminine world of the home. So far has Andromache removed herself from the manly concerns of battle in which she earlier had attempted to interfere that the cloak she weaves is embroidered with flowers, symbols of life and beauty – a striking contrast with the description in Book 3 of the tapestry Helen weaves, the subject of which was the very martial matters in which they are all embroiled (3.125ff).

Yet when Andromache hears the lamentations from the tower and discerns what has happened, she drops her shuttle, which, as Maria Pantelia notes, signifies the permanent rupture Hector's death represents to her domestic stability and her feminine identity: "Without Hector, Andromache passes from a state of insecurity into a state of complete and irretrievable loss of identity."[53] Followed by two attendants, Andromache runs to the tower, again μαινάδι ("raving": 22.460); seeing her husband's corpse dragged behind Achilles' chariot, she faints, losing her veil and headbands in the process, a detail which, as it did with Hecuba, "symbolizes a fall from womanly happiness and fulfillment."[54] When she comes to, Andromache at first raves madly for death, and then paints a grim picture of the life of a widow and orphan deprived of the man who both served as their protector and elevated them through his reputation, a vision which contrasts sharply with Hector's earlier utopian fantasy.[55] Andromache's lament illustrates the loss of identity Hector's death means for her by concentrating on the emptiness of her life and her son's without Hector around to give them purpose and position, and she signifies the end of her role as wife by anticipating burning his clothing τετυγμένα χεροὶ γυναικῶν ("made by the hands of women": 22.511) on the pyre as a substitute for proper mourning. Charles Segal has also argued that in this passage, the poet further

emphasizes the reliance of Andromache's identity on her status as Hector's wife linguistically. Homer does not refer to her by name throughout the entire episode, minimizing her individual identity, but instead highlights her wifely role by referring to her as ἄλοχος ("wife": 22.437), the significance of which word is underscored through its insertion it into an otherwise formulaic line. By emphasizing her role as ἄλοχος, Homer suggests that Andromache "sees [Hector's] death as the collapse of her own life, the destruction of her identity, her social position in a highly formalized society."[56]

In his examination of 22.437-76, Segal detects additional variations on formulaic lines that further drive this point home. Noting a contrast with the standard transitions between Priam and Hecuba's preceding laments as well as between the lamentations of all three women (Andromache, Hecuba, and Helen) in the final threnodic scene in Book 24, Segal shows that here, in contrast, Homer frustrates our expectations by devoting almost forty lines to Andromache's belated comprehension of the situation, which he positions as an *anagnorisis* "worthy of Aristotle's praise."[57] Segal's close linguistic analysis of these lines also reveals that Homer deliberately manipulates formulaic language usually found in martial contexts and applies them to Andromache as grief-stricken wife both to highlight the contrast between the masculine world of war and feminine domestic contexts,[58] and to underscore the fact that Andromache's fate is in some senses "at one with Hector's."[59] By employing a deliberate analogy of Andromache's grief with the struggles and death of men in battle, Segal lends support to the view that in an important sense, Hector's death in battle represents death in a very real way to Andromache's self as well: in effect, Andromache "...come[s] as close as a woman in the *Iliad* can to feeling the blow of the spear."[60] At the same time, it is only by

moving into this undefined position that Andromache is fully able to express her emotions: with male connection from which she derived her identity severed, she is now, temporarily at least, able to acquire an authentic voice that stands in ironic contrast to the invisibility previously expected of her.

In the more formalized lamentation that follows the retrieval of Hector's corpse in Book 24, Andromache leads off the lamentations, referring to him as ἆνερ ("husband": 24.725), a form of address that emphasizes once again her wifely role. Andromache's thoughts, moreover, are here again focused on the effects that Hector's death will have on her own life and that of her son, and she additionally blames Hector for the grief she endures: ἀρητὸν δὲ τοκεῦσι γόον καὶ πένθος ἔθηκας/ Ἕκτορ· ἐμοὶ δὲ μάλιστα λελείψεται ἄλγεα λυγρά./ οὐ γάρ μοι θνῄσκων λεχέων ἐκ χεῖρας ὄρεξας,/ οὐδέ τί μοι εἶπες πυκινὸν ἔπος, οὗ τέ κεν αἰεὶ/ μεμνῄμην νύκτάς τε καὶ ἤματα δάκρυ χέουσα ("...you have given unspeakable grief and sorrow to your parents, Hector: and for me most of all, you have left miserable pains. For you did not stretch out your hands to me, dying in your bed, nor did you say to me any intimate word, which I might remember always, through the days and nights of pouring forth tears for you": 24.741-45). Like Hecuba, Andromache sees Hector and his death primarily in the context of how they relate to her, but rather than focusing on Hector's noble nature, his prowess in battle, and the glory he has brought on himself and his people through his accomplishments, she mourns the particular ways in which his death detracts from her feminine identity. Again, however, it is significant that Hector's death temporarily frees her from the constraints associated with subordinating her identity to his, and ironically allows Andromache a moment of public visibility through her lament.

Throughout the epic, Andromache is the model of a loving wife, but one who views her own identity as so tied up with her husband that she is unable to see value in her existence apart from him. Having lost her strongest male alliance, like Hecuba, Andromache expresses a loss of identity. In contrast with Hecuba's final lament, however, Andromache's is wholly characterized by "bitter and inconsolable sorrow" and a sense of "forlorn abandonment."[61] Rather than focusing on Hector himself, Andromache emphasizes her own position at the end of this epic as devastated, and virtually without hope. Her final words situate Hector's death as an end for her as well, and she foresees the rest of her days as endless repetitions of this one, spent in mourning for her loss. With her natal family destroyed and her husband dead, Andromache is without a significant male on whom her identity might depend; as a result, she sees herself as deteriorating into a less-than-human state of stagnation and stasis.

Helen

Just as she offers a sort of counterbalance to the idealized images of Hecuba and Andromache in Book 6, Helen elsewhere presents a striking opposition likewise with other women of the *Iliad*. Women like Briseis and Chryseis are used by men in war, whereas Helen instead motivates men to action[62]; other women like Hecuba and Andromache suffer helplessly, whereas Helen "seduces men away from the battlefield into the bedroom."[63] Helen's special status can in part be attributed to her great beauty, and in part to her divine heritage as daughter of Zeus. Her mystique is such that other Homeric characters seem to regard her as either a "goddess…[or] a grief: she is never a mere woman, but one exalted or sinister, beyond the ordinary, the real."[64] Many scholars,

in fact, have argued that the Iliadic Helen represents a "faded goddess," a vestige of an ancient fertility deity who has been demoted to mortal status with the strengthening of patriarchal structures.[65] Yet despite her "specialness," her beauty, her allure, and her divine connections – or perhaps more accurately, because of them – rather than providing an intended model for women, Helen symbolizes all that is dangerous about the female sex.

Helen's expressions of self-loathing in Book 6, as we have seen, are presented with an ambiguity that allows the audience to view her with pity or to see her as manipulative and self-serving. Likewise, Helen's every appearance in the overall epic seems purposefully drawn with a similar ambivalence that consistently results in the conflicting interpretations by commentators on the subject of her character.[66] This sort of ambiguity reflects the discomfort men in ancient Greece felt about women's sexuality and its relationship to masculine identity. Helen's beauty and sexual magnetism paired with constant uncertainty about her sincerity, her motivations, and her sexual allegiance position her as the personification of male fears about women's nature – she is the Bronze Age embodiment of Hesiod's καλὸν κακὸν ("beautiful bad thing": *Theog.* 585).

F.J. Groton argues that prior to her first appearance in Book 3, textual references to Helen have inclined the audience towards a sympathetic view of her role in instigating the war: the Greeks in the *Iliad* seem to believe that Paris has abducted Helen against her will, that she suffers from their treatment of her, and that she desires to return home with her first husband.[67] This view is most clearly set forth by Nestor in Book 2, where he says, μή τις πρὶν ἐπειγέσθω οἶκον δὲ νέεσθαι/ πρίν τινα πὰρ Τρώων ἀλόχῳ κατακοιμηθῆναι,/ τίσασθαι δ' Ἑλένης ὁρμήματά τε στοναχάς τε ("...let no man

hasten to return home before he has slept beside the wife of one of the Trojans to avenge Helen's sorrows and groans": 2.354-56).[68] The use of a similar formula at 2.589-90 suggests that Menelaus himself shares this perspective: μάλιστα δὲ ἵετο θυμῷ/ τίσασθαι Ἑλένης ὁρμήματά τε στοναχάς τε ("[Menelaus] put it foremost in his heart to avenge Helen's sorrows and groans"). While, as Groton notes, this suggests some measure of sympathy for Helen's plight, Nestor's vision of appropriate vengeance for her abduction illustrates the Greek view of male honor as a function of women's sexuality: just as Menelaus' honor is tarnished by Paris' absconsion with his wife, the Greeks in return will mar the honor of every Trojan by compromising each man's wife's sexual fidelity.

Helen's initial appearance does little to contradict the audience's predisposition to view her presence in Troy in such a light. In Book 3, Iris, disguised as Laodice, approaches Helen to inform her that Menelaus and Paris are about to fight a duel on her behalf and to encourage her to come and watch the showdown from the tower, where her primary function will not be as spectator, but instead to be on view herself, "to validate herself, and therefore her value as a sign."[69] Iris finds her in an unambiguously feminine context: τὴν δ' εὗρ' ἐν μεγάρῳ· ἣ δὲ μέγαν ἱστὸν ὕφαινε/ δίπλακα πορφυρέην ("She found [Helen] in the hall: she was weaving a dark, two-folding robe on the great loom...": 3.125-26). Iris' appearance causes Helen to weep and γλυκὺν ἵμερον ἔμβαλε θυμῷ/ ἀνδρός τε προτέρου καὶ ἄστεος ἠδὲ τοκήων ("threw sweet desire into her heart for her former husband, and her city, and her parents": 3.139-40), so that her allegiance is positioned here as with the Greeks rather than with Paris.

At the same time, however, the design that Helen is weaving when Iris enters focuses on πολέας...ἀέθλους/ Τρώων θ' ἱπποδάμων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων,/ οὕς ἕθεν εἵνεκ' ἔπασχον ὑπ' Ἄρηος παλαμάων ("the many conflicts of the horse-taming Trojans and bronze-clad Achaeans, which they endured at Ares' hands for her sake": 3.126-28). Helen's choice of subject matter contrasts sharply with Andromache's design in Book 22: unlike Andromache, whose limited vision focuses on her hopes for life with her husband as represented by the flowers she depicts, Helen is able to see her life and her situation in a broader context. Alone of women in the *Iliad*, Helen defines herself apart from her relationship with any one particular male. On the contrary, Helen uses her weaving as a voice that helps establish her identity, and which makes her *kleos* known to future generations,[70] a proclamation which some scholars see as making Helen into an avatar for the poet himself.[71] Thus despite her later self-deprecation, Helen's awareness of the place she has earned in human memory is suggested by the subject matter she has chosen for her weaving,[72] and this awareness implies a certain measure of pride and self-worth.

We first see explicit evidence of ambiguous attitudes towards Helen in the reaction of the old men sitting with the Trojan king Priam on the tower as Helen approaches: most admire her beauty, and express understanding that the Greeks and Trojans would suffer so much for such a woman, but another protests, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὧς τοίη περ ἐοῦσ' ἐν νηυσὶ νεέσθω,/ μηδ' ἡμῖν τεκέεσσί τ' ὀπίσσω πῆμα λίποιτο ("...but even though she is such, let her return on the ships, lest she be left behind as a bane to us and to our children": 3.159-60). Helen is thus positioned simultaneously an object of beauty and of grief. This ambiguity continues when Priam, asking Helen to join

him in viewing the standoff between her two husbands, famously absolves her from blame for the war: οὔ τί μοι αἰτίη ἐσσί, θεοί νύ μοι αἴτιοί εἰσιν ("To my mind, you are not to blame at all; the gods... are the cause": 3.164). Helen's response, however, suggests that she acted of her own volition: ὡς ὄφελεν θάνατός μοι ἀδεῖν κακὸς ὀππότε δεῦρο/ υἱέϊ σῷ ἑπόμην θάλαμον γνωτούς τε λιποῦσα/παῖδά τε τηλυγέτην ("Death ought to have been more pleasing an evil to me than when I followed your son here, leaving behind my marriage bed, my kinsmen, and my darling child...": 3.173-75). Despite Priam's exoneration, Helen claims to view herself as culpable, and even closes by referring to herself as κυνώπιδος ("bitch-face": 3.180).

Yet as Nancy Worman has observed, "[i]n every scene in which she appears, [Helen's] speech is edged threateningly with competing implications,"[73] and an important question here is to what extent Helen's assumption of blame and her self-deprecation are intended to reflect authentic interiority, or if we are instead intended to see her words as calculated. It has long been recognized that the Greeks were comfortable with the idea of a "double motivation" where both human and divine causes were seen as responsible for a particular situation, a concept reflected in the tension in the Homeric epics between views of Helen's culpability and statements that exonerate her.[74] Often, Helen is characterized as wholly responsible for the Trojan War, while at other times she is explicitly exculpated, as seen above.[75] Helen, too, seems to recognize both her own culpability, as suggested in her words to Priam, and the fact that she is in some ways a mere puppet of the gods, as she will later imply (3.299-300).[76] Helen's own view of her responsibility is, of course, crucial to the assessment of her self-image, and the issue here is whether she truly views herself as blameworthy or whether she is using self-

deprecation as a strategy for gaining the sympathy of men who have just acknowledged the suffering and grief her presence is causing them.

G. J. Ryan views Helen's self-deprecating speech to Priam as wholly deceitful, seeing a discrepancy between her words and non-verbal indicators of self-image: "If she felt as she says, she would not have approached so boldly, with confidence in her beauty, the assemblage of men on the tower."[77] Ryan goes on to argue that Helen's death wish and her description of herself as "dogface" (3.180) are the "words of a woman supremely confident of herself, of her beauty and charm. No other would speak so slightingly of herself."[78] In addition, Ryan judges Helen a "wanton" when she allows Paris to seduce her in Book 3, and sees Helen's interactions with Hector in Book 6, again, as duplicitous.[79] Ryan does give Helen a modicum of credit, seeing her concern about the slight she has caused to her brothers' honor (3.236-42) as perhaps "genuine," her attempts to resist Aphrodite and her verbal abuse of Paris in Book 3 as showing "an excellent spirit," and her final words spoken over Hector's body as "noble words, and probably sincere"; nonetheless, his final assessment is negative: "...beneath their nobility one cannot miss the note of personal loss to Helen; even to the end, she is egocentric."[80]

F.J. Groton, however, takes Helen's self-deprecation at face value: "...she is filled with unbearable feelings of shame in her fear that she has lost the esteem and respect of Greek and Trojans alike."[81] Groton, in fact, finds no evidence in the *Iliad*[82] for characterizing Helen as "wanton, self-centered, deceitful, bewitching, and beguiling," and finds no valid reason for viewing Helen's words as insincere or dishonest.[83] This controversy suggests that, as with the episode in her bedchamber in Book 6, Homer here leaves the question open. Helen's presumed awareness of the direction the Trojan elders'

talk was taking could have prompted genuine feelings of shame, but just as easily, Helen can be seen as playing on their sympathy in order to minimize feelings of resentment or hostility for the pain her role in the situation has caused.

Rather than judging between these two extremes, perhaps we should consider that both conditions may be true simultaneously: while her own homesickness and the words of the Trojan elders may have stirred up feelings of shame, Helen, who is smart enough to know how precarious her situation is, might be capitalizing on these feelings to negotiate, either consciously or subconsciously, a more sympathetic attitude among the Trojans. In a similar way, Helen's relatively "unbounded" condition in Troy comments upon Paris' compromised masculinity,[84] complicating the black and white categories of male and female and suggesting Homer's recognition of contradictions within the gendered system. The general extremity of views like Ryan's and Groton's do not allow for a more nuanced reading of this sort, and moreover, exemplify the sorts of reductive patriarchal attitudes that tend to divide women into categories of goddess or whore.[85]

Helen's interchange with Priam on the tower consists for the most part of him questioning her as to the identities of various Greek heroes, including Agamemnon, Odysseus, and Ajax. While this episode provides us the opportunity to peer into Helen's past life with the Greeks, and thus delve deeper into the questions of her sincerity and true allegiance, it seems odd coming as it does so late in the war. J. T. Sheppard accounts for this seeming anachronism by arguing that Priam is subtly encouraging Helen to "relieve her heart by leading her to speak of her husband."[86] At the same time, however, her identifications here obliquely underscore her status as a bride-prize, since she is able to recognize these heroes only because once they had all gathered at Sparta to compete as

suitors for her hand.[87] Helen answers Priam's questions with evident respect for the Greek warriors, calling Agamemnon ἀμφότερον βασιλεύς τ' ἀγαθὸς κρατερός τ' αἰχμητής ("both a good king and a mighty spearman": 3.179), Odysseus a πολύμητις ("much-scheming": 3.200) man εἰδὼς παντοίους τε δόλους καὶ μήδεα πυκνά ("knowing tricks of all sorts and clever schemes": 3.202), and Ajax πελώριος ἕρκος Ἀχαιῶν (the "gigantic wall of the Achaeans": 3.229). At the same time, as Nancy Worman observes, Helen uses her identification of Agamemnon as a touchstone to "frame an elegiac look at her own past, thus substituting her story for his,"[88] once again lacing her speech with ambiguity. Additionally, the homesickness that Homer has told us Helen felt when Iris beckoned her, and which was likely sharpened by Antenor's reference to an embassy Menelaus and Odysseus made to Troy on her behalf,[89] is perhaps manifest in the fact that after identifying Ajax, she moves on to Idomeneus unprompted, reminiscing about how Menelaus would entertain his Cretan friend at Sparta.[90] She then comments on the absence of her brothers Castor and Polydeuces[91]: unaware that they have died, she considers that either they did not come or that they avoid the company of other soldiers αἴσχεα δειδιότες καὶ ὀνείδεα πόλλ' ἅ μοί ἐστιν ("fearing the shame and many reproaches which are mine": 3.242). Once again, Helen's sincerity is questionable: some would argue that her apparent homesickness and her brothers' absence have aroused feelings of guilt and shame for her previous actions which prompt her self-deprecation here. Others would say that Helen continues to play upon the sympathies of Priam and the Trojans elders, knowing that their feelings towards her are ambiguous. Once again, a more nuanced view would suggest that there may be some truth to both viewpoints simultaneously.

The next scene, however, seems to lend support to the view that Helen's remorse is sincere. In this episode, Aphrodite, having whisked Paris off the battlefield to the safety of his bedroom, summons Helen to join him. Helen is not fooled by the goddess' guise of an old serving woman who had worked for Helen back in Sparta, and responds with apparent resentment (3.399-412):

> δαιμονίη, τί με ταῦτα λιλαίεαι ἠπεροπεύειν;
> ἦ πῄ με προτέρω πολίων εὖ ναιομενάων
> ἄξεις, ἢ Φρυγίης ἢ Μῃονίης ἐρατεινῆς,
> εἴ τίς τοι καὶ κεῖθι φίλος μερόπων ἀνθρώπων·
> οὕνεκα δὴ νῦν δῖον Ἀλέξανδρον Μενέλαος
> νικήσας ἐθέλει στυγερὴν ἐμὲ οἴκαδ' ἄγεσθαι,
> τοὔνεκα δὴ νῦν δεῦρο δολοφρονέουσα παρέστης;
> ἧσο παρ' αὐτὸν ἰοῦσα...
> κεῖσε δ' ἐγὼν οὐκ εἶμι· νεμεσσητὸν δέ κεν εἴη·
> κείνου πορσανέουσα λέχος· Τρῳαὶ δέ μ' ὀπίσσω
> πᾶσαι μωμήσονται· ἔχω δ' ἄχε' ἄκριτα θυμῷ.
>
> "Intrusive goddess, why do you want to deceive me like this?
> Will you lead me now to yet another well-settled city,
> Either to Phrygia or lovely Maeonia,
> Where there is some other mortal man dear to you?
> Since now, Menelaus, having beaten godlike Alexander
> Wishes to lead loathsome me back homeward –
> Is it because of this you stand here now in your trickery?
> Go sit beside him yourself! ...
> I'm not going there: it would be abominable of me,
> Tending to his bed. All the Trojan women hereafter
> Would fault me. I have countless pains in my heart already."

Helen's words here smack of sincerity, particularly since there is no one else around on whose sympathies she needs to play. In contrast to her speech in front of the male audience of the *teichoscopia*, the calculated impression of which made it ripe for analysis, here, before a single female, deity though she be, Helen is frank and her words straightforward, omitting any room for interpretation and suggesting that she adapts her speech to the gendered context as the Topography of Shame predicts. At the same time, this passage also goes a long way towards convincing the audience that Helen is not, at

least at present, staying with Paris willingly.[92] Aphrodite's angry response strengthens this view (3.414-17):

> μή μ' ἔρεθε σχετλίη, μὴ χωσαμένη σε μεθείω,
> τὼς δέ σ' ἀπεχθήρω ὡς νῦν ἔκπαγλ' ἐφίλησα,
> μέσσῳ δ' ἀμφοτέρων μητίσομαι ἔχθεα λυγρὰ
> Τρώων καὶ Δαναῶν, σὺ δέ κεν κακὸν οἶτον ὄληαι.
>
> "Don't anger me, wretch, lest I toss you aside
> and hate you as terribly as I love you now.
> I will contrive grievous hatred for you in the midst of both
> The Trojans and the Danaans, and you will suffer an evil doom."

Knowing "the extent of her dependence on others' valuation of her," Helen is afraid,[93] and she thus obeys the goddess. But the words she addresses to Paris when she arrives are not welcoming, but reproachful, further suggesting that she is there under compulsion and that her true allegiance is with Menelaus (3.428-36):

> ἤλυθες ἐκ πολέμου· ὡς ὤφελες αὐτόθ' ὀλέσθαι
> ἀνδρὶ δαμεὶς κρατερῷ, ὃς ἐμὸς πρότερος πόσις ἦεν....
> ἀλλ' ἴθι νῦν προκάλεσσαι ἀρηίφιλον Μενέλαον
> ἐξαῦτις μαχέσασθαι ἐναντίον· ἀλλά σ' ἔγωγε
> παύεσθαι κέλομαι, μηδὲ ξανθῷ Μενελάῳ
> ἀντίβιον πόλεμον πολεμίζειν ἠδὲ μάχεσθαι
> ἀφραδέως, μή πως τάχ' ὑπ' αὐτοῦ δουρὶ δαμήῃς.
>
> "You have come back from the war? You ought to have died there,
> Beaten by the stronger man, who formerly was my husband...
> But go now, challenge war-loving Menelaus,
> To fight you again. On the other hand, I advise you
> To hold back, don't do battle nor fight
> Recklessly with blond Menelaus,
> lest you perish quickly under his spear."

Helen here, at least initially, seems violently averse to her current situation, implying disgust with Paris' conduct and recognition that her first husband outshines her current one in both bravery and honor.[94] Our sympathy for Helen and the view that she is genuinely remorseful, guilt-ridden, and homesick, however, are immediately undercut

when Paris, after a very short speech in response to her suggestion, asks her to go to bed with him, and she immediately complies, a response which suggests to some scholars that Helen's rebukes were merely "a kind of bitter foreplay."[95] As they linger in bed after making love, moreover, Homer reminds us that Menelaus ἀν' ὅμιλον ἐφοίτα θηρὶ ἐοικὼς/ εἴ που ἐσαθρήσειεν Ἀλέξανδρον θεοειδέα ("was hunting the crowd like a wild beast, trying to find godlike Alexander": 3.449-50), a pathetic juxtaposition which drives home the shame Helen has brought on her first husband and highlights her culpability here at the end of this episode. It is in this context that Hector enters the bedroom in Book 6, finding Helen working "virtuously" at her loom and exhorting Paris back to battle, as discussed earlier in this chapter.[96] As such, the image of Helen, in her own eyes, in those of other characters, and in those of the audience, constantly vacillates between an appearance of guilt and of innocence, of honor and shame, and between the roles of victim and offender.

The ambiguity surrounding Helen's motivations in Book 3 and her speech in Book 6 is a pattern repeated throughout the epic. At the end of the *Iliad,* the body of Hector is brought back into Troy. His wife and mother initiate the *gooi*, but Helen gets the last word (24.762-75):

> Ἕκτορ ἐμῷ θυμῷ δαέρων πολὺ φίλτατε πάντων,
> ἦ μέν μοι πόσις ἐστὶν Ἀλέξανδρος θεοειδής,
> ὅς μ' ἄγαγε Τροίηνδ'· ὡς πρὶν ὤφελλον ὀλέσθαι.
> ἤδη γὰρ νῦν μοι τόδε εἰκοστὸν ἔτος ἐστὶν
> ἐξ οὗ κεῖθεν ἔβην καὶ ἐμῆς ἀπελήλυθα πάτρης·
> ἀλλ' οὔ πω σεῦ ἄκουσα κακὸν ἔπος οὐδ' ἀσύφηλον·
> ἀλλ' εἴ τίς με καὶ ἄλλος ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἐνίπτοι
> δαέρων ἢ γαλόων ἢ εἰνατέρων εὐπέπλων,
> ἢ ἑκυρή, ἑκυρὸς δὲ πατὴρ ὣς ἤπιος αἰεί,
> ἀλλὰ σὺ τὸν ἐπέεσσι παραιφάμενος κατέρυκες
> σῇ τ' ἀγανοφροσύνῃ καὶ σοῖς ἀγανοῖς ἐπέεσσι.
> τὼ σέ θ' ἅμα κλαίω καὶ ἔμ' ἄμμορον ἀχνυμένη κῆρ·
> οὐ γάρ τίς μοι ἔτ' ἄλλος ἐνὶ Τροίῃ εὐρείῃ
> ἤπιος οὐδὲ φίλος, πάντες δέ με πεφρίκασιν.

> Hector, you are the dearest to my heart of all
> my brothers-in-law; truly, godlike Alexander,
> who led me to Troy, is my husband: I wish I'd died first.
> For this now is the twentieth year
> Since I went from there and left my fatherland:
> I have never yet heard from you an evil or reproachful word.
> But if anyone in the house might taunt me,
> My brothers- or sisters-in-law or their beautifully-robed wives,
> Or my mother-in-law – my father-in-law was always very kind –
> You would hold that person back, exhorting him
> Both with your gentleness and with your soothing words.
> And so I weep for you and for myself, grieving in my unhappy heart;
> For there is no one else in broad Troy [who is] kind
> or dear to me. Instead, everyone shudders at me.

The placement of Helen as the third and final mourner here is surprising, both since Helen is the indirect cause of Hector's death,[97] and since this ordering goes against what Johannes T. Kakridis has called "the ascending scale of affections" which is typically found in epic and tragedy,[98] where Andromache, as the mourner most closely tied to Hector, should come last rather than first, as was the case in Book 22. This inversion of our expectations suggests that we should look for additional meaning in this placement and special significance in Helen's speech. F. J. Groton sees Homer's intent in placing Helen in the "position of honor" as supporting the "lasting impression of a sensitive and dignified woman" she gives us through her lament.[99] Maria Pantelia and Linda Clader, however, recognizing that the ascending scale of affections also demonstrates a general epic tendency for climactic progression, see Helen's placement here as appropriate in light of her particular, and unusual, understanding of the concept of Homeric *kleos*[100]; as such, the ordering of mourners in this final book moves not towards increasing intimacy with the deceased, but instead from a personal level to a more universal one.[101] Whereas Andromache, as we have seen, concentrates on her own private concerns, blaming Hector

for abandoning her and emphasizing the effect Hector's death will have on her own life, Helen focuses on "...the character of the dead warrior, the man, who despite his personal loss and the suffering his family and city had to endure, was still able to treat her with kindness and generosity (24.771-72). Helen's lament is not about what Hector can no longer do for Troy, but about the greatness of a human being who deserves to be remembered."[102]

At the same time, although Helen weeps for Hector and calls attention to his noble qualities, as she herself admits, she also weeps for herself[103] and for the position she is in without Hector to defend her. In fact, "her lament in this case focuses entirely on the threat of blame,"[104] so that what is on the surface focused on Hector is on a deeper level concerned with Helen herself. For Helen, Hector's death is a disaster which compromises her security, and so the death wish she expresses here, followed again by a stream of self-pity, are unsurprising when viewed as a manifestation of the Topography of Shame. Yet while we can again read these sentiments straightforwardly, here she once again exhibits a "special type of verbal mutability [that] arises at least in part from a difference between the formal locutions she employs and the intended impact of her words."[105] Thus, Helen's statements can also be interpreted as a series of deliberate, public messages directed not so much towards Hector, but towards the Trojans standing nearby, messages designed to extricate her from her rather precarious position: she assigns responsibility for her presence in Troy to Paris, and by extension absolves herself of blame; she positions herself as pitiable to solicit sympathy from the Trojans in general; she emphasizes Hector's support of her, and thus aligns herself with this best-loved Trojan hero; and she praises the benevolence of Priam, the Trojan king, while

simultaneously letting him know of her mistreatment in order to buttress his previous support and elicit additional protection.

Helen understands that Hector's death represents a crisis point in her life, as she has lost her strongest alliance among the Trojans, but unlike Hecuba and Andromache, she does not see her identity as totally obliterated by Hector's death. While her speech laments the loss she genuinely mourns, her subtle verbal machinations make clear that she envisions a future for herself as an individual and apart from both Hector and her current husband. Although her "special" position as the daughter of Zeus and most beautiful woman in the world allows her this sort of freedom, which is utterly out of the question for other mortal women, it is significant that in negotiating a revised position for herself, she works to tighten the bond with Priam, in effect securing an alternative powerful male alliance to offset the one she has just lost. In addition, Norman Austin detects an indirect, subtle boast in Helen's final line: by representing herself "as someone in whose presence people shiver, with cold Stygian fear," Helen situates herself as possessing the "chilling aspects of [her] equivocal power."[106] Thus, while we can, and should, read Helen's grief for Hector as sincere, she also utilizes calculated verbal manipulation in order to elevate her status and bolster her social standing. Despite her privileged and exceptional position, then, Helen's actions, while they push the boundaries untested by other women, ultimately accord with the Topography of Shame as well.

Helen's strategic use of both self-deprecation and ritual laments to exert indirect power here is supported by the ideas of classical scholars like John Winkler and Nancy Felson-Rubin, who have drawn on the findings of cultural anthropologists of the contemporary Mediterranean to show that women in constrained positions used the tools

at their disposal in order to influence events and and achieve a limited degree of empowerment.[107] Anna Caraveli, for example, has demonstrated that women in 20th century villages in Epiros and Crete make use of ritual lament – a sphere of activity where women are expected to take the active role and dominate over men – to voice grievances as a form of social protest. Caraveli has identified categories of lament-songs that protest against everything from the "social isolation and ambiguous" status of widows, to war and natural disaster, to modern medical practices, to the official Christian doctrine of death.[108] In the ancient world, too, women made use of lament as an acceptable channel through which they might exert influence: women in Rome, for instance, participated in ostentatious displays of grief and lamentation at funerals in order to bolster the status of the deceased and bring reflected honor back onto the family, capitalizing on a socially acceptable means of female expression to attain a political end in the program of aristocratic competition.[109]

Self-deprecation, too, is one of the tools with which women might exert indirect but significant influence, as Helen's example indicates, and an effective one when a woman's relationship to men is threatened, as the Topography of Shame suggests. While it does not discount the possibility that Helen's repeated self-deprecation may be based in genuine feelings, the Homeric text does call the sincerity of her claims of self-loathing into question by emphasizing the fact that she considers herself worthy of epic remembrance, suggested when she weaves her role in the Trojan War into her tapestry, treating it "as if it were the story most central to every warrior's life."[110] In addition, Helen refers to her affair with Paris as fated ὡς καὶ ὀπίσσω/ ἀνθρώποισι πελώμεθ' ἀοίδιμοι ἐσσομένοισι ("so that hereafter, we will be famous in song among men to

come": 6.357-8).[111] Despite her claims of self-loathing, Helen's tapestry[112] and her statement suggest a sense of self-importance, not only to the Greeks and Trojans whose lives she directly affects, but also as a figure of significance to posterity. Helen, as such, is an unusual figure in that she alone does not derive her identity exclusively from attachment to her husband – whether it be Menelaus or Paris – but rather, she sees herself as an individual with her own story, one worthy of commemoration. In this way, the poet alerts us to the possibility that Helen's self-deprecatory sentiments may have a strategic use.

In the *Iliad*, Helen is thus presented as a woman who uses calculated verbal manipulation, both in explicit self-deprecation and implied boasting, in order to bolster her position in relation to men, even where her expressions of self-loathing might be rooted in authentic feelings of shame. This sort of manipulation characterizes Helen as dangerous and threatening, a view completely in line with the sexual danger she epitomizes as a wife who causes the deaths of thousands of men by making a cuckold of her husband. At the same time, Briseis' lament for Patroclus, with its secondary objective of bolstering her position with Achilles, demonstrates that Helen's manipulative verbal techniques are not restricted to exceptional women, but instead may be used more broadly by ordinary women as well. These techniques regularly appear in the context of imminent erotic disaster or are otherwise related to the status of the woman's relationship to men, and thus function in accord with the Topography of Shame model for women's self-image I have elucidated. Thus, while critics still too often read women's speeches as emotional outpourings, these findings demonstrate that they frequently had strategic and political aims as well.

Paris

A further word is in order about Paris, who alone of men in the *Iliad* comes close to denigrating himself by recognizing his shortcomings and admitting to unheroic behavior[113]; yet an examination of Paris' attitudes suggests an overall contrast with the strategies of women, and his example ultimately works to support the ideas about self-deprecation and gender dynamics I have explicated.

In Book 3, Hector questions Paris' bravery and fighting ability, expresses disgust for his behavior in stealing Menelaus' wife, and articulates his wish that Paris had never been born (3.39-57).[114] Paris responds, Ἕκτορ ἐπεί με κατ' αἶσαν ἐνείκεσας οὐδ' ὑπὲρ αἶσαν ("Hector, you have upbraided me fittingly, and not beyond my due": 3.59), accepting his brother's criticism nearly wholesale.[115] Paris' only objection is to Hector's mockery of his good looks: μή μοι δῶρ' ἐρατὰ πρόφερε χρυσέης Ἀφροδίτης·/ οὔ τοι ἀπόβλητ' ἐστὶ θεῶν ἐρικυδέα δῶρα ("But don't fling the lovely gifts of golden Aphrodite at me; the glorious gifts of the gods are not to be scorned": 3.64-66). When Hector takes him to task again in Book 6, this time for being absent from the battlefield, Paris once more responds Ἕκτορ ἐπεί με κατ' αἶσαν ἐνείκεσας οὐδ' ὑπὲρ αἶσαν (6.333), again acknowledging the validity of Hector's disparaging remarks. While Paris' admission of fault in these cases is not exactly self-deprecatory, it is unusual, but can perhaps be related to the fact that more than any other male character in this epic, Paris is identified as feminized: Hector's criticism in Book 3 berates Paris for being εἶδος ἄριστε (a "pretty boy") identified with the world of Aphrodite more than with the masculine realm of the battlefield, while in Book 6, Paris lingers in the feminine domestic sphere, and his attention is only redirected towards masculine concerns by his wife's

nagging and his brother's rebukes.[116] The taunting by enemy warriors which is so common on the battlefield, moreover, is in Paris' case focused on his femininity. When Paris shoots the Greek hero Diomedes in the foot with an arrow, for instance, Diomedes denigrates him saying, τοξότα λωβητὴρ κέρᾳ ἀγλαὲ παρθενοπῖπα/ εἰ μὲν δὴ ἀντίβιον σὺν τεύχεσι πειρηθείης,/ οὐκ ἄν τοι χραίσμῃσι βιὸς καὶ ταρφέες ἰοί·/ νῦν δέ μ' ἐπιγράψας ταρσὸν ποδὸς εὔχεαι αὔτως./ οὐκ ἀλέγω, ὡς εἴ με γυνὴ βάλοι ἢ πάϊς ἄφρων ("You archer, disgraceful with the bow, preening girl-chaser – if, indeed, you were to try me face to face with your weapons, your bow and plentiful arrows would not keep you safe. Now, grazing the flat of my foot, you boast like this? I couldn't care less if a woman had hit me, or a senseless boy": 11.385-89). Diomedes' questioning of Paris' masculinity, moreover, is further emphasized both metaphorically – as the Greek word for foot (πούς) was frequently punned with penis in the Greek[117] while Paris' bow and arrow was considered a relatively effeminate weapon – and linguistically: in disparaging Paris as a "seducer," Diomedes chooses a term with the markedly feminine stem παρθενο- (maiden, virgin).

Additionally, Paris' admission of shortcomings seems different in nature from that of even Helen, whose sincerity in her self-criticism is often questionable: while Helen's self-deprecation regularly focuses on shame and worthlessness, Paris gives no indication that he feels shame, or even remorse, for his behavior. As Norman Austin puts it, "while Helen must both live with her shame and accept her function as the spectacle of shamelessness," Paris, in contrast, "is impervious to shame."[118] In Book 3, as noted above, he unabashedly accepts Hector's criticism of his lack of manly virtue, but far from feeling himself inadequate, turns around and offers to fight Menelaus man-to-man. In Book 6, Paris again seems unashamed of lingering in his bed while others fight on his

behalf, and in fact offers a rather unsatisfactory excuse: οὔ τοι ἐγὼ Τρώων τόσσον χόλῳ οὐδὲ νεμέσσι/ ἥμην ἐν θαλάμῳ, ἔθελον δ' ἄχεϊ προτραπέσθαι ("I have not been sitting here in my room so much out of anger or resentment towards the Trojans; I just wanted to give myself over to my sorrow": 6.335-36). The inappropriateness of Paris' carefree attitude is sharpened by the Greek view of the purpose of marriage as "work,"[119] so that conjugal relations were properly conducted in the expectation of producing legitimate offspring. Paris, conversely, makes love to Helen out of sheer desire, in effect casting him as frivolous. This characterization is strengthend by his attitude towards warfare, as demonstrated in the contrast between Hector, who "wears the symbols of his courage, while Paris merely plays with his breatplate, spear, and bow."[120] This scene, then, effectively frames him as outside the bounds of the proper "work" that defines the male human condition in the arenas of both sexuality and warfare. Paris' disassociation from manly concerns is further suggested by his nonchalant arrogance when he tells Hector that he can go on ahead while Paris puts on his armor, since ἐγὼ δὲ μέτειμι· κιχήσεσθαι δέ σ' ὀΐω ("I'll follow behind; and I think I'll catch up with you": 6.341). This cocky attitude is reinforced when, at the end of the book, he prances up to Hector gaily, saying, ἠθεῖ' ἦ μάλα δή σε καὶ ἐσσύμενον κατερύκω/ δηθύνων, οὐδ' ἦλθον ἐναίσιμον ὡς ἐκέλευες; ("Noble one, have I, tarrying, delayed you too much in your haste? Have I not come in due time, just as you ordered me?": 6.518-19), displaying a carefree manner that contrasts sharply with the weariness and burden of responsibility that hang over Hector's head. Overall, Paris' admissions of poor behavior seem to have little impact on his self-image.

In Book 13, Hector once again criticizes his brother by calling his masculinity into question – Δύσπαρι εἶδος ἄριστε γυναιμανὲς ἠπεροπευτὰ ("Damned Paris, pretty boy, girl-crazy trouble-maker…": 13.769) – and, like Diomedes, punctuates his critique linguistically by choosing the distinctively feminine stem γυναι- (woman, wife). This time, however, Paris defends himself (13.775-87):

> Ἕκτορ ἐπεί τοι θυμὸς ἀναίτιον αἰτιάασθαι,
> ἄλλοτε δή ποτε μᾶλλον ἐρωῆσαι πολέμοιο
> μέλλω, ἐπεὶ οὐδ' ἐμὲ πάμπαν ἀνάλκιδα γείνατο μήτηρ·
> ἐξ οὗ γὰρ παρὰ νηυσὶ μάχην ἤγειρας ἑταίρων,
> ἐκ τοῦ δ' ἐνθάδ' ἐόντες ὁμιλέομεν Δαναοῖσι
> νωλεμέως· …
> νῦν δ' ἄρχ' ὅππῃ σε κραδίη θυμός τε κελεύει·
> ἡμεῖς δ' ἐμμεμαῶτες ἅμ' ἑψόμεθ', οὐδέ τί φημι
> ἀλκῆς δευήσεσθαι, ὅση δύναμίς γε πάρεστι.
> πὰρ δύναμιν δ' οὐκ ἔστι καὶ ἐσσύμενον πολεμίζειν.
>
> "Hector, though it is your pleasure to blame me, who is blameless,
> I intend to rush forth from the fight at some other time
> rather than now, since my mother did not bear me altogether feeble.
> For since that time beside the ships you roused up to battle our companions,
> Since then, staying right here, we've engaged with the Danaans
> ceaselessly…
> Now lead on, whichever way your heart and soul command you,
> Eagerly, we will follow you at once, and I declare that we
> Will not lack in prowess, as far as our strength holds out."

Paris demonstrates here that he does not accept unwarranted insults, nor has the earlier criticism he received provoked the sort of shame or guilt that might have compromised his self-image – in part, perhaps, because Paris, no matter how effeminate, cannot compromise the honor of his male relatives in the same way that a woman can. Paris' spirited self-defense in response to Hector's rebuke positions his previous acceptance of his brother's censure as merely a somewhat reasonable ability to recognize and accept his own shortcomings, free from the burden of having these faults reflect negatively on his kin.

At the same time, however, Paris does not accept criticism from Helen: after listening to her abuse in Book 3, he responds simply, μή με γύναι χαλεποῖσιν ὀνείδεσι θυμὸν ἔνιπτε·/ νῦν μὲν γὰρ Μενέλαος ἐνίκησεν σὺν Ἀθήνῃ,/ κεῖνον δ' αὖτις ἐγώ ("Woman, don't upbraid my heart with harsh reprovals: for Menelaus beat me now, with Athena's help, but I'll [fight] him again": 3.438-40). While it is difficult to make judgments on the basis of one example, one wonders whether Paris' rejection of Helen's censure, which seems to have as much validity as the criticism Paris accepted from Hector, is a function of the gendered context. Characteristically, her hostile words seem to have little impact on Paris' sense of self: in fact, he self-assuredly invites her to bed immediately after hearing her scornful tirade, perhaps recognizing Helen's self-interested willingness to engage in their relationship while she purports to condemn it, or perhaps, like Nancy Worman, reading Helen's rebukes as a kind of antagonistic foreplay.[121] As such, while Paris' ability to accept criticism seems to be a function of his relative feminization, there is no suggestion that his self-image is compromised, or that his recognition of negative behavior results in anything approaching feelings of shame. In this way, his example works to support the model for gender dynamics set forth in the Topography of Shame.

Conclusions

Despite the relative marginalization of women as a narrative necessity in the war-focused story of the *Iliad*, Homer establishes an ideological baseline for assessing the female nature and the places women should occupy in the patriarchal system of Homeric Greece through his depiction of goddesses, war-captives, and Trojan wives, mothers, and mistresses. In Homeric society, women who function as good wives and mothers are

associated with the domestic sphere; they associate with female servants or family members when not with the male kin; they attend to religious rites and duties; they are obedient to their husbands; and above all, they view their own identities as purely a function of their relationship with men. Since these parameters prevent them from openly expressing political opinions or strategies, these women often subvert or adapt acceptable means of public female communication, such as laments, to acquire a political identity and express political messages. Women like Helen who do not conform to this model or who transgress the appropriate boundaries are regarded with apprehension and seen as dangerous and manipulative. Across the board, however, women in this epic live their lives and tailor their actions wholly in consideration of their standing with males.

Furthermore, as the Topography of Shame would suggest, in the *Iliad*, women can be assertive in women's contexts – as in Book 3, where Helen attempts to rebuff even a female divinity – but also with men when they see themselves as acting for the benefit of their male kin, as when Hecuba attempts to dissuade Hector from fighting Achilles and Priam from ransoming Hector's body. Even Helen's abuse of Paris appears in the context of defense of her first husband, Menelaus, with whom her allegiance is currently aligned. Self-deprecation and self-pity, on the other hand, regularly occur in situations where a woman has failed to live up to male ideas of feminine virtue – as with Helen's example in Books 3 and 6 – or where the stability of the woman's relationship with a male is threatened, as with Andromache in Book 6 and with all three women's laments for Hector in Books 22 and 24. Female actions and attitudes are shaped by the particular gendered context even in the case of Helen, who, as we have seen, is able to establish her individual identity apart from her attachment to men. Even Helen's long-range view of

her story as worthy of epic remembrance is itself circumscribed by male-dictated values and ideals. Thus while Homer initially seems to set Helen forth as a threatening counter-example to the more idealized female behavior exemplified by Hecuba and Andromache, this most unusual of women nonetheless ultimately views her self-worth as a function of how she lives up to the masculine ideal.

The *Iliad*, therefore, offers a complex multi-faceted view of how women operate within the constraints of the patriarchal system. While women typically "buy into" male-dictated views of what constitutes feminine virtue and vice and, as a result, tend to derive their identities wholesale from their relation to their male kin, at the same time, we see them working within the limits of the system, using self-deprecation and self-pity as covers to advance political goals. These expressions tend to occur at times of potential crisis in their relationships with these males, and thus are often paired with genuine feelings of anxiety regarding self-worth and identity. As such, an analysis of women's expressions of self-image in the *Iliad* maps out the Topography of Shame which we will continue to see at play in the subsequent epic literature of Greece and Rome.

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[1] Katz 1981.28 notes that with the warriors on the field, Troy is largely inhabited by women who perform typically feminine activities such as ritual supplication, weaving, and child-tending. I would add that the males who remain in the city are regularly feminized: the Trojan elders who appear watching the fight in Book 3, for instance, are τεττίγεσσιν ἐοικότες οἵ τε καθ' ὕλην/ δενδρέῳ ἐφεζόμενοι ὄπα λειριόεσσαν ἱεῖσι ("like cicadas who, throughout the forest, perched in a tree, set their delicate voices in motion": 3.151-52. See Carson 1995 for more on masculine and feminine associations

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with voice sound and quality). The temporary dislocation to the domestic realm of Paris, the most effeminate of warriors, beginning in Book 3 provides further support for this view (see "Paris" below in this chapter for more on Paris' feminization).

[2] A fuller version of this story was told in the lost *Cypria*, a ca. late-7th century BCE "prequel" to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; a votive chest of Cypselus, tyrant of Olympia during the same period, also depicted this episode (see Paus. 5.19.5).

[3] Staten 1993.241-42.

[4] O'Brien 1993.85.

[5] See "Woman as the Anti-Man" in Chapter 1.

[6] Agamemnon uses this same phrase with Achilles at 1.180, echoing the fundamental contrast which characterizes Hera and Zeus' relationship between uncontrolled emotion, gendered as feminine, and disdain, or rational male attachment.

[7] The race of Amazons present another notable exception to the usual masculine exclusivity in war. As a society of warrior women who shunned the company of men, however, like the virgin goddess Athena, these women were detached from their reproductive function and thereby disassociated from the sexual threat that women normally pose. In addition, as mortal women who assume a male function, the Amazons were generally regarded as an example of an "upside down" and therefore unnatural society. For more on how the masculine traits of Athena and the Amazons are reconciled with their feminine nature, see Blundell 1995.25-46 and 58-62.

[8] O'Brien 1993.6, 110-11. O'Brien examines Hera's cultic role at both Samos and Argos in the late 8th Century BCE, noting that she served as "protector of the life cycle of crops, animals, and mortals at both sites" (1993.83); in the *Iliad*, in contrast, she turns on her

own cities, offering them up for Zeus to destroy in exchange for assurance that Troy will perish (4.51-61: noted in O'Brien 1993.84). For more on Hera's transformation from divine protectress to scheming wife in Homer, see O'Brien 1993.77-111 (Chapter 4: "Hera's Iliadic Venom and Its Source").

[9] O'Brien 1993.100. O'Brien notes that in the *Iliad*, the only character other than Hera whom Zeus threatens to smite is Typhon.

[10] See Carson 1990.

[11] Ann Suter 1987.52ff, following the work of Deborah Boedeker (1974. *Aphrodite's Entry into Greek Epic*. Leiden) and Linda Clader (1976.6 noted in Suter 1987.52; see also Clader 1976.1-3), detects traces of Vedic myth in this episode. In the original myth, the Dawn goddess is both abductor and seducer, whereas here, her role has been split into two. Suter's argument supports both the idea that Aphrodite should be seen as sexually attracted to Paris and the frequent view of Helen as a mortal avatar of Aphrodite.

[12] While some scholars position Athena's adoption of "pet" heroes as a nurturing function (i.e. Blundell 1995.26ff), Homer's language in describing Athena's interactions with her favorites is neither maternal or sexual, but is instead related to an identification with these heroes based on similar values or personality traits (see, for example, *Od.* 13.296ff and the related discussion under "Athena" in Chapter 3).

[13] Harris and Plazner 2008.197. For a discussion of the defeminization of Athena in artistic representations in the Classical period, a trend which coincides with the strengthening of patriarchal structures, see Keuls 1985.35-42.

[14] Note that Paris' account of Helen's encouragement, too, can be taken two ways: either Helen, as a woman with an unusual awareness of the importance of *kleos*, is encouraging

Paris towards the pursuit of excellence, and thus acting as a good wife to him, or she has resumed her earlier, mocking challenge to Paris to go back out and face Menelaus, a fight she knows he will lose.

[15] Graver 1995.41 observes that Helen is the only character in Homer's epics who insults herself, a point echoed by Worman 2001.21.

[16] See "Background and Parameters" in Chapter 1.

[17] Worman 2001.25 notes that "[t]he *ophelon* phrase…seems to be a locution used both by those in mourning and by Homeric heroes caught in threatening or painful situations." Odysseus, most notably, uses it twice "when he is trying to use a painful situation to gain sympathy" (Worman 2001.24-25), which both strengthens the argument that Helen is using her deathwish here as a strategy and reminds us that these verbal strategies relating to self-image are not the exclusive domain of women.

[18] See, for example, Groton 1968.38.

[19] Graver 1995.51. See also Clader 1976.17ff.

[20] Graver 1995.59.

[21] Worman 2001.28.

[22] Katz 1981.29, too, sees "clear sexual overtones" in this episode, noting that Helen's description of the "perfect husband" as suggested through her denigration of Paris fits Hector perfectly (see also Clader 1976.16); Worman 2001.27 likewise view Helen here as "engag[ing] in a delicate seduction of Hector."

[23] Worman 2001.23.

[24] Worman 2001.29.

[25] Katz 1981.20.

[26] Katz 1981.30.

[27] In equating Hector with her entire family, Andromache collapses the "ascending scale of affections" (see "Helen" below) into one man, a move that intensifies her reliance on and the importance of Hector in her life. As critics have noted, Hector himself employs the ascending scale of affections in visiting first Hecuba, then Paris and Helen, and then Andromache in Book 6, a juxtaposition which emphasizes Andromache's conflation of the persons of importance in her life into one. Thus for Andromache even more than for other women, her identity and self is tied up exclusively in her husband.

[28] Noted in Katz 1981.31.

[29] Keith 2000.66 has argued that Hector's characterization of war as masculine and the home as feminine at 6.490-93 is undercut both by Andromache's tactical advice here and by other references to women as complicit in the activities of war, such as Thetis' provision of arms to Achilles and Helen's role in causing the war in the first place. These feminine intrusions into the masculine realm of the battlefield, however, do not serve to challenge the masculine nature of war, but rather to emphasize it: Andromache's interference is positioned as inappropriate, Thetis' gesture is motivated by maternal rather than martial instincts, and the motivation for the Greek attack stems more from concerns about masculine honor, as we have seen, than from concern for the well-being of a particular woman, even one as stunning as Helen.

[30] Katz 1981.33.

[31] Women in the ancient world who place a higher value on the *kleos* of their male kin than on their safety are viewed as exceptional, and as demonstrating a decidedly masculine heroism. In *Sayings of Spartan Women*, for example, Plutarch notes that one

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Spartan mother exhorted her son as he went into battle to come back with his shield or on it (241.16), demonstrating the author's general view that the noble women of the highly militaristic Spartan society were considered atypical and unfeminine in their habits and attitudes.

[32] Although Hector's regard for his reputation over his wife's long-term well-being seems callous to modern sensibilities, Christine Perkell 1981.357 argues that in this context, Hector represents a positive model of male behavior towards women in that he is not "exclusively defined by his military role," but also seen as fully human in his relationship with his wife. She further notes that in contrast to his visits to his mother and to Helen, Hector's visit to Andromache is motivated only by a wish to see her "purely for sentiment – and even before his beloved son."

[33] This observation has also been made by Staten 1993.357.

[34] Katz 1981.35.

[35] Katz 1981.33.

[36] Suzuki 1989.29.

[37] Austin 1994.24 points out that "Helen is conspicuously different" in that she, "though often captured, is not, never was, and never will be a slave."

[38] Staten 1993.342.

[39] G. S. Kirk 1985. *The Iliad: A Commentary* Vol. 1. Cambridge. 65-66; noted in van Wees 2003.1.

[40] Suzuki 1989.21ff and Staten 1993.342-43. Likewise, Rabel 1988.473ff positions the dispute over Chryseis as an "*Iliad* in miniature," where the dishonor resulting from the loss of Chryseis parallels the loss of honor accruing from the rape of Helen.

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[41] Suzuki 1989.29 and Staten 1993.342. Suzuki further argues that the name Briseis, which signals her position in relation to the men who claim her, make her into a "cipher whose identity or meaning is determined by the dominant males to whom she is attached."

[42] For more on the prize-value of Briseis, see Dué 2002.37ff (Chapter 2: "Prize").

[43] Katz 1981.24.

[44] The word ἄναξ at 9.276 is vocative and should be set off with commas as in West's 1998 Teubner edition (and Leaf's 1886 edition). As these commas were omitted in the Oxford (via Perseus) text I am following, I have added them here.

[45] Staten 1993.346.

[46] Staten 1993.351.

[47] See Suzuki 1989.21ff and 68ff for more on the "scapegoating" of both Briseis and Helen.

[48] Suzuki 1989.27-28.

[49] Casey Dué 2002.1ff discusses links between Briseis and both Helen and Andromache in their roles as captives, prizes, daughters, and wives in the introduction to *Homeric Variations on a Lament by Briseis*; Dué further links Briseis' lament here to Hecuba, Andromache, and Helen's later dirges for Hector in Book 24, the latter two of which are also explored by Suzuki (1989.28ff and 55).

[50] See Katz 1981.25.

[51] See Euripides' *Hecuba* 1265.

[52] Lynne-George 1996.11. See Lynne-George 1996 also for the general identification of the notion of concern, care, and support as feminine.

[53] Pantelia 1993.496.

[54] Segal 1971.50.

[55] Katz 1981.36.

[56] Segal 1971.37-38.

[57] Segal 1971.36-37. J. A. Scott 1914.396, in contrast, interprets Homer's intentions in removing Andromache from Hector's death-scene as a "perfect example... of Homeric and Hellenic reserve."

[58] For example, 22.448 (χαμαὶ δέ οἱ ἔκπεσε κερκίς) represents a variation on two poetic formulae, where the woman's shuttle is substituted for the warrior's hand (Segal 1971.43-44).

[59] Segal 1971.43ff.

[60] Segal 1971.56.

[61] Lynne-George 1996.11.

[62] See Katz 1981.26.

[63] Katz 1981.37.

[64] Suzuki 1989.35.

[65] See Austin 1994.esp. 86-88. Suzuki 1989.40 notes that despite these vestiges of her divine power, Helen's human limitations are emphasized by her ignorance of brothers' deaths (3.233-44) and by her submission to Aphrodite (3.418). I might note that Warkentin 1991.345 takes Suzuki to task for neglecting the "process" of Helen's movement as a liminal figure from goddess to mortal.

[66] A similar ambiguity surrounds Helen's character in the broader mythological tradition: the Archaic poet Stesichorus is said to have composed a poem in which an εἴδωλον (a

specter or phantasm) of Helen went to Troy while the real Helen stayed in Egypt (noted in Pl. *Phdr.* 243a-b and *Resp.* 586c), a variation which exculpates Helen from much of the blame she incurs merely by virtue of the fact that in the Homeric tradition, she shares Paris' bed. For more on this and other alternate traditions surrounding Helen, see Suzuki 1989.13ff, Austin 1994.2ff and 90-203, and Graver 1995.53ff.

[67] Groton 1968.33-34.

[68] "[T]he conventional epic analogy between the sexual penetration of a woman's body and the conquest of enemy territory" (Keith 2000.40) which also seems to be at play here further illustrates the Homeric tendency to reduce women to symbols of male power and prestige.

[69] Austin 1994.42.

[70] Pantelia 1993.495. I would note that Pantelia's wording ("Helen, as a woman, acquires a voice and identity, it may be argued, only through the creativity of her weaving") focuses on Helen's limitations rather than on the fact that she capitalizes on the tools at her disposal to assert herself, giving a somewhat weaker impression of Helen than I have suggested here.

[71] Suzuki 1989.40.

[72] In her study of Helen's character, Linda Clader 1976.6ff shows that all of Helen's appearances in the *Iliad* are associated with poetry. For instance, in addition to the example stated here, in the *Teichoscopia* at 3.146-244, Helen becomes the author of a catalog of heroes when she describes the Greek warriors to Priam, and at 6.357-58, she explicitly reminds Hector that their suffering will be rewarded by remembrance in song in future generations.

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[73] Worman 2001.21.

[74] See Blundell 1995.49 *et al.* While no other character in the *Iliad* explicitly blames Helen (Worman 2001.21), as Graver 1995.53-54 points out, Achilles does refer to her as ῥιγεδανῆς ("shudder-inducing" or "chilling": 19.325), and Hector calls her both πῆμα and κατηφείη (a "woe" and a "shame": 3.50-51). Leslie Collins (1988. *Studies in Characterization in the* Iliad. Frankfurt. 57; qtd. in Graver 1995.58) sees the reason for Homer's omission of direct expressions of public hostility towards Helen as dictated by the need to disguise the paradox that "the very act which necessitates a war over her also condemns her from the poem's point of view, and renders her an unworthy object of struggle."

[75] Groton would assign primary blame to Paris, whom both Greeks and Trojans despise (1968.37), arguing that "Helen wins our sympathy with her concern for others and her regret for the past, which she freely acknowledges to be not wholly to her credit… Whatever the verdict about her complicity, few will doubt her intrinsic integrity and worth" (1968.38-39). While the Greeks and Trojans both do seem to find Paris despicable, the majority of the Trojans, at least, find Helen contemptible as well (see for example 24.767-75).

[76] In Homer, the Trojans (*Il.* 3.50, 3.91), the Greeks (*Od.* 14.68-69), the gods (*Od.* 22.227), and the poet himself (*Il.* 2.590, 3.128) regard Helen as responsible for the war and both the Trojans (*Il.* 3.156-60) and the Greeks (*Od.* 11.438), as well as Helen herself (*Od.* 4.145, 263), position her behavior as morally blameworthy. At the same time, the poet (*Il.* 3.28, 5.63), the Greeks (*Il.* 3.281, 6.357), and the Trojans (*Il.* 3.51, 6.282) regard Paris as equally responsible and his behavior as equally culpable (noted in Garstang

1962.339). For other characters' views of Helen's culpability in the *Odyssey*, see "Helen" in Chapter 3.

