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DEPARTMENT OF GREEK AND LATIN

***GAMOS IN ARCHAIC AND CLASSICAL GREEK POETRY***  
***THEME, RITUAL AND METAPHOR***

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I, Styliani Papastamati, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

## Abstract

Marriage is everywhere in Greek poetry of all periods. Yet the poetic use of marriage receives only partial and occasional attention in modern scholarship. The present study seeks to fill this gap in part by examining the use of marriage in archaic and classical Greek poetry from Homer to Menander. My interest is in the ways marriage in its various forms contributes to the thematic concerns and purposes of the poetic genre in which it is employed. Though the focus is not primarily historical, the project is influenced by New Historicism, in that it seeks to explore the use of marriage within the experiential and conceptual frameworks of the first audience(s). It also draws (less markedly) on feminist criticism and on research in archaeology and socio-political history.

Chapter 1 addresses the use of marriage imagery in Pindar to promote the acknowledgement of victory and delineate the athlete's new status in his community. Chapter 2 examines the use of marriage as an ending in Greek drama, both the (often) formalist use in the Euripidean *deus ex machina* interventions and its climactic use in comedy as a means to encapsulate the comic hero's success. Marriage as plot ending reaches its peak in New Comedy, where it forms the natural and inevitable resolution of the plot. Chapter 3 deals with the motif of missed *gamos* in Greek tragedy both to generate pathos and to articulate themes of choice, distortion, and destruction of *oikos* and *polis*. Chapter 4 looks at the way the perversion of marital norms in Aeschylus extends to the gradual destruction of *oikos* and expands to the *polis*. Chapter 5 is engaged with good *gamos*. This is to a large extent a poetics of absence, in that ideal

marriages in Greek poetry are depicted in the impending or actual separation of the two partners.

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## **Editions, Translations and Abbreviations**

Aristophanes, Sophocles, Euripides and Homer are cited from Wilson (2007), Lloyd-Jones and Wilson (1990), Diggle (1981, 1984, 1994) and Monro and Allen (1917-46) OCT respectively. Extant Aeschylean plays are after West (1998). Pindar follows Snell and Maehler (1980). The text for Menander follows Sandbach (1990<sup>2</sup>). The text for Aeschylean fragments is cited after Sommerstein (2008c), unless stated otherwise. The text for Euripidean fragments follows Collard and Cropp (2008).

The translations for Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Pindar, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes and Menander are cited from Murray and Wyatt (1999<sup>2</sup>) and Murray and Dimock (1995<sup>2</sup>), Race (1997), Sommerstein (2008a, 2008b, 2008c), Lloyd-Jones (1994), Kovacs (1994-2002), Henderson (1998, 2000), and Arnott (1996, 1997c, 2000) respectively.

Abbreviations of journals follow *L'Année philologique*.

*For my parents, Diamantis and Agapi*

# Introduction

## 1. Preamble

The institution of marriage is a near-universal phenomenon, though it shows a range of culturally specific features. Its nature and even significance are distinct in different cultures. Unsurprisingly, given its often central role, it also features, with differing degrees of prominence, in the creative literature of many cultures, and with a variety of characteristics. In ancient Greece, marriage was one of the fundamental building blocks of society. Its central role and its broad coherence across time and space gave it a (continuing) currency which made it a major theme in Greek literature across genres and over time, where it plays a variety of different roles – as plot content, structural device, recurrent theme, or metaphor – in different contexts. It is this literary use of marriage which forms the focus of this thesis.

## 2. Greek marriage

### a. Definition

The Greek word for marriage is *gamos*. It is used of formal marriage that is a solemnized and socially recognized sexual union between two adults who after an approved ritual live together forming a family unit (Greek *oikos*).<sup>1</sup> The term is also used in verse texts – although in a limited range of literature such as Pindar and tragedy – to

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<sup>1</sup> Reinsberg (1989) 15-7 with Patterson (1991) 48-61; cf. Oakley and Sinos (1993) 9, Rehm (1994) 18, Patterson (1998) 3-4, 107-37, esp. 108-9.

denote informal sexual unions.<sup>2</sup> This might seem at first sight to cause difficulty for a project such as this one. In practice, however, the problems are limited. In some cases, as in *Trachiniae*, the fluid use contributes to plot focus on problems within or around marriage<sup>3</sup>. In others it could be argued that the terminology highlights in one way or another the aberrant nature of relationships which mimic or distort marriage (as *Hom.Od.* 1.36, *Eur.Tr.* 932). All these fall naturally within the scope of a work such as this. The small residue of looser use is sufficiently clear to limit the potential for confusion.

For legitimate *gamos* there were two prerequisites in ancient Greece. The first is the procedure of the *engye*, a formal agreement between the father of the girl and the future husband, the subsequent wedding ritual.<sup>4</sup> Ideally, the marriage would be sealed by the eventual birth of children (especially male), after a year or more. In classical Athens at least, and possibly elsewhere, there were additional elements such as the registration of the children of this *oikos* in the phratry.<sup>5</sup> My interest here however is less in such local variations than in the features common to a Greek marriage.

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<sup>2</sup> συνοικέω is another verb used for marriage. This word, too, as *gamos*, contains some ambiguity. It can denote either legitimate marriages or cohabitations of any kind (*LSJ*, s.v.).

<sup>3</sup> This instance might be classed under what Easterling (Easterling (1997b) 25) has called 'heroic vagueness'.

<sup>4</sup> Oakley and Sinos (1993) 9-10.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. pp. 20-1 and Lacey (1968) 110-2.

## b. Ritual

The ritual of *gamos* in its broad outlines was a Panhellenic institution.<sup>6</sup> For the wedding ritual itself, our sources are mostly Athenian, but the rites are broadly consistent across the Greek world, despite minor local variations.<sup>7</sup> For instance, the procession is certainly a common feature; it occurs as early as in the description of the shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18 and then it is also illustrated on Athenian black figure vases. Here I will attempt to present a brief picture of the wedding ritual in outline in order to have a general picture of the Greek wedding, based on Oakley and Sinos (1993).

The legal precedent to weddings was *ἐγγύη* (*engye*), a kind of a premarital contract between the father of the bride and the bridegroom; this included the bridegroom's promise that he would take the bride – and in that sense was a kind of betrothal – and also the agreement on the dowry provided, which functioned as a substantial obstacle to divorces (cf. P.O.7).<sup>8</sup> In Athens, the *engye* involved (after 451/450 BC) the father's declaration that his daughter was Athenian – so that the children would be γνήσιοι, legitimate, citizens.<sup>9</sup>

The first key phase of the wedding ritual itself is the purification bath taken by both the bridegroom and the bride.<sup>10</sup> The bath of the bride was the more distinctive one: in Athens she went to the Acropolis, to a spring called Kallirhoe, accompanied by a

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<sup>6</sup> *OCD*<sup>4</sup> s.v. 'marriage ceremonies' and 'betrothal'.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Oakley and Sinos (1993) 5.

<sup>8</sup> Lacey (1968) 105-6, Redfield (1982) 186, Oakley and Sinos (1993) 9-10.

<sup>9</sup> Just (1989) 47-8, 60-4, 73-5, Hartmann (2002) 79-84, cf. Wagner-Hasel (1997) 894-5.

<sup>10</sup> Hartmann (2002) 84-5, Reilly (1989) 424-5, cf. Reinsberg (1989) 51-2, 54-5, Hague (1988) 32-3.



procession.<sup>11</sup> The next important stage of the ritual is the feast at the bride's house and her unveiling. As well as its social significance, this public celebration had an authenticating function, in that it was used as proof that the marriage was legal, as stated in forensic speeches.<sup>12</sup> In a (still) oral society, marriage was 'documented' not with physical text but through witnessed actions. The public celebration was indispensable in that it provided the witnesses needed.<sup>13</sup> Apart from this practical part there was a social aspect to this civic presence: the new *oikos* was accepted and acknowledged by the community and was integrated into it.<sup>14</sup> At the beginning of this feast the bride was veiled; the husband himself had not seen his bride until then. The veil and the action of the unveiling (*ἀνακαλυπτήρια*) were thus crucial not only for the groom but for the wedding itself, as well. This was a point of transition in the bride's life: she was elevated to the status of wife/woman (*gyne*) from maiden (*parthenos*).<sup>15</sup>

After the feast, the pair was escorted to the bridegroom's house, their future home. This transfer took the form of a public procession. The broad features of this procession can

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<sup>11</sup> Hartmann (2002) 84-5, cf. Reinsberg (1989) 51-2, 54-5. There are two λουτροφόροι (Athens, number 1453, *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 1127 and Karlsruhe, Badisches Landesmuseum, number 69/78) which have as theme the procession. The representation of the groom's bath is rare (cf. Hague (1988) 33) and so the information on it is rather poor. There exists, though, an ὕδρῖα from Warsaw (National Museum, number 142 293) depicting such a bath: the groom takes his bath in a big, flat basin.

<sup>12</sup> Hague (1988) 34, Hartmann (2002) 88.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Reinsberg (1989) 50.

<sup>14</sup> At *O.7.6* Pindar points to this role of the community indirectly through the adjective ζαλωτός.

<sup>15</sup> Hague (1988) 35. (There are not many representations of this unveiling, but an image can be created (Skyphoid Pyxis, Pushkin Museum 510, 330/20 BC, Moscow, b) Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 10223, 440/30 BC). The bride is sitting opposite her husband. She is veiled and only her eyes and nose can be discerned. A girl behind her, the νυμφεύτρια, unveils her. There is a man behind the groom, too, the πάροχος. The winged ἔρωσ with a ribbon is a theme of the unveiling, too. The καταχύσματα, nuts thrown on the pair, appear, too, occasionally (Reinsberg (1989) 57-8, Oakley and Sinos (1993) 83, fgs. 60-1, cf. Reilly (1989) 418, Hague (1988) 34.)

be reconstructed from the surviving illustrations on vases<sup>16</sup>: the pair constituted the focus; they walked or drove on mules or horses. The bride and the groom would often wear garlands; the groom sometimes held a staff as well and the bride her veil, or this was touched or possibly removed by another woman, called a νυμφεύτρια. Women carried torches, which were an essential feature. An important aspect was that the pair were never alone; they were surrounded by other people; this was an event which encompassed the whole community.<sup>17</sup> The procession had a special significance,<sup>18</sup> as the representations of weddings on vases show. As in the wedding feast, the presence of a wider civic community confirmed the social acceptance and legal and religious validity of the marriage.<sup>19</sup> The procession ended with the reception of the bride and the groom by the groom's mother, who stood at the entrance of the new house of the pair; she too held two torches to receive the groom and the bride. The groom then took his wife off the vehicle<sup>20</sup> and they entered their new common *oikos*. Finally the pair retired to their bedroom to consummate the union. The wedding was completed the next day by another celebration (*epaulia*).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> A) Athens, National Museum 1174, b) Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Preussischer Kulturbesitz (Ost) 3373, c) New York, Metropolitan Museum, 56.11.1, d) Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Preussischer Kulturbesitz Antikenmuseum 2372, e) Athens, National Museum 1388, f) Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Preussischer Kulturbesitz Antikenmuseum F 2530, g) London, British Museum 1920.12-21.1, h) Florence, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 3790, i) Ferrara, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 2893 and j) the Attic red-figure pointed ἀμφορά by the Copenhagen Painter, New York, Levy collection.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Peleus and Thetis surrounded by the gods in the vase from Florence, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 3790.

<sup>18</sup> Oakley and Sinos (1993) 26, cf. Hartmann (2002) 87.

<sup>19</sup> Hartmann (2002) 87-8.

<sup>20</sup> Reinsberg (1989) 58-63, Oakley and Sinos (1993) pp. 92-4, fgs. 75-8, p. 97, fig. 85, pp. 99-100, fgs. 87-9, pp. 84, 91, 112-4, fgs. 62-3, 74, 108-11.

<sup>21</sup> Oakley and Sinos (1993) 10, 38-42.

To all these celebrations, songs in the form of wedding song (*hymenaios*, *epithalamion*) were an integral element.<sup>22</sup> Sappho's *epithalamia* are particularly informative about Greek weddings, since she is the only Greek poet who provides us with what seem to be authentic wedding songs.<sup>23</sup> These songs were performed in collective celebrations,<sup>24</sup> mainly during the procession towards the new *oikos* but also at the feast at the house of the bride, and outside the new house or chamber of the couple as well.<sup>25</sup> In the context of the wedding celebration, they contributed to the public expression of the legitimacy of the marriage.<sup>26</sup> The notion of transition was central to the *hymenaios* itself.<sup>27</sup> It articulates the idea that marriage is a transition both to a new status and to a new *oikos*.<sup>28</sup> The motifs of wedding songs could be summarized in the following: a refrain (Ἵμῆν ὦ Ἵμέναιε), the praise of the pair getting married, and specifically the *makarismos* (Sappho, fr. 105, 113 and fr.115-7), the expression of the good fortune of the couple.<sup>29</sup> Sappho also casts light on the bride's feelings of anxiety for the loss of virginity (fr. 114), or a more general fear of the male sex (fr. 105), another motif of the wedding

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<sup>22</sup> Hague (1983) 131, Contiades-Tsitsoni (1990) 35, Swift (2010) 242. There does not seem to exist a clear distinction between the terms *hymenaios* and *epithalamion*, despite the traditional one which used *hymenaios* for the wedding songs performed during the procession from the *oikos* of the bride to her new *oikos*, and the term *epithalamion* in the occasion of singing outside the bridal chamber. This approach is not confirmed by the evidence of the surviving texts (Swift (2010) 242-3; cf. Contiades-Tsitsoni (1990) 30-2).

Wedding song forms the subject of a monograph by Badnall (2008).

<sup>23</sup> Swift (2010) 244. In particular, Sappho's wedding songs focus on those stages which were essential to the ritual and marriage itself: the procession to the bride's home (fr.27), the feast there (cf. fr.31, 112), the procession to the groom's home (fr. 44) and images from the wedding night (fr. 30, 103B, 110 for instance).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 30-31.

<sup>25</sup> Hague (1983) 132, Oakley-Sinos (1993) 11, 23-30 *passim*, 38-44 *passim*; cf. Swift (2010) 242.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 30-31.

<sup>27</sup> Swift (2010) 249-50.

<sup>28</sup> Badnall (2008) 32-4, Swift (2010) 247, 249-50; cf. Oakley and Sinos (1993) 1.

<sup>29</sup> Contiades-Tsitsoni (1990) 94-99, also 102, Swift (2010) 245, 246-8; cf. Hague (1983) esp. 133-140 and Oakley-Sinos (1993) 23-4, MacLachlan (1997) 183, Badnall (2008) 43-5; on *makarismos*, see Hague (1983) 134-5.

song.<sup>30</sup> The fear of the passage from virginity to marital status is expressed in this context in the form of a lament.<sup>31</sup>

### **c. Ideology**

The wedding ritual outlined above is very useful for unravelling the Greek mentality regarding marriage, in that it encodes the notions central to marriage ideology into specific rites which form the Greek wedding.<sup>32</sup> Marriage is a multi-layered institution in archaic and classical Greece: it had ramifications for the individuals getting married, for the relationship between their families, for their families themselves as units (*oikoi*) of the *polis* and for the *polis* itself.

Marriage was of fundamental value both to the *oikos* and to the entire *polis*.<sup>33</sup> It created and maintained an *oikos*,<sup>34</sup> and contributed both to the preservation of the *oikos* itself and to that of its property.<sup>35</sup> Yet, being a unit of the larger civic community, the *oikos* further provided for the continuation of the *polis*, reflected in the strong civic character of marriage celebration.<sup>36</sup> This formal aspect was essential because it was one of the ways which served to guarantee the legitimacy of the offspring of this marital union. In civic communities, which were anxious to ensure the continuous regeneration of the body of legitimate citizens, marriage was an ideal way to control and supervise this

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<sup>30</sup> Contiades-Tsitsoni (1990) 99, MacLachlan (1997) 182, Drew-Griffith (1989) 60; cf. Badnall (2008) 79.

<sup>31</sup> Badnall (2008) 7, 13, 17-20.

<sup>32</sup> Oakley and Sinos (1993) 1, 3.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Ormand (1999) 9-14.

<sup>34</sup> Lacey (1968) 113, cf. Lacey (1968) 140, Pomeroy (1997) 33. This is also indicated by the use of the verb συνουκέω for 'living in marriage' (cf. Lacey (1968) 112).

<sup>35</sup> Gould (1980) 44-5.

<sup>36</sup> Oakley and Sinos (1993) 4.

procedure. In classical Athens in particular, as noted above, this legitimacy was secured by registration in the phratry or in the deme (in the times of Cleisthenes), which happened only after the birth of the first child, its presentation to the other members of the *oikos* on the tenth day in a big celebratory festival, and the oath of the father that the child was a legitimate citizen.<sup>37</sup> This is the reason why marriage was a cornerstone of civic ideology, at least in Athens. Marriage had then a double character, public and private<sup>38</sup>, and it thus acted jointly in the common interest of the *oikos* and the *polis*.<sup>39</sup>

Secondly, marriage was an act of exchange among males, as formally represented in the procedure of the *engye*.<sup>40</sup> Marriage was an alliance based on the agreement of two males, the father of the bride and the bridegroom, and sealed by the arrangement of the dowry.

Thirdly, *gamos* was regarded as a *telos* for human beings, the agent of their fulfilment.<sup>41</sup> There is no primary material from ancient Greece which offers an explanation of the way that *gamos* brought about this fulfilment. We can suggest that marriage was an important marker of biological maturity, of social maturity: it places both male and

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<sup>37</sup> Lacey (1968) 111-2, 129.

<sup>38</sup> Patterson (1998) 131-2.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Patterson (1998) 112.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Rabinowitz (1993) 4ff., esp. 15-7, Wohl (1998) pp. xiii-xxxvii, Ormand (1999) 13.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Lattimore's (1942) 192 words: 'The death of a virgin involves a lack of completeness; it means an unfinished life.' Lebeck (1971) 68-73 also speaks of 'the *telos* of marriage' but she speaks more about the way marriage is fulfilled and she does not treat it as the way of fulfilling human existence.

female in a position to form an *oikos* and create the next generation of the family. This applied both to males and to females, although not in the same way.<sup>42</sup>

Greek literature offers supporting evidence for this. For instance, Pindar speaks of *gamos* as *τελευταία* (*P.9.66*).<sup>43</sup> Aeschylus describes children and marriage as a *telos*: *πρὸ παίδων καὶ γαμηλίου τέλους* (*Eum.835*), as well.<sup>44</sup> Sophocles mentions *τὰ νυμφικὰ τέλη* (*Ant.1240-1*). This notion of *gamos* as *telos* is enshrined in Greek religion and cult.<sup>45</sup> The *hieros gamos* of Zeus and Hera was regarded as the prototype for the human marriage. In this union Zeus *teleios* transmits his perfect status to Hera *teleia* (*γημαμένην δὲ {ἔτι} τῷ Διὶ ἐκάλεσεν αὐτὴν Τελείαν*, *Paus.8.22*), and *telos* is achieved through *gamos* (*Phot.s.v. τέλεον: τελείους τοὺς γεγαμηκότας καλοῦσιν, καὶ τελειωθῆναι τὸ γῆμαι*).<sup>46</sup>

Although marriage is easily understood to be the *telos* of the life of women, this may not be so easily understood as being such for men. Vernant's<sup>47</sup> famous opinion that 'marriage is for the girl what warfare is for the boy' would certainly make the last statement seem somewhat improbable. After all, it is evident why *gamos* would be the

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<sup>42</sup> Zaidman and Pantel (1992) 68, 71-2, Rehm (1994) 32.

<sup>43</sup> Woodbury (1982) 252-3, 255, and fn.23 on p. 252. See p.52.

<sup>44</sup> See my discussion in ch. 4, pp. 225-8.

<sup>45</sup> Zaidman and Pantel (1992) 71-2, cf. Ormand (1999) 18-9.