[77] Ryan 1965.115.

[78] Ryan 1965.115.

[79] Ryan 1965.115-16.

[80] Ryan 1965.116.

[81] Groton 1968.35.

[82] Groton 1968.35 fn.1 does acknowledge that Helen's behavior as described by Menelaus at *Od.* 4.266ff is blameworthy, but singles this episode out as an aberrant exception that foreshadows later more negative treatments of Helen in later Greek literature.

[83] Groton 1968.35 fn.1.

[84] See "Paris" below.

[85] Nancy Worman (2001.esp. 20-21), for one, has offered a more balanced view, arguing that while "[t]he Homeric poet himself seems to respond to a pre-existing tradition of conflicting stories, apparent in the tensions between the more forgiving depiction of Helen that he clearly favors and the darker implications that he allows to intrude," at the same time, "traces of this blame tradition confound any understanding of Helen as simply good or evil – as simply a goddess or a dog."

[86] Sheppard 1933.34.

[87] Clader 1976.10. For the list of Helen's suitors, see Hes. fr. 196ff (M/W).

[88] Worman 2001.23.

[89] Sheppard 1933.35-36.

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[90] In Proclus' *Cypria*, Menelaus was in fact away in Crete when Paris came to Sparta. Although Homer does not touch on the matter, it is likely that, as with the Judgment of Paris, he had this tradition in mind (Groton 1968.36 fn. 2).

[91] Sheppard 1933.37.

[92] Groton 1968.36 sees this episode as demonstrating Helen's consistency in character: "... here in dramatic form Helen expresses all the feelings which we have found to be typical of her. There is the same self-criticism as she imagines herself to be hateful to Menelaus, the same remorse and sense of shame as she refuses to serve Paris again, the same regard for her reputation as she considers the judgment of her friends, and finally the same pessimistic attitude toward her present circumstances." I do not detect the same measure of shame and remorse that Groton sees here, though her characterization of herself as στυγερὴν ("hateful" or "loathsome": 3.404) does suggest a somewhat self-critical attitude.

[93] Suzuki 1989.38.

[94] Groton 1968.37.

[95] Worman 2001.27.

[96] See "Book 6" above.

[97] Pantelia 2002.22.

[98] 1949. *Homeric Researches*. Lund. See esp. "Meleagrea" and 19-20; noted in Katz 1981.27 and Pantelia 2002.22.

[99] Groton 1968.38.

[100] Clader 1976.11; Pantelia 2002.23-25.

[101] Pantelia 2002.23-25.

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[102] Pantelia 2002.25-26.

[103] See Suzuki 1989.55.

[104] Worman 2001.29.

[105] Worman 2001.21.

[106] Austin 1994.36. See Clader 1976.18ff for an alternate perspective on Helen's use of this and other modifiers.

[107] Winkler 1990; Felson-Rubin 1994.

[108] Caraveli 1986.esp. 179ff.

[109] The presence of sumptuary laws limiting women's expressions of grief suggests that they are not to be viewed as simple emotional displays, but as part of this program of aristocratic competition. For more on mourning practices in Rome and their relation to aristocratic power, see Flower 1996.

[110] Worman 2001.23. Clader 1976.7, however, notes that Homer describes the subject of Helen's tapestry as *aethloi*, contests which are directed towards a prize: thus, while Helen herself is depicted as viewing herself as a subjective being, the broader narrative reminds us of her status as an object.

[111] Keith 2000.1-2. An ancient commentator too recognized the tapestry as a metaphor for epic (Schol. ad *Il.* 3.126-7 noted at Keith 2000.2 fn. 3).

[112] Like many of Helen's comments, this tapestry can be read in two ways: as self-deprecatory, emphasizing the trouble she has caused, or, as I have read it here, as a boast, promoting herself as worthy of epic remembrance. Graver 1995.57 suggests the former reading: "...Helen, in her speech in *Iliad* 6, is grieved by the prophetic awareness that she and Paris are to become the butt of unfriendly songs" and her words "direct us to a poetic

tradition which treated her and Paris quite harshly, as morally degenerate." Graver's reading depends on the view of the κακὸν μόρον ("evil fate") to which Helen refers as the subject of the song she foresees; in my reading, Helen sees the prospect of fame and glory in epic remembrance as consolation for the current suffering which will make such fame possible. The latter reading is supported by Suzuki's view that Helen's understanding of "Zeus' ambiguous gifts...prefigures Achilles' hard-won acceptance of Zeus' gifts from his two urns" (1989.54), a metaphor Helen herself echoes at *Od.* 4.235-39.

[113] A comparison also might be drawn with Thersites, the only other male character in this epic who is shamed and humiliated to such an extent by his own comrades (2.244ff). While Thersites' reaction to Odysseus' abuse finds little parallel with Paris' responses, Odysseus' rebuke does serve to set off Hector's criticism of Paris.

[114] The repeated verbal abuse of Paris by his fellow Trojans is interesting in light of Nancy Worman's observation that Helen is spared such abuse by other Homeric characters (2001.21), suggesting circumstantial support for the argument that Helen's use of self-deprecation is strategically designed to stave off such attacks from others.

[115] Agamemnon presents a potential parallel to Paris' acceptance of censure: in response to Nestor's much less direct and more diplomatically presented admonition (Βρισηΐδα κούρην/ χωομένου Ἀχιλῆος ἔβης κλισίηθεν ἀπούρας/ οὔ τι καθ' ἡμέτερόν γε νόον: μάλα γάρ τοι ἔγωγε/ πόλλ' ἀπεμυθεόμην: σὺ δὲ σῷ μεγαλήτορι θυμῷ/ εἴξας ἄνδρα φέριστον, ὃν ἀθάνατοί περ ἔτισαν,/ ἠτίμησας, ἑλὼν γὰρ ἔχεις γέρας – "you went away from the hut of raging Achilles, taking the girl Briseis, not at all in accordance with our minds. I, indeed, dissuaded you urgently, but you, yielding to

your heart's desire, dishonored our best man, whom the immortals revere, for taking his prize, you hold it still": 9.106-11), Agamemnon, like Paris, acknowledges that this criticism contains some truth: ὦ γέρον οὔ τι ψεῦδος ἐμὰς ἄτας κατέλεξας:/ ἀασάμην, οὐδ' αὐτὸς ἀναίνομαι ("Old man, you spoke of my madness, and it was not at all a lie. I was led astray, I do not deny this": 9.115-16). Rather than leaving it at that and thereby assuming some responsibility for his behavior, however, Agamemnon attributes fault to madness sent by the gods, as he suggests here (ἀντί νυ πολλῶν/ λαῶν ἐστὶν ἀνὴρ ὅν τε Ζεὺς κῆρι φιλήσῃ,/ ὡς νῦν τοῦτον ἔτισε, δάμασσε δὲ λαὸν Ἀχαιῶν./ ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ ἀασάμην φρεσὶ λευγαλέῃσι πιθήσας,/ ἂψ ἐθέλω ἀρέσαι – "That man whom Zeus loves in his heart is worth many men, just as now he has honored this man, and devastated the army of the Achaeans. But since I was led astray, having been persuaded in the sorry plight of mind, I wish to make it up again": 9.116-20) and states more explicitly in Book 19: ἐγὼ δ' οὐκ αἴτιός εἰμι,/ ἀλλὰ Ζεὺς καὶ Μοῖρα καὶ ἠεροφοῖτις Ἐρινύς,/ οἵ τέ μοι εἰν ἀγορῇ φρεσὶν ἔμβαλον ἄγριον ἄτην,/ ἤματι τῷ ὅτ' Ἀχιλλῆος γέρας αὐτὸς ἀπηύρων./ ἀλλὰ τί κεν ῥέξαιμι; θεὸς διὰ πάντα τελευτᾷ ("I am not to blame, but rather Zeus and Fate and Erinys, who walks in darkness; they threw savage blindness on my mind in the assembly on that day when I robbed Achilles of his prize. But what was I to do? The god accomplishes everything": 19.86-90).

[116] Katz 1981.23-24, 26.

[117] See Levine 2005.57-59.

[118] Austin 1994.49.

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[119] The marriage-as-work argument, most closely associated with French structuralist scholars like Vernant and Detienne, stems from Frederick Engels' essay *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, first published in 1884. Engels noted that in the Classical era, "[t]he little conjugal love that was known to antiquity was not in any way a subjective inclination, but an objective duty; not a reason for but a correlate of marriage" (1955. Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels, *Selected Works* vol. 2. 168-326. Moscow. 234; qtd. in Konstan 2000.123). For more on the distinction between notions of "work" and "play" as they relate to sexual love in antiquity, see Carson 1990.149-53.

[120] Clader 1976.15.

[121] Worman 2001.27.

Chapter 3: Homer's *Odyssey*

In contrast to their peripheral position in the *Iliad*, women in Homer's *Odyssey* play more prominent, active, and visible roles. The *Odyssey* is populated by a large number of strong women with distinct personalities who take action of their own accord and often work to further their own individual goals and desires.[1] These women tend to be cast as positive or negative according to whether they function to further the hero's quest or to hinder it, so that this epic, too, conforms to the Topography of Shame model. The far more central role that women play here in comparison to the *Iliad* is exemplified by the figure of Penelope: not only does she receive a significant amount of "screen time," she also plays a major role both in motivating Odysseus' actions, and, as we will see, in actively working to shape the plot – while at the same time appearing not to. From the epic's outset, Penelope is in the throes of erotic crisis, uncertain whether her husband is dead or alive. The suitors in her house place Penelope's boundaries at constant risk, a threat intensified by the example of the maidservants who have already been sexually compromised. The enormity of the threat to the Topography of Shame here and Penelope's success in eventually overcoming it contributes to the enduring image of her as a virtuous ideal for feminine behavior, but also as an example for women on how to "work the system" in order to negotiate a secure place for themselves and protect their own interests while appearing to submit to the male-dictated behavioral parameters society assigns to them.

Because the figure of Penelope looms so large in the *Odyssey*, most of the other female characters work as foils whose shortcomings and failures in negotiating the

Topography of Shame system throw Penelope's success into sharper relief. Helen, for instance, in many ways mirrors Penelope situationally: both women are left at home alone while their husbands are away, and both are subjected to sexual overtures that threaten their chastity. Whereas Helen succumbs to this temptation, initiating years of heartache and woe for Greeks and Trojans alike, Penelope is able to hold out and remain true to her absent husband, a success underscored by the fact that her temptation was far greater than was Helen's – whereas Helen's husband Menelaus was alive and gone for just a short time[2] during which Helen was wooed by one lone suitor, Penelope was left alone for twenty years, unsure whether her husband was dead or alive, and pressured by a hoard of suitors numbering nearly one hundred.

In addition to Helen, the *Odyssey* provides us with a wide variety of women, from lowly maidservants to exalted goddesses, who illustrate a broad spectrum of responses to the Topography of Shame, and all of whom in one way or another are measured against the example of Penelope. While the *Odyssey*'s mortal women in particular, once again, are the primary focus of this study, Odysseus' interactions with female deities offers us both a broad societal perspective of how women's natures are fundamentally different from men's and a valuable comparative tool for analyzing the central example Penelope's character provides. Thus, as with the *Iliad*, goddesses provide an important starting point for examining how gendered ideologies function in this context.

Athena

In the *Odyssey*, Athena acts as a consistent ally to Odysseus in his quest to return to Penelope, a patronage that extends to his son Telemachus as well. The *Odyssey* opens

with Athena issuing a complaint to her father Zeus, where she expresses her concern for Odysseus' welfare and asks why he has been allowed to languish on the island of the nymph Calypso for so long (1.45-62). When Zeus concedes that the time has come to bring the hero home, Athena immediately suggests a plan for achieving this goal: Zeus should send Hermes down to order Calypso to release Odysseus, while she herself will go to Ithaca to prompt Telemachus towards male heroic action. She then takes on the guise of Odysseus' guest-friend Mentes and appears to Telemachus in Ithaca, urging him first to call an assembly and order the suitors who have been wooing his mother and eating him out of house and home to disperse, and then to obtain a ship and set out for the mainland to ask his father's old comrades for news of Odysseus' whereabouts.

Athena's attention to Telemachus and his execution of her suggestions occupy the first four books of the epic, often referred to as the *Telemacheia*. These books serve two important purposes: they direct the attention of Odysseus' household to the issue of his welfare, thus setting the stage for his return after nearly twenty years, and they give Odysseus' son, who has grown up without a father or appropriate male authority figure, a nudge towards maturity by providing him with public speaking experience in the assembly, practice with seafaring, and connections of *xenia* with important Greek leaders. This movement from inside to outside the house is a necessary one for appropriate masculine development, since for men, identity rests on accruing honor in a public setting – suggesting, perhaps, that a male "Topography of Honor" corresponds to the Topography of Shame in play for women.[3] Athena's concern with Telemachus' "coming of age" is explicitly set forth when she, as Mentes, exhorts him, οὐδέ τί σε χρὴ/ νηπιάας ὀχέειν, ἐπεὶ οὐκέτι τηλίκος ἐσσι./...σύ, φίλος, μάλα γάρ σ' όρόω καλόν τε μέγαν τε,/ ἄλκιμος ἔσσ', ἵνα τίς σε καὶ ὀψιγόνων ἐὺ εἴπῃ[4] ("But now it is

necessary for you not to prolong your childhood, since you are no longer of such an age…You, dear friend – for I see that you are handsome and strong – be brave, so that those of later generations will speak well of you": 1.296-302). Athena's support and encouragement continue throughout Telemachus' journey: she assumes the form of the Ithacan elder Mentor to offer him a ship (2.286-95), repeated encouragement (2.270-85; 3.14-20), and reassurance (3.230-38); she takes on Telemachus' own form to gather him a crew (2.382-87); and she plants courage in his heart (3.75-78), prompts him to head home at the appropriate moment (15.10-15), and warns him of the ambush the suitors have planned and how to avoid it (15.27-42). As such, from the beginning of the *Odyssey*, Athena functions as an active goddess, but one who consistently works to promote the interests of her chosen mortal male connection, interests which include seeing to the honor and welfare of his son.

In Book 5, Athena turns her attention back to the man himself: she reminds her father that Odysseus is still languishing on Calypso's island, which prompts Zeus to follow through on his promise to send Hermes to order the nymph to release him (5.7-20). Thereafter, Athena serves as a helper to Odysseus on his journey in much the same way as she had assisted his son: once he has made his way to the island of Scheria, she arranges for a meeting with the king's daughter Nausicaa (6.25-40), who will offer him clothing, a bath, food, and advice; she appears to Odysseus as a young girl to guide him to the king's palace and offer him advice on approaching the royal couple (7.18ff); and once the Phaeacians have deposited him on Ithaca, she helps him secure his possessions (13.361-65), reassures him of his wife's continuing fidelity (13.375-81), advises him on

how to proceed safely (13.397-415), and disguises him as an old beggar so that he can move about freely while assessing his situation (13.429-38).

Athena's support of both Odysseus and his son functions in accordance with the Topography of Shame: although she consistently transgresses expectations of feminine passivity in her scheming and machinations, all of Athena's actions in this epic are taken in order to further Odysseus' heroic male agenda. Athena herself tells us the reason for her particular patronage of Odysseus: ἀλλ' ἄγε, μηκέτι ταῦτα λεγώμεθα, εἰδότες ἄμφω/ κέρδε', ἐπεὶ σὺ μέν ἐσσι βροτῶν ὄχ' ἄριστος ἁπάντων/ βουλῇ καὶ μύθοισιν, ἐγὼ δ' ἐν πᾶσι θεοῖσι/ μήτι τε κλέομαι καὶ κέρδεσιν ("But come, let us speak no more of these things, we who know tricks, since you are best by far of all mortals in counsel and words, and I am famed among all the gods for wisdom and cunning": 13.296-99). Athena recognizes an identification between herself and our hero which Odysseus himself has promoted as ideal in a relationship between husband and wife: οὐ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ γε κρεῖσσον καὶ ἄρειον,/ ἢ ὅθ' ὁμοφρονέοντε νοήμασιν οἶκον ἔχητον/ ἀνὴρ ἠδὲ γυνή· πόλλ' ἄλγεα δυσμενέεσσι,/ χάρματα δ' εὐμενέτῃσι, μάλιστα δέ τ' ἔκλυον αὐτοί ("For indeed, there is nothing greater or better than this, than when a man and woman manage their household with the same thoughts in their minds, [a thing which gives] many pains to their enemies and joys to their friends, and they themselves are spoken of most highly": 6.182-85). This ideal, where the husband and wife participate in a relationship characterized by *homophrosyne* ("like-mindedness" or "unity of mind and purpose") – and which, as we shall see, reflects Odysseus' own marriage to Penelope – sounds almost egalitarian: Sarah Bolmarcich, in fact, argues that the application of this term (and related forms of the word) to a male-female pair is unique in Homer, and concludes that "for a good marriage to exist, both partners must act

as though they were male comrades… Penelope must be analogized to a male ally of Odysseus in order to play the role of a faithful wife successfully."[5] From the Greek perspective, Odysseus' recognition of his marriage as one that exemplifies *homophrosyne* thereby elevates his wife by making her into a sort of "honorary male"; nonetheless, the dictates outlined in the Topography of Shame require even here the woman's ultimate deference to the male agenda. In Penelope's case, scholars like John Winkler argue that she actually drives the plot, and ultimately outwits Odysseus, all while appearing not to[6]; yet despite this relatively active stance, Penelope's machinations, and even her final "trick," as we shall see, in the end coincide with and work to further Odysseus' own goals.[7]

This same imbalance is evident even in Odysseus' relationship with Athena, who undoubtedly is superior to him in her immortality and in her supernatural capabilities: here too, the male and female principles are working in perfect accord, but both are focused on furthering the interests of the heroic male – preserving his *kleos* by getting him home, protecting his possessions, and ensuring the sexual integrity of his wife. Athena's attention to Odysseus' male-focused interests is paralleled by her deference to masculine authority in the divine realm: not only does she seek Zeus' approval before taking action on behalf of her mortal favorite, she also gives way to Poseidon, as she indicates when she tells Odysseus that she has not made her assistance manifest sooner because οὐκ ἐθέλησα Ποσειδάωνι μάχεσθαι/ πατροκασιγνήτῳ, ὅς τοι κότον ἔνθετο θυμῷ,/ χωόμενος ὅτι οἱ υἱὸν φίλον ἐξαλάωσας ("…I did not want to fight Poseidon, my father's brother, who held a grudge in his heart against you, raging because you blinded his dear son": 13.341-43; see also 6.329-31). Only after Poseidon's wrath has

been somewhat mollified by the punishment of the Phaeacians for giving Odysseus transport to his homeland (13.125ff) does Athena appear to Odysseus in her true form and offer him her assistance directly. Thus, even in serving Odysseus' needs, Athena yields to divine male authority.

Athena's support of Odysseus and his son continues throughout the epic: she arranges their reunion at the appropriate moment (16.167ff), provides divine light to aid them in putting the household weapons out of the suitors' reach (19.33-34), reassures and supports them as their plan to take revenge on the suitors progresses (20.44-53), provokes the suitors to further insult and abuse Odysseus-as-beggar in order to promote Odysseus' indignation (20.284ff), prompts Penelope to initiate the bow contest (21.1-4), and stands up beside Odysseus and his son as they battle the suitors (22.205ff). The dovetailing of Odysseus and Telemachus' agendas in the second half of the epic highlights the fact that Athena's assistance of the son always serves to further Odysseus' own goals, the primacy of which objective Telemachus himself acknowledges when he refrains from stringing the bow, but instead holds back in deference to his father's wishes (21.128-35). In the same way, because his wife's honor reflects so wholly on her husband, Athena's patronage of Odysseus extends to support of Penelope as well: she appears to her in a dream in order to reassure her of her son's safety once the suitors' plot has come to light (4.795ff), prompts her to make an appearance in front of the suitors (18.158ff), and periodically gives her a beauty treatment or respite from her grief by putting her to sleep (i.e. 18.188-96; 21.354-58). As with her support of Telemachus, Athena's aid to Penelope indirectly serves to further Odysseus' own interests. For example, Penelope's appearance in front of the suitors in Book 18 serves a threefold purpose: it inflames Odysseus' desire

for his wife and exhorts him to courageous action; it works to replenish Odysseus' diminished stores by extracting gifts from the suitors; and it helps to remind Odysseus of the *homophrosyne* that he and his wife share.

Even after the suitors' defeat, Athena continues to work in the epic's denouement to ensure Odysseus' happiness and safety: she lends him god-like beauty to increase his attractiveness to Penelope (23.156-63); she prolongs the night (23.241-46) and brings the dawn (23.344-48) to accommodate Odysseus' reunion with his wife; and, when the suitors' kin attempt to avenge the deaths of their sons and brothers, she first exhorts Odysseus' aged father Laertes to one final glorious act in battle (24.516-25), and then, having obtained her father's approval (24.472-88), imposes peace so that Odysseus is freed from this new danger (24.528-36).

Thus here, as in the *Iliad*, Athena is an active goddess, but her behavior consistently conforms to the Topography of Shame model. Not only do her actions promote the interests of the mortal male with whom she feels the strongest sense of kinship, but also she acts only after receiving her father Zeus' approval (as at 1.45ff and 24.472-88). Although she is in many ways the most masculine of the Greek goddesses, as Odysseus' protector Athena fulfills her function as *kourotrophos*, or "nurturer of young men," a role which many scholars see as feminine.[8] It is, in all likelihood, Athena's position between masculine and feminine that permits her to fill this sort of unambiguously supportive role in the *Odyssey*: as a virgin goddess, she is dissociated from the sexual threat most women pose.[9] As a result, Athena's support of Odysseus' interests and her deference to her own male kin offer a divine model for idealized male-female relations, one which defines the feminine role as one whose primary function is to

support and sustain masculine needs and interests. While this dynamic has long been recognized, the Topography of Shame offers us an interpretive model to understand why and how women – both divine and mortal – fit or contradict this pattern.

Calypso and Circe

In addition to the prominent role of Athena, the *Odyssey* includes a number of minor goddesses, the two most important of whom are Calypso and Circe. Odysseus' interactions with these immortal females are for the most part related in his extended narration to the Phaeacians in Books 9-12.[10] This series of tales depicts "a world that is by turns superhuman and subhuman" and which is thereby marked off from the world of men and the human concerns of agricultural cultivation, religion, and sacrifice.[11] As Seth Schein has demonstrated, these stories "tend to represent what is 'human' as male and most of the 'pleasures' and 'dangers' – or what a male imagination fantasizes as such – as female"; moreover, the danger these females represent is either literally or symbolically sexual: they threaten Odysseus with "being swallowed, engulfed, concealed,[12] or obliterated."[13] The contrast between women like Calypso and Circe and their "benign counterpart," the virgin goddess Athena, thereby works to "reinforce the notion that it is a woman's sexuality which is potentially so threatening to a man's independence."[14] Accordingly, both Calypso and Circe are initially framed as seductresses who threaten to derail Odysseus' mission to return to Ithaca and restore the integrity of his household; once he subdues them, however, they are transformed into helper figures. In the mortal realm, the figure of Clytemnestra, whose story recurs throughout the epic, reinforces this idea: left without adequate male supervision while her husband sails off to fight the

Trojan War, her dangerous feminine aspects take over entirely, with fatal repercussions for Agamemnon.[15] Clytemnestra thus serves as a counter-example, illustrating the dangers female sexuality poses when it is not constrained by male authority.

At the epic's outset, Calypso holds Odysseus on her island against his will, a situation that Athena casts as perverse and unnatural: τοῦ θυγάτηρ δύστηνον ὀδυρόμενον κατερύκει,/ αἰεὶ δὲ μαλακοῖσι καὶ αἱμυλίοισι λόγοισιν/ θέλγει, ὅπως Ἰθάκης ἐπιλήσεται· αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσεύς,/ ἱέμενος καὶ καπνὸν ἀποθρῴσκοντα νοῆσαι/ ἧς γαίης, θανέειν ἱμείρεται ("[Atlas'] daughter detains the wretched, grieving man, and with soft and wheedling words she beguiles him, so that she might cause him to forget Ithaca; but Odysseus, longing just to see the smoke rising up from his homeland, wants to die": 1.55-59). Despite the quasi-utopian existence Odysseus apparently enjoys on Ogygia – he is free from labor and concern with social obligations, he enjoys the constant companionship of a beautiful goddess, and he is offered immortality itself if he would but take it – his confinement with Calypso causes him nothing but pain. Greek conceptions of manhood entail "social agoraphilia, a love for the sunlit public places. Such open contexts are associated not only with exposure and sociability but also with risk and opportunity, with the possibility of the grand exploit and the conspicuous deed"[16]: on Ogygia, Odysseus has access to none of these things. Odysseus' confinement with Calypso, therefore, transgresses the natural order of things: mortal men are supposed to labor, strive for status, suffer, age, and die, and Odysseus, of all heroes, recognizes well his place in the divine order (see 5.203ff). The unnaturalness of Odysseus' existence on Ogygia is highlighted by the reversal of gender roles: Calypso holds Odysseus against his will, forces him to have sex with her (5.154-55), and is concerned primarily with her own pleasure rather than with Odysseus' goals and desires. As David Gilmore has shown,

concepts of manhood in the circum-Mediterranean include a prevailing fear of this sort of "loss of...personal autonomy to a dominant woman," an anxiety epitomized by such tales of seductresses who "entrap [a man] forever...causing him to forget his masculine role."[17] For this reason, Odysseus' situation at the epic's onset is cast as unacceptable, a "problem" that must be remedied.

At Athena's prompting, Zeus moves to set the situation aright by sending the messenger god Hermes down to communicate his command that Odysseus be released. Calypso is naturally displeased by this order, and offers her famous statement on the double-standard that exists for gods and goddesses: σχέτλιοί ἐστε, θεοί, ζηλήμονες ἔξοχον ἄλλων,/ οἵ τε θεαῖς ἀγάασθε παρ' ἀνδράσιν εὐνάζεσθαι/ ἀμφαδίην, ἤν τίς τε φίλον ποιήσετ' ἀκοίτην ("You jealous gods are cruel far above others, you who envy goddesses for openly going to bed alongside men, if some one of them might have made him her dear husband": 5.118-20). Victoria Wohl suggests that what the gods are actually objecting to here is "a relationship where the woman has power over the man...," as is the case when the woman is a goddess and the man is a mortal; Wohl thus sees Zeus' order as "a divine mandate for the ascendancy of men over women in sexual relations."[18] The perverse nature of women's dominance over men is illustrated once again by the negative example of Clytemnestra, who, upon losing her proper male guardian Agamemnon, enters into a relationship with his weak and compliant cousin Aegisthus. The threat this deviant dynamic poses to the male hierarchy is, once again, illustrated by the lethal consequences this relationship has for Agamemnon. In the divine realm, the contrast between the devastating implications of Aphrodite's affair with Ares for her husband Hephaestus, related by the bard Demodocus in Book 8, and the nonchalant attitude of Zeus towards his own extramarital dalliances[19] also reinforces this

notion. Accordingly, Zeus' order to Calypso initiates the reestablishment of a proper gendered balance, and despite her initial challenge to the tenets of the Topography of Shame, Calypso quickly bows to the authority of Zeus (5.137-42).

When Calypso announces that she is relinquishing her hold on him, Odysseus, who had previously been in a state of powerlessness and despair, begins to reassert his patriarchal prerogatives, insisting that Calypso "swear a solemn oath" that she is not planning additional trouble for him (5.177-79), a precaution she approves. With the power balance on its way to being reestablished, Odysseus is then able to share Calypso's table and bed one final time without the grief and despondency he has apparently been feeling throughout their relationship. Correspondingly, Calypso, now properly reconciled to the patriarchal agenda, becomes a helper to Odysseus rather than a hindrance: she offers him an axe and an adze, shows him where to find timber appropriate for making a raft, provides cloth for a sail, stocks his raft with plentiful provisions for his journey, and even supplies him with a favorable breeze (5.233ff). Once male authority has been properly asserted, Calypso redirects her attention towards male heroic interests as the Topography of Shame requires.

Throughout this episode, Calypso's language, too, follows the tenets of the Topography of Shame. Her statement to Hermes that τὸν μὲν ἐγὼν ἐσάωσα.../ τὸν μὲν ἐγὼ φίλεόν τε καὶ ἔτρεφον, ἠδὲ ἔφασκον/ θήσειν ἀθάνατον καὶ ἀγήραον ἤματα πάντα ("...I saved [Odysseus]...I loved him, and nourished him, I told him he would be deathless and ageless through all his days": 5.130-136) constitutes a boast which focuses on how she worked to forge an alliance with a male where she lacked one before. The actions she takes in order to cement this bond, moreover, are depicted as feminine: she nourishes, protects, and soothes. Soon thereafter, Calypso acknowledges

her limitations: ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ οὔ πως ἔστι Διὸς νόον αἰγιόχοιο/ οὔτε παρεξελθεῖν ἄλλον θεὸν οὔθ' ἁλιῶσαι,/ ἐρρέτω, εἴ μιν κεῖνος ἐποτρύνει καὶ ἀνώγει,/ πόντον ἐπ' ἀτρύγετον· πέμψω δέ μιν οὔ πῃ ἐγώ γε·/ οὐ γάρ μοι πάρα νῆες ἐπήρετμοι καὶ ἑταῖροι,/ οἵ κέν μιν πέμποιεν ἐπ' εὐρέα νῶτα θαλάσσης./ αὐτάρ οἱ πρόφρων ὑποθήσομαι... ("But since it is not ever possible for another god to elude the will of aegis-bearing Zeus, nor to go against him, I assent, if Zeus stirs him up or commands him over the barren sea. But in no way will I 'send' him: for I have no oared ships, and no companions who would send him across the broad back of the sea. However, I will offer him a well-disposed heart": 5.137-43). Here, Calypso not only cedes authority to Zeus, but she recognizes that her contributions are restricted to the sort of emotional support associated with the feminine realm: the masculine concerns of shipping and travel are out of her jurisdiction. Later, the crisis Odysseus' impending departure causes, as the Topography of Shame would lead us to expect, triggers Calypso to express self-doubt: οὕτω δὴ οἶκόνδε φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν/ αὐτίκα νῦν ἐθέλεις ἰέναι;...οὐ μέν θην κείνης γε χερείων εὔχομαι εἶναι,/ οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν, ἐπεὶ οὔ πως οὐδὲ ἔοικεν/ θνητὰς ἀθανάτῃσι δέμας καὶ εἶδος ἐρίζειν ("Do you wish still to go homeward into your dear fatherland?...Surely, I pray, I am not inferior to [your wife], neither in frame nor stature, since never is it seemly that mortals contend with immortals either in form or in figure": 5.204-13). The loss of her sole male connection here prompts Calypso to question her own beauty and desirability. As such, Calypso indicates verbally what she has demonstrated through her behavior: goddess though she be, her self-image depends on her relationship to a dominant male, and though she may attempt to challenge patriarchal prerogatives in the service of this relationship, she ultimately defers to male authority.

While Calypso's role is initially one that perverts normal gendered relations, her actions nonetheless are consistently in line with expectations of feminine nature: she is a weaver, a singer, and a seductress, as well as a nurturer who saves, protects, and provides for Odysseus when he washes up on her island after being shipwrecked. These feminine qualities, however, act as obstacles to Odysseus' goals so long as Calypso is acting on her own and without the direction and restraint that patriarchal controls provide. Once Zeus reinstates these controls, Calypso's role is transformed into one that advances Odysseus' interests, illustrating once again the need for feminine subservience, even in the realm of the divine.[20] This dynamic is reinforced by notions of space and time: Calypso's overwhelmingly feminine "domestic" space is removed from the masculine arenas of memorable accomplishment, struggle, and change, and is therefore located "outside" of time. But once Calypso is reconciled to Zeus' agenda, Odysseus is able to move forward once again in time and space as he prepares for the journey by sea which will return him to the public world of human society.

Circe's character functions in much the same way as Calypso's, but her example teaches these lessons more overtly. Odysseus' description of the lead-up to his encounter with Circe is ominous: he calls her δεινὴ θεὸς ("dread goddess": i.e. 10.136, 11.8, 12.150), describes the smoke curling up through the thick woods (10.148-52), and recalls the grief and apprehension that overwhelm his remaining companions (10.198-202). All this points to something amiss, and again, that something is a powerful and dangerous female presence whose nature is unbridled by the restraining and mollifying influence of male authority. Indeed, Circe exhibits typical feminine traits – she sings, she weaves, she

seduces, she offers nourishment and rest – but the end result of this is the transformation of Odysseus' men into beasts.

This transformation is a clear metaphor for the emasculation and loss of identity that occur when the "natural" balance of gendered power relations is disrupted.[21] In their animal state, Odysseus' men become, in effect, all "body," prisoners of the flesh and of appetites, unable to access higher-order thinking and communication. As feminists have shown, the mind-body duality is frequently gendered: the woman is associated with the body and the man with the soul.[22] Because the body in this duality is the negative term, the anchor that weighs down and undermines the "best efforts" of the soul as representive of the pure self, "then women *are* that negativity, whatever it may be: distraction from knowledge, seduction away from God, capitulation to sexual desire, violence or aggression, failure of will, even death."[23] The arousal of men's desires is therefore attributed to the manipulation of women like Circe, so that distraction from masculine arenas of accomplishment are seen as the woman's fault.[24] Women tend to internalize this way of thinking and hold themselves responsible for unwanted sexual advances or assault, and the resulting guilt contributes to "unease with our femaleness, shame over our bodies, and self-loathing"[25] – the sorts of feelings we have seen associated with the Topography of Shame. Lest men be seen as "the enemy," however, we should bear in mind that they, too, "find themselves embedded and implicated in institutions and practices that they as individuals did not create and do not control – and that they frequently feel tyrannized by."[26] The resulting male anxieties, then, often manifest themselves in art and literature in episodes of emasculation and disempowerment, such as we see in the Circe tale.

In order to combat Circe's dangerous female force, Odysseus relies on the advice of Hermes, who once again represents the voice of patriarchal divine will. Hermes offers Odysseus an herb that will protect him against Circe's drugs and then directs him to threaten her with his sword (10.289ff). When Odysseus does so, as Hermes had predicted Circe immediately subjugates herself by taking his knees and inviting him into her bed (10.321-35). The shift in power dynamics here is further signified by Odysseus' insistence once again, as Hermes had advised, that Circe vow to do him no further harm (10.342-44), thus adding verbal confirmation of the deference she had initially indicated through gesture. This sequence of events offers a fairly unambiguous message that the assertion of phallic power (the sword) serves to neutralize the sexual danger the feminine principle represents and channel it instead into something beneficial.[27] Once Odysseus pulls his sword and asserts his dominance, Circe demonstrates the positive aspects of the female nature, nourishing and supporting the male as she works with him to further his goals and promote his agenda.

Circe's transformation from malevolent threat to benevolent ally is total: from this point forward, she acts as a nurturer and helper, offering Odysseus and his men baths, rest, and plentiful feasts, as well as sexual pleasure. Odysseus does linger in the pleasure of Circe's company longer than we might think suitable for one who purports to yearn for home and family: his crew, in fact, have to remind him of Ithaca and the need to return home (10.469-74), suggesting that even women who act as helpers often serve to distract from the male heroic agenda. Circe, nonetheless, does not attempt to restrain him (διογενὲς Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ,/ μηκέτι νῦν ἀέκοντες ἐμῷ ἐνὶ μίμνετε οἴκῳ – "Godlike son of Laertes, much-scheming Odysseus, do not now,

unwilling, stay in my house any longer": 10.488-89): as soon as he expresses desire to be on his way, she is ready with encouragement and support, offering him the advice he will need to navigate the difficult journey to the underworld on which he must embark before turning his bow homewards (10.504ff), supplying him with livestock to make his offering to the shades of the dead (10.569-74), and a providing a favorable breeze to speed him on his way (11.6-8). Similarly, when Odysseus later stops back at her island to retrieve the body of his companion Elpenor, Circe again offers him hospitality (12.21-27), detailed advice on how to proceed (12.37ff), and again, a favoring wind (12.148-50).

Like Calypso, Circe represents a powerful female force whose raw feminine energy proves destructive when it is not properly channeled through male authority,[28] a dynamic also evident elsewhere in the tales of Books 9-12. This tendency towards feminine destructiveness is reflected in Greek ideas, incipient in Hesiod's *Theogony* and explicated by Jean-Pierre Vernant,[29] of the female association not just with the body, as we have seen, but in particular with the *gaster*, a word that designates the stomach, but for women, also the womb and the breast. Women's insatiability, it was thought, manifested itself as both a hunger for food and an appetite for sex, a voraciousness whereby "the shameless feminine *gaster* consumes the male's energy and dispatches him from the greenness of youth to a desiccated old age."[30] In the *Odyssey*, women's gluttony for food is illustrated by the Lastrygonian wife of Antiphates, a woman ὅσην τ' ὄρεος κορυφήν ("as big as the top of a mountain": 10.113), and by the six ravenous heads of Scylla and the gaping maw of Charybis (12.85-07 and 234-59), while both Calypso and Circe demonstrate avid sexual appetites far beyond that expected of mortal women. Only

through the appropriate establishment of male authority are women's appetites controlled and their energies turned towards productive channels, as the examples of Calypso and Circe both demonstrate. By presenting the possibility of female dominance we see first in Calypso and later in women like Circe and subsequently rejecting it in favor of male power, Homer invests patriarchal power structures with "an air of inevitability, the naturalness of an ideology."[31] This privileging is emphasized spatially, since both Calypso and Circe occupy wild, uncivilized worlds located at the edge of the map, where their time is spent weaving in an eternally "domestic" context. Odysseus ultimately rejects these worlds, choosing to return to human society with its public contexts where masculine achievement can be appropriately recognized. As such, like Athena, these lesser goddesses ultimately contribute to a divine illustration of proper gendered roles and categories, a model which is important to bear in mind as we turn our attention to the mortal women who populate the world to which Odysseus returns.

Helen

As the only (mostly) mortal woman that appears in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, Helen offers us a unique opportunity to explore the depiction of a single character in multiple contexts.[32] As we saw in the *Iliad*, Helen was depicted as a woman capable of using the tools at her disposal – namely calculated verbal manipulation through self-deprecation and boasting – in order to navigate the precarious positions she occupied in relation to her closest male allies; modern anthropologists studying 20th century Greek villages have identified the use of similar information management techniques, such as the calculated use of secrecy and lying in public communication in

order to bolster or protect family honor.[33] Helen's ability to exert this sort of indirect power paired with the sexual threat she clearly poses as a woman who cuckolded her first husband Menelaus and then quickly took Deiphobus as a third husband after the death of Paris results in a highly ambiguous view of her as both alluring and dangerous. As the world's most beautiful and desirable woman, Helen is particularly vulnerable to shifts in her immediate erotic situation, but at the same time, because of her great beauty – and perhaps too as a result of her semi-divine status as a daughter of Zeus – Helen is uniquely suited to forging new bonds and alliances with men when her situation changes. Yet as we see in the *Iliad*, despite these unusual shifts, Helen's expressions of self-deprecation or boasting, whether calculated or rooted in genuine feelings of shame or pride, nonetheless occur in relation to imminent erotic disaster or threats to her relationship with her male kin in the very way the Topography of Shame would lead us to expect: just as secrecy and lying are important in modern Mediterranean contexts to safeguard familial bonds, Helen uses boasting and self-deprecation to preserve existing alliances, and occasionally, to forge new ones.

In the *Odyssey*, Homer characterizes Helen in much the same way, offering us an ambiguous view of a woman who constantly uses verbal manipulation to bolster her position with Menelaus, her original husband to whom she has now been restored. At the same time, "[w]hile the Helen of the *Odyssey* is the same person that we see in the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey* poet shifts the light so as to present her in ways that are appropriate and significant for the *Odyssey*."[34] Most relevant for our purposes is the shift in attitude Helen exhibits as a result of her more secure and stable position. With the war over, Helen is distanced from the destruction that resulted from her infidelity and her safety is no longer

potentially in jeopardy; in addition, with Paris and Deiphobus now dead, she no longer feels pulled between competing male attachments. As a result, while we still see Helen employing verbal manipulation to achieve particular ends in relation to Menelaus, her remaining male tie, she does so with assertive confidence, rather than constantly using self-deprecation or evoking self-pity. Even more than in the *Iliad*, this strengthened characterization fits well with some scholars' view of the pre-Homeric Helen as a goddess who has been "trimmed down…to fit into the scope of the Homeric epic," as we saw in the previous chapter.[35]

Helen's powerful, dominating presence is evident from her first appearance in the *Odyssey*. In Book 4, Telemachus has come to Sparta to seek from Menelaus news of his father. Menelaus entertains him hospitably, and, as courtesy demands, refrains from asking Telemachus his name until after they have feasted. Nonetheless, when Telemachus begins to weep at mention of Odysseus, Menelaus starts to suspect his identity. As he ponders this possibility, Helen enters with much fanfare: Homer's description, comprising 16 lines (4.121-36), likens her to a goddess,[36] as he compares her to Artemis (4.122) and includes an elaborate account of her rich and exotic implements (χρυσέην τ' ἠλακάτην τάλαρόν θ' ὑπόκυκλον …/ ἀργύρεον, χρυσῷ δ' ἐπὶ χείλεα κεκράαντο – a "golden distaff and wheeled workbasket of silver, finished on the edges in gold": 4.131-32), gifts she had obtained in Egypt. She follows up her assertive entrance with a short speech that effectively trumps the hesitant Menelaus' authority in the "masculine" realm of the dining hall (4.138-46)[37]:

> ἴδμεν δή, Μενέλαε διοτρεφές, οἵ τινες οἵδε
> ἀνδρῶν εὐχετόωνται ἱκανέμεν ἡμέτερον δῶ;
> ψεύσομαι ἦ ἔτυμον ἐρέω; κέλεται δέ με θυμός.
> οὐ γάρ πώ τινά φημι ἐοικότα ὧδε ἰδέσθαι
> οὔτ' ἄνδρ' οὔτε γυναῖκα, σέβας μ' ἔχει εἰσορόωσαν,

ὡς ὅδ' Ὀδυσσῆος μεγαλήτορος υἷι ἔοικε,
Τηλεμάχῳ, τὸν ἔλειπε νέον γεγαῶτ' ἐνὶ οἴκῳ
κεῖνος ἀνήρ, ὅτ' ἐμεῖο κυνώπιδος εἵνεκ' Ἀχαιοὶ
ἤλθεθ' ὑπὸ Τροίην πόλεμον θρασὺν ὁρμαίνοντες.

"Menelaus, dear to Zeus, do we know who of men
these, who have come into our house, claim to be?
Shall I speak the truth or hide it? My heart urges me on.
Never yet have I thought anyone seemed so alike
Neither man nor woman – and awe takes me, looking upon him –
As this man seems to the son of great-hearted Odysseus,
Telemachus, whom that man left a newborn in his house
When, on account of me, dogface that I am, the Achaeans,
Went beneath Troy, contemplating fierce warfare."

Helen not only usurps Menelaus' position by taking up the issue of his guest's identity herself, she also shows him up in the area of intelligence, deducing in mere seconds what Menelaus had been so slow to perceive. Nor is this astuteness an anomaly: she also trumps Menelaus' authority and shows herself superior in cleverness when Telemachus, taking his leave, asks Menelaus to interpret a bird-sign; while Menelaus is thinking it over, Helen intervenes to prophesy Odysseus' imminent return (15.167-78).[38] Homer thus calls attention to Helen's exceptional cleverness and her *de facto* power over her husband by book-ending her appearances in the *Odyssey* with episodes that highlight these characteristics.

In Book 4 Helen follows up her initial display of intelligence with another power-play, effectively wresting the authority to regulate speeches from her husband: after seeing that the memories he has been recounting before Helen's entry have caused his young guests grief, Menelaus attempts to postpone recollections of lost loved ones until the morning, but Helen reinitiates them soon thereafter. Compared to the *Iliad*, where she regularly uses passive-aggressive verbal techniques in negotiating her position with males, Helen demonstrates unusual straightforwardness here, immediately asserting

narrative control.[39] Her surprising moxie can perhaps be attributed to the matrilocal nature of her marriage – since "...Sparta is her home, not Menelaus'," her loyalty to the household is presumed to be less tenuous than in a patrilocal arrangement, giving her the latitude to exert an unusual amount of authority[40] – and to the more secure position she now occupies, having been restored as Queen of Sparta and Menelaus' wife, in contrast to her precarious position while the Greeks and Trojans fought over her at Troy. Homer emphasizes this shift from "woman of passion to chaste wife" metaphorically, comparing Helen here, as we have seen, to Artemis, whereas in the *Iliad*, she was regularly linked to Aphrodite.[41] Maria Pantelia's analysis of the symbolism of spinning and weaving in the Homeric epics, too, supports this view of Helen's increased sense of self-confidence as related to her more secure position: Pantelia argues that weaving, with its potential for creative expression, is an activity performed by "[w]omen who feel uncertain about their future or identity, especially in regard to their marriage...,"[42] whereas spinning, which does not have the potential of producing a concrete message, is an activity performed by women who feel more established and secure in their identity, particularly in regards to men.[43] Pantelia's observations are supported by the association between the loom and female stages of life in modern Mediterranean contexts as well: Pierre Bourdieu's observations of the Kabyle people in northeastern Algeria, for instance, indicate that "from the point of view of the male members of her family, all of the girl's life is, as it were, summed up in the successive positions that she symbolically occupies in relation to the weaving-loom which is the symbol of male protection."[44] Similarly in the *Iliad*, Helen and Andromache are depicted as weaving at the very time when activities on the battlefield make their futures particularly uncertain (for Helen, the duel between Paris

and Menelaus, and for Andromache, Hector's death). In the *Odyssey*, in contrast, Helen is described in connection with spinning rather than weaving at the very moment when she asserts herself with confidence in the male arena of the dining hall.[45]

Despite her improved sense of security and the increase in self-assurance that comes along with it, Helen is still a woman, and therefore she is still subject to abide, more or less, by the societal parameters which developed in support of patriarchal ideologies. Thus, as we saw in the *Iliad*, Helen continues to use self-deprecation as a manipulative tool: with Telemachus present, the Trojan war is sure to be a subject of conversation, which will certainly dredge up painful memories of her infidelity for her husband. Under the circumstances, Helen's mention of the time ὅτ' ἐμεῖο κυνώπιδος εἵνεκ' Ἀχαιοὶ/ ἤλθεθ' ὑπὸ Τροίην πόλεμον θρασὺν ὁρμαίνοντες ("when the Achaeans, on account of me, a dog-face, came up under Troy, pondering furious war": 4.145-46), although it may indicate genuine remorse, at the same time can be read as calculated: Helen's deprecatory self-reference paired with her prudent use of the past tense in the present situation seem designed to garner male sympathy and to reassure her husband that she has reformed her wanton ways.

Helen's implication of self-loathing here is contradicted not only by the self-confident, assertive way she conducts herself in the dining hall, but also by the positive image of herself which she projects in the story she tells Telemachus about his father. According to Helen, on an occasion when Odysseus disguised himself as a beggar and infiltrated Troy, she alone recognized him, and after she swore an oath not to give him away, he told her all of the Greeks' plans. Before leaving, Odysseus killed a great number of Trojans, causing grief to the women, but, says Helen, ...ἐμὸν κῆρ/ χαῖρ', ἐπεὶ ἤδη

μοι κραδίη τέτραπτο νέεσθαι/ ἂψ οἶκόνδ', ἄτην δὲ μετέστενον, ἣν Ἀφροδίτη/ δῶχ', ὅτε μ' ἤγαγε κεῖσε φίλης ἀπὸ πατρίδος αἴης... ("...inwardly I rejoiced, since my heart had already turned to go back homeward, and I regretted the folly which Aphrodite gave me when she led me away from my dear fatherland": 4.259-62). While Helen's story is ostensibly about Odysseus, it effectively emphasizes her own cleverness and dependability, suggests repentance for her folly in running off with Paris, highlights Aphrodite's responsibility for her actions, and positions her true allegiance with the Greeks and her heart with Menelaus.[46] She buttresses this positive image by casting herself in the role of the "helpful female" we have seen occupied by goddesses like Athena, and by Calypso and Circe once they are properly subsumed under male control. Furthermore, Helen's account also points to a comparison with Penelope, who in Book 19 will, like Helen, interview a disguised Odysseus and supply him with clothes and a bath,[47] a parallel which at first glance would seem to reinforce Helen's implications of loyalty by aligning her with this most famous of faithful wives. Then again, Helen's self-characterization here completely undercuts her presentation of herself to Priam and the other Trojans in the *Iliad*, reinforcing our view of her as verbally manipulative: she suits her allegations of loyalty to the audience.

Helen's tale also exhibits her improved self-assurance in the concern it suggests with *kleos*. While the *kleos* she pretends to further is, again, ostensibly that of Odysseus, as Ann Bergren has shown, her real aim is to elevate her own fame and glory.[48] Helen's tale itself affirms her feminine virtue of reliability and the proper realignment of her fidelity to Menelaus, and the cleverness she attributes to herself is presented even as a match for that of Odysseus himself. In addition, the context in which Helen presents her story suggests her concern with *kleos* in multiple ways. First, Helen's re-initiation of

reminiscences about Odysseus after Menelaus has attempted to suspend them functions as a "counter-action" that attempts to match the portion of the evening under her husband's direction.[49] Indeed, she even attempts to go him one better: her effort differs from his in that both the narrator and Helen herself situate her as a poet. Bergren notes that "[t]he contexts of the word '*pharmakon*' in hexameter diction depict drugs in their capactity [sic] to cure or to destroy as analogous to two faces of epic poetry," one concerning *klea* ("glorious deeds") and the other about *lugra* ("ruinous or baneful deeds").[50] Bergren sees the drug Helen slips into the wine as analogous to the poetry of *kleos* in that it νηπενθές τ' ἄχολόν τε, κακῶν ἐπίληθον ἁπάντων ("banishes pain, allays anger, and causes forgetfulness of all grief": 4.221),[51] an equivalence supported by Hesiod's assertion that even a man with grief and sorrow in his heart δυσφροσυνέων ἐπιλήθεται οὐδέ τι κηδέων/μέμνηται ("will forget his troubles, nor will he remember his cares": *Theog.* 102).[52] In inserting this analogy, "the poet makes Helen a reflection of himself."[53] This comparison is strengthened immediately afterward when Helen "declares herself a bard"[54]: ἦ τοι νῦν δαίνυσθε καθήμενοι ἐν μεγάροισι/ καὶ μύθοις τέρπεσθε· ἐοικότα γὰρ καταλέξω ("Indeed, now, sitting in the hall, eat, and take pleasure in my stories: for I will say is what right and proper": 4.238-39). As a bard who sings her own praises, however, she not only parallels Homer, but Odysseus as well, as he will fill a similar role in Books 9-12. In an epic that "associates, indeed almost equates, poetry with heroism,"[55] Helen's tale not only works as an indirect boast that showcases her intelligence properly tempered by her feminine virtues, but the context in which she presents it demonstrates that, as in the *Iliad*, Helen exhibits an unusual concern with the acquisition of *kleos* beyond that which is normally allotted to women.[56]

Although Helen's pursuit of *kleos* pushes the bounds of what was considered acceptable, Helen is, as we have seen, in many ways a special case. Her tale itself, in fact, works to emphasize her extraordinary status. Worman, for instance, argues that Helen's story, where she bathes, anoints, and dresses Odysseus and swears him a great oath of secrecy before he confirms his identity, suggests a comparison with Circe and Calypso and thereby positions her as a version of the "dread goddess."[57] This association is strengthened by the view that Helen's encounter with Odysseus contains elements of seduction,[58] and by her use of a drug which "is parallel in place- and time-deadening effect and disengaging result to Kirke's potion…," positioning Helen, like Circe and Calypso, as an "overpowering, self-serving, sexual sorceress."[59] Thus, in contrast to the *Iliad*, where only "an uneasy awareness prevails…that Helen is the mistress of daimonic powers,"[60] the portrait of Helen in the *Odyssey* more explicitly positions her as a "faded goddess."[61]

Helen, therefore, in her speech and demeanor and through her tale, presents an image of herself that is both powerful and positive. Menelaus, however, undercuts this image with his own Odysseus tale, which subtly contradicts Helen's self-characterization. Menelaus' story recounts how Odysseus saved the Greeks hiding inside the Trojan Horse when Helen approached with her third husband, Deiphobus, whom she had taken after Paris' death. Circling the horse, Helen imitated the voices of the wives of the Greek leaders, calling out their names[62]; several of the heroes inside longed to answer, but Odysseus held them back by clamping his hands over their mouths. Helen's behavior in Menelaus' story contradicts the characterization of herself she suggested in her own tale: though she is still certainly clever, here she is also treacherous and double-crossing,

attempting once again to betray the Greeks to the Trojans; additionally, since Menelaus' story must follow Helen's chronologically, his account challenges her assertion of repentance and the implication of her overriding allegiance to him, since she has accepted yet another lover after Paris' death.[63] Moreover, Menelaus exposes her as verbally manipulative both inside his tale (then), with her mimicry of other women's voices, and outside of it (now), by proving false the self-portrait she draws in her own tale.[64] As such, Homer effectively turns the parallel he has implied between Helen and Penelope on its head: with Menelaus' effective refutation of Helen's claims of loyalty, rather than Penelope serving as a flattering counterpart to Helen, Helen's fickleness now serves to call Penelope's own fidelity into question.

Menelaus' tale thus counteracts the intended effects of Helen's drug: while her aim was to facilitate tale-telling in a state of "forgetfulness of all grief" (4.221), her drug has instead allowed Menelaus to recall without pain cares that he might well have preferred to forget, and with this recollection, he "renders her *mythos* yet another fictitious imitation of the voice of a Greek wife."[65] In revealing the duplicitous nature of a story she had framed as narrating ἐοικότα ("what is right and proper": 4.239), Menelaus exposes her as a false bard, undercutting her claim to *kleos*. By deconstructing her tale, he also reverses her second association with *kleos*: the drug she has used, formerly analogized with the sort of epic poetry that produces *kleos*, becomes instead a metaphor for the genre of epic that recounted *lugra*, "wretched deeds," and thus gives *penthos*, "unforgettable grief."[66] With her tale, Helen had attempted to match herself against her husband and attain a measure of glory that is usually consider off-limits for women, testing the limits of the Topography of Shame. Menelaus' counter-tale, however,

effectively checks the advances Helen attempts to make and reinscribes the parameters of this theorem, bringing their relationship back into a more appropriate gender balance.[67]

The back and forth between Helen and Menelaus in this episode, furthermore, casts Helen's culpability for the war at Troy as ambiguous in much the same way as it was positioned in the *Iliad*. In her own tale about Odysseus, as we have seen, Helen minimizes her own guilt and shifts the blame to Aphrodite (4.259-62); Menelaus, however, challenges her implication in his response story when, relating Helen's treacherous attempt to get the Greeks inside the horse to give themselves away, he says, κελευσέμεναι δέ σ' ἔμελλε/ δαίμων, ὃς Τρώεσσιν ἐβούλετο κῦδος ὀρέξαι ("A god who wished to give glory to the Trojans must have urged you on": 4.274-75). Given the general thrust of Menelaus' tale and its apparent design as a response that contradicts Helen's characterization of herself in her own tale, Menelaus' assignation of blame to the gods seems an ironic comment on the attempts of Helen, and perhaps others, to minimize her responsibility.[68] The ambiguity surrounding the responsibility for the war and the figure of Helen herself is evident elsewhere in the *Odyssey*: in the underworld episode, Odysseus places the blame on Helen when he comments to the shade of Agamemnon, Ἑλένης μὲν ἀπωλόμεθ' εἵνεκα πολλοί ("Many of us perished on Helen's account": 11.438); later, however, Penelope exculpates her, saying, τὴν δ' ἦ τοι ῥέξαι θεὸς ὤρορεν ἔργον ἀεικές·/ τὴν δ' ἄτην οὐ πρόσθεν ἑῷ ἐγκάτθετο θυμῷ/ λυγρήν ("Truly a god urged her on to do that shameful deed; nor before did she put such baneful folly in her heart": 23.222-24). This question, moreover, has still not been settled. Some modern scholars would view Helen more sympathetically: F. J. Groton, for instance, who defends Helen's character in the *Iliad*, while admitting that Helen's behavior in

Menelaus' tale is blameworthy,[69] nonetheless defends the overall portrait the poet draws of Helen in the *Odyssey*, viewing her as a model of social behavior and an example of an ideal hostess.[70] Ryan, in contrast with Groton, sees Helen's character in the *Odyssey* as consistent with his assessment in the *Iliad*: she is "wanton, self-centered, deceitful, bewitching and beguiling in both poems."[71] While these personal or "moral" evaluations have their place, more important to this study is Helen's structural position, to which this sort of ambiguity is necessary: if the "guilt" were entirely Helen's, it would make no sense for Menelaus to take her back as a wife, and yet he must from a political standpoint, since it cements the relationship between Mycenae and Sparta; positioning her as entirely blameless, however, dampens the ideologically-driven argument that women are bad and sexually weak, and therefore must be controlled. As such, Helen's guilt needs to be up for debate.

In her final appearance in this epic, Helen once again exhibits concern with remembrance as an individual separate from her husband. As Telemachus takes his leave, Menelaus offers him a parting gift according to the custom of guest-host relations. Helen then follows her husband's gift with one of her own, a beautiful robe, boasting that she has made it herself and asking Telemachus to give it to his mother for safekeeping until he can pass it on to his wife on his wedding day (15.123-29).[72] By this means, Helen subtly prompts Telemachus to remember and celebrate her apart from her husband, while at the same time encouraging him to promote her reputation among the women of his household. Helen's consistent concern with individual public recognition, which we saw both in the *Iliad*[73] and in her earlier appearance in this epic, runs contrary to typical feminine expectations and thus sets Helen apart from ordinary women; at the same time,

the *kleos* that Helen is promoting for herself in each of these instances has a distinctly feminine slant. In the song she anticipates in the *Iliad*, Helen expects to be remembered for the beauty which "launched a thousand ships"; through the robe which she gives Telemachus here, she promotes her apparently exceptional skill in weaving; through the tapestry into which she weaves the story of the Trojan War in the *Iliad*, she advertises both of these feminine virtues; and through the story she earlier told of Odysseus, she hoped to promote her reputation for cleverness and fidelity. At the same time, Helen's aim in this instance may also have a secondary purpose. After Hector's death in the *Iliad* and Helen's resulting loss of her primary male protector, we witnessed her subsequent attempt to reinforce her secondary ties with Priam; likewise, Helen now may be seeking to secure back-up ties with an elite male as political insurance should her current connection fail her. In other words, she may be using this gift as leverage to obligate Telemachus to protect her in the event that she should separate again from Menelaus in the future or otherwise lose his protection. Given the connection of his mother Penelope, daughter of Icarius, with Sparta, an alliance with Telemachus seems a natural choice. Helen's gift, therefore, is emblematic of her problematic feminine nature: she works within the Topography of Shame in that her actions are motivated by her need for male protection, but she pushes the limits by working to establish an identity and a secure position independently of the male to whom she is currently attached. As she was in the *Iliad*, the Helen of the *Odyssey* is thus cast as a woman who uses duplicity and manipulation to her own advantage, but in doing so, she is motivated by her need to bolster and preserve her relationship with male connections. Thus despite the complications Helen introduces both as a special category unto herself and through her

ability to transfer her allegiance from one *kyrios*-figure to another,[74] she nonetheless broadly conforms the Topography of Shame model in the same way as we have seen for the average mortal woman.

Nausicaa and Arete

Upon leaving Calypso's island, the first people Odysseus comes across are the Phaeacians, a mortal race (see 6.7-12) that seems to live an idyllic, almost utopian existence (see 7.84ff) which some scholars see as representing the remnants of a matriarchy.[75] Vidal-Naquet further notes that the world of the Phaeacians is "double," incorporating some aspects of the fantasy worlds of the stories in Books 9-12 and in other ways reflecting the human concerns of the "real" world depicted on Ithaca and in Pylos and Sparta.[76] The Phaeacian women whom Odysseus encounters, therefore, though they conform more or less to our expectations about women's behavior and self-image, like Helen, constitute a somewhat special category.

When Odysseus reaches the shores of the Phaeacian island of Scheria, he is tired, dirty, naked, and hungry. Concocting a plan to help him, Athena by means of a dream prompts the young Phaeacian princess Nausicaa to initiate a laundry outing with her friends, reminding her that the time for her to marry is drawing near (6.25-40). While no appropriate groom has yet been found, as Nausicaa herself later reveals (see 6.280-84), both goddess and girl presume that the need to attract male attention is a fundamental reason for attending to appearance. Although this seems an ideological given, Nausicaa is nonetheless embarrassed to mention this motive to her father when asking him for a wagon to make her trip to the springs: αἴδετο γὰρ θαλερὸν γάμον ἐξονομῆναι/

πατρὶ φίλῳ. ὁ δὲ πάντα νόει ("...she was ashamed to mention her blossoming marriage to her dear father. But he discerned everything...": 6.66-67). Alcinous well understands his daughter's underlying motive, but refrains from asking her about it, suggesting his tacit approval of Nausicaa's demure silence on the subject. From the outset, then, Nausicaa is presented as a young girl with the appropriate priorities and virtues: she sees herself primarily in relation to her future husband, she is industrious enough to initiate and participate in a trip to do the washing, and she is sufficiently modest in front of her father.

Later, as Nausicaa and her friends wait for the laundry to dry by the riverside, a bedraggled Odysseus, concealing his genitals with an olive branch, approaches as diplomatically as he is able and asks the princess for assistance. While the other girls scatter in fear at his approach, Nausicaa stands firm, as Athena has put courage in her heart (6.138-40).[77] Nausicaa receives her suppliant with grace and hospitality beyond her years, but once he is cleaned up, Nausicaa begins to view Odysseus as a potential mate (6.242-45). After offering him food and drink, Nausicaa instructs Odysseus on how to proceed to her father's house: as long as they are outside the city, he should follow her cart, but once they come to a populated area, he should stay behind until she has enough time to reach her father's house in order to avoid provoking gossip or speculation (6.274-84):

> μάλα δ' εἰσὶν ὑπερφίαλοι κατὰ δῆμον·
> καί νύ τις ὧδ' εἴπῃσι κακώτερος ἀντιβολήσας·
> 'τίς δ' ὅδε Ναυσικάᾳ ἕπεται καλός τε μέγας τε
> ξεῖνος; ποῦ δέ μιν εὗρε; πόσις νύ οἱ ἔσσεται αὐτῇ.
> ...βέλτερον, εἰ καὐτή περ ἐποιχομένη πόσιν εὗρεν
> ἄλλοθεν· ἦ γὰρ τούσδε γ' ἀτιμάζει κατὰ δῆμον
> Φαίηκας, τοί μιν μνῶνται πολέες τε καὶ ἐσθλοί.'
>
> "There are some exceedingly arrogant men in this land,

> And now someone of the worse sort, meeting us, might say,
> 'Who is this handsome and well-built stranger following
> Behind Nausicaa? Where did she find him?
> Where'd she pick him up? He will be her husband now.
> ...It's better, if she, going about, found a husband
> From somewhere else; for she scorns the local Phaeacians
> Though many fine men indeed court her.'"

Nausicaa's concern for avoiding gossip suggests an appropriate amount of maidenly modesty, while her implication that she is both aggressively pursued by the best of the Phaeacian youth and that she considers herself above them constitutes a subtle boast clearly designed to signal to Odysseus that he too should consider her as a potential bride. Nausicaa thus exploits the latitude of the Topography of Shame to praise Odysseus' appearance, to boast about her suitors (and thus imply her own beauty), and to claim modesty simultaneously.

Although Nausicaa fades into the background once Odysseus comes under the protection of her parents, the question of the appropriateness of her behavior arises when her mother recognizes the clothes her daughter has given him. The discussion that ensues illustrates the problems that arise when two expectations for virtuous behavior come into conflict: Arete's initial recognition of the clothes Odysseus wears (7.233-35) causes some alarm, since any unsupervised contact between an unmarried girl and an adult male might call the girl's sexual integrity into question. Odysseus' explanation alleviates this anxiety, but Nausicaa's father Alcinous expresses dismay that his daughter has not acted properly in neglecting to escort her suppliant to his home (7.298-301). Odysseus, recognizing that Nausicaa was caught between respecting the laws of *xenia* and safeguarding her reputation for modesty, defends her by explaining that it was he himself who had suggested that he follow behind rather than accompany Nausicaa into the city (7.302-07).

While both proper treatment of suppliants and preserving feminine virtue are fundamental priorities in the Greek world, Nausicaa clearly views the latter as a higher priority, and the concern with which her mother questions Odysseus about his clothes suggests that Nausicaa made the appropriate choice. Odysseus' discretion here, moreover, mirrors Alcinous' earlier respect for Nausicaa's modesty in hiding her true motivation for the laundry outing. In both cases, the initiative and planning belong to the female, but the conflicting demands of the Topography of Shame require that credit be ceded to the male, a dynamic that foreshadows the interactions between Odysseus and Penelope in the second half of this epic.

Like the other women we have seen, Nausicaa's behavior and attitudes conform to the Topography of Shame: her attention to domestic concerns, her behavior with her father, and her interactions with Odysseus all relate to the important objective of maintaining the feminine virtues of industry, desirability, and modesty with an eye to attracting a worthy husband. In the hopes of securing this fundamental attachment with a male so important for women in the ancient world, she asserts herself with a subtle, calculated boast. In this way, Nausicaa plays with and even bends the rules intelligently – and with appropriate deniability – in order to achieve her goals. While Nausicaa is fairly typical in this sense, in one important way she is distinct from ordinary mortal women: as Nausicaa takes her leave of Odysseus, she bids him χαῖρε, ξεῖν', ἵνα καί ποτ' ἐὼν ἐν πατρίδι γαίῃ/ μνήσῃ ἐμεῦ, ὅτι μοι πρώτῃ ζωάγρι' ὀφέλλεις ("Farewell, stranger, so that even in your native land, you might remember me, since you owe me first for saving your life": 8.461-62). Like Helen, who also occupies a special place in the hierarchy of women, Nausicaa suggests a concern with individual remembrance that is more typical of

Greek men than it is of women, who were expected to view their importance solely in relation to their male connections. The examples of Helen and Nausicaa, however, raise the possibility of a sort of feminine power obtained through careful and skilled manipulation of these male connections, a power we will later see most fully and successfully exercised in the case of Penelope.

Even more than her daughter, the Phaeacian queen Arete is singled out as different – and indeed more powerful – than ordinary mortal women. Nausicaa describes her to Odysseus as exerting particular authority among the Phaeacians when she instructs him on how to approach her parents: τὸν παραμειψάμενος μητρὸς περὶ γούνασι χεῖρας/ βάλλειν ἡμετέρης, ἵνα νόστιμον ἦμαρ ἴδηαι/ χαίρων καρπαλίμως, εἰ καὶ μάλα τηλόθεν ἐσσί./ εἴ κέν τοι κείνη γε φίλα φρονέῃσ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ,/ ἐλπωρή τοι ἔπειτα φίλους τ' ἰδέειν καὶ ἱκέσθαι/ οἶκον ἐυκτίμενον καὶ σὴν ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν ("Passing [my father] by, throw your arms around my mother's knees, so that you, rejoicing, might see your homecoming day quickly, even if you are from a far-off land. For if she is well-disposed to you in her heart, then there is hope that you will see your loved ones and return to your well-built home and your dear fatherland": 6.310-15). Nausicaa's description includes nonverbal indicators which underscore both Arete's virtue and her esteemed position[78]: ἡ δ' ἧσται ἐπ' ἐσχάρῃ ἐν πυρὸς αὐγῇ,/ ἠλάκατα στρωφῶσ' ἁλιπόρφυρα, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι,/ κίονι κεκλιμένη· δμωαὶ δέ οἱ εἴατ' ὄπισθεν ("She'll be seated by the hearth in the light of the fire, spinning sea-purple wool, a wonder to look upon, leaning on a pillar; and her maidservants are working behind her": 6.305-07). Scholars have long recognized the hearth as a symbol of both the "fixed center of family life…[and of] unchanging permanence,"[79] while the woman's place by

the pillar, which represents the *axis mundi*, represents "the entire world order."[80] Arete is thereby positioned as central to the *oikos*. Arete's virtue is further emphasized by her feminine entourage, as she is surrounded and protected by her maidservants, while her association with spinning rather than weaving, as we have noted, suggests the stability of her domestic situation.[81] Athena, disguised as a young child who offers Odysseus guidance to the palace, confirms Nausicaa's characterization by reiterating her advice and emphasizing the unusual esteem in which Arete is held (7.66-77):

> ...τὴν δ' Ἀλκίνοος ποιήσατ' ἄκοιτιν,
> καί μιν ἔτισ', ὡς οὔ τις ἐπὶ χθονὶ τίεται ἄλλη,
> ὅσσαι νῦν γε γυναῖκες ὑπ' ἀνδράσιν οἶκον ἔχουσιν.
> ὣς κείνη περὶ κῆρι τετίμηταί τε καὶ ἔστιν
> ἔκ τε φίλων παίδων ἔκ τ' αὐτοῦ Ἀλκινόοιο
> καὶ λαῶν, οἵ μίν ῥα θεὸν ὣς εἰσορόωντες
> δειδέχαται μύθοισιν, ὅτε στείχῃσ' ἀνὰ ἄστυ.
> οὐ μὲν γάρ τι νόου γε καὶ αὐτὴ δεύεται ἐσθλοῦ·
> ᾗσι τ' εὐ φρονέῃσι καὶ ἀνδράσι νείκεα λύει.
> εἴ κέν τοι κείνη γε φίλα φρονέῃσ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ,
> ἐλπωρή τοι ἔπειτα φίλους τ' ἰδέειν καὶ ἱκέσθαι
> οἶκον ἐς ὑψόροφον καὶ σὴν ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν."
>
> "...Alcinous made [Arete] his wife,
> And honors her as no other woman on earth is honored,
> Of whichever women now keep house for their husbands.
> Thus she was honored in the heart and still is yet,
> By her dear children, and by Alcinous himself,
> And by the people, who look on her just like a goddess,
> And welcome her with words whenever she goes through the city.
> For she is lacking nothing of a sound mind,
> And she dissolves quarrels even among men with her judgment.
> For if she is well-disposed to you in her heart,
> Then there is hope that you will see your loved ones
> And return to your well-built home and your dear fatherland."

The elevated position Arete apparently holds seems unusual in a culture where she would normally be subordinate to her husband not only on the basis of gender, but also through her kinship connection, since, as Athena has explained, Arete is not just Alcinous' wife, but also his niece (7.54-68). Indeed, despite the repeated tributes to her power, the scene

that follows offers up contradictory messages. Odysseus does as he has been told and supplicates Arete rather than Alcinous, but when the Phaeacians all react to Odysseus' appearance with stunned silence, the elder who speaks up first addresses Alcinous, not Arete, urging him to accept the suppliant. Arete, in fact, does not speak at all until her husband has properly welcomed Odysseus and provided him with both food and drink. When she does speak, however, Arete demonstrates the exceptional understanding with which Athena had credited her: ἔγνω γὰρ φᾶρός τε χιτῶνά τε εἵματ' ἰδοῦσα/ καλά, τά ῥ' αὐτὴ τεῦξε σὺν ἀμφιπόλοισι γυναιξί·/ καί μιν φωνήσασ' ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα·/ "ξεῖνε, τὸ μέν σε πρῶτον ἐγὼν εἰρήσομαι αὐτή·/ τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν; τίς τοι τάδε εἵματ' ἔδωκεν; ("She recognized the lovely clothes, both the mantle and the tunic upon seeing them, for she herself had made these with her serving-women, and she addressed him, speaking winged words: 'Stranger, I myself will ask you this first: who are you, and where do you come from among men? And, indeed, who gave you these clothes?'": 7.234-38). Despite her initial deference to her husband, like Helen, Arete demonstrates an astute ability to recognize significant details her husband has missed,[82] and like Helen, she asserts herself in the masculine realm of the dining hall by beating her husband to the punch and asking their guest to reveal his identity.

The contradictory indications about the precise nature of Arete's honored position continue throughout Odysseus' stay with the Phaeacians. It is Alcinous, for instance, who directs the next day's activities, while Arete remains virtually invisible until her husband instructs her to provide their guest with a chest in which to keep his gifts and to prepare him a bath, requests with which she obligingly complies; on the other hand, Arete again demonstrates her characteristic shrewdness when she advises Odysseus to secure the lid of the chest in which she has placed his gifts with a knot to safeguard against thieves

(8.443-45), a suggestion which our wily and ever-suspicious Odysseus readily acts upon. Later, when Odysseus interrupts the lengthy tale of his adventures to suggest that it is time for bed, Arete takes the initiative, encouraging him to continue by ordering the Phaeacians who are present to send for gifts. Yet Arete's assertiveness here is undercut by the elder Echeneus, who seconds her suggestion, but qualifies it, saying, Ἀλκινόου δ' ἐκ τοῦδ' ἔχεται ἔργον τε ἔπος τε ("But both deed and word depend on Alcinous": 11.346), a point which Alcinous reiterates and underscores, when he says, τοῦτο μὲν οὕτω δὴ ἔσται ἔπος, αἴ κεν ἐγώ γε/ ζωὸς Φαιήκεσσι φιληρέτμοισιν ἀνάσσω/...πομπὴ δ' ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει/ πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ' ἐμοί· τοῦ γὰρ κράτος ἔστ' ἐνὶ δήμῳ ("Indeed, this word will thus be [mine], if I, living, am lord over the oar-loving Phaeacians... his conduct will be a concern of all men, but most of all for me, since power in the land is mine": 11.348-53).[83]

Echeneus' deflection of Arete's initial proposal suggests that the reality is that Alcinous holds supreme authority in Phaeacia, while any power Arete wields is dependent on him, leaving her role more or less "limited to intercession."[84] The responses of both Echeneus and Alcinous in effect also act as reminders to Arete that judging and regulating such performances in the "public" context of the banquet is a male prerogative, and that Arete's intervention is "not quite acceptable."[85] At the same time, the fact that Alcinous does follow through on Arete's suggestion indicates that she does exert some influence with her husband, as does her mere presence in the hall during the banquet and exchange of stories.[86] As with Helen and her matrilocal marriage, Arete's unusual authority in relation to her husband and her participation in social activities more usually restricted to males may stem in part from the endogamous nature of Phaeacian society,

where there would be "...less anxiety about [women's] allegiance and less effort necessary for commandeering their productivity for the advantage of the house."[87]

In addition, Lillian Doherty, citing Odysseus' eventual report of his adventures to his wife Penelope as an "audience of one" in Book 23 as a parallel, shows that Odysseus pays Arete particular respect when he makes an explicit point of including her in the audience of his own narrative by concentrating in the first half of the *Nekuia* on the "catalog of heroines."[88] Because of the poem's conscious identification between its hero (Odysseus) and its narrator ("Homer"), Doherty sees Odysseus' inclusion of females in the epic's internal audiences as Homer's attempt to break a norm by including women in his own implied audience as well,[89] a transgression that accords well with the poet's narrative agenda not only to present, but also to question ideological gender norms. At the same time, his use of Arete and Penelope in particular is telling, in that it characterizes his ideal female listener as, like both of these women, "intelligent, chaste (i.e. faithful to a husband), and allied with the hero of the poem"; thus, in effect, the poet "elicits [his female listener's] assent to a model of female behavior."[90] This dynamic, then, like the responses of Echeneus and Alcinous, works to reinscribe the limits of proper female conduct[91] in much the same way that the broader poem first challenges and then ultimately affirms expectations for women's behavior and the tenets of the Topography of Shame. In addition, as Wohl has noted, the "catalog of heroines" Odysseus includes for Arete's benefit "are not actually heroines at all but rather the daughters, wives, mothers, or rape victims of heroes," a survey which "leaves no doubt as to the role [women] must play in [the heroic and cosmic] order."[92]

Thus, despite Nausicaa and Athena's testimonials, Arete's purported "power" is far from unproblematic. While these testimonials can be viewed as "boasts" on her behalf, Arete herself gives little indication of her self-image through either self-deprecation or boasting, perhaps because, in her secure position as Alcinous' wife, no erotic crisis or other event that would disrupt her position in relation to him presents itself. Despite this security and the unusual amount of power she exerts, Arete does demonstrate the typical feminine virtues indicated by the Topography of Shame: she is industrious, as her constant spinning and her association with the products of her weaving suggests; she is concerned with feminine modesty, as she indicates through her concern for her daughter's propriety; and she takes a back seat to her husband. Thus, Arete ultimately positions herself within the proper bounds of womanly behavior, asserting herself only when promoting or defending the interests of her male kin.

The Serving Women

While Helen, as daughter of Zeus, and Nausicaa and Arete, as inhabitants of a society "in between" the fantasy worlds of Books 9-12 and the human realms of Ithaca and the mainland,[93] all occupy a somewhat liminal position between divine and mortal, the serving women who form an important part of Odysseus' household are all too securely in the mortal realm. Although women like Eurycleia, Eurynome, and Melantho play somewhat limited roles, they are important not only in terms of plot, but also in that they give us rare access to the voices of women in a disenfranchised position, and therefore offer a good opportunity to begin to explore how the perspectives of non-elite women in the Greek world are represented through the lens of epic.

The maidservants in Odysseus' household provide an interesting subject for an analysis of this sort in particular because they are explicitly judged as "good" or "bad" in accordance with how well their actions and attitudes work to support their absent master, who in the case of slaves should represent their most significant male connection.[94] The housekeeper Eurynome, for instance, after hearing that a stranger in her master's household (in fact Odysseus himself) has been abused, comments to Penelope, εἰ γὰρ ἐπ' ἀρῇσιν τέλος ἡμετέρῃσι γένοιτο·/ οὐκ ἄν τις τούτων γε ἐΰθρονον Ἠῶ ἵκοιτο ("If only there might be some fulfillment to our prayers, not one of these men would live to meet well-throned Dawn": 17.496-97). Eurynome here demonstrates her virtue by equating her wishes with those of the *oikos*, and thus with Odysseus himself. In her only other short speech, Eurynome further suggests her allegiance to the household after Penelope tells her that she wants to descend into the hall and exhort her son to avoid the company of the suitors, ...ὑπερφιάλοισιν.../ οἵ τ' εὖ μὲν βάζουσι, κακῶς δ' ὄπιθεν φρονέουσι ("insolent [men], who on the one hand speak well, but on the other, they intend evil things in the future": 18.167-68). Eurynome heartily agrees with her impulse, but advises her in addition to attend first to her appearance, reminding her that ἤδη μὲν γάρ τοι παῖς τηλίκος, ὃν σὺ μάλιστα/ ἠρῶ ἀθανάτοισι γενειήσαντα ἰδέσθαι ("already your son is of such an age, [and] most of all you asked the immortal gods to see him a bearded man": 18.175-76). While Eurynome's association of Penelope's beauty with Telemachus' coming-of-age may initially seem odd, it illustrates the close connection between a woman's virtue – including her physical beauty – and the honor that accrues to her closest male kin, who, with Odysseus absent, is her son. Thus, not only does Eurynome align herself with Odysseus' household and against the suitors by encouraging Penelope to ask her son to distance himself from them, she also looks out for

the reputation of her mistress, which, as she implies, reflects directly on the honor of the male head of the household.

The maid Eurycleia is another example of a maidservant who is judged as virtuous because she aligns her interests with those of the *oikos*. For example, in Book 2 when Telemachus orders her to help him prepare for his journey to the mainland, Eurycleia is distraught at his plan, and expresses her concern that he will die abroad like his father or that the suitors will plot his demise while he is gone (2.367-71). Despite her concern for Telemachus' safety, however, Eurycleia defers to Telemachus' wishes, preparing provisions for his journey and swearing not to tell Penelope of his departure, as Telemachus has asked. Eurycleia from the start, therefore, demonstrates her allegiance to and concern for the well-being of the male head of the household, but at the same time, she bows to his judgment despite her own reservations. She is, moreover, as good as her word, only admitting her knowledge after Penelope has heard elsewhere of Telemachus' departure. At this point, Eurycleia demonstrates the extent of her allegiance to the male head of the household when she suggests the risk she took in keeping the information from her mistress: νύμφα φίλη, σὺ μὲν ἄρ με κατάκτανε νηλέι χαλκῷ/ ἤ ἔα ἐν μεγάρῳ· μῦθον δέ τοι οὐκ ἐπικεύσω./ ᾔδε' ἐγὼ τάδε πάντα ("Dear lady, kill me with pitiless bronze, or let me be in the hall: I will not hide the story from you. I knew all these things": 4.743-45). Because of her unquestioned loyalty, Eurycleia is repeatedly singled out, as she was here, as a special helper by both Telemachus and Odysseus. In Book 19, for example, Telemachus trusts her to shut up the other maidservants inside their rooms while he puts away the weapons left out in the hall (19.14-20). Later, he looks to Eurycleia for an accurate report of how his mother had treated the beggar:

Eurycleia responds in defense of Penelope, reporting that she had done everything that was proper to make her guest comfortable (20.128-43), thereby reassuring him that her mistress had maintained the household respect for the laws of *xenia*. She herself then commences to safeguard this same principle, ordering the maidservants to prepare the hall for the arrival of the suitors (20.147-56). Furthermore, it is Eurycleia that Odysseus sends to fetch Penelope at the crucial moment when he can at last reveal his identity openly (22.480-84); Eurycleia's evident delight in this task further demonstrates her fidelity: γρηὺς δ' εἰς ὑπερῷ' ἀνεβήσετο καγχαλόωσα,/ δεσποίνῃ ἐρέουσα φίλον πόσιν ἔνδον ἐόντα·/ γούνατα δ' ἐρρώσαντο, πόδες δ' ὑπερικταίνοντο ("The old woman, laughing, went into the upper chamber to tell her mistress that her dear husband was at home. Her knees were firm, and her feet were lifted high": 23.1-3). Most importantly, perhaps, Odysseus himself in the end entrusts Eurycleia with the job of judging which of the serving women are guilty, and which are innocent, giving her indirect power over life and death (22.417-25). Eurycleia's eagerness to condemn the straying maidservants, moreover, suggests not only her fidelity to Odysseus, but also another interesting facet of the Topography of Shame: while, as we have seen, women frequently internalize the ideology of shame and blame that holds them accountable even for unwanted sexual advances,[95] they also demonstrate a tendency to project this blame onto others as a means of protecting themselves against their own self-doubts: thus, at the expense of other women, they are able to "[shore] up belief in the robustness of their own self-repect, self-confidence, and purity."[96] Eurycleia demonstrates this phenomenon by her quick and decisive condemnation, which, in effect, throws her own loyalty into sharper relief.

Eurycleia makes her fidelity to Odysseus in particular explicit in Book 19, when, unaware that she is in fact in her master's presence, she apostrophizes the presumed-absent Odysseus: ὤ μοι ἐγὼ σέο, τέκνον, ἀμήχανος· ἦ σε περὶ Ζεὺς/ ἀνθρώπων ἤχθηρε θεουδέα θυμὸν ἔχοντα./ ...νῦν δέ τοι οἴῳ πάμπαν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ ("Alas, child, I am helpless where you are concerned. Truly Zeus hated you above other men, although you had a god-fearing heart... Now from you alone he has taken away the homecoming day altogether": 19.363-69). Eurycleia's distress at Odysseus' continuing absence sets the stage for the scene that follows: washing the beggar's feet, she recognizes the scar that her master had received in a boar hunt as a youth, and τὴν δ' ἅμα χάρμα καὶ ἄλγος ἕλε φρένα, τὼ δέ οἱ ὄσσε/ δακρυόφι πλῆσθεν, θαλερὴ δέ οἱ ἔσχετο φωνή./ ἁψαμένη δὲ γενείου Ὀδυσσῆα προσέειπεν·/ "ἦ μάλ' Ὀδυσσεύς ἐσσι, φίλον τέκος· οὐδέ σ' ἐγώ γε/ πρὶν ἔγνων, πρὶν πάντα ἄνακτ' ἐμὸν ἀμφαφάασθαι ("joy and pain seized her heart at once, and her two eyes filled with tears, and her clear voice was held within her. Grasping his beard, she addressed Odysseus: 'Truly, you are Odysseus, dear child! I did not know you before, until I touched my master all over'": 19.471-75). This clearly spontaneous and intuitive response suggests that Eurycleia's words are spoken from the heart, without guile or calculation, confirming that her earlier distress when speaking of his absence was genuine, and doubtlessly reassuring Odysseus that this old woman in particular considers her interests at one with his own.

Despite her by now unquestionable loyalty and trustworthiness, however, when Eurycleia instinctively turns to Penelope to share the good news, Odysseus grabs her by the throat and threatens her: μαῖα, τίη μ' ἐθέλεις ὀλέσαι; ...ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ ἐφράσθης καί τοι θεὸς ἔμβαλε θυμῷ,/ σίγα, μή τίς τ' ἄλλος ἐνὶ μεγάροισι πύθηται./ ὧδε γὰρ

ἐξερέω, καὶ μὴν τετελεσμένον ἔσται·/ εἴ χ' ὑπ' ἐμοί γε θεὸς δαμάσῃ μνηστῆρας ἀγαυούς,/ οὐδὲ τροφοῦ οὔσης σεῦ ἀφέξομαι, ὁππότ' ἂν ἄλλας/ δμῳὰς ἐν μεγάροισιν ἐμοῖς κτείνωμι γυναῖκας ("Nurse, why do you want to destroy me? ... But now since you have perceived [my identity], and a god threw it into your heart, be quiet, lest someone else in the palace learn of it. For I will tell you this, and, indeed, it will be done: if a god should subdue the admiring suitors by force of my arm, I will not spare you, even though you are my nurse, whenever I kill the other maidservants in my halls": 19.482-90). Eurycleia's instinct to share the information she has acquired with Penelope and Odysseus' violent gesture and threat towards even this most loyal of servants demonstrates once again that women were seen as inherently weak and given to verbal leakage[97]; only through male control – with the use of force if need be – were women able to maintain a virtuous disposition and be a help to men rather than a danger.

At the same time, as we have noted, women's communication networks can be useful when properly channeled, as when Odysseus uses Eurycleia's report to determine which of the maidservants have remained loyal and which have betrayed him. A similar, self-contradictory principle is at play in modern Mediterranean contexts, where village societies view women's gossip as a negative and destructive activity; at the same time, anthropologists have demonstrated that such gossip performs essential functions, like solidifying friendships between women, disseminating knowledge about others, and, most significantly for our purposes, collecting information which may be crucial to a family's social or economic welfare to pass on to their husbands.[98] Odysseus' violent gesture and threat, in this case, work to assert proper male control over female discourse. Eurycleia's appropriate realignment with the male agenda is indicated by her relatively unperturbed response: τέκνον ἐμόν, ποῖόν σε ἔπος φύγεν ἕρκος ὀδόντων;/ οἶσθα

μὲν οἷον ἐμὸν μένος ἔμπεδον οὐδ' ἐπιεικτόν,/ ἕξω δ' ὡς ὅτε τις στερεὴ λίθος ἠὲ σίδηρος ("My child, what sort of speech has fled the wall of your teeth? You know that such is my strength, steadfast and unyielding, but I shall hold as firm as stone or iron": 19.492-94). Eurycleia's mild boast here once again accords well with the Topography of Shame: unwavering in her loyalty to her master, she proudly proclaims the fortitude and restraint that will help him further his own goals and interests.

Eurycleia's loyalty to Odysseus, her tendency to boast when her sentiments align with his interests, and her feminine inclination to verbal incontinence are all once again illustrated in Book 22 after Odysseus summons her to the scene of the slaughter of the unwelcome suitors. When she looks upon the gruesome scene, Eurycleia ἴθυσέν ῥ' ὀλολύξαι ("began to cry out to the gods in a loud voice": 22.408), but Odysseus, understanding that the slaughter of the suitors will have created a political problem – the anger of their families – is concerned with keeping things quiet, and thus he quickly κατέρυκε καὶ ἔσχεθεν ἱεμένην περ,/ καί μιν φωνήσας ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα·/ "ἐν θυμῷ, γρηῦ, χαῖρε καὶ ἴσχεο μηδ' ὀλόλυζε· οὐχ ὁσίη κταμένοισιν ἐπ' ἀνδράσιν εὐχετάασθαι ("restrained her and held her in check, though she was eager, and speaking winged words, he addressed her: 'Rejoice in your heart, but contain yourself and do not cry out loud: it is not holy to gloat over dead men'": 22.409-12).[99] Eurycleia here illustrates the Topography of Shame in that she sees Odysseus' triumph as indistinguishable from her own. At the same time, the juxtaposition between Odysseus' restraint and Eurycleia's impulsiveness highlights her inherent feminine weakness,[100] and demonstrates once again the idea that only when under male control can feminine virtue be properly channeled.[101]

In contrast to the loyalty of both Eurynome and Eurycleia, the maid Melantho repeatedly shows that her interests run counter to those of the *oikos*. For instance, when the beggar offers her advice geared towards supporting and protecting their mistress, Melantho not only disregards it, but openly mocks him as well (18.327-36), demonstrating a lack of respect both for her mistress and for the treatment of guests in her master's household. Moreover, with this interchange, Homer illustrates the connection the ancient Greeks saw between more generalized feminine virtue and sexual chastity when he notes that τὴν Δολίος μὲν ἔτικτε, κόμισσε δὲ Πηνελόπεια,/ παῖδα δὲ ὣς ἀτίταλλε, δίδου δ' ἄρ' ἀθύρματα θυμῷ·/ ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὣς ἔχε πένθος ἐνὶ φρεσὶ Πηνελοπείης,/ ἀλλ' ἥ γ' Εὐρυμάχῳ μισγέσκετο καὶ φιλέεσκεν ("Dolius sired [Melantho], but Penelope nurtured her, and raised her just as her own child, and gave her playthings delightful to her heart; but still, she did not hold any sorrow in her heart on Penelope's behalf, but instead she slept with Eurymachus and loved him": 18.322-25). The maidservants thus are divided between those who are virtuous and loyal to Odysseus and his household, and those whose lack of virtue and fidelity is demonstrated not only verbally, but also through what is framed as sexual betrayal: their "leaky" mouths which compromise the effective management of information in the house correspond in this way to their "leaky" bodies, with their compromised sexual integrity. This contrast between the "good" maidservants that the "bad" ones is further suggested by their names: both Eurynome and Eurycleia contain the prefix εὐ-, suggesting goodness, rightness, and guiltlessness, whereas the name Melantho (as well as that of Melanthius, the "evil" goatherd) is related to μελᾶς, a word meaning black, gloomy, or murky, while her father Dolius' name means "tricky" or "treacherous."

Melantho again demonstrates her lack of fidelity to the household in Book 19, where she lashes out at the beggar, telling him to ἔξελθε θύραζε, τάλαν, καὶ δαιτὸς ὄνησο·/ ἢ τάχα καὶ δαλῷ βεβλημένος εἶσθα θύραζε ("Get out of here, wretch, and be happy with your feast: or forthwith, you'll be out, having been struck by a torch": 19.68-69). Once again, Melantho disregards the household's integrity by abusing a guest and disregarding the laws of *xenia*. That this runs counter to the interests of the household is confirmed by Penelope, who, having overheard Melantho's comments, takes her to task: πάντως, θαρσαλέη, κύον ἀδεές, οὔ τί με λήθεις/ ἔρδουσα μέγα ἔργον, ὃ σῇ κεφαλῇ ἀναμάξεις·/ πάντα γὰρ εὖ ᾔδησθ', ἐπεὶ ἐξ ἐμεῦ ἔκλυες αὐτῆς/ ὡς τὸν ξεῖνον ἔμελλον ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἐμοῖσιν/ ἀμφὶ πόσει εἴρεσθαι, ἐπεὶ πυκινῶς ἀκάχημαι ("Always, you bold and fearless bitch, you do not escape my notice doing some outrageous deed, and you will wipe it off on your own head: you knew all these things well, since you heard it from me myself, that I intended to question the stranger about my husband in my halls, since I am grieving continuously": 19.91-95).[102] Penelope's response, moreover, suggests that Melantho's transgression goes farther than her disregard of *xenia*: even worse, her attempts to get rid of the beggar are at cross-purposes with her mistress' desire to obtain information about Odysseus, so that her abuse of the guest here demonstrates explicit neglect of her master's interests. Penelope's presumed allusion to the role Melantho has earlier played in exposing her shroud-trick[103] reinforces the suggestion of Melantho's indifference, since Penelope had been using this trick as means of holding the suitors off and, again, protecting Odysseus' own interests. Importantly, this interchange immediately precedes Penelope's interview with the beggar, and so Melantho's presence and attitude remind us of the dangers of female

communication networks, alerting us to the fact that Penelope is aware that the conversation which will follow may be overheard by unfriendly ears.[104]

While Melantho is the only maidservant-gone-bad who is given a name and a voice, she serves as a representative, as is made clear by the fact that these women always appear in a group: in Book 19, for instance, Melantho appears among the δμῳαὶ λευκώλενοι ("white-armed maidservants": 19.60) who work to clean up the hall after the suitors' feast. Elsewhere, the solidarity of the group is indicated through their mutual laughter. In Book 18, as we have seen, Melantho abuses the beggar in response to his suggestion that they attend to the needs of Penelope; although Melantho is the only one to respond with "ugly words," after Odysseus finishes speaking, αἱ δ' ἐγέλασσαν, ἐς ἀλλήλας δὲ ἴδοντο ("they [all] laughed, and they looked at each other": 18.320). In addition to suggesting uniformity of attitude, the maidservants' laughter here demonstrates a lack of self-restraint and *sophrosyne*, and is therefore emblematic of both their "faithlessness to the *oikos*" and their sexual promiscuity[105]; their nonchalant attitude, moreover, provides a sharp contrast with the tears of Penelope, who the poet repeatedly tells us κλαῖεν ἔπειτ' Ὀδυσῆα φίλον πόσιν ("wept for her dear husband Odysseus": i.e. at 1.363, 16.450, 19.603, 21.356), an opposition which underscores both the infidelity of the former and the steadfast devotion of the latter.[106] This contrast is brought out once again at the beginning of Book 20, when a group of women ἐκ μεγάροιο.../ ἤισαν, αἳ μνηστῆρσιν ἐμισγέσκοντο πάρος περ,/ ἀλλήλῃσι γέλω τε καὶ εὐφροσύνην παρέχουσαι ("came out of the hall, the ones who before were sleeping with the suitors, furnishing merriment to each other with laughter": 20.6-8). While Melantho is not explicitly named here, as one of the women identified as a lover of one of the suitors, she

is presumably part of the group. In this way, Melantho functions as the spokesperson for the sexually disloyal serving women, and her attitudes are taken to be representative of the group as a whole. This sort of "bunching up," which finds a parallel in the attitudes and behavior of Antinous and Eurymachus representing the mocking sentiments of the group of suitors as a whole, "reduces heroic stature,"[107] so that when taken together with gender, class, and position liabilities, the effect is to position these maidservants as the lowest of the low. Penelope's statement that her shroud-trick was betrayed by δμῳάς, κύνας οὐκ ἀλεγούσας ("my maidservants, those callous dogs": 19.154), and her implication that Melantho was among them (19.91-92), strengthens this characterization by once again associating the group with negative behaviors or attitudes and recognizing Melantho as the group's prime representative.

In contrast, the maidservants who remain loyal to Odysseus and his wife, such as Eurynome and Eurycleia, as noted above, more commonly appear and speak as individuals rather than being associated with a group.[108] An additional example can be found in Book 20 in the old grinding woman who, in response to Odysseus' request for a sign from Zeus, prays that the suitors will that day see their last feast. The narrator tells us, δώδεκα πᾶσαι ἐπερρώοντο γυναῖκες/ ἄλφιτα τεύχουσαι καὶ ἀλείατα, μυελὸν ἀνδρῶν./ αἱ μὲν ἄρ' ἄλλαι εὗδον, ἐπεὶ κατὰ πυρὸν ἄλεσσαν,/ ἡ δὲ μί' οὔπω παύετ', ἀφαυροτάτη δ' ἐτέτυκτο ("fully twelve women worked grinding barley and grain, sustenance of men. The others were sleeping, since they had ground their wheat, and [this woman] alone had not yet finished, being feeble, and so she worked on": 20.107-10). This woman's prayer clearly positions her as loyal to Odysseus and the *oikos*, and she is accordingly explicitly singled out as distinct from the larger group of

maidservants. This contrast works well with the ancient Greek prejudice that women as a "race" were weak and naturally predisposed to vice. As Nicole Loraux has shown, this is not a mere metaphor: authors from Hesiod and Semonides to Euripides saw women as Zeus' separate creation, a *genos gynaikon* that "threatens the unity of masculine society."[109] This race of women as a whole was thought to have only one function – to serve as a curse and "embodiment of man's misfortune"; yet the division of the *genos* into *phyla* ("tribes") offers some hope, in that these subdivisions represent varying degrees of this misfortune.[110] The small percentage of women who are able to manifest feminine virtues through male control and constraint are rare individuals that stand out from the group. In the *Odyssey*, therefore, the maidservants who remain under the influence of the household and its absent master are "marked" as individuals, while those that have succumbed to temptation are characterized as group which stands for the larger category of "women."

Melantho and the other maidservants who inappropriately transfer their primary allegiance from Odysseus to the suitors offer us a rare example of what happens to women who do not respect the contours of the Topography of Shame. After Odysseus succeeds in vanquishing the suitors, the loyal maidservant Eurycleia, as we have noted, identifies the twelve women who have dishonored his household. Odysseus orders his son to have these women first clean up the blood and gore left from the slaughter, and then to take them out into the courtyard and θεινέμεναι ξίφεσιν τανυήκεσιν, εἰς ὅ κε πασέων/ ψυχὰς ἐξαφέλησθε καὶ ἐκλελάθωντ' Ἀφροδίτης,/ τὴν ἄρ' ὑπὸ μνηστῆρσιν ἔχον μίσγοντό τε λάθρη ("strike them with the points of your swords, until the time when you have removed the souls of all of them, and they have forgotten Aphrodite, the one having hold of them when they slept secretly with the suitors":

22.443-45). Loraux has demonstrated that in the Greek world, death by the sword was associated with manliness and heroism. As such, by instructing Telemachus to dispatch the disloyal maidservants with the sword, Odysseus here suggests that their behavior removes them from the realm of the feminine. Telemachus, however, reconsiders once he has the women rounded up in the courtyard: μὴ μὲν δὴ καθαρῷ θανάτῳ ἀπὸ θυμὸν ἑλοίμην/ τάων, αἳ δὴ ἐμῇ κεφαλῇ κατ' ὀνείδεα χεῦαν/ μητέρι θ' ἡμετέρῃ παρά τε μνηστῆρσιν ἴαυον ("Indeed, I would not take away with a clean death the souls from these women, who slept with the suitors, pouring disgrace on my head, and on my mother's": 22.462-64). Instead, he hangs them, ὣς αἵ γ' ἑξείης κεφαλὰς ἔχον, ἀμφὶ δὲ πάσαις/ δειρῇσι βρόχοι ἦσαν, ὅπως οἴκτιστα θάνοιεν./ ἤσπαιρον δὲ πόδεσσι μίνυνθά περ οὔ τι μάλα δήν ("so that they had their heads in a row, and there were nooses on both sides for all their necks, that they might die most pitiably. Their feet convulsed for a while, but not for long": (22.470-72). Whereas death by sword was connected to men and heroic exploits, death by hanging was seen as a "woman's death," and associated with suicide, especially by women whose connection to their husbands or other male kin had been terminated.[111] While Odysseus' initial instinct to put these women to death by sword can be explained by his view of them as "de-feminized" by their lack of fidelity, Telemachus' shift to death by hanging stems from his desire to deprive the women of any association with masculine virtue and heroic achievement. Additionally, the particular association Loraux notes between hanging and the suicide of women who have lost their husbands or otherwise had their relationship with their closest male kin severed[112] is appropriate for these women, who had earlier abandoned their connection with Odysseus, and have now lost their sexual partners to death at Odysseus' hands.

Peter Gainsford has called attention to the fact that these women are "expendable...[T]he unfaithful maidservants are killed with no hint that their continued existence is of any importance to the existence or the stability of the *oikos*," and he relates this expendability to the position of these women "both inside and outside the *oikos*."[113] Like wives in patrilocal marriages, the loyalty of maidservants is viewed as inherently weak, but this tenuousness is reinforced in the case of the latter by their doubly disenfranchised position. Such women are especially susceptible to opportunities to transfer their allegiance from one dominant male to another, as the maidservants have done by shifting their devotion from Odysseus to the suitors. This strengthens the notion that class, in addition to gender, has some relevance to the Topography of Shame. For example, as Gainsford notes, the male servant Melanthius, like the female servants, occupies a similar liminal position in relation to the *oikos*, and his death too poses no real threat to the integrity of the household; on the other hand, the servants Eumaeus and Eurycleia, both of whom are former nobles, exhibit a "drawn-in-ness," whereby their allegiance is positioned as fully transferred from their natal households to Odysseus'.[114] While the fidelity of Penelope, Eurycleia, and Eumaeus, each of whom is disenfranchised by class and/or gender, comes under Odysseus' scrutiny, all three are ultimately depicted as hinging their identities around the patriarchal male and are thereby judged as "good"; the disloyal maidservants, on the other hand, are less able to remain steadfast and faithful because they are inferior not only by virtue of gender, but by virtue of birth and station as well, illustrating that the tenets of the Topography of Shame have class as well as gender applications.

Penelope

In looking at the figure of Penelope in the *Odyssey*, much attention has focused on exactly what Penelope knows and when she knows it. Homer himself leaves much room for interpretation on the question of Penelope's recognition of the beggar in her house as her husband, a question which is somewhat dependent on whether one subscribes to the ideas of the group of Homeric scholars called analysts, who "postulate several stages of composition, involving different authors who have imperfectly fused alternative versions of the traditional stories," or those of unitarians, who argue for unity of authorship of the Homeric epics in the forms in which they have come down to us, at least in terms of aesthetic effect.[115] As Marilyn Katz has pointed out, both the analyst and unitarian positions are rooted in an ideology that views characterization as consistent and coherent,[116] a view that is not entirely applicable to the compositional style of the Homeric epics.[117] As my concern is with the broader cultural ideologies the text embodies, a unitarian reading of this epic is more appropriate, since the audience of the *Odyssey* in the early Classical period would have been familiar with the epic in much the same form as it has come down to us, and likely they would have viewed it as an integrated whole. At the same time, I hope to avoid a reductive reading by offering an interpretation of the broad societal mechanisms that can account for Penelope's generalized behavior without attempting to force all her actions into a single consistent and oversimplified characterization.

Even in a unitarian reading, Homer leaves much room for ambiguity and interpretation on the point of Penelope's knowledge of the stranger's identity,[118] a point of paramount importance as it goes to "the degree of intelligence and of agency attributed

to [Penelope]."[119] On the one hand, scholars like Sheila Murnaghan argue for a straightforward appraisal, suggesting that lacking any direct word from her or explicit hint from the narrator, we should assume that Penelope is unaware of the beggar's identity and the potential repercussions of her actions,[120] a view which some have criticized as positioning Penelope as an ignorant victim.[121] Helene Foley, like Murnaghan, sees Penelope as unaware of the beggar's identity, but she argues that her decision to initiate the bow contest represents a socially responsible act of self-sacrifice in the interests of her son and as an act of obedience to Odysseus' earlier explicit instructions; in Foley's view, therefore, although Penelope remains ignorant of the broader situation, the "moral agency" she demonstrates gives her a more positive, active role in which she "makes a fully conscious and autonomous decision that entails rejecting hope and desire for obedience to social responsibilities."[122] The contrast between Murnaghan and Foley's readings illustrates the two primary paths that feminist criticism takes in analyzing texts: the critical path, which uses a closed oppositional reading to expose the ways in which women are constrained, and the utopian path, which uses an open affirmative reading in seeking to identify textual openings as opportunities for finding alternative interpretations that allow for women's empowerment.[123]

A stronger example of a utopian reading is found in the work of scholars following Philip Harsh, who argued that Penelope in fact knows that the stranger in her house is her husband and that she initiates a covert exchange of information with him, most clearly demonstrable in their interview in Book 19.[124] Mihoko Suzuki, for example, favors this view, suggesting that "Penelope suspects the identity of the beggar in Book 17, even before she has seen him."[125] Such "absolute" readings, however, have a

tendency to perhaps overstate the amount of power and knowledge Penelope is able to achieve: Suzuki goes so far as to suggest that Penelope consciously "render[s] the suitors – preoccupied with feasting and entertainment – unfit for martial activity upon Odysseus' return" and that her "effective rule over the suitors lays the groundwork for Odysseus' restoration of order."[126] In my view, such extreme interpretations minimize the social obstacles that women had to negotiate in the ancient world, and thus do little justice to the ability of real women to negotiate the impediments they faced to exerting real influence. Anne Amory offers a slightly more conservative slant, arguing that Penelope only recognizes Odysseus subconsciously[127]; her view, however, has been criticized for replicating the "stereotypical contrast between masculine rationality and feminine intuition."[128] Still others, such as John Winkler, use modern feminist anthropology to argue that Penelope suspects the stranger's identity and works in their interview to test her theory, but only confirms this information when she extracts the secret of the bed from him in Book 23.[129] I am here following Winkler's approach, assuming that Penelope suspects but does not know the stranger's identity, but bearing in mind that the audience, like Odysseus, suspects that she suspects, but does not know for certain her level of knowledge or ignorance. Indeed, like Nancy Felson-Rubin, I see the audience's uncertainty regarding Penelope's precise state of mind as a crucial part of Homer's intent.[130] The premise that Penelope suspects but does not know the beggar's identity is the approach that best replicates the uncertainty of the audience,[131] while offering a reading that can take arguments from the more extreme positions into account as well.[132] More importantly, the Topography of Shame requires an opaque and ambiguous position on Penelope's part, as it is just this sort of crisis in her relationship with Odysseus that

would prompt Penelope to behave as she does: to boast, to self-deprecate, to utilize verbally manipulative strategies, and to engineer strategic outcomes based on suspicions rather than knowledge.

In this reading, Penelope's actions are motivated by self-preservation. At the beginning of the *Odyssey*, Penelope is being wooed by a number of suitors, but she does not have secure information about whether or not her husband is dead. Thus, she "is placed in a paralyzing position where she can take no action that is without negative consequences"[133]: if she takes another man in marriage and her husband returns, she is ruined; however, if her husband is dead, it is much to her advantage to take another husband, since her position and her very security are entirely dependent on her connections with her male kin.[134] Wisely, therefore, Penelope delays. Rather than rejecting her suitors outright or choosing one of them, she puts them off with ploys like her infamous shroud-trick: after telling the suitors that she cannot contemplate a new marriage until she has fulfilled her obligation to weave a shroud for her aged father-in-law Laertes, she proceeds to weave it by day and unravel it by night. By this means, Penelope signals to the suitors her concern for the traditional patrilinear order while simultaneously keeping her options open, holding out hope to the suitors and holding them off at the same time. Pantelia, in addition, sees Penelope's weaving, like that of Helen, Calypso, Circe, and Arete, as an indication of the security or insecurity of her position in relation to men. Penelope is depicted as weaving while Odysseus' return is still an uncertainty and while Telemachus is still too young to assert himself as a man. Once Telemachus returns from his mainland adventure ready to assume his place as head of the household and Odysseus, although unbeknownst to her, has landed on Ithaca,

Penelope becomes associated with spinning rather than with weaving (17.96-97 and 18.313-16), symbolizing "the renewal of her marital stability and the transfer of power and responsibility from her hands back to Odysseus'."[135]

As Penelope's shroud-trick demonstrates, women in oppressed positions in this sort of honor-and-shame society are compelled to resort to "screens of nonverbal evasion, verbal ruses, and unfulfilled promises" in order to protect the household and its honor.[136] Yet because of her precarious position, and because a woman's interests in ancient Greece corresponded to those of whichever man served as her protector, Penelope can be viewed as playing both sides, a possibility Athena suggests in Book 15 when she appears to Telemachus in a dream: οἶσθα γὰρ οἷος θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσι γυναικός·/ κείνου βούλεται οἶκον ὀφέλλειν ὅς κεν ὀπυίῃ,/ παίδων δὲ προτέρων καὶ κουριδίοιο φίλοιο/ οὐκέτι μέμνηται τεθνηκότος οὐδὲ μεταλλᾷ ("For you know that such is the heart in the breast of a woman: she wants to enlarge the household of the one who weds her, and she no longer remembers her former children and her dear wedded husband, now departed, nor does she ask after him": 15.20-24). Even if she stays true to Odysseus and does not take another husband, Penelope's delay places Telemachus in a position of perpetual adolescence, since he "cannot woo his rightful wife until his patrimony is secured, and he cannot secure his tenuous patrimony until his mother steps aside"; thus, Penelope can be viewed as Telemachus' "ally, probably, against the suitors, but an 'enemy' of his own independent status in his marginal phase between child and man (age) and between unimportant boy and *aristos* male (gender)."[137] As such, Penelope is caught in a difficult position: to choose from among the suitors is a betrayal of her husband, while not choosing encroaches on her son's ability to achieve his rightful place as a man.

Penelope's words and actions, therefore, like Helen's can be seen as calculated attempts to negotiate a secure position for herself in an uncertain situation by allowing for alternative scenarios until she secures reliable information about her husband's situation. The precariousness of the line she walks is indicated by the fact that her intentions are interpreted in various ways by other characters in the epic: the suitor Antinous characterizes Penelope as a tease when confronting Telemachus in an assembly of the islands' elders (2.88-92); when Odysseus visits the underworld, his late mother Anticleia assures him that Penelope remains faithful (11.181-83), but Agamemnon soon thereafter, after expounding on the negative example provided by Clytemnestra, characterizes Penelope as a potential threat, and advises Odysseus to κρύβδην, μηδ' ἀναφανδά, φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν/ νῆα κατισχέμεναι· ἐπεὶ οὐκέτι πιστὰ γυναιξίν ("steer your ship into your own dear fatherland in secret, not openly: no longer is there any trusting in women": 11.455-56); despite her later characterization of Penelope as dangerous in the fickle nature she naturally possesses as a woman, Athena herself reassures Odysseus that although Penelope πάντας μέν ῥ' ἔλπει καὶ ὑπίσχεται ἀνδρὶ ἑκάστῳ,/ ἀγγελίας προϊεῖσα, νόος δέ οἱ ἄλλα μενοινᾷ ("gives hope to all, and makes promises to each man, sending then messages, her mind contemplates other things": 13.380-81); at the end of Book 15, Telemachus acknowledges Penelope's modesty when he tells the seer Theoclymenos that Penelope does not appear often, but weaves on a loom in her upper chamber (15.514-17); yet at the same time, he earlier called her chastity into question when he told Athena-as-Mentes, μήτηρ μέν τέ μέ φησι τοῦ ἔμμεναι, αὐτὰρ ἐγώ γε/ οὐκ οἶδ'· οὐ γάρ πώ τις ἑὸν γόνον αὐτὸς ἀνέγνω ("My mother says that I am [Odysseus' son], but I myself don't know: for never yet has

anyone himself been certain of his own begetting": 1.215-16); and Eumaeus, on the other hand, confirms for the benefit of both Telemachus and of Odysseus, then disguised as the beggar, that Penelope still waits for her husband to return (16.37-39).[138] That Homer encourages a similar uncertainty in the audience is illustrated by repeated comparisons between Penelope and *both* Artemis, goddess of chastity, and Aphrodite, goddess of sexual love (i.e. 17.37 and 19.54).[139]

In fact, all these views of Penelope are accurate. Once again, the Topography of Shame requires this sort of ambiguity, as it is Penelope's very marginality that allows her to walk the line between being a help to her husband and a threat to him. Women, in other words, do have a role to play in managing contact and conflict between those in the *oikos* and those outside of it, especially through information management, but in order to maintain a virtuous image, they must appear *not* to play such a role. If they play their part too openly, blame ensues; yet if they cannot or do not play it at all, they become dangerous. Penelope's frequent weeping is a case in point: while it may indicate genuine feelings of grief and helplessness, it is also a "theatrical" way for Penelope to signal fidelity to her husband and the internal conflict that prevents her from moving on and choosing a suitor. Thus, Penelope capitalizes on societal prejudices about feminine weakness in order to further her own agenda.

Along these lines, Penelope exhibits throughout the *Odyssey* a strategy where she maintains allegiance and fidelity to her husband while at the same time working to keep the suitors interested in order to keep them in reserve in the event that she learns of Odysseus' death.[140] This strategy is emphasized from Penelope's first appearance in Book 1, which is preceded by the first reference to Clytemnestra, whose infidelity proved

fatal to her husband. As we have seen, Clytemnestra's example is emphasized repeatedly throughout the *Odyssey* in order to characterize women's infidelity as catastrophic to the male and to increase the audience's anxiety in regard to Penelope's own intentions. As a result, "the poem continually expresses doubt that even wives of basically good character, when unsupervised by a husband or his surrogate, will make decisions in the interests of their marital family."[141] The audience is thereby encouraged to view Penelope as both a contrast to Clytemnestra and a potential counterpart.

Thus, when Penelope first comes into view, she sends contradictory messages to both the suitors and the audience of the poem. At first glance, she demonstrates the signs of a chaste and passive, therefore ideal, woman: she descends from her rooms not alone, but accompanied by two maids; she expresses grief for her lost husband; and she is appropriately veiled (1.328-44). As Molly Myerowitz Levine has demonstrated, such veiling, along with bound, controlled hair, suggests modesty and sexual chastity, while wild, untamed hair, along with unobstructed views of women's eyes, are associated with unfettered, threatening sexuality, an association that reaches back to ancient times but which is still very much in force in modern Mediterranean contexts.[142] Donald Lateiner has discussed these sorts of nonverbal indicators, along with proxemic patterns, as an important means of analyzing and decoding verbalizations in the *Odyssey*. While Lateiner generally positions nonverbal behaviors as more reliable than verbal messages, he notes that often, Penelope's "nonverbal behavior is deceptive, and her clothing, jewelry, posture, etc., function as deceptors."[143] In her first appearance in Book 1, the signs Penelope suggests through her deportment run somewhat contrary to proxemic signals, such as her entry into the predominately male space of the banquet hall, and verbal

indicators, like her assertive request that the bard change his song. Penelope's interference here infringes on the male right to regulate bardic performance, an intrusion similar to the one we earlier saw with Arete. Thus, just as Arete was gently rebuked by Echeneus and Alcinous, Telemachus, too, takes Penelope to task, asserting his male prerogative and reestablishing the traditional separation between male and female spheres of both space and activity[144]: ἀλλ' εἰς οἶκον ἰοῦσα τὰ σ' αὐτῆς ἔργα κόμιζε,/ ἱστόν τ' ἠλακάτην τε, καὶ ἀμφιπόλοισι κέλευε/ ἔργον ἐποίχεσθαι· μῦθος δ' ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει/ πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ' ἐμοί· τοῦ γὰρ κράτος ἔστ' ἐνὶ οἴκῳ ("going back to your quarters, tend to your own work, the loom and the distaff, spinning and weaving…Speaking is the concern of men, and most of all for me, since I have authority in this house": 1.356-59).[145] Despite this common assertion, however, the social expectation was just the opposite: women must "speak," yet appear not to be speaking. Accordingly, by taking advantage of this pretext for appearing before the suitors, Penelope here achieves several "unspoken" ends: she tantalizes the suitors and inflames their desire, but at the same time, the grief she reports not only bolsters her pretext for delaying a new marriage, but also signals her fidelity by acting as a "boast" about her attachment to her husband and to her son. While Homer does not make explicit that Penelope is consciously manipulating in pursuit of her own ends here, this appearance does suggest the possibility that like Helen, Penelope uses calculated speech paired with nonverbal signals to negotiate a precarious situation involving her male alliances.

Telemachus' rebuke aside, Penelope's boldness in speaking assertively to men here and on other occasions suggests a sense of entitlement and authority. On each of these occasions, however, as the Topography of Shame requires, she is speaking in the interests of her male relatives. In the episode discussed above, for example, Phemius'

song of the Greeks' νόστον.../λυγρόν ("sorrowful homecoming": 1.326-27) from Troy can be taken to imply that the issue is effectively closed: Penelope's assertive request that the bard change the subject of his song can thus be read as a subtle defense of her husband, an objection that he is still alive and on his way home, and thus, the chapter is not yet fully written. A more striking example of Penelope's assertiveness in defense of her male kin is found in Book 16, where she descends from her rooms and rebukes the suitors directly for plotting to murder Telemachus. While in general Penelope negotiates her position subtly through calculated speech and behavioral indicators, here she is forthright, since she speaks not on her own behalf, but in defense of her son[146] (16.418-33):

> Ἀντίνο', ὕβριν ἔχων, κακομήχανε, καὶ δέ σέ φασιν
> ἐν δήμῳ Ἰθάκης μεθ' ὁμήλικας ἔμμεν ἄριστον
> βουλῇ καὶ μύθοισι· σὺ δ' οὐκ ἄρα τοῖος ἔησθα.
> μάργε, τίη δὲ σὺ Τηλεμάχῳ θάνατόν τε μόρον τε
> ῥάπτεις, οὐδ' ἱκέτας ἐμπάζεαι, οἷσιν ἄρα Ζεὺς
> μάρτυρος; οὐδ' ὁσίη κακὰ ῥάπτειν ἀλλήλοισιν.
> ἦ οὐκ οἶσθ' ὅτε δεῦρο πατὴρ τεὸς ἵκετο φεύγων...;
> ...τοῦ νῦν οἶκον ἄτιμον ἔδεις, μνάᾳ δὲ γυναῖκα
> παῖδά τ' ἀποκτείνεις, ἐμὲ δὲ μεγάλως ἀκαχίζεις·
> ἀλλά σε παύσασθαι κέλομαι καὶ ἀνωγέμεν ἄλλους."
>
> "Antinous, arrogant, evil-scheming, they say you are the best
> of your age-mates among the people of Ithaca
> in council and in words, but you are not such.
> Madman – why are you plotting death and doom for Telemachus,
> And why do you take no heed of suppliants, for whom Zeus stands witness?
> It is not righteous to plot evils for one another.
> Or do you not know that your own father came here as a fugitive...?
> ...Now you gobble up [Odysseus'] house, dishonored, you court his wife,
> you would murder his son, and you grieve me greatly.
> I order you to stop, and to command the others to stop."