<sup>46</sup> Avagianou (1991) 31-3 and fns. 27-30, Zaidman and Pantel (1992) 71-2. As Avagianou mentions, the model case of Zeus and Hera is slightly different from the humans in that Zeus transmits the perfect status he already has to Hera, whereas Hera is the passive receiver of this perfect status. In other words Zeus is already perfect, he does not need *gamos*, but Hera does. It is in this sense that Avagianou treats *gamos* as an active *telos* for Zeus and a passive one for Hera. On Zeus *teleios*, specifically as a god of marriage, see Avagianou (1991) 31-3 and most recently Seaford (2012) 147 with fn.39 and also p.148.

The text for Photius follows Naber (1864-5), but the punctuation is mine. The text from Pausanias is cited after Rocha-Pereira (1990).

<sup>47</sup> Vernant and Vidal-Naquet (1988) 99.

*telos* of women, who were to a certain degree restricted with respect to their activities, movements and authority, so that this was the only thing that made a full adult of them (to the limited degree that a woman was ever entirely an adult in Greek culture). But since men had a range of social activities and functions it is not so clear why *gamos* should carry such important connotations of fulfilment.<sup>48</sup>

Nevertheless, the significance of *gamos* as *telos* for men is supported by archaeological evidence.<sup>49</sup> Though it takes different forms, the evidence where missed *gamos* was lamented is balanced for males and for females. The vital importance of *gamos* had as a result that death before marriage heightened the grief for young girls and boys who died early. Vases and epigrams for both unmarried males and females at their graves attest the validity of this claim for both sexes.<sup>50</sup> Though it is true that there seem to be more funeral epigrams lamenting the lost *gamos* for the maidens rather than for the unmarried boys,<sup>51</sup> it is also true that there are far more wedding vases on the graves of boys than on those of girls: these vases through their shape hint at the missed *gamos* of the deceased, support the argument that missed *gamos* was equally lamented for boys and girls, and confirm the importance of marriage as *telos* for both sexes.<sup>52</sup> Demosthenes attests the

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<sup>48</sup> Cf. Rehm (1994) 32, Swift (2010) 249-50.

<sup>49</sup> Rehm (1994) 32.

<sup>50</sup> The most famous example in this category is the Phrasikleia epigram:

σῆμα Φρασικλείας·  
κόρη κεκλέσσομαι  
αἰεὶ, / ἀντὶ γάμο  
παρὰ θεῶν τοῦτο  
λαχῶσ' ὄνομα (IG I<sup>3</sup> 1261).

<sup>51</sup> Lattimore (1942) 192-4 and 193 fn.156.

<sup>52</sup> Rehm (1994) 27, 31, 32, 164 fn.70, 165-6 fn.14 and for the archaeological primary material evidence see Kokula (1984) 182-3 and Boardman (1988) 175, 179. Finally there is an issue about the analogy of male-female population. Pomeroy (1997) 120-1 concluded that there can be no certainty of the male-female analogy.

placement of λουτροφόροι on the tombs of the unmarried boys (Dem. 44.18, 44.30). Harpocration s.v. λουτροφόρος interestingly presents the male aspect of λουτροφορία before marriage, not referring to women at all.<sup>53</sup> Literature itself offers a number of examples of lamentation for missed *gamos* for males or the degree to which lack of marriage was a deficiency for the person in question: Astyanax in *Trojan Women* (Eur.*Tro.* 1167-70), Hippolytus (*Hipp.* 1131-52) in the homonymous play and the killed sons of Heracles in *Heracles* (*Her.* 476-9, 481-4).<sup>54</sup> It is also supported by the *makarismos* in the Sapphic *epithalamion* where the groom's blessedness and his good fortune on the occasion of his marriage is an emphatic presence.<sup>55</sup> Therefore it is clear that the importance of marriage for males is underplayed in ideology and underestimated in the scholarship.<sup>56</sup>

Indeed, although there was no state pressure, as there was in Sparta, on citizens to marry,<sup>57</sup> *gamos* as the keeping of an *oikos* was crucial for men as well, and for their *oikos*.<sup>58</sup> As for ancient Greeks an important part of one's life was to preserve the *oikos*,

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<sup>53</sup> Harpocration s.v. *loutrophoros*: Λουτροφόρος καὶ λουτροφορεῖν· ἔθος ἦν τοῖς γαμοῦσι λουτρά μεταπέμπεσθαι ἑαυτοῖς κατὰ τὴν τοῦ γάμου ἡμέραν, ἔμπρον δ' ἐπὶ ταῦτα τὸν ἐγγύτατα γένους παῖδα ἄρρενα, καὶ οὗτοι ἐλουτροφόρου. ἔθος δὲ ἦν καὶ τῶν ἀγάμων ἀποθανόντων λουτροφόρ<ον φέρ>ειν καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ μνήμα ἐφίστασθαι· τοῦτο δὲ ἦν παῖς ὑδρίαν ἔχων. λέγει περὶ τούτων Δείναρχος ἐν τε τῷ κατὰ Θεοδότου καὶ ἐν τῇ Κατὰ Καλλισθένους <εἰς>αγγελίᾳ. ὅτι δὲ τὰ λουτρά ἐκόμιζον ἐκ τῆς νῦν μὲν Ἐννεακρούνου καλουμένης κρήνης, πρότερον δὲ Καλλιρρόης, Φιλοστέφανος ἐν τῷ περὶ κρηνῶν φησί. μέμνηται δὲ τοῦ ἔθους οἱ κωμικοί. (The text is based on Badino (2010).)

<sup>54</sup> Cf. on the issue Rehm (1994) 32 with a special emphasis on the sons of Heracles.

<sup>55</sup> Swift (2010) 245-6. On *makarismos*, see above p.19.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Swift (2010) 249-50.

<sup>57</sup> For instance MacDowell (1978) 86. MacDowell acknowledges the existence of some references to penalties or restrictions to Athenian citizens who did not choose to marry but presents references to primary material which show that it is highly debatable whether these were ever put in force, for example Dem. 44.10, ὁ Ἀρχιάδης οὐκ ἔφη προαιρεῖσθαι γαμεῖν.

<sup>58</sup> Rehm (1994) 18, esp.32 with 159-60 fn.34 with reference to Patterson (1991) 59; cf. Patterson (1991) 61 and more recently Swift (2010) 249. Failure to have an *oikos* of your own was very important (Rehm (1994) 32, 165-6 fn.14-5).



its cults and its property, marriage was of critical importance. *Gamos* was a transition for men in that it signalled the assumption of their responsibilities as citizens of the *polis* and their role as head of the *oikos*.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, there were rituals of transition which formed part of the wedding ritual for men as well. In the framework of the Apatouria, there are three sacrifices focusing on the three main male transitions in the life of a man: birth, adolescence, and marriage; these three transitions were subject to validation on behalf of his phratry.<sup>60</sup> In sum, the completion that marriage brings is due to its role as a condition by which a person has become a full adult and is placed in a position to reproduce and therefore to ensure the continuation of his *oikos*, not to mention the keeping of the family property inside the *oikos* and the continuation of cult and offerings.<sup>61</sup>

### **3. Previous scholarship on marriage and its contexts**

#### **a. Historical works**

Though, as will become clear, my approach to marriage in Greek literature is distinctive, it builds on a substantial body of recent work. In the field of marriage excellent work has been done from the socio-historical aspect. Gould (1980), Just (1989), Lacey (1968) and Patterson (1998) in their more general studies about family and women have provided insights into the social significance of marriage with regard to the *oikos* and the *polis*. More exclusively dedicated to marriage, its procedures and the frame of

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<sup>59</sup> Swift (2006) 130.

<sup>60</sup> Cole (1984) 233-4.

<sup>61</sup> Lacey (1968) 16, Raepsaet (1971) 94-9, 109, Rehm (1994) 21, 160 fn. 41.

concepts which formulated the core of the institution of marriage are Reinsberg (1989), Hartmann (2002) and V rilhac and Vial (1998). From the iconographical and archaeological aspect, Oakley and Sinos (1993) give an excellent presentation of the ritual of wedding in Athens making use of the archaeological material. Finally, for the cultural context of marriage the work of Avagianou (1991) on sacred marriage (*hieros gamos*) is very useful, despite its specific focus. It supplements all the other works dedicated to marriage with the extremely important notion of fulfilment that marriage was believed to generate both for men and women. Taken together, the exhaustive work done in the socio-historical field supplies the modern scholar with the necessary updated information on marriage as well as on its social and cultural importance. The latter is crucial for my work because it gives valuable insight into the motivations and implications of its use and allows one to determine with greater confidence the likely readings of and reactions to its literary use within its original cultural context.

## **b. Literature**

In the field of literature there has been some work done on marriage specifically, but the precedents of my research are not only these specific works, but also those which explore marriage in the framework of gender studies. The reason is that within a society in which marriage is the (only) assumed and desired goal of women it is almost impossible to explore the subject of marriage without also looking at the larger issue of the female in general. Since my emphasis is on marriage more generally rather than on female experience I will try as far as possible to separate these out.

This scholarship is to a large extent focused on drama. Discussion of marriage in other genres has perhaps unsurprisingly been far more limited. To begin with, in epic there is a broad categorization, as we will see for tragedy, between the socio-political interest and the literary interest. There are works on ‘Homeric’ society, which deal with women and marriage among other issues. The classic and most prominent works in this field are Finley’s book (1956) and Snodgrass’s (1971). There are three books related to gender studies on Homer. The representation of the female in Homeric epic is treated in Cohen (1995). The other two (Doherty (1995) and Minchin (2007)) offer an insight into the women in epic. Doherty’s book establishes the fact that, although there is room for female action in epic, its influence is actually undercut by and ultimately reinforces male authority.<sup>62</sup> Minchin’s book is engaged with illustration of women, female speech, representation and characterization in Homer. Both works are potentially useful for the exploration of marriage, although they are not directly interested in it. Attention has also been focused on separate female figures in Homer. The female who has attracted the most consideration (apart from Helen) is Penelope, with (inevitably) some discussion of the nature of her marriage and her role in it, both from a sociological perspective and in terms of plot and character. Relevant works include Katz (1991), Felson-Rubin (1994), Clayton (2004) and Heitman (2005).

Research on marriage in drama can be divided into three categories. Firstly, there has been an exhaustive discussion on one specific aspect of marriage, namely exchange; the focus has been specifically on the use of women as subjects of tragic action who challenge male authority and whether ultimately they are doomed only to be objects

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<sup>62</sup> Doherty (1995) 22-3.

confirming contemporary androcentric ideology. This discussion began with Rabinowitz (1993). Rabinowitz represents the most extreme position on this issue, despite her express intention not to adopt a fundamentally feminist perspective (pp. ix-x). She starts from the position that tragedy is engaged with civic ideology and that as part of this social system 'tragic *gamos*' is used to explore it (1ff.). She then argues that all efforts of women to act as subjects manage only to confirm male authority, although she acknowledges that possibly women had a certain power in the domestic field (7); basically for Rabinowitz tragedy suggests that resistance to the dominant system is possible, although tragedy ultimately confirms both the role of women as objects of exchange and male homosociality, as well as the prevailing social order (12, esp. 21ff.); female resistance to the system is bound to fail (21-2). Women are only fetishized objects (24).

Although Rabinowitz offers useful insights, the picture which emerges subsumes too many diverse works under a single interpretative model. The response to Rabinowitz was often critical, and it was felt (not unreasonably) that her approach was oversimplifying. More sympathetic was Wohl, who again offered an interpretation of tragic marriage from a feminist perspective in Wohl (1998). In an extremely thorough study Wohl establishes the frequency of exchange of women in tragedy (p. xiv), and again argues for the confirmation of male authority and the position of women as objects of exchange (p. xvii), although tragedy questions both of them (p. xvii). For Wohl however tragedy does not seek to '[become] an instrument of oppression', and she is open to many readings which are excluded by the monolithic approach of Rabinowitz (p. xx). According to Wohl, the female point of view and reaction and attempt to

function as subject are explored in tragedy (p. xxi), ‘tragic exchange ... is generative, not merely repressive’ (p. xx). She argues that ‘[t]he exchange of women is ... a nodal point of hegemonic negotiation in tragedy’ (p. xxii) and is indeed used to contest Athenian ideology, engaged as it is in a creative exploration of this ideology (p. xxiii-iv), both reproducing and challenging this system (p. xxxvii).

The issue of female subjectivity explored in these two works is successfully treated in the excellent study of Foley (Foley (2001)), where a whole chapter is dedicated to female acts relevant to marriage. To Foley female acts can be aberrant (7), but tragic women also make valid important decisions without their *kyrios*, independently of male authority (8, 335). She also argues persuasively that through women and marriage, domestic issues are used to explore public issues (14). Foley also focuses attention on whether female acts serve or challenge the dominant system (12). She argues that since tragedy is a civic institution and can ‘articulate the civic life, ideology, social and political roles, and distribution of power in democratic Athens’ (17); female voice and actions are used to add another perspective to the civic dialogue (18) due to their different status (335). The prejudices against women and their capacity both for good and bad are to Foley a good way for tragedy to explore ‘tragic self-division’ (336). Despite the fact that she recognizes that female action can be positive (10, 335), Foley still claims that it ‘both affirms the danger of allowing women to make choices.....and... reveals the dangers of not educating them to do so.’ (336).

These works, though useful for my purpose, focus more on female subjectivity. They do not deal with the use of marriage in literature more generally. This brings us to the

second category of scholarship on gender and marriage in tragedy. The first major work which explores marriage in Greek literature is Rehm (1994). Rehm researches the thematic use of this motif. His methodology is an important antecedent to the approach I will be using in my work here: he focuses on ‘the emotional effects of marriages and death in relation to other issues raised by the tragedies, following as far as possible the path of the play itself’ (10). In particular, he examines how the motif of marriage to death was used ‘to explore the political and social problems facing the city’ (136). In Rehm’s view female actions open the potential for resistance to the dominant mentality and ideologies (137-9, esp. 137). Marriage was an important field for this challenge (8). The reason is that, as he argues, this was a space where women had a crucial role and it was also central to their concerns (8-9). Rehm’s work has implications for a slightly more prominent position of women in historical Athens than we were aware of (7), thus taking part in the discussion about female subjectivity.

Thirdly, a work which falls between Rehm’s book and the first three books I have mentioned above is Ormand (1999). Ormand has much in common with Rabinowitz and Wohl, in that he sees marriage as an exchange. Yet, he does not focus exclusively on the aspect of exchange, as if this was just a kind of commercial exchange. He also takes into consideration the fact that a marriage arrangement is a link of kinship between two families and an intimate relationship between two people. The focus on marriage *per se* and not as a mere exchange associates this book with Rehm’s work. In particular, Ormand examines marriage as an exchange of women in Sophocles and ‘the way that Sophocles uses and represents these legal and social definitions in his dramas’ (2); he is also interested in how marriage is explored to generate questions regarding male-

dominated ideology (5). He argues that marriage is employed to present women in the paradoxical position of subject which then results in crisis, although women themselves are not to blame for this impasse (7).

Seaford has discussed marriage in tragedy from a variety of perspectives in two important articles,<sup>63</sup> as well as in his book *Reciprocity and Ritual*.<sup>64</sup> His main position is that marriage is central to tragedy and there is a strong focus on perverted marriage. In particular, Seaford investigates the forms wedding ritual takes in tragedy, normally a ‘subverted’ one, and the perverted use of the symbols of wedding for dramatic effect, either in scenes of the deaths of women, virgins who lost their marriage or married women who fared badly regarding their marriage, or to illustrate perverted extramarital unions.<sup>65</sup> He also discusses the way in which tragedy explores some of the tensions implicit in the transition from the natal to the marital *oikos* through the prioritization of the one or the other, due to the conflicts between these two *oikoi* or even due to wrong balances inside the marital *oikos* itself.<sup>66</sup>

More specific to marriage is the scholarship on New Comedy. Lape (2004) examines marriage in Menander in the framework of civic ideology, gender and cultural values. Lape researches the specific poetic use of marriage in its role as guarantor of the continuation and survival of the body of Athenian citizens and the role of New Comedy in questioning Athenian civic ideology and its failure to ‘democratize’ it further by

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<sup>63</sup> Seaford (1987), Seaford (1990b). Seaford also discusses the issue in Seaford (1986) and touches on it again in Seaford (1990a).

<sup>64</sup> Seaford (1994).

<sup>65</sup> Seaford (1987).

<sup>66</sup> Seaford (1990b).

ultimately affirming it.<sup>67</sup> Traill (2008) considers the use of ‘the mistaken identity plot’ and the way Menander has carefully created the progression of these plots.<sup>68</sup> Among other issues, Traill discusses how Menander, through the motif of mistaken identity on the part of marginalized women, explores Athenian gender and marriage ideology in his plays; in her view he promotes the ideal of marital happiness, depriving marriage of the severe public and civic character it had in earlier literature, and possibly in earlier civic communities, viewing it as a matter for the individuals, and presenting it as a factor for their personal fulfilment.<sup>69</sup>

#### **4. Aim of this thesis**

What is apparent from the brief survey above, for all the insights offered to date, is the lack of a substantial study dedicated specifically to the poetic use of marriage *per se*. This is the gap that my study seeks to fill. Marriage is ubiquitous in Greek literature. The reason for this pervasiveness is not simply that marriage is a part of the historical context of the works studied: creative literature, even in highly stylized forms, is selective in its reaction to its environment. Rather, marriage constitutes an enabling element for the writer. Marriage is important as a theme in its own right and many texts explore the relationships, tensions and behaviour patterns operative within marriage. Moreover, because it is a building block of society, it can also be used as a kind of microcosm of the *polis* to explore issues central to the civic community.<sup>70</sup> More importantly, marriage comes loaded with cultural and ethical values; this means that it

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. Lape (2004) esp. 243-6, 252-3.

<sup>68</sup> Traill (2008) 1-13.

<sup>69</sup> Traill (2008) 245-68.

<sup>70</sup> Rehm (1994) 136, Foley (2001) 14.



acquires a pronounced symbolic dimension in turn in such a way that it can become a powerfully expressive image. Finally, because of its transitional function it can also acquire a major structural role at the level of plot. All these indicate a strong, intrinsic potential for marriage as metaphor and image. For these reasons marriage constitutes a flexible medium of expression; it can be used in many different contexts and accordingly be adapted to a range of literary needs.

Given its importance and significance for the construction of meaning, research into the poetic use of marriage from a literary and not just a sociological or political perspective has much to contribute to our understanding of the texts. Some of the value is straightforwardly historical; some of it is literary, in that it can enrich our reading of a range of poetic texts in different genres. My interests are less in exploring the representation of marriage, in defining marriage ideology, in extracting historical reality or in determining whether marriage is validated or subverted, than in exploring the imaginative use which poets make of the marriage motif, whether literal or metaphorical. This thesis differs from other studies also in that it approaches the use of marriage from various directions in order to extract a more nuanced picture of the way in which marriage is exploited. A second, distinguishing feature is that it uses a multiplicity of genres and periods.

Naturally, and despite what was said above about the generic and chronological range of this study, not all texts, nor all examples or aspects of marriage, can be covered in a work on this scale. So, the subject matter of my research will be archaic and classical Greek poetry; the chronological end of my research is Menander. Given the limitations

of scale it would be impossible to cover every instance even in one genre. Treatment must be selective and the criterion of my selection is the uses which are more prominent, sustained, illuminating and distinctive of and in each genre. These are the aspects that constitute the rich embedded role of *gamos* in Greek poetry and exemplify the imagistic, rhetorical and emotional value that made *gamos* a precious tool in the hands of the Greek poets.

## 5. Material and methods

My approach to the reading of Greek poetry itself is strongly informed by the methods of the school of New Historicism, a rather ‘open-knit’<sup>71</sup> school<sup>72</sup> and a critical approach itself of remarkable complexity.<sup>73</sup> This study follows New Historicism in the following respects. It is based on a recognition that literature reflects the cultural and historical framework in which it comes into being and in which it is embedded.<sup>74</sup> Literature is in dialogue and interaction with its cultural, social and historical contexts and a reading which locates it in those contexts helps us to make a better understanding of the texts.<sup>75</sup> Therefore, the history and culture of a given period and its value system (whether these are absorbed, adapted or contested) are of critical importance for the interpretation of its literature. Despite the fact that I do not aim to reconstruct a complete sociological, historical or cultural picture of marriage in archaic and classical Greek societies, my

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<sup>71</sup> See Gallagher and Greenblatt (2000) 2ff., cf. in contrast Veesper (1994).

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Salkeld (2007) 69.

<sup>73</sup> Veesper (1994) 2.

<sup>74</sup> Veesper (1994) 2, cf. Bressler (1994), and especially Castle (2007) 131.

<sup>75</sup> Greenblatt (1980) 3, cf. Brannigan (1998) 56-61 *passim*, esp. 61, Habib (2005) 761.

study does indeed have implications for a potential reconstruction of attitudes to and experience of marriage.

It is essential to note that in applying a New Historical approach I also take into account the pervasive element of anachronism in Greek tragedy and also the fact that Homeric society and its reflections in tragedy were not in any simple sense historical societies but rather amalgams, in the former of an archaic and a pre-archaic society, with (on any reconstruction) an element of creative imagination, in the latter of the Homeric world and the world of the classical period. Thus each text projects simultaneously at least two chronological and cultural strata, the past culture which forms the context of the plot, and the contemporary culture of the performance, of which it is the product.

In approaching my theme I vary the focus from chapter to chapter. In some instances I use case studies to typify the larger trends, in others (where feasible) I address all or nearly all the cases. In the process I explore aspects of the use of marriage in epic, epinician and drama from a range of perspectives and under a range of headings. I am interested both in the literal presence of marriage as a plot component, small or large, and in its presence as image. This choice allows us to build up a rounded, coherent, though inevitably selective, picture of *gamos* in Greek literature. As noted above, although in one way or another the thesis touches on a variety of aspects of marriage, it does not claim to be a comprehensive treatment of the theme, which though desirable would be impossible within the space available.

Chapter 1 researches marriage as ritual, as image and as narrative motif in epinician and argues that Pindar capitalizes on the cultural semantics of *gamos* as part of a rhetoric of praise which ensures a positive reception of the victor, the song and ultimately the genre.

Chapter 2 discusses the use of marriage as closural device in Greek drama. In tragedy this use is largely associated with *deus ex machina* interventions, principally in Euripides, who regularly employed it in his conclusions. In this context there is often a weak association between marriage as closure and the plot it closes. The result is that marriage often gives a ‘pendant closure’<sup>76</sup> in the framework of partial and often ironic resolutions. Though Euripides’ use frequently tends toward formalism, there is a subset of plays (represented by *Helen*, *Alcestis*) where *gamos* in the form of remarriage is organic and inevitable. In Sophocles, marriage is a structural part of the ending and ultimately operates as an oblique pointer toward a larger (intuited) divine perspective.

Though in Aristophanes marriage is never a plot theme, unlike Euripides’ remarriage plots, on those occasions where it occurs as a closural gesture, it effects a natural, although not inevitable, conclusion, in that it forms an organic part of the celebration of the hero and may also pick up key themes in the plot. In returning to this motif Aristophanic comedy to some degree shares the formalist tendency of Euripides. I argue however that the use of *gamos* as closure in Aristophanes is organic at a deeper level, in reflecting, however remotely, the probable origin of comedy from phallic rituals. *Gamos*

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<sup>76</sup> By this term I mean an ending which leaves several issues of the play hanging, unanswered, and thus fails to provide a full, firm closure to the play; alternatively what I call a pendant closure can be described as an open ending.

as an archetypal social event also gives a communal aspect to the feast for the comic hero's victory and thus expands the circle of celebration. Through a conflation of victory and wedding, marriage in its capacity as fulfilment for humans adds the dimension of fulfilment to the hero's success. In the framework of the metatheatrical elements often found in the *exodos* of comedy, Aristophanic *gamos* communicates to the audience the message that the poet should and will win in the comic competition. Yet there is a distinguishing feature of *gamos* in Aristophanic endings. They have an element of the *hieros gamos*, which makes them loaded with implications both of agrarian fertility and of socio-political continuity. This kind of marriage has strong connotations of cosmogony. Aristophanes ultimately employs them to shape myths of the creation of a new, utopian world.

In Menander, marriage as an ending is deeply integrated into the plot, becoming a fully organic *telos*. It emerges from a sudden revelation as resolution, and a wedding feast seals the play celebrating the 'hero's'<sup>77</sup> success in winning his bride. Yet, as in tragedy, marriage is used to explore other issues, such as human characters and behaviour.

Chapter 3 deals with the motif of missed *gamos* in tragedy, which is used to generate and enhance pathos. In addition, due to the cultural significance of marriage, this motif is effectively employed to articulate themes of the plays, priorities, choice, and loss to the individual, the *oikos*, and the *polis*. In its metaphorical dimension, the language of missed marriage highlights distortion and perversion in human behaviour.

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<sup>77</sup> On this term see p. 143, fn. 549

In chapter 4 I argue that perverted marriage in Aeschylean tragedy forms part of a network of *oikos* and *polis* in crisis and expresses aspects of this malfunction. In this context flawed marriage is the ideal device to explore disruptions in civic life. It is also used to explore larger issues of the play such as loyalties, victimhood, violence, revenge and last but not least marriage in its own right.

Finally chapter 5 seeks to distil the ways in which good, successful or happy marriage is illustrated through its absence both in epic and in drama. In common with most European literature, Greek literature offers no narrative of successful marriage in real time, that is within the fictive present of the epic or tragic plot. Its image is contained in narratives at the shadow of a forthcoming separation, or in laments and reminiscences of past happiness.

## Chapter 1: *Gamos* and Victory in the Pindaric Epinician

### 1. Introduction

The use of marriage in a genre such as the victory ode, which is destined to praise a victor in athletic games, is at first sight paradoxical to anyone unfamiliar with Pindar. Marriage has at best a tangential relevance to athletics and therefore its presence in a genre praising athletic victory may seem unexpected. Nevertheless, marriage has an important role in Pindar's epinician odes and is part of the rich Pindaric network of imagery. And yet, although the erotic cast of the Pindaric epinician has long been recognized,<sup>78</sup> there has been no systematic study of the role of *gamos* in his work.

In this chapter I discuss how Pindar images victory through *gamos*. In the odes ambition is symbolized by *eros*, the winning of the victory is visualized as the winning of the bride through hard *ponos*, the passage to the status of victor as the passage to new status after a marriage, the celebration of the victory as the celebration of the wedding. Pindar uses the wedding celebration and its associations to ask for the acknowledgement of the victory by the *polis* and to ease the re-integration of the victor into his community with the *kleos* and new social standing that his victory has bestowed on him. The need for the motif reflects the fact that Greek society was highly competitive and the envy and hostility of the victor's fellow-citizens was (from the Greek perspective) an inevitable side effect of victory. And praise-song, desirable as it is for the victor and his family,

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<sup>78</sup> For instance, Crotty (1982) pp. x, 83, Steiner (1998) 123-49, Hubbard (2002) 264, fn.25, and particularly Scanlon (2002).

may enhance this hostile reaction, as well as the conspicuous consumption of money for the personal display of the winner. Finally I will argue that *gamos* also helps to achieve the victor's transition to his new status, and secure the immortality of his *kleos*, since the victor is depicted as bringing *kleos* to his *oikos* and to his *polis* as well. But first and foremost the *gamos* metaphor belongs to Pindar's image vocabulary and this is where I begin.

One of the features which most distinguishes Pindar within the archaic lyric tradition is the remarkable density of his imagery.<sup>79</sup> Pindar not only uses a high frequency of images in a short space<sup>80</sup> but he also tends to juxtapose them, shifting rapidly from the one metaphor or image to the other.<sup>81</sup> Metaphor has the capacity by creating impressions to express thoughts and make allusions in an implicit and economical way.<sup>82</sup> It uses everyday experiences to visualize ideas and perceptions in terms of a concept more familiar to us.<sup>83</sup> This means that abstract ideas become more concrete and clearer.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, metaphor has the capacity to create connections.<sup>85</sup> This in turn gives prominence to the notions which are important for the poet's purposes.<sup>86</sup> In the case of Pindar, this kind of representation focuses the attention of the audience on those specific aspects of the victory that matter for the praise task and are of interest to the poet.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Cf. Silk (2007) 184, Hutchinson (2012) 277. On Pindar's metaphor-systems, see Nünlist (1998) and most recently Patten (2009) and Lattmann (2010).

<sup>80</sup> Dornseiff (1921) 67.

<sup>81</sup> Dornseiff (1921) 67-8, Péron (1974) 339. Péron attributes this apposition to the fact that there are 'analogies which can be expressed only through metaphor.'

<sup>82</sup> Péron (1974) 339, Nisetich (1980) 43, Steiner (1986) 23, 27. See Steiner (1986) on the effects of the use of the metaphor.

<sup>83</sup> Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 5, 10-13.

<sup>84</sup> Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 5.

<sup>85</sup> Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 97-8.

<sup>86</sup> Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 97-8, 193.

<sup>87</sup> Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 10, especially 152ff.



Pindar's images are drawn from areas of life familiar to many, if not most, of the audience. This made the connotations Pindar wanted to create readily accessible.<sup>88</sup>

According to one influential school of metaphor theory, metaphor is not simply a feature of style but a way of organizing the world of experience. Irrespective of any larger applicability, this approach to metaphor certainly seems relevant to the dense Pindaric use of imagery. Pindar creates distinctive metaphors through which he encourages us to visualize the victory and its celebration. Thus, he creates a new understanding of the experience of the victory.<sup>89</sup> A new sense of reality is created, the aim of which is to change the perceptions of the audience and promote responses in accordance with these new perceptions.<sup>90</sup> Ultimately it is about the refinement of the conceptual system created by the culture.<sup>91</sup>

Pindar's metaphors are not just a collection of individual images.<sup>92</sup> They are drawn from a very restricted recurrent set of source domains.<sup>93</sup> These are nature, plants, animals, water, the sea or even the craftsmanship of building, wrestling and images of other athletic contests.<sup>94</sup> Pindar's images are basically limited to a relatively small number of recurrent, mutually responsive, metaphors which form a coherent network.<sup>95</sup> The result is a system of large metaphor groupings which is never encountered at any point in the

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<sup>88</sup> Péron (1974) 16, 336-7, cf. Silk (2007) 179, Lakoff and Turner (1989) 109.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 139.

<sup>90</sup> Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 145.

<sup>91</sup> Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 145-6, cf. Lloyd-Jones (1982) 139, 162, who speaks about 'a distinctive vision of the world' created by Pindar's poetry.

<sup>92</sup> Péron (1974) 333-4.

<sup>93</sup> Péron (1974) 333, 337.

<sup>94</sup> See Péron (1974), Steiner (1986), and the old but still valuable study of Dornseiff (1921) 54ff.

<sup>95</sup> Péron (1974) 333-4, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) 157; cf. Lattmann (2010) 314.

corpus in its entirety; it remains fragmentary in form as experienced at the level of the individual ode but is at the same time remarkably coherent and highly organized when viewed across the corpus.<sup>96</sup> This system, coherent and fragmented at once, fulfils specific poetic aims. On the one hand, the fragmentation of the system across the corpus allows for different aspects of any given metaphor to be used for different purposes according to context. Thus themes and issues are explored from diverse angles; this produces complex effects. On the other hand, the coherence of this system effects the successful articulation of the key themes of Pindar's odes. Hence, the synoptic exploration of the images in the appropriate systems is the only way through which it is possible to gain an insight into Pindar's imaginative world and main ideas in their entirety<sup>97</sup> and ultimately get a full sense of Pindar's art.<sup>98</sup> For an author whose work was encountered during his lifetime through performance and not (or at least not primarily) through the written word,<sup>99</sup> this raises fascinating questions about the perception of the corpus as a whole which cannot be addressed here. But the fact remains that whether or not it was ever perceived as a single entity, this system through its diverse imagery offers a remarkably coherent worldview.

My interest here however is not the system as a whole but one image group in particular which is employed to illustrate victory, namely marriage. The association we find in Pindar between *gamos* and athletic success was evidently not a feature of the victory ode as a genre, since we appear not to find it in either of his two great rivals, Bacchylides

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<sup>96</sup> Péron (1974) 334-5 with a special reference to nature, the source domain of the maritime imagery he investigates; cf. Lattmann (2010) 314.

<sup>97</sup> Dornseiff (1921) 54, cf. Péron (1974) 15, 336-7.

<sup>98</sup> Steiner (1986) 27.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. Currie (2004) 49-54, Morrison (2007) 7, 41-79, Carey (2007) 199-209; for a written transmission of the odes see Hubbard (2004) 71-91.

and Simonides.<sup>100</sup> Nor was it either inevitable or obvious, since it is only exploited by Pindar. Yet, *gamos* is a recurring image in Pindar, appearing in one in every three odes.<sup>101</sup>

It is not suggested here that Pindar is in any respect interested in marriage itself; his approach is opportunistic, though coherently opportunistic. There is no attempt to represent marriage in all its aspects; what is at issue is rather a stylized but consistent image of marriage which can be constructed through the pictures drawn from the marriage imagery domain. Thus only those aspects of *gamos* are highlighted which are compatible with the image and concepts of victory which Pindar wants to promote.

To create his analogies Pindar presented his audience with a fictionalized form of *gamos*, an amalgam of the real marriage, as experienced by his contemporaries, and heroic prototypes from the world of myth. In this, as in other aspects of his celebration of victory, he places his victorious athletes in an idealized world which while locating them in historical time connects them with the values and experiences of the major figures of the heroic age.<sup>102</sup> For instance, in place of the *engye*, the first stage of ancient *gamos* probably across most of the Greek world, he uses the winning of the bride, a phenomenon common only in myths.

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<sup>100</sup> The erotic aspect of archaic praise poetry seems by and large to have been homo- rather than heteroerotic (cf. Stehle (2009) 61-2).

<sup>101</sup> He uses this image group in 15 at least out of his 46 epinician odes (*Olympians*: 1, 7, 9, *Pythians*: 2, 3, 4, 9, 11, *Nemeans*: 1, 3, 4, 5, *Isthmians*: 4, 6, 8).

<sup>102</sup> Nagy (1990), 199-214, Currie (2005) 406-414, but esp. 59, 205-414; cf. Mackie (2003) 95-6.

This treatment of *gamos* is possible because what Pindar ultimately uses in this metaphor are the connotations aroused by the image and not the precise affinities between *gamos* and victory. This is also evident in the fact that there is no precise narrative coincidence between the stages of *gamos* and the stages of victory, particularly in regard to the celebration. In weddings the reception of the pair at their new *oikos*, which was actually the groom's own *oikos*, took place after the celebration, unlike the reception of the victor into his *polis*, which happens before the victory celebration. It is the elements and the associations rather than the precise sequence which make *gamos* useful.<sup>103</sup>

I turn now to the specifics of the use of the *gamos* metaphor of victory. A fundamental element shared by the two fields of this metaphor, the source domain and the domain of the tenor, is ritual. This is clear in the case of the wedding with its sacrifices, purification baths, the symbolism of the procession and its cultural role as a rite of passage.<sup>104</sup> In the case of the victory the ritual aspect, though different, is equally clear. These games were known as the 'holy games'.<sup>105</sup> Indeed, not only are the games an aspect of cult but the victory odes have a religious-cultic element in the form of prayers,

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<sup>103</sup> Cf. Steiner (1986) 21.

<sup>104</sup> See Oakley and Sinos (1993) especially 3-37.

<sup>105</sup> *Anth.Pal.IX.357* (anonymi epigrammatici): τέσσαρες εἰσιν ἀγῶνες ἀν' Ἑλλάδα, τέσσαρες ἱροί, / οἱ δύο μὲν θνητῶν, οἱ δύο δ' ἀθανάτων· Ζηνός, Λητοῖδαο, Παλαίμονος, Ἀρχεμόροιο. / ἄθλα δὲ τῶν κότινος, μῆλα, σέλιννα, πίτυς. (The text is cited after Waltz (1957).) In other words the sacred games for Greeks were the Olympian, the Pythian, the Isthmian and the Nemean games. Pindar also characterizes them under the name *hieroi aethloi*: *O.8.64*, *O.13.15*. Cf. Race (1986) 19; for the ritualistic and cultic aspect of the games see Burkert (1985) 106-7, Raschke (1988); cf. Valavanis (2004).

thanks to the gods, praise of the gods of games and city and sacrifices.<sup>106</sup> This common cult dimension facilitates the transference between the two domains.

As is the case in Pindar's other metaphors, the Pindaric *gamos* metaphor of victory is not a single image but a composite subset of metaphors, concepts and associations which evokes the experience behind, on which its constituents are based and shows it in its full coherence.<sup>107</sup> It helps to articulate the shared value system against which victory is evaluated, namely athletic ideology, and also the association of the victor with the hero, which existed already from the victory song attributed to Archilochus and is referred to by Pindar at *O.9.1-2*.<sup>108</sup> *Gamos* and its ritual were particularly useful for Pindar in the generation of this metaphor, in that 'the part-whole structure' of the *gamos* metaphor allows the image of the victory 'to be mapped onto' it on the basis 'of their common structure'.<sup>109</sup> Thus, all the knowledge related to the ritual of *gamos* as rite of passage is transmitted to the metaphor of victory as a rite of passage.<sup>110</sup> What Pindar does is that he takes these existing cultural associations and concepts, combines them into a system, invokes the audience's cultural knowledge and manipulates it. He then extends this system and deploys it in ways convenient to his presentation of victory.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Cf. for instance Burkert (1985) 106, Young (2004) 12-16, 52-66, especially 52-54, Fisher (2009) 527-9.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. Lakoff and Turner (1989) 89.

<sup>108</sup> The Archilochus victory song went like this: τήνελλα καλλίνικε .... χαῖρε ἄναξ Ἡράκλεις, / αὐτός τε καιόλαος, αἰχμητὰ δύο (fr. 324 West). On this song, see Gerber (2002) 21-3, cf. Pelliccia (2009) 255-6.

<sup>109</sup> Cf. Lakoff and Turner (1989) 90.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. Lakoff and Turner (1989) 92. In this case, of course, some of the ideas underlying the metaphor of victory as passage were already part of the conceptual landscape of the ancient Greeks. What Pindar does is promote this concept further by the association of victory with the rite of passage *par excellence*, namely *gamos*.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. Lakoff and Turner (1989) 51-3.

Before proceeding to the consideration of *gamos* as an image for victory it is important to see how Pindar treats victory, the vehicle in his metaphor, in order to understand how he associated victory with marriage and why marriage was a convenient, or even ideal, tool for Pindar in the representation of victory in his praise task.

Victory in Pindar's odes is conceptualized<sup>112</sup> from the correlation of certain themes<sup>113</sup> and may in very rough outline be given as follows. It is the product of great labour (*ponos*)<sup>114</sup> undergone by a person of excellent natural abilities (*phya*)<sup>115</sup>, assisted by a god's favour (*theos*).<sup>116</sup> The expenditure (*dapana*) of *ploutos*<sup>117</sup> is essential to this process of *ponos* (I.1.41-51).<sup>118</sup> The victory in itself is a splendid achievement (*aglaia*)<sup>119</sup>. As such it can cause *phthonos* (envy, jealousy) both from men and gods.<sup>120</sup> Nonetheless, it creates fame (*kleos*) for the victor, his *oikos* and *polis*.<sup>121</sup> This *kleos* in itself cannot last, nor can it 'travel' without the medium of words which can keep it alive in people's memory.<sup>122</sup> It is here that poetry (*hymnos*) supervenes<sup>123</sup>, celebrates

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<sup>112</sup> Willcock (1995) 15-9, Race (1997a) 3-4. For the notions of *ponos*, reward, *kleos* and the role of the public celebrations see Schadewaldt (1928) especially 266-91, Carey (1995a) 88-92, Nisetich (1980) 41-7 and Young (1968) 61ff., 66ff., 73-4, 101 on the immortal *kleos* that poetry generates. There are other important themes as *koros*, *kairos*, *metron*, *chrysos*, *philia* which, however, are not so important for the definition of victory. On these see for instance Race (1997a) 4 and Willcock (1995) 17-9.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Lattmann (2010) 59.

<sup>114</sup> O.11.4, I.3.17b, N.4.1-2; cf. Thummer (1968-9) II.22-3, II.34-5, Gerber (1982) ad 81.