Here, not only does Penelope directly criticize Antinous' character, she issues him a direct order, a rare occurrence indeed for a woman speaking to an elite man, and one that

would seem to run contrary to the tenets of the Topography of Shame. The threat posed to her son, however, justifies Penelope's unusual boldness, since the Topography of Shame above all seeks to protect the interests of male kinship ties and see to the safety of the men themselves. Nonetheless, considering the nature of Antinous' offense, Penelope's complaint is relatively mild. Additionally, she softens her criticism with a reminder of past services, intended to prompt both Antinous and the other suitors to treat her household with more respect, but also suggesting a small degree of the sort of verbal manipulation we would expect to see in this sort of male/female interaction. In contrast, her rebuke of her serving woman Melantho for mocking the beggar in Book 19, discussed above, is much more aggressive, more forthright, and more threatening (19.91-95). Though class issues would lead us to expect some discrepancy in how Penelope interacts with Melantho compared with how she speaks to Antinous, Antinous' offense was, in this case, exponentially greater than Melantho's. Nonetheless, Penelope's tone and word choice when speaking with Melantho lack the calculation and artifice she demonstrates when confronting Antinous.

That this discrepancy in tone is not purely attributable to class is suggested by an incident in Book 4, where Penelope complains of the suitors to the herald Medon, saying (4.684-95):

> μὴ μνηστεύσαντες μηδ' ἄλλοθ' ὁμιλήσαντες
> ὕστατα καὶ πύματα νῦν ἐνθάδε δειπνήσειαν·
> οἳ θάμ' ἀγειρόμενοι βίοτον κατακείρετε πολλόν,
> κτῆσιν Τηλεμάχοιο δαΐφρονος· οὐδέ τι πατρῶν
> ὑμετέρων τὸ πρόσθεν ἀκούετε, παῖδες ἐόντες,
> οἷος Ὀδυσσεὺς ἔσκε μεθ' ὑμετέροισι τοκεῦσιν,
> οὔτε τινὰ ῥέξας ἐξαίσιον οὔτε τι εἰπὼν
> ἐν δήμῳ...
> κεῖνος δ' οὔ ποτε πάμπαν ἀτάσθαλον ἄνδρα ἐώργει.
> ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ὑμέτερος θυμὸς καὶ ἀεικέα ἔργα
> φαίνεται, οὐδέ τίς ἐστι χάρις μετόπισθ' εὐεργέων.

> "Would that this now were the last and latest time that they dine here,
> either courting me or coming together for some other reason.
> You, gathering here so often, devouring much livelihood,
> You destroy [the things] of prudent Telemachus, nor have you listened to
> Anything from your fathers before, when you were children,
> What sort of man Odysseus was among your parents,
> Never doing or saying anything beyond due measure
> Among the people…
> But [Odysseus] never treated a man arrogantly at all.
> But your heart brings to light shameful acts,
> And there is no gratitude in you for these past well-wrought deeds."

With the suitors out of earshot, Penelope launches a more forceful complaint against them, but her wishes concerning their fate are somewhat ambiguous: she wishes that this be "the last time…they dine here," but whether she means in her house or altogether is unclear. Moreover, she aligns her interests with her son's by positioning her indignation as a result of the fact that the suitors are depriving Telemachus of his patrimony, a wise association in consideration of the apparently close relationship between Medon and Telemachus.[147] At the same time, as she did with Antinous, Penelope reminds Medon of Odysseus' past kindnesses and subtly encourages him to show his own gratitude by maintaining allegiance to his wife and son. Thus, while Penelope is marginally more forceful in her complaints about the suitors when speaking to Medon alone, she nonetheless demonstrates techniques similar to those she used with the suitors with this male servant, strategies which were more or less absent in her more straightforward rebuke of Melantho.

In Book 17, Penelope again complains of the suitors' behavior behind their backs, this time as she sits with her maids. When she overhears Antinous abusing the beggar by striking him with a footstool, Penelope wishes aloud, αἴθ' οὕτως αὐτόν σε βάλοι κλυτότοξος Ἀπόλλων ("So may the archer Apollo strike you": 17.494). Turning to her

handmaid Eurynome, she then elaborates: μαῖ', ἐχθροὶ μὲν πάντες, ἐπεὶ κακὰ μηχανόωνται·/ Ἀντίνοος δὲ μάλιστα μελαίνῃ κηρὶ ἔοικε ("Nurse, they are all hateful, since they contrive evils; but Antinous, most of all, is like black death": 17.499-500). Penelope's statement here seems different in tone – more direct, more assertive, and more sincere – than her earlier complaint to Medon. Her complaint could also be taken simply as an attempt to signal to her maids her continuing fidelity to Odysseus; yet since Penelope knows that her maidservants are a potential source of betrayal, as they were responsible for exposing her shroud-trick to the suitors (19.151-55), her remark here might also be viewed as an indirect rebuke of those traitorous women who have aligned themselves with men as unworthy and immoral as the suitors. But while she may have multiple ends in mind when making this statement, she does not demonstrate the same complex verbal strategies in her interchange with the maids as she does with a male household servant. Thus, while Penelope on occasion assert herself with an eye towards preserving the interests of her male kin in accordance with the Topography of Shame, she demonstrates subtle differences in how she asserts herself, differences which seem to depend more on the gender than on the status of the person to whom she is speaking.

Penelope's most direct expression of self-image in this epic is her repeated remark that any beauty she might have had went to ruin on the day her husband sailed away with the Argives (18.178-81 and 251-53; 19.124-26). In Book 18, Penelope protests to her maid Eurynome, who has encouraged her to attend to her appearance before descending to the main hall that ἀγλαΐην γὰρ ἐμοί γε θεοί, τοὶ Ὄλυμπον ἔχουσιν,/

ὤλεσαν, ἐξ οὗ κεῖνος ἔβη κοίλῃς ἐνὶ νηυσίν ("The gods who hold Olympus destroyed my beauty at that time when [Odysseus] went away on the hollow ships": 18.180-81). While we might imagine that Penelope truly feels her looks have been diminished by grief and aging, her self-deprecation in this exclusively female context seems somewhat surprising. This particular self-deprecatory expression, however, is explicitly positioned as insincere, while its underlying objectives are once again related to Penelope's attempts to maintain a secure position in relation to men. On this occasion, Penelope, prompted by Athena, feels compelled to appear in front of the suitors. Despite the pretext she uses for this appearance– she tells Eurynome that she wants to advise Telemachus to keep a proper distance from the suitors – Homer tells us that her real intention is μνηστήρεσσι φανῆναι, ὅπως πετάσειε μάλιστα/ θυμὸν μνηστήρων ἰδὲ τιμήεσσα γένοιτο/ μᾶλλον πρὸς πόσιός τε καὶ υἱέος ἢ πάρος ἦεν ("to move the hearts of the suitors and so that she might become more worthy in the eyes of her husband and her son than she was before": 18.160-62),[148] a goal which she succeeds in achieving (18.212-13).[149] Homer's implication seems to be that Penelope is well aware of the power of her beauty, and her disavowal of her looks is disingenuous. At the same time, since the predominant male ideology seems to require such female duplicity, we might question the narrator's own truthfulness on this issue: the Topography of Shame itself leads us to expect this sort of dual motivation, where Penelope suggests one "good" incentive and one "bad," so that she can be interpreted as both defending her male kin and seeking to bolster her own position through her feminine vanity and conceit.

In either case, having decided to appear in front of the suitors, Penelope now anticipates a situation crucial to maintaining her security with regard to male alliances,[150]

and one in which her anxiety would be heightened if she does suspect that her husband will also be present, as, indeed, the above quotation seems to suggest.[151] Therefore, despite the women-only context, the anticipation of a risky negotiation with regard to male alliances alone might prompt such as expression of self-deprecation. At the same time, however, Penelope's self-deprecatory expression to Eurynome cannot be simply regarded as a statement made only to her maid: Penelope elsewhere exhibits great caution with information, recognizing that some servants are disloyal. If Odysseus returns or if he does not, she needs to have maintained a consistent pattern of longing for him even with servants who are apparently loyal to her.[152] Indeed, in the end, it is the nurse Eurycleia who triumphantly reports to Odysseus which of the women have been faithful, and which have not. Penelope would therefore want to conceal any pleasure she might derive from the attentions of the suitors even from a loyal maid like Eurynome and to maintain a constant appearance of fidelity to avoid being "blacklisted" by any member of her household. By disavowing her beauty here, she is not only signaling to Eurynome her grief at her husband's absence, but she also refutes the idea that she wants to appear for the purpose of inflaming the suitors' desires.[153]

When Penelope descends to the main hall, she signals her loyalty and modesty nonverbally, as she is attended by her handmaids and demurely holds a veil over her face,[154] and then reitrates this self-deprecatory remark to the suitor Eurymachus publicly, in the presence of the rest of the suitors and of her son Telemachus (18.251-55):

> Εὐρύμαχ', ἦ τοι ἐμὴν ἀρετὴν εἶδός τε δέμας τε
> ὤλεσαν ἀθάνατοι, ὅτε Ἴλιον εἰσανέβαινον
> Ἀργεῖοι, μετὰ τοῖσι δ' ἐμὸς πόσις ᾖεν Ὀδυσσεύς.
> εἰ κεῖνός γ' ἐλθὼν τὸν ἐμὸν βίον ἀμφιπολεύοι,
> μεῖζόν κε κλέος εἴη ἐμὸν καὶ κάλλιον οὕτως.
>
> "Eurymachus, truly the gods destroyed my virtue, both in form

> And in stature, when the Argives went away to Ilion,
> And my husband Odysseus went with them.
> If only he, coming back, would take charge of my life,
> My glory would be greater and more splendid.

Penelope's reiteration here that she regards her beauty as diminished, while it once again may reflect some real anxieties about her appearance, is primarily framed as calculated. If, as I have argued, Penelope suspects, but is uncertain, that her husband is at hand, and she is additionally unsure of his chances against a large number of suitors, her interest is in negotiating a secure place for herself in a variety of scenarios. Thus, it is still to her advantage at this point to maintain an appearance of fidelity to her husband and grief at his absence while holding out hope to the suitors. Therefore, when Eurymachus first compliments her saying, περίεσσι γυναικῶν/ εἶδός τε μέγεθός τε ἰδὲ φρένας ἔνδον ἐΐσας ("...you surpass other women in figure, in stature, and in the well-balanced mind within you": 18.248-49), Penelope takes this cue to emphasize her beauty by positioning it as diminished, while also reminding the suitors, and potentially Odysseus as well, that her heart belongs to her husband. At the same time, Penelope effectively refutes for Odysseus's benefit and for her son's the idea that she has appeared to show off her beauty to the suitors in the first place, and demonstrated her intelligence while doing so. Here then, as frequently, "Penelope projects herself...as defeated, downtrodden, essentially resourceless, but her apparent and advertised lack of independence, power, and prestige contrast starkly with her successful manipulation of relationships with her family and household, as well as with...the irritable, invasive suitors."[155]

Penelope's skillful verbal manipulation continues as she segues into a report of Odysseus' directive that she marry when Telemachus grew his first beard[156] and then

hints to the suitors that it is customary for those who come courting to bring gifts (18.275-80):

> μνηστήρων οὐχ ἥδε δίκη τὸ πάροιθε τέτυκτο·
> οἵ τ' ἀγαθήν τε γυναῖκα καὶ ἀφνειοῖο θύγατρα
> μνηστεύειν ἐθέλωσι καὶ ἀλλήλοις ἐρίσωσιν,
> αὐτοὶ τοί γ' ἀπάγουσι βόας καὶ ἴφια μῆλα,
> κούρης δαῖτα φίλοισι, καὶ ἀγλαὰ δῶρα διδοῦσιν·
> ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀλλότριον βίοτον νήποινον ἔδουσιν."
>
> "This is not the proper way to behave for suitors
> Who want to court a good woman and the daughter
> of a rich man, men who vie with others;
> Truly, they themselves lead forth cattle or goodly sheep,
> Feasts for the bride's friends, and they give splendid gifts.
> But they do not consume the livelihood of another, unpunished."

Here again, Penelope achieves multiple goals with her speech: she gives the suitors hope that a marriage is imminent; she successfully extracts gifts which help to replenish the household's depleted stores; and she prompts Odysseus, if he is in fact in the house, to act and act quickly. In this context, Penelope's self-deprecatory remarks cannot, therefore, be simply viewed as straightforward expressions of how she views herself. Indeed, her manipulative intent here is recognized by Odysseus, who γήθησεν .../ οὕνεκα τῶν μὲν δῶρα παρέλκετο, θέλγε δὲ θυμὸν/ μειλιχίοις ἐπέεσσι, νόος δέ οἱ ἄλλα μενοίνα ("rejoiced, since she coaxed gifts from them, and stroked [the suitors'] hearts with pleasing words, while her mind was set on other things": 18.281-83).[157] Just as we earlier saw that Homer "knew" that Penelope intended to display her beauty even while she deprecated it, here Odysseus "knows" that Penelope is showing off her beauty to extract gifts. These complementary "readings" of Penelope demonstrate once again that from the dominant male perspective, it is necessary to the structural position of women to view them as both disingenuous and duplicitous.

Penelope's use of calculated speech with men is additionally evident in her interactions with her son. On her first appearance in the *Odyssey*, as we have seen, Penelope descended to the banquet hall to ask the bard to change his song (1.336-44). When Telemachus overrides her authority and rebukes her for overstepping her bounds, Penelope, along with the suitors, seems surprised to hear him asserting himself, which is generally seen as an indication of his blossoming manhood. As the epic progresses, this pattern continues, but Penelope's initial assertiveness seems to fade. For example, in Book 17, when Telemachus returns from the mainland, she immediately – and directly – questions him for news of Odysseus, but he puts her off rather abruptly, with μῆτερ ἐμή, μή μοι γόον ὄρνυθι μηδέ μοι ἦτορ/ ἐν στήθεσσιν ὄρινε φυγόντι περ αἰπὺν ὄλεθρον ("Mother, don't stir up grief, nor agitate the heart in my breast, now that I've escaped sheer destruction": 17.46-47). The next time she broaches the subject, she does so in a much less direct manner: Τηλέμαχ', ἦ τοι ἐγὼν ὑπερώϊον εἰσαναβᾶσα/ λέξομαι εἰς εὐνήν...οὐδέ μοι ἔτλης,/ πρὶν ἐλθεῖν μνηστῆρας ἀγήνορας ἐς τόδε δῶμα,/ νόστον σοῦ πατρὸς σάφα εἰπέμεν, εἴ που ἄκουσας ("Telemachus, going up to my quarters, I will go to sleep on my bed...[since] you have not seen fit to tell me, before the arrogant suitors come into this house, if you have heard something said about your father's return": 17.101-06). This time, she succeeds in eliciting a response, and learns that according to Menelaus, Odysseus is not dead,[158] information supported by the seer Theoclymenos who reports that Odysseus is in fact already on the island. While her meeker approach this time suggests a new tentativeness in her relationship with her son, her ability to succeed using this sort of verbal game is illustrative of the fact that manipulation of language and the pretense of deference were crucial avenues in the

Topography of Shame through which women in Homeric society were able to achieve power when more direct routes were unavailable to them.

In the critical interview with the beggar in Book 19, Penelope again demonstrates that she is capable of using verbal manipulation both to extract and convey information while staying within the boundaries of acceptable behavior for women. As Winkler argues, Penelope's interchange with the beggar here is constrained both by the presence of maids, some of whom have already proven themselves to be unreliable in safeguarding household secrets,[159] and by the fact that she is uncertain of the beggar's identity and is therefore jockeying for more information while playing her cards close to her chest. For these reasons, Winkler sees the entire interview as a covert exchange of information between two like-minded individuals who are wary not only of the listening maidservants, but also of each other.[160]

At the onset of the interview, Penelope reiterates her now familiar self-deprecatory statement: "ξεῖν', ἦ τοι μὲν ἐμὴν ἀρετὴν εἶδός τε δέμας τε/ ὤλεσαν ἀθάνατοι, ὅτε Ἴλιον εἰσανέβαινον/ Ἀργεῖοι, μετὰ τοῖσι δ' ἐμὸς πόσις ᾖεν Ὀδυσσεύς ("Stranger, the immortals destroyed my virtue in figure and in form when the Argives went away to Ilion, and with them went my husband Odysseus": 19.124-26). Here, Penelope's motivation again seems to be twofold: first, to call attention to her beauty – in this case, no reference has been made to her beauty in particular, and so her protest seems otherwise oddly out of place; and secondly, to emphasize her grief at her husband's absence. In both cases, her statement can be read as an indirect boast, as she is using this opportunity to advertise both her beauty and her loyalty to Odysseus. Penelope then uses this opening to report how she put off the suitors with her shroud trick,

declaring, ἐγὼ δὲ δόλους τολυπεύω ("I weave my tricks": 19.137) and rounding her account off with, ὣς τρίετες μὲν ἔληθον ἐγὼ καὶ ἔπειθον Ἀχαιούς ("So for three years, I fooled them and convinced the Achaeans": 19.151), boasts prudently offset by her acknowledgement of the gods' inspiration (φᾶρος μέν μοι πρῶτον ἐνέπνευσε φρεσὶ δαίμων – "a god first breathed the web into my mind...": 19.138). Penelope here seems to play only one side, explicitly suggesting to the beggar that she grieves for her husband and detests the overtures of the suitors. While some scholars see this as evidence that she recognizes the beggar as her husband, her less ambiguous attitude here also might be attributed to the fact that the beggar has been repeatedly abused and mistreated by the suitors, so that Penelope can safely assume that he is not in cahoots with them; indeed, she is hopeful that he will have some information regarding her husband's whereabouts. Therefore, her boast[161] makes sense in that with the beggar, it is to her advantage to maintain an uncompromised appearance of loyalty to Odysseus.

As is proper, Penelope sees to the needs of her guest, ordering her maids to wash his feet and make him up a bed. Turning to Eurycleia, Penelope directs her, ἀλλ' ἄγε νῦν ἀνστᾶσα, περίφρων Εὐρύκλεια,/ νίψον σοῖο ἄνακτος ὁμήλικα· καί που Ὀδυσσεὺς/ ἤδη τοιόσδ' ἐστὶ πόδας τοιόσδε τε χεῖρας·/ αἶψα γὰρ ἐν κακότητι βροτοὶ καταγηράσκουσιν ("But come now, thoughtful Eurycleia, get up and wash the feet of your master's age-mate; Odysseus, too, has such hands and feet by now: for mortals grow old quickly in hard times": 19.357-60). Those who would argue that Penelope recognizes her husband in the beggar, or that she suspects this as a possibility, see this as a hint that Penelope knows his identity, but is prudent and clever enough to make her suggestion obliquely.[162] If so, Penelope's savvy is underscored when, shortly

thereafter, the nurse Eurycleia points out this similarity more blatantly: οὔ πώ τινά φημι ἐοικότα ὧδε ἰδέσθαι/ ὡς σὺ δέμας φωνήν τε πόδας τ' Ὀδυσῆϊ ἔοικας ("...never, I say, have I seen anyone so like to Odysseus as you are, in your frame, your voice, and your feet": 19.379-80). Despite the resemblance she mentions, Eurycleia's evident shock at finding Odysseus' scar minutes later suggests that the beggar's true identity had not yet occurred to her: the logic of the Topography of Shame, indeed, necessitates Eurycleia's surprise in order to preserve the ambiguity surrounding Penelope's own level of awareness and the question of just who controls the plot. At the same time, Eurycleia's directness in commenting on the beggar's resemblance to Odysseus reveals her unguarded nature; Penelope, in contrast, is depicted as more subtle, more clever, and more shrewd than her nurse, characteristics which parallel traits of Odysseus himself and suggest that she alone constitutes a worthy partner for her husband.

This fundamental similarity between Odysseus and Penelope is emphasized throughout the epic. As noted above, Odysseus himself praised this connection between husband and wife as the ideal in Book 6, when he wished for the princess Nausicaa a husband with whom she could live in harmony. Scholars have identified the *homophrosyne* Odysseus elevates in that scene as reflecting Odysseus' relationship with his own wife[163]: this dynamic is evident in the parallel between Penelope's calculated appearance in the hall to extract gifts from the suitors in order to replenish the household's depleted stores and Odysseus' similar tactic, when he stops his narrative to the Phaeacians at a point strategically designed to encourage the giving of gifts (11.328ff)[164] – a maneuver Alcinous subtly calls him on,[165] just as Odysseus later acknowledges Penelope's own ploy. In Book 19, Odysseus symbolically acknowledges

this basic similarity between the two of them when he compares Penelope to a good king who rules over a just and fertile land, a description that has twice been applied to Odysseus himself (2.230-34 and 5.8-12). Helene Foley argues that this "reverse simile" – her term for an epic simile where norms are reversed and an identification between people of different social stations and sexual roles is established – not only calls attention to the similarity between husband and wife, but also functions as Odysseus' tacit acknowledgement of the role Penelope has played in preserving his position.[166] Thus, the high esteem in which Odysseus holds his relationship with his wife is predicated on the assumption that, as the Topography of Shame would lead us to expect, their "like-mindedness" is directed towards common, male-centered goals: the preservation of the household and the support of the patriarchal male's position in it. In another famous reverse simile, the poet himself initiates a comparison, seemingly from Odysseus' viewpoint, of shipwrecked sailors reaching land (23.231-40); but by the time it reaches its conclusion, the simile has shifted to Penelope's perspective rather than Odysseus' – as welcome as the sight of land is to the sailors, ὣς ἄρα τῇ ἀσπαστὸς ἔην πόσις εἰσοροώσῃ ("so welcome was her husband to her as she looked upon him": 23.239). This shift again emphasizes the like-mindedness of Odysseus and Penelope,[167] suggesting that they "feel the same feelings, think the same thoughts, as if they were the same person,"[168] while undercutting our expectations by placing Penelope herself temporarily in the subject position.[169]

This surprising acknowledgment of women's subjectivity, however, is limited: "unlike Odysseus, Penelope is portrayed from without, and the poet, while according her subjectivity, does not seek to represent it; he sees her through the eyes of the male

characters around her."[170] Thus, the ideal of a marriage characterized by *homophrosyne* privileges the male agenda by both aligning the woman's goals and values with those of the male and by favoring the male perspective. At the same time, it does afford some space for deep and genuine bonds between husband and wife, and additionally offers the woman a small measure of subjectivity, even if this subjectivity is dependent on her husband.

Scholars who believe that Penelope recognizes her husband, therefore, see the interview that follows as an illustration of the powerful connection between the two of them, as they participate in a sort of verbal dance where they communicate with each other in code[171]: Penelope asks for proof that the beggar has seen Odysseus, and he offers her a detailed description of his clothing, which she made for him, and of the distinctive brooch she gave him as he left (19.215-35); Penelope relates a dream in which her pet geese are killed by an eagle who then reveals that he symbolizes her husband and the geese the suitors, and the beggar agrees that her husband must be very near at hand indeed (19.535-58)[172]; Penelope tells the beggar that she is considering setting up a bow contest for her hand, a challenge that only Odysseus has been able to meet in the past, and the beggar encourages her to do so right away (19.572-87).[173] John Winkler's slightly more conservative viewpoint, which argues that Penelope merely suspects the beggar's identity, would read Penelope in this interview as actively testing the beggar until their interchange "reaches a point where his answers are sufficiently Odyssean to justify her gamble in setting up the contest of the bow."[174] In either case, if Penelope either suspects or knows the beggar's identity, she signals to her husband (or possible husband) that she is prudent enough not to reveal her knowledge to anyone, since she is not even explicitly

acknowledging it to him; that she is cautious enough to look for proof before believing the story of any man that comes along (an implication of her sexual fidelity as well); and that she is deferential enough to seek his agreement before instituting a contest that will push the situation to a critical juncture.[175] The fact that the messages Penelope sends to Odysseus are laced with ambiguity, however, seems to support Winkler's model: in her dream, for instance, she describes the suitors as her pet geese, suggesting her control over them, and says that she wept when they were killed (19.541), indicating that to some extent, she enjoyed their attentions.[176] Thus, Penelope still exhibits a strategy where she is jockeying for position rather than putting all her eggs in one basket: this suggests the limits of Penelope's knowledge through her need to continue to strategically navigate the precepts of the Topography of Shame until her position in relation to a male protector has been secured.

Penelope's decisive role in the epic's climax – her decision to initiate the bow contest and the fact that she advocates that the beggar be given a chance at stringing the bow – conforms well to this analysis of her behavior as a calculated response to the Topography of Shame. Penelope's instigation of the contest in the first place is designed to place her at an advantage no matter what the outcome[177]: if Odysseus is not present, it is unlikely that the suitors will be able to complete this task, and Penelope, having offered the suitors a fair chance to win her, will then be able to continue to delay; if one of the suitors does succeed at completing the task, Penelope will win a strong and worthy husband, one likely to be able to defend her if Odysseus ever does return to stake his claim; if, on the other hand, Odysseus is present, Penelope pushes him to take action and reclaim his position as husband and king, and indeed, provides him with the means and

opportunity to do so; and in the unlikely event that Odysseus is home but is defeated in this task, she will win a husband stronger and more capable than Odysseus himself.[178] Felson-Rubin sees this "plotting" as another way in which Penelope parallels Odysseus, who "envisions sequences of life-events" in engineering the suitors' destruction with Athena and later with Telemachus.[179] Additionally, like Odysseus – and Helen and other women who, like Penelope, attempt to negotiate the Topography of Shame to their advantage – Penelope here exhibits concern with feminine *kleos*, as the bride-contest will enhance her reputation as a woman wooed by many suitors.[180]

As the contest plays itself out, none of the suitors is able to string the bow. When the beggar asks for a turn, the suitors refuse to allow it, and Penelope again asserts herself by arguing on the beggar's behalf.[181] Penelope's assertiveness in this case is especially surprising since she speaks in direct opposition to the male majority, but once again, her position conforms to the Topography of Shame: first, she can be viewed as working on behalf of her male kin simply by defending the principle of *xenia*, honoring which is imperative to the interests of the household; on the other hand, if she suspects that the beggar is her husband, she is facilitating his opportunity to win her hand once again and giving him access to a weapon he might use against the unarmed suitors. At the same time, by denying that the beggar will thereby gain the right to marry her, she keeps her options open just in case the man turns out not to be her husband. Telemachus, however, once again puts his foot down in order to establish that direct power is in the hands of the male (21.343-53):

> μῆτερ ἐμή, τόξον μὲν Ἀχαιῶν οὔ τις ἐμεῖο
> κρείσσων, ᾧ κ' ἐθέλω, δόμεναί τε καὶ ἀρνήσασθαι...
> ἀλλ' εἰς οἶκον ἰοῦσα τὰ σ' αὐτῆς ἔργα κόμιζε,
> ἱστόν τ' ἠλακάτην τε, καὶ ἀμφιπόλοισι κέλευε
> ἔργον ἐποίχεσθαι· τόξον δ' ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει

> πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ' ἐμοί· τοῦ γὰρ κράτος ἔστ' ἐνὶ οἴκῳ.
>
> "Mother, no one of the Achaeans has more claim to the bow
> than me, to give it or to withhold it from whom I wish...
> But going into your chamber, tend to your own affairs,
> The loom and the distaff, and order your maidservants
> To attend to their work: the bow will be a concern for all men,
> But most of all for me: for the authority in this house is mine."

As is proper, of course, Penelope obeys, signaling that despite her plots and machinations, she ultimately defers to the voice of patriarchal authority. Once again, after the boundaries of the Topography of Shame are put to the test, we see them reinscribed by the dominant male. Rather than viewing Penelope as meekly passive here, however, we might consider the possibility that her intercession on the beggar's behalf was intended as an opening for her son: while it would have been problematic for him to intervene in this way, her interference allows Telemachus to assert himself both by overruling her and by declaring his authority outright, while at the same time giving him an excuse to get her out of the room so that the slaughter can commence. Once again, Penelope simultaneously pushes the limits of the Topography of Shame with her assertiveness and interference, but does so in the service of its primary goals – to support her male kin. At the same time, she does all this while working under the radar, preserving her options in the event of unexpected outcomes.

Penelope demonstrates her characteristic wariness again in Book 23, where she is finally reunited with her husband. When the nurse Eurycleia announces Odysseus' presence and his triumph over the suitors, Penelope is stubbornly reluctant to accept the information, calling Eurycleia mad, and repeatedly denying that what she says is true (23.11-24, 59-68, and 81-84).[182] Even when she sits face to face with Odysseus himself,

she hangs back, prompting Telemachus to complain, μῆτερ ἐμή, δύσμητερ, ἀπηνέα θυμὸν ἔχουσα,/ τίφθ' οὕτω πατρὸς νοσφίζεαι, οὐδὲ παρ' αὐτὸν/ ἑζομένη μύθοισιν ἀνείρεαι οὐδὲ μεταλλᾷς;/ οὐ μέν κ' ἄλλη γ' ὧδε γυνὴ τετληότι θυμῷ/ ἀνδρὸς ἀφεσταίη, ὅς οἱ κακὰ πολλὰ μογήσας/ ἔλθοι ἐεικοστῷ ἔτεϊ ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν·/ σοὶ δ' αἰεὶ κραδίη στερεωτέρη ἐστὶ λίθοιο ("My mother, no mother at all, hard-hearted, why do you turn your back on father, nor sitting beside him, do you latch onto him with words nor do you question him? No other woman with her stubborn heart would hold herself back from her husband, who, having suffered so many evils, came home to his fatherland in the twentieth year; but always your heart is harder than stone": 23.97-103). Telemachus seems to expect Penelope to run impulsively into Odysseus' arms since "[w]omen in the toils of Homeric social reproductive systems are not supposed to know how to suppress impulse, calculate against men, and be distrustful."[183] Yet, as the Topography of Shame suggests, the constrained positions women like Penelope would have occupied frequently demanded just the opposite: that these women suppress impulse, and that they calculate, distrust, and deceive while appearing to adhere to stereotypes of emotionalism and irrationality. In this way, Penelope's ability to control her impulses is not surprising, but nonetheless would have marked her out as an exceptional woman from the male perspective. For this reason, Odysseus signals his approval with a smile, telling his son, Τηλέμαχ', ἦ τοι μητέρ' ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἔασον/ πειράζειν ἐμέθεν ("Telemachus, let your mother test me in the halls": 23.113-14), and as such, implies his recognition that Penelope's caution matches his own.[184] As Odysseus himself seems to suggest, Penelope's course of action here is once again dictated by the Topography of Shame in that by testing her husband and confirming her own restraint and fidelity, she is actually acting in his own interests.

Penelope continues to hold back until she confirms her husband's identity with her infamous bed-trick: asking the nurse to bring out his bed, Penelope solicits an angry reaction from Odysseus, who built the bed himself around the trunk of an olive tree. By implying that the bed has become movable, Penelope puts the possibility that the sanctity of her inner rooms has been violated on the table; by then revealing that the bed is still intact, she effectively refutes the accusation of infidelity that has gone unspoken.[185] Thus, Penelope effectively turns the tables on Odysseus, demonstrating a sense of cunning that rivals his, and, arguably, serving to balance out the "humiliating spousal deception" she has endured both publicly and in their private interview[186] by being kept so long in the dark. On this basis, Lateiner argues that "[h]er movements and moves should be read as wiliness, not confusion – if not consciously strategized, then still learned and gendered social survival skills."[187] By getting a rise out of Odysseus, a reaction that confirms his identity in a vulnerable moment, Penelope reveals herself as the "ultimate trickster," a characterization that finds parallel in frequent analyses of Odysseus' character.[188] At the same time, by testing her husband and extracting privileged information before she gives herself over to him, Penelope implies similar restraint with other suitors and imposters, as she herself suggests (23.213-22):

> αὐτὰρ μὴ νῦν μοι τόδε χώεο μηδὲ νεμέσσα,
> οὕνεκά σ' οὐ τὸ πρῶτον, ἐπεὶ ἴδον, ὧδ' ἀγάπησα.
> αἰεὶ γάρ μοι θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσι φίλοισιν
> ἐρρίγει μή τίς με βροτῶν ἀπάφοιτο ἔπεσσιν
> ἐλθών· πολλοὶ γὰρ κακὰ κέρδεα βουλεύουσιν.
> οὐδέ κεν Ἀργείη Ἑλένη, Διὸς ἐκγεγαυῖα,
> ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀλλοδαπῷ ἐμίγη φιλότητι καὶ εὐνῇ,
> εἰ ᾔδη ὅ μιν αὖτις ἀρήϊοι υἷες Ἀχαιῶν
> ἀξέμεναι οἶκόνδε φίλην ἐς πατρίδ' ἔμελλον.
> τὴν δ' ἦ τοι ῥέξαι θεὸς ὤρορεν ἔργον ἀεικές...
>
> "Don't be angry or feel resentment towards me
> Because at first I did not treat you affectionately in this way;

> For always the heart in my dear breast
> Shivered with fear, lest some mortal might beguile me
> With words; for many strive for evil profits.
> Neither would Argive Helen, born of Zeus,
> Have mingled in bed with a foreign man
> If she had known that the war-loving sons of the Achaeans
> Would bring her home again to her dear fatherland.
> Truly a god urged her on to do that shameful deed…."

With this trick, therefore, Penelope once again uses the tools at her disposal as a woman, including manipulation and deceit; because she uses them in support of her husband's honor rather than contrary to it, however, she is presented as virtuous. Nonetheless, her exoneration of Helen from blame[189] and the implicit comparison between the two of them suggests her recognition that Odysseus' suspicions regarding her sexual chastity were not entirely without basis, and that the possibility existed that she too might have ended up like Helen.[190] This comparison is strengthened by the earlier parallels drawn between Helen and Penelope, both of which characterize these women as potential threats: as noted above, both women play host to a disguised Odysseus, but the loyalty Helen implies in recounting her version of this story is refuted by Menelaus' response story, effectively calling Penelope's loyalty into question as well[191]; additionally, both women show an unusual concern with acquiring feminine *kleos* – Helen through the commemoration of her beauty in her weaving[192] and Penelope by initiating the test of the bow for her hand as an indication of her desirability – an interest which suggests the development of an identity separate and apart from that of the male rather than reliant upon it. Yet, although it effectively demonstrates the threat she poses, the comparison with Helen also highlights Penelope's ultimate ability to withstand the temptation to which Helen succumbed, and thereby, it also serves to underscore her virtue. Penelope

herself emphasizes this difference by calling attention to her deferred recognition of her husband, a delay which acts as a counterpoint to Helen's immediate recognition of Telemachus – and Odysseus himself in the story she narrates – in Book 4,[193] thus emphasizing Penelope' exceptional restraint, and Helen's famous lack thereof.

This final comparison with Helen at the epic's close and the double-implication it has both for Penelope's susceptibility to temptation as a "weak" woman and for her virtue in resisting such temptation is strengthened by a corresponding final contrast with another of the epic's foils for Penelope, the notorious Clytemnestra. In Book 24 the shades of the suitors report to Agamemnon what has transpired. This report inspires Agamemnon to apostrophize Odysseus, praising his wife as μεγάλῃ ἀρετῇ ("possessing great virtue": 24.193) to such an extent that τῷ οἱ κλέος οὔ ποτ' ὀλεῖται/ ἧς ἀρετῆς, τεύξουσι δ' ἐπιχθονίοισιν ἀοιδὴν/ ἀθάνατοι χαρίεσσαν ἐχέφρονι Πηνελοπείῃ ("the fame of her virtue will never die, and for the people of earth, the immortals will make a lovely song for prudent Penelope": 24.196-98). His praise is sharpened by the juxtaposition with his own wife: οὐχ ὡς Τυνδαρέου κούρη κακὰ μήσατο ἔργα,/ κουρίδιον κτείνασα πόσιν, στυγερὴ δέ τ' ἀοιδὴ/ ἔσσετ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους ("Not thus did the daughter of Tyndareus contrive her evil deeds, killing her wedded husband, and a loathsome song will be hers among men": 24.199-201). Like Clytemnestra and Helen, Penelope was left alone and exposed to adulterous overtures; unlike Clytemnestra and Helen, however, Penelope succeeded in resisting this temptation, and she thereby succeeds in gaining for herself a feminine brand of *kleos* – she will be immortalized in song for her chastity and marital fidelity. Through the negative example of Clytemnestra and the exalting of Penelope, Homer effectively demonstrates that the acquisition of *kleos* is possible for

women, but it is not the sort of *kleos* that Helen and later Penelope attempt to take actively – *kleos* that focuses on them as individuals. Rather, the sort of *kleos* Homer sanctions is based upon maintaining one's place as a woman and keeping one's virtue intact in order to bolster male honor: in other words, upon maintaining the tenets of the Topography of Shame.

Thus, despite her skillful navigation of the precarious position into which she had been thrust, once Odysseus' return and resumption of his place as head of the household have become certainties, Penelope reverts to a position of subordination, instructed to retreat to the women's quarters and, as Donald Lateiner puts it, "keep her kissable mouth shut"[194]: εἰς ὑπερῷ' ἀναβᾶσα σὺν ἀμφιπόλοισι γυναιξὶν/ ἧσθαι, μηδέ τινα προτιόσσεο μηδ' ἐρέεινε ("going up into your quarters sit with your maidservants, and do not look out at anyone or ask any questions": 23.364-65). With her position as wife secure, Penelope can resume a more traditional passive position rather than working to jockey for position through boasting, self-deprecation, or other verbally manipulative strategies.

Conclusions

In the *Odyssey,* therefore, Penelope conforms to our expectations of a virtuous woman functioning within the bounds of the Topography of Shame in that she produces expressions of self-image primarily in connection with her relationships to males: she conveys self-pity when she thinks of her long separation from her husband and her ignorance of whether he lives or dies; she expresses disdain for her looks which she relates to her husband's long absence; and she suggests vanity when she decides to show

herself among the suitors in order to solicit gifts to bolster the household stores and to inflame her husband's and the suitors' desires. As we have seen with other women, she also uses verbal manipulation and calculated self-deprecation, along with strategic nonverbal and proxemic indicators, to navigate or bolster her position in relation to men. Penelope's need to preserve an alliance with a strong male, whether it is Odysseus or someone else, positions her as a potential sexual threat to her husband, a characterization emphasized throughout the epic by repeated references to Clytemnestra and to her sister, Helen,[195] as well as through comparisons with other dangerous females, from Calypso and Circe to Penelope's own maidservants. Penelope, however, is ultimately held up as a model for women rather than as a warning to men, since unlike Helen, Clytemnestra, and others, Penelope does not actualize this threat.

While Helen and Penelope both demonstrate similar strategies and machinations, Helen is generally seen as a negative character since her adultery detracts from the honor of her husband, while Penelope, whose actions ultimately work to preserve and promote her husband's interests, is remembered as virtuous. Penelope's example, therefore, suggests that while women are subject to the constraints of the Topography of Shame, they are not without power, both in sexual terms and through information management. Penelope demonstrates that women can work within the parameters of the Topography of Shame, using the channels that are open to them to exert power and navigate strategic positions for themselves despite the liabilities of being subjected to this system. By both testing its boundaries and keeping her final objectives in line with the larger goals of the Topography of Shame, Penelope alone succeeds in serving as a model for women in two important ways: as a virtuous, faithful wife whose actions ultimately align with the

interests of her husband, she becomes a standard for men to use as an ideal for women; but by working the system in ways that guard her own self-interests apart from her husband, she acts as an example to women on how to exert power and maximize their own goals while working within the social constraints imposed upon them. Indeed, Penelope embodies the contradictions built into the Topography of Shame regarding how women are expected to act: they are obliged to take enormous responsibility for communication and end results while pretending to be weak, dependent, and disenfranchised. Thus, in the *Odyssey*, Homer effectively achieves several competing objectives: he reaffirms the need to constrain women through the parameters of the Topography of Shame by providing numerous examples of women who pose a threat to men through their weak or dangerous natures; he suggests through Penelope's example avenues for women to exert appropriate power and influence that both work from inside and test the boundaries of the Topography of Shame; and he reinscribes the tenets of the Topography of Shame by holding up as a model of feminine virtue Penelope, whose challenges to this model are ultimately exposed as supporting its broad objectives in that they work in the end to support rather than undercut the interests of her husband.

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[1] The prominence of women in the *Odyssey* and the epic's promotion of the *oikos* as a suitable subject for song has led readers such as Samuel Butler to suggest that the author of this epic was a woman. For an overview of the methodological problems with Butler's arguments, see Winkler 1990.esp. 129-33.

[2] Homer here likely had in mind the tradition Proclus preserves, where Menelaus was away in Crete when Paris came to Sparta (Groton 1968.36.fn 2).

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[3] See Gilmore 1990.esp. 9-12 and 36-38. Gilmore 1990.11 shows that generic notions of manhood understand there to be a "critical threshold" boys must pass by means of testing in order to earn the right to their appropriate gender identity. Part of the understanding of manhood in the Mediterranean, and in Greece in particular, is "publicity, being on view and having the courage to expose oneself to risk. In addition, it means decisive action that works or serves a purpose, action that meets tests and solves real problems..." (1990.36).

[4] Greek text for the *Odyssey* throughout this study is based on that found in Homer. 1919. *The* Odyssey *with an English Translation by A. T. Murray, PhD, in Two Volumes.* Cambridge MA (obtained at http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgibin/ptext?lookup=Hom. +Od.+1.1).

[5] Bolmarcich 2001.213.

[6] Winkler 1990.145-61.

[7] For more discussion of *homophrosyne* in the relationship between Odysseus and Penelope, see "Penelope" later in this chapter.

[8] i.e. Blundell 1995.26-27.

[9] Blundell 1995.53.

[10] Schein 1995.17 notes that most goddesses and nonhuman females appear only in Odysseus' extended narration, while mortal women and the goddess Athena are represented only by the voice of the poem's narrator. Calypso alone appears in both the primary and embedded narratives.

[11] Vidal-Naquet 1986.15-38 (Chapter 1.1: "Land and Sacrifice in the *Odyssey*").

[12] Calypso's name, in fact, means "concealer."

[13] Schein 1995.19. The exception to this use of gender markers is the case of Polyphemus, the Cyclops who devours Odysseus' men in Book 9. As Schein 1995.19 asserts and Austin 1983.10ff implies, however, Polyphemus is symbolically feminized by the womb-like cave he inhabits, which overflows with milk and youngsters and from which the hero is "reborn," as well as by the symbolic "rape" which Odysseus perpetrates against him by penetrating the orifice of his eye with the sharpened trunk of an olive tree. His remote location, additionally, distances him from the human contexts of masculine competition and exchange, suggesting instead feminine domestic cloistering.

[14] Blundell 1995.53.

[15] For more on Clytemnestra, see "Penelope" in this chapter.

[16] Gilmore 1990.38. The association of women with domestic space and men with outdoor, public space still persists in the modern Mediterranean, as Pierre Bourdieu's observations of the Kabyle people of northeastern Algeria demonstrate: "The man who stays too long in the house during the day is either suspect or ridiculous: he is 'the man of the home,' as one says of the importunate man who stays amongst the women and who 'broods at home like a hen in the henhouse.' A man who has respect for himself should let himself be seen, should continuously place himself under the gaze of others and face them" (1973.103).

[17] Gilmore 1990.50.

[18] Wohl 1993.26.

[19] See for example *Iliad* 14.315-28 (discussed in "Goddesses," Chapter 2).

[20] The continuing, and even increasing, relevance of the theme of women's need to be tamed or civilized in the Classical period is illustrated by related artistic developments:

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whereas women in the episodes from the *Odyssey* were earlier "visualized as fearsome creatures...they were humanized, beautified, dressed fashionably, civilized, tamed, or domesticated by Greek artists before the end of the fifth century" (Buitron-Oliver and Cohen 1995.38). Keuls discusses other political uses of artistic depictions of Trojan War episodes in the Classical period (1985.395-401), as well as other artistic developments in the 5th century which likewise demonstrate a concern with bolstering patriarchal authority, such as the progressive masculinization of Athena (1985.35-42) and the increasing frequency of scenes of rape and male domination (1985.47-55). For a more general discussion of the depiction of women in art in ancient Greece, see Pomeroy 1975.142-48 and Blundell 1995.188-95.

[21] See Wohl 1993.24.

[22] See Bordo 1993.2-11.

[23] Bordo 1993.5.

[24] Bordo 1993.6.

[25] Bordo 1993.8.

[26] Bordo 1993.28. See also Gilmore 1990.23ff and 229ff. Gilmore 1990.229 points out that contrary to conventional prejudices, cross-cultural concepts of manhood, far from being "self-serving, egotistical, and uncaring," instead foster underlying ideals of generosity and self-sacrifice, positive traits that are often obscured because male giving is less demonstrative than female giving, and more directed towards the family or society as a whole rather than towards individuals.

[27] Wohl 1993.25.

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[28] Wohl 1993.23-24 argues that the dangers of these sorts of powerful women are further suggested by the dearth of human inhabitants on both Calypso and Circe's islands, suggesting that "women in charge of their own sexuality would choose not to procreate" and thus they are in need of "men to direct their fertility into socially productive channels."

[29] Vernant 1986.60-61 and 66-68.

[30] Vernant 1986.67.

[31] Wohl 1993.19.

[32] While Helen is a daughter of Zeus, unlike the demi-goddesses Calypso and Circe, she lives in the mortal realm and more or less operates under mortal rules and customs.

[33] See Du Boulay 1974.172-73 and 187-200. Winkler 1990.133-37 briefly discusses the application of the work of modern anthropologists on this topic to the *Odyssey* in particular.

[34] Austin 1994.71.

[35] See "Helen" in Chapter 2.

[36] See Clader 1976.29 and Worman 2001.30.

[37] See Wohl 1993.32.

[38] Scott 1930.384 and Clader 1976.37. See also Clark 2001.346.

[39] Worman 2001.30 suggests that Helen's speeches here "invoke various models of authoritative speech – the Muses, the poet or choral performer, the speaker of prophecy – and demonstrate her sensitivity to the appropriate locution."

[40] Wohl 1993.32.

[41] Suzuki 1989.64.

[42] Pantelia 1993.500.

[43] Since World War II, the importance of handmade textiles in the Greek household has diminished as commercial productions have become more widely available and affordable, but up through the late 19th century, women's contributions through the production of such work, particularly as part of the dowry, was considerable (see Pavlides and Hesser 1986). The distinction between spinning and weaving in the ancient world perhaps finds an analogy in this period in that generally speaking, women worked to produce carpets, needlepoints, linens, and embroidery for their own dowry before their marriage, whereas after they were married, their work was directed towards contributions to their daughters' dowries. Thus, while their activities may remain the same, women whose domestic position has stabilized no longer need to concentrate on creation for their own sake, but instead have the freedom to redirect their energies to the hopes, aspirations, and concerns of their children.

[44] Bourdieu 1973.100. Bourdieu explains that "before marriage [the woman] is placed behind the weaving-loom, in its shadow, under its protection, as she is placed under the protection of her father and her brothers; on her wedding-day, she is seated in front of the weaving-loom with her back to it, with the light upon her, and finally she will sit weaving with her back to the wall of light, behind the loom."

[45] This reading is supported through the additional examples of Circe and Calypso, both of whom weave rather than spin: Circe weaves until she is interrupted by Odysseus, who enters her home and asserts masculine dominance, while Calypso is found weaving at the moment when Hermes arrives to give her Zeus' orders to free Odysseus. Thus, even for immortal women, weaving suggests the incompleteness of their lives without a man and

their "identity is defined and validated only through their relationships with male companions" (Pantelia 1993.498).

[46] Suzuki 1992.68 notes that because she is Paris' wife and has been treated kindly by both Hector and Priam, Helen's emphasis on her renewed loyalty to the Greeks "entails a problematic betrayal of the Trojans: her rejoicing over the deaths of Trojan warriors in the midst of bewildered and grieving Trojan women casts a sinister light on her loyalty, the very quality she intends to illustrate by her story."

[47] Winkler 1990.141.

[48] See Bergren 1981.205ff.

[49] Bergren 1981.205-06; see also Clader 1976.37.

[50] Bergren 1981.206; see also Clader 1976.32-33 and Suzuki 1989.66ff.

[51] Bergren 1981.207.

[52] Noted in Clader 1976.33.

[53] Bergren 1981.206-07.

[54] Bergren 1981.207; see also Clader 1976.33 and Suzuki 1989.68ff.

[55] Suzuki 1992.70-1. Suzuki notes in particular the convergence of poetry and heroism in the comparison of Odysseus, as he strings the bow before the showdown with the suitors, to a bard (21.404-11).

[56] Pietro Pucci (1987. *Odysseus Polytropos: Intertextual Readings in the* Odyssey *and the* Iliad. Ithaca. 209-13; noted in Doherty 1995.60-62) argues that the Sirens' song is connected with epic discourse, and, like Helen's drug, it undermines male narrative control. Thus, the Sirens, like Helen, illustrate a feminine concern with remembrance and appropriation of spheres of activity normally gendered as male. Ann Bergren (1983.

"Language and the Female in Early Greek Thought," *Arethusa* 16. 69-95), however, has argued that the idea of a female "Muse" of epic poetry itself represents male appropriation of female speech (noted in Doherty 1995.62).

[57] Worman 2001.32.

[58] Bergren 1981.209 and Austin 1994.79.

[59] Lateiner 1992.142. Suzuki 1989.72-73 elaborates on this parallel, noting that Helen "emasculated her husband by her past elopement and by her present assertion of superiority over him," while Calypso and Circe detain Odysseus, keeping him (temporarily at least) in their power.

[60] Austin 1994. 73.

[61] See "Helen" in Chapter 2; see also Austin 1994.72ff.

[62] J. A. Scott 1930.384 attributed Helen's ability to mimic the wives of the Greek commanders, very few of whom she could have known, to "her more than human origin." At the same time, he defends her recognition of Telemachus, whom she has never met, on the basis of features similar to his father's as "natural and common."

[63] See Clader 1976.34 and Bergren 1981.210.

[64] S. Douglas Olson 1989.391 explores these two stories as "subtle acts of self-justification, self-explanation, and mutual recrimination" and sees them as setting up the action in Books 17-21, where Odysseus enters his palace in disguise, and, as in Helen and Menelaus' stories, he will be in mortal danger if detected. Helen's story suggests a scenario where he might identify himself to Penelope and act against the suitors in collusion with her, whereas Menelaus' story suggests that he would be wise to keep her in the dark (Olson 1989.391). As Olson sees it, Menelaus' story is privileged as the

"right" one, suggesting that "collective male society as a whole and the values it supports… depends on the active suppression of the husband's instinctive desire to share his secrets (and thus his 'true identity') with his wife" (Olson 1989.392-393). Clader 1976.35 notes that since Menelaus' story follows Helen's, it is in the "stronger narrative position," leading the audience to view his story as the more credible one. See also Bergren 1981.205-10. Cp. Wohl. 1993-34-35, where she argues that the veracity of *both* stories must be questioned, and that Helen is "neither and both" the "good" Helen of her own story and the "bad" Helen of Menelaus'.

[65] Bergren 1981.210.

[66] Bergren 1981.210.

[67] Suzuki 1992.67 sees Homer's intent here as a little more drastic, saying that he "robs Helen in Sparta of any power to act with consequence, thereby relegating her to the margins of his narrative" in order to "blame and hence to scapegoat her as the evil wife."

[68] Some scholars take Menelaus' words more straightforwardly (see Groton 1968.35, Austin 1994.82, and Worman 2001.31 and 34). Ryan 1965.117, too, sees Menelaus' story as somewhat less calculated, believing he tells it innocently in order to illustrate his wife's cleverness, whereas its unintended effect is to demonstrate her perfidy.

[69] Groton 1968.35 fn.1. See "Helen" in Chapter 2.

[70] Groton 1968.38.

[71] Ryan 1965.117. See "Helen" in Chapter 2.

[72] Worman 2001.35 notes that the wedding this robe symbolizes is "precisely the ritual whose luxurious trappings and illicit transgression [Helen] symbolizes," once again pointing to the ambiguity and contradiction inherent in her presentation.

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[73] See "Helen" in Chapter 2.

[74] According to Austin 1994.26, Helen's special status is emphasized in the *Odyssey* at 4.561-69, which, in stating that as her husband, Menelaus will be transported to the Isles of the Blessed at the end of his life, implies that she too will be spared death and even rewarded in the afterlife.

[75] See Harris and Platzner 2008.145ff.

[76] Vidal-Naquet 1986.26ff. Vidal-Naquet 1986.29 relates this difference to the "land-based character" of the representatives of the real world as opposed to the distinctly maritime nature of the Phaeacians at a time when the Greeks of Homer's age were beginning to embark on colonization in the west.

[77] Dougherty 2001.133 notes the typical elements of a rape narrative here, where a nubile young girl playing with her maids by the water's edge is approached by a strange man (cp. Persephone, Cyrene, and, I might add, Europa).

[78] Although he doesn't analyze these particular passages, Lateiner 1995.244 recognizes Arete as a "pre-echo" to Penelope in that she "fulfills difficult to reconcile patriarchal duties and self-interest by means of sex-dichotomized nonverbal and verbal behaviors."

[79] Harris and Platzner 2008.196.

[80] Wohl 1993.23. Wohl further notes that the woman beside an image of the *axis mundi* (variously represented as "a loom, a roofpillar, and a bedpost"), suggests that "the woman must revolve around the man; while he supports the universe, her cooperation is essential. The woman's role is defined and prescribed by the symbolic phallus."

[81] Pantelia 1993.499-500; see also "Helen" above.

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[82] Suzuki 1989.65 extends the comparison of Helen's gift of recognition to include Argus the dog, noting that Helen's frequent epithet *kynopides* ("dog-faced") strengthens this association.

[83] See Doherty 1992.167 and Wohl 1993.29ff.

[84] Vidal-Naquet 1986.29.

[85] Doherty 1992.167.

[86] Doherty 1992.163ff argues that Arete and Helen's presence in the banquet hall is to be seen as unusual in the context of the *Odyssey* based both on Demodocus' story in Book 8, where an exclusively male audience of gods comes to witness Ares and Aphrodite's humiliation at being caught in bed by Hephaestus, and on Telemachus' rebuke of Penelope in Book 1, where he criticizes her interference and sends her back to her quarters after she asks the bard to change his song. Doherty 1992.167 further notes that even Arete and Helen are not "fully integrated into the masculine activities of the banquet," since both spin and weave with their maidservants while the men eat and drink.

[87] Wohl 1993.31.

[88] Doherty 1992.168.

[89] Doherty 1992.171.

[90] Doherty 1992.175.

[91] Doherty 1992.173.

[92] Wohl 1993.36. Wohl 1993.37 goes on to argue that the presentation of these women offers a counterpoint to the story of Clytemnestra that occupies the second part of the *Nekuia* and this contrast, like the two stories about Helen in Book 4, functions as "an ideological attempt, though positive and negative *exempla*, to regulate female creativity

in a socially productive way so that women will give birth to heroes, rather than murder kings."

[93] Vidal-Naquet 1986.26ff; see also "Nausicaa and Arete" above.

[94] It should be noted that the male household servants are judged by a similar yardstick. As slaves themselves, however, it might be argued that these men occupy a disenfranchised position that feminizes them to the extent that they, too, demonstrate conformity to the Topography of Shame. Along similar lines, Lateiner 1995.247 notes that other marginalized figures, such as Telemachus, with his lack of control over his household, and the "beggar," who feigns the loss of his home, his physical prowess, and his position, similarly emphasize their disenfranchised positions strategically in order to "subvert the dominant discourse" of the suitors.

[95] See "Calypso and Circe" above.

[96] Bordo 1993.8-9.

[97] See Carson 1995.

[98] See Du Boulay 1974.201-29 (Chapter 9: "Gossip, Friendship, and Quarrels").

[99] Levine 1984.6-7 argues that even after Odysseus silences her here, "[s]he cannot keep her glee within herself...and continues to laugh aloud until rebuked again – this time by Penelope," further illustrating her irrepressible "feminine" nature.

[100] Levine 1984.8 also explores this contrast, noting in particular that Odysseus' smile at 20.301 "functions as a counterpoint to Eurykleia's loud laugh of victory (23.1, 59) and proves the truth of the scholiast's comment that smiling is more noble and austere than laughter ([Lord Chesterfield *Letters* 19 October O. S. 1748 (1598 Dobrée)] on *Iliad* 7.212)."

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[101] Lateiner 1995.254 too notes that Eurycleia "conforms to emotional, excessively expressive, and incautious female stereotypes beloved by misogynists everywhere."

[102] Felson-Rubin 1994.23 and 29-30 sees Penelope's reproach of Melantho, which follows and parallels a reproach by the beggar, as further "yoking or pairing" the couple, both rhetorically and by illustrating their shared disapproval of female boldness, thereby demonstrating the *homophrosyne* discussed elsewhere in this chapter (see "Athena" and "Penelope").

[103] Winkler 1990.149 suggests that Penelope's rebuke of Melantho at 19.91-92 identifies her in particular as responsible for exposing Penelope's secret.

[104] Harsh 1950.10. See also Winkler 1990.148-49 for more on the maids as a potential source of information leakage.

[105] Lateiner 1995.254. Lateiner also sees the maidservants' neglect of the dog Argus (noted at 17.319-23) as another indication of their lack of self-restraint (1995.254), and positions their neglect and exclusion of the dog as "surrogate contempt" for his master (1992.155). For more on the laughter of the maids, see Levine 1987.

[106] Levine 1987.26. Levine 1987.23 also juxtaposes Penelope's laughter at 17.542 and 18.163 with the laughter of the maidservants, arguing that the former "connotes knowledge and loyalty" while the latter "connotes blindness, rebelliousness, and sexual misbehavior."

[107] Lateiner 1992.139 and159-60.

[108] In a few cases, Eurykleia and Eurynome appear where a group of maidservants are also present. In these cases, however, they do not demonstrate solidarity with the group, but speak and function apart from the others. In Book 4, for instance, Penelope addresses

a group of maidservants, but Eurycleia, who alone responds, is set off from the rest when she reveals that she alone knew that Telemachus had set forth for the mainland (4.745-49). In the incident in Book 17 discussed above, where Eurynome aligns her interests with Penelope and the household and against the suitors, we have been told that Penelope was δμῳῇσι γυναιξίν/ ἡμένη ("sitting with her maids": 17.505-06). In this instance, however, Eurynome herself is not particularly linked with the other maids, and Eurynome's sentiments spoken in response to her mistress' initial comments (εἰ γὰρ ἐπ' ἀρῇσιν τέλος ἡμετέρῃσι γένοιτο – "If some fulfillment of our prayers would come about": 17.496) align her with Penelope rather than with the other maidservants. In other cases, both Eurynome and Eurycleia regularly appear as individuals rather than as part of a group of maidservants.

[109] Loraux 1993.75. For a broad overview of this topic, see Loraux 1993.72-110 (Chapter 2: "On the Race of Women and Some of Its Tribes: Hesiod and Semonides").

[110] Loraux 1993.89.

[111] Loraux 1987. Loraux's article focuses on tragedy, but she discusses some mythological exempla from the epic tradition, and most of her assertions, which are framed as cultural generalizations, work for Homeric epic as well.

[112] See Loraux 1987.

[113] Gainsford 2003.56.