<sup>115</sup> O.9.100-2, O.11.19-20, I.3.13-4; cf. Schadewaldt (1928) 298, Bundy (1986) 3 fn.11, 16-7, 30-1.

<sup>116</sup> O.1.106-8, O.11.10, I.3.4, O.7.87-90; cf. Bundy (1986) 30-31.

<sup>117</sup> O.2.53-6; cf. I.1.67-8, I.4.29, I.3.2, I.3.17b, P.5.1.

<sup>118</sup> Kurke (1991) 98, 235-8, Bundy (1986) 83-4, 86-90.

<sup>119</sup> O.9.98-9, O.13.13-6, P.6.44-6, I.2.18; cf. Thummer (1968-9) II ad 2.18.

<sup>120</sup> From men: N.4.36-43, O.2.95-8; from gods: I.7.39, I.7.43-4, I.4.11-3, N.4.69; cf. Schadewaldt (1928) 278, fn.1, 288, Thummer (1968-9) I. 80-1, Bundy (1986) 40, 56 fn.51, 60-61, 63-4.

<sup>121</sup> O.8.10, O.10.95-6, N.7.63, I.5.7-8. For instance Bundy (1986) 52, 60, 60 fn.63, 61, 64 fn.75, 65-6, 83-4, 87-90.

<sup>122</sup> Cf. Morgan (1993) 10. Cf. p.80.

<sup>123</sup> I.3.7, I.4.3, N.4.2-5, O.11.4-6, I.7.16-9, I.4.40-2, N.4.6, N.4.83-5, O.2.89; cf. Schadewaldt (1928) 277 n.1, 278 fn.1, 298ff., Thummer (1968-9) I. 95.

this *kleos* and makes it immortal through the charming effects (*charis*)<sup>124</sup> of the poet's skills (*sophia*)<sup>125</sup>. It also extends the fame in space. Finally, the skills which realized the achievement constitute the victor's *areta*.<sup>126</sup>

I will argue that the Pindaric hybrid of *gamos* is collocated with and interacts with all the notions described above which are attached to the victory,<sup>127</sup> namely with the sequence ambition, *ponos*, success, transition to a new status, *telos*, integration into the community and immortal *kleos* and complete fulfilment of the transition. The bride was the object of ambition and won after *ponos*. Both the groom and the bride were making their passage to a new status. This success and this new status were validated through the public celebration and especially through song. This is carried over to the victory and underlines its most important aspects.

Finally, a point about method. I have been speaking throughout of metaphor. But the *gamos* motif in Pindar takes the form not only of metaphor and simile but also of the major figuring device of mythic narrative.<sup>128</sup> All these converge to form a coherent image of victory which I have subsumed for convenience under the term 'metaphor'. So, in this framework I will pay close attention to the role of *gamos* in myth. Myth is used from the earliest period as a way of exploring contemporary experience and thus forms part of the image system whereby Pindar organizes his world. As a means of generating

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<sup>124</sup> *O.*7.11, *I.*3.8, *I.*4.72b, *N.*4.7; cf. Schadewaldt (1928) 277f., 287 fn.5.

<sup>125</sup> Thummer (1968-9) I. 95 fn.77, II. 42, Bundy (1986) 69 fn. 83, 71 fn.91.

<sup>126</sup> *O.*11.6, *N.*4.41; cf. Thummer (1968-9) II ad 3/4.4f., Willcock (1995) 18, Bundy (1986) 82ff.

<sup>127</sup> For the idea that metaphor expresses the association of victory with all the key notions of Pindaric poetry, see Lattmann (2010) 59-60.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. Nünlist (1998) 347-8, Lattmann (2010) 270, 314. For a case for metaphor as part of a larger expression system, see Lattmann (2010) 49, 52-3; Lattmann explains this in terms of Peirce's theory of metaphor (Lattmann (2012) 550-1).

parallels and contrasts with and implicit comments on the contemporary world of its audience, it has natural affinities with metaphor, despite the many differences. Before I proceed to the specifics of the interplay between *gamos* imagery and victory, I will firstly discuss an essential correspondence between marriage and victory which facilitated the correlation between them, their shared role as *telos*, as fulfilment of ambition and potential.

## 2. Marriage as *telos*<sup>129</sup>

As was noted above, *gamos* and athletics share a ritual dimension,<sup>130</sup> as suggested by the adjective that characterizes them as sacred, ἱεραία.<sup>131</sup> The games are celebrated in honour of gods (though historically they may have their origin in funeral games). As such the competitions individually and collectively are (like other forms of competition in the Greek world, such as Athenian drama) a *charis* offered by mortals to gods as a means of honouring and propitiating.<sup>132</sup> It has been suggested plausibly that one aspect of the ritual character of the games may have been an initiation into adulthood.<sup>133</sup> This probably gave the games their teleological character.

This teleological aspect is very important for the *gamos* metaphor of the victory.

Victory is a *telos* for the athlete. The athlete has achieved something spectacular which

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<sup>129</sup> Woodbury (1982) 253, 255; cf. Ormand (1999) 18.

<sup>130</sup> On the ritual aspect of the athletic games, see Nagy (1990) 136-45.

<sup>131</sup> Nagy (1990) 137. See p.44 fn. 105.

<sup>132</sup> Some scholars see the athletes' efforts themselves as a ritual re-enactment of the heroic ordeals and consequent death; and therefore the song for the praise of the athletic victory as a compensation (even if not entirely) for the heroic death (Burkert (1985) 105-107, Kennedy (1989) 12-13 and fn.40 on p.13; Nagy (1990) 136-45).

<sup>133</sup> Burkert (1985) 105-107.



is limit-defining. All the efforts of the athlete have a meaning once he wins in an athletic competition.<sup>134</sup> Failure, by contrast, especially after such *ponos* and expenditure, in such a competitive society, meant lack of this fulfilment and shame (cf. *P.9.92*).<sup>135</sup> Although there is no instance where Pindar explicitly says that victory is the fulfilment of the athlete, or a *telos* in itself, this notion is traceable in Pindar's epinicians. Moreover, victory, apart from being a target, also provided the athlete with a new social status and financial privileges or political potential, as we shall see below.<sup>136</sup>

Crucially, the idea that the athlete has reached the limit of human success, *eudaimonia*, is clearly expressed repeatedly in Pindar. At *P.1.99-100* he says:

τὸ δὲ παθεῖν εὖ πρώτον ἀέθλων· εὖ δ' ἀκούειν δευτέρα

μοῖρ'· ἀμφοτέροισι δ' ἀνήρ

ὄς ἂν ἐγκύρση καὶ ἔλη, στέφανον ὕψιστον δέδεκται.

εἰ γάρ τις ἀνθρώπων δαπάνῃ τε χαρεῖς

καὶ πόνῳ πράσσει θεοδμάτων ἀρετᾶς

σύν τέ οἱ δαίμων φυτεύει δόξαν ἐπήρατον, ἐσχατιαῖς ἤδη

πρὸς ὄλβου

βάλλετ' ἄγκυραν θεότιμος ἐών (*I.6.10-3*).

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<sup>134</sup> Cf. Carson (1982) 127: 'solitary excellence [is] a doomed, wild, sterile thing'. See also Carson (1982) 121, 125-8 on the parallel.

<sup>135</sup> See p. 66. Victory is a compensation for the investment of time and effort and the taking of risks and this accentuates one's sense of victory as *telos* (see pp. 62-4).

<sup>136</sup> See pp. 64-6.

νέα δ' εὐπραγία χαίρω τι· τὸ δ' ἄχγνυμαι,  
φθόνον ἀμειβόμενον τὰ καλὰ ἔργα. φαντί γε μάν  
οὔτω κ' ἀνδρὶ παρμονίμαν  
θάλλοισαν εὐδαιμονίαν τὰ καὶ τὰ φέρεσθαι (P.7.18-21).

The bliss of victory<sup>137</sup> is repeatedly illustrated in Pindar: *O.5-23-4*, *P.10.22-9*, *P.11.55-8*, *N.3.19-21*, *N.9.46-7*, *N.11.13-6*, *I.5.12-5*. Pindar himself at one point says that victory gives the athlete calm for the rest of his life (*O.1.98*, cf. *N.4.1-2*, *N.9.44-5*). Since he pointedly adds ‘as far as athletics are concerned’ (*O.1.99*), he evidently does not have in mind a life of uninterrupted success, which anyway would run counter to the Pindaric rhetoric of vicissitude as a dominant feature of human life.<sup>138</sup> More probably it indicates that glory, the *kudos*, which results from the victory.<sup>139</sup>

Related to this aspect of victory is its presentation by Pindar as a *telos*. In *Nemean 3*, by presenting Heracles (*N.3.22ff.*) as the archetypal toiler and as such the model for the contemporary athlete and the victor himself, Pindar assimilates the victory to Heracles’ νόστου τέλος (*N.3.25*). Victory is often likened to reaching the pillars of Heracles (*O.3.43-45*, *N.3.20-23*, *I.4.11-12*).<sup>140</sup> The athletic success is then a pinnacle, a furthest limit, a *telos*.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> The issue has been thoroughly discussed by Thummer (1968-9) 66-81.

<sup>138</sup> See below, pp. 59-61.

<sup>139</sup> Instone (1996) ad *O.1.97-8*, Gerber (1982) ad *O.1.98*.

<sup>140</sup> See Nieto-Hernandez (1993) 77, 86; cf. Patten (2009) 212-3.

<sup>141</sup> See Nieto-Hernandez (1993) 86; cf. Patten (2009) 212-3.

So, victory is a culminating moment (*telos*), as was *gamos*.<sup>142</sup> Ancient Greek *gamos*, as we noted in the Introduction, directs the wed pair towards a perfect status both in individual development and in social function.<sup>143</sup> In the framework of Pindar's *gamos* metaphor these cultural semantics of *gamos* are employed to show that victory fulfils the existence of the athlete as *gamos* fulfils the existence of the wedded couple.

This aspect is amply reflected in Pindar's epinicians, which exploit extensively the idea of *gamos* as the *telos* both for men and for women. The *gamos* with Thetis was the *telos* for Peleus, the parallel to the victor (*N.3.70*, cf. 35-6).<sup>144</sup> This notion is still more prominent in the case of Cyrene, whose marriage to Apollo is also defined as *τελευτά* (*P.9.66*). Cyrene in *P.9* for all her excellence at hunting did not fulfil her social role in the community. Bold, independent, even heroic, as she is, there is a sense that she is incomplete in Greek terms. She is a virgin, away from her home (*P.9.18-9*) and outside the *polis*. Her *telos* is realized only when she is brought into a recognized role as bride (*P.9.51ff.*). In this case *gamos* gave her much more than was expected for a woman in ordinary life. She founded and ruled over a wonderful city and bore a child to a god (*P.9.56a-65*, *P.9.69-70*). The exhibition of her life as wife and mother as her real fulfilment contribute to the idea of human *telos* and fulfilment through marriage (cf. *P.9.44*).<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> For a different treatment of the use of *gamos* and victory as *telos* see Lattmann (2010) 308-9.

<sup>143</sup> Burkert (1985) 132-3, cf. Avagianou (1991) 32-3, Rehm (1994) 32, 165-6 fn.14, Neuburg (1990) 68, for instance. See also pp. 21-5.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. Instone (1996) ad *N.3.70-5*, ad *N.3.32-6*.

<sup>145</sup> Woodbury (1982) 252-3, Carson (1982) 124. Indeed this may also result from the exchange between Apollo and Chiron. Apollo asks three questions (*P.9.33-5*) and Chiron replies only to the third, which obviously is what matters to Apollo the most. The answer is that Apollo will marry her, lead her to Africa

The deployment of the *gamos* metaphor communicates this attribute of *telos* from *gamos* to the victory. In *O.1* and *P.9* victory and *gamos* are conflated. This is done at its best at *P.9.118*. Marriage is the τέλος ... ἄκρον of Alexidamus' victory in the race.<sup>146</sup> Again in *O.1* Pelops' victory (*O.1.76-81*) and his marriage (*O.1.88-89*) interconnect and lead to the realization (note the use of νῦν δ', *O.1.90*) of his ambitions and posthumous renown (*O.1.90-96*). He was eager for excellence and great deeds (*O.1.81-5*). His subsequent victory and marriage provided him with a kingdom and immortal *kleos* as he wished (cf. *O.1.82-4*).

I turn now to the first part of the *gamos* metaphor of victory, the winning of the bride, which parallels the winning of athletic victory.<sup>147</sup>

### 3. Mythologizing *gamos*: The winning of the bride

The arrangement of marriage in archaic and classical Greece was not a question of intimacy or attraction between the two individuals concerned. Marriage was rather a

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where she will govern everything and that she will bear a boy, Aristaeus, to Apollo (*P.9.51-65*). But Chiron characterizes what Apollo has asked as a κύριον τέλος (*P.9.44*) known to Apollo (*P.9.44-5*), but which he, Chiron, will answer (*P.9.50-1*). In other words Apollo's marriage is a τέλος, as well as Cyrene's destiny and motherhood (Woodbury (1982) 254 and fn.31). This is another way Cyrene's marriage can be regarded as her τέλος quite different from her previous wild life (*P.9.18-25*) (As line 58 shows, the stress of this account is on Cyrene (Carey (1981) ad *P.9.58-58b*)). This interpretation is also dictated by the oracular and teleological background in which Chiron's words are introduced (Cf. Carey (1981) ad *P.9.44ff*. Note also the verb μέλλεις (*P.9.52*) and the futures θήσεις (*P.9.54*), δέξεται (*P.9.56*), δωρήσεται (*P.9.57*), τέξεται (*P.9.59*), οἴσει (*P.9.61*), στάξοισι (*P.9.63*), θήσονται (*P.9.63*), cf. also ὁσία (*P.9.36*). (Cf. Instone (1996) ad *P.9.36-7*, ad *P.9.44-9*, ad *P.9.52-3*, ad *P.9.54-5*, cf. also Carey (1981) ad *P.9.39*, ad *P.9.44ff*. and ad *P.9.61*.)

<sup>146</sup> Woodbury (1982) 253, 255, cf. Felson (2004) 386, Athanassaki (2003) 96. Marriage is also linked with victory at *P.9.97-103* (McNeal (1978) 147, Woodbury (1982) 255, Felson (2004) 386, Carson (1982) 122-3, cf. Kurke (1991) 113).

<sup>147</sup> For the winning of the bride as metaphor for winning the victory and for the conflation of marriage and victory, see also Lattmann (2010) 272-6, 303-4.

matter of exchange and negotiation between families through their leading males.<sup>148</sup> It was family interests and alliances, questions of finance, political influence and prestige that dictated a marriage arrangement and not feelings of individual desire.<sup>149</sup> Especially when this marriage exchange took place between members of the elite, the interests that dictated this exchange were stronger than any personal considerations. From this perspective marriage was a pragmatic affair and the negotiation of the best match was of critical importance. This aspect of the marriage exchange offered little purchase for Pindar in his effort to idealize and praise the victor. Hard negotiation makes good business but bad poetry.

To make use of the *gamos* metaphor of victory Pindar needed to elide or suppress these associations. The extent of the problem for Pindar is clearer when we consider the fact that athletics could be seen as selfish and self-indulgent. Athletic activity had a strong self-regarding aspect: regardless of any civic benefit (to which we return below), it was undertaken for the sake of individual and familial prestige in a competitive culture.<sup>150</sup> Moreover, the athlete had laboured hard and spent huge amounts of money for his glory:<sup>151</sup> In the ancient as in the modern world success in the games required training and practice.<sup>152</sup> In addition the victory ode was probably an expensive commodity and its aim was to praise an individual. Lastly, the display of the victor carried political associations with it, even on occasion suspicions of tyrannical aspirations.<sup>153</sup> The victory itself as an achievement was celebrated in a cultural-political context in which

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<sup>148</sup> See Introduction, p. 21.

<sup>149</sup> Vêrilhac and Vial (1998) 218-27, cf. Oakley and Sinos (1993) 9, Carey (2009) 30.

<sup>150</sup> See below, pp. 64-6.

<sup>151</sup> Cf. pp. 62-6.

<sup>152</sup> See pp. 62-4.

<sup>153</sup> Kurke (1991) 175-81 *passim*.

conspicuous consumption for private reasons was generally frowned upon and in which self-assertion in the form of personal display could create hostility.<sup>154</sup> There was a general reluctance, for instance, in all Greek states in the early fifth century to allow tomb display.<sup>155</sup> Greek societies were also highly competitive and many of the elite harboured athletic ambitions. All this means that the individual's good fortune was likely to be resented by his fellow-citizens.<sup>156</sup> Especially among the elite<sup>157</sup>, to which the victor usually belonged (Xenophanes 2.15-9 D-K<sup>158</sup>), this public personal display and self-aggrandizement was a potential source of anxiety.<sup>159</sup> These negative reactions to the success itself would be strengthened by Pindar's public praise (N.8.19-22).<sup>160</sup>

The task of navigating through these complex dynamics was a delicate one. Pindar needs to praise the victor and make the audience celebrate this victory. The poet plays the role of the advocate. He negotiates with the *polis* on the victor's behalf in order to assuage any reservations about the victor, communicate the message of validation of

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<sup>154</sup> Kurke (1991) 195-224 *passim*, cf. Carey (2007) 203.

<sup>155</sup> Morris (1987) 44-54, 151-5, 183-9, 205-17, cf. Thomas (2007) 141-2.

<sup>156</sup> Cf. Thummer (1968-9) 80-1, Kurke (1991) 202, 209.

<sup>157</sup> On this issue see Kurke (1991) esp. 195-224. The victor at this period was usually an aristocrat. Athletics were mostly the field of the elite (cf. Isocrates 16.33-4). They required the time and the money for training that only the aristocrats could give. Cf. Fearn (2007) 150-1, and in contrast Young (1984) 147-65 and Fisher (2009) 535-6.

<sup>158</sup> οὔτε γὰρ εἰ πύκτης ἀγαθὸς λαοῖσι μετεῖη  
οὔτ' εἰ πενταθλεῖν οὔτε παλαιμοσύνην,  
οὐδὲ μὲν εἰ ταχυτῆτι ποδῶν, τόπερ ἔστι πρότιμον,  
ῥώμης ὅσσ' ἀνδρῶν ἔργ' ἐν ἀγῶνι πέλει,  
τοὔνεκεν ἂν δὴ μᾶλλον ἐν εὐνομίῃ πόλις εἴη...

<sup>159</sup> Cf. Bowra (1964) 187-8.

<sup>160</sup> Bundy (1986) 40, 56 fn. 51.

victory, acceptance and reintegration of the victor to the audience.<sup>161</sup> So the victory has to be presented in a way which will achieve these objectives.

To help with this process marriage itself has been reconfigured. Negotiation between elite families may be necessary in order to ensure a marriage settlement which satisfies all parties, but there is nothing inspiring about it; it offered little scope for poetic idealization. Pindar's solution was to replace this aspect of marriage with the mythical analogue.<sup>162</sup> Marriage is brought about not by negotiation but by *eros* and enterprise, and the winning of the bride becomes the outcome of a hero's ambition.<sup>163</sup> Yet ultimately, as I will show below, this is not just about hiding some uninspiring aspect of *gamos* or victory. It has a positive dimension too.

Marriage based on winning the bride is rare outside the world of myth.<sup>164</sup> There is a possibility that the Alexidamus story narrated in *P.9* was a historical example of winning the bride, but this is family folklore and we cannot be certain that it is factually correct. Moreover, even if true, it involves a Libyan king, not a Greek, even if the groom was a Greek, and therefore sheds little light on Greek practices.<sup>165</sup> And it evidently belonged in the distant past. Herodotus offers another story of contest for the hand of the bride (Hdt. 6.126-30), which may be folklore, too.<sup>166</sup> According to Herodotus, this is

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<sup>161</sup> Kurke (1991) 225-39, 257-62, cf. Most (1985) 120, 186-90 on the poet and his praise for the victor.

<sup>162</sup> Cf. Lattmann (2010) 314. Comedy offers an interesting parallel here. The tedious issue of negotiation is sidelined in Aristophanes, too, in his treatment of peace. Peace is also a matter for negotiation. But in *Acharnians* it is metamorphosed into wine (*Ach.*1225-34), in *Peace* it is represented by the rescue of the goddess's statue (*Pax* 221ff., 974ff.), in *Lysistrata* by the haggling over the body of Reconciliation (*Lys.*112ff.). See chapter 2, pp. 117-8, 136-7.

<sup>163</sup> For the bride as target see Lattmann (2010) 273, 276.

<sup>164</sup> Cf. Lattmann (2010) 272-3.

<sup>165</sup> Instone (1996) ad 105.

<sup>166</sup> Cf. however Parker (1994) 423, who is certain that the narrative did mirror the historical truth.

how Cleisthenes of Sicyon tried to find a husband for his daughter. Cleisthenes organized a competition among the Greek elite in order to choose the best match for his daughter. If this is indeed historical fact, it could conceivably be taken as evidence for elite practice.<sup>167</sup> But the absence of corroborative parallels suggests that Cleisthenes' choice is not to be taken simply as transparent evidence for larger cultural trends. It is more probable that Cleisthenes is there designedly mimicking heroic practices, perhaps especially the competition for Helen's marriage.<sup>168</sup> Cleisthenes is thus making a statement about his own regime as a revival of Homeric kingship, in which case it again tells us more about the world of myth than the world of experience in archaic Greece.<sup>169</sup> His option also mirrors the importance that political alliance with him had in the Greek context.<sup>170</sup> But historical or not, this case stands isolated in inter-Greek relationships and practices in the archaic and classical period. So we can be reasonably sure that the winning of the bride as we find it in the victory odes reflects the influence of the mythical world on Pindaric *gamos*.<sup>171</sup>

This substitution of the uninspiring negotiation with the heroic winning of the bride is part of Pindar's larger heroization of athletics (cf. *O.1.67-96*).<sup>172</sup> In his praise Pindar tends to assimilate his victors in some measure to the heroic world.<sup>173</sup> In Pindar's ethical world the life of human beings acquires meaning only if one takes risks, succeeds in them and acquires *kleos* (*O.1.81-4*). The necessity and importance of danger away from

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<sup>167</sup> Baragwanath (2008) 154-5, Scott (2005) ad 126.1.

<sup>168</sup> Parker (1994) 423, McQueen (2000) x-xi, ad 126.3, 130.1, Scott (2005) ad 126.1, 126.3, 128.1.

<sup>169</sup> Parker (1994) 423.

<sup>170</sup> Cf. Parker (1994) 424.

<sup>171</sup> Cf. Lattmann (2010) 273-4.

<sup>172</sup> Steiner (1986) 137-8; cf. Nagy (1990) 199-214, also McNeal (1978) 156.

<sup>173</sup> Currie (2005) 3, 7, Lattmann (2010) 314. Nevertheless, I do not find Currie's views on the anticipation of future heroization persuasive.



home (*P.4.186*, cf. *O.1.83*) to achieve *areta* is also on the basis of the Argonautic expedition (*P.4.185-7*). In *N.3* Peleus is a parallel of the victor in his endurance, victory in wrestling and self-reliance (*N.3.70*, cf. *N.3.35-6*).<sup>174</sup> It is only the test (*πεῖρα*, *N.3.70*) that exposes, attracts notice to and makes prominent the worth and excellence of people.<sup>175</sup> Thus both the hero and the victor have proved their worth. Risk, excellence and *kleos* are featured in Cyrene's case too. Cyrene leaves her home (*P.9.18-9*), goes into the wild and engages in dangerous pursuits (*P.9.20-25*, *P.9.26-8*). Her excellence and heroic spirit win her a groom – and a god (*P.9.26-32ff.*), just as Peleus' *areta* won<sup>176</sup> him Thetis (cf. *N.5.33-7ff.*).<sup>177</sup>

This conception of victory is profoundly influenced by epic. This is presented at its most explicit at *O.1.81-5*. Pelops' attempt to win the competition at Elis is described there as *μέγας κίνδυνος* (*O.1.81*) which may bring about even his death (*O.1.82-5*). The contest for Hippodameia's hand becomes now a choice between courageously risking an early death with glory and accepting an inglorious old age. The ethic is ultimately and visibly derived from that of the heroic world, especially and most explicitly *Il.12.322-8*.<sup>178</sup>

In the semi-fictionalized *gamos* of the Pindaric epinician, the first stage is *eros*, here represented in the desire for a wife by the (now) sexually mature Pelops. The *eros* of myth approximates to the ambition of the athlete. The targets of the athlete and of the

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<sup>174</sup> Cf. Lattmann (2010) 152.

<sup>175</sup> Cf. Instone (1996) ad *N.3.70-5*, ad *N.3.32-6*.

<sup>176</sup> Cf. Lattmann (2010) 152.

<sup>177</sup> For a recent discussion focused specifically on the marriage motif in *Pythian* 9, see Lattmann (2010) 270-309.

<sup>178</sup> Instone (1996) ad *O.1.82*. Pindar also makes through his vocabulary choices the hero as parallel to Hieron. See on this Gerber (1982) ad *O.1.78*, ad *O.1.83*, ad *O.1.84*, Instone (1996) ad *O.1.75-6*, ad *O.1.78*, ad *O.1.84*, ad *O.1.86b-9*. For *κίνδυνος* in athletics see Gerber (1982) ad *O.1.81*, Instone (1996) ad *O.1.81*.

hero are alike demanding and both bestow *kleos* on their agent (*O.1.69-71*, *O.1.88*, cf. *O.9.9-10*, also *N.3.32-7*, *N.4.62-5*).<sup>179</sup> Pindar takes care to associate Hieron and Pelops in the opening and close of the ode (*O.1.23*, *O.1.93-5*).<sup>180</sup> The applicability of the myth to Hieron is underlined by vocabulary echoes between Pelops' prayer and Hieron: κράτει δὲ πέλασον (*O.1.78*), κράτει δὲ προσέμειξε δεσπότην (*O.1.22*), ἀπάντων καλῶν (*O.1.84*), καλῶν (*O.1.104*), ἄεθλος (*O.1.84*), ἀέθλων (*O.1.99*).<sup>181</sup> Pelops is ultimately not just the antecedent for the victor as a type but also and especially for the equestrian victor like Hieron.<sup>182</sup> In this frame, Pelops' *eros* for Hippodameia corresponds to Hieron's ambitions (μερίμναισιν, *O.1.108*).<sup>183</sup> The equation between *eros* and ambition is underlined by the way Pindar's Pelops describes the marriage, as an achievement, as a target achievable only at great risk, and as a source of glory. Hippodameia is both an actual object of desire and a representative of something larger, the highest prize which demands the highest effort and conveys commensurate glory. *O.1* is not the only case where *eros* is explicitly and inseparably connected with ambition. This is also the case in the myth of Ixion's inappropriate *eros* for Hera, who belongs to Zeus (τὰν Διὸς εἶναι λάχον / πολυγαθέες, *P.2.27-8*). This makes it overambitious (μαινομέναις φρασίν, *P.2.26*; ὕβρις εἰς ἀνάταν ὑπεράφανον / ὄρσεν, *P.2.28-9*) to fall in love with her (*P.2.26-8*) and even more to attempt to unite with her, as he did (*P.2.33-4*).

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<sup>179</sup> *Eros* was used as metaphor in the literature of earlier period. It appears already in Homer for the desire for food (*Od.12.308*), for instance. It is also used by Thucydides to illustrate the strong desire in the narrative of the Sicilian expedition (*Thuc.6.24.3*).

<sup>180</sup> Köhnken (1974) 199-200.

<sup>181</sup> Gerber (1982) ad 75-85, cf. also Instone (1996) ad *O.1.78*, ad *O.1.84*.

<sup>182</sup> Köhnken (1974) 203-6.

<sup>183</sup> It is in the frame of this association that Pindar changes the myth of Pelops and presents both ambitions as related to horses. Hieron wanted to win in a horse race, as Pelops did. But the notion of horses is used in another way, too. It is inherent in the name of Pelops' object of desire, Hippodameia, while Pindar calls Hieron ἵπποχάρμαν βασιλῆα (*O.1.23*) (Köhnken (1974) 203).

As these passages show, in the Pindaric epinician, *gamos* and its associations become a means of expressing aspiration in general. And it is important that *eros* is confined by *gamos* in this way. In the case of the athlete, the concept and language of *eros* help to present the will to succeed and achieve as something almost visceral, as a powerful yearning. At the same time the location of *eros* within the socially sanctioned context of marriage presents this ambition as something ethically right and socially beneficial, not as mere appetite.<sup>184</sup>

There are however right ambitions which are compatible with mortal limitations and perverted ambitions which are beyond them. The first bring success and the latter destruction. Perverted desire is a failure to acknowledge the limitations in human ambitions (*N.11.48*; cf. *P.3.59-60*, 87-92).<sup>185</sup> Apart from Ixion's trespass mentioned above, Coronis polluted Apollo's σπέρμα ... καθάρων (*P.3.12-20*). Tityos tried to rape Leto (*P.4.90-2*). All of them are accordingly punished. Coronis was killed by Apollo (*P.3.8-11*). Ixion got a cloud, a fake Hera, to unite with (*P.2.36-40*) and was subjected to eternal punishment, a punishment for which he was solely and personally responsible: τὸν δὲ τετράκναμον ἔπραξε δεσμόν / ἐὸν ὄλεθρον ὄγ' (*P.2.40-1*, cf. *P.2.29-30*).<sup>186</sup> Tityos was killed by Artemis (*P.4.90*). All these desires were distorted in that they were overambitious. Mere humans sought to vie with the gods and ignored the limitations inherent in human nature. Coronis ἤρατο τῶν ἀπεόντων (*P.3.20*). Ixion failed to ὀρᾶν

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<sup>184</sup> I return to this issue on p. 72 below.

<sup>185</sup> Currie (2005) 350, 398.

<sup>186</sup> Cf. Carey (1981) 62-3 and ad 29, ad 40 and ad 41. For the common features between Ixion's and Coronis' myth, see Morrison (2007) 97.

μέτρον (*P.2.34*).<sup>187</sup> All these are set against the positive values of the Pindaric epinician. In *Pythian* 3 by contrast the laudator presents himself as conscious of the limitations inherent in human nature as the basis for his conclusion that he is not to wish for Hieron's recovery (cf. *P.3.65f.*). Instead, in a gesture which is meant also to include the ailing Hieron and all right-thinking people, he turns to himself and says: μή βίον ἀθάνατον / σπεῦδε (*P.3.61-2*). This emphasis on good and bad desire allows Pindar to sharpen his praise of athletic ambition. In the real world the opposite of athletic desire is lack of ambition reflected in inactivity, not malign ambition. By generating a sharp contrast between good and bad desire, Pindar is able to accentuate the positive nature of athletic desire.

At the other end of the spectrum from Ixion and the other criminals, legitimate ambition and *eros* bring success and *gamos*. Apollo's passion,<sup>188</sup> μέλιχος ὀργά (*P.9.43*, cf. *P.9.32-7* and σοφᾶς / Πειθοῦς ἱερᾶν φιλοτάτων, *P.9.39-39a*) is right and achieves *gamos*. Apollo has asked Chiron about it (*P.9.36-7*). Chiron encouraged him to proceed to this union (*P.9.51-2*) and explained its fated nature (*P.9.52ff.*), which ultimately shows its legitimacy. Pelops' desire to win Hippodameia, σχεθέμεν (*O.1.71*)<sup>189</sup> shows due regard for mortal limitations and results in success and his wedding. Particularly important here is the word *hetoimon* (*O.1.69*), which characterizes the marriage as close both in a physical sense (he is at Elis) and in the more profound sense of 'accessible',

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<sup>187</sup> Zeus had been a benefactor to him but he wanted to rape Hera instead of feeling greater gratitude. Ungratefulness is surely its first message (*P.2.23-5*), but beyond that he is guilty of ignoring mortal limitations (*P.2.33-4*) (Currie (2005) 292).

<sup>188</sup> Carey (1981) ad 42, Instone (1996) ad 43, cf. Burton (1962) 41.

<sup>189</sup> Slater (1969) s.v. ἔχω, Gerber (1982) ad 71.

‘available’, ‘within the limit of realistic human ambition’.<sup>190</sup> Divine favour on the basis of correct conduct towards the gods contributes to the warrant of Pelops’ success. His relationship with Poseidon (*O.*1.25ff.) gave him the means (*charis*) to ask for help in his endeavours. The moral rightness of Pelops’ victory, and in particular its association with a sense of human limitation, is highlighted through the contrast with Tantalus. Tantalus is another example of ignorance of limits. His distorted desires are described in the language of eating: καταπέψαι (*O.*1.55), κόρω (*O.*1.56) in the context of the symposium where he was said to have slain his son and given him to the gods to eat (*O.*1.37-9 and *O.*1.48-52); his real transgression regarding the gods had also to do with symposia and food (*O.*1.60-4). The contrast between Tantalus’ improper ambition and Pelops’ moderate ambition is stressed through the use of the language of eating (ἔψοι, *O.*1.83) to express the inglorious lifestyle rejected by Pelops.<sup>191</sup> The issue of legitimate aspiration is picked up at the close when the ode comes back to Hieron:<sup>192</sup> his wishes are rightful and this is expressed through the divine sanction for his activities (θεὸς ἐπίτροπος ἐὼν τεαῖσι μήδεται / ἔχων τοῦτο κᾶδος, Ἱέρων, / μερίμναισιν, *O.*1.106-8).<sup>193</sup>

This idea of athletic ambition as a moderate ideal is one we find elsewhere in Pindar. In *Olympian* 7 Pindar presents Diagoras as prudent (ὀρθαὶ φρένες, *O.*7.91), a quality inherited from his ancestors, and his success as the result of such a legitimate ambition (*O.*7.89-95). Hieron’s victory and aspirations lie within the area defined by mortal

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<sup>190</sup> On the idea that the near is good and safe, and the far is bad and risky see Young (1968) 35-68, 116-20.

<sup>191</sup> Cf. Gerber (1982) ad 83, Instone (1996) ad *O.*1.82-4.

<sup>192</sup> It may also be the case, as has been suggested (cf. Gerber (1983) ad 55, ad 56), that the language of eating linking Pelops and Tantalus may also recall Hieron’s *symposion* which was presented in the beginning of the ode (*O.*1.14-8ff.) and introduce the issue of Hieron’s ambitions and achievement by implication. But in any way the comparison becomes explicit at the end of *O.*1.

<sup>193</sup> Cf. Köhnken (1974) 205-6.

limitations. His success was granted by the gods (*P.2.-7-12*) after his pious request (*P.2.12*) due to his acknowledgment of mortal deficiency (cf. *P.2.56*, 65-7).<sup>194</sup> This virtue of Hieron is underlined by Pindar's version of the myth of Ixion, which is used in order to illustrate human *hybris* against the gods and ignorance of his limits as mortal.<sup>195</sup>

Ambition, however, is not enough. In addition the athlete must be prepared to face risk and endure labour.<sup>196</sup> Victory in the games in the historical period does not involve (in most events) the life-threatening danger we meet in myth.<sup>197</sup> But in any case it demands time, effort and more importantly the expenditure of large sums of money,<sup>198</sup> with no certainty of success (*I.4.41*); and physical risk of a sort there often is, together with the risk to one's reputation in a society where honour mattered.<sup>199</sup> The victor's prize is the crown; that of the hero is the bride, who likewise is a reward for great *ponos* (*N.1.69-70*, *N.3.36*, *N.4.62-5*). Heracles gains his marriage to Hebe – and immortality – as reward, *καμάτων μεγάλων ποινὰν* (*N.1.70*, cf. *I.4.59-60*): he cleared the earth of monsters and evil men and he also contributed to the victory of the gods in the battle with the giants (*N.1.62-9*). In *I.4* he killed Antaeus and restored order to Poseidon's temple (*I.4.52-4b*); for Pindar as for the Greek tradition more generally he is the great benefactor of mankind (*I.4.55-57*).<sup>200</sup> Labour is also heavily emphasized in the case of Peleus, who

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<sup>194</sup> Most (1985) 71, 88, 92-3.

<sup>195</sup> Most (1985) 82, 88; for the change of the myth see Most (1985) 83-4. See above pp. 58-60.

<sup>196</sup> Cf. Carey (1981) ad *P.9.96-7* (with a list of occurrences). For risk, see also above, pp. 56-8.

<sup>197</sup> Chariot racing was dangerous and included a risk of death (cf. *P.5.32-4*, 49-53 and Willcock (1995) 8, for instance). In boxing, wrestling or the pancration, death was only occasional (see Brophy and Brophy (1985) on this).

<sup>198</sup> See above, pp. 53-4.

<sup>199</sup> Cf. Kurke (1991) 98-9, 110-1. See p.66 and also pp. 53-4.

<sup>200</sup> Carey (1981) 132 and ad *N.1.71-2*, and on *I.4*: McNeal (1978) 147, 156, Willcock (1995) ad *I.4.58-60* and p.83. *N.1.70* makes the parallel between Heracles and Chromius, the victor, explicit: cf. ἡσυχίαν καμάτων μεγάλων ποινὰν for Heracles (*N.1.70*) and μεγάλων δ'ἀέθλων (*N.1.11*), ἐν κορυφαῖς ἀρετῶν μεγάλας (*N.1.34*), even πολυπόνων (*N.1.33*). (Carey (1981) ad *N.1.70*.)

managed to capture Iolcus single-handedly (at least for Pindar) and subdue Thetis (N.3.34-6) because of his tenacity, ἐγκονητί (N.3.35-6, N.4.65),<sup>201</sup> as she transformed herself (in a manner typical of sea gods) into a variety of threatening shapes (N.4.62-4). The *ponos* of the hero here is particularly emphasized through a very careful choice of superlatives (ὄξυτάτους, δεινοτάτων, N.4.63-4) and strong compound and descriptive adjectives παγκρατές, θρασυμαχάνων (N.4.62); such an adjective (ὕψιθρόνων, N.4.65) is also used to describe Thetis, Peleus' acquisition. This in turn highlights the victor's analogous *ponos* and success.<sup>202</sup> It is significant that Pindar should choose one of the Aeacids, Aegina's local heroes,<sup>203</sup> as the archetype for *ponos* and achievement. This reflects in part the special relationship Pindar had with Aeginetean victors.<sup>204</sup> But there is another reason which made Aegina inspiring and effective as a choice. The theme of labour was especially relevant to this island because of its specialization in athletic martial disciplines.<sup>205</sup> It also seems that the usurpation of the Aeacids by the aristocracy of Aegina gave them an ideal mythic reflection in the struggle of Peleus against Thetis. The essence of the Aeacid myth was martial valour and *kleos* and the association with the Aeginetean aristocracy authorized their position in the command of the army of

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<sup>201</sup> Lattmann (2010) 152; cf. for instance, Instone (1996) ad 32-6, ad 35-6. On the change that Pindar made to the myth in order to make the parallel with the athletic struggles clearer see Burnett (2005) 131-3. Peleus' ἀπειτή was the reason the gods decided that Thetis should become his wife (I.8.40, N.5.33-6, cf. Willcock (1995) ad 54-68).

<sup>202</sup> Burnett (2005) 247.

<sup>203</sup> Race (1986) 92, Willcock (1995) 92.

<sup>204</sup> Race (1986) 92, Willcock (1995) 10, Hornblower (2007) 293ff.: for no other place did he compose more odes than for Aegina.

<sup>205</sup> Race (1986) 93-4.

Aegina.<sup>206</sup> Peleus' struggle to succeed with Thetis offered a particularly effective model for the purpose of validating the victor's achievement.

#### **4. The public celebration**

The victory is celebrated in a public feast. As we saw in the Introduction, the public celebration was a crucial element of the weddings, too, and confirmed both the validity of the wedding, as also the integration of the new *oikos* into the larger community of the *polis*.<sup>207</sup>

This is a feature which unites athletic success and *gamos*. There is more to the victory celebrations than a social event, as we shall see. They also have a practical communal function. In this section I will argue that this public character of the victory celebration was crucial for Pindar's presentation of victory. As in the case of the weddings, the public was asked to validate this victory in order to re-integrate the victor into the community.