[114] Gainsford 2003.56. Eurycleia was the daughter of Ops, the son of Peisenor (1.429-31); Laertes had purchased her in their youth at a high price. Eumaeus indicates at 15.412-14 that his father was a king. For Eurycleia's devotion to the household, see discussion "The

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Serving Women" above; for Eumaeus' transference of allegiance from his natal household to Odysseus', see 14.140-44.

[115] See Doherty 1995.33-34. A significant drawback of the analyst position is that it denies that Homer might be purposely holding his cards close to his chest in the same way his characters are concerned with doing (for more on this, see Winkler 1990.143-45 and 156-61).

[116] Katz, Marilyn A. 1991. *Penelope's Renown: Meaning and Indeterminacy in the* Odyssey. Princeton. 78 and 94; noted in Doherty 1995.34 and 52. Katz 1991.93ff sees Penelope's character as split, and ultimately characterized by an "indeterminacy" which also surrounds the figure of Odysseus, though less wholly (noted in Doherty 1995.52-53).

[117] Doherty 1995.34 acknowledges the work of Milman Parry and Albert Lord, who have demonstrated that the rules of consistency in the oral-traditional mode of these epics' composition differ considerably from those of authors who compose works to be read (see Lord, Albert B. 1960. *The Singer of Tales*, Chapter 6. Cambridge MA).

[118] As Winkler 1990.158-59 notes, Homer's narrative is entirely one-sided, told "from the point of view of male anxiety"; thus, while for Penelope the stranger's identity is uncertain, the audience is never asked to question it, while on the contrary, we are asked to wonder along with Odysseus about his wife's fidelity, a discrepancy highlighted at the moment Odysseus, the master trickster, is himself tricked (23.173-204). Lateiner 1995.249-50, therefore, argues that the unitarian view, constructed from the narrator's andrifocal point of view, disempowers Penelope by positioning her as illogical, emotional, and confused, a "'weeping and sleeping' pathetic beauty." This reading, however, seems at odds with the elite Greek male's need to bolster his honor through his

wife's virtue: no man would want to marry a woman who would put his household at such a competitive disadvantage. See below for other unitarian readings that view Penelope in a more positive light.

[119] Doherty 1995.33.

[120] Murnaghan 1987.105.

[121] Winkler 1990.142.

[122] Foley 1995.100-106.

[123] See Doherty 1995.40.

[124] Harsh 1950.esp. 10-18 (noted in Murnaghan 1987.111, Winkler 1990.155, and Doherty 1995.36). Winkler 1990.160 rejects the ideas of Harsh and his followers in favor of his own somewhat more conservative view (see below) that Penelope suspects the beggar's identity but is only "99% certain" because he believes that if she did recognize him wholly, Penelope would have no reason to test Odysseus in Book 23. While I prefer Winkler's more conservative approach, I believe an argument could be made that Penelope is testing her husband in Book 23 in order to reassure him about her caution and to demonstrate and confirm her wariness to the household rather than simply to satisfy her own doubts.

[125] Suzuki 1989.77.

[126] Suzuki 1989.80.

[127] Amory, Anne. 1983. "The Reunion of Odysseus and Penelope." *Essays on the* Odyssey, C. H. Taylor Jr., ed. Bloomington. 100-21; noted in Murnaghan 1987.111 and Doherty 1995.37-38.

[128] Doherty 1995.38. For an overview of the scholarly interpretations of Penelope's awareness of the beggar's identity or lack thereof presented here, as well as a few others, see Doherty 1995.39ff.

[129] Winkler 1990.142-43 and 145ff.

[130] Felson-Rubin 1994.4-5.

[131] As Felson-Rubin 1994.5 and 37 argues, the audience is invited to ponder Penelope's precise position until 23.205 when her "knees go slack"; thus, the audience and Penelope are aligned in that their doubts and uncertainties are simultaneously relieved.

[132] At the same time, Doherty 1995.48 points out that while both Winkler and Felson-Rubin try to remove Penelope from the role of victim and offer her a positive, active role in shaping her own destiny, both scholars ultimately fail to "[move] outside the androcentric frame" since both attempt to empower Penelope by demonstrating that she is "*like Odysseus*, or *like the (male) poet*" (See also Doherty 1995.45-49).

[133] Foley 1995.107.

[134] Penelope's dependence as a woman on her nearest male kin is illustrated in Book 4 where, upon learning that Telemachus has sailed in search of news of his father, Penelope's first instinct is to send for her father-in-law Laertes.

[135] Pantelia 1993.497.

[136] Lateiner 1995.243-44. Lateiner suggests that women in modern Greece are still so compelled.

[137] Lateiner 1992.144.

[138] Foley 1995.97ff points out that the text presents confusing information about who ultimately has the right to decide whether or not Penelope remarries: "[s]ometimes the

choice to remarry is said to be Penelope's alone; sometimes it lies in the hands of her son or father; sometimes the decision is a joint one in which Penelope will decide in conjunction with her son or father." Despite these inconsistencies, "it appears that her preference plays an essential role in the process..." (1995.99).

[139] Felson-Rubin 1994.36-37. Worman's observation that Helen's cultic connections with both Aphrodite and Artemis "indicate her failure to make the transition to a stable marital status" lends further support to the idea that Penelope's similar dual association is intended to cast her in an ambiguous light (2001.20; following Calame, Claude. 1997 (1977). *Choruses of Young Women in Ancient Greece: Their Morphology, Religious Role, and Social Function*, new and revised ed. Trans. Derek Collins and Jane Orion. Landham, MD. 191-93).

[140] In contrast, Felson-Rubin 1994.3 argues that images other than that of the faithful wife – such as "the coy tease, the enchantress, the unreliable mother, the adulteress, the hard-hearted wife – are ultimately contradicted or fail to fulfill their narrative potential."

[141] Foley 1995.97.

[142] Myerowitz Levine 1995. See also Lateiner 1995.255.

[143] Lateiner 1992.151.

[144] Doherty 1992.165-66. Matthew Clark 2001.339 sees Telemachus' rebukes of his mother here and later in this epic as attempts to assert masculine authority as head of the household which form part of his "coming-of-age." Wohl 1993.38-39, on the other hand, sees these interactions as attempts on Penelope's part to secure political and economic power, bids which are forestalled by Telemachus.

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[145] As Suzuki 1989.70 notes, these lines echo Hector's speech to Andromache in Book 6 of the *Iliad*, and thereby "underscore the *Odyssey*'s divergence from its predecessor in conceiving poetry, not war, as the privileged activity that Telemachus wants to claim as his male prerogative."

[146] Sharon James' study of women's speech in Roman comedy (2005.21-22) finds a similar principle at play: James finds that Sostrata of Terence's *Heautontimoroumenos*, for example, is timid when speaking on behalf of her daughter but protective and assertive when acting in her son's interests.

[147] At 22.355-60, Telemachus takes steps to save Medon, saying that he took care of him as a child.

[148] Felson-Rubin 1994.28 identifies this as an instance of Lesky's "double-motivation," suggesting the possibility that Penelope suspects the stranger's identity or that she enjoys the attentions of the suitors, or both. Wohl 1993.40-41, on the other hand, sees this as an act of "sexual self-assertion" in a "conscious bid for authority through the only channels available to a woman." While Wohl in my view overstates Penelope's ambitions by suggesting, as noted above, that she is here and elsewhere jockeying for genuine political power (Wohl 1993.38-39), her view of Penelope's use of her sexuality for her own advantage otherwise works well with my arguments. Winkler 1990.146-47, in contrast, argues that "Homer arranges both that [Penelope] seduces and that she not be blamable for any seduction, since she is acting strictly in the interests of her household, her son, and her husband." While I agree with Winkler's general point, I see it, too, as overstated, since Penelope does in fact derive some personal benefit from her appearance separate from the advantages it gives to her male kin.

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[149] Seth Schein 1995.17-18 notes that while there are relatively few physical descriptions of the female characters in the *Odyssey*, women are regularly characterized by the effects their appearances have on others, a technique most prominent in the case of Penelope. Thus, as Felson-Rubin 1994.3 notes, Penelope "functions both as a subject weaving her own plot and as an object constituted by the gazes of various male characters."

[150] Penelope's pretext for appearing in front of the suitors and her "real intention" are both related to bolstering the position of her male kin, either by acting in their defense or in accruing the feminine honor – honor which reflects wholly on the husband – that derives from sexual desirability.

[151] Suzuki 1989.79 suggests that Penelope's protests that her beauty has faded "underscore the fact that her enjoyment of her own attractiveness signifies her knowledge that Odysseus is present to witness it."

[152] Felson-Rubin 1994.29.

[153] Along similar lines, Lateiner 1995.255 argues that Penelope's "nightly crying jags convey nonverbally her public image and her self-image as lonely, but loyal, wife and mother, a very real victim," an image that would be presented primarily for the benefit of her maidservants.

[154] See Levine 1987.25.

[155] Lateiner 1992.152.

[156] Murnaghan 1987.110 notes the misogyny in the epic's logic where Penelope's possible remarriage is seen as a "reprehensible betrayal" of Odysseus despite the fact that, as Penelope notes here, he himself seems to have endorsed this course of action before he left, replicating the human "inclination to blame women for the circumstances

by which they are constrained" – and, I would add, to minimize praise for them when they negotiate these constraints successfully. Foley 1995.102, in contrast, argues that "[g]iven Telemachus' situation and Odysseus' instructions reported by Penelope in Book 19, both to remarry and not to remarry are potentially acts of moral fidelity to Odysseus." Levine 1983.177, on the other hand, argues that Penelope has invented Odysseus' instructions to remarry once their son grows his first beard. Winkler 1990.147 concurs, seeing this as a strategy to distract the suitors from their plot to kill Telemachus, as does Lateiner 1995.260, who notes that this information only emerges when she is attempting to extract bride-gifts.

[157] Not only is Odysseus' smile here a reflection of his own recognition that he and his wife share similar goals and strategies (see Schein 1995.22-23), as Lateiner 1995.258 has argued, Penelope's laugh at the beginning of this episode (18.163), like Odysseus' "sardonic smile" here at the end (and again later at 20.301-02) has no intended internal audience, but instead "signals another scheme – something up her capacious sleeve," further positioning their relationship as characterized by *homophrosyne*. Levine 1983.172, likewise, sees her laugh as "a mark of confidence when she sees that she will be able to fool the suitors." Felson-Rubin 1994.29, in contrast, suggests that Penelope's laugh at 18.163 signals her own confusion at her motivations. For more on laughter and smiling in the Homeric epics, see Levine 1982-83, 1983, and 1984.

[158] Felson-Rubin 1994.21-22 also identifies a subtle warning to his mother on Telemachus' part when he recounts Menelaus' simile of the doe that brings her fawns to a lion's lair: when the lion returns, both doe and fawns are killed.

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[159] See Winkler 1990.148-50. For more on secrecy as a social necessity in Greek culture, see Winkler 1990.133-37 and Dubisch 1986a.208-11.

[160] Winkler 1990.148ff.

[161] Lateiner 1995.253 also described Penelope's report of her shroud-trick as a "boast."

[162] Suzuki 1989.83, following Harsh 1950.14, goes this one step further, arguing that, rather than just acting as a hint to Odysseus himself or perhaps to the audience that she suspects (or knows) his true identity, Penelope here is actively prompting her maid Eurycleia to recognize her master as well. Winkler 1990.148, who reads this more narrowly as the narrator's hint to the audience, points out a similar "hint" at 17.548-50, where Penelope says to Eumaeus of the beggar, αἴ κ' αὐτὸν γνώω νημερτέα πάντ' ἐνέποντα,/ ἕσσω μιν χλαῖνάν τε χιτῶνά τε, εἵματα καλά ("If I recognize him, that he is telling the whole truth, I will give him fine clothes": Winkler trans). Winkler sees the wording here as first leading the audience to suspect that Penelope does recognize the beggar as her husband before she offers a corrective; in this way, according to Winkler, "the poet has momentarily set in our minds – and then erased – the thought that Penelope might recognize Odysseus" (Winkler 1990.148).

[163] i. e. Wohl 1993.19 and Felson-Rubin 1997.45.

[164] Noted also in Winkler 1990.147. Winkler 1990.155-56 furthers this point, arguing that "just as Odysseus is a master story-teller and is compared to an epic singer at the climactic moment when he comes into possession of the bow (21.406-9, c. 411 *aeise*), so Penelope is a master-weaver, and weaving is an appropriate image for the work of the epic poet who specializes not in recitals of heroic battle but the plotting and counter-plotting of a household in conflict."

[165] Alcinous states that Odysseus does not strike him as a lying man who would make up stories; instead, he speaks ὡς…ἀοιδὸς "like a bard" (11.368). The implication seems to be that Alcinous recognizes that Odysseus is stretching the truth, but that his intent is to entertain rather than to deceive – and that the gifts he has ordered in return are "payment" for his services as a bard.

[166] Helen Foley 1984.59, 68. See also Bolmarcich 2001.212 for more on this simile as a reflection of Odysseus' and Penelope's *homophrosyne.*

[167] Foley 1984.59.

[168] Winkler 1990.161.

[169] See Doherty 1992.173-74. Another reverse simile at 8.523-31, which compares Odysseus' grief to that of a newly widowed Trojan woman about to be taken into slavery – a metaphor that recalls Hector's forecast of Andromache's fate after the Trojan War at *Il.* 6.450-65 – offers a similar identification between masculine and feminine which provides an oblique glimpse at the possibility of women's subjectivity (see Foley 1984.59, 72 and Suzuki 1989.80-81).

[170] Suzuki 1989.91.

[171] See Harsh 1950.11-18 and Winkler 1990.145ff. Bolmarcich 2001.212 argues that regardless of whether or not Penelope recognizes the beggar, the fact that, as here, they regularly "act in concord…reflects how alike their characters are." Felson-Rubin 1994.6 likewise suggests that both περιφρῶν Penelope and cunning Odysseus occupy a mid-point on the spectrum of awareness, somewhere between the panoramic perspective of the gods and the tunnel vision of the suitors, further demonstrating their like-mindedness.

[172] Harsh 1950.16-17 and Winkler 1990.142-43. Winkler argues that Penelope has invented this dream entirely in accordance with her agenda to test the suitors.

[173] Harsh 1950.17.

[174] Winkler 1990.143.

[175] The view that Penelope suspects the beggar's identity and at this point has satisfied herself enough to suggest the critical contest is attractive in that it explains this abrupt decision which would otherwise be inadequately motivated. As Winkler 1990.154-55 argues, the alternatives – to see her decision as an act of desperation or an admission that she can no longer hold the suitors off, or, with the analysts, to "look for traces of scissors and scotch tape" – deprive both Penelope and Homer himself of the control and *metis* each demonstrates throughout the epic.

[176] Lateiner 1995.252; see also Felson-Rubin 1994.32-33. Suzuki 1989.85 argues the more extreme position that the dream, along with Penelope's tears as she handles the bow before the contest in Book 21, indicates genuine "ambivalence" about her husband's return and real distress at the prospect of the suitors' destruction.

[177] See Felson-Rubin 1994.16-17 and 33ff and Foley 1995.103-04.

[178] While Penelope in this way can be viewed as exerting power through her machinations, at the same time, Wohl 1993.42 points out that in the course of the bow contest, Penelope is reduced to an *algama*, much as we saw with women in the *Iliad*, when Eurymachus admits that it is not the woman herself so much as the throne that has been under contention (22.51-53; see also 21.249-52).

[179] Felson-Rubin 1994.18.

[180] Felson-Rubin 1994.33-34. At the same time, Felson-Rubin 1994.25 later cautions us not to exclude the possibility that Penelope sets up the contest "in good faith," fully intending it as a means of selecting a new husband, a possibility suggested by Penelope's prayer for death (20.61-83) and her private tears as she prepares the weapons for the contest (21.5-60). Those who believe Penelope is more cognizant of the situation would see these two incidences as manifestations of the anxiety that would naturally accompany a situation that has such a profound bearing on Penelope's destiny, her fear that her suspicions regarding the stranger's identity are wrong, and/or her sadness at the inevitable passing of the extended period of courtship which she has in some ways enjoyed (Felson-Rubin 1994.35-36).

[181] Felson-Rubin 1994.37-38 points out that in resolving this quarrel, Penelope fulfills the role of the "blameless king" with whom Odysseus as beggar had earlier compared her (at 19.107-14) and is placed in the company of Arete, the other queen whose power to settle quarrels, "even among men" (cf. 7.74) was marked out as exceptional.

[182] Harsh 1950.3-6 sees Penelope's skepticism here as resulting from a combination of emotion and reason: she is both emotionally overwhelmed at the sudden change in her world after twenty years and she is still on guard lest the stranger prove to be an imposter. He concludes that "[d]oubts in this scene do not preclude the existence of suspicions and hopes previously" (1950.4-5). Winkler 1990.137-38 suggests that Penelope's insistence that Odysseus is dead – an assertion set forth by Telemachus and Laertes as well – does not necessarily represent her true convictions, but is rather a means of "jockeying for position," in that it demonstrates her wariness about cherishing remote hopes.

[183] Lateiner 1995.276.

[184] Levine 1984.7 explores further implications of Odysseus' smile here, arguing that it "shows his confidence in his ultimate acceptance and his appreciation of his wife's prudence" as well as signaling that "he is undisturbed by his wife's stubbornness."

[185] Felson-Rubin 1994.38 identifies this "chastity test" as an element of folktales, usually applied to the wife by the husband, but here administered by Penelope to herself. Felson-Rubin sees this as not only a serious effort to confirm her husband's identity and to "prove" her own innocence, but also as a bit of playful eroticism on the part of Penelope, who now, at last, knows she is safe.

[186] Felson-Rubin 1994.39 and Lateiner 1995.273.

[187] Lateiner 1995.276.

[188] Lateiner 1995.278. Along similar lines, Felson-Rubin 1994.7ff argues that Penelope occupies a relatively balanced role in the husband-wife relationship, a position demonstrated in the "courtship dance" in which the two participate, where they "alternate between subordinating and dominating each other" (1994.9) and culminating in the exchange of narrations they engage in after they are reunited, where "each fits the role of teller and listener" and where each selectively interprets the events of the preceding years in light of their outcome (1994.40-41).

[189] Schein 1995.25 argues that Penelope's "refusal to join in the otherwise universal condemnation of [Helen]" here calls into question the poem's overall judgment on Helen's moral responsibility, which most readers have assumed was aligned with that of the poem's male characters. Likewise, Schein asserts, the values surrounding the character of Penelope and the overall poem itself are "open-ended, interpretively

ambivalent or indeterminate, and irreducible to a single, straightforward, one-dimensional reading" (1995.26). See also Katz 1991.esp. 3-19 and 155-95.

[190] See Suzuki 1989.75, Wohl 1993.43-44 and Felson-Rubin 1994.39-40. The parallel between Penelope and Helen finds evidence external to the epic: Diana Buitron-Oliver and Beth Cohen 1995.46-47 find further support for this parallel in Classical period art, where both women are found in a seated pose with a hand supporting the chin or head, a gesture that in this period denotes a variety of psychological states such as sadness and indecision/contemplation. Whereas most of the Penelope images have been taken to denote mourning for her absent husband, when viewed in comparison with those of Helen, whose images are taken to suggest a contemplation that in her case is likely to be sexual decision-making, the significance of Penelope's gesture too is called into question. Alternative mythological traditions, moreover, support the idea that Penelope is viewed in the *Odyssey* as a sexual threat with good reason: Wohl 1993.21.n.2, for instance, notes variations on the story of Penelope and Odysseus, one of which makes Penelope the mother of Pan either by Hermes or by *all* the suitors (see Apollod. *Epit.* 7.28; Cic. *Nat. D.* 3.22.56; and Serv. *ad Aen.* 2.44).

[191] See "Helen" above in this chapter.

[192] See "Helen" above and in Chapter 2.

[193] See Suzuki 1989.87.

[194] Lateiner 1995.244.

[195] For more on Helen as a foil for Penelope, see Clader 1976.35-40.

Chapter 4: Virgil's *Aeneid*

As with Homer's works, Virgil's *Aeneid* positions women according the Topography of Shame: in general, they demonstrate stereotypical feminine weaknesses, they view their identities as reliant upon those of men, and they tend to self-deprecate or boast at times of erotic crisis or when their relationship with their closest male kin is otherwise threatened. At the same time, Virgil wrote his epic during a period of profound historical change and under the patronage of the emperor Augustus. For this reason, his work contains a self-conscious political aspect largely absent from the Greek epics. As Kristina Milnor has shown, consideration of the interplay between politics and gender[1] ideology is particularly important during this period as women took on new roles in the civic arena while maintaining a traditional association with domestic virtue; in addition, the redefinition of public and private life that came about as the state became centered on the imperial family resulted in a new emphasis on the domestic world of women as inseparable from the public realm of politics.[2] The overriding concern with feminine virtue which resulted means that female literary figures in early imperial texts "must be understood as inseparable from the historical moment in which they were born."[3]

In laying the foundations for the new imperial state, Augustus worked to advance a set of ideologies which on the one hand accommodated new ways of participating in public life and on the other harkened back to an idyllic, virtuous past.[4] Virgil, who was undoubtedly influenced by the difficulties of the previous period of war and strife – as well as by Augustus' patronage of his work – constructs an epic which follows a broad trajectory that in many ways confirms and supports this imperial program. At the same

time, Virgil had some reason to resent the new regime. On the one hand, being from Mantua, Virgil belonged to the provincial elite, members of which arguably participated more fully in the new imperial system than they did in the late republic. On the other hand, Mantua seems to have suffered from the resettlement of veterans by Octavian. Virgil therefore would likely have identified with the Roman masculine elite who had been stripped of real power and position – in effect, "feminized" – with the changed political system. As a result, Virgil refuses simply to toe the party line: instead, his narrative repeatedly questions and challenges the hard and fast distinctions implied in imperial propaganda. As a result, the *Aeneid* both works with and plays against the gendered hierarchies that the epic genre and patriarchal ideologies tend to promote.

As emperor, Augustus encouraged a vision of the new imperial regime as ushering in a period of peace, stability, and prosperity after the civil strife and upheavals of recent years. David Quint thus sees an analogy between "the defeated, war-weary Trojan remnant in search of a new beginning and Virgil's readers, the survivors of the recent civil wars, who are offered a fresh start in the new Augustan state."[5] At the same time, Augustus' own role in the civil wars following the death of Julius Caesar was highly problematic because he both asserted power as Caesar's heir and professed to reinstitute the authority of the senate and the integrity of the republic that Caesar had worked to destroy.[6] His power-struggle with Mark Antony also presented difficulties as a violent conflict with not just a fellow Roman, but one who had formerly been allied with the same Caesar from whom Augustus himself derived his power. Augustus' solution to the former problem was to deemphasize Caesar's actions and behavior in life while promoting the late, apotheosized Caesar as a means of divinely sanctioning his rule.[7] He

dealt with the latter by displacing in the public imagination the Roman Antony as the primary target of his aggression with Antony's lover and ally, the Egyptian queen Cleopatra, effectively transforming a civil dispute into a war against a dangerous foreign threat.[8] Augustan ideology, therefore, tended to identify what was dangerous and foreign as feminine.

As a result, while ancient epic in general concerns itself with shaping societal notions of masculine and feminine identities and establishing gender hierarchies, because of the highly political nature of the *Aeneid* and its origins in the early years of Augustan rule, in Virgil's epic these gendered ideologies overlay other binary categorizations, such as "west vs. east" and "Roman vs. foreigner." By capitalizing on these identifications, Virgil in some ways aligns his narrative with the ideological tenets which best promote, and were promoted by, Augustus himself. As such, the *Aeneid* generally assigns to women the same sorts of categorical traits we have seen advanced by Aristotle and the Pythagoreans, associating them with physical weakness and an emotional instability that poses a threat to social progress. Because of their feminine frailty and mutability, women in this epic are regularly associated with strife, civil discord, and the outbreak of war[9] while men exhibit the steadfastness and reliability that enable civilization to move forward in a productive way.[10] The threat women pose to the larger goal thereby justifies their subordination. Moreover, women who transgress gender boundaries or work at cross-purposes to male designs (e.g. Dido, Camilla, and Amata) are regularly sacrificed for the Roman cause, establishing their value as secondary in the ideological framework of Augustan society.

While the poem generally seems complicit in this representation of gender roles, as Homer did in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Virgil here works both to promote current gender ideologies and to question, challenge, and redefine them on his own terms at the same time. Since Adam Parry's 1963 "The Two Voices of Vergil's *Aeneid*," scholars have recognized that this epic is surprisingly open to contradiction, offering an alternative to the dominant voice and refusing a simple "univocality." This alternative voice is often gendered feminine: because of their position "outside" the system, along with the prevailing view that they are weak and susceptible to verbal leakage, women present a "safe" and convenient vehicle through which to question and challenge dominant ideologies and propaganda. As Ruth Padel notes, "[a] fictive female voice can most sharply express the pain and resentment against the apparently unjust system productive of such pain,"[11] so that the portrayal of women as weak and emotional allows them to express opinions and emotions that run contrary to prevailing ideologies. Yet while alternate voices are given unusual prominence in the *Aeneid*, they have to resist and negotiate with the patriarchal program from a position of weakness, both because they are subject to prevailing ideologies, and because it is only by working from within the parameters of the system that Virgil can use these voices to reveal the cracks and fissures in the propagandistic façade set forth in the larger narrative. In other words, Virgil can utilize these disenfranchised women to voice opposition and resistance to Augustan norms precisely because they are understood to be categorically "wrong." In this way, women's voices might well serve as a model for the poet's own stance of veiled resistance, so that the narrative tendency to sacrifice, stifle, or silence these women indirectly points to some of the problems inherent in the larger patriarchal program. As a

relatively disenfranchised elite male under a controlling imperialistic regime, the author thus takes advantage of the limitations imposed upon him in the strictures of imperial propaganda in order to promote an alternative agenda. In so navigating a treacherous ideological landscape from "under the radar," Virgil in many ways parallels women like Penelope and Helen whom we have seen negotiating similar personal agendas while working within the limits outlined by the Topography of Shame. Like these women, it might be argued that Virgil here uses the tools at his disposal and works from within the constraints of the system to negotiate an individualized position while appearing to promote and support the broader social ideologies dictated by the Augustan regime. As such, Virgil explores the feminine position as a metaphor for the separation from power the Roman male elite felt as part of the changed political system,[12] suggesting that the Augustan principate in a sense forces Roman men to co-exist in the Topography of Shame.

Goddesses

While, once again, mortal women are the focus of this examination, a word concerning goddesses is in order, as figures like Juno and Venus not only play a large part in shaping the narrative, but they also provide a divine template for how gender roles function for mortal women. As we have seen in Homer's epics, the attitudes and behaviors of these immortal females conform to the stereotypes typically laid out for women: they are vengeful, vain, scheming, manipulative, and irrational, and as a result of these traits, they are associated with strife, they threaten the establishment of order, and they serve as obstacles to the patriarchal goal of empire-building. The depiction of Juno

and Venus as always scheming with only their individual purposes and desires in mind is reinforced by the complementary portrayal of male gods, such as Jupiter and Mercury, who regularly work to further the larger, more significant goal of founding Rome, a contrast Allison Keith identifies as part of "a consistent pattern of antithesis between male and female in the *Aeneid*."[13] At the same time, we might consider that rather than endorsing these divisions, Virgil utilizes these female voices as a means of expressing opposition to the patriarchal perspective. In addition, he ultimately complicates this seemingly straightforward dichotomy, issuing a challenge to the sorts of gender categorizations he initially seems at pains to corroborate through these divine exempla.

Virgil calls attention to the role of females as instigators of discord from the very start, presenting the wrath of a goddess scorned as the chief obstacle to Aeneas' goal in his poem's proem: he tells us that Aeneas' progress was hindered as he was buffeted by land and sea *saevae memorem Iunonis ob iram* ("on account of the unforgetting wrath of savage Juno": 1.4).[14] Juno hates the Trojans for three reasons: she favors Carthage and she knows that the descendents of Aeneas are destined to destroy it; she holds a grudge for the judgment of Paris; and she resents the honor given to *rapti Ganymedis* ("Ganymede seized": 1.28). While the first of these three reasons does not seem to be a grievance that is (stereo)typically "female,"[15] two out of three of the causes given for Juno's malevolence stem from slights to her standing with men: she nurses grief over *iudicium Paridis spretaeque iniuria formae* ("the judgment of Paris and the injury to her scorned beauty": 1.27), and she feels threatened by Jupiter's attraction to a young Trojan boy. The primary mover of the plot, then, is Juno and her wrath, which is repeatedly

characterized as a wound to her self-image (she is *dolens* – "suffering" – at 1.9; the *causae irarum saevique dolores* – "causes of her wrath and her fierce pain" – are noted at 1.25-32; and she is *aeternum servans sub pectore volnus* – "holding fast the eternal wound in her breast" – at 1.36), specifically as it relates to the diminishment of her sexual standing with men. As R.O.A.M. Lyne puts it, Juno is cast a goddess "who feels hugely offended because of slights to her beauty, sexuality, and, as she sees it, honour" rather than because of an outraged sense of justice or morality; her behavior, as a result, is cast as "unfair, arbitrary, and unpredictable."[16] Virgil thus positions women's vanity as an obstacle to social and political advancement, and in this way, he makes prominent the issue of gender identities, using a divine model to prefigure the importance that this issue will take on the human level in this epic.

Virgil presents Juno's hostility as particularly feminine in that it is both excessive and irrationally directed at an innocent man: *Musa, mihi causas memora, quo numine laeso,/ quidve dolens, regina deum tot volvere casus/ insignem pietate virum, tot adire labores/ impulerit. Tantaene animis caelestibus irae?* ("Muse, remind me of the causes, why her divinity was so wounded, or suffering what thing the queen of the gods drove a man outstanding in piety to endure so many disasters, to undergo so many trials. Can such rage [seize] immortal spirits?": 1.8-11). Juno goes on to initiate the action of the epic, when, seeing the Trojans sailing out from Sicily, she refuses to sit back and do nothing, but instead arranges for a storm to hinder them. This action is cast as petty and vain when she implies that she takes it chiefly because she measures her worth against that of other goddesses: *Pallasne exurere classem/ Argivum atque ipsos potuit submergere ponto, unius ob noxam..?/... Ast ego, quae divom incedo regina, Iovisque/ et*

soror et coniunx, una cum gente tot annos/ bella gero! ("Wasn't Pallas able to burn up the Argive fleet and drown the men themselves in the sea on account of the crime of just one man…? …But I, who stride forth as queen of the gods, both sister and wife of Jove, I wage war for so many years with one race of men!": 1.39-47).

Juno continues to be a figure of intense animosity who promotes strife and discord throughout the epic. Not only does she harry Aeneas and undercut his advancement, she repeatedly promotes the outbreak of war, routinely making use of females, both mortal and divine, to carry out her schemes. For example, Juno seduces Aeolus into causing the aforementioned storm in Book 1 by offering him one of her nymphs (1.71-75); she sends the messenger goddess Iris, who disguises herself as the mortal woman Beroe, to encourage the Trojan matrons to burn the fleet (5.605ff); she utilizes the Fury Allecto to instigate Latinus' wife Amata's attempt to disrupt the alliance her husband has made with the Trojans (7.323ff) by prompting her into a Bacchic frenzy that soon infects the other mothers of Latium[17]; and she later exhorts Turnus' sister, the nymph Juturna, to overturn a truce between the Trojans and the Italians (12.138ff). Juno's use of female figures to execute her schemes and stir up strife works well with the ancient view of women as more vulnerable to daemonic possession as a result of their inherent feminine weakness[18]; in addition, the partnership of mortal and divine in these episodes reinforces the gendering of civil strife and discord in this epic as particularly feminine.

The prevailing characterization of Juno, then, seems to conform with stereotypical views of women as petty, unreasonable, and threatening. Moreover, despite her extraordinary divine power and position, she will ultimately have to put aside her wrath

and *consilia in melius referet* ("bring back a better mindset": 1.281) since *sit placitum* ("that would please [Jupiter]": 1.283). Thus, here as in Homer, the dominant message is that the feminine must be conquered and subsumed under patriarchal authority in order for peace and order to be established.

This straightforward notion of gender categories seems to work on the surface, because, as David Quint puts it, "[t]he advantage of ideology…is its capacity to simplify, to make hard and fast distinctions and draw up sides."[19] If we take a larger view, however, the system itself requires that the "feminine" not really be conquered, since it must continue to exist in order to define the masculine as its opposite: Jupiter, in other words, needs Juno to be petty and irrational in order to delineate his own position as the rational embodiment of law and order. In this way, both Homer and Virgil construct a double message around women, requiring them to be controlled and obedient in order to support the patriarchal agenda, but at the same time needing them not to be in order for the Topography of Shame to function. As a result, in order to exert authority and power, women must disguise their machinations behind a screen of attitudes and behaviors that are gendered feminine. In light of this, we might reconsider the motivations behind Juno's rage towards Aeneas and the Trojans: despite the emphasis on locating her wrath in slights to her self-image, the foremost reason Virgil gives for her animosity is a political concern for preserving a city under her patronage. Because the Topography of Shame is more comfortable ascribing feminine impulses to women's behavior, we might interpret the weight given to less practical considerations as a screen that patriarchal ideologies put in place in order to make women less threatening. Indeed, Virgil seems to hint at this possibility in giving this political consideration "top billing." At the same

time, we might bear in mind that the cultural assumption that women's voices are categorically "wrong" makes them convenient tools for voicing opposition. As such, we see in Virgil an overlap between what is constituted as feminine and resistance to Roman imperial power, a dynamic which Juno's malevolence towards Aeneas aptly illustrates.

In contrast to Juno's opposition to Aeneas as a representative of Roman imperial power, Venus, as Aeneas' mother, generally functions as a divine ally to her son in his quest to found Rome,[20] an alignment that complicates the gendering of resistance to Roman imperial power as feminine. Despite her characterization as *kourotrophos*, however, rather than exhibiting the feminine virtues we would expect to see in a woman whose goals are in harmony with the patriarchal agenda, Venus exhibits many of the same negative "feminine" traits we have seen in Juno: she is vain, petty, scheming, and manipulative. For example, Venus initially approaches her son disguised as a young huntress rather than in her true form; when Aeneas finally recognizes her, he berates his mother for *falsis ludis imaginibus* ("duping him with false images": 1.407-08) and says he prefers to talk with her in *veras...voces* ("true voices": 1.409). He thus opposes his mother's false and manipulative nature to his own, which he implies is sincere and straight-dealing by comparison. Additionally, Venus presents herself in this scene in an explicitly sexual manner – her hair flies loose in the wind and her robe is cinched up to expose her knees (1.318-20) – so that despite her supportive disposition, Venus is unable to occupy unproblematically a maternal stance towards her son as a result of the sexuality and duplicity which more or less define her. Even with her son, Venus seems to derive her identity from her sexual appeal, and she furthermore delights in false appearances

where there seems to be no external motivation. Even a benevolent goddess, thus, exhibits characteristic feminine weaknesses that we have seen tend to work at cross-purposes to patriarchal goals.

In addition to deriving her self-image from her sexual appeal, Venus, like Juno, measures her value by the external standard of comparison with others. When she complains to Jupiter of her son's ongoing struggles compared with the happy fate of Antenor (1.242-49), she implies that this inequity suggests her own devaluation (1.250-53):

> *nos, tua progenies, caeli quibus adnuis arcem,*
> *navibus (infandum!) amissis, unius ob iram*
> *prodimur atque Italis longe disiungimur oris.*
> *Hic pietatis honos? Sic nos in sceptra reponis?*
>
> "But we, your own offspring, to whom you have promised the citadel of heaven,
> Our ships have been lost – unspeakable! – on account of the wrath of one
> We are betrayed, and we are far removed from Italian shores.
> Is this the reward for piety? Is this how you restore our royal dominion?

Venus' speech here is presented as a calculated attempt to manipulate Jupiter's favor towards her son, which indeed it achieves, since we learn that as a result of their conversation, Jupiter ensures that *regina quietum/ accipit in Teucros animum mentemque benignam* ("queen [Dido] received a calm spirit and a benevolent mind towards the Teucrians": 1.303-04). This characterization of Venus as a manipulator is borne out repeatedly in the first few books of this epic. For instance, while her son talks to Dido, Venus *novas artes, nova pectore versat/* [*c*]*onsilia* ("concocts new arts, new plans in her breast": 1.657-58) – plans that again involve false appearances: she substitutes her son Cupid for Aeneas' son Iulus in order to ensure that Dido is favorable to Aeneas, plotting by means of gifts to *furentem/ incendat reginam, atque ossibus implicet ignem* ("inflame

the raging queen, and set a fire in her bones": 1.659-60). She specifies, moreover, that she intends to do this in an underhanded way: *capere ante dolis...meditor* ("...I plan to capture the queen beforehand with tricks...": 1.673-74). Later, she joins forces with Juno in another scheme designed to arrange an isolated rendezvous between Aeneas and Dido, once again to manipulate her son's continuing security among the Carthaginians.

Moreover, although she works on behalf of the patriarchal program rather than against it, Venus is characterized as using feminine strategies to achieve her goals. When she lobbies Jupiter to attend to Aeneas' interests, she acts on behalf of her son as the Topography of Shame requires, and she does so using the feminine strategies at her disposal. At the same time, as her speech (1.250-53; quoted above) with its first person plural perspective implies, her son's political interests are an extension of her own, a circumstance that reminds us that in the Augustan era, the domestic realm is inseparable from the public arena of politics. We might then consider that she is in some ways using a motivation that the Topography of Shame sanctions as legitimate in order to promote her own political ends, goals which would be deemed as threatening if pursued more overtly.

In this way, the scheming, manipulative behavior of Juno and Venus in this epic conforms to the Topography of Shame, which does not allow women formal power and therefore requires them to use indirect means of persuasion or deceit to achieve their goals. Both goddesses' actions are, on the surface, framed as motivated by the particulars of their relationships to men: Juno's "irrational" wrath stems primarily from the threat she sees to her self-worth as measured by her sexual attractiveness to men, while Venus' manipulative behavior is motivated by her desire to promote the interests of her son rather than her own political position in the Olympian hierarchy. As such, these

goddesses seem to foreground the issue of women's self-image, providing a paradigm for mortal women's attitudes and behaviors. Yet behind the scheming and machinations of these females, we might detect more rational, practical motives that the Topography of Shame works to disguise. As such Virgil highlights the image of women which patriarchal ideologies are invested in promoting, while simultaneously exposing this negative image as a veneer that the Topography of Shame imposes on women in order to perpetuate its own goals.

Virgil brings this façade into sharper relief in Book 10, when, at the council of the gods, Venus accuses Juno of being at the root of all the Trojans' problems (10.18-62): not only do Venus and Juno butt heads here, but Juno is also once again framed as an instigator, the architect, in fact, of all of Aeneas' woes. Initially, the fact that one female deity characterizes another as an instigator seems to reinforce the implications of the larger narrative; yet Virgil promptly challenges this engendering by following Venus' complaint with Juno's vigorous and logical self-defense speech, where she rightly points out both the role of fate and the contributions that mortal men make to bringing about their own troubles (10.63-95). As such, Juno's speech problematizes the ideological "given" the broader narrative has until this point conveyed and calls into question the very gendered stereotypes her character has served to reinforce. In this way, although the behavior and characterization of both Juno and Venus at first seem to promote the gendered ideologies mapped out by the patriarchal system, Virgil here issues a challenge to these assumptions rather than giving them what initially seemed to be a sort of "divine sanction." Furthermore, in addition to chipping away at the very notion of clear-cut gender categorizations, Virgil's depiction of these goddesses may disguise a mildly

subversive political message: as the progenitor, in this Roman context, of the Julian *gens*, Venus' behavior serves not only as a powerful, and perhaps cautionary, model for the behavior of imperial women such as Livia, but also as a comment upon the manipulative strategies of Augustus himself in crafting his imperial position. Thus, once again, the complexities of Virgil's narrative can be interpreted as both bolstering Augustan ideologies and problematizing them at the same time, a dynamic we must bear in mind when turning our attention to the mortal counterparts of these divine females.

Creusa

Although Creusa's role in this epic is small, she plays an important part in modeling an ideal Roman matron, while also providing an early and seemingly unproblematic example of conformity to the Topography of Shame. Yet the image of Creusa as a feminine ideal is complicated by its context: because her story is told from Aeneas' biased perspective, Virgil encourages us to wonder whether she is a woman who truly "buys into" the tenets of the Topography of Shame or a constructed product of what patriarchal ideals imagine a virtuous matron to be.

In Aeneas' account of the fall of Troy, Creusa is unmentioned until Venus informs Aeneas, who is vainly but courageously attempting to save the city, of the futility of resisting, reminding him that his father Anchises, his wife Creusa, and his son Ascanius are at home alone and undefended. Creusa remains silently in the background as Aeneas pleads with Anchises, who at first refuses to flee with them to safety, and she only emerges from the shadows when Aeneas moves to strap his armor back on in preparation to rejoin the fray. Here, Creusa obstructs his path and, holding up their small

son Iulus, asks Aeneas not to desert them, begging him on behalf of his father, his son, and lastly, herself. Creusa, therefore, is a silent and indistinct figure until she moves to act for the safety of her male relations, appropriately ranking her own interests last.[21] Creusa's actions therefore function in accordance with the Topography of Shame, but because her primary interest is in keeping her principal male kin connections safe even at the expense of the pursuit of glory, her request causes a crisis of priorities for Aeneas, who is now caught between public duty and private responsibilities. Thus, as we have seen with women like Andromache in Homer's *Iliad*, even women who are largely cast as positive or benign ultimately threaten to compromise the public interests and larger goals of the men they love. Here, the crisis is averted when a portent from the gods brings the two spheres into alignment: the divine flame that licks Ascanius' temples acts as an omen of his auspicious destiny, signaling that Aeneas must attend to his family – in particular, his son – as a means of perpetuating the Trojan race. This *deus ex machina* brings private and public interests into convergence – prefiguring the intersection between these two spheres in the Augustan age – as Aeneas moves to save his family while beginning his journey to establish what will become Rome.

Despite the essential connection implied here between public and private, the narrative immediately repositions women as expendable in the interests of the larger political agenda, as is demonstrated in the famous vignette of Aeneas and his family making their way out of the burning city: Aeneas carries his father, who holds the *penates*, and leads his son by the hand, ordering Creusa to follow behind *longe vestigia* ("with feet at a distance": 2.711). The formation they take reproduces the relative valuations Creusa has just implied verbally, prioritizing the male and emphasizing the

woman's nonessential nature,[22] an attitude replicated in contemporary Roman visual depictions, which commonly omit Creusa.[23] The disposability of the female this vignette implies is substantiated almost immediately when Creusa is lost and goes unmissed for some time.[24] Aeneas, moreover, seems to excuse himself from responsibility for this loss and instead implies Creusa's own culpability when he says *et comites natumque virumque fefellit* ("she failed her companions, her son, and her husband": 2.744), illustrating once again a tendency in the ancient world to blame the (female) victim. As a result, when Aeneas must then delay his flight and risk his life in order to find her, Creusa is positioned as a potential threat to the success of Aeneas' mission at its inception, even as she is being cast aside for the good of Aeneas' larger destiny.

When the lost Creusa appears as a shade to Aeneas, the words she speaks to him are again indicative of how she regards herself and estimates her value: she asks him to leave off his grief, since fate did not permit her to accompany him out of Troy; she relates to him the hard road he must take to his new homeland, where he will obtain a new kingdom and a royal bride; and she reassures him, *Non ego Myrmidonum sedes Dolopumve superbas/ aspiciam, aut Graiis servitum matribus ibo,/ Dardanis, et divae Veneris nurus* ("I will not see the haughty seats of Myrmidons or Dolopians, nor will I, a Dardanian woman and daughter-in-law of the divine Venus, go as a slave to Greek matrons": 2.785-87). By suggesting that her fate was to die in order to make way for Aeneas' new, younger, politically expedient bride, Creusa positions herself – and by extension, women categorically – as marginal in the project of Roman advancement. Significantly, she also takes care to inform her husband that her virtue has not been compromised, sexually or otherwise. As Rebecca Langlands has shown, *pudicitia*

("modesty" or "virtue," specifically in relation to sexuality), a central ethical quality in the Roman world, was a vital personal trait that married women needed to display publicly.[25] Because women are vulnerable to the advances and assaults of lustful men, they "need responsible and incorruptible companions to protect them…"[26] in order that their *pudicitia* be preserved. Creusa, therefore, both acknowledges the significance of her sexual chastity as a reflection on her husband's honor and the importance of reassuring Aeneas that he has not fallen short as a protector and guardian of his wife's virtue. At the same time, Creusa's prophetic speech reminds us that women served an essential role in the transmission of information,[27] a point emphasized elsewhere in this epic as well – for instance, in the Harpy Celaeno's prediction to Aeneas in Book 3 (3.247-57), and in the Sibyl's prophecies to and guidance of Aeneas in Book 6 (see 6.83-97, 125-55, 322-30, and 562-627).

In general, then, Creusa represents an ideal Roman wife: she is passive and silent until she needs to act on behalf of her male relations; she gives herself over entirely to fate, willingly sacrificing herself for her husband's goals and the good of society at large; she conscientiously attends to her feminine virtue as a means of bolstering the honor of her husband; and she properly channels her feminine tendency towards verbal leakage by acting as an information conduit which works towards the advancement of the male agenda. This idealized portrait of a Roman matron, moreover, is echoed soon thereafter in the brief glimpse we get of Andromache in Aeneas' tale of his journey. Despite her enslavement and subsequent marriage to Helenus, Andromache remains a *univira* in spirit: when Aeneas approaches, she is pouring out libations to Hector's memory; when she sees Aeneas, her first thought is of Hector; when she asks after Ascanius, it is again

in relation to Hector as his uncle; and when she bids the Trojans farewell, she offers Ascanius a gift meant to remind him of the love she bears him as Hector's wife.[28] Thus, long after her husband's death, Andromache continues to center her thoughts and activities on his memory. Like Creusa, Andromache acts as a model of the ideal wife who unquestioningly accepts and works within the male-dictated parameters of the Topography of Shame to support her husband's needs and goals at the expense of her own interests.

Yet while the portraits of both Creusa and Andromache initially seem to be straightforward promotions of patriarchally-dictated gender ideologies, both women are exclusively presented from Aeneas' perspective. These accounts may reasonably be read as colored, since Aeneas, as the poem's primary, if somewhat reluctant, mortal representative of masculine patriarchal values and agendas, may indeed be virtually blind to women's subtle manipulation of the particulars of a system whose primary function is to bolster patriarchal ideals and ideologies. This possibility is supported by Aeneas' tendency to neglect advice and misread omens in this book. For instance, Aeneas twice straps on his armor and sets out to fight the Greeks despite supernatural indications that he is to do otherwise – first following the ghost of Hector's disclosure that the city is lost and his injunction to Aeneas to take to the sea and seek to establish a new city (2.281-95), and again after his goddess-mother's command that he attend to his family, accompanied by her divine revelation of the gods' role in Troy's fall (2.594-620) – actions which suggest Aeneas' stubborn inclination to deal with difficulties by falling back on familiar strategies. Shortly thereafter, when a tongue of fire shoots from his son Ascanius' head, Aeneas frantically attempts to douse the flames rather than recognizing it as an

auspicious omen, a failure that demonstrates Aeneas' propensity to view matters superficially rather than to seek a deeper meaning.[29] Alternately, we may attribute Creusa's and Andromache's virtually unproblematic conformance to the Topography of Shame here as a willful reconstruction on Aeneas' part, as he works to convey to Dido – who will in the future act, temporarily at least, as his "wife" – what constitutes the proper attitudes and behavior for a Roman matron.

Moreover, as Lyne argues, Virgil hints at the problematic aspects of this episode by contrasting Aeneas' cold, unresponsive attitude towards the living Creusa[30] with his behavior after her death, where he displays in "passionate superabundance" the emotion he felt but repressed while she was alive. Because he exhibits a particular concern for her well-being and makes his affection known only to her shade, Aeneas in his account calls attention to the problematic gendered hierarchies he himself works to promote. By illustrating Aeneas' capacity for such demonstrations "too late," Virgil explicitly signifies the "lamentable consequences" inherent in the policy the larger epic advocates.[31]

Dido

Virgil's Dido is a complex figure, as is suggested by the numerous women – and men – with whom she is compared or on whom scholars have argued her character is modeled: these include Cleopatra, Medea,[32] and Ajax most commonly, but also Penthesilea,[33] Ariadne,[34] Phaedra,[35] Alcestis,[36] Heracles,[37] and the wife of Hasdrubal, the last commander of Carthage,[38] among others. The various models on which her character relies, only a few of which I will explore here, offer a wide spectrum of associations that

color the audience's view of Dido's gendered behavior and offer various, sometimes contradictory, ways of interpreting her actions and attitudes.

As an independent political leader, Dido initially appears to manifest a noble, self-assured character that positions her as an "honorary male," posing a challenge to the black and white gendered categories and hierarchies the *Aeneid* outwardly works to establish. By throwing her lot in with Aeneas, however, she seems to cast off her masculine side and embrace her feminine role, in effect reaffirming the gender ideologies the Augustan regime is at pains to promote. When their affair goes sour, Dido seems to react to this erotic disaster with the loss of control and excess of passion the Topography of Shame would lead us to expect of a woman no longer under the restraining influence of a male. These superficial readings work in accordance with the broader patriarchal view of women's nature, a perspective aligned with the Topography of Shame and the Augustan agenda. As we shall see, however, Virgil repeatedly hints at alternative readings which challenge these simplistic gender categorizations and ask us to consider whether these more obvious interpretations might be patriarchally-imposed perspectives employed to produce a picture of Dido in accordance with traditional expectations of women. In other words, while Dido in the end is painted as uncontrolled, unrestrained, and emotional, we are asked to consider if, like Penelope, she may be capitalizing on these feminine modes of acting in an attempt to access power and authority that would be otherwise unavailable to her. As such, once again, Virgil's narrative simultaneously works to illustrate the ideologies that underlay Augustan propaganda and to expose their inner workings.

More than any other woman in the epics of classical antiquity, Dido assumes a powerful, active – in ancient terms, masculine – role which she generally fills in a noble and capable manner. Ironically, she is freed to take up this "masculine" position only after assuming an ideal role for women: after Pygmalion murders her husband Sychaeus, Dido takes vengeance on her brother and swears allegiance to her dead husband's memory, thus taking on the role of a *univira*.[39] In assuming this unusual position of power, then, Dido has behaved in accordance with the Topography of Shame: she takes action, but in the interests of her late husband – in fact, at his instigation, since the impetus for Dido's flight is the urging of Sychaeus' ghost (1.356-59). Indeed, rather than manifesting her own political independence and identity in the first place, we might see Dido as a sort of "stand-in" for her late husband. For this reason, Dido initially manifests a relatively unconflicted attitude towards the self even in her unusual leadership position: she is a respected ruler who conducts the business of her city capably and with apparent self-confidence. Virgil's descriptions of Dido's rule, for instance, convey a sense of competence and an air of authority: he tells us that *instans operi regnisque futuris… saepta armis, solioque alte subnixa resedit* ("pursuing the work of her coming kingdom… surrounded by guards, she sat down, resting on her high throne": 1.504-06); and that *[i]ura dabat legesque viris, operumque laborem/ partibus aequabat iustis, aut sorte trahebat* ("she gave judgments and laws to men and she portioned out work and labor in equal parts, or she drew lots": 1.507-08). The positive nature of her authority is reinforced in this context by her "Romanness," suggested by the justice and mercy on which she bases her reign, the *hospitium* she offers the Trojans, and her use of the

vocabulary of political union to expose Aeneas' problematic behavior and rationalize her own.[40]

However, Dido's assumption of a masculine role is not unproblematic. On the one hand, these statements are tempered by references to her beauty (she is *forma pulcherrima* – "most lovely in body": 1.496) and suggestions of her *pudicitia* in her comparison with the virgin goddess Diana (1.498-502), virtues that are particularly feminine. These feminine associations are strengthened by Virgil's reuse of the Homeric simile which introduces Nausicaa (οἵη δ' Ἄρτεμις εἶσι κατ' οὔρεα ἰοχέαιρα,/ ἢ κατὰ Τηΰγετον περιμήκετον ἢ Ἐρύμανθον,/ τερπομένη κάπροισι καὶ ὠκείῃς ἐλάφοισι:/ τῇ δέ θ' ἅμα νύμφαι, κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο,/ ἀγρονόμοι παίζουσι, γέγηθε δέ τε φρένα Λητώ:/ πασάων δ' ὑπὲρ ἥ γε κάρη ἔχει ἠδὲ μέτωπα,/ ῥεῖά τ' ἀριγνώτη πέλεται, καλαὶ δέ τε πᾶσαι:/ ὣς ἥ γ' ἀμφιπόλοισι μετέπρεπε παρθένος ἀδμής – "...just as Artemis, shooter of arrows, moves on the mountains, either along Taygetus or on high Erymanthus, delighting in boars and swift deer; and along with her the wild nymphs, daughters of Aegis-bearing Zeus, play, and Leto rejoices in her heart: for [Artemis] holds her head and her brows above all the rest, and easily she is recognized moving among them, [though] all are beautiful: so too [Nausicaa], an untamed virgin, distinguished herself among her haidmaids": 6.102-10), and its application here to Dido instead (*Qualis in Eurotae ripis aut per iuga Cynthi/ exercet Diana choros, quam mille secutae/ hinc atque hinc glomerantur oreades; illa pharetram/ fert umero, gradiensque deas supereminet omnis:/ Latonae tacitum pertemptant gaudia pectus:/ talis erat Dido* – "Just as on the banks of the Eurotus or along the ridges of Cynthus Diana trains her chorus, and following her a

thousand Oreads gather here and there; she bears a quiver on her shoulder, and walking, she towers over all the goddesses: and joys seize Latona's silent breast: such was Dido": 1.498-503). This allusion to Nausicaa reminds us of Dido's feminine marriageability, while foreshadowing the fact that the marriage will not in fact take place. At the same time, Nausicaa's professed concern with reputation corresponds with Dido's political concerns as queen of the Carthaginians. Yet Virgil describes Dido as a *dux femina* (1.364), a term which some Roman authors use of a female ruler in order to indicate societal dysfunction, where female usurpation of male power indicates a society "gone awry,"[41] reminding us once again that her position of authority is at odds with her gender. Scholars have also noted a difference between Dido's speech and that of male leaders like Latinus, a discrepancy which they generally attribute to her femininity. Commentators have often suggested, for instance, that Dido's speeches in Book 1 are direct, simple, and sincere, whereas Latinus' speech welcoming Aeneas in Book 7 is "a mobilisation of allusion and scholarly rhetoric to create masculine exclusivity."[42]

Helen Lovatt, however, detects something more complex in Dido's speeches, recognizing in them a complex interplay between masculine and feminine qualities. While Lovatt agrees that Dido's speech is different in nature from those of men like Ilioneus and Latinus, she argues that Dido's apparent directness masks an artful engagement with Greek language and culture,[43] qualities which position her speech as learned and well-considered – in other words, masculine – rather than merely simple. At the same time, Lovatt also notes a "breathy" quality to Dido's speeches in Book 1 (1.561-78 and 1. 615-30) created by an extremely high percentage of elisions per line when

compared with the *Aeneid* as a whole and with the lines of male speakers, such as Ilioneus, Achates, Aeneas, and Latinus, in comparable situations. Lovatt tentatively attributes this "breathiness" to an indication of emotional intensity that Virgil seems to be characterizing as feminine.[44] Lovatt also sees Dido's speech as feminine in its extraordinary responsiveness, where Dido carefully addresses each concern that first Ilioneus and then Aeneas presents to her.[45] Lovatt's assessment is supported by Joseph Farrell's observation that classical accounts of women's Latin tended to characterize it as, among other things, emotional,[46] as well as Jane Stevenson's analysis of 2nd-3rd century epitaphs, in which she finds that "those which speak in a woman's voice are more immediate, more personal, and more directly concerned with the relationship between the living and the dead than those which speak with the voices of men."[47]

Dido likewise exhibits both masculine and feminine qualities in her use of language: her speech is masculine in its strength and assertiveness, evident, for example, in its frequent imperatives (*solvite* and *secludite* at 1.562; *subducite* at 573; *agite* and *succedite* at 1.627) and first person singular verbs (*dimittam* and *iuvabo* at 1.571; *dimittam* and *iubebo* at 577); but feminine in its passive constructions (*Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur* – "Trojan and Tyrian will be led by me with no distinction": 1.574; [*t*]*empore iam ex illo casus mihi cognitus urbis*– "From that time the downfall of your city has been known to me": 1.623) and in Dido's characterization of herself as a passive victim of fortune (*Res dura et regni novitas me talia cogunt moliri* – "Harsh circumstances and the newness of my kingdom compel me to set in place such measures": 1.563-64; and *Me quoque per multos similes fortuna labores/ iactatam* – "Fortune also [drove] me, harried, through many similar hardships": 1.629-30).[48] Dido's

speeches here also contain archaisms, a penchant for which both Plato (*Cra.* 418c) and Cicero (*De or.* 3.7.45) connected with women,[49] as well as allusions to masculine speech patterns that derive from comedy.[50] The result is that Dido's speeches contain "mixed messages" in that her language is "both archaic and colloquial, epic and comic, feminine and masculine."[51]

Moreover, the self-assured masculine *habitus* Dido seemed to manifest with her assertive entry is contradicted when, approached by Ilioneus, her words and body language indicate deference, apprehension, and insecurity: she answers him with eyes lowered (*voltum dimissa* – "dropping her gaze": 1.461) and responds apologetically, citing compulsion, to his complaint that her people will not permit the Trojans to land[52] (1.563-64). Additionally, in contrast to Latinus' reception of the Trojans in Book 7, Lovatt sees it as significant that here, both Ilioneus and then Aeneas speak first, and Dido responds to them, suggesting Dido's deference and the male speakers' superior power.[53] Despite Dido's initial presentation as an "honorary male," then, a closer look suggests that she manifests a sense of shame where we would not expect it from a man, demonstrating an ingrained way of behaving – a feminine *habitus* – that she cannot shed, despite her elevation to a position of power and authority.

Other scholars have detected additional indications in Dido's speech that while she governs capably, she does so with a womanly bent: for instance, when Dido offers Aeneas refuge, she expresses a sympathetic identification with the Trojans' situation: *Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco* ("Not ignorant of hardship myself, I have learned to help the wretched": 1.630; see also 1.628-29 discussed above). Lovatt argues that this sense of empathy, pervasive in Dido's initial speeches to the Trojans, stands in

direct contrast to Latinus' much more distant brand of sympathy when he recognizes that Aeneas has endured *qualia multa mari nautae patiuntur in alto* ("many such things as sailors suffer on the high sea": 7.200).[54] Lovatt also notes a difference in the concerns that lay behind the responses both Dido and Latinus give to the Trojans: whereas Dido's answer is generally focused on the Trojans and reassuring them that they have found a safe haven and a sympathetic ally,[55] Latinus, while offering the Trojans what they want, exhibits a prevailing concern with the future of his own race, and their name and immortality in particular.[56]

In this way, in Dido's opening speeches, Virgil suggests that although she exerts authority through channels typically gendered male, she does so by accessing feminine language and strategies like deference and sympathy.[57] In order to negotiate the difficult gulf between masculine and feminine, women (then as now) are required to be "bilingual," since, as Thorsten Fögen puts it, "[w]omen's language was almost always understood in antiquity as a deviation from the male norm. If, on the other hand, women did not behave as they were expected to and acted more like male speakers, this was perceived as a transgression of boundaries and a threat to male domains."[58] While Dido's speech is to some extent feminized, "she is continually negotiating the contradictions of her position, protecting and displaying her power as a monarch and her pride in her city, while assuming a position of humility and unpretentiousness, deftly and concisely displaying her knowledge and culture.... [H]er rhetorical skill negotiates a complex situation (or rather series of situations) in a subtle way, keeping hold of her authority, but using the height of art to give an impression of simplicity."[59] Dido's situation thus recalls the position of women, who under the Augustan regime both took on new public roles

and at the same time, were expected to maintain traditional domestic virtues. As we have seen with Penelope, Dido as presented in Book 1 skillfully negotiates this difficult position by capitalizing on the tools available to her under the Topography of Shame, thereby maintaining a non-threatening image in order to achieve a certain degree of control and authority.