This validation is necessary because the victory has changed the athlete. In achieving victory he has acquired glory and a new status. A victory in Greek athletic Games mattered in a very practical way as it generated a remarkable change in social standing. The significance of victory is reflected in the heroic status enjoyed by some victors.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> Fearn (2007) 151.

<sup>207</sup> See pp.20-1.

<sup>208</sup> Currie (2005) 151-2.



This new status<sup>209</sup> is already signalled by the reception of the victor in his *polis*. The victor usually returned to his city in a chariot-procession (*eiselasis*); in exceptional circumstances a part of the city-wall was broken for the victor to enter through it.<sup>210</sup> Subsequently he was publicly crowned with wreaths or garlands or he received a *phyllobolia*.<sup>211</sup> Moreover, victors were often honoured by free meals in the *prytaneion* throughout their life (*sitesis*); this was the case in Athens, but in some other cities as well.<sup>212</sup> The dedication of statues of the victors, sometimes in the *agora* of their city, or a sanctuary or, for those most prosperous, at the place of their victory, was a further recognition of their *kudos*.<sup>213</sup> In particular, a statue in Olympia was a reward that Olympic victors enjoyed (Pliny, *NH* 34.16), albeit only the most wealthy or powerful ones.<sup>214</sup> Other rewards attested include a position of honour in battle for athletic victors.<sup>215</sup>

This enhanced status is also attested by the privileges, often financial, which the victors enjoyed in the Greek cities.<sup>216</sup> Furthermore, victory was politically bankable. Victors' prestige was strengthened through the victory and this facilitated the realization of their political ambitions.<sup>217</sup> Indeed, the political potential of victory is reflected in the coup attempt of Cylon in 632 BC (Thuc. 1.126).<sup>218</sup> Its persistence even in democratic Athens

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<sup>209</sup> See the brilliant discussion of Currie (2005) 139-52.

<sup>210</sup> Kurke (1993) 134, 141; cf. Currie (2005) 139-40.

<sup>211</sup> Currie (2005) 141-2.

<sup>212</sup> Currie (2005) 142-3.

<sup>213</sup> Smith (2007) 95.

<sup>214</sup> Currie (2005) 143-4, Smith (2007) 94-101, esp. 95.

<sup>215</sup> Currie (2005) 149-51.

<sup>216</sup> Bowra (1964) 184-6.

<sup>217</sup> See especially Kurke (1991) 225-39.

<sup>218</sup> Bowra (1964) 177, Davies (1981) 99.

is shown by the arguments of Alcibiades before the Sicilian expedition (Thuc. 6.16.2).<sup>219</sup>

The prestige value of victory is amply brought out in the contrast with the loss of face to the loser, exemplified in a hyperbolic form by Pindar's description of the homecoming of the loser at *P.8.81-7*:

τέτρασι δ' ἔμπετες ὑψόθεν  
σωμάτεσσι κακὰ φρονέων,  
τοῖς οὔτε νόστος ὁμῶς  
ἔπαλπνος ἐν Πυθιάδι κρίθη,  
οὐδὲ μολόντων παρ ματέρ' ἀμφὶ γέλως γλυκύς  
ᾤρσεν χάριν· κατὰ λαύρας δ' ἐχθρῶν ἀπάοροι  
πτώσσοντι, συμφορᾷ δεδαγμένοι.

This image is repeated at *O.8.69*.

Nevertheless, these gains are not automatic but are dependent on whether the community acknowledges the achievement of the athlete.<sup>220</sup> For Pindar this public acknowledgement and acceptance will also contribute to the generation and duration of the victor's *kleos*.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Bowra (1964) 177, Davies (1981) 99.

<sup>220</sup> Crotty (1982) 104-38, especially 120-1, Kurke (1991) 15-34, especially 27-8.

<sup>221</sup> See below on the issue of public acceptance and the preservation of *kleos*, pp. 72-3, 77-82.

Again, Pindar employs the marriage metaphor of victory to help him accomplish the task of the victor's reintegration into his *polis*. The wedding celebration is used to image the victory celebration.<sup>222</sup> One feature of the wedding celebration is *makarismos*, which expressed the absolute happiness of the newly-wed pair.<sup>223</sup> It is a feature which unsurprisingly recurs to a heightened extent in the victory ode.<sup>224</sup> Pindar himself includes the characterization μάκαρ in the praise of the victor (*P.5.20-3*, *N.7.94*). He repeatedly stresses that the victor has reached the summit of human happiness.<sup>225</sup>

Pindar deploys this affinity in his *gamos* metaphor in order to highlight the victor's happiness and underline the value of the victory. In the frame of this metaphor, perfect *olbos* as the reward for *ponos* and achievement is particularly emphasized through the celebrations of marriages between heroes and goddesses, which take place in the community of the gods. Heracles' marriage to Hebe is his ἐξάϊρετος ποιινά for his great labours (*N.1.69-72*). Peleus' great *ponos* and *areta* (*N.4.57-64*) could rightly be rewarded (*N.5.34-6*) through the marriage to Thetis and a wedding gathering among the gods (*N.4.65-8*) or a celebration in song and music with Apollo and the Muses (*N.5.22ff.*).<sup>226</sup>

The same factors are at work in the extended simile at the opening of *Olympian 7*. The picture of bliss that we see in myths appears in the non-mythic weddings of Pindar's narratives. It is present in the toast made by the father of the bride at *O.7.1-6*: the word

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<sup>222</sup> Cf. Lattmann (2010) 314.

<sup>223</sup> See Introduction, pp. 19, 24.

<sup>224</sup> Currie (2005) 151.

<sup>225</sup> For instance *P.10.22-9*, *P.1.46*, cf. *N.4.76-85*; see also *O.1.12ff.* and *P.3.84-6*, where the victor is a king. See above pp. 48-51.

<sup>226</sup> Lattmann (2010) 152.

ζαλωτόν (O.7.6) expresses the notion of definitive happiness in the marriage celebrated (ὁμόφρονος εὐνᾶς, O.7.6). Since this wedding feast is used as the image of the victory celebration (O.7.7-10) the attribute of the perfect happiness of the victory is emphasized by its association with the *gamos*.

Φιάλαν ὡς εἴ τις ἀφνειᾶς ἀπὸ χειρὸς ἐλὼν  
ἔνδον ἀμπέλου καχλάζοισαν δρόσῳ  
δωρήσεται  
νεανία γαμβρῶ προπίνων οἴκοθεν οἴκαδε, πάγχρυσον,  
κορυφὰν κτεάνων,  
συμποσίου τε χάριν κᾶδός τε τιμάσαις <v>έον, ἐν δὲ  
φίλων  
παρεόντων θῆκῃ νιν ζαλωτόν ὁμόφρονος εὐνᾶς·  
καὶ ἐγὼ νέκταρ χυτόν, Μοισᾶν δόσιν, ἄεθλοφόροις  
ἀνδράσιν πέμπων, γλυκὺν καρπὸν φρενός,  
ἰλάσκομαι,  
Ὀλυμπία Πυθοῖ τε νικῶντεσσιν (O.7.1-10).

These lines describe an idealized wedding feast. Everything seems to be in abundance; this is a wedding feast in rich families (ἀφνειᾶς, O.7.1; πάγχρυσον, O.7.4); the bridegroom is young (νεανία γαμβρῶ, O.7.4); it is a prestigious marriage alliance (κᾶδός τε τιμάσαις <v>έον .... ζαλωτόν, O.7.5-6), all the more since it is one of *homophrosyne* (ὁμόφρονος εὐνᾶς, O.7.6). An important aspect of this marriage is the intertextual relationship with the *Odyssey*:

σοὶ δὲ θεοὶ τόσα δοῖεν ὅσα φρεσὶ σῆσι μενοινᾶς,  
ἄνδρα τε καὶ οἶκον, καὶ ὁμοφροσύνην ὀπάσειαν  
ἐσθλήν· οὐ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ γε κρεῖσσον καὶ ἄρειον,  
ἢ ὄθ' ὁμοφρονέοντε νοήμασιν οἶκον ἔχητον  
ἀνήρ ἠδὲ γυνή· πόλλ' ἄλγεα δυσμενέεσσι,  
χάρματα δ' εὐμενέτησι, μάλιστα δέ τ' ἔκλυον αὐτοῖ (Od.6.180-5).

The prominent position of such a glorious wedding at the opening of the song for Diagoras in the context of a public celebration is highly suggestive. It firmly emphasizes the importance of communal (φίλων παρεόντων, O.7.6) acceptance and confirmation of the new κᾶδος (O.7.5). This is stressed by the (almost) all-male context. It is significant that the bride though present in the image (ὁμόφρονος ἐνᾶς, O.7.6) is left on the margin as the image focuses on the male and public aspects of *gamos*. Given the strong association between wedding and victory, since the importance of the role of the community figures so starkly in the first part of the simile, the implication is that the role of Pindar's present audience is of great significance, too. Pindar thus attempts to give an ideal picture of the victory and implicitly asks his audience to confirm, approve and recognize this achievement.

In N.1 the public celebration is stressed again. There is a feast celebrating the victory at N.1.19-22 and one for the marriage of the victor's heroic prototype, Heracles: victory and marriage and certainly *apotheosis* are confirmed. Heracles is integrated into a new

community, a divine one, and has nothing to expect now but eternal glory.<sup>227</sup> Thus, by implication, this request for the reintegration of the victor is addressed to Pindar's audience in the victory celebration of Chromius (*N.1.19-22*).

An important part of the representation of both marriage and victory celebration in Pindar was the throwing of leaves. This is a common aspect of marriage ritual and the events after victory. Thus, the wedding ritual appears at the ending of *P.9* conflated with athletic victory.<sup>228</sup> The φυλλοβολία of *P.9.123-4*, though typical of athletic victories, recalls the nuptial καταχύσματα; it shows the victory and hints at *gamos*.<sup>229</sup>

The final part of the metaphor is the transfer of the bride to her new home, foregrounded in the case both of Apollo (*P.9.5-13*, *P.9.51-8*) and Alexidamus (*P.9.121-3*). Telesicrates' achievement of victory too, which comes in the narrative immediately after the marital union of Cyrene and Apollo,<sup>230</sup> is presented in the same terms: as a wedding procession to the bride's new home and the reception of the couple (*P.9.71-5*).<sup>231</sup> Telesicrates brings his δόξαν ἡμερτάν (*P.9.75*) as if she were his bride.<sup>232</sup> The couples have their hands attached, as usual in the representations of wedding rituals in

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<sup>227</sup> Carey (1981) 132 and cf. also ad 71-2.

<sup>228</sup> Kurke (1991) 133, Felson (2004) 386; cf. Lattmann (2010) 273-4.

<sup>229</sup> Felson (2004) 386, Carson (1982) 122-3. Carson (1982) 122-3 observes several vocabulary signs of wedding throughout this myth: ἀρμόζων (117), ἀπάγεσθαι (119), ἄγεν (123).

<sup>230</sup> On the *gamos* of Apollo and Cyrene in *P.9*, see Carey (1981) ad 13, ad 53.

<sup>231</sup> Cf. Instone (1996) ad 56-6a.

<sup>232</sup> Carey (1981) ad 78, cf. Kurke (1991) 128, 132. Cf. also Alexidamus who holds his bride by the hand and leads her through the crowds (*P.9.122-3*) mirroring in a way Apollo's gesture at *P.9.6* (Woodbury (1982) 255, Carson (1982) 122).

iconography (*P.9.117, 122*).<sup>233</sup> There they are received by a female in the role of the mother of the groom, Aphrodite (*P.9.9-11*), Libya (*P.9.55-56a*) or Cyrene (*P.9.73-4*).<sup>234</sup>

Reintegration into the community with the new status figures in *P.9* both for the mythical prototype and the victor: Cyrene is founding a new colony (*P.9.54-5*).<sup>235</sup> Likewise, Pindar pays great attention to this incorporation of Alexidamus by placing a detailed description of it at the end of the ode. Thus not only does he emphatically underscore its importance but he also seeks to prefigure this reception and acceptance of the victor. So the metaphorical passage of the victor to his new status<sup>236</sup> is effectively realized through the community's acknowledgement.

An important aspect of the re-admission of the victor into his city is the removal of any hostile emotions directed towards the victor by his fellow-citizens.<sup>237</sup> Of all negative reactions, Pindar explicitly presents *phthonos* as the only possible reason for the rejection of the victor. Resentment at conspicuous display or suspicion of self-aggrandizement is never explicitly spelled out. Pindar calculatedly oversimplifies the obstacles to the reintegration of the victor because this facilitates his praise task.

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<sup>233</sup> Carson (1982) 121-2. This gesture is represented in several vase-paintings, including an Attic red-figure pointed *amphora* (Copenhagen painter, New York, Levy collection), an Attic red-figure *loutrophoros* (Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 03.802), an Attic red-figure tripod *pyxis* (Warsaw, National Museum 142319), an Attic white-ground *pyxis* (Splanchnopt painter, London, British Museum D 11), an Attic red-figure *loutrophoros* (Sabouroff Painter, Copenhagen, National Museum 9080) and an Attic red-figure *calyx-krater* (Painter of the Athens wedding, Athens, National Museum 1388). (See Oakley and Sinos (1993) 51-128, esp. 94-114.)

<sup>234</sup> Cf. Carson (1982) 122-3, Instone (1996) ad 9, Carey (1981) ad 9, ad 75/6 cf. also Carey (1981) ad 13.

<sup>235</sup> Carson (1982) 128.

<sup>236</sup> See on this pp. 53-5.

<sup>237</sup> See also pp. 53-5 on this issue.

In addressing the *phthonos* attracted by success and celebration, he argues both implicitly and explicitly that this expenditure by the victor was not only for himself but for the community as well, since the *polis* had a share in the glory of this victory.<sup>238</sup> At the same time, Pindar's presentation also aimed to legitimize any consumption of money for the celebration of the victory.<sup>239</sup> This effect is aided in part by the *gamos* metaphor. The *polis* is embedded in the metaphor as an active participant in the process. Their acceptance of the victor and acknowledgement of his success in celebration is a part of the *gamos* imagery. On the other hand, the wedding metaphor associates the celebration of the victory with a celebration whose collective importance is accepted and which is part of the recurring rhythms of community life. This is never made explicit, but still it achieves its effect by implication.

The public reception was important not just for the immediate acknowledgement of success, as noted above, but also for the duration of the *kleos* (see esp. *I.7.16-17*) which came from the victory. The achievement, important though it may be, was incapable in itself of keeping its glory alive. It is always up to the victor's community to preserve the memory of victory and with it the *kleos* of the victor. This is effectively underlined in *Pythian 9*, with the conflation of wedding and victory in the case of the reception of

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<sup>238</sup> Kurke (1991) 196, 198, 202, 225-39. This idea of the communal value of victory specifically in comparison with *gamos* is enhanced in *P.9*. if one agrees with Lattmann (2010) 304-9, 312-3 that the brides in the mythic cases communicate their qualities to the country which receives them. Lattmann (2010) 309 also regards the glory and the general prosperity of the *polis* due to marriage and victory as everlasting: 'Sein [i.e., the victor's] Sieg im Laufen ist Höhepunkt der Stadtsgeschichte und Garant alles zukünftigen Glücks und Segens'.

<sup>239</sup> Kurke (1991) 185-6.



Alexidamus in his *polis* (P.9.123-5),<sup>240</sup> as well as in the injunction to the audience to celebrate Telesicrates' victory (P.9.93-6):<sup>241</sup>

μή με λίποι καθαρὸν φέγγος. Αἰγίνα τε γάρ  
φαμί Νίσου τ' ἐν λόφῳ τρις δὴ πόλιν τάνδ' εὐκλειΐξαι,  
σιγαλὸν ἀμαχανίαν ἔργῳ φυγῶν·  
οὔνεκεν, εἰ φίλος ἀστῶν, εἴ τις ἀντάεις, τό γ' ἐν ξυνῶ  
πεποναμένον εὔ  
μή λόγον βλάπτων ἀλίιο γέροντος κρυπτέτω·  
κεῖνος αἰνεῖν καὶ τὸν ἐχθρόν  
παντὶ θυμῶ σὺν τε δίκᾳ καλὰ ῥέζοντ' ἔννεπεν (P.9.90-6).

Just as the wedding is celebrated through a wider community beyond the families concerned, φίλων παρεόντων (O.7.5-6), so the victor – like his counterpart the bridegroom<sup>242</sup> – can be ὄλβιος (O.7.10, cf. also O.1.11 (μάκαιραν), P.5.11 (μάκαιραν), P.5.20 (μάκαρ), N.9.3, P.9.4, cf. N.1.71) only when he enjoys φᾶμαι ἀγαθαί (O.7.10).<sup>243</sup> And for this the community is crucial.

## 5. Song

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<sup>240</sup> Felson (2004) 386.

<sup>241</sup> Felson (2004) 387.

<sup>242</sup> The notion of marriage and specifically wedding and wedding feast as ὄλβος ὑπέρτατος is presented at P.3.89 (ὄλβον ὑπέρτατον), and heroic examples of such ὄλβος are Cadmus and Peleus (P.3.86-95).

<sup>243</sup> Kurke (1991) 123-4.

Unsurprisingly, an important underpinning for all the effects identified above was the representation of the victory ode as a wedding song. The victory ode, for all its inclusion of praise of the victor's city, was dedicated to an individual and a family. The wedding song by contrast had a communal character.<sup>244</sup> So, the *gamos* metaphor in imaging the victory as a wedding appropriates for the victor the communal values of the wedding song and thus seeks a similar enthusiastic celebration. Pindar's song asks the audience to welcome it, receive their fellow-citizen as the victor he has now become and acknowledge and validate the victory.

This is not as straightforward a process as it might seem. Though choral song is usually *the* civic voice, in the epinician there is a less straightforward link between singers and society. In the case of the victory ode, the relationship between the chorus and the state is ambiguous.<sup>245</sup> In most choral modes, the chorus is commissioned by and speaks for the *polis*.<sup>246</sup> In the case of the epinician the choral voice 'is a communal voice ... by aspiration rather than by delegation'.<sup>247</sup> In choosing to present his song as the civic voice Pindar seeks to make his song the song of the *polis* and ease both the validation of the victory and the reintegration of the victor into his *polis*.<sup>248</sup>

A further problem is that the epinician ode is a paid task; this had implications for the objectivity of the praise of the victors.<sup>249</sup> This could give rise to a (quite natural)

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<sup>244</sup> See p.19.

<sup>245</sup> Carey (2007) 207-8.

<sup>246</sup> These issues have been recently discussed by Carey (2007) 207-8.

<sup>247</sup> Carey (forthcoming 2013).

<sup>248</sup> Cf. Nagy (1990) 141-2.

<sup>249</sup> Carey (2007) 207. Hornblower (2009) 42-3, cf. in contrast Pelliccia (2009) 245-7, who dismisses the evidence provided by epinician poetry and speculates that the poets were of such high social class that

suspicion about the sincerity of the praise. Again the marriage metaphor contributes to reorientating the thoughts of the audience in relation to this problematic truth.

In this it aligns itself with motifs such as *charis*,<sup>250</sup> *xenia*<sup>251</sup> and *philia*<sup>252</sup>, which Pindar deploys as a strategy to represent his motives for praise in non-monetary and more intimate terms. In this frame the exchange taking place in *gamos* agreements is also used to idealize the relationship between Pindar and the victor.<sup>253</sup> Thus it is highly suggestive that Pindar chooses to use the toast, which confirms the alliance between the two houses (οἴκοθεν οἴκαδε ... κᾶδός τε τιμάσαις, *O.7.4-5*), as a parallel to his song (*O.7.7-9*)<sup>254</sup> to characterize his role; the effect is to suppress the negative connotations that the commercial dimension of his poetic activity might possess.<sup>255</sup> The relationship between poet and victor also gains in significance through this assimilation with the marriage alliances (*O.7.3-5*).<sup>256</sup> Between families, marriage bonds themselves were important, as a matter of fact. Especially in the case of the aristocrats, in the context of the proem of *O.7*, their importance was outstanding, since the interests they served were of major importance and the property exchanged greater.<sup>257</sup> The relationship then between the

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they did not need to compose poetry for a living. Indeed, there is such evidence in the odes. Pindar at least recognizes a commercial element in the poet-patron relationship (*P.11.41-2*, *I.2.1-11*, esp. 6-8, for instance; see Morgan (1993) 13-14).

<sup>250</sup> Kurke (1991) 103-6.

<sup>251</sup> Kurke (1991) 135-59.

<sup>252</sup> Kurke (1991) 122-5.

<sup>253</sup> Kurke (1991) 108-34.

<sup>254</sup> Willcock (1995) ad *O.7.1-12*, ad *O.7.1-4*, ad *O.7.7-10*. Pindar likes this simile between drink and his poetry (*N.3.76-9*; cf. *I.6.2-3*). In this case the simile is very useful to Pindar, because nectar gives immortality (cf. *O.1.62-4*). The effect of the simile is that it claims Pindar's poetry does the same (Willcock (1995) ad *O.7.7-10*).

<sup>255</sup> Cf. Athanassaki (2003) 195, Nicholson (2000) 198, Kurke (1991) 120.

<sup>256</sup> Willcock (1995) ad *O.7.1-12*.

<sup>257</sup> Kurke (1991) 116-7, Gould (1980) 44-5.

poet and his patron, the victor, loses its commercial aspect and relocates itself within the systems of reciprocity valued by the Panhellenic elite.

In the frame of the association between marriage and victory Pindar idealizes his victory ode by describing it as νέκταρ χυτόν, picking up the idea of drink offering from the first strophe;<sup>258</sup> Pindar frequently likens his song to drink.<sup>259</sup> Here, however, he builds on these motifs. The victory ode is like not just wine but νέκταρ. This emphatically presents the epinician as lasting song.

Song, like other aspects of the victory, is heroized in Pindar and forms part of the larger quasi-heroization of the victor discussed above.<sup>260</sup> The analogy of marriage song assists in this process. This is especially clear in *Nemean 5*. There Peleus' marriage with Thetis signals his acceptance by the gods despite his past sins (*N.5.14-8*). The divine approval is expressed in particular through the wedding song by the Muses and Apollo (*N.5.22-5ff.*) enacted at the feast for his wedding and in the presence of the gods, as well as by their arrangement of the match. Through the narrative conflation of the wedding song<sup>261</sup> with the epinician ode the *areta* of Peleus images the *areta* of the victor and idealizes him and his achievement. Thus Pindar implicitly asks for the communal validation of the victory.

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<sup>258</sup> Cf. Nünlist (1998) 199-205, esp. 199, 205.

<sup>259</sup> Thummer (1968-9) 82-102, esp. 86-93, cf. Willcock (1995) ad *O.7.7-10*.

<sup>260</sup> See pp. 52-64.

<sup>261</sup> Pindar narrates the song of the Muses in direct speech, but this quotation does not end at a certain point for Pindar's own ode to resume.

The confirmatory role of the song is crucial in this metaphor because this acknowledgement of the victor can generate the most effective immortalization of the victor's *kleos*. As we saw above,<sup>262</sup> public acknowledgement of victory was crucial for the new status of the victor to come into effect, but also for his *kleos*. Yet, public acknowledgement in itself is of limited duration. Memories fade, as Pindar stresses: 'humans forget' (*I.7.17*). Only Pindar's song can guarantee the immortality of the *kleos*:  
ἀ δ' ἀρετὰ κλειναῖς ἀοιδαῖς / χρονία τελέθει (*P.3.114-5*).<sup>263</sup>

The effect of immortality is underlined in *Nemean 5* where the wedding song is sung by the Muses (*N.5.25ff.*). Through the syntactical assimilation of the victory ode with the song of the Muses noted above, Pindar suggests that as the Muses guaranteed immortality for Peleus, the poet achieves immortality with his ode for the victor.<sup>264</sup> This is something that he does elsewhere too, as at *N.4.6-8*.<sup>265</sup>

Song in this role of preserver reflects another dimension of marriage, procreation. The ultimate role of marriage is to provide heirs who will perpetuate the *oikos* and through it the *polis*.<sup>266</sup> *Olympian 10* offers a direct equation of the song with issue (*O.10.86-96*). The song has the same role as a son. The latter provides the continuation of the *oikos* and the fortune is kept inside the *oikos*, which is a kind of immortalization (*O.10.88-90*). Likewise, the song provides the εὐρὸ κλέος of the victory and thus keeps it immortal

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<sup>262</sup> See pp. 64-6, 72-3.

<sup>263</sup> Of course, the idea of immortalization through song is not Pindar's. It is very epic in its origin.

<sup>264</sup> Pfeijffer (1999) 72, 76.

<sup>265</sup> Pfeijffer (1999) 72.

<sup>266</sup> See Introduction, pp. 20-1.

(*O.*10.91-6). Even the danger that the death poses to the *oikos* and the *kleos* of the victory is defeated with the son (*O.*10.90) and the song (*O.*10.92-3) respectively.

The notion of immortalization through Pindar's song is perhaps most fully integrated with the notion of *gamos* through the wish for procreation in the myth of *I.*6.43-9. Heracles there goes to take Telamon to join him on the Trojan expedition, but he finds Telamon and his family feasting. He makes then a toast and wishes for a son to be born to Telamon. A good case has been made for taking the feast in the myth here to be a wedding feast and the context agrees with this reading of *I.*6.36.<sup>267</sup> The libations and the prayer for a son suit the occasion of a wedding very well. Heracles' choice to wish for Telamon's fathering a son (*I.*6.42-6) makes best sense at a wedding occasion, given the explicit emphasis on child-bearing as the aim of marriage, and taking also into account that Telamon's particular request at that gathering, according to Heracles, was a son (*I.*6.52). This cannot be a mere coincidence. If the context is a wedding feast, the wishes and the prayers acquire added significance.

Pindar chooses to describe Heracles' role in terms of the role of the poet in a victory celebration. Heracles prays for the continuation of the *oikos*; the poet wishes for the immortality of the fame of the victor. Indeed, the mythic feast and prayer finds its analogue in the opening scene of the ode. The occasion of Heracles' prayer (*I.*6.1-9) is likened to that of the poet's wishes: this is a feast (*συμποσίου*, *I.*6.1), where the poet makes a libation and prays for a further victory (*I.*6.7-9). Although the poet's emphasis

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<sup>267</sup> There is a serious textual problem caused by the lacuna at *I.*6.36. As Thummer (1968-9) and Privitera (1982) note ad hoc, Von der Muehl's reading *γάμον* or *γάμονος* is likely to be the correct one on the basis of the similar structure *δαινόντα γάμον* (*Od.*4.3) (Burnett (2005) 82 fn.3).

here is on the aspirations for further success, the reference to Mnemosyne at the end of the ode (*I.6.74-5*) points to song's ability to perpetuate fame and thus points to a further dimension of the analogy between the immediate context and the notion of procreation in the myth. Thus the procreation through marriage images the immortalization of *kleos* through the victory ode.

This notion of immortality is further developed when the victor's present success is shown to act in the framework of the victories of his clan. The victory perpetuates the fame of all the victories that this *oikos* has achieved (*N.5.1-8*, *N.5.43*, *N.11.19-21*, *I.2.28-32*, *I.2.44-8*).<sup>268</sup> Thus the song on the occasion of the victor's present success revives the past glory of his *oikos* (*ἐγεῖραι / καὶ παλαιὰν δόξαν ἔδῶν προγόνων*, *P.9.104*) and sustains it.<sup>269</sup>

The marriage metaphor and its effect on the preservation of the glory of victory also function within the framework of Pindar's expressed expectations regarding the reperformance of his odes. He clearly expresses his anticipation of further audiences beyond the *polis*, namely Panhellenic audiences and/or future audiences (e.g. *N.4.13-6*, *N.5.1-5*).<sup>270</sup> So the victor's fame is spread all over Greece and with it the *kleos* of his *oikos* (*N.11.19-21*, *P.9.103-5*) and his *polis* (*N.5.8*, *N.3.12-3*). The victory ode has a far larger audience to confirm and validate the victory. Thus the victor's *kleos* becomes greater because along with being infinite in time, the victory ode is now presented as infinite in space. This impacts at a fundamental level on the content of the victory ode.

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<sup>268</sup> Nagy (1990) 199-214.

<sup>269</sup> Felson (2004) 386, cf. Carey (1981) ad 107-9, Instone (1996) ad 103-4, ad 105.

<sup>270</sup> Morgan (1993) 11-3, cf. Carey (2007) 199, Morrison (2007) 12-3, 117-25 *passim*, Hubbard (2004) 72-5.

The epinician ode generally avoids any unnecessary details of the first performance.<sup>271</sup> On the contrary, it exhibits certain elements which are specific neither in time nor in space and which facilitate the Panhellenic reception of Pindar's songs.<sup>272</sup> Pindar's choice and use of images from the realm of everyday pan-Greek experience is compatible with this larger tendency.<sup>273</sup> The *gamos* metaphor is one of these timeless, indeed spaceless, elements.<sup>274</sup> Because the essentials are largely Panhellenic, the *gamos* metaphor has a communicative value throughout Greece.<sup>275</sup>

In this context the wedding song helps Pindar to promulgate his odes in Greece. If we accept the current view of poetic genre as a kind of discourse, the wedding song as a form common across Greece is a sort of Greek *koine*. The parallelism between Pindaric epinician and the wedding song facilitates the poet in getting the ode out to and understood in the Greek world.

This association falls within Pindar's larger tendency to explore the boundaries between his victory ode and popular songs. These popular songs vary from work songs to the impromptu victory songs mentioned by Pindar at the beginning of *O.9*.<sup>276</sup> The latter were the established ways to celebrate the victory before Simonides and perhaps Ibycus wrote the first victory odes.<sup>277</sup> As is clear from *O.9* these popular spontaneous songs

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<sup>271</sup> Cf. Morgan (1993) 11-15, Carey (2007) 210, Morrison (2007) 128-9.

<sup>272</sup> Morrison (2007) 10, and especially 128-30, cf. Thomas (2007) 165-6.

<sup>273</sup> Cf. Steiner (1986).

<sup>274</sup> See Introduction, p. 16.

<sup>275</sup> See p. 43.

<sup>276</sup> Yatromanolakis (2009) esp. 267.

<sup>277</sup> Barron (1984), Rawles (2012) esp.4-5 on popular songs for victory, and Rawles (2012) 6-27 on Ibycus and Simonides; cf. Robbins (1997) 244, *OCD*<sup>4</sup> s.v. Simonides.



continued to co-exist with the commissioned epinician.<sup>278</sup> This correlation of the bought ode with popular forms tacitly helps to sideline the commercial nature of the poet-patron relationship.

Yet Pindar's relationship to the popular song culture is shifting; he associates and dissociates according to strategic need.<sup>279</sup> Though the comparisons with the established popular songs form part of Pindar's validation of his genre<sup>280</sup> and his discourse of communal celebration,<sup>281</sup> on the other hand, he needs to dissociate rhetorically himself from it because he needs to accentuate the distinctiveness of the bought ode as against the impromptu celebration.

Thus in *Olympian* 9 Pindar contrasts his own victory ode with the generic song for victories popularly ascribed to Archilochus which, in Pindar's terms, was (just) sufficient for its occasion (ἄρκεσε, *O.9.3*).<sup>282</sup> The developed victory ode is composed for a specific victor each time and it is able to spread his fame throughout Greece (*O.9.25*, cf. *O.9.5-8*).<sup>283</sup> Pindar's care to distinguish his song from simpler forms, indicating its

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<sup>278</sup> Cf. Thomas (2007) 164-5, and in contrast Pelliccia (2009) 245-7.

<sup>279</sup> Cf. Thomas (2007) 144-5, 150-2. See Thomas (2007) 163-6 for a historical comparison between the epinician ode and the monuments in remembrance of the victory. Thomas there also mentions that statues and epinicians historically co-existed and there was a kind of cultural rivalry between them. The epinician did have some characteristics of the statue monuments but also had features which could guarantee immortal fame for the victor and his achievement.

<sup>280</sup> The association with the popular form fits into a tendency to validate his ode as a long-established genre as he does at *O.10.76-85* (Verdenius (1988) ad *O.10.78*) and *N.8.51-3* (Race (1997b) 93 with fn.4).

<sup>281</sup> Cf. Pelliccia (2009) 255-6, Carey (forthcoming 2013). See also above, on p. 74, my discussion on the chorus and the civic voice.

<sup>282</sup> Cf. Kurke (1991) 201 and Morgan (1993) 3, 7-8, 11, 14. This was also done with the statue analogy at *N.5.1-5* (cf. Thomas (2007) 144-5, 150-2).

<sup>283</sup> Cf. Most (1985) 192-5.

superiority to them, underlines the unique effectiveness of the victory ode in that it will survive and will secure an immortal *kleos* for the victor, his *oikos* and his *polis*.<sup>284</sup>

Nevertheless, in the case of wedding song Pindar never actually does distance himself. The reason for this is perhaps that the wedding song does not offer any kind of competition to the Pindaric epinician; nor does the association threaten to diminish the commissioned ode, unlike the ‘song of Archilochus’. So, Pindar is free to exploit the usefulness of the wedding song as Panhellenic discourse and also exploit all aspects of the potential similarities.

This Panhellenic appeal of the ode has a further effect: The victor brings home his *doxa*, won at the Panhellenic games to his *polis*; but the song transmits that *doxa* to Hellas. As mentioned above,<sup>285</sup> the audience is needed because they acknowledge and validate the transition, performing the reintegration of the victor into his community. The ode replicates that process of reception within a larger Greek audience. The ode thus offers something more valuable – across time – than the community’s validation.<sup>286</sup> The immortal *kleos* that only the victory song can generate is what fully and definitely effects the transition to the new status once again.

## 6. Conclusion

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<sup>284</sup> Cf. Thomas (2007) 150-2, 163-6.

<sup>285</sup> See above, pp. 64-5.

<sup>286</sup> See pp. 77-8.

It will be clear – and unsurprising – that Pindar is not interested in *gamos* as an historical phenomenon. Some realities of *gamos* as experienced in his world disappear from his presentation – specifically the business of negotiation of match and dowry. Pindar seems to be much more interested in those aspects of *gamos* that show its cultural and civic importance both for the individuals and the public. Pindar thus leads the audience to feel the victory as an affair if not their own, at least very much related to them. Then the need to accept the victor in the community becomes greater and the praise of the victor which Pindar makes reaches its target. Praise and victor get the approval of the community. And finally the victor achieves his transition to his *telos*, ensuring an undying *kleos* for himself, and significantly for his *oikos* and his *polis*.

## Chapter 2: *Gamos* as *telos* in drama

### 1. Introduction

As we have seen both in the introduction and the previous chapter,<sup>287</sup> marriage has pronounced connotations of fulfilment which embrace not only the individuals involved, but also their family and their society. Where for Pindar this becomes a dynamic model for representing and managing victory and its context and aftermath, in Athenian drama, to which I now turn, this notion of *gamos* and *telos* assumes a structuring role based on the larger functions we have discussed so far. *Gamos* in Greek drama varies from being a structural device which fulfils a largely formal role (Euripides) through being a closural device functioning in a larger framework of fulfilment and divine determinism (Sophocles) to being the fulfilment of the individual and the conclusion of his successful pursuit of victory (Aristophanes) and finally to the organic and vital conclusion of a plot centred on marriage in Menander. This chapter explores the way in which this function of *gamos* as *telos* is performed in both tragedy and comedy.

Marriage is obviously at home in the happy and celebratory endings of comedy, but its positive social and emotional connotations might seem incompatible with tragedy. Indeed, despite the fact that negative endings<sup>288</sup> are not inevitable, statistically there is – and was – a strong tendency toward grim endings or indications of a bleak future in tragedy. Marriage, then, as a recurrent – perhaps ideal – occasion for celebration in real

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<sup>287</sup> See especially pp. 21-5, 48-52.

<sup>288</sup> ‘The bad end unhappily, the good unluckily. That is what tragedy means.’ (T. Stoppard, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, act 2).

life, could be seen as inconsistent with tragic endings. And yet, as I will show, tragedy manages to employ it as *telos* very successfully.

Of all three surviving dramatic poets, Euripides is the one who mainly<sup>289</sup> uses marriage as a closural feature, though marriage as ending also occurs, to a much lesser extent, in Sophocles. In Euripides, it is regularly employed in the framework of the arrangements or predictions of the *deus ex machina* intervention at the end of several of his plays; it fits then within a larger formalistic tendency. However, this use of marriage as a closing moment varies in the degree of integration into the plot. Consequently the sense of resolution in turn varies considerably. In many cases the limited relevance to the plot development raises questions about the gap between formal closure and thematic, emotional or aesthetic closure. In Sophocles, marriage as ending has some similarities to Euripides. Although marriage does not result directly from the plot in any Aristotelian sense, it is highly relevant to it. Furthermore, all of the tensions found in Euripides are there, though here they are an explicit presence. Nevertheless, this use of marriage as *telos* is more fully integrated thematically than any of Euripides' examples. The tensions in play are creative: they allow the poet to underline the issues of divine and human knowledge which underpin the plot. More importantly, *gamos* as *telos* here has pronounced connotations of destiny and fulfilment. Thus, in Sophocles marriage is a *telos* in two ways. It is a *telos* in structural terms; but it is also a *telos* in that it has strong connotations of fulfilment, albeit not necessarily in ways perceptible to the participants.

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<sup>289</sup> It is used in quite different ways in Aeschylus, which I shall discuss in ch. 4, pp. 225-33.

In contrast to tragedy, the celebratory connotations of marriage made it easy for comedy to include it in its toolkit for endings. There is here a more organic aspect to the way in which *gamos* is deployed as a rounding off device in comedy than is generally the case in tragedy. Generally speaking, Aristophanes' endings involve a change of status or a resolution of severe problems. More importantly for my present purposes in Aristophanes, dance, celebration, sex, rejuvenation – including marriage as renewal – or other reward for the hero are frequent features of the conclusion (*Ach.* 1198-1234, *Eq.* 1331-1408, esp. 1331-6, 1390-1408, *Lys.* 1273-1321, *Vesp.* 1512-37, *Thesm.* 1112-83, *Plut.* 1208-9). These are the embodiment of the hero's victory, which has strong connotations of fulfilment of his existence as a human being. Occasionally this is eloquently articulated through his marriage at the end. As we shall see, marriage in Aristophanic comedy is often tied with the idea of the sacred marriage, as well as with fertility, which enhance the implications of fulfilment. Therefore marriage here is a real *telos* for the victor. In comedy, then, the wedding is an important indicator of the success and the renewal of the comic hero and the (re)constitution of the larger civic or cosmic order.

Like Aristophanes, and indeed like Euripides, Menander is prone to end his plays with marriage. Since Menander invariably opts for romantic plots, unsurprisingly marriage is the *telos* of his plays, both structurally and thematically. Indeed, the use of marriage as ending achieves a fully organic resolution in Menander far beyond Aristophanes' *gamos*. Menander also uses marriage as a social microcosm and a metaphor to discuss social issues, characters and behaviours.

## 2. Tragedy

The use of marriage as a closural device in tragedy is firmly rooted in its social importance. Yet, as in Pindar, this use of marriage presents a paradox. Whereas in other sources the notion of marriage as a kind of fulfilment is emphatically associated with the female, drama expands the focus of marriage as fulfilment to embrace males as well as females.<sup>290</sup>

As noted above, of the three surviving tragedians Euripides is distinctive for his recurrent use of marriage as an ending. Significantly, he uses *gamos* as *telos* in a place where Aeschylus and Sophocles had the opportunity to use marriage as conclusion but did not. I am referring here to the case of Electra's marriage, which forms part of the conclusion in Euripides' *Electra*, but not in the Sophoclean *Electra*, nor in Aeschylus' *Choephoroi*, which covers the same myth, although this marriage was already present in the mythical tradition. The first obvious reason for this differentiation on behalf of Euripides is his well-attested tendency (notorious already in his own day) toward domestication. Euripides pays special attention to the inner, domestic life of the *oikos*. Moreover, Euripides is marked by a tendency to explore the boundaries of the tragic genre by using features of satyr drama and comedy, and marriage with its affinities with comic escapism was an area ripe for exploitation. Last, the deep-rootedness of marriage in collective experience makes it an ideal stabilizing mechanism in plays which otherwise destabilize myth, but more importantly it makes it a convenient component in the framework of Euripides' well-known tendency toward formalism and stylized

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<sup>290</sup> See also my discussion in ch. 3, pp. 178-86, and also 201-7.

endings. In fact he shows a strong tendency to link marriage as an ending device with the *deus ex machina*.<sup>291</sup> In this context *gamos* frequently figures in command or prophecy and co-exists with highly formal aspects of Greek life such as cult and prophecy.