Despite her intelligence and capability in negotiating the treacherous landscape of the Topography of Shame, because of her inherent feminine weakness, Dido, like so many other women of epic, is easily manipulated by the gods: Cupid finds an easy means of infecting her with a deadly passion for Aeneas using her womanly bent for children – *infelix.../ expleri mentem nequit ardescitque tuendo/ Phoenissa... petit haec oculis, haec pectore toto/ haeret et interdum gremio fovet...* ("The unlucky Phoenician... was not able to sate her mind and she is burned by what she sees...she sought [the boy] with her eyes, she clung to him with her whole breast, and she warmed him in her lap": 1.712-18) – as well as her frivolous desire for pretty things – *et pariter puero donisque movetur* ("she was moved equally by the boy and by the gifts": 1.714).[60] Once she is infected with love for Aeneas, Dido becomes conflicted, seemingly torn not between her more masculine role as leader and her longing to become Aeneas' wife, but between two components of her feminine identity: her status as a *univira* and her love for Aeneas, who threatens this identity.

In considering a marriage with Aeneas, Dido turns to her sister Anna, who appeals to both Dido's feminine identity and her masculine role: to Dido the woman, she argues that her feminine identity is incomplete, since she has not born children; appealing

to her masculine side, she argues that an alliance with the Trojans would strengthen her kingdom's position. Here, Anna exposes direct and practical political calculation by women, and demonstrates fairly explicitly that in order to achieve political goals, women must be prepared to use feminine rationalizations as a "cover." As a result, Anna appears threatening, a characterization reflected in Ovid's *Fasti* (3.523-656: *Idus* 15th), where, driven from Carthage by hostile forces after her sister's death, Anna takes refuge with Aeneas, but is driven out by the jealousy of Lavinia. Interestingly, Lavinia's behavior here too can be read as utilizing women's strategies to achieve a political goal: although Ovid casts her animosity towards Anna as motivated by sexual jealousy, she may well be equally prompted by the threat Anna might pose to her status and position as Aeneas' wife.

In response to Anna's advice, Dido acts as both male and female in her attempts to bring about a successful union with Aeneas. She makes the rounds of the city's shrines, praying for the gods' blessing, a role most often assigned to women; she is weakened by her desire, pining for Aeneas in a typically female fashion[61]; and she dotes on Ascanius, taking him into her lap in a motherly gesture. In contrast, being without male kinship ties – she has no father, husband, or brother – Dido acts in some ways as her own guardian, giving Aeneas a tour of her city to show him what he might gain through a marriage with her, filling a typically male role in Roman match-making; yet the city she shows him is symbolically presented as a dowry, positioning her part in the union itself as explicitly the feminine one.

Dido's masculine/feminine dilemma illustrates the fine line she has to negotiate as a woman fulfilling what is typically a male role. From the patriarchal perspective, giving

herself to Aeneas suggests Dido's weakness and susceptibility to feminine passion, as a result of which she compromises her full devotion to her role as ruler of Carthage and sacrifices her *univira* status – her claim to feminine honor. This view is suggested both by the guilt she feels over this betrayal, demonstrated by her attempts to appease the gods even before she acts upon her feelings, and by the poet's statement that *coniugium vocat; hoc praetexit nomine culpam* ("she calls [her union with Aeneas] marriage, and with that word she conceals her sin": 4.172). However, Virgil's occasional use of women's voices to question patriarchal ideologies should alert us that we might look beyond this more obvious reading. While on the surface Dido's desperate passion for Aeneas seems irrationally lodged in emotion, prioritizing her personal desires over political expediency, at the same time, her actions are simultaneously based in sound political logic. Although clearly a competent leader, as the female ruler of a start-up kingdom Dido's position is somewhat precarious: indeed, while contemplating her attraction to Aeneas, Dido's sister Anna, as noted above, reminds her that she is surrounded by hostile neighbors: *placitone etiam pugnabis amori?/ Nec venit in mentem, quorum consederis arvis?/ Hinc Gaetulae urbes, genus insuperabile bello,/ et Numidae infreni cingunt et inhospita Syrtis;/ hinc deserta siti regio, lateque furentes/ Barcaei. Quid bella Tyro surgentia dicam,/ germanique minas?* ("Will you even struggle against such an agreeable love? Do you not bear in mind in whose lands you have settled? Here the Gaetulians, a race unconquerable in war, hem you in, and the unbridled Numidians and the hostile Syrtis; there, a region forsaken in drought, and the Barcaeans raging far and wide. What should I say of the wars roiling in Tyre, and your brother's threats?": 4.38-44). It seems unlikely, then, that Dido can remain unmarried or unattacked in her current position. Given these pressures,

allying herself with Aeneas makes political sense – particularly, given the Trojans' apparent political connections with Sicily – as does masking her motivation behind less threatening "feminine" impulses. Since the Topography of Shame seems to demand that women screen their intelligence behind silence or emotional outbursts, when we get either – especially from a poet as complex and multi-layered as Virgil – we ought to see an invitation to read through to some possible practical or political motivations. Just as Penelope navigates the Topography of Shame by disguising her stratagems behind a veil of tears, Dido here may be attempting a similar sort of negotiation.

The view of Dido as a savvy politician who stakes her fortunes on an alliance with a powerful Roman male works well with the allusion many scholars have detected in Virgil's portrait of Dido to Cleopatra VII, the Egyptian queen who came into conflict with Octavian in the final years of the republic. In addition to the obvious parallel between two powerful African queens who are driven to suicide through their interactions with Romans (or future Romans), Virgil's picture of Dido's appearance before the hunt in Book 4 recalls Cleopatra both in nature and appearance: *Tandem progreditur, magna stipante caterva,/ Sidoniam picto chlamydem circumdata limbo./ Cui pharetra ex auro, crines nodantur in aurum,/ aurea purpuream subnectit fibula vestem* ("Finally she emerged, with a great crowd pressing around her, enveloped in a Sidonian mantle with ornate borders. Her quiver is of gold, her hair is knotted in gold, a golden brooch fastens her purple cloak": 4.136-39).[62] Like Dido in this scene, Cleopatra not only hunted and rode horseback,[63] but popular notions also associated her with Eastern luxury and the decadence signified by excesses of purple and gold.[64] The association of Dido with

Cleopatra should prompt us to view Dido's affair with Aeneas as perhaps located as much in political expediency as in "irrational" female passion.

Yet while Dido's connection with Cleopatra helps to support the location of her motivations in political strategy, this association can at the same time be seen to reinforce Augustan ideologies. The ornamentation that connects these two women goes against Roman ideals of feminine *pudicitia*, which entail that "[a] woman must not look as if she has beautified herself or is in any way attempting to attract attention to herself"[65]; the affluence that lays behind her appearance, moreover, was seen by the proper Roman as producing indolence, and so was viewed with moral disapproval. Towards the end of the republic, Augustan propaganda, in fact, had cast Egyptian luxury and wealth as evils that stood in opposition to proper Roman *gravitas* and positioned Cleopatra in particular as an exotic foreign threat. By associating her with Cleopatra, then, Virgil's portrait of Dido recalls the strife and violence of the final years of the republic, so that discord is, once again, effectively gendered feminine.

The representation of the battle of Actium on the immortal shield of Aeneas in Book 8 (675ff) reinforces the parallel between Dido and Cleopatra in a way that also seems to support Augustan ideologies. On this shield, Vulcan depicts Augustus restoring order with the defeat and death of Cleopatra, reinforcing the notion that because women are associated with strife and discord, they must be conquered – Cleopatra in a literal sense, and Dido more metaphorically – in epic as in life, for peace and prosperity to prevail. This imagery also drives home the point that in successfully resisting her exotic African charms, Aeneas prefigures Augustus, who represents victory and Roman virtue, as opposed to Antony, who succumbed to, and was destroyed by, his degenerate *Aegyptia*

coniunx ("Egyptian wife": 8.688). The suppression of Cleopatra's name in this episode, moreover, supports an ideology that maintains that "[w]oman cannot possess an independent political identity,"[66] while at the same time, "the opposition between East and West becomes the otherness of the second sex."[67] Thus, Virgil links "Jupiter on the divine level, Aeneas on the mythological, and…Augustus, on the historical, as the legitimate authors of…*pax* and order," to a corresponding association of Juno, Dido, and Cleopatra with strife[68]; as a result, the defeat of the female characters in this epic reflects the establishment of peace and order ushered in by Augustus in the early years of his rule.[69]

Like Cleopatra, who Augustus had positioned as luring Antony away from his Roman duty to a life of luxury and indolence, Dido threatens to distract Aeneas from his larger purpose through her charms. The particularly feminine nature of this threat is highlighted by Iarbas' prayer to Jupiter complaining that Dido has turned her affections towards Aeneas despite what he sees as his own superior claim (4.206-18) – in effect, a "proper" male-to-male appeal to the need for supervision over a woman. Without such supervision, Dido poses a threat to Aeneas' manhood, just as Augustan propaganda had cast Antony as feminized by his relationship with Cleopatra. Iarbas' prayer in turn prompts Jupiter to send Mercury off to reassert the proper patriarchal order. When Mercury appears to remind him of his duty, Aeneas appears to be feminized by his voluntary subordination to a woman: he is clothed in a rich Tyrian mantle, a gift from Dido, and, as Mercury points out, he neglects his own duties in order to further her interests: *Tu nunc Karthaginis altae/ fundamenta locas, pulchramque uxorius urbem/ exstruis? heu, regni rerumque oblite tuarum!* ("Are you now laying the foundations of

lofty Carthage, and building up the beautiful city of a woman? Alas! You have forgotten your own kingdom and your own affairs!": 4.265-67). Mercury's rebuke, however, immediately jolts Aeneas back to his senses: *Aeneas aspectu obmutuit amens,/ arrectaeque horrore comae, et vox faucibus haesit./ Ardet abire fuga dulcisque relinquere terras,/ attonitus tanto monitu imperioque deorum* ("Aeneas, maddened, was struck dumb by this vision, his hair bristled in horror and his voice stuck in this throat. He burns to flee, to leave behind these lovely lands, astonished by such a warning and the command of the gods": 4.279-82). Thus, although the danger posed by a sexually alluring, exotic woman initially threatened to "unman" Aeneas, in the end his better instincts prevail and he is reconciled to the larger patriarchal program: he becomes, in effect, an Augustus rather than an Antony. Dido's connection with Cleopatra, then, in many ways works with the ideological program Augustus worked to promote; yet as we have seen, this same association should remind us to stay alert for practical and political motivations behind the excess of emotion for which Dido has become famous.

Aeneas' decision to leave prompts an erotic crisis for Dido, who desperately works to preserve the alliance she has established, recognizing that no alternate male kinship alliance will present itself. Throughout Book 4, Dido is presented as constantly wavering between love and hate for Aeneas; between pleading with him to pity her and cursing him for deserting her; and between blaming him and blaming herself. This vacillation corresponds to the boasting and self-deprecation that usually accompanies an erotic crisis, as directing blame towards others implies that one's own behavior in contrast has been correct, while blaming oneself suggests recognition of one's own

shortcomings. Having lost the connection to the male tie around which she had anticipated centering herself, the predominant narrative voice depicts Dido as succumbing to the typical feminine weaknesses which so often become manifest when women are not subjugated to the control and authority of men: she loses control, wavers indecisively, rages wildly, pleads pitifully, and threatens bitterly.

Dido's emotional turmoil is laid out for the audience through a series of impassioned speeches where Virgil metaphorically turns her inside out and offers an "autopsy of her psychological state."[70] Dido's first confrontation with Aeneas initially suggests indignation: *Dissimulare etiam sperasti, perfide, tantum/ posse nefas tacitusque mea decedere terra?* ("Did you hope, traitor, to be able to conceal such a great crime and to leave my land in silence?": 4.305-06). By positioning Aeneas as duplicitous and his action as a crime,[71] Dido suggests that she sees herself as worthy of better; in the questions she poses to Aeneas immediately afterwards, however, she betrays doubt of her own self-worth: *Nec te noster amor, nec te data dextera quondam/ nec moritura tenet crudeli funere Dido?/... Mene fugis?* ("Will not our love, nor your right hand formerly given, nor Dido about to die a cruel death hold you back?... Is it me you flee?": 4.307-14). The small degree of self-worth suggested by Dido's indignation is additionally undercut by her pleas for pity (4.314-23):

> *Per ego has lacrimas dextramque tuam te*
> *(quando aliud mihi iam miserae nihil ipsa reliqui)*
> *per conubia nostra, per inceptos hymenaeos,*
> *si bene quid de te merui, fuit aut tibi quicquam*
> *dulce meum, miserere domus labentis, et istam,*
> *oro, si quis adhuc precibus locus – exue mentem.*
> *Te propter Libycae gentes Nomadumque tyranni*
> *odere, infensi Tyrii; te propter eundem*
> *exstinctus pudor,*[72] *et, qua sola sidera adibam,*
> *fama prior.*

"By these tears and your right hand –
(Since I have left nothing else now for my wretched self)
By our marriage and our recent vows,
If I have ever well deserved something from you, or if I was ever
something sweet to you, pity a house about to fall, and,
I'm begging you, if there is still a place for prayers, put off your intention.
Because of you, the Libyan tribes and the Numidian tyrants
Hate me, and my own Tyrians are hostile. Because of you leaving,
My modesty is extinguished, and my prior reputation,
by which alone I was reaching the stars."

Dido's groveling positions her as subordinate to Aeneas and suggests a view of herself as dependent on Aeneas' charity to the extent that without him, she has nothing, not even honor, a virtue she sees, as did the ancient world in general, as effectively dependent on public reputation.[73] Moreover, Dido indicates feelings of being used for Aeneas' political and personal advantage before being cast aside, but her sense of abandonment is not limited to Aeneas: she now feels cut off from her former allies and even her own people. This latter point reminds us, however, that Dido is acutely aware that this failed alliance with Aeneas puts her in a precarious political position. Again, then, we might consider whether Dido's impassioned pleading and feminine wavering are strategies that Dido is using in an attempt to recoup some of her losses and gain a more advantageous political position. This possibility is strengthened when Dido goes on to ask (4.325-30):

Quid moror? An mea Pygmalion dum moenia frater
destruat aut captam ducat Gaetulus Iarbas?
Saltem si qua mihi de te suscepta fuisset
ante fugam suboles, si quis mihi parvulus aula
luderet Aeneas, qui te tamen ore referret,
non equidem omnino capta ac deserta viderer.

What am I waiting for?
For my brother Pygrmalion to destroy my walls,
Or for Gaetulian Iarbas to lead me off as a captive?
If there had been some child received by me from you

> Before your departure, if there were playing in my court
> Some little Aeneas, who would recall you with his face,
> I would not seem so completely abused and deserted."

Dido's reference to Pygmalian and Iarbas calls to mind the very real political predicament she now faces, reminding us that her rage might not just be that of a woman scorned, but based instead in practical considerations. Likewise, her desire for a *parvulus Aeneas* might be read as stemming from political motivations, since, as a likely successor to Dido's throne outside of marriage to the local nobility, a son by Aeneas would serve as a kind of political bargaining chip.

Aeneas, who, as we have seen, in many ways represents the imperial, patriarchal perspective in this epic, responds to Dido's confrontation with a speech that conforms to Roman ideals regarding suppression of emotion, a positive quality emphasized by the contrast between Dido's *accensa* ("inflamed": 4.364) condition and Aeneas' collected one (*obnixus curam sub corde premebat* – "bearing down, he presses his pain under his heart": 4.332).[74] Aeneas' taciturnity in response to Dido's verbal effusiveness also suggests a sense of self-discipline and restraint in accordance with the Roman virtue of *decorum*,[75] an essential characteristic of which is "verbal continence."[76] The juxtaposition between Dido's first irate speech to Aeneas, and his controlled response therefore suggests a fundamental inability of Dido, as woman, to restrain herself, and Aeneas' corresponding ability to censor himself and control his emotions.[77] Susanna Braund demonstrates that Virgil emphasizes Aeneas' steadfastness in contrast with Dido's mutability and lack of control through the use of the imperfect tense when describing Aeneas' reaction to Dido's diatribe (*tenebat/... premebat*: 4.331-32), and by juxtaposing

his *immota.../lumina* ("unmoving eyes": 4.331.32) with Dido's *volvens oculos* ("rolling eyes": 4.363).

Aeneas' response, then, suggests an ideal of rational masculine control and resolution. Yet at the same time, its substance is unsatisfying on both the personal and political levels (3.338-55):

> *nec coniugis umquam*
> *praetendi taedas, aut haec in foedera veni.*
> *Me si fata meis paterentur ducere vitam*
> *auspiciis et sponte mea componere curas,*
> *urbem Troianam primum dulcisque meorum*
> *reliquias colerem...*
> *sed nunc Italiam magnam Gryneus Apollo,*
> *Italiam Lyciae iussere capessere sortes;*
> *hic amor, haec patria est...*
> *me puer Ascanius capitisque iniuria cari,*
> *quem regno Hesperiae fraudo et fatalibus arvis.*

> "Never did I extend
> The marriage torches, nor did I come into this sort of contract.
> If Fate would permit me to lead my life by my own auspices
> And to arrange my affairs by my own will,
> I would concern myself with the Trojan city first, and the
> Beloved remnants of my people...
> But now, Gryneian Apollo orders me to seize great Italy,
> His Lycian lots order me to take Italy:
> Here is my love, here is my fatherland...
> And my boy Ascanius and the injury to his dear head –
> I would cheat him of his Hesperian kingdom and his fated fields."

As a response to personal concerns, Aeneas' speech comes up short. He first positions Dido's view of their union as marriage as irrational, calling her perception of reality into question[78] while at the same time suggesting his own lack of genuine investment in their love affair. Additionally, he states that his first choice in life, were it fated, would be that Troy still stood, but since that cannot be, he looks to Italy as his "love," implicitly devaluing Dido by placing her third at best.[79] Adding further insult to injury, he reminds

her that though she may not have children, he does.[80] The obtuseness with which Aeneas responds to Dido's outrage perhaps suggests the sacrifice in humanity absolute devotion to the imperial project entails. This interpretation is implied when Dido characterizes him as cold and hard after hearing this response: *Num fletu ingemuit nostro? Num lumina flexit?/ Num lacrimas victus dedit, aut miseratus amantem est?* ("Did he groan at my weeping? Did he even turn his eyes [towards me]? Did he, overcome give into tears, or did he pity the one loving him?": 4.369-70).[81]

As a response to Dido's political concerns, Aeneas' answer is also lacking: as Susan Skulsky notes, Aeneas' expectation that Dido understand his need to establish his city because of her own allegiance to Carthage disregards her immediately preceding complaint that she has compromised the security of Carthage on his account.[82] Additionally, his reminder of the inheritance owed to Ascanius ignores her implication that her own legacy is imperiled by the lack of an heir. Overall, Aeneas' response is more inflammatory than comforting: he "acknowledges no fault of his own; expresses no love for Dido, no sympathy for her pain, no regret at leaving her. Instead he attempts to exonerate himself with the superficially correct but substantively false legalism that he never actually married her."[83] Thus, what looks like masculine self-control, or *decorum*, is also more or less a lie, strengthening the connection between Aeneas and Ulysses that has been in the air throughout the first part of the epic – and in effect, bringing both the integrity and the humanity of the imperial regime Aeneas represents under scrutiny. Thus, although Virgil characterizes Aeneas as steadfast in his renewed devotion to duty, he does not ignore the cost involved in this project.

Dido reacts to Aeneas' response with a sense of incredulity. Once again, her response to him simultaneously positions her as subject to the emotional excess expected of women and hints at the possibility that her motivations for the affair were grounded in sound political reasoning as much as they were in passion. For instance, she not only wishes harm on him, but also threatens to haunt him even after her death (4.382-87):

> *Spero equidem mediis, si quid pia numina possunt,*
> *supplicia hausurum scopulis, et nomine Dido*
> *saepe vocaturum. Sequar atris ignibus absens*
> *et, cum frigida mors anima seduxerit artus,*
> *omnibus umbra locis adero. Dabis, improbe, poenas.*
> *Audiam et haec Manis veniet mihi fama sub imos.*
>
> Indeed, I hope, if some pious spirits still have power, that in the mid-[sea],
> You will swallow up your punishments among the rocks, and often
> You will call the name Dido. Though absent, I will pursue you with black fires,
> And, when cold death will have carried off your limbs from your soul,
> My ghost will be present everywhere. You will pay the penalty, you wretch.
> I will hear; the report will come to me in the depths among the shades."

Dido's words here not only suggest the negative feminine traits of spitefulness and vengeance, her threats to pursue him after death associate her with the Furies. At the same time, Dido's emphasis on revenge as an *umbra* rather than through military action hints at her distance from more tangible political power: as such, Virgil seems to be exploring the somewhat changed situation of women in the late Roman Republic and Augustan periods while reminding us that more practical motivations lurk behind the *furor* of Dido which the patriarchal narrative voice wants to position as irrational. In addition, when Dido recounts her kindnesses towards Aeneas (*Eiectum litore, egentem/ excepi et regni demens in parte locavi;/ amissam classem, socios a morte reduxi* – "I rescued him, cast out, in need, and madly, I settled him in part of my kingdom; I saved his scattered fleet, saved his companions from death": 4.373-75), the outrage she suggests

can be read as not just personal, but political: the sanctuary, hospitality, and territorial rights she has offered the Trojans and they have accepted in effect constitute a political convenant which Aeneas breaches with his action. Again, a closer reading of Dido's words prompts us to consider whether Dido may be "working the system" in much the same way Penelope did, utilizing women's traits in order to achieve a measure of power and authority.

After this initial confrontation, Dido asks her sister Anna to intercede on her behalf (4.431-36):

> *Non iam coniugium antiquum, quod prodidit, oro,*
> *nec pulchro ut Latio careat regnumque relinquat:*
> *tempus inane peto, requiem spatiumque furori,*
> *dum mea me victam doceat fortuna dolere.*
> *Extremam hanc oro veniam – miserere sororis –*
> *quam mihi cum dederit cumulatam morte remittam.*
>
> I no longer ask for our former marriage, which he forsook,
> Nor that he do without fair Latium and relinquish his realm:
> I ask but for empty time, repose and space for my passion,
> While my fortune teaches me, defeated, to grieve.
> I ask this last indulgence – pity your sister! –
> If he will grant it to me, I will pay him back with interest by my death."

Here again, Dido manifests womanly traits and suggests a negative self-image: she characterizes the time she requests as a "favor," asks for pity, and expresses a death wish. Thus, the overriding narrative voice once again positions her as subject to feminine weakness in accordance with the Topography of Shame. In consideration of our earlier detection of underlying political motivations, however, we might read her words here as a shrewd attempt to negotiate some time in order that she might make alternate arrangements for the security of her city rather than as a pathetic effort to buy a few more

hours with the lover who has rejected her. Euripides' Medea, in fact, provides a model for this in her exchange with Creon, where she pretends to beg a few hours' reprieve from exile to attend to her motherly duties as a means of covering her more politically calculated goal of exacting revenge on Jason (*Med.* lines 340-80). Aeneas' response, however, again demonstrates both resolution and callousness: in response to Anna's attempts to intercede, *nullis ille movetur/ fletibus.../fata obstant, placidasque viri deus obstruit auris* ("...he is moved by no tears...The fates stand firm, the god obstructed the unruffled ears of that man": 4.438-40); he is then described as an oak, "buffeted by Anna's pleas,"[84] but in the end, *mens immota manet* ("his mind remains unmoved": 4.441-49). Aeneas thus demonstrates both the manly Roman virtue necessary for empire-building and the loss this sort of achievement entails.

After Anna's attempt at intercession fails, Dido reflects on the options she has left to her (5.534-46):

> *En, quid ago? Rursusne procos inrisa priores*
> *experiar, Nomadumque petam conubia supplex,*
> *quos ego sim totiens iam dedignata maritos?...*
> *Quid tum, sola fuga nautas comitabor ovantis,*
> *an Tyriis omnique manu stipata meorum*
> *inferar, et, quos Sidonia vix urbe revelli,*
> *rursus agam pelago, et ventis dare vela iubebo?*
>
> What do I do? Should I, mocked, try once again
> My former suitors, should I, a suppliant, beg a marriage among the Nomads,
> Whose marriages I have now rejected so many times?...
> What then, shall I, alone in flight, follow the exulting [Trojan] sailors,
> Or shall I be brought out with my Tyrians and my whole crew
> pressing on them, even those whom I scarcely pulled out of the Sidonian city
> shall I lead them again on the sea, and order them to give their sails to the winds?

As she reviews her options, Dido here again suggests that the motivations behind her "passion" were at least in part based on a practical need to forge an appropriate political alliance. Since each alternative she considers, aside from death, involves reforming an attachment to a male, we are reminded that Dido is constrained to work within the parameters of the Topography of Shame. Indeed, what looked like Dido's political independence and identity in the first place instead may have been a kind of proxy, so that her attempt to attach herself to Aeneas was not a renunciation of independence, but rather a politically savvy move involving the transference of allegiance from a dead husband to a living one.

Because Dido executes such maneuvers under the Topography of Shame system – and likely without consciously doing so – her speech still reflects many of the traits we expect to see at a moment of extreme erotic crisis. Rejecting the options she has overviewed as unviable, she resolves to die (4.547-52):

> *...morere, ut merita es, ferroque averte dolorem.*
> *Tu lacrimis evicta meis, tu prima furentem*
> *his, germana, malis oneras atque obicis hosti.*
> *Non licuit thalami expertem sine crimine vitam*
> *degere, more ferae, tales nec tangere curas!*
> *Non servata fides cineri promissa Sychaeo!*
>
> ... die, as you deserve, turn away your pain with iron.
> You, sister, overcome by my tears, you first burdened me in my rage
> with these evils, and you exposed me to the enemy.
> It was not granted to me, taking no part in the marriage bed, to carry through
> my life without blame, as a wild beast, not to touch such cares!
> I have not preserved my faith promised to Sychaeus' ashes.

Dido's words indicate inner turmoil, as she describes herself as *invisam* ("despised": 4.541) and positions herself as pitiful. Additionally, while she faults Anna for encouraging her union with Aeneas, she makes clear that the primary blame is her own

when she characterizes herself as deserving of death, implying that she incurred guilt by abandoning her *univira* status, and reproaches herself for breaking her vow to her late husband. While practical motivations may have been behind her attempt to ally herself with Aeneas, the erotic crisis that results from the failure of this plan prompts the sort of self-deprecatory remarks that the Topography of Shame would lead us to expect.

Although the poet occasionally alerts us to the fact that Dido may well be exerting unofficial power through the channels available to her as we have seen with Penelope, the prevailing patriarchal voice of the *Aeneid* focuses on the sort of self-deprecation we see here, along with the view of Dido as irrationally ruled by passion and subject to other typical negative feminine traits. This patriarchal perspective is explicitly set forth when Mercury appears again to Aeneas and warns him that Dido *dolos dirumque nefas in pectore versat,/ certa mori, varioque irarum fluctuat aestu* ("contemplates schemes and awful sins in her breast, determined to die, and seethes in the variable heat of anger": 4.563-64). Mercury urges him to leave, reminding him that *varium et mutabile semper/ femina* ("a woman is always an inconstant and changeable thing": 4.569-70). By placing this gnomic utterance in the mouth of Mercury, who is acting as an agent of Jove himself, Virgil aligns this perspective with that of the Augustan regime.[85]

When she sees the Trojans set sail, Dido's reaction again demonstrates the vacillation and tides of emotion that have contributed to the overarching contrast between female mutability and male steadfastness advanced by patriarchal ideology: her first instinct is to marshal her forces, suggesting a sense of power and a concern for her honor (4.590-94):

> *Pro Iuppiter, ibit*
> *hic...et nostris inluserit advena regnis?*

Non arma expedient, totaque ex urbe sequentur,
diripientque rates alii navalibus? Ite,
ferte citi flammas, date vela, impellite remos!

"O Jupiter, will he go away
and will he, a stranger, mock our kingdom?
Won't [some] prepare arms, pursue him out of the whole city,
Others tear apart his boats with our ships? Come,
Quickly, bring torches, raise the sails, man the oars!"

Dido's outrage and the sense of entitlement it implies here, however, is undercut immediately by her disorientation: *Quid loquor, aut ubi sum? Quae mentem insania mutat?/ Infelix Dido, nunc te facta impia tangunt* ("What am I saying, or where am I/ What insanity has muddled my mind? Unhappy Dido, only now do these impious deeds touch you!": 4.595-96). Dido's confusion is characteristic of the emotional instability frequently attributed to women and suggests that her impulse towards action is a product of madness rather than a means of salvaging her honor. Yet because the Topography of Shame is much more comfortable seeing her as driven by emotion than as a shrewd and capable leader, if Dido has in fact gambled that it was politically expedient to "fall in love" with Aeneas, when her bet does not pay off, we might consider that she would naturally play out her hand through such emotional display and the sort of self-deprecation we have seen above.

An important issue here in looking at Dido's self-image is her reference to the *facta impia* mentioned above (4.596), a line which has caused much controversy. Some scholars take Dido to be referring to her own shortcomings – specifically, the shame she feels in abandoning her vows to Sychaeus. If so, Dido is manifesting a negative self-image stemming from what she sees as a sexual transgression against one of her male kin: she feels guilt for being unfaithful to Sychaeus, she blames herself and her weakness

for the impossible situation she is now in, and she positions herself as deserving of these rewards. If, however, as some scholars argue, she is referring to Aeneas' "foul deeds" in misleading her with a false marriage and then abandoning her without even the courtesy of letting her know about it, the implications for self-image are very different: she sees herself as unfairly abused, she holds Aeneas responsible, and she believes the punishment she has received is unjust.

Early 20th century scholars generally took the "optimistic" view that Virgil's intention was to place the blame for the affair gone wrong squarely on Dido's shoulders in order to advance a pro-Augustan program of imperial propaganda.[86] W. Warde Fowler, for instance, concluded that Virgil "...used all his resources to draw a woman whose real nature was that of Medea, of Clodia, of Cleopatra; women whose nature was utterly incompatible with all Roman ideals of family and social life," a position lauded soon thereafter by Bernard Knapp, who noted Virgil's deviation from the tradition given by Timaeus, where Dido commits suicide to avoid breaking her vows to Sychaeus.[87] Herbert Yeames exculpates even Venus in order to focus blame on Dido: "[Venus] is not responsible for the tragic ending of Dido's passion; that is the nemesis of conscience for violated vows and deserted duties, the penalty inflicted by a proud nature on its own weakness and sin"; he concludes that in portraying Dido as culpable, Virgil is "making a powerful plea for the old Roman morality."[88] Following these leads, Michael Putnam, argues that "[i]t is guilt at her own perfidy, not the treachery that she imputes to Aeneas, which frames her actions and which she alone reveals in an important moment of clarity."[89] In these views, it is through her own fault that Dido descends into the irrationality which overwhelms her after she recognizes Aeneas' determination to depart.

These readings seem to be supported by Dido's earlier admonition to herself to *morere, ut merita es* ("...die as you deserve": 4.547), by her implication that her behavior has been worthy of blame (4.550), and by her admission of guilt in her failure to keep her vow to Sychaeus (4.552). Moreover, Dido seems to demonstrate feelings of shame for this betrayal non-verbally and to associate her guilt with her sexual transgression when, as she prays over her marriage bed on the funeral pyre, she stands with one foot unsandaled and her dress unbound, signifying her unchastity (4.517-21).[90] In addition, as Ralph Hexter notes, Dido has conveniently ignored repeated references to prophecies and other indications that Aeneas' final destiny is not in Carthage, but in Italy; Hexter notes in particular the instructions of Helenus which Aeneas relates to her at 3.374-462,[91] but to this we might add the injunctions Creusa's ghost explicitly laid out, which Aeneas recounted to her at 2.780-84.

More recent critics, however, have tended more towards the "pessimistic" view, which emphasizes indications in the *Aeneid* of challenges to imperial values and the questioning of Augustan propaganda.[92] Sergio Casali, for example, asserts that the *facta impia* Dido refers to are Aeneas' rather than her own, arguing that Dido here implies she should have killed the Trojans when they first arrived and she had the chance.[93] Casali argues that the *facta impia* that Dido thinks she should have seen from the beginning refer to an alternate version of Aeneas' escape from Troy. On the basis of the *aiunt* in the following lines with reference to Aeneas' reputation (*En dextra fidesque,/ quem secum patrios aiunt portare Penates,/ quem subiisse umeris confectum aetate parentem!* – "Behold the right hand and the fidelity [of he] whom they say carried his ancestral gods, whom they say took up his father, consumed with age, upon his shoulders!": 4.597-99),

Casali argues that Dido is sarcastically suggesting that the account of the fall of Troy Aeneas has offered is false and calling to mind a variant version, current in antiquity, in which Aeneas betrays Troy to the Greeks.[94] According to Casali, this negative version was the one that had reached Carthage ahead of Aeneas, which accounts for the somewhat hostile reception Ilioneus says the Carthaginians have given him. Indeed, it is this version of events that Casali sees as being depicted in the frieze Aeneas examines on the walls of the temple of Juno[95]: *Se quoque principibus permixtum adgnovit Achivis* ("He also saw himself mixed in among the foremost of the Achaeans": 1.488). When Dido meets Aeneas, then, she welcomes him and is ready to believe his version of the events only because Venus has arranged that she be predisposed in this direction. Horsfall's analysis supports this view, reminding us that Dido has learned of the events of the Trojan War from Salamanian Teucer, one of Troy's bitterest enemies, and pointing out that the pictures on the temple overwhelmingly depict the victories of Juno's favorites[96] – images Aeneas conveniently misinterprets as positive. In addition, Aeneas is cast as a narrative double of Ulysses in the first half of the *Aeneid*, further encouraging the reader towards a negative view of him as duplicitous and scheming, since from the Trojan standpoint, Ulysses was viewed as conniving and treacherous, a negative view also found in Greek tragedy (e.g. Sophocles' *Ajax* and *Philoctetes*). When Aeneas ultimately abandons Dido and she experiences his treachery firsthand, however, she is able to recognize that the stories she had heard initially were in fact true.[97] Thus, her reference to "these foul deeds" in this context constitutes an "I should have known better" attitude.

Casali's reading is supported by the rhetorical question Dido had posed a short time before: *Nescis heu, perdita, necdum/ Laomedonteae sentis periuria gentis?* ("Alas, do you not recognize,/ doomed woman, do you not yet understand the treachery of Laomedon's race?": 4.541-42). In addition, when Ilioneus protests to Dido that *Non nos aut ferro Libycos populare Penatis/ venimus, aut raptas ad litora vertere praedas* ("We have not come to plunder Libyan penates with the sword, nor to divert snatched spoils to the shores": 1.527-28), the reader's knowledge that "his descendants in 204 and 146 will do just that"[98] might also alert the audience to be on the lookout for such indications of Trojan treachery.

With a poet of Virgil's complexity, however, it is best to view the ambiguity of this phrase as intentional. M. B. Ogle argued as early as 1924 that Virgil meant his audience to see Aeneas and Dido as equally implicated in their "sin," as they both neglect their duty – he to his mission, she to her people – and they both must atone for this sin through suffering.[99] Casali recognizes this intentional ambiguity and argues that Virgil's purpose is to allow some readers to accept this poem as simple propaganda, while calling the ideologies this propaganda promotes into question for those who choose to see further,[100] a reading which works well with the double-layered interpretation I have been advocating. Moreover, because Dido arguably employs feminine traits to advance a political agenda, we might well read her ambiguous phrasing here as referring to *both* Aeneas' and her own culpability: while Dido might here be referring to Aeneas' treachery as Casali suggests, she might well be acknowledging at the same time her own shortcoming in not having recognized his nature from the start. Thus, as her seemingly genuine expressions of self-deprecation discussed above suggest, Dido's skill in

negotiating the Topography of Shame in order to achieve practical or political ends does not preclude the possibility that she is implicated in its workings at the same time.

For this reason, Dido's words and behavior frequently suggest that she has internalized many of the notions about female nature that the Topography of Shame sets forth, which she demonstrates as this speech continues (4.600-606):

> *Non potui abreptum divellere corpus, et undis*
> *spargere? Non socios, non ipsum absumere ferro*
> *Ascanium, patriisque epulandum ponere mensis?—*
> *Verum anceps pugnae fuerat fortuna: —fuisset.*
> *Quem metui moritura? Faces in castra tulissem*
> *implessemque foros flammis natumque patremque*
> *cum genere exstinxem, memet super ipsa dedissem.*
>
> Could I not have torn apart his dragged-away body, and scattered it
> On the waves? Could I not have destroyed his companions, or Ascanius himself
> With the sword, and served him as a feast at his father's table? –
> True, the outcome of the battle had been undecided – would that it were!
> What did I, about to die, have to fear? I should have thrown torches into his camp,
> I should have filled the decks of his ships up with flames, I should have
> Extinguished son and father and his whole race, and thrown myself on top.

The excessiveness of Dido's speech casts it as feminine in its a lack of self-restraint: like Medea, Clytemnestra, or Philomela, Dido here seems a woman scorned who considers taking excessive, violent retributive action, and who therefore represents a threat to men. Moreover, her notion to serve Ascanius up as a meal to his father signifies a savagery similar to that we saw with Hecuba in her cannibalistic impulse,[101] suggesting the erosion of Dido's humanity along with the loss of her male kinship connection. Dido's negative feminine traits are again suggested when she aligns herself with dark forces and black magic[102]: she calls on the Sun, Juno, Hecate, and the *Dirae ultrices* ("vengeful Furies") to *meritum... malis advertite numen,/ et nostras audite preces* ("...turn your worthy spirit to

these evils, and hear my prayers": 4.611-12). She follows this invocation with a curse, which further positions her as irrational, excessive, and feminine (4.615-29):

> *...at bello audacis populi vexatus et armis,*
> *finibus extorris, complexu avulsus Iuli,*
> *auxilium imploret, videatque indigna suorum*
> *funera; nec, cum se sub leges pacis iniquae*
> *tradiderit, regno aut optata luce fruatur,*
> *sed cadat ante diem, mediaque inhumatus harena.*
> *...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.*
>
> ...Shaken by war and by the arms of a warlike people,
> Exiled from his borders, and torn away from the embrace of Iulus,
> Let [Aeneas] beg for aid, and let him see unworthy deaths
> of his people: and, when he has surrendered under the terms
> of an unjust peace, let him not enjoy his reign, nor the wished-for light,
> but let him die before his allotted day, and, unburied, [lie] amidst the sand.
> ...And you, O Tyrians, persecute his offspring and his whole future line
> With grudges, and send these things as a tribute to
> Dido's ashes. Let there be no love, no treaties for our people.
> And let rise up out of my bones some avenger,
> Who will pursue the Dardanian settlers with fire and with sword,
> Now, and at another time, at whatever time strength lends itself.
> May shores oppose shores, I pray, and waves oppose waves, and
> Arms oppose arms; may they themselves and their descendants be always at war."

Dido suggests feminine excess in cursing not only Aeneas and his descendants to endless generations of war, but her own Tyrians as well. This feminine irrationality is strengthened by Virgil's repeated characterization of Dido herself as a Fury: as noted above, she earlier vowed to Aeneas that she would pursue him after her death (4.384-87), and here, after invoking the Furies themselves, she calls on an avenger to pursue the Trojans on her behalf (4.625-27). In this way, Dido demonstrates many of the negative

feminine traits the Topography of Shame sets forth for women, a manifestation which the prevailing patriarchal view would see as stemming exclusively from her erotic passion; at the same time, however, the long-term political ramifications of Dido's curse once again remind us that while "love" may have played a role, political factors have been important considerations in her actions as well. In other words, Dido's allusion to the Punic Wars as a political consequence implies that the alliance that has been breached is primarily a political one.

As Dido prepares for suicide, her final speech seems to bear out this reading (4.653-58):

> *Vixi, et, quem dederat cursum fortuna, peregi,*
> *et nunc magna mei sub terras ibit imago.*
> *Urbem praeclaram statui; mea moenia vidi,*
> *ulta virum, poenas inimico a fratre recepi;*
> *felix, heu nimium felix, si litora tantum*
> *numquam Dardaniae tetigissent nostra carinae!*
>
> I have lived, and, what course fortune gave me, I have completed,
> And now my great shade will go beneath the earth.
> I built a glorious city; I saw my walls [rise];
> As an avenger, I received the penalty from my evil brother;
> Happy, alas, too happy [I would have been], if only
> Dardanian keels had not touched our shores!"

Dido's boasting about city-building and obtaining justice locates her primary focus in the public realm, while her reference to "Dardanian keels" situates her grudge as against the collective, suggesting that political considerations outweight individual, personal ones. Yet at the same time, her last thoughts are of Aeneas (4.659-62):

> *Moriemur inultae,*
> *sed moriamur...Sic, sic iuvat ire sub umbras:*
> *Hauriat hunc oculis ignem crudelis ab alto*
> *Dardanus, et nostrae secum ferat omina mortis.*

> "We will die unavenged,
> but we will die.... Thus, thus it is pleasing to go among the shades:
> The Trojan will draw up this sight with his cruel eyes from the deep
> And bear with him the omens of my death."

In her final wish, Dido hopes that Aeneas knows of and is pained by her death, and in so wishing, Dido once again implies that her sense of worth and identity are reliant on Aeneas' acknowledgment of them. As such, Dido implies that while in some ways she has "worked" the Topography of Shame system, at the same time she is not immune from its mechanics.

Dido's manner of death illustrates this tension. In womanly fashion, she manipulates Anna into arranging a funeral pyre on the pretext of using black magic, a woman's art – and an ignoble one at that – to purge herself of her grief[103]; she piles Aeneas' clothes, his picture, and her marriage bed upon the pyre in a perversion of the marriage ceremony[104]; and she commits suicide as a result of her excessive passion. Additionally, Dido's manner of death can be viewed as providing a model of virtuous behavior for women. Noting the effigy of Aeneas Dido has placed on the marriage bed (4.508), Lyne positions Dido's suicide as a sort of suttee, suggesting the complete and utter devotion to her "husband" seen as ideal in Roman women.[105] Alternately, R. J. Edgeworth argues that an important model for Dido in her death scene is the wife of the Carthaginian commander Hasdrubal, who appeared in Polybius' lost *Histories* (38.20), Appian's *Roman History*, (8.19.131) and in the lost 51st book of Livy, who, like Virgil, was a major Augustan literary figure. According to Edgeworth's reconstruction of this fragmentary narrative,[106] in the last stages of Rome's siege of Carthage in 146 BCE, Hasdrubal abandons the Carthaginian holdouts in the temple of Eshmoun and surrenders

himself to Scipio Africanus. When his wife realizes what he has done, she comes out of the temple with her children and confronts him, taking him to task for deserting her and the children without so much as a word to them. Calling him a betrayer of his country, she calls upon the gods of Carthage to take vengeance before killing her children and throwing them into the fire that by now is consuming the temple, and then jumps into the flames after them.[107] Edgeworth argues that Dido recalls Hasdrubal's wife in numerous ways: both women complain that their men have left without informing them; both men desert their "wives" to secure a future in Rome; both women pray to the gods for vengeance; both characterize their husbands as "traitors" (Hasdrubal's wife in Appian calls him "ἄπιστε," while Dido uses the corresponding Latin word *perfide* (4.305) for Aeneas); and both women immolate themselves in a fire which represents "the funeral pyre of Carthage."[108] As such, Dido's manner of death aligns her with feminine vices and with feminine virtues, while positioning her motivation as primarily erotic.

On the other hand, Dido kills herself, as Nicole Loraux has argued, in a masculine and heroic way: she dies by the sword[109] in order to salvage what she can of her honor, a death clearly modeled on that of Ajax, one of the greatest Greek heroes.[110] Like Ajax, Dido finds both her honor and her political position compromised: she has renounced her claim to feminine *kleos* by breaking her vow to Sychaeus, and, by betting on an alliance with Aeneas that fell through, she has undermined the security and stability of her throne. Dido's comparison with Ajax is strengthened by the clear parallels in the interchange between Dido and Aeneas in the underworld in Book 6 and that of Ajax and Odysseus in Book 11 of the *Odyssey.* Since women who die for love typically do so by hanging,[111] Dido's death by the sword implies that her suicide is motivated more by political than

erotic considerations, a suggestion her connections with Ajax supports. As such, Dido's death simultaneously emphasizes her feminine vices and virtues as well as the political aspects of her motivations, suggesting that she both exploits and is shaped by the tenets of the Topography of Shame.

At the same time, the manner of Dido's suicide –by the blade on an altar-like pyre – suggests the sacrificial nature of her death, a reading supported by her repeated association with injury and death: at 1.341, we are told that *longa est iniuria* ("long is [the story of] her injury"); at 4.1-2, she, *gravi iamdudum saucia cura/ volnus alit venis, et caeco carpitur igni* ("too long wounded with this burdensome care, nourished the injury of love, and she is undone by its blind fire")[112]; and Dido first appears as Aeneas is studying the image of the death of Penthesilea on the Trojan War frieze on Juno's temple (1.490-97). In positioning Dido as a sacrifice, the dominant voice of the narrative thus suggests that as with Creusa, Dido as a woman is not only expendable, but she is also an obstacle to imperial advancement.

The poet drives the sacrificial nature of Dido's death home by presenting it in an almost scopophilic fashion. Virgil sets up her death scene *penetrali in sede sub auras* ("in the innermost court": 4.504), and thereby metaphorically exposes her dwelling for the viewer's inspection in much the same way her speeches throughout this book have offered up her inner psychological state to the audience. Moreover, while Dido takes steps to preserve the secrecy of her death and keep it from the public eye, Virgil's narrative explicitly exposes her to view: when her companions are suddenly mentioned at 4.663-5 (*illam...ferro/ conlapsam aspiciunt comites* – "her companions see her collapsed upon the sword"), they stand in for the poet and his audience, fixing our gaze on her

bloody hands and the dripping sword.[113] In addition, Dido's dying body is somewhat fetishized as the poet lingers lovingly over it for forty-two lines (4.663-705). In so doing, Virgil undercuts the heroic action she has just taken and leaves us with the view of an aesthetic and eroticized female body, reducing her, in the view of patriarchal ideologies, to a feminine ideal: she is silenced and objectified, sexualized but rendered passive.[114]

At the same time, Virgil's deployment of scopophilia in representing Dido's death may be read as ironic, as it works directly against his exploration of her emotional depth: it is significant, for instance, that Virgil explicitly asks the audience to identify with Dido by addressing her directly (4.408-12)[115]:

> *Quis tibi tum, Dido, cernenti talia sensus?*
> *quosve dabas gemitus, cum litora fervere late*
> *prospiceres arce ex summa, totumque videres*
> *misceri ante oculos tantis clamoribus aequor?*
> *Improbe Amor, quid non mortalia pectora cogis?*
>
> How was it for you then, Dido, undergoing such feelings?
> What groans did you give, when you saw the broad seashores
> Swarming [with Trojans] from your high tower, and you saw
> Before your eyes the whole sea churning with their cries?
> Cruel Love, what do you not compel mortal hearts to endure?

Virgil here invites the audience to assume the woman's perspective and feel what she feels, an extraordinary move in traditional epic narrative.[116] This strategy is consistent with Virgil's characterization of Dido's story as a tragedy which meets the qualifications set down in Aristotle's *Poetics* (13.2-6): it arouses pity and fear and purges the emotions by the spectacle of a noble character brought from prosperity to adversity through error or frailty rather than by vice.[117] In so framing Dido's tale, Virgil expects the audience to relate to Dido and feel along with her. Sarah Spence additionally suggests that Virgil employs this sort of strategy, noting that in Book 4, we are permitted intimate access to

Dido's feelings, while Aeneas' are left ambiguous,[118] and that Virgil has the audience "stay" with Dido even after Aeneas has sailed away.[119] Lyne, moreover, notes that the repeated use of the epithet *infelix* (*i.e.* at 1.749 and 4.68, 450 and 529) and the additional description of her as *misera* (1.719 and 4.697), along with the narrator's stated judgment that *merita nec morte peribat* ("she perished by a death undeserved": 4.696) suggest the author's own attitude towards Dido and encourage us to pity and sympathize with her.[120] T.S. Eliot has further suggested that in Book 6, "Dido's behaviour appears almost as a projection of Aeneas' own conscience: this, we feel, is the way in which Aeneas' conscience would *expect* Dido to behave."[121] By having his protagonist so identify with Dido's feminine perspective and in effect encouraging his audience to do the same, Virgil to some extent undercuts the traditional gendered divisions at work in Roman society, tapping into the feelings of disempowerment and devaluation many elite males would have felt with the overthrow of the republic and the establishment of the monarchy.[122] A similar point has been made for Catullus and the elegists – namely, that the elegiac *puella* works as a metaphor for the poets' political alienation; Catullus' Ariadne in poem 64 is a particular model for Dido[123] in that the emotional identification with a woman in each work strengthens this metaphor. As Sarah Spence puts it, "[T]o the degree that [Book 4 of the *Aeneid*] enlists sympathy for Dido, it engages us as audience on the side of difference and against the cause of empire, even if only temporarily."[124]

The identification with and sympathy for Dido Virgil expects us to feel here is replicated elsewhere in the epic when he highlights the grief of women who, like Dido, have fallen victim to the advancement of the patriarchal agenda. In Book 3, for instance, we hear of Andromache, who continues to mourn the loss of Hector long after the war

has ended (3.300-05) and who views Ascanius as a "kind of surrogate for Astyanax,"[125] while in Book 9, Euryalus' mother is completely undone by the death of her son in battle (9.473-97).[126] The emotional cost to women such as these, as Wiltshire shows, is further emphasized through repeated use of similes focused on the role of the mother (i.e. *Aen.* 5.213-17; 8.407-15; 9.59-64; 9.563-66; 12.473-77)[127] and by the association of women's work with death (i.e. Andromache's gift to Ascanius, "surely woven originally for her son Astyanax" (3.482-91); the cloak Euryalus' mother wove for him and he never got a chance to wear (9.486-89); Lausus' tunic, woven by his mother, through which Aeneas plunges his sword (10.817-20); and Dido's cloak, which becomes Pallas' shroud (11.72-77).[128] Just as Helen's productions in Homer's epics served as metaphors for epic poetry,[129] these woven emblems, too, can represent the larger poem. Whereas Helen's work, however, was regularly connected with her concern for accumulating feminine *kleos*, these works, in contrast, are associated with grief, an association which again undercuts the simplistic view of the *Aeneid* as a vehicle for the unquestioned promotion of the glory of Augustus' reign.

As such, while Virgil's epic recognizes the prevailing ideology that subjugates women and private concerns to the good of the state, he does not ignore that this sort of prioritizing comes at a price: as Wiltshire suggests, "It is extraordinary that Vergil takes any account, much less the extensive account he does, of the struggles, pains, hopes, and disappointments of relationships in the private realm. The exquisite attention lavished upon Dido, the eloquent lament of the mother of Euryalus, the grief of the sisters Anna and Juturna who cannot save the siblings they adore, the mourning of all the parents in the *Aeneid* who watch their children die young: Vergil's tribute to the victims is the

measure of their worth."[130] Because Virgil so often asks us to consider the viewpoint of the victim as he does most explicitly with Dido, Virgil's use of scopophilia, which initially seems a straightforward means of discounting and objectifying women, is ultimately positioned as a self-conscious means of critiquing the system.

As Aeneas leaves Carthage and Dido behind, however, the dominant narrative voice once again asserts itself, emphasizing Aeneas' fixedness of purpose and steadfastness in contrast to Dido's earlier fickleness and inconstancy: *interea medium Aeneas iam classe tenebat/ certus iter* ("Meanwhile, now, unwavering Aeneas was holding a course with his fleet through the mid-sea…": 5.1-2). Throughout the epic, in fact, Aeneas follows a trajectory that moves steadily from hesitation and doubt towards focus and resolution, while Dido, in contrast, moves from self-assurance to despair and death. The discrepancy between Dido's changeable nature and Aeneas' steadfastness is further highlighted again in Book 8 by the depiction of their counterparts, Cleopatra and Augustus, in the depiction of the Battle of Actium on Aeneas' shield discussed above, where, while Cleopatra is "carried away on what we might call her ship of state, Augustus stands firmly in control at the stern, beside the rudder."[131] Although the Augustan ideological perspective here temporarily reasserts itself, Virgil issues a subtle challenge to this seemingly clear dichotomy as well: as David Quint argues, the depiction of the battle of Actium on Aeneas' shield articulates an imperial ideology which "is not identical to the 'meaning' of the *Aeneid*, which devotes a considerable part of its energy to criticizing and complicating what it holds up as the official party line."[132] The final image on the shield, for instance – *pontem indignatus Araxes* ("the Araxes, indignant at the bridge": 8.728) Augustus had erected to replace the one put up by Alexander – calls

the permanence of Augustan rule into question. This detail, then, undermines the stable image of Augustan *imperium*, and by extension, the clear-cut distinction the poet has implied between the nature of not just Aeneas and Dido, but male and female as well.

Virgil's presentation of Dido in the *Aeneid* is that of a complex, multi-faceted woman who is difficult to categorize. The dominant narrative voice sees Dido's undoing as a product of her inherent lack of feminine control and restraint, characteristics that become manifest when she is confronted with an erotic crisis. In the patriarchal view, she serves as not only a distraction to Aeneas, but as a threat to his mission and therefore to the larger good of society, a characterization strengthened by her association with Cleopatra. In this reading, she is not intended as a model for Roman women to follow, but rather as a negative exemplum. On the other hand, Virgil also inserts an alternate narrative voice, one that asks us to identify and sympathize with Dido[133] in a way that undercuts what otherwise seems to be a straightforward endorsement of patriarchal ideologies. Additionally, Virgil's portrait of Dido is complicated by the possibility that the passion she demonstrates for Aeneas disguises more practical political reasons for forging an alliance with him: like Penelope, Dido may be attempting to carve out a secure position for herself using the feminine tools at her disposal. This possibility is strengthened by Virgil's positioning of Aeneas as a Ulysses figure, an association which encourages the reader to see a good bit of Penelope in Dido as well, and to consider that she may be negotiating the Topography of Shame in a similar way. The tension between these two readings suggests that while Dido may be "playing the system," the system's expectations for women have also to some extent infiltrated her. Dido, therefore,

effectively illustrates women's location both inside and outside social structures, a marginalized position which aligns her with the Roman elite men who had been effectively stripped of power with the institution of the imperial regime. Dido's example, then, on one level works to support the ideals and ideologies Augustus worked to promote, while on another, it works to call these gender divisions into question.

The Trojan Matrons

In Book 5, the Trojan women, weary of the journey and desiring to stay where they are, set fire to the ships. Although they soon change their minds, Aeneas and the other men deem it best to leave them behind and let them settle where they are. This episode replicates the action of Book 4 in important ways: in both cases, women assert individual needs, and in doing so, threaten to derail Aeneas' mission; as a result, they are abandoned despite their protestations. The women's action, moreover, follows hard upon Mercury's warning about the variable nature of women in Book 4, in effect confirming the danger that the changeable feminine character poses to the male agenda. Then, when the women are abandoned, the dominant voice of the epic reinforces the implication of the Dido episode by situating the needs and desires of women as inconvenient obstacles that must be overcome for societal good. Although this episode in general seems to reinforce many of the negative views of women the patriarchal agenda strives to promote, here, too, Virgil complicates what initially seemed clear-cut, confounding these gender categorizations by suggesting an identification between these women and Aeneas, the author's primary representative of imperial perspectives and ideals.

When Aeneas pauses at Eryx to commemorate the death of his father with games, the women are excluded, left aside to participate only in the mourning aspects of Anchises' funerary celebration. The women's marginal condition is thereby explicitly demonstrated through their juxtaposition with the men: while the funeral games of Anchises offer the men an opportunity to commune in an atmosphere of competition for excellence and of joyful celebration, the women are set apart and beset by weariness and despair, a contrast Georgia Nugent sees as framing them as the "quintessential Other."[134] Despite their discontent, they behave in accordance with male-assigned parameters, weeping for Anchises and merely ruminating on the long hard journey still to come, until they are stirred to action by the interference of Iris, disguised as Beroe. Only then do they take action in their own interests and contrary to the male agenda in their attempt to burn the ships, an action which threatens the integrity of Aeneas' mission by jeopardizing his ability to sail on. Their behavior, moreover, is framed as a frenzy rather than as a rational action taken as a step towards achieving their goals: at first they hesitate in uncertainty (5.654-55), but when Iris takes flight, *attonitae monstris actaeque furore/ conclamant, rapiuntque focis penetralibus ignem;/ pars spoliant aras, frondem ac virgulta facesque/ coniciunt* ("stunned by the omen and driven into a fury, they shout, and snatch fire from the inner hearths; some strip the altars, and throw foliage and brush and firebrands": 5.659-62). As was the case in Homer's works and with Dido in this epic, women are positioned as easily manipulated by the gods as pawns for their own divine purposes due to their inherent feminine weakness and instability. At the same time, Virgil is careful to demonstrate that these divine machinations merely exacerbate tendencies that are already manifest in these women: although Juno sends Iris to instigate the Trojan women into

burning the ships, Iris merely encourages the despair and weariness they already feel rather than producing discontent out of nothing.

When the men are alerted to the crisis, Ascanius and the other Trojan men move against the women like an army against a foreign enemy (*Primus et Ascanius, cursus ut laetus equestres/ ducebat, sic acer equo turbata petivit/ castra* – "And first Ascanius, hastening as he was gladly leading on his horsemen, thus vigorous, he sought the disordered camp with his horse": 5.667-69) – positioning the women, from the predominant male perspective, as "other" at the outset of their interaction. Then, the feminine concerns of the Trojan mothers are not only silenced and discounted, but also derided, as Aeneas, in effect, had earlier done to Dido. As Georgia Nugent notes, "[s]eeking to bring the women under control and reproach them for their treacherous act of arson [Ascanius] speaks to them with assertions so simplistic they seem appropriate for address only to a child or a madman" [135] when he says, *Non hostem inimicaque castra/ Argivum, vestras spes uritis. En, ego vester/ Ascanius!* ("You are not burning the enemy and the hostile camp of the Argives, but your own hopes. Behold, I am your Ascanius!": 5.671-73). Ascanius' reproach hits its mark: the reassertion of masculine authority brings the women back to their senses (*suosque/ mutatae adgnoscunt, excussaque pectore Iuno est* – "Changed, they recognize their own, and Juno is shaken from their breast": 5.678-79) so that they now view their actions in accordance with the patriarchal perspective: having acted against male interests the women are ashamed (*piget incepti lucisque* – "they are ashamed of their undertaking and of the daylight itself": 5.678) to such an extent that they become almost bestial (*illae diversa metu per litora passim/ diffugiunt, silvasque et sicubi concava furtim/ saxa petunt* – "They scatter

here and there in fear along the shore, and they seek forests and hollows and rocks wherever they may find them": 5.677-78).

Despite Ascanius' success in bringing the women back to their senses, the Trojan matrons' action threatens the integrity of Aeneas' mission not only on the literal level, but on a spiritual level as well. As the ships burn, Aeneas prays to Jupiter, who promptly responds with a tempest that quickly quenches the fire and saves most of the ships. Although Jupiter's intervention would seem to suggest divine sanction for his continued journey, Aeneas nonetheless is thrown into despair: *pater Aeneas, casu concussus acerbo,/ nunc huc ingentes, nunc illuc pectore curas/ mutabat versans, Siculisne resideret arvis,/ oblitus fatorum, Italasne capesseret oras* ("father Aeneas, shaken by such a harsh misfortune, wavered, contemplating here and there huge cares in his breast, whether he would settle in Sicilian lands, forgetful of the fates, or make for Italian shores": 5.700-703). Aeneas' wavering, hesitation, and inner turmoil recall the emotional state of the Trojan matrons themselves, suggesting not just a sympathy for these women, but an identification with the feminine,[136] so that this incident, like his interaction with Dido, temporarily threatens to disrupt gender categories. This disruption, moreover, is replicated later on in the description of Euryalus' mother's grief in Book 9, when her laments at learning of her son's death weaken the soldiers and cause their courage and desire for combat to falter. In effect, then, the Trojan matrons and Euryalus' mother threaten to "unman" the Trojans, as Dido had almost succeeded in doing earlier, positioning these women as both literally and symbolically threatening through their feminine weakness.

In addition to Ascanius' patronizing speech which positions them as mere children, the Trojan matrons are dehumanized by Nautes' objectification when he characterizes them, along with the feeble old men, as cast-offs, and describes them with the neuter *quidquid* (*longaevosque senes ac fessas aequore matres,/ et quidquid tecum invalidum metuensque pericli est,/ delige, et his habeant terris sine moenia fessi:/ urbem appellabunt permisso nomine Acestam* – "choose out both the men advanced in old age and the women worn out from the sea, and whatever one with you is weak and fears dangers, and let the weary ones have their walls in these lands: and with your permission, they will call the city 'Acesta'": 5.715-18).[137] As such, the fatigue, weariness, and despair the Trojan women feel are first characterized as feminine and then as deviant, which categories are framed as coextensive.

Although the women, having been successfully shamed, disavow their behavior and assert their desire to travel on, their about-face serves to undermine their stability; therefore when the patriarchal voice which has chastised them rejects their realignment with the larger goal and insists on abandoning them anyway,[138] their loss is reinscribed as positive, as a sloughing off the weak in order to strengthen the group as a whole.[139] The gendered nature of this divestiture is underscored when order is reasserted through the agency of three patriarchal forces: first, by Jupiter's quenching of the fire; second, by Nautes' suggestion that the women be left behind; and third, by the late Anchises' approval of this suggestion, the supernatural quality of which, along with Jupiter's action, positions their abandonment as in accordance with the divine order.[140] Like Creusa, the Trojan mothers are seen as more or less "dead weight," and their abandonment makes the group that goes on purer, stronger, and more masculine.[141] In Book 4, Aeneas

demonstrated his ability to abandon an individual woman whose attention to private concerns threatened his mission; here, Aeneas' commitment to his goal is reaffirmed by this collective abandonment of women who again show more concern for their individual needs and desires than for the good of the group as a whole.[142]

In addition, the sacrifice or desertion of the female we have seen with Creusa, Dido, and now the Trojan matrons finds a metaphorical parallel that seems to confirm Virgil's programmatic use of this theme. Clara Shaw Hardy has demonstrated that in Book 3, the *antiqua mater* is subjugated to the paternal fatherland and the Magna Mater to the *penates*, as is illustrated by Anchises' misinterpretation of the oracle at Delos: Anchises had initially interpreted the oracle's advice to Aeneas seek out the *[a]ntiquam...matrem* ("ancient mother": 3.96) as the maternal ancestral seat – Crete – and the land of the *mater cultrix Cybeli* ("the nurturing mother of Mount Cybeli": 3.111), but the *penates* later appear and designate the paternal ancestral seat – Italy – as the correct interpretation (3.161-71).[143] Thus, male gods are privileged over female, and the paternal line over the maternal one,[144] reinforcing the exclusive focus on masculine concerns at the wholesale expense of feminine ones.

The Trojan matrons, then, initially seem to illustrate the idea that women's weak and fickle nature positions them as a threat to the masculine agenda. Only when male authority reasserts itself and brings the women under control do they reconcile themselves to these patriarchal goals and manifest the proper feelings of shame for the actions that endangered these goals in the first place. This negative gender characterization then works to justify their abandonment for the sake of the larger cause. At the same time, Virgil complicates this message with Aeneas' own agitation, hesitation,

and self-doubt, throwing these seemingly straightforward gender categorizations into confusion. Once again, our poet first capitalizes on common gender ideologies to advance an agenda that supports Augustan propaganda, then calls these assumptions into question by subtly challenging them.

The Underworld

Book 6 stands at a pivotal point in the epic, where "the poem's plot becomes less the escape from the Trojan past than the actualization of the Roman future."[145] This shift is initiated in Book 4 with Aeneas' decision to abandon Dido in pursuit of his mission, and then reconfirmed in Book 5, where the Trojan matrons are left behind after they attempt to burn the ships. Book 6 actualizes this project, first by giving Aeneas the opportunity to confront Dido and the repercussions of his actions; then, by the "prophetic ratification" of Aeneas' mission when Anchises shows him the long line of his descendents,[146] marking Aeneas' renewed dedication to his goal; and soon thereafter with the death of Aeneas' nurse Caieta, which symbolically signifies the end of Aeneas' youth.[147] As such, Aeneas' transition from a hesitant and indecisive hero to one who is earnestly and exclusively focused on his goal is also a movement away from solitary to collective, from private to public, and from female to male.[148]

At this important juncture, which is further emphasized by its placement at the center of the epic, the presentation of the Cumaean Sibyl is particularly significant for looking at the issue of women. In many ways, the Sibyl exemplifies the inherently contradictory position of women. She is a positive figure in that she acts as a guide to Aeneas and his men and as a conduit of information from gods to mortals, beneficial

aspects emphasized by her connection to Diana, goddess of childbirth and nurturer of young girls. She thus acts as a "helper figure" to Aeneas, using her feminine traits to support the male agenda. Yet her association with the underworld and her connections with Diana Trivia in particular (6.13 and 35) link her to darkness and death. The image of the labyrinth depicted on the gates to Apollo's temple where the Sibyl is housed (6.14ff) furthers these more ominous associations, reflecting as it does the maze-like structure of the Sibyl's cave with its hundred doors (6.42-43) and the labyrinthine qualities of Hades itself, over which the Sibyl stands sentinel.[149] For our purposes, the labyrinth might also stand as a metaphor for the Topography of Shame, a confusing and treacherous landscape that women must negotiate with limited knowledge and the tools they have at hand. While the Sibyl, then, is in many ways cast as positive, she is also a marginalized figure who stands outside the normal domestic contexts for women and who is potentially dangerous or threatening in her power.

In that she is directive and authoritative while Aeneas defers to her entirely, the Sibyl initially seems to constitute an interesting exception to the patterns which usually govern female behavior. Because she is merely acting as an agent of Apollo, however, her authority stems from a controlling male: like Dido, she can be seen as exerting her power as a proxy.[150] The primary means by which she exerts this authority is through information management, a point underscored by the fact that she is the only female who is given a voice in all of Book 6.[151] As we have seen, women in the ancient world were viewed as lacking restraint and self-control, a quality often signified through the verbal leakage which itself was viewed as an indicator of sexual unchastity; for this reason, men are justified in imposing external controls on women and working to keep them more or

less silent. At the same time, it is precisely because of "feminine" vulnerability that female voices cannot be entirely marginalized or silenced: men, it seems, cannot "speak" like the Sibyl or Creusa or Celaeno. Thus, while patriarchal ideologies require women to be silent because of their weakness, at the same time, their vulnerability and marginalization place them in a position to contribute in vital ways to the flow of information.

The relationship between feminine vulnerability and communication are emphasized in Book 6 by the description of the god "entering" the Sibyl, a passage which is grostequely concerned with the lack of bodily control. And while the Sibyl is to some extent desexualized at the human level – her position as Apollo's priestess makes her sexually unavailable to mortal men – at the same time, she is also characterized as sexually vulnerable, as her prophecy is presented as a kind of mind-rape by Apollo[152]: *non voltus, non color unus,/ non comptae mansere comae; sed pectus anhelum,/ et rabie fera corda tument; maiorque videri,/ nec mortale sonans, adflata est numine quando/ iam propiore dei* ("...neither her face nor her color are one, her hair does not remain ordered, but her breast heaves and her wild heart swells with frenzy; she seems to be taller, nor is she speaking as a mortal, as she was filled up with the spirit of the god now coming closer": 6.47-51). Thus, the Sibyl effectively illustrates the double-bind into which patriarchal ideologies place women through the complex interplay between women's vulnerability and channels of accessing authority.

After Virgil's initial introduction of her possession, he prolongs the Sibyl's ecstasy: *At, Phoebi nondum patiens, immanis in antro/ bacchatur vates, magnum si pectore possit/ excussisse deum; tanto magis ille fatigat/ os rabidum, fera corda domans,*

fingitque premendo ("But, not yet giving way to Phoebus, the monstrous prophetess raves in her cave, if she might be able to shake the great god free from her breast; by so much more he tires out her raving mouth, subduing her wild heart, and he shapes her to his will by pressing force": 6.77-80). Then, before the god takes his leave, we get a final glimpse of her frenzy: *ea frena furenti/ concutit, et stimulos sub pectore vertit Apollo* ("Apollo shakes the reins as she rages, and he plies the goad under her breast": 6.99-100). While the sort of divine possession the Sibyl is subject to can be destructive, as we have seen with Helen's Aphrodite-induced *ate* and Cupid's tragic influence on Dido, in the case of prophetic possession, where it is controlled, monitored – and indeed, exploited – by the male, it becomes socially beneficial, and thereby acquires a positive bent[153] analogous to the positive role women can play in society through the management of information for the benefit of the *oikos*.[154] At the same time, not only does the prolonged emphasis on the Sibyl's seizure sexualize her, but it fetishizes her as well, much as we have seen with Dido, while the stress on Apollo's mastery over her both underscores the erotic subordination of female to male and engenders this lingering gaze as male. In this way, the Sibyl's fetishization objectifies her, effectively undercutting the authority and power she initially seems to exert. The dominant narrative voice, then, uses the Sibyl's frenzy as a "tragic instrument" aimed at male sensibilities, since its aim "is not to emancipate contemporary women, but to find a useful image of suffering: not so much imaginative sympathy with, as literary exploitation of women's victimised position."[155] As such, even this powerful, authoritative priestess is in some ways reduced, as we have seen with Dido and other women, to a sacrificial spectacle of suffering offered up for the benefit of the male gaze.

In general, then, while the Sibyl on the surface seems to act outside of the Topography of Shame, a closer examination reveals that she is actually subject to it. Nonetheless, here with the Sibyl, too, Virgil offers us hints of resistance to the larger patriarchal agenda. First, the Sibyl predicts that the Golden Bough, which Aeneas must procure before he will be permitted to enter the underworld, will come free without hesitation if Aeneas is indeed fated to make this journey; but since the bough in fact resists, Aeneas has to break it away violently, making it a kind of symbol for the Sibyl's own ambiguous relationship to Apollo, in that Aeneas' "rape" of the bough parallels the Sibyl's somewhat unwilling possession by the god. Then, when she leads him out of the underworld with its vision of Roman glory to come, the Sibyl sends Aeneas through the Gate of Ivory, the path by which the spirits send false dreams rather than true shades (6.893-98). In doing so, she reinforces the ambiguity introduced with the Golden Bough, and asks us to question the glorious vision of the Roman future we have just been given, effectively issuing a challenge to the truth of the imperial ideals and ideologies that the dominant narrative voice promotes.

Although the Sibyl's role is relatively small, she is a pivotal figure who serves as a point of comparison for all the other individual women in this epic. Like Creusa, the Sibyl acts as a mouthpiece of the gods, serving a positive purpose for Aeneas, but at considerable expense to herself; like Dido, she is located both inside and outside the system in that she both capitalizes on it, and is a victim of it; also like Dido and, as we shall see, Camilla, the Sibyl occupies an unusual position of power and authority, the threat posed by which is diffused by the reduction of their female bodies to sexualized,

erotic objects subject to the male gaze; like the Trojan women and Amata, she is subject to daemonic possession; and like Lavinia, her life is given over entirely to the service of the male agenda. Although her position as priestess of Apollo and guide to Aeneas gives her patriarchally-sanctioned power and authority, at the same time, her access to this authority derives from her feminine weakness and vulnerability, undercutting her power considerably and supporting the view of women the Topography of Shame seems to promote. Yet with her final decisive action of sending Aeneas through the gate of false dreams, she effectively issues the most forceful challenge in the epic to the Augustan ideologies the dominant voice of the *Aeneid* endorses.

Although the Sibyl, then, has many connections with the Dido we met in Books 1 and 4, the Dido who appears in Book 6 seems to offer a sharp contrast: whereas the Sibyl offers Aeneas important information and guidance, Dido greets him with silence, remaining cold and remote. Yet despite her aloofness, the opportunity to confront Dido allows Aeneas to face the consequences of his actions, providing the closure necessary for him to put the past behind him and renew his dedication to his goal. This movement is signified by his emphatic recognition that *Extremum fato, quod te adloquor, hoc est* ("By fate, this is the last time I will speak to you": 6.466).[156] Dido's refusal to speak to Aeneas, on the other hand, clearly stems from continuing resentment, suggesting that Dido continues to suffer even in death. Thus, this interchange allows Aeneas to recognize the truth and the finality of the rift between them, even if he is pained by it, and to move towards the future and his goal of founding the Roman Empire; for Dido, however, there is no future.[157]

Because of the concern which Book 6 exhibits with strengthening the focus on Aeneas' mission, the dominant narrative voice is interested here in positioning Dido once again in accordance with prevailing patriarchal views of women. For instance, she is found not with the suicides, but in the *lugentes campi* ("mourning fields": 6.441) along with other women, who, like Dido, died as a result of misfortune in love. As such, we are reminded of her excesses of passion rather than her capacity for action and achievement. Dido also suggests feminine shame and weakness when she rejects Aeneas' pleas by maintaining silence and keeping her eyes fixed on the ground, reversing her earlier verbal excesses and ceding the power of speech entirely to Aeneas.[158] In addition, Dido's stubborn refusal to reconcile with Aeneas even now is consistent with the ancient view of women expressed by Aristotle, who claims that ἔστι δὲ καὶ δύσθυμον μᾶλλον τὸ θῆλυ τοῦ ἄρρενος καὶ δύσελπι, καὶ ἀναιδέστερον καὶ ψευδέστερον, εὐαπατητότερον δὲ καὶ μνημονικώτερον ("The female is also more dispirited and more desponding, more shameless and more lying, more easily deceived and more mindful [of grudges]": *Hist. an.* 8 [9].1.608b10-12).[159] The "feminine" despondency her continuing resentment suggests is brought into sharper relief not just in contrast with Aeneas' movement towards the future, but also by the juxtaposition once again between Aeneas' steadfastness and Dido's mutability: Dido, for instance – whose name Feldherr relates etymologically to the Phoenician word for "wanderer"[160] – is compared to the "wandering moon" (*surgere.../ ...per nubila lunam:* "the moon rising up through the clouds": 6.454), while Aeneas, securely described as *Troius heros* (the "Trojan hero": 451), *stetit* ("stands firm": 6.452). He asks Dido, moreover, to *Siste gradum* ("fix her feet in place": 6.465) and resist flight back into the shadowy grove, a request which she ignores.[161] Dido's flightiness is further emphasized with this retreat in that she flees into

the arms of her first husband Sychaeus, again substituting one masculine alliance for another. In addition, the simultaneous presence of Aeneas and Sychaeus reminds us that Dido has also sacrificed her *pudicitia* by abandoning her *univira* status.

This emphasis on Dido's negative feminine traits is accompanied, moreover, by a corresponding focus on her defeat. For instance, scholars have widely recognized that Aeneas' interactions with Dido are modeled on Odysseus' encounter with Ajax in Book 11 of the *Odyssey*.[162] Ajax committed suicide after first losing a contest with Odysseus over rights to Achilles' arms, and then, in a fit of madness, slaughtering a herd of cattle which he believed to be the Greek leaders on whom he wanted to take vengeance. While Dido is somewhat heroized by her association with this Greek heroic male, we are also reminded that, like Ajax, she is located in the underworld in the first place only because she has lost out to an opponent who will survive and go on to accumulate more glory – once again confirming the implicit association between Aeneas and Ulysses as a treacherous, negative figure. This sense of defeat is furthered in the parallels between Ajax' madness and Dido's passionate rage preceding their deaths, as well as by the striking failures each felt they had perpetrated – Ajax, in failing to take vengeance on the Greek leaders, and Dido in placing her city in a dangerous position by betting on an alliance that fell through. Thus, the sense of defeat both Ajax and Dido feel is sharpened by a corresponding damage to their reputation and honor: both, we are reminded, have suffered a loss of *fama*.

Aeneas further emphasizes Dido's defeat and her loss of both her more masculine *fama* and her feminine *pudicitia* through a reference to Catullus 66.39, itself a reworking of an earlier poem by Callimachus (see *Aet* 4.fr. 110). Aeneas' claim that *invitus, regina,*

tuo de litore cessi ("unwilling, queen, I left your shore": 6.460) echoes the famous lament of the lock of Berenice, which has been transferred to the heavens as the constellation Coma Berenices after this Hellenistic Egyptian queen dedicated it to the gods as an offering for her husband's safe return from abroad.[163] By associating himself with the lock, Aeneas underscores the fact that he himself is being "elevated to the stars" through his quest, as Jupiter has predicted to Venus at 1.259-60 (*sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli/ magnanimum Aenean* – "you will bear your great-hearted son, lifted up, to the stars in the sky"), while Dido, as she earlier complained, has lost the "astral immortality of the virtuous" on his account[164] (*te propter eundem/ exstinctus pudor, et, qua sola sidera adibam,/ fama prior* – "Because of you leaving, my *pudor* is gone, and my *fama*, by which alone I before was hoping to reach the stars": 4.321-23). Aeneas' allusion to Berenice's lock also serves as a cruel reminder of Dido's abandonment by the man she considered her husband, since Berenice had offered the lock as a pledge of marital devotion,[165] and other happy brides were later expected to make offerings to it.[166] That girls in Greece offered a sacrificial lock of hair as a prenuptial rite – a ritual that may have been in play at Rome as well – would have strengthened this irony.[167] Finally, this allusion also recalls for the reader both the final moments of Dido's life[168] and Aeneas' plucking of the *auricomos...fetus* ("golden-haired branch": 6.141): both of these offerings are prerequisites for entry to the underworld, but for Aeneas, this descent is a heroic quest to see his father, while for Dido, it is the culmination of her downfall and defeat.[169]

At first glance, then, Virgil's portrait of Dido in the underworld seems to underscore the negative feminine characteristics expected by the Topography of Shame – traits like weakness, mutability, vengefulness, and despondency – as a means of

promoting Aeneas' masculine goal of empire-building. In also emphasizing her defeat, Virgil seems to be putting this kind of stereotype under a global, political spotlight, so that suppressing women seems to constitute an important part of constructing the Roman Empire. This suppression of the feminine is later confirmed in the "parade of heroes" in Book 6 (6.756-886), which is entirely devoid of women. Despite this clear male privileging, however, women are not entirely without a role to play: this passage, for instance, briefly acknowledges their essential function as childbearers in the allusion to *tua postuma proles,/ quem tibi longaevo serum Lavinia coniunx/ educet silvis* ("your last son, whom your wife Lavinia will bear for you in your old age, a long time hence": 6.763-65). This function is most crucial, perhaps, in the context of the imperial family, since the Augustan principate seemed to demand succession from father to son; indeed, its heightened importance here almost necessarily empowered the women in this family – Livia, Octavia, the Agrippinas, and the Julias – because the politics of the imperial family were now at least half the politics of the state. Nonetheless, the importance of women's functions derives from the supporting roles they play in the patriarchal program, and thus these roles, though critical, are themselves positioned as secondary.

At the same time, however, as by now we might expect, Virgil's portrait of Dido here is not as straightforward as it seems at first glance, and much of what initially seems to support patriarchal agendas can, with a closer look, also be read as calling them into question. For instance, while the allusion to the lock of Berenice underscores Dido's defeat, it also highlights Aeneas' questionable treatment of her[170] and reminds us that his success is at her expense, thus calling attention to the fact that the sacrifice which the masculine project of Roman imperial achievement entails is the suppression of the

feminine. As if to emphasize this point, in the *Aeneid*'s underworld, women appear only in the *lugentes campi*: they are entirely absent from the realms of soldiers, from Tartarus, from Elysium, and from the line-up of Aeneas' descendents, positioning them as superfluous to the masculine realms of action and achievement. At the same time, the Sibyl's position as Aeneas' guide works against this characterization, highlighting the double-bind of the Topography of Shame: women are at once in the precarious position of being essential and expendable simultaneously.

Additionally, as Andrew Feldherr argues, Virgil consciously includes in this underworld scene allusions to erotic poetry and Hellenistic elegy not only to emphasize the sacrifice of women and personal attachments required by the epic goal of empire-building, but also to demonstrate the distorting effects of viewing characters through a gendered lens.[171] Aeneas' interaction with Dido in the underworld effectively emphasizes the reversal of traditional gender roles that prevails in erotic poetry and which earlier characterized their own relationship: just as it is the active male lover who is rejected by the *dura puella* ("adverse maiden") in erotic poetry, Aeneas' pleas here characterize him as "an elegaic 'victim of love' and consequently as a pursuing *amator.*"[172] As noted above, recent scholarship has demonstrated that the gender reversals in Augustan elegy work to emphasize the disempowered position of the male elite under the new imperial regime[173]; Aeneas' alignment with these elegiac lovers, then, serves to bring a similar point to his readers' attention. At the same time, Feldherr also detects more sinister overtones in this episode, seeing precedent for Aeneas' question *Quem fugis?* ("Whom do you flee?": 6.466) in amatory poetry where a male lover seeks a sexual liaison with an unwilling girl (i.e., Apollo's pursuit of Daphne in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 1.452-567).

This image of "Aeneas as rapist" is reinforced by the imagery of the dark forest, by the casting of Theseus as "an uncomfortable precedent" for Aeneas's trip to the underworld – an allusion hinted at by the image of the labyrinth Aeneas contemplates on the temple doors at the beginning of Book 6[174] – by the parallel between Dido and Ariadne, each of whom the hero abandons without notice after she acts as both helper figure and lover to him, and by the Sibyl's earlier need to explicitly deny to the ferryman Charon that Aeneas, like Theseus, had come to the underworld for such a purpose (6.392-400).[175] The allusion to the myth of Theseus, moreover, casts further doubt on Aeneas' larger goal as well: as Penelope Doob points out, just as "Theseus' escape from the labyrinth was followed by an ill-fated descent to Hades, from which he had to be rescued by Hercules…[s]imilarly, Aeneas's escapes from his mazes may not be permanent, and if he is to be architect of his new *domus* after so may failed attempts, he too, or so the doors suggest, will pay a heavy price."[176]

Additionally, despite what is in many ways a negative, gender-stereotyped characterization, Virgil's portrait of Dido is in many ways sympathetic. Her association with the tragic hero Ajax suggests that Aeneas' behavior towards her, like that of Odysseus towards Ajax, was not entirely honorable, and her injured feelings are not unjustified. Aeneas' attitude here, moreover, brings this point into sharper relief: the impassive demeanor Aeneas presents to Dido in the face of her rage in Book 4 contrasts sharply with his desperate pleas for her understanding when he meets her in the underworld in Book 6. Like he did with Creusa, Aeneas demonstrates his grief and passion to Dido's ghost rather than to her living self. As Lyne has argued, by voicing his feelings towards these women "too late," Virgil underlines the detrimental effect on

human relations necessitated in the imperial policies the dominant epic voice advocates.[177] Aeneas' own pain, moreover, drives home the personal cost of his political achievement, prompting us once again to consider the high price of empire-building.[178]

The complex interplay between the dominant voice and the voice of resistance in this episode reflects the central and important position of Book 6 in looking at the themes and issues presented in the epic as a whole. On the issue of gender, the examples of both the Sibyl and Dido demonstrate the tendency of the broader narrative to promote Augustan ideologies by casting women into the negative binary roles required by the Topography of Shame, while at the same time, hinting at an alternative reading which works to call these same gender categories into question. This dynamic is further intensified in Book 6 by the presence of Caeneus, who was born a woman, then called Caenis, but raped by the god Poseidon. Following the rape, Poseidon grants her a wish, and she chooses the male form so that she cannot be raped again. Here, however, Virgil tells us that she has now reverted back into a woman,[179] *rursus et in veterem fato revoluta figuram* ("changed back again by fate into her old form": 6.449). Caeneus appears in the short catalog of heroines Aeneas encounters in the *lugentes campi*,[180] where she stands out both for the greater attention Virgil gives her and for her emphatic position immediately preceding Dido,[181] a placement which seems again to imply that what Aeneas did to Dido was also a kind of "rape." Scholars have offered numerous interpretations of the importance of the Caeneus figure,[182] all of which in one way or another tend to view Caeneus as a reflection of Dido's "divided self."[183] While the view of Caeneus as a reflection of Dido's fragmented nature has its place, I would submit that

in addition to this more localized meaning, Caeneus' placement here at the epic's center should alert us to look for broader significance as well. For instance, the gender confusion Caeneus embodies – the ambiguous and unnatural quality of which is emphasized by her name, which is related to the word καινός ("something strange")[184] – replicates the *Aeneid*'s subtle, subversive voice which attempts to complicate and deconstruct the sorts of gender binaries patriarchal ideologies advocate. Additionally, Caeneus' transformations can also be seen to symbolize the conflicted positions women are placed in under the Topography of Shame: in order to access indirect power, they have to utilize the feminine strategies and traits the system expects of them; yet in manifesting these traits, they are implicated in the very system they set out to resist.

Thus, the underworld episode is central to the *Aeneid* both positionally and thematically, with particular importance for issues of gender. Through the Sibyl, Dido, and Caeneus, Virgil here underscores the gendered tensions present in the epic as a whole and drives home the subtle subversive challenge he issues to the masculine/feminine binaries which are set forth in patriarchal ideologies.

Camilla

Following the authoritative position of the Sibyl, the multi-layered depiction of Dido, and the gender ambiguity of Caeneus in the underworld episode in Book 6, the appearance of the warrior-maiden Camilla in Book 7 might seem to suggest that the poet is following his challenge to traditional gender binaries with a trajectory towards ever more powerful and independent women. Lyne, for instance, describes Camilla as "a character who realizes, intensifies, unequivocally exhibits quality of leadership,

originality, and toughness more insecurely present in Dido, more hesitantly attributed to her by the poet."[185] Indeed, like Atalanta, another warrior/huntress with connections to Diana, Camilla initially exhibits traits associated with masculine virtue, thereby placing her in the category of "honorary male." Yet also like Atalanta, Camilla is positioned as undone in the end by her feminine weaknesses, so that despite the challenge she seems to pose to traditional gender binaries, the dominant patriarchal voice ultimately reinscribes her as feminine, making her the exception that proves the rule. At the same time, however, Virgil once again gives us reason to look beyond this perspective and see in his portrait of Camilla yet another subtle challenge to the prevailing ideologies the broader narrative implies.

Virgil at first seems to transgress overtly the gender code of an epic whose stated topic is *[a]rma virumque* ("arms and the man": 1.1) by placing Camilla in his catalog of heroes,[186] where he characterizes her as an explicitly unfeminine female: *advenit Volsca de gente Camilla/ agmen agens equitum et florentis aere catervas/ bellatrix, non illa colo calathisve Minervae/ femineas adsueta manus, sed proelia virgo/ dura pati cursuque pedum praevertere ventos* ("Camilla of the Volscian tribe was there, leading a band of horsemen and a crowd blooming with bronze; a warrior-woman, she did not accustom her feminine hands to the distaff or weaving basket of Minerva, but to endure harsh battles and to fly before the winds with the pace of her feet": 7.803-7).[187] Indeed, Virgil goes so far as to accord her the position of honor in this lineup, placing her last, even after Aeneas' primary antagonist Turnus himself.[188] Camilla also seems to trump Turnus in the prominent, leading role he concedes to her in the military maneuvers of the Italian forces (11.508-19).[189] Moreover, she is characterized as an inspiration to her own troops, to her

allies – including Turnus (see 11.432-33) – as well as to the Italian mothers, who pitch in as their city is besieged, following Camilla's example (*Ipsae de muris summo certamine matres,/ monstrat amor verus patriae, ut videre Camillam* – "The mothers themselves from the height of the wall, show true love of their fatherland in the struggle, as they saw Camilla": 11.891-92).[190] Generally speaking, Camilla is portrayed as an ideal warrior, who exhibits masculine attributes and skills and demonstrates typical soldierly behavior on the battlefield.

Despite this masculinization, Virgil does not let us forget that Camilla is a woman. For instance, he repeatedly calls attention to her gender, referring to her as *virgo* or *femina* (7.806, 11.507, 664, 705, 734, 808 et al.), and oddly characterizes her (manly) weapons as *muliebribus armis* ("womanly arms": 11.687) and *telis…virginis* ("maiden's weapons": 11.808). Camilla's place at the end of the catalog of heroes also recalls Herodotus' placement of Artemisia in his catalog of Persian commanders (*Hist.* 7.61-99): in both cases, the emphasis on a dominant female works to indicate the abnormality of the enemy forces in accordance with the Greek ethnographic model of inversion and situates them as opponents of the progress and civilization represented by the protagonists.[191] The implication of this sort of societal dysfunction is strengthened by Camilla's comparison with the more well-known warrior-maiden Penthesilea, whom he had placed last in describing the scenes from the Trojan War which decorate the Temple of Juno in Book 1.[192] Virgil further stresses this analogy linguistically, referring to both women as *bellatrix* (1.493 and 7.805) and by comparing Camilla and her warrior women to Amazons in general (11.648 and 660) or to Penthesilea and her fellow Amazon Hippolyta in particular (11.659-663).[193] Like Camilla, Penthesilea's masculine traits are

presented as an anomaly (*audetque viris concurrere virgo* – "a maiden, she dares to engage in battle with men": 1.493) while her sexual characteristics are emphasized (*aurea subnectens exserta cingula mammae* – "she bind[s] a golden girdle beneath a bared breast": 1.607), calling attention to her ambiguity.[194]

Camilla's transcendence of traditional gender categories catapults her out of the realm of the mortal. Like the unnatural Harpy Celaeno, she is associated with both the divine and the monstrous: Virgil not only refers to her as *dia* ("god-like": 11.657),[195] he additionally describes her as *horrenda* ("dreadful": 11.507) and *aspera* ("rough": 11.664), words elsewhere reserved for immortals such as Juno (1.279 and 7.323), the Sibyl (6.10), and Allecto (7.505). As Sue Blundell has shown, there is in the classical world a tendency for female deities like Athena and Artemis to be characterized by androgyny,[196] so the implicit comparison between Camilla and goddesses is likely designed to emphasize her gender ambiguity as much as her extraordinary power. At the same time, the permanent virgin status that forms part of her androgyny works to alleviate the sexual anxiety a strong, active woman would normally pose to the dominant male. Such figures, for instance, are presented as targets for rape in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, where their visual depiction, like Camilla's, is strongly scopophilic.

Trudy Harrington Becker argues that Camilla's ambiguity, like that of Caeneus, is an intentional reflection of the multivocality recent scholars have identified in the *Aeneid* as a whole.[197] The story of Camilla's background (11.539-84), for example, foregrounds issues of sexual confusion. First, her father Metabus, in flight from his enemies, wraps the infant Camilla in cork-wood and binds her to spear before throwing her across the raging Amasenus river; after swimming across himself, he unwraps her from her

symbolic "womb" in a metaphorical second birth that transforms father into mother. Then, Metabus raises Camilla on the milk of a wild mare and teaches her weaponry from her first steps, further confounding categories not only of male and female, but of human and animal as well. In addition, in describing Camilla's *aristeia* in Book 11, Virgil employs a strategy of "concealing and then revealing the identity and gender of the victorious warrior to create an atmosphere mimicking that of warfare, the confusion and horror,"[198] underscoring the ambiguity that permeates the epic and replicating Virgil's regular questioning of the very gender categories his poem works to delineate.

Yet the challenge Camilla initially poses to secure gender categories is undercut in the end when Camilla's feminine traits ultimately seem to overpower her masculine ones. Camilla is defeated when she is caught off guard while pursuing Chloreus: *caeca sequebatur totumque incauta per agmen/ femineo praedae et spoliorum ardebat amore* ("blind and reckless, she pursued him through all the ranks, and she burned with a womanly love of booty and spoils": 11.781-82).[199] While masculine heroic *kleos* entails the accumulation of booty in war, Camilla's desire is explicitly characterized as feminine in that it is an excessive and irrational concern with acquiring personal adornment rather than with accumulating glory.[200] It seems, then, that the honorable masculine traits she had managed to manifest are less integral to her nature than her feminine weaknesses. Thus, the challenge Virgil initially poses to gender categories and imperial ideologies calls these delineations into question only to reaffirm them in the end.

Once again, however, we must bear in mind that the Topography of Shame dictates that women's actions be governed by this sort of petty desire. As a woman and a warrior, Camilla is a threatening figure; yet if her power is compromised by her inability

to suppress her natural feminine traits, she becomes much less intimidating, much as Atalanta's inability to resist the lure of the golden apples detracted from the threat, both literal and symbolic, she posed as an unbeatable opponent in a deadly footrace. Because the petty desires which distract her and lead to her death run contrary to Camilla's character as it has been presented to us up to this point, here again Virgil may be prompting us to look through the motivations which the Topography of Shame attribute to her to seek a more practical, and consistent, impetus for her behavior: rather than seeing her targeting of Chloreus as spurred by a feminine urge for trinkets, we might read her choice as motivated by the *kleos* that accumulating Chloreus' expensive battle gear would represent. Indeed, Virgil himself bring this possibility to our attention when he suggests first the possibility that Camilla had a more "honorable" motivation in mind: *Hunc virgo, sive ut templis praefigeret arma/ Troia, captivo sive ut se ferret in auro/ venatrix, unum ex omni certamine pugnae/ caeca sequebatur* ("The virgin, whether she would hang the Trojan arms in the temple or whether she would dress herself in captive gold, like a huntress blindly pursued him alone out of everyone in the strife of battle": 11.778-81). As such, as he did with Dido, Virgil here may be explicitly calling attention to the fact that the Topography of Shame is a male-dictated system which not only imposes behavioral parameters on women, but which is also used to "read" women's behavior through its own generalizing lens.

Virgil replicates this dynamic, as he did with Dido, through his presentation of Camilla's body as a spectacle offered up for the male gaze. Here again, this fetishization initially seems to support the dominant voice of the epic by presenting Camilla as an objectified, sexualized woman; yet as with Dido, it may disguise a subtle challenge to the

patriarchal order. On the one hand, Barbara Weiden Boyd argues that "Virgil's [initial] description of [Camilla] relies so much on visual effects that she appears, at least momentarily, to be not a living, breathing character but an artistic creation, her movement frozen by the static close of the catalog review."[201] Virgil also includes an account of how others react to her – a crowd of matrons, we are told, *miratur…et prospectat euntem* ("marvel and stare at her passing: 7.813) – in effect, telling his audience how to react to her in the manner of ekphrasis, a strategy which works to further fetishize Camilla.[202] This fetishization culminates with Camilla's death, where, as he did with Dido, Virgil prolongs the physical suffering Camilla endures in order to emphasize the spectacle of her agony (11.799-831).[203] Allison Keith notes that both these deaths are gratuitous, and suggests that these beautiful women are presented in their deaths as erotic and aesthetic objects of the audience's prolonged gaze.[204] That these two women are singled out in particular for this treatment is related to their conspicuous transgression of gender boundaries: by reducing each of these women to an eroticized body, the poet undercuts any heroic, masculine association with their death and with their positions in life and reduces them to what is essential to the ideal – vulnerability, passivity, and sexuality. In addition, Camilla also seems to function as a female symbol for Italy – an identification strengthened by her upbringing in the Italian wilderness, connecting her explicitly to the Italian landscape – just as Dido represented Carthage and, through her parallel with Cleopatra, Egypt. These landscapes are symbolically conquered or possessed by the killing or raping of these women, a connection the fetishization of their dying bodies reinforces. In this way, "male mastery of a feminised landscape" is connected with the construction of Roman political and social order.[205]

On the other hand, Camilla's identification with Italy and her defeat by the forces of the "Easterner" Aeneas serve to further complicate the categories of "us" and "them," thereby challenging the simplistic gendering the poem initially seems to put forth. A similar challenge to prevailing gender divisions is found at 9.614-20, where Numanus taunts Ascanius by associating his Trojan clothing and pastimes with effeminacy.[206] This association was a common one in the ancient world, as the Trojans are from Asia Minor and were therefore frequently overlapped with feminized Lydians and Persians: on classical Greek vases, for instance, Trojans are often represented in Lydian or Persian dress. Yet Ascanius' manliness is validated, and indeed emphasized, when he kills Numanus, and Apollo then congratulates him on his *nova virtute*, or "new manhood" (9.641),[207] betraying a concern with defining the heroic male or ideal Roman as a masculine entity in diametric opposition to the category of the feminine. In some ways, then, as with Camilla, Virgil here employs a strategy of calling gendered categories into question in order to reaffirm and reinforce them. On the other hand, the conflict between the Italians and the Trojans – the ancestors of the Roman race – in Books 7-12 is a kind of civil war, and thus comments on how the civil wars of the 2nd and 1st centuries BCE in Rome resulted in a major confusion in identity. While the poem, therefore, is at pains to establish a distinction between masculine and feminine, at the same time, these passages can also be read as a commentary on the confusion and instability of such distinctions in civil war.

In addition, as he did with Dido, Virgil may be employing this scopophilic perspective on Camilla in a self-conscious way in order to critique the system rather than merely playing into it. This possibility is suggested by the striking contrast between

Camilla's initially noble, masculinized description and her reduction to an object of the male gaze at the end. In addition, even as he lingers over her dying body, Virgil assimilates Camilla to the Homeric warrior Patroclus: like Patroclus, whom Euphorbus struck after Apollo had stunned him (*Il.* 16.788ff), Camilla is brought down by Arruns, a lesser warrior who has secured the help of Phoebus in hitting his target (*Aen.* 11.784ff). Both Euphorbus and Arruns, moreover, are so rattled by their own success that they immediately seek refuge in the mass of troops that surround the scene (*Il.* 16.813-15 and *Aen.* 11.806-15). This parallel serves as a reminder of Camilla's formidability and heroic nature. She is further heroized, in addition, by her last words to Acca: *Effuge et haec Turno mandata novissima prefer:/ succedat pugnae Troianosque arceat urbe./ Iamque vale* ("Go and bear these final commands to Turnus: let him take my place in the fight and keep the Trojans back from the city: now, farewell": 11.825-27). Camilla's statement reminds us that as a warrior and leader, she stood not just as an equal, but in some ways as a superior to Turnus. As such, Virgil seems to purposely evoke Camilla's heroic nature, a reminder that works at cross-purposes to the objectification the scopophilic male gaze suggests, and once again calls into question the broader gender ideologies the overall poem seems at first glance to promote.

Amata

If Camilla initially seemed to contradict traditional gender binaries in an important way, Amata, in contrast, seems to embody them almost from the start. When Latinus disregards the claims of Turnus and offers their daughter's hand in marriage to Aeneas, Amata, whipped into a frenzy by the Fury Allecto,[208] manifests the unrestrained

passion and irrationality that the male imagination projects onto women's nature, and which, when untempered by male guidance and control, pose a threat to the male political agenda. Yet while the fact that her goals are at cross-purposes to her husband's initially seems to place Amata's behavior outside of the parameters of the Topography of Shame, a closer analysis reveals that in fact she works in accordance with it. In addition, as we have seen with both Dido and Camilla, despite her apparent irrationality, Amata's passion may be working to disguise more practical political motivations, so that her frenzy can be seen as an attempt to use feminine strategies to exert power and authority where it would otherwise be unavailable.

Amata's frenzy is sparked when Latinus offers Lavinia's hand in marriage to Aeneas, bypassing the claims of Turnus, whom Amata had hoped would be her son-in-law. Her energies, therefore, are directed towards an end that conflicts with her husband's interests, a circumstance that seems to place her outside of the bounds of the Topography of Shame. Yet closer inspection suggests that rather than working in opposition to the goals of her closest male ally, Amata instead has simply realigned her allegiance, transferring her hopes for the future from Latinus to Turnus. This reading is suggested by the erotic roots some scholars have detected in Amata's passion. Lyne, most notably, has called attention to the connections between Allecto's assault on Amata and the "excluded lover" topos prominent in erotic poetry; according to Lyne, these connections, paired with the name "Amata" – which as a substantive means "beloved" –position her passion as particularly erotic.[209] Indeed, Amata's frenzy is inordinately excessive for one who is merely a potential mother-in-law, but typical of despairing lovers both in tragedy and in erotic elegy. Lyne also explores connections between Amata and Dido, further

positioning Amata's passion as that of a despairing lover rather than of a concerned mother-in-law.[210]

If Lyne's interpretation is correct, rather than working against her primary male ally, Amata has instead realigned her loyalties, albeit somewhat incestuously, and now asserts herself on behalf of Turnus' interests rather than her husband's. Indeed, so closely does Amata connect her interests with those of Turnus that she commits suicide when she learns – mistakenly – that Turnus has been killed, further linking her to incestuous lovers like Phaedra and Jocasta. As such, Amata's behavior, which initially seems to run contrary to the principles of the Topography of Shame, upon closer inspection reinforces it: like Dido and Euryalus' mother, Amata's behavior becomes irrational, excessive, and unrestrained at the crisis occasioned when a significant male connection is compromised.

At the same time, we might once again consider Amata's emotional outburst as a patriarchal projection that disguises what might actually be sound motivations. What initially appears to be a pseudo-incestuous attachment to her would-be son-in-law Turnus, for instance, may mask a canny recognition of the fact that if Lavinia marries Aeneas, the status of their children – the only grandchildren Amata will have, as Lavinia is apparently an only child – would be compromised by the existence of Ascanius, Aeneas' eldest born son and principal heir. In other words, Amata's despair may stem from valid concerns that bridge the personal and the political rather than simply representing irrational "womanly" passion. These concerns, indeed, have already been validated, as Anchises' prophecy in Book 6 informs us that Lavinia's offspring will take a back seat to Ascanius, whose descendents will form the Julian *gens*, true heirs to Aeneas and eventual rulers of Rome (6.760ff). The possibility that Amata here is

manipulating the Topography of Shame by using women's weakness as a cover to achieve a political goal is suggested when Virgil tells us that she hides her daughter in the forest *simulato numine Bacchi* ("with the spirit of Bacchus feigned": 7.385). As such, as in the case of Dido, Virgil here may be prompting us to understand Amata's emotional excess as a patriarchal way of explaining and minimizing female astuteness and political savvy in a way the Topography of Shame deems legitimate.

Lavinia

In contrast to her mother Amata's passionate and frenzied emotional state, Lavinia is not only passive and restrained, but also colorless and unindividuated, particularly when compared with to Dido in the first half of the epic, and Camilla in the second. Yet despite her lack of an active role and a strong personality – or more accurately, because of these factors – Lavinia plays an important role in establishing models for gendered behavior in Roman society. More than any other woman in the *Aeneid*, Lavinia provides a model for what the ideal Roman matron-to-be should look like: yet her dull flatness when compared with the other women of the epic paired with the clear lack of passion as the basis for her marriage to Aeneas once again brings attention to the personal cost involved in empire-building and calls into question the narrative's broader message.

Lavinia plays a crucial role in the success of Aeneas' mission: the importance of her future marriage to Aeneas is emphasized throughout the first half of the epic by allusions, direct and indirect, to the woman herself (2.783, 6.93-94, and 6.764). Yet despite her symbolic importance, Virgil permits the audience only four brief, direct

glimpses of Lavinia, all of which work to highlight her filial devotion, her piety, and her passivity. In her first appearance in Book 7, Lavinia's hair is burned in an ominous portent both of war and of her future greatness. In this episode, she appears as a "dutiful daughter, piously helping to carry out the family's religious ritual. She does nothing, says nothing; she is the passive recipient of the portent."[211] Soon thereafter, Amata, feigning a Bacchic frenzy, whisks her daughter away to the woods to prevent her marriage to Aeneas (7.387-88), effectively cloistering her from the audience's view. Although she remains central to the action in that Latinus' act of giving her to Aeneas while passing over Turnus prompts the ensuing battle, she does not reappear until Book 11. Here she appears, *oculos deiecta decoros* ("lowering her eyes modestly": 11.480) – an important nonverbal indicator of feminine *pudicitia*[212] – in a procession, led by her mother, of Latin women bringing gifts to Minerva in the hopes of securing aid in war (a tableau prefigured in the mural depicting the fall of Troy on Juno's temple in Carthage (1.479-82) where the women bear a robe to the temple of Minerva for the same purpose – in both cases, in vain). When we next glimpse Lavinia, she stands by silently as her parents speak with Turnus about the war. When Amata asserts that Turnus' death will mean her own, tears sting Lavinia's cheeks, and her face becomes flushed, *indum sanguineo veluti violaverit ostro/ siquis ebur, aut mixta rubent ubi lilia multa alba rosa* ("Just like if someone will have dyed Indian ivory blood-red, or when white lilies, mingled with many roses, blush": 12.67-69), a blush which operates as another significant nonverbal indicator of *pudicitia*.[213] Lavinia's final appearance comes after Amata's suicide, where, in accordance with ancient funerary custom, she *manu flavos...*

crinis/ et roseas laniata genas ("tore out her golden locks with her hands and rends her rosy cheeks": 12.605-06).

Despite the fact that the glimpses we get of Lavinia are few and brief, the portrait Virgil gives us is carefully designed to suggest the ideal for young women,[214] just as the portrait he draws of Aeneas works as a model for masculinity. All four of Lavinia's appearances in this epic are closely connected to her parents, suggesting filial devotion, and they also conspicuously illustrate positive roles for women – specifically, participation in religious ceremonies and mourning rituals. Moreover, in these brief appearances, Lavinia demonstrates modesty, passivity, and silence, three virtues both prized in women in antiquity and consonant with the very sparseness and brevity of her appearances in an epic where her role, ironically, is central. These qualities position Lavinia as the ideal Roman bride: young, innocent, chaste, and one who, importantly, has completely surrendered herself and her individuality to the will of destiny.[215] Virgil likewise positions the marriage of Aeneas and Lavinia as representative of the ideal Roman union, one whose motives are political and completely devoid of personal desires. As far as Virgil tells us, Aeneas and Lavinia have never even met: their betrothal, as was usual in Rome, was a business-like arrangement agreed upon by father and prospective son-in-law in the bride's absence. Their marriage is predicated not on love or passion (which, as we have seen, Virgil makes clear would be the case with Turnus: 12.70-71), but on creating a political alliance between a rising power and the royal native line.[216]

Lavinia's function as a pawn, more or less, used to gain ground in the game of empire-building is underscored by the silence and passivity which generally work to reduce her to an object rather than an individual. This objectification is suggested by

Lavinia's explicit assimilation to Italy through references to geographical features derived from her name (1.2-3 and 1.270-71),[217] so that she embodies the Italian landscape much as Camilla did earlier. Camilla's violent death and Lavinia's marriage, then, are parallel ways of possessing that landscape. A. R. Sharrock, moreover, notes that the description of Lavinia's blush at 12.64-69[218] positions her as a "painted lady…the symbol and the prize of the epic struggle, an object to be fought over, and, in this passage, an art-object the *sight* of which inflames Turnus."[219] In so characterizing Lavinia, Virgil opposes her to more subjective individual women like Dido and Camilla. As active, thinking women, Dido and Camilla must be sacrificed, and in death are reduced to objects of the erotic gaze; Lavinia, in contrast, need not die, for she fills this role in life, as the imperial context requires. Virgil thus gives us a model for an ideal Roman union in the Augustan vision, but the colorlessness of the bride and the obvious lovelessness of the marriage work to highlight what is lost.

In her passivity, modesty, and willingness to subject herself entirely to the male agenda, Lavinia seems to "buy into" the behavioral parameters for women the Topography of Shame insists on more than any other woman in these three ancient epics. Nonetheless, despite her virtue, the threat Lavinia poses through her womanly nature is not ignored: as a woman, she is repeatedly associated with war and strife. For instance, the passion Lavinia's blush illicits in Turnus is quickly transformed into a lust for arms,[220] once again aligning marriage with violence and women with war, and reminding us that despite her passivity, Lavinia's sexuality positions her as dangerous.[221] Even before we meet Lavinia, the Sibyl in Book 6 makes a similar implication, characterizing her as a second Helen (*Causa mali tanti coniunx iterum hospita Teucris/ externique*

iterum thalami – "The cause of such great evils for the Teucrians will once again be a foreign wife, again an alien marriage-bed": 6.93-94) – a comparison reinforced by references to Aeneas as a second Paris (4.215, 7.321-22, 7.359-64, and 9.136-42). Indeed, the poet himself explicitly refers to Lavinia as *causa mali tanti* ("the cause of so many evils": 11.480).[222]

The association of men with peace and progress and women with strife and discord is further highlighted by the parallel omens we see in Books 2 and 7, when flames appear to burst from the hair of first Ascanius, then Lavinia.[223] In the first instance, an *innoxia* ("harmless") flame licks Ascanius' head, and though Aeneas and Creusa are initially alarmed, Anchises immediately recognizes this as a portent of future greatness and of a stable, continuing Trojan line (2.679-91). Furthermore, the appearance of flames in Ascanius' hair, followed by a second portent of a shooting star which *de caelo lapsa per umbras/... facem ducens multa cum luce cucurrit* ("ran, falling down from the heavens through the darkness, drawing along a torch with abundant light": 2.693-94), calls to mind Julius Caesar, whose name is related to the Latin word *caesaries* ("[head of] hair") and whose death was followed by the appearance of a comet presumed to signify his apotheosis. Thus, the omen associated with Ascanius portends for him a wondrous future and strengthens the connection between heroic figures of myth and the glory of the current regime. The symbolism surrounding the flames that burst from Lavinia's head, however, are much darker: the flames crackle and give off dark smoke, sparks, and heat, and those standing around watch in horror at the *nefas* ("impious" or "abominable") sight. And while this omen is ultimately interpreted as portending that the girl *fore inlustrem fama fatisque.../ ipsam* ("herself would be glorious in fame and in

fate"), this positive interpretation is joined with a prophecy of war (7.71-80). The disparity these omens suggest is reinforced in the "parade of heroes" in Book 6: the ancestral lineup Anchises displays to Aeneas makes clear that while Lavinia will bear a race of kings who will rule in Alba Longa, these offspring do not contribute to the formal line of succession (6.760-66); Ascanius' line, on the other hand, will generate *hanc…gentem, Romanosque tuos* ("this race, your own Romans": 6.788ff). Thus, while Lavinia is paradoxically both joined to Aeneas' family and shut out from it, it is from Ascanius alone that the peace and stability the Roman Empire represents springs. Yet at the same time, Virgil works to call this permanence into question: as David Quint notes, "the glorious parade of Roman history in the underworld of Book 6 ended with the death of Marcellus, the male heir, and hence with the threat of new dissension and civil war destroying the empire from within…,"[224] so that the issue of offspring here prefigures the entire problem of dynastic succession in Augustus' new principate.

Lavinia's connection with war relates to a larger pattern in this epic associating men with peace, stability, and progress, and women with discord and danger. Latinus, for example, has overseen a long period of peace (7.45-46); he welcomes the Trojans, offering them land, wealth, and a marriage alliance (7.259-73); he refuses to break his marriage-promise to Aeneas despite Amata and Turnus' objections (7.373-74); he discourages Turnus from battle (7.594-99); and he resists opening the Gates of War (7.616-19). In contrast, as noted above, both the Trojan War and the war between the Trojans and Latins recounted in the *Aeneid* are instigated by disputes over Helen and Lavinia respectively. Helen's involvement, moreover, was initiated by the meddling of female divinities, as Aphrodite offered her to Paris as a bribe in exchange for his vote in a

vain divine beauty contest, which was itself prompted by the machinations of the disgruntled goddess Eris, herself an embodiment of discord. Furthermore, we learn from Deiphobus in the underworld of Helen's role in Troy's ultimate defeat: she betrays her third husband to her first, whom she had initially betrayed for her second (6.509ff),[225] suggesting that her initial role as instigator was no isolated incident. In addition, the imagery on Pallas' belt, where a band of youth are cut down on their wedding night (10.495-500), locates this theme on a more symbolic level, calling to mind the Danaids, whose myth was a major theme in the decoration of the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine.[226] This subtle reference to Augustan decorative programs implies that the epic's association of marriage and conflict replicates current imperial propaganda and ideologies.

The allusion to the myth of the Danaids also recalls the idea that marriage often represents the intersection of domestic and political: although there are a number of variations on the Danaid myth, all seem to position the marriage of the daughters of Danaus to their cousins as a power struggle between Danaus, later king of Argos, and his brother Aegyptus in Egypt.[227] Likewise, the Palatine complex where these images were located was not just a public space, but also served as an extension of the emperor's house; the Temple of Apollo, in fact, may have been connected to Augustus' own home with a ramp,[228] further illustrating the interplay between public and private. In addition, the Danaid portico has also been interpreted as an allusion to Augustus' triumph at Actium in the conflict it represents between the civilized Danaids and the barbarous Egyptians. In this reading, Danaus' daughters' rejection of a foreign marriage at their father's command represents Rome's rejection of Antony and Cleopatra under the

direction of Augustus as *pater patriae*.[229] As such, the allusion to the Danaid myth and its prominent use in the Augustan building program simultaneously underscores the association of women and marriage with strife and danger and the fact that women, when properly subsumed under male authority, are imperative to political advancement. This reading of the Danaid myth is supported by a reverse simile at 8.407-15, where the god Vulcan, rising from bed to attend to the work of forging a shield for Aeneas, is compared to a dutiful housewife. Like the image on Pallas' belt, this simile can be read two ways: on the one hand, it draws a contrast between women's domestic labor and the labor of men on behalf of the state; on the other, it "underscores the inextricable connection between the two – between, one might say, the work of social reproduction and that of producing the imperial state."[230] Additionally, this seemingly benign metaphor is also connected with the idea of marriage and women as associated with strife, as Venus, who has prompted Vulcan's rising, has just manipulated him with her sexual charms to obtain a favor for her son, the product of an extra-marital affair.[231] Like the belt of Pallas, this simile draws attention the connection between marriage and discord, while at the same time positioning domestic and political concerns as inextricably connected.

At the same time, we might insert a more oppositional reading to this allusion to the Danaids: as Kristina Milnor points out, the inclusion of a statue of Danaus with a drawn sword on the portico serves to underscore his impotence, since it was not he, but his daughters who committed the crime, and indeed, he had not been able to prevent the marriage in the first place. In Milnor's view, then, "[t]he story of the Danaids thus does not simply carry the message that women's 'private' actions may have political effects, but that they may be politically effective where men's are not."[232] Similarly, in the

reverse simile discussed above, Venus capitalizes on the strategies available to her as a woman – her sexuality and charm – in order to advance a political agenda and the interests of her son, a reading that works well with the view I am advancing here, that women access personal and political power by capitalizing on the limitations of the Topography of Shame.

Despite her virtue and passivity, then, Lavinia is implicated in the larger epic program of associating women with discord and strife. Both this association and her function as an ideal Roman wife are supported by supported by scholarly observations on Virgil's use of allusions. As he opens the second half of his epic, for instance, Virgil invokes the Muses a second time, calling in particular on Erato, patroness of erotic poetry. Most scholars see this as an allusion to Apollonius, who invoked Erato halfway through his *Argonautica*. However, in Apollonius this choice is clearly motivated, since the second half of his poem will focus on the love affair between Jason and Medea. In the *Aeneid*, however, the primary focus of the action is war, not love. Many scholars have reasoned that Erato works here at a generic muse, a reading that seems inconsistent with Virgil's careful attention to detail and allusion elsewhere.[233] We might consider, however, whether Virgil might make this allusion ironically in order to call attention, once again, to the lack of erotic passion in the union of Aeneas and Lavinia, once again calling attention to what is lost in the Augustan program of empire-building. The allusion to Erato also highlights Virgil's redirected focus on war rather than love, bolstering the connection we have seen in the *Aeneid* between women and discord. The allusion to Apollonius' epic reinforces this connection still further by positioning Lavinia as a

Medea figure. As with Jason and Medea, Aeneas' prospective union with Lavinia is a precursor to strife and conflict.

Alternately (or perhaps simultaneously), this allusion to the story of Jason and Medea also reminds us of Dido's characterization as a Medea figure, and suggests a comparison of Lavinia (and Rome) to the character of Glauce in the traditional story of Jason as "the politically desirable bride in whose favor the hero rejects his foreign wife, leaving her bitter and vengeful."[234] Virgil once again predicates the ideal Roman marriage, therefore, on political expedience, and in this way, the action of the second half of the *Aeneid* is in fact motivated by Erato, although she is, as Dorothea Clinton Woodworth puts it, "a very restrained and Roman Erato,"[235] and one that subordinates women as individuals to the greater purpose of empire-building.[236]

Despite her few and brief appearances, then, Lavinia acts as an important symbol in the *Aeneid*: in her utter passivity, she serves as a model for Roman women, while her connections with conflict serve as reminders of women's inherently threatening nature. Because she conforms neatly to the expectations for women laid down by the Topography of Shame, maximizing her feminine virtue while also demonstrating the need for male controls and restrictions, she advances perfectly the gendered ideologies set forth in the Augustan program. Yet her character is so bland and colorless and the marriage Aeneas foresees with her so completely devoid of passion that Virgil, in effect, offers us a compelling vision of what is lost in the process.[237]

Turnus

Although the characters in the *Aeneid* who are opposed to Aeneas' mission are overwhelmingly feminine – most notably, Juno, Dido, Camilla, Allecto, and Amata – Turnus, whose objection to the alliance between the Trojans and Aeneas leads to war, constitutes an important exception to this gendered division; thus, like Paris in the *Iliad*, his character deserves a closer look.

Although Turnus is a fierce fighter often positioned as an Achilles figure, like Paris, he is repeatedly feminized through allusion and characterization. For example, just as the gods play on women, exciting their passions by "working with" their natural inclinations, Lyne shows that Turnus, too, is susceptible to Allecto's suggestions because his previous brooding and deliberating had prepared him for just such an onslaught.[238] Michael C. J. Putnam also detects comparisons to both Dido and Camilla in the final book of the *Aeneid*.[239] For instance, like Camilla, whose desire for booty, as we have seen, is explicitly cast as feminine, it is Turnus' greed for spoils in the form of Pallas' belt which ultimately leads to his demise, a comparison driven home by Virgil's reuse of the same line in describing their deaths (*vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras* – "and with a groan her (/his) indignant spirit fled down to the shades": 11.831 and 12.952) – the very line which closes the whole *Aeneid*.[240] Women, moreover, are repeatedly associated with passion (Dido and Amata, most obviously), a trait emphasized in Turnus as well: not only does Turnus burn with love for Lavinia (*illum turbat amor, figitque in virgine voltus: ardet in arma magis* – "love agitates him, and he fixes his gaze on the maiden: he burns all the more for battle": 12.70-71) – an unseemly situation for a Roman male – his passion is explicitly contrasted in these books with the practical concerns of

Aeneas, whose interest in Lavinia is based wholly on political considerations. Thus, while Turnus, as Aeneas' primary antagonist, is a worthy opponent in his martial prowess, his eagerness for battle and his eventual demise are drawn with feminine overtones.[241] While the *Aeneid* thus seems in many ways to confirm the tenets of the Topography of Shame and the Mediterranean construction of the feminine, unlike the Homeric epics, it complicates the issue considerably by connecting the "feminine" with a political position: resistance to the Roman Empire in general, and to the Augustan solution more specifically.

In addition, in the end, Virgil also problematizes the dichotomy between the gendering of passion as feminine and reason as masculine: at the epic's close, Aeneas kills Turnus not as a reasoned political response, but through an impassioned impulse prompted by the sight of Pallas' belt[242]: he is *furiis accensus et ira terribilis* ("burning with fury and terrible in his wrath": 12.946-47), words that recall earlier descriptions of both the rage of Dido – a comparison reinforced by the use of the same non-verbal indicator to describe the emotional state of both[243]: *volvens oculos* ("rolling eyes": 4.363 and 12.939) – and the fury of Turnus himself, simultaneously feminizing the epic's primary hero and aligning him with his greatest enemy. Despite, then, the prevailing associations of women with uncontrolled emotion and men with reason and rationality, Virgil ultimately calls this division too into question. Moreover, this problematic ending has further implications for the issue of Augustan propaganda: because Augustus was obliged to avenge Julius Caesar's death while at the same time he was attempting to erase the particulars of Caesar's triumviral career and promote his own promise of clemency, his "filial piety became a screen behind which to eliminate his enemies."[244] This finds a

parallel in Aeneas' killing of Turnus, in that it, too, is "private vengeance cloaking itself in legality, an act of judicial murder."[245] Despite a prevailing appearance, then, of the systematic advancement of Augustan ideals, from beginning to end Virgil works covertly to challenge the same ideologies his larger narrative promotes.

Conclusions

As in the Homeric epics, women in the *Aeneid* tend function in accordance with the Topography of Shame, exhibiting shame or despair and expressing self-deprecatory sentiments in times of crisis in their relationship to men, and speaking or acting assertively when working in the interests of their male connections. This formula is complicated, however, by this epic's self-conscious political aspect. While on the one hand, Virgil is concerned with advancing the patriarchal ideologies specifically promoted by Augustus – both his patron and the man who ushered in an era of peace and prosperity after decades of war and strife – at the same time, he refuses to gloss over the problems that accompanied the institution of the imperial regime: the disempowerment of the male elite and the personal costs involved in empire-building. To this end, Virgil issues repeated, subtle challenges to the binary gendered categories the larger epic ostensibly promotes.

A broad, superficial reading of the *Aeneid* suggests that although women like Dido and Camilla cross gender lines and initially actualize the positive characteristics more usual in men, their feminine sexual weaknesses ultimately emerge so that their masculine attributes are revealed as unsustainable, eventually leading to their destruction. In order to manifest leadership abilities, strength, and intelligence, then, these women

have to act like men; when their feminine traits are given a foothold, each woman is destroyed, demonstrating the dangers inherent in transgressing gender boundaries. On the surface, therefore, women seem to challenge these gender categories only to reinscribe them in the end. In contrast, women like Lavinia who subsume their needs and desires to male control and the patriarchal agenda, though they remain in the background, are afforded both honor and a future place in the Roman world. In this way, the prevailing narrative voice seems to confirm and promote the traditional gender roles we have see associated with the Topography of Shame.

Because opposition to the patriarchal program is gendered feminine, moreover, women in the *Aeneid* are regularly sacrificed for the sake of a higher, masculine purpose: the establishment of a stable empire which will ultimately be characterized by the period of peace and harmony ushered in by Augustus as the *Pax Romana*. The necessity of renouncing the feminine is demonstrated by the fact that women are sacrificed at significant junctures in Aeneas' journey: he initiates his quest with the death of Creusa; his reaffirmation of his commitment to his goal corresponds with Dido's suicide[246]; the funeral games of Anchises are concurrent with the actions which lead to the abandonment of the Trojan matrons; and the death of Caieta commemorates the Trojans' arrival in Italy (7.1-4).[247] Lavinia's maidenhood is also offered as a sort of sacrifice when she is given as a peace-pledge to Aeneas, an act which initiates both the initial alliance between the Trojans and Latins and the animosity of the Teucrians; and Amata's soundness of mind is sacrificed as a precurser to war and later her life itself is sacrificed as the war progresses.[248] In each instance, these threats are ultimately removed, silenced, or

otherwise contained, and as such, they serve to reaffirm the patriarchal power and authority they initially imperiled.[249]

Thus, the dominant narrative voice makes clear differentiations between categories like male and female in the service of promoting the ideologies that buttress the patriarchal program Augustus has put in place. Yet while the overarching narrative regularly attempts to pigeonhole women, giving primary attention to how they work to illustrate imperial gender ideologies, at the same time, Virgil taps into their marginalized voices in order to suggest alternative readings that work to deconstruct the very categories the dominant voice has imposed. The sacrifice of women, for instance, results from current Augustan ideologies positing that Roman *pietas* involves sacrificing individual desires to the good of the state, a position that Virgil represents, but does not necessarily endorse. As Nugent demonstrates, overwhelmingly in this epic, whereas men like "...Aeneas, Anchises, Evander, and Latinus yield unquestioningly to the exigencies of fate, female figures such as Dido, Camilla, Amata, Juturna, and others suggest the possibility of choice and independent volition"; as such, "Vergil's representational strategy enables him to show, often through women who question, refuse, or reject dominant ideological tenets of the *Aeneid*, that alternative modes exist."[250] Virgil thus utilizes the marginal position of women to voice veiled opposition to the Augustan agenda, so that the narrative tendency to renounce the female indirectly suggests to some of the problems inherent in the larger patriarchal program. In this way, Virgil capitalizes on the tools at his disposal to exercise a sort of unofficial, indirect power in a system that more or less works to disenfranchise him as an elite male, not only calling the gender

binaries which serve to disempower women into question, but simultaneously mapping out a parallel Topography of Shame for men.

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[1] My examination at times appears to conflate biological sex and gender. While the Romans did not have a word for the concept of "gender," as Dominic Monserrat 2000.153ff shows, they viewed individuals as masculine or feminine "not only according to the body, but also according to behaviour" (2000.156). Since, however, "gender and sex need to be in harmony for things to function properly" (2000.157), the Romans would have seen the association of women as "feminine" and men as "masculine" as normal and appropriate.

[2] Milnor 2005.1-3.

[3] Milnor 2005.2.

[4] Milnor 2005.3-4.

[5] Quint 1993.55.

[6] Quint 1993.61.

[7] Quint 1993.62.

[8] See Quint 1993.23.

[9] Keith 2000.67-74.

[10] See Keith 2000.35ff.

[11] Padel 1993.16.

[12] Maria Wyke 1987 has expored a similar principle at play in Augustan elegy.

[13] Keith 2000.25.

[14] Latin text in this study is based on that found in Vergil. 1900. *Bucolics, Aeneid, and Georgics of Vergil*. J. B. Greenbough, ed. Boston (obtained at http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Verg.A.1.1).

[15] While allegiance to a particular city or hero does not seem to be a trait exclusive to female divinities, goddesses are often portrayed as more excessive in their zeal to help or protect their favorites. In addition, Horsfall 1973-74.3 demonstrates that Juno's support of Carthage is characterized as working against the male principles of order and morality.

[16] Lyne 1987.95.

[17] Mack 1999.144. Mack 1999.143 notes that Allecto acts not as an avenger – the traditional role for a Fury – but as an instigator, as "discord personified."

[18] That women in particular were seen as more vulnerable to daemonic infiltration (Padel 1993.11) is suggested by the prevalence of examples of women maddened by a god in myth: Padel 1993.7, for example, notes the frenzy of Agave and her fellow revelers in Euripides' *Bacchae*, Aeschylus' maenads tearing Orpheus limb from limb in the lost play *Bassarides*, and the example, found in "[s]everal earlier poets," of the daughters of Proteus, who were "maddened by a goddess, and ran wild on the mountains, desiring men but disgusting them by their own physical condition."

[19] Quint 1993.23.

[20] Joseph Farrell 1999.109 argues that the role of Venus in helping Aeneas towards his goal has been under-acknowledged in favor of emphasis on Anchises' role as *pater*, a point which suggests some persistent underlying gender bias in scholarly criticism.

[21] Perkell 1981.361, in contrast, sees Creusa's positioning of herself as indicative of the fact that "[s]he values her person and, as it seems, she expects from Aeneas certain

actions expressive of family responsibility, both as father and as husband." In this reading, Aeneas immediately afterwards inverts Creusa's hierarchy when he prioritizes Anchises' and Iulus' safety and asks her to walk behind alone.

[22] Nugent 1999.264.

[23] See "Aineias: M. Fuga di Troia – Aineias porta Anchises" and "N. Fuga da Troia – Aineias conduce Anchises" in *LIMC I*. 1981. Zurich. 386ff.

[24] As Perkell 1981.358 notes, tradition offered two variants of Creusa's story, the older of which had Creusa accompanying Aeneas into exile (it was this version that Virgil's predecessor Naevius, for example, followed). The second version, which Virgil loosely employs, had Cybele and Aphrodite conspiring to rescue Creusa from Troy; the "notable addition" of Aeneas isolating Creusa from her male family members and then forgetting her entirely seems to be a Virgilian innovation, and one which troubled even some ancient readers, as indicated by Servius' recommendation that at *Aen.* 2.729, where Aeneas is *pariter comitique onerique timentem* ("fearing equally for [his] companion and [his] burden"), we take the singular *comiti* – presumably referring to Ascanius – to stand for *comitibus*, in reference to both son and wife (noted in Perkell 1981.360).

[25] Langlands 2006.1-3 and 37-39.

[26] Langlands 2006.23.

[27] See "Helen," "The Serving Women," and "Penelope" in Chapter 3, and Winkler 1990.133-37.

[28] Wiltshire 1989.43-44.

[29] Aeneas' tendency to misread or neglect omens continues throughout his narrative in Book 3. For example, when Aeneas breaks off the boughs of a myrtle tree in order to

deck the altar in preparation for a sacrifice, *atro liquuntur sanguine guttae,/ et terram tabo maculant* ("drops of black blood flow and stain the ground with gore": 3.28-29). Aeneas neglects this omen not just once, but twice, tearing off another branch, which bleeds like the first, and then starting in on a third, so that the unfortunate Polydorus, whose remains are there entombed, finally is compelled to speak up and ask him to leave off (3.31-46).

[30] This attitude is part of the Stoic tradition in accordance with which Roman men were expected to manifest their feelings towards their wives (see Lyne 1987.166ff).

[31] Lyne 1987.149-51 and 161-77. Lyne includes Aeneas' attitude towards Ascanius and Pallas in his examination, but notes that these are different in nature. Nonetheless, these examples too ask us to "approach the Stoical attitude to life (which the *Aeneid* may appear to espouse) warily and critically" (1987.183).

[32] i.e. Uhlfelder 1955 and Monti 1981.1-3, 38, 42. Foley positions the internal conflict Euripides' Medea faces as a gendered debate between her "masculine, heroic, and public self and a feminine, maternal self" (1989.62, following Burnett, Anne. 1973. "*Medea* and the Tragedy of Revenge." *CP* 68. 1-24 and Dihle, Albrecht. 1977. "Euripides' *Medea.*" *Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften.* Heidelberg; see also Foley 1989.73ff), an argument with many relevant parallels to the discussion of Dido which follows here.

[33] i.e. Tatum 1984.437 and Keith 2000.68.

[34] i.e. Uhlfelder 1955, Monti 1981.1-2, 42, and Lyne 1987.129.

[35] i.e. Yeames 1913.146.

[36] i.e. Smith 1993.308ff and R.D. Williams 1972. *The Aeneid of Vergil*. London; noted in Tatum 1984.443 fn 30. Macrobius (*Sat.* 5.19.2) and Servius (*ad Aen.* 4.694) had both recognized in the cutting of Dido's lock an allusion to Euripides' *Alcestis* (Smith 1993.309). Smith1993.309, following John Rauk (1991. "The Cutting of Dido's Lock: *Aeneid* Book 4." *AAPhA* 52), notes that the comparison to Alcestis also points out a contrast between Alcestis, as the perfect wife who sacrifices herself on her husband's behalf and is redeemed, and Dido, who curses her "husband" and is herself destroyed.

[37] Tatum 1984.439.

[38] Edgeworth 1976-77.130-33; Konstan 2001.17 n. 8.

[39] In some ways, Dido's assumption of *univira* status catapults her out of the feminine realm and into, not the masculine one, but that of the "third sex," which included individuals who could not procreate or chose not to, such as eunuchs or hermaphrodites (see Monserrat 2000.157-61). In such a reading, Dido would be likewise seen as deviant and dangerous.

[40] Monti 1981.35-36, 77. Monti 1981.36 notes that Catullus had also used Roman political metaphors in defining his relationships with Lesbia.

[41] Becker 1997. The ancient commentator Servius tells us that the phrase *femina dux facti* (1.364) is "to be pronounced in tones of amazement" (noted in Keith 2000.23-24 and Langlands 2006.143.fn 48; trans. Langlands), while the fourth century grammarian and commentator Aelius Donatus (1.80.2-3) suggested that this phrase was to be understood to mock Pygmalion (noted in Keith 2000.23-24). Ilioneus' statement that Dido owes her position to the gods (*O Regina, novam cui condere Iuppiter urbem/ iustitiaque dedit gentis frenare superbas* – O Queen, to whom Jupiter has given it to establish a new city

and to rein in the pride of the nearby people with justice…": 1.522-23), while not an unusual attribution in a world concerned with avoiding incurring the gods' wrath through *hubris*, might additionally here be seen as an attempt to rationalize Dido's unusual success.

[42] See Lovatt 2005.8.

[43] Lovatt 2005.8-9. While this "artful engagement" can be construed as learned and therefore "masculine," it is simultaneously feminine in that the Romans designated the Greek language as effeminate (Farrell 2001.53-54).

[44] Lovatt 2005.9-10. Lovatt sees a similar emotional intensity in Turnus' speech to Juturna as he recognizes the inevitability of his own death, as this speech contains a comparable number of elisions. While Turnus has good reason to feel overwhelmed in this situation, there is no obvious reason why Dido would feel more emotionally moved than the men to whom she is speaking (or than Latinus in a comparable situation in Book 7) other than her femininity. In addition, Turnus is in some ways singled out among men as feminized (see "Turnus" below).

[45] Lovatt 2005.14-15.

[46] Farrell 2001.56-57.

[47] Stevenson 2005.55.

[48] Lovatt 2005.15-16. For a comprehensive analysis of female speech (primarily focused on the comedies of Plautus and Terence), see Adams 1984.

[49] Noted in Lovett 2005.12 fn 27 (following McClure 1999.38-40 and Adams 1984.44 respectively); the association with women and archaic speech is also noted in Farrell 2001.65-66 and Stevenson 2005.31.

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[50] See James 2005.

[51] Lovatt 2005.12.

[52] Lovatt 2005.5 notes that scholars have interpreted Dido's averted gaze differently: "Austin [Austin, R. G., ed. 1971. *P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Primus*. Oxford. 180] reads *demissa* as implying 'both modesty and emotion'. Pöschl [Pöschl, V. 1966. *The Art of Vergil: Image and Symbol in the Aeneid*, trans. Seligson. Ann Arbor. 70] suggests that the gesture 'delicately shows her embarrassment at the harsh treatment afforded the ship-wrecked Trojans.'" Either reading, however, indicates a womanly sense of shame. Lovatt notes that Latinus, too, looks down as he considers a response (7.249-51), but argues that the tone here is more indicative of contemplation than it is of shame, and has the additional effect of creating suspense concerning the nature of his reaction, so that Latinus' gesture, in contrast to Dido's, indicates power (2005.5-6).

[53] Lovatt 2005.4 following Laird, A. 1999. *Powers of Expression, Expressions of Power: Speech Presentation and Latin Literature*. Oxford.

[54] Lovatt 2005.11-13.

[55] Horsfall's reading (1973-74.4ff) of Dido's welcome to the Trojans in Book 1 is much different: he sees her offer of *hospitium* as suspect in consideration of later hostility between Rome and Carthage, and reminds us that Venus "is not deceived by Dido's friendliness," which is why she sends Cupid to fire Dido with love for Aeneas.

[56] Lovatt 2005.15-16.

[57] See Sharon James 2005 for an examination of women's use of speech to exert power in Roman comedy.

[58] Fögen 2005.38.

[59] Lovatt 2005.16.

[60] These gifts, notably, are all particularly feminine items: *pallam signis auroque rigentem,/ et circumtextum croceo velamen acantho,/ ornatus Argivae Helenae.../ sceptrum, Ilione quod gesserat olim,/ maxima natarum Priami, colloque monile/ bacatum, et duplicem gemmis auroque coronam* ("a mantle stiff with markings in gold, and a veil woven all around with saffron acanthus, worn by Argive Helen..., the scepter which Ilione, eldest daughter of Priam, had once carried, a necklace set with pearls, and a double crown set with gems and gold": 1.648-55).

[61] Women in the *Aeneid* are regularly portrayed as physically weakened by love or otherwise unable to control themselves emotionally (Ogle 1925.268-69), whereas men are stronger and more self-restrained. Cf. the reactions of Rama and Sita in the Indian epic *Ramayana* (see R.K. Narayan's reworking based on the Tamil version by Kamban: 1972. *The Ramayana*. New York. 24-26). The debilitating "love-sickness" which afflicts males in Latin elegy, while an exception to this gendered categorization, is depicted as problematic and highly feminizing.

[62] Quint 1993.24. Quint 1993.28 also notes that Dido's embrace of Cupid, disguised as Ascanius, recalls her relationship to Caesarion, whom she and Antony tried to promote as Julius Caesar's heir at a ceremony in Alexandria in 34 BCE.

[63] Pomeroy 1990.25.

[64] See, for example, Plutarch's description of Cleopatra on her barge (*Vit. Ant.* 26.1-3).

[65] Langlands 2006.71.

[66] Quint 1993.29.

[67] Quint 1993.28. See also Keith 2000.118.

[68] Keith 2000.76. See David Quint 1993.26ff for more on the association of Cleopatra with strife in the depiction of the Battle of Actium on Aeneas' shield.

[69] Keith 2000.78. Keith also sees "the unprecedented visibility of upper class women in the political upheavals of the decade after Caesar's assassination" as an important historical motivator for Virgil's association of women with strife in this epic.

[70] Keith 2000.114-15.

[71] Horsfall 1973-74 argues that Dido's betrayal of her "unambiguous" vow to remain a *univira* overshadows any betrayal Aeneas' behavior suggests ("Aeneas' lack of *fides* is nothing when compared to [this]"). Perkell 1981.364, however, notes that the poet himself characterizes Aeneas' actions as *dolos* ("deceits" or "tricks": 4.296).

[72] Tatum 1984.448 notes Dido's loss of *pudor*, and argues, following West 1980.321 fn 17, that *pudor* is usually a masculine virtue in epic, but is applied to Dido since *pudicitia* cannot be used in the nominative for metrical reasons; nonetheless, the application of a masculine word to a feminine virtue seems in Dido's case appropriate considering her complex gender characterization (Tatum 1984.448 fn. 46).

[73] See Lendon 1997.47- 51 and Barton 2001.18-23.

[74] See Braund 1998.133-34.

[75] While the Greek term *sophrosyne* might better describe the behavioral ideal I am discussing, Latin never acquired an adequate translation (Lendon 1997.42). Cicero's description of *decorum*, however, suggests the sort of moderation and self-control *sophrosyne* entails: *hoc decorum, quod elucet in vita, movet approbationem eorum, quibuscum vivitur, ordine et constantia et moderatione dictorum omnium atque factorum* ("...this decorum, which shines out in our way of life, inspires the approval of those with

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whom it is lived, by the order and constancy and moderation [it imposes] on all our words and deeds": *Off.* 1.28.98; noted in Barton 2001.24). Lendon 1997.42 suggests that cultivation of Roman *gravitas* would produce similar behavior, and so this term might work as a suitable Latin substitute as well. For more on the Roman ideal of "The Middle Way," see Barton 2001.24-28.

[76] See Carson 1995.126. Braund 1998.136-37 also discusses the ancient admiration for taciturnity (i.e. Longinus *Subl.* 9.2; Plut. *Mor.* 28F), and argues that Aeneas' verbal restraint in response to Dido's diatribe would have been seen as a reflection of the virtue of *decorum*, and appropriate for a member of the elite.

[77] Braund 1998.130 points out that Dido says more in Book 4 than Aeneas does in the entire second half of the epic (Aeneas speaks a mere 182 lines in all of Books 7-12). Aeneas' taciturnity is also emphasized in Book 4 when he at first *obmutuit amens* ("stunned, was struck dumb": 4.279) by Mercury's admonition to resume his journey, then again when he avoids speaking to Dido (see 4.288-94), and thirdly when Virgil conveys Aeneas' orders to his men to prepare for departure through indirect commands (see 4.288-94). Virgil then introduces Aeneas' response to Dido's accusations as *pauca* ("a few words": 4.333), further characterizing him as verbally continent (Braund 1998.131-33). At the same time, Aeneas' response is actually longer than Dido's initial speech (indeed, it is his second longest speech in the epic, following the tales he tells in Books 2 and 3). Aeneas is, in fact, most talkative with Dido, and he grows increasingly silent, as noted above, towards the end of the epic (Braund 1998.142), further characterizing Dido as threatening to Aeneas' sense of *decorum*.

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[78] Spence 1999.81 suggests that Aeneas' position here is the irrational one, since he has been "at best, unclear in his intentions and, at worst, downright misleading, especially when behavior suitable to a Roman marriage is considered." For more on the latter point, see G. Williams. 1958. "Some Aspects of Roman Marriage Ceremonies and Ideals." *JRS* 48.23-24.

[79] Perkell 1981.368 and Quint 1993.58.

[80] Skulsky 1985.448.

[81] Braund 1998.134 sees this shift to third person as an indication that Aeneas is no longer meeting Dido's gaze and positions her own later aversion of her eyes in the underworld as "payback."

[82] Skulsky 1985.448.

[83] Perkell 1981.365. Perkell 1981.367 argues that Aeneas had both acted and dressed the part of the husband; Mercury's term *uxorious* (4.266) paired with Dido's later use of the phrase *data dextera* ("with the right hand given": 4.307) also corroborate Dido's perspective.

[84] Braund 1998.132-36.

[85] Augustan propaganda regularly utilized images of the punishment of women: for example, in the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine, statues of the Danaids were set up in a portico, while the dying Niobids were said to decorate monumental golden tripods dedicated there by Octavian; additionally, the attic of the colonnades in the Forum of Augustus contained scale copies of the caryatids from the Erechtheum in Athens (see Milnor 2005.51 and Zanker 1988.87, 256-57). For more on the Danaid statues, see "Lavinia" below.

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[86] Knapp 1924.206-07 (following Fowler, W. Warde. 1920. *Roman Essays and Interpretations*. Oxford). Perkell 1999a.16 notes that ancient commentators subscribed to this view (i.e. Servius 1.1 and Donatus' introduction to *Aen.* 1).

[87] Fowler, W. Warde. 1920. *Roman Essays and Interpretations*. Oxford.189-90 (noted in Knapp 1924.206-07); Horsfall 1973-74.8-9; and Perkell 1981.362-63. Horsfall 1973-74.8ff, and, briefly, Perkell 1981.362-63 examine possible variations in the earlier traditions regarding Dido. Both note that the legends of Dido and Aeneas were originally not contemporaneous: indeed, most scholars date Carthage's founding to the 9th century (Horsfall 1973-74.9).

[88] Yeames 1913.149-50.

[89] Putnam 1984.75.

[90] Since women's boundaries, sexual and otherwise, were regarded as porous and leaky, external indicators of order, restraint, and control, such as headgear, veils, belts, and other bindings, came to signify women's chastity. For more on this topic, see Carson 1990 and Myerowitz Levine 1995; for more on the erotic associations of the foot in particular, along with the shoe as its "sexual covering" (Rossi, W. A. 1993. *The Sex Life of the Foot and Shoe*. Malbar, FL.1, qtd. in Levine 2005.55), see Levine 2005.

[91] Hexter 1999.66-67.

[92] Perkell 1999a.15ff notes that this "anti-Augustan" position gained momentum in the United States during the Vietnam War, an era when the appropriate and moral use of military power was a matter of heated debate.

[93] Casali 1999.203-06.

[94] Casali 1999.206. Menecrates of Xanthos (*FGRHist* 769 F 3 = Dion. Hal. 1.48.3) reports that Aeneas betrayed Troy to the Greeks because of Paris' hostility towards him; for this reason, the Greeks permitted Aeneas to save his family; one Lutatius (either Quintus Lutatius Catulus or Lutatius Daphnis) also positioned Aeneas as a traitor (noted in Casali 1999.206 fn. 6).

[95] Casali 1999.208-09.

[96] Horsfall 1973-74.8.

[97] Casali 1999.209-10.

[98] Horsfall 1973-74.4.

[99] Ogle 1925.261-63. Ogle's argument that Aeneas' punishment is "no less" than Dido's since his heart is broken and, compelled by the hard necessity of returning to duty, he has lost the haven of a city, is somewhat unconvincing.

[100] Casali 1999.210.

[101] See "Hecuba" in Chapter 2.

[102] Women in antiquity were perceived as having a particular kinship with "the darker, polluting side of divinity" (Padel 1993.6).

[103] Horsfall views Dido's use of duplicity and black magic in arranging her suicide even more negatively, arguing that these are meant to "lower her in our esteem" (1973-74.7) and seeing in them support for his contention that Dido's actions in the *Aeneid* are characterized by "violence, greed, duplicity, and hatred" (1973-74.12) throughout.

[104] Yeames 1913.146 and Tatum 1984.443 fn. 30 (following R.D. Williams 1972. *The Aeneid of Vergil*. London).

[105] Lyne 1987.45.

[106] Edgeworth reconstructs this story by supplementing the information available in Appian with examination of the Mai-Heyse palimpsest of Polybian excerpts (Vatican 73) and both the Periochae of Livy's lost book and the epitome from the Oxyrhynchus Papyri (1976-77.130, 132). Konstan 2001.17 n. 8 notes that a similar version of this story is found in Florus 1.31.16-17.

[107] Edgeworth 1976-77.130-31.

[108] Edgeworth 1976-77.132-33.

[109] See Loraux 1987. Dido's suicide represents a notable deviation from that of Cleopatra (Edgeworth 1976-77.129).

[110] West 1980.323 and Tatum 1984.443 fn. 30 (following R. D. Williams 1972. *The Aeneid of Vergil*. London).

[111] See Loraux 1987 and "The Serving Women" in Chapter 3 for more on hanging as a feminine mode of suicide.

[112] Edgeworth 1976-77.130; West 1980.323; and Keith 2000.112-13. Monserrat's suggestion that the association of wounds with effeminate men and their possible function as "metaphorical vaginas" (2000.178-80) provides additional significance to Virgil's connection of wounds to Juno and Dido.

[113] Keith 2000.114-15.

[114] Nugent 1999.266ff points out a more generalized tendency towards incorporality and etherealization for women in the *Aeneid*: whereas men's bodies and their disposal is a cause for concern (i.e., those of Pallas, Mezentius, Nisus, and Euryalus), the bodies of women seem to "waft away" (i.e., those of Creusa, Dido, Caieta, Camilla, and Amata).

[115] Indeed, Juvenal's *Satires* 6.434-7 seem to suggest that women in particular would have responded to the epic by identifying with Dido.

[116] See also Spence 1999.92-93. Ovid will adopt this strategy and develop it much more fully in the *Metamorphoses* and other works, but he is, in many ways, working to explicitly challenge the epic tradition from the inside by transgressing its norms, whereas Virgil, while he does introduce challenges to the Homeric tradition, is working more within its established conventions.

[117] Noted by Yeames 1913.143. Richard Heinze, Kenneth Quinn, Viktor Pöschl, J. L. Moles, and Frances Muecke have also argued that Book 4 reflects an Aristotelian sense of tragedy (noted in Spence 1999.86).

[118] Spence 1999.81.

[119] Spence 1999.85.

[120] Lyne 1987.230-31.

[121] Eliot 1945.21 (also qtd. in Tatum 1984.434).

[122] As discussed in the introduction (see "Problems" in Chapter 1), feelings of disempowerment among the elite with the advent of the empire are noted in Tacitus (*Ann.* 1.1.25 and 1.7.1).

[123] Aeneas' casting as a Theseus figure (see "The Underworld" below) strengthens the connection between Dido and Ariadne, each of whom is abandoned after acting as a helper figure and hostess to the hero.

[124] Spence 1999.95.

[125] Quint 1993.60.

[126] See Wiltshire 1989.38ff and 1999.173ff.

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[127] Wiltshire 1989.38ff.

[128] Wiltshire 1989.54.

[129] See the sections on "Helen" in both Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

[130] Wiltshire 1989.120-21. Perkell 1981.371 agrees: "It almost seems as if loved women are introduced into the *Aeneid* in order that they may subsequently be lost from Aeneas' life. Thus Virgil is suggesting the emotional cost to the Romans of becoming an imperial people."

[131] Quint 1993.29.

[132] Quint 1993.23.

[133] The story of Dido's downfall in Book 4 has persistently proven the most popular part of the *Aeneid*, in modern times and, according to both Macrobius (*Sat.* 5.17.5) and Ovid (*Tr.* 2.533-36), in the ancient world as well.

[134] Nugent 1992.267.

[135] Nugent 1992.279-80.

[136] Nugent 1992.269-70.

[137] Nugent 1992.268-69.

[138] See Nugent 1992.282-93.

[139] Nugent 1992.286.

[140] Nugent 1992.268-69.

[141] Keith 2000.26. The power of the patriarchally-constructed ideology here is illustrated by Nugent's observations (1992.275ff) on the 20th century female-authored scholarship on this topic, where authors frequently replicate the masculine values of the text they evaluate: Ellenor Swallow 1953.179, for instance, approves of Aeneas' decision to

abandon his "*reliquiae*," seeing his position as stronger with these "tag ends...cleared away" (qtd. in Nugent 1992.277).

[142] Nugent 1992.275.

[143] Quint 1993.57-58 offers a different interpretation, connecting Anchises' misinterpretation to the Trojan tendency in the first half of this epic to attempt to repeat their past: "Anchises' application of the oracles to Crete suggests a desire for what is familiar and recognizable – landmarks from the old Troy – rather than a willingness to confront a new and unknown future."

[144] Hardy 1996.1-5, 7.

[145] Feldherr 1999.115. See also Knapp 1924.213-14 and Wiltshire 1989.67ff. Fowler (Fowler, W. Warde. 1920. *Roman Essays and Interpretations*. Oxford, 1920.198) notes that the shield of Aeneas reflects this forward movement, depicting scenes from the future rather than the heroism of the past (qtd. in Knapp 1924.214).

[146] Nugent 1992.259-60.

[147] Wiltshire 1989.110.

[148] Nugent 1992.259-60.

[149] See Doob 1990.237-40 for more on the importance of the labyrinth in Book 6.

[150] The Sibyl is further connected to Dido by her position as an Ariadne figure who helps Aeneas navigate the underworld, a labyrinthine space from which escape is difficult (Doob 1990.239). See "Dido" above for more on Dido as an Ariadne figure; see below in this section for more on Aeneas as a Theseus figure.

[151] Feldherr 1999.103-04.fn. 46.

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[152] Padel 1993.12 has observed that "[a] possessing deity may be male or female, but when a possessing deity is male there is often a sense of divine rape."

[153] See Padel 1993.8 and 14.

[154] See "Helen" and "Penelope" in Chapter 3.

[155] Padel 1993.16.

[156] T. S. Eliot 1945.21, in contrast, argues that an important point of this episode is that "Aeneas does not forgive himself."

[157] Wiltshire 1989.93, on the other hand, argues that Dido, too, benefits from this interaction: "...Dido has regained her agency over her own choices. As she moves to the side of Sychaeus, she is once more in possession of her dignity and identity. She is no longer pitiful, just as Aeneas is no longer insensitive."

[158] Smith 1993.310 -11 notes the parallel with Euripides' Alcestis, who does not speak once she is restored to life, so that verbal expression becomes exclusively engendered as male. At the same time, Smith sees Dido's silence as a powerful response in itself, a position supported by McClure 2001.11, who notes that "[e]ven women's silence may denote a form of resistance rather than passive submission."

[159] Adams' analysis of Roman comedy (1984.47 and 73) suggests that the view of women as more prone to complaints and self-pity held in Rome as well (i.e. Ter. *Ad.* 291).

[160] Feldherr 1999.101. According to Feldherr, this etymology is attested by Timaeus (*FGRH* 566 fr. 82) and the *Etymologicum Magnum* (Feldherr 199.101 fn. 40).

[161] Feldherr 1999.100-01.

[162] As Eckerd Lefevre (1978. "Dido und Aias. Ein Beitrag zur römischen Tragödie." *Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur*. Mainz) has shown, both Ajax and Dido

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commit suicide after a loss of τιμή/*fama*; both fall on swords given to them by Trojans (Hector and Aeneas respectively); both long for darkness or to escape the light of day; and both contrive to die apart from their family members (noted in Tatum 1984.446-47).

[163] For further analysis of this allusion, see Tatum 1984.440-43; Skulsky 1985; Smith 1993; and Feldherr 1999.107ff.

[164] Skulsky 1985.449 and Smith 1993.310. For further associations of Aeneas with astral imagery, see Skulsky 1985.449 and 452-53.

[165] Skulsky 1985.451. This irony is sharpened by the fact that Berenice was an ancestor of Cleopatra, who serves as a model for Dido (Skulsky 1985.452; Smith 1993.308) and whose romantic associations, like Dido's, led to her ruin rather than to lasting happiness.

[166] See Catull. 66.79-83.

[167] Skulsky 1985.451.

[168] Tatum 1984.444; Skulsky 1985.451; Feldherr 1999.108.

[169] Skulsky 1985.451.

[170] Yeames 1913.139-40 argues that the tendency to fault Aeneas in this situation results from our modern romantic bias and is incompatible with ancient ideals, which emphasized "fate, destiny, and duty over all else." More recently, Susanna Braund 1998.129-30 has attempted to recover a "more Roman perspective" on this affair, concluding that such a position would concede some sympathy to Aeneas without necessarily taking it away from Dido.

[171] Feldherr 1999.103ff.

[172] Feldherr 1999.112.

[173] See, for example, Wyke 1994a.115-18.

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[174] Doob 1990.227-53 traces the importance of labyrinthine imagery throughout the *Aeneid* and therefore sees Theseus as an important counterpart to Aeneas in the epic as a whole.

[175] Feldherr 1999.112-13.

[176] Doob 1990.238.

[177] Lyne 1987.149-51 and 161-77.

[178] Skulsky 1985.454-55. Smith 1993.311 takes the implications of Aeneas' interaction with Dido a step further, seeing her restoration to Sychaeus as positioning Aeneas as a failed "Hercules" (and Theseus, and Orpheus) figure, which Smith sees as effectively calling Aeneas' entire mission into question.

[179] This final transformation is a Virgilian innovation (West 1980.317; Feldherr 1999.99).

[180] Jacques Perret (1964. "Les compagnes de Didon aux enfers" *REL* 42.247-61; noted in Tatum 1984.436-37) observed that these seven figures mentioned at 6.445-49 are alterations of the procession of heroines in *Odyssey* 11. Both Perret and West 1984.315 suggest that these women reflect various aspects of Dido's character.

[181] West 1980.316.

[182] E. Kraggerud (1965. "Caeneus und der Heroinenkatalog, *Aeneis* VI 440ff." *SO* 40. 69; noted in West 1980.317) sees Caeneus' transformation from man to woman and back to man as reflecting Dido's changing relationships with men (Sychaeus-Aeneas-Sychaeus). J. Perret (1964. "Les Compagnes de Didon aux Enfers (*Aen.* VI, 445-449)." *REL* 42. 252; noted in West 1980.317) explains the relevance based on sex: as a girl, Dido held a feminine role in her marriage to Sychaeus; upon his death, she assumes the masculine role of *femina dux*; and in the affair with Aeneas and then her "remarriage" to Sychaeus,

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she resumes her feminine role of wife. Grace Starry West, noting that Caeneus now has a feminine shape but retains a masculine name, argues that she "corresponds to a tragic conflict in Dido's soul": like Dido, Caeneus is now neither wholly female, nor completely male, demonstrating that Dido's interior conflict remains unresolved even in death (West 1980.316-18; see also Tatum 1984.437).

[183] This reading is supported by Robert Rabel 1985, who discusses the earlier comparison between Dido and the Harpy Caleano, a monstrous, ravenous creature with the face of a maiden and the body of a bird (3.214-17) – a hybrid form that again suggests a comparison to the biform Minotaur trapped in the labyrinth (see Doob 1990.230). Both Celaeno and Dido, for instance, have been displaced and forced to leave their homes; both ultimately associate the Trojans with treachery, calling them *Laomedontiadae*; and both curse the Trojans to an uncertain future, wishing upon Aeneas their own pain. The episodes in the Strophades and in Carthage are also paralleled structurally, with both initiated by a storm that drives Aeneas to shore and followed by attempts at purification (in Actium, for the pollution of the sacrifice to Jupiter, and in Sicily, ostensibly in honor of Anchises but symbolically as an act of atonement for Dido's death) and underworld episodes (first in Buthrotum, which is populated by "a group of living dead clinging to the past" and then in the literal underworld scene of Book 6). Rabel posits that the comparison with Celaeno underscores Dido's composite nature, and situates her as an unnatural, liminal creature. Thus Dido, like Celaeno, is attended by pollution (Rabel 1985.318 following Mary Douglas (1966), who has shown that those who defy normal categories are often associated with pollution) and once more related to the Furies. I would add to this that both women are programmatically silenced: when Celaeno's

prophecy that the Trojans will found their homes where they eat their tables comes true in Book 7, Aeneas attributes it to his father (7.120-25), essentially writing her out of the text, just as Aeneas' speech to Dido in Book 6 rather misrepresents some aspects of their relationship. Yet while the male perspective writes these women as negative and works to deprive them of a voice, the poet in effect calls this view into question by calling attention to its inaccuracies. For more on the comparison between Dido and Celaeno, see Wolfgang Hubner. 1970. *Dirae im romischen Epos: Uber das Verhaltnis von Vogeldamonen und Prodigien*. Hildesheim. 60; Thomas Berres. 1982. *Die Entstehung der Aeneis*. Wiesbaden. 232; and David Quint 1982. "Painful Memories: *Aeneid* 3 and the Problem of the Past." *CJ* 78. 31.

[184] West 1980.323.

[185] Lyne 1987.136.

[186] Keith 2000.27.

[187] Keith 2000.31. Keith notes that Virgil disturbs gender expectations elsewhere, as in describing Euryalus as feminine in his fragile beauty at 9.433-7 (2000.31).

[188] For a comprehensive discussion of Camilla's placement in this catalog, see Boyd 1992. Williams 1961.149 solves the problem of Camilla's placement in the final position by framing her as an appendix ("It is immediately evident that the structure is framed by the two most mighty warriors, Mezentius at the beginning and Turnus at the end, and that the final haunting lines which describe the warrior-queen Camilla act as a sort of pendant, bringing the book to a close on a note of strange beauty"), an argument which replicates the objectification of Camilla, making her into a focus of the male gaze rather than recognizing her status as a legitimate warrior. Williams 1961.149 sees the same principle

at play in a smaller way in the case of Penthesilea in the mural on Juno's temple, and in that of Marcellus in the parade of heroes in Book 6, though the latter he qualifies as being set apart by "many differences" (which differences he leaves unspecified).

[189] See Becker 1997.

[190] Becker 1997.

[191] Boyd 1992.214ff.

[192] Boyd 1992.225 observes that Virgil has reversed the ordering of Penthesilea and Memnon from what seems to be his model (Arctinus' *Aethiopis*), suggesting that there was a thematic purpose behind his decision.

[193] Becker 1997; Lyne 1987.136 n. 57. Becker also notes parallels between Camilla and Hippolyta and, like Boyd, between Camilla and Artemisia.

[194] Boyd 1992.221 points out that Camilla's ornamentation as she enters battle contrasts with Virgil's previous description of her habit in life as being to wear nothing but animal skin (11.576-77). Boyd sees this as partially explained by Virgil's lack of opportunity to revise.

[195] Becker 1997.

[196] Blundell 1995.26-31 and 43-45.

[197] Becker 1997. As Becker notes, Camilla is Virgil's creation, and therefore her characterization and actions, unconstrained by precedent, are wholly directed towards Virgil's artistic vision and ideological purposes.

[198] Becker 1997.

[199] Anderson 1999.206-07 suggests that Chloreus, as *sacer Cybelo* ("sacred to Cybele": 11.768), is a eunuch, which explains the particular exotic and feminine gaudiness of his attire and accoutrements.

[200] Becker 1997; Keith 2000.28-29. Becker 1997 argues that Virgil implicitly condemns those whose longing for spoils is excessive, and he regularly characterizes this flaw as fatal, noting that aside from Camilla, both Euryalus and Turnus ultimately perish because of their greed for booty.

[201] Boyd 1992.227.

[202] Anderson 1999.203ff argues that Virgil creates in Camilla an unambiguously heroic figure who "is neither chauvinistically triumphant nor pornographically defective." While I would agree that Camilla is in general drawn as heroic and a figure to be admired, she is not exempt entirely from feminine weakness, nor is she androgynously depicted in a way that removes her wholly from subjection to the male gaze. As Williams 1961.147 notes, for instance, although the catalog of heroes in general is intended to prompt visualization, "the pictorial aspect of the presentation is most marked of all at the end when we are shown the onlookers watching Camilla's arrival."

[203] Heuze, P. 1985. *L'image du Corps Dans L'oeuvre de Virgile*. Paris and Rome. 129-34; noted in Keith 2000.116. Boyd 1992.228-29 also notes that the emphasis on Camilla's cloak and hairpin recalls a similar passage describing Dido in Book 4, further positioning both women as objects of the gaze.

[204] Keith 2000.117.

[205] Keith 2000.41.

[206] See Quint 1993.26.

[207] Keith 2000.19-20. Keith 2000.20 notes that Numanus' insults draw on Thersites' speech at *Il.* 2.235ff, where he casts the Achaean commanders as feminine (ὦ πέπονες κάκ' ἐλέγχε' Ἀχαιΐδες οὐκέτ' Ἀχαιοὶ – "You weaklings, base disgraces, [you are] no longer Achaean men, but women!": *Il.* 2.235) in order to call their bravery into question. As is the case with Ascanius, the Achaeans' manliness is ultimately reaffirmed when Odysseus responds to Thersites' insults with first verbal and then physical abuse that leaves Thersites terrified and weeping in pain (*Il.* 2.268-69). A similar strategy of emphasizing heroic qualities by first calling them into question is also seen at *Od.* 8.140ff, where the Phaeacian Euryalus' questioning of Odysseus' athletic abilities gives him a chance to show them off. Cf. also later epics such as *Beowulf*, where Unferth's insults give the hero the opportunity to boast of his prowess (499-606).

[208] Amata's frenzy illustrates once again the feminine weakness that positions women as susceptible to daemonic possession (see introduction to this chapter and Padel 1993.11): at the same time, Allecto merely "works with" the feelings already incipient in Amata (Lyne 1987.15 and 70).

[209] Lyne 1987.13ff.

[210] Lyne 1987.18ff and 116ff.

[211] Woodworth 1930.179.

[212] Langlands 2006.72.

[213] Langlands 2006.72.

[214] See Woodworth 1930.186-87.

[215] Woodworth 1930.186.

[216] Woodworth 1930.188ff argues that the marriage of Aeneas and Lavinia works as a parallel to and validation of the controversial marriage between Octavian, a *parvenu* but the most promising of the triumvirs, and Livia, whose aristocratic lineage represented the houses of both the Livii and the Claudii.

[217] Consistent with the geographical place-names associated with Lavinia's name, Dougherty 2001.131 sees Lavinia herself as a mere symbol for the actual land to be settled: the marriage of Aeneas and Lavinia represents "the unification of two peoples, the newly arrived Trojans and the native Italians, into the city that will one day become Rome. Military conquest and overseas settlement are thus rewritten as marriage." For more on the symbolic connection between women and land, see Dubois 1988.esp. 39-85.

[218] For an overview of various readings on the reasons behind Lavinia's blush, see F. Cairns 2005.195-96. Cairns own conclusion on this point – that Lavinia blushes "out of shame when she hears her marriage being spoken of in her presence by someone else" (2005.197) works well with the view of Lavinia as an ideally modest and deferential maiden I have elucidated here.

[219] Sharrock 1991.44. An alternate interpretation of this blush is offered by Lyne 1987.118-19, who, citing the prevalent fire imagery, locates it in sexual jealously and erotic impulse.

[220] Wiltshire 1989.118. See also Putnam 1999.213.

[221] Lavinia's association with strife becomes more explicit in Ovid's *Fasti* (3.15), where, as noted above (see "Dido"), she drives Dido's sister Anna from Aeneas' house out of jealousy.

[222] Woodworth 1930.190-193 sees the analogy between Aeneas and Lavinia and Paris and Helen as alluding to "the malicious critics who ascribed Augustus' marriage [to Livia] to an illicit love affair followed by a tyrannical abduction" and situates Virgil's ultimate positioning of their union as a Roman ideal as a response to this sort of gossip in order to glorify Augustus and his regime. More recent critics, who tend to view Virgil's Augustan references less unambiguously, would likely see the connection to Paris and Helen as working to call Augustus' marriage into question, even while he is elevating it.

[223] Noted in Keith 2000.73.

[224] Quint 1993.30-31.

[225] Garstang 1962 argues that Virgil emphasizes the "crime of Helen" in the *Aeneid* as a means of demonstrating that the Trojan War itself is part of a larger "world pattern" where all these events are directed towards the greater purpose of *fatum Romanum*. While this argument initially seems to exonerate Helen, it also illustrates once again the use of marriage as a destructive force and women as convenient tools of the gods as a result of their feminine sexual weakness.

[226] The Porticus Apollonius in the Palatine complex contained fifty statues of the daughters of Danaus, along with a fifty-first of their father with an upraised sword (Milnor 2005.49-51).

[227] Milnor 2005.51.

[228] Milnor 2005.49; see also Zanker 1988.50.

[229] Milnor 2005.52.

[230] Milnor 2005.11.

[231] Milnor 2005.7.

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[232] Milnor 2005.64.

[233] Alternately Mack 1999.129ff suggests that the love story initiated here is that of Virgil for his native land. While this reading seems unsatisfactory considering the particularly erotic nature of Erato, it is consistent with Aeneas' earlier characterization of the Italian land to Dido (*sed nunc Italiam magnam Gryneus Apollo/…hic amor, haec patria est…* – "But now, Gryneian Apollo orders me to seize great Italy…Here is my love, here is my fatherland…": 4.345-47).

[234] Skulsky 1985.450. Mack 1999.133 also discusses Lavinia as a Glauce figure, noting in particular that the portent of Lavinia's flaming hair alludes to the description of the death of Jason's new wife (there unnamed) in Euripides' play.

[235] Woodworth 1930.178.

[236] See Skulsky 1985.453-54.

[237] While this interpretation may be legitimately criticized as a more "modern" take on expectations of marriage, Carlin Barton 2001.esp. 1-8 has argued for a view of the Romans as far more "emotional" than modern prejudice generally perceives them to be. Thus, although they would not have been likely to look for marriages that were full of spice or passion, it seems reasonable to argue that the fiery passion of Dido would, at the least, be likely to move the Romans in such a way that the bland Lavinia would pale in comparison.

[238] Lyne 1987.68-69. At the same time, despite these feminine associations, Turnus at first tried to brush off Allecto's attempts to prompt him into battle (7.435-44), so that even he, as a male, was initially opposed to conflict.

[239] Putnam 1999.210-11, 220. Quint 1993.35 also detects comparisons between Turnus and Cleopatra, the historical figure of whom Dido is the mythological avatar: "[t]he *Aeneid* itself replicates the ship of Cleopatra in the boat that carries Turnus out of the battle in Book 10 (653-88), after he has pursued a phantom Aeneas set in his path by Juno. In both cases the epic protagonist briefly escapes an inevitable defeat and death, and Virgil underscores the analogy to Cleopatra by having the despondent Turnus briefly consider suicide (680-82)."

[240] Lyne 1987.136; Putnam 1999.226. Boyd 1992.219-20 suggests that the inclusion of Camilla among the ranks of enemy warriors in the first place implies their feminization as a group. Virgil also stresses the Greek origins of the Italian forces, which reinforces the suggestion of their feminization (see Monserrat 2000.165), while, as Williams 1961.148 notes, at the same time accounting for the importance of Greek influence in early Italy and providing the Trojans an opportunity to redeem themselves.

[241] Interestingly, as he did with Dido, Virgil asks us to step into Turnus' shoes – in fact, to share them with him – when, just before his death, the poet uses first person plural verbs in an epic simile that prompts the audience to feel what Turnus' feels (12.908-12); thus, while Turnus' gendered position is called into question, Virgil asks the (predominantly male) audience to identify with him, further confounding the gender issues in this epic.

[242] Scholars have long debated whether the passion that leads Aeneas to kill Turnus is, like Dido's, presented as morally condemnable or intended to be seen as a reflection of his *pietas* (see Perkell 1981.355ff for a brief overview of this issue).

[243] Noted in Braund 1998.143.

[244] Quint 1993.76.

[245] Quint 1993.95.

[246] Keith 2000.118.

[247] Wiltshire 1989.110. Keith 2000.48 notes that the deaths of Palinurus and Misenus also serve as sacrificial deaths, but while she sees them as different in nature from the feminine sacrifices, Nugent 1992.284ff sees them as related, noting structural parallels between Palinurnus' death and the abandonment of the Trojan mothers earlier in Book 5: "Both [Palinurus and the Trojan mothers] are isolated, misinterpreted by Aeneas, determined by others to be expendable, and left behind for the good of the Trojan 'whole'" (1992.286). As such, Palinurus is more or less "feminized" by the dominant masculine discourse of the epic, an engendering which renders his "sacrifice" consistent with the overall program. Mack 1999.136 offers a more positive reading, but one at odds with the majority of scholars: for her, Caieta "is not presented as a sacrifice to Aeneas' mission in the way that Dido and Palinurus are. What is more, she is memorialized in the Italian landscape, the only Trojan to be so honored."

[248] Nugent 1992.288 points out that a reference to the Sirens suggests that Virgil relates this programmatic pattern in the *Aeneid* to a similar strategy at play in the *Odyssey*: Virgil alludes to a tradition where, after Odysseus manages to overcome their enticements and successfully sail past their island, the Sirens kill themselves by jumping into the sea (5.864-66), demonstrating that "[i]n the mythological paradigm, the lure of detaining women must be overcome and, further, the appropriate end for such women is death."

[249] Nugent 1992.273.

[250] Nugent 1999.263.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The Topography of Shame is a system of expectations for women's behavior mapped out by the patriarchal societies of ancient Greece and Rome, though it bears considerable similarity to the sex/gender structures of contemporary Mediterranean cultures. This system defines women's virtue through behaviors like passivity, modesty, and silence, traits which work to promote male control and regulate the chastity so vital to male honor and identity. According to the logic of the Topography of Shame, these behavioral guidelines were needed because women by nature are inherently weak, unrestrained, and uncontrolled, subject to both verbal and sexual leakage. While the Topography of Shame asked women to subordinate themselves to male authority in order to maintain the self-restraint that enabled them to maximize this feminine virtue, at the same time, it needed them to exhibit these negative female traits in order to justify these controls, and to provide a negative standard against which men could measure and define their own identities.

Because women subject to this system came to see their identities as wholly tied up with those of their primary male kinship connection, they tend to boast or assert themselves in order to bolster or defend their relationships with men, while they tend to self-deprecate in times of erotic crisis or when their relationship with their primary male protector was otherwise threatened. This system, then, left women little space to eke out a separate identity, to say nothing of acting independently or exerting authority. Women who did take action against male interests were seen as threatening and monstrous, so that the patriarchal instinct was to ostracize or destroy them.

Yet despite the constrictions this system placed on women's behavior and the implications that constant subjection to these socially embedded notions undoubtedly had for women's self-image, some women learned to exert a sort of unofficial power from behind the scenes by utilizing the tools that the Topography of Shame made available to them, such as displays of beauty, emotional outbursts, claims of self-pity, and proclamations of loyalty, in order to influence the actions and attitudes of others. By first examining the broad ideologies and ideals that governed women's behavior in the ancient world and then analyzing how women both accepted these notions and learned to forge this sort of path of resistance, we can better understand the lives of these women, whom the lack of more direct evidence have kept at a distance for so long.

Because of their cultural centrality and their use as guides to appropriate moral conduct, the epics of Homer constitute a logical starting place for examining the ideological tenets that underlie Greek culture. For Rome, the *Aeneid* provides a similar touchstone, as Virgil self-consciously constructed this epic as a Roman answer to Homer's works and ostensibly as a vehicle for advancing the patriarchal ideologies so crucial to the agenda the emperor Augustus was at pains to promote. Thus on a broad narratological level, each of these epics works to illustrate the Topography of Shame as it is intended to operate, offering the audience both idealized models of feminine virtue in the women who conform to this system, and a cautionary example in the marginalization, sacrifice, or destruction of those who do not. At the same time, these epics demonstrate openness to conflict and contradiction, often challenging the very values and ideologies they elucidate, and thus they offer us an opening, the analysis of which might bring us to a better understanding of women's interiority.

The *Iliad*, the earliest of these epics, lays out the contours of the Topography of Shame and generally reaffirms its tenets through examples of virtuous wives and mothers like Andromache and Hecuba, women who tend to view their identities as a function of their relationships to males and to regulate their behavior accordingly. Despite these prevailing images, however, the poet also offers us in Helen the example of a woman who operates within the general parameters of the system, but does so in a way that suggests she is self-consciously manipulating its dictates in order to promote covertly her own agenda rather than subjugating her needs and desires to the goals of her male allies, and who is as a result an ambiguous and vaguely threatening figure. In the *Odyssey*, with its more domestic focus, Homer expands the roles he depicts as available for women: for example, women like Calypso and Circe demonstrate the dangers women pose through their sexuality, along with their beneficial aspects when subsumed under male authority; references to Clytemnestra suggest the dangers women who are not properly controlled pose; and Helen again appears as an example of a woman who is somewhat threatening in her self-conscious manipulation of the system for her own ends. Most importantly, the *Odyssey* offers us the example of Penelope, a woman who navigates the terrain of the Topography of Shame with such subtlety and skill that she succeeds in preserving her own interests while remaining aligned with patriarchal goals; as a result, Penelope serves both as a ideal model for women from the male perspective, and as an example for women themselves on how to exert unofficial power in a system that works to keep them disenfranchised.

While similar dynamics are at play in Virgil's *Aeneid*, this work is complicated by its more self-conscious construction at a particular chronological moment in a time of

great social and political change. Virgil was tapped to write this epic as an explicit vehicle for promoting the ideologies that supported the social and political reforms that Augustus had instituted. While these imperial ideologies themselves complicated the simple gender binaries we saw at play in Greece by casting what is Roman as masculine, and drawing a corresponding analogy between the foreign and the feminine, they also advanced the traditional gender binaries and behavioral expectations required by the Topography of Shame. The broad strokes of Virgil's narrative seem to support these ideologies. For instance, although strong, independent women like Dido and Camilla initially seem to challenge gender categories, in the end, they are exposed as vulnerable to women's weaknesses, and thus work to reinforce the norms they initially called into question. Women like Creusa and Lavinia, on the other hand, subjugate their own needs and identities entirely to their male kin, and they are thus cast as virtuous ideals.

Yet here, too, the poet offers alternative voices that work to question the assumptions set forth in the larger narrative, voices that are regularly gendered feminine. As we saw with some women in Homer, Virgil offers us examples of women who try to "work the system" by tapping into stereotypical women's behaviors to achieve their own practical or political ends. For instance, Dido exhibits excessive passion towards Aeneas as a means of establishing a politically expedient alliance, and Amata manifests an irrational frenzy in defense of a marriage connection that safeguards her line of descent. Virgil takes this idea one step further than the examples we saw in Homer, however, by suggesting that to some extent, negative female behaviors like Dido's excessive passion and Amata's fury are patriarchal projections designed to relieve male anxieties surrounding the threat posed by women who are independent, intelligent, and politically

savvy. Furthermore, Virgil undercuts the poem's idealistic vision of Roman glory under the imperial regime by disrupting the black and white gender divisions the patriarchal program promotes not only through the inclusion of gender-ambiguous characters like, most obviously, Caeneus, but also by assimilating his heroic protagonist's behavior to that of women at the very climax of his epic. In addition, Virgil works throughout the *Aeneid* to demonstrate the costs that go along with empire-building, an idea perhaps best illustrated through the comparison between the vibrant, passionate Dido, who is sacrificed for the advancement of the patriarchal agenda, and the bland, colorless Lavinia who is, in contrast, essential to it. In this way, Virgil skillfully and subtly manipulates a narrative ostensibly directed towards ideological affirmation in order to challenge and question it instead. As an elite male more or less violently disempowered with the overturning of the republic by the imperial regime, Virgil, it seems, takes a cue from women who, like Penelope, exert power from a disenfranchised position by just these sorts of strategies.

Despite the vast differences between the lived experience of women in the Bronze Age culture the Homeric epics depict, the Archaic period to which the form of these epics as we have them can be dated, and the Classical and Roman Imperial periods to which I am arguing the principles of the Topography of Shame apply, certain fundamental ideas about the nature of women and expectations for the limits of their behavior persisted across time. The Topography of Shame thus offers us a broad map to understand the precarious social world women in antiquity had to navigate, a model that will be useful in examining the presentations of behaviors and attitudes of "real" women as they are presented in historical accounts, oratorical treatises, and the scant fragments of women's

own writings. Virgil's use of a sort of "Topography of Shame" for men, furthermore, suggests that this model has broader applications as well, offering us a lens through which to view other marginalized or disenfranchised groups. As such, through this study of female self-image in some of the works of antiquity generally seen as most profoundly implicated in the patriarchal agenda that kept women disenfranchised, we can hope to come to a broader understanding of the social mechanics that operated in classical antiquity as a whole.

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