So, in Euripides, marriage begins to acquire the status of a stylized closural device, as one of a number of closural ploys. Yet its use is complicated. Naturally, marriage is not the result of a romantic storyline, as is the case with Menander (as we will see<sup>292</sup>). It is in fact rarely a logical result of the plot in an Aristotelian sense.<sup>293</sup> Frequently it is imposed by an authoritative or authoritarian figure largely external to the action of the play. Even this intervention is ambiguous in itself: the text is often unclear as to whether marriage is being ordained or predicted. On the other hand, it is never simply superimposed as something completely extraneous but relates to themes in the plot. Thus it often gives a kind of resolution, however fraught, ambiguous or limited, to tensions or irregularities of the play. This results in a complex effect; marriage provides a formal closure but with a number of complex issues left hanging. It thus often gives a

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<sup>291</sup> The frequency of this usage in the plays we have is not simply an accident of survival. Marriage as one of the arrangements of an intervening god in the conclusion of the play also appears in Euripides' *Erechtheus* (combined with a cult, fr. 370.104), *Antiope* fr. 223.100-2 and probably in *Melanippe Desmotis* (test. iib = F 496 N, cf. Collard, Cropp and Lee (1995) 244). (The numbers are based on Collard and Cropp (2008).)

The *deus ex machina* device has certain characteristics. S/he is a figure in authority and his orders are always accepted (Dunn (1996) 35, 38). He does not belong organically to the action (Dunn (1996) 28, 41) and his intervention is formal (Dunn (1996) 41). He gives explanations for events past or future (Dunn (1996) 34). Often the speeches of the *deus ex machina* serve as aetiology for specific cults (see Scullion (1999) 217-33 on the issue of invention and tradition in the cults introduced by the *deus ex machina*). The *deus ex machina* also intervenes to prevent violence as in *Helen*, *I.T.*, *Antiope* and *Erechtheus* (cf. Jouan (2000) 31).

<sup>292</sup> See below, pp. 137-52.

<sup>293</sup> A well-constructed plot for Aristotle needs to demonstrate coherence between its beginning, middle and ending. In other words the middle must result naturally from the beginning, and the ending must result naturally from the middle (*Poe*.1450b23-1451a15, esp. 1450b23-33; cf. 1450a21-23).



pendant closure. The result is a framing device which paradoxically questions the possibility of framing in the real world as distinct from the stylized world of drama. I will firstly begin with the device of the *deus ex machina*, which is used to generate the marriage endings.

#### **a. The device**

As a device, the *deus ex machina* is very convenient for Euripides. It allows him to bring the plot to an extreme crisis and then provide a resolution or change of direction to it. Although external to the plot, the gods chosen are in some way associated with the characters. In *Andromache*, Thetis intervenes as the *dea*. As Peleus' wife and Neoptolemus' grandmother, she cannot be considered as irrelevant to the story (*Andr.* 1231-34).<sup>294</sup> In *Orestes*, Apollo appears as *deus ex machina* to save Orestes from the impasse into which he has brought himself. His association with the events of the play and relationship to the *oikos* of the Atreids is evident from his (emphasized) role in authorizing the killing. In *Electra*, Castor and Pollux, relatives of Electra and Orestes, appear as the *dei ex machina* to offer consolation, explanations and imposition of divine will and punishment.<sup>295</sup> In particular, it is Castor, already presented as Electra's past suitor (*Eur.El.* 312-3), who speaks to the siblings (*Eur.El.* 1238-1291, 1292-1359 *passim*).

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<sup>294</sup> Dunn (1996) 31.

<sup>295</sup> Thury (1985) 20-21, 23.

In *Trachiniae* and *Medea* there is no literal divine intervention. In *Medea*, Medea appears on a crane above the roof in the manner of a *dea ex machina*<sup>296</sup> in a scene of triumph over Jason.<sup>297</sup> Medea gives the conclusion of the play. Jason gets his punishment from her lips (*Med.* 1351-60, 1378-88).<sup>298</sup> But Medea, like the other *dei*, also looks forward to (her) future. She will go to Athens Αἰγεῖ συνοικήσουσα (*Med.* 1385). The uncompromising manner in which she speaks and Jason's inability to do anything against Medea and her announcements give her an authority which recalls that of a more traditional *deus*.<sup>299</sup>

In all the cases to be discussed below, marriage as *telos* is embedded in a context of divine authority, of a decisive, sudden, formal and unquestionable intervention in the midst of an impasse, and an oracular background or something almost like it. This last is very important because it is common both to Euripides' tragedies and to Sophocles'. Not only does marriage as a ritual sit very well in such a divine, oracular context, which in turn gives a kind of solemnity to these endings and naturally to the marriage alliances arranged. More crucially it endows marriage with the element of fate, divine determinism, purpose. Thus it conveys a notion of completeness inherent in marriage.

It is important to note that in the *deus ex machina* speeches where the marriage arrangement is announced or predicted, this attribute of marriage as *telos* is never

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<sup>296</sup> The affinities that this scene has with the *deus ex machina* interventions have been explained sufficiently by Cunningham (1954) 152, 158 and very convincingly by Knox (1977) 207-18 with parallels. See also on the issue Mastronarde (1990) 264-66, Mossman (2011) ad 1317.

<sup>297</sup> Easterling (1977) 190, Segal (1996) 41-42.

<sup>298</sup> Cf. Mastronarde (2002) 33.

<sup>299</sup> This is confirmed in that Jason cannot catch or reach her, as she is both scenically and in terms of power on a higher level than him (*Med.* 1320-22; Luschnig (1992a) 44, Mossman (2011) ad 1317).

spelled out explicitly. Yet its cultural importance for the survival of the *oikos*<sup>300</sup> and the recurrent centrality of the *oikos* to Greek tragedy mean that the issue of the fulfilment is an important part of the subtext of the plays. It is this dimension which provides the ‘positive’ aspect of the conclusion, in contrast to the tensions that are often contained in the marriage arrangement and in general in the conclusion.

### **b. Closural position and thematic relevance: marriage, and destruction and irregularities in the *oikos***

Despite the formalistic tendency noted above, marriage in Euripides is usually thematically related to the plays in which it appears as closure. In some cases it is at the centre of the plot and there it emerges entirely appropriately from the action. At the same time, the gap between formal closure on the one hand, and emotional and aesthetic closure on the other, raises problems which undermine the framing role of marriage.

In *Andromache*, marriage is deeply embedded in the thematic concerns of the play. The disorder in the *oikos* of Neoptolemus,<sup>301</sup> generated by its structural irregularities, is one of the main problems of the play. Neoptolemus’ wife Hermione is in every sense a bad spouse, disrespectful to her husband and arrogant towards him (*Andr.* 209-12). She

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<sup>300</sup> See Introduction, pp. 20-1.

<sup>301</sup> This element has been emphasized by Storey (1989) who argues for ‘domestic disharmony’ as a key motif in *Andromache*, and indeed many of the *oikoi* which are presented in *Andromache* are problematic, but the main interest is focused on the *oikos* of Neoptolemus. It is the problems of this particular *oikos* that engage the audience’s attention. The other *oikoi* (Hector’s, Menelaus’ and Agamemnon’s, cf. Storey (1989) 18, 20-1, 21-2 accordingly) themselves are of less importance; they matter only in relation to Neoptolemus’ *oikos*. Even the problematic marriage of Peleus’ with Thetis forms an unhappy past for Neoptolemus’ *oikos* (cf. Storey (1989) 22-3).

knows very well that she is of higher birth and wealth (*Andr.* 209-12, cf. 152-3).<sup>302</sup> She has never accepted or been accepted by her new family.<sup>303</sup> It is not strange then that Neoptolemus is presented as alienated (ταῦτά τοί σ' ἔχθει πόσις, *Andr.* 212; πόσει μισουμένην, *Andr.* 33).<sup>304</sup> Peleus also dislikes both her and her family (*Andr.* 547-765, cf. also 209-12, 619-23).<sup>305</sup> Her resentment and her sense of grievance and insecurity are very much the effect of her own unnatural position within her husband's *oikos*: Neoptolemus maintains both a wife and a concubine, with the result that the wife considers the concubine a rival and a threat (*Andr.* 464-93, cf. 123-4, 909).<sup>306</sup> Whether or not she is correct (and Andromache disagrees), this situation is an irregularity in itself. It is also the starting-point of the conflicts in *Andromache*, the beginning of the extreme events which set the *oikos* in turmoil. By the end of the play the problems in the relationships have created a fractured *oikos*: the head of the family is dead. The wife, Hermione, is gone.<sup>307</sup> In the end, what remains in the ruins of this *oikos* is an unprotected illegitimate son, the father's concubine and the old grandfather.

Thetis' intervention goes some way to restoring the *oikos*. Although this is not her sole arrangement, the marriage between Andromache and Helenus, Hector's brother, which she decrees, offers the eventual restoration of the *oikos*, an *oikos* which has greatly suffered throughout the play.<sup>308</sup> This will bring Neoptolemus' son, who is not named

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<sup>302</sup> Kyriakou (1997) 10-12. She also prioritizes her natal over her marital *oikos* (Seaford (1990b) 166, 167-8).

<sup>303</sup> Philippo (1995) 361-2.

<sup>304</sup> Storey (1989) 19.

<sup>305</sup> Papadimitropoulos (2006) 156-7, Philippo (1995) 362.

<sup>306</sup> Seaford (1990b) 151-53, 167-70, Philippo (1995) 361, Storey (1989) 19-20, Lloyd (1994) 3.

<sup>307</sup> Cf. Mossman (1996) 153, Storey (1989) 17.

<sup>308</sup> Cf. Lloyd (1994) ad 1245.

here, to Molossia (*Andr.* 1244), where Helenus had already been living (Apoll. 6.12-13). Thus, he will be brought up in a ‘proper’ family as Neoptolemus’ legitimate heir and not merely as the son of a concubine. Eventually, when he comes of age he will be established in the kingship of the Molossians (*Andr.* 1247-49), which had been gained by his father before his death (Apoll. 6.12-13).<sup>309</sup> This arrangement then achieves the continuation of the Aeacids.<sup>310</sup>

Yet, there is another dimension. The continuation of the Aeacids is to be achieved only in unison with the continuation of the Trojan royal *oikos*. Neoptolemus’ son was Andromache’s too. She herself is identified more in relation to Troy than to Thebes in Asia, her place of origin (cf. *Andr.* 4, 656, 908, 960).<sup>311</sup> In addition, it appears that Helenus will be King till Molossus reaches the age to become King. Molossus will then succeed Helenus, a Trojan king. So, Molossus, linked through his mother and his stepfather with the royal *oikos* of Troy will continue the Trojan line, too (*Andr.* 1249-51, cf. also κατοικήσαι, *Andr.* 1244).<sup>312</sup> Therefore, Andromache’s marriage becomes the instrument through which the survival of both *oikoi* is secured.<sup>313</sup> Such an end also gives a resolution to Andromache’s problems, which had introduced the play (*Andr.* 1-765). She has lost her protector, she is a slave and her own and her son’s lives have been threatened. She constantly looks back to her ‘ideal’ marriage to Hector. Now, with her

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<sup>309</sup> Cf. Apollodorus 6.12-13, cf. Lloyd (1994) ad 1243-52, ad 1245.

<sup>310</sup> Apart from this important role that the marriage of Andromache has in the play, its significance is also illustrated through the effect it has on Peleus, as I will show in my main discussion.

<sup>311</sup> Cf. Philippo (1995) 369-70. (This is a recurrent implication in the play through the references to Andromache’s previous situation.)

<sup>312</sup> Cf. Philippo (1995) 370, Lloyd (1994) ad 1243-52, Storey (1989) 20.

<sup>313</sup> Cf. Allan (2000) 81-82.

marriage to Helenus, her bond with the Trojan royal line and *oikos* is revived.<sup>314</sup> Thus, this arrangement (*Andr.* 1245) means that Andromache is finally restored to Hector's family and partially to her previous life.<sup>315</sup>

Apart from this strong link to the themes of the play, the role of marriage is crucial in that its associations with stability and continuity contribute to the positive tone of the ending. Through marriage most of the problems of the *oikos*, the lives of the individuals, and welfare and survival of the *oikos* are restored. Thus it offers an optimistic counterpoint in comparison to the turbulent events of the play. This is also true for Peleus, who is the focus of the last part of *Andromache* (*Andr.* 1047ff.) together with (the corpse of) Neoptolemus (*Andr.* 1166ff., especially 1168).<sup>316</sup> It is immediately after Peleus' lamentations (*Andr.* 1173-1225) that Thetis intervenes. Peleus' main worry when he sees the corpse of Neoptolemus is the extinction of his *oikos* (*Andr.* 1176-80, cf. 1205-7).<sup>317</sup> Andromache's wedding is one of the arrangements which provides for the end of these concerns. This is how his *oikos* lives through the ages (*Andr.* 1249-51). In addition, Peleus will become immortal (*Andr.* 1253-58). This seals the provisions for a better future for him. Significantly, Thetis stresses that he owes this development to his marriage with her (*Andr.* 1231-32, 1250, 1253; cf. 1258, συνοικήσεις may hint at a 'new' *oikos* with Thetis<sup>318</sup>).<sup>319</sup> So, marriage, in more than one respect, acts to secure

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<sup>314</sup> Cf. Allan (2000) 81-2.

<sup>315</sup> Allan (2000) 81-82.

<sup>316</sup> Cf. Lloyd (1994) 5. Like Andromache and Hermione, he is in despair and feels hopeless (Lloyd (1994) 5).

<sup>317</sup> Peleus' focus is shared between lament for the *oikos* (*Andr.* 1176-80, 1186-87, 1189-92, 1205-07, 1216-17 (rather than for Neoptolemus)) and for Neoptolemus (*Andr.* 1181-83, 1189-92, 1193-96, 1200-01, 1205-07, 1209-12).

<sup>318</sup> Cf. Storey (1989) 20.

Peleus' prosperity. Here then marriage forms a part of an idealized fictive world. Everything seems stable at last, and there is a feeling of satisfaction in this closure.

Yet even in *Andromache* the *deus ex machina* solves only some of the irregularities in the *oikos* of Neoptolemus: Hermione and Orestes escape unpunished, at least as far as the plot allows us to judge. Nothing is mentioned about them. Neoptolemus is killed and his burial serves only as censure to Delphi's lack of protection of innocent people (*Andr.* 1241-42).<sup>320</sup> Still, though marriage in *Andromache* falls short of full closure, this is the most complete resolution of all the marriage endings of Euripides.

The organic relation of marriage to the themes of the play is even stronger in Euripides' *Electra*. *Gamos* is prominent here. Hera has a stark presence as protector of marriage at the beginning of the play, and the festival in her honour<sup>321</sup> is central to the play. Even more important is the subversion of marriage, a theme that runs throughout the play. This is evident in the general distortion of the purposes of marriage in *Electra*,<sup>322</sup> and mainly in the failed union of Electra and the *autourgos*. Euripides invents here a marriage<sup>323</sup> which socially marginalizes her: it is the medium for her exile from the

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<sup>319</sup> This marks an ironic contrast to Peleus' previous censure of the marriage to Thetis (*Andr.* 1186-87, 1219-20, cf. 1224-25). (Allan (2000) 81-82, cf. Storey (1989) 20-21 on Thetis' marriage and 'domestic disharmony'.)

<sup>320</sup> *Andr.* 1251-2 indicate that Thetis is sent by the gods to bring an order to people the gods care about. Thus, this line may imply that what is not provided for is not of interest to the gods. But when applying this to Neoptolemus' case this would either mean that the gods were not interested in that Neoptolemus should be dead and thus lines 1270-72 are in agreement with Thetis' purpose of intervention or that the gods are not omnipotent; they cannot really arrange justice and help those that are in the right. This last now questions the success of the *deus ex machina* intervention or at least, it indicates that the role of the *deus* is not to resolve all problems and that the emotional effects are therefore mixed.

<sup>321</sup> Cf. Zeitlin (1970) 651.

<sup>322</sup> Zeitlin (1970) 665ff.

<sup>323</sup> Zeitlin (1970) 650.

royal house and the loss of inheritance, wealth, home and family and high social position as royalty (see *Eur.El.* 184-89),<sup>324</sup> and even her status as woman.<sup>325</sup> This perverted *gamos* reinforces the larger disrupted condition of the *oikos*.<sup>326</sup> It was settled precisely to prevent the creation of a powerful *oikos*, as would happen if Electra married in accordance to her status (*Eur.El.* 19-24; cf. 25-8). The potential threatening offspring is thus pre-empted, as is the proper continuation of the line and *oikos* of Agamemnon.

This aberrant situation will be reversed at the close with the marriage of Electra to Pylades which comes at last to protect Electra and restore her.<sup>327</sup> Despite the initiatives of Orestes and Electra (*Eur.El.* 1190-1200), Castor's arrangements and divine authority are the agent of relief to the disturbed psychic condition of Electra.<sup>328</sup> Her marriage should provide her with a happy life, and release her from her miseries. She will now be properly taken care of (*Eur.El.* 1308-13, especially 1311). She will get all that a woman can expect in ancient Greece (cf. πόσις ἔστ' αὐτῆ καὶ δόμος, *Eur.El.* 1311). Crucially, this new marriage is the worthy marriage for which she was so eager.<sup>329</sup> This match will also provide her with the wealth Aegisthus and Clytemnestra had taken from her (δότη πλούτου βάρθος, *Eur.El.* 1287). Last but not least Pylades (*Eur.El.* 1249) is her brother's best friend, the son of king Strophius. This means her return to the royal class and restoration to a high social status.

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<sup>324</sup> The citizens know about her present reduced circumstances and pity her (*Eur.El.* 118-19); cf. Chong-Gossard (2003) 216.

<sup>325</sup> For a full analysis of the social exclusion of Electra and her marriage see ch. 3, pp. 163-5, 186-9.

<sup>326</sup> See on this issue, ch. 3, pp. 194-5.

<sup>327</sup> Cf. Gärtner (2005) 27-28 for the idea of foil in a different context.

<sup>328</sup> Thury (1985) 6-7, Gärtner (2005) 25-26.

<sup>329</sup> Gärtner (2005) 25-26, cf. Thury (1985) 6-8, 20-22, especially 6-7 and 21.



Yet, marriage offers resolution only in part. Unlike *Andromache*, the structural problems of the *oikos* are not to be solved here.<sup>330</sup> The survival of the *oikos* is not provided for. Orestes' marriage to Hermione, which would secure the desired continuation of the *oikos*, is not mentioned. Thus, the play may suggest that there is no safe future for this *oikos* and its suffering will be perpetuated, just as its crimes have been repeated in this play.

The positive aspects of the conclusion, including the felicity which Electra's union to Pylades would have brought, are also undermined by the imminent separation of Orestes and Electra. This is emphatically illustrated through their reactions: any joy for Electra is overpowered by her separation from Orestes (Eur.*El.* 1308ff., esp. 1321-34, 1339). Thus, in Euripides' *Electra*, even in the fictive world in which it belongs, marriage fails to achieve the full state of happiness that was culturally expected to generate. Yet, there is a good reason for the absence of resolution. Orestes and Electra have committed a terrible crime and they have to pay.

*Orestes* is a play where marriage arrangements again seem to be related to the plot, but at the same time are remarkably disconcerting. Despite the incongruities of the marriage (which I explore below), the road to this final development is well prepared thematically. The main thematic issue in which the marriage in the end is embedded is once more the structural irregularities of the *oikos* of the Atreids. *Orestes* presents an *oikos* with severe problems (cf. *Or.* 982-1012), burdened by a history of criminality stretching back into the past and threatened with extinction in the present as a result of

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<sup>330</sup> Mossman (2001) 377, 380, 383.

Orestes' violence.<sup>331</sup> It continues on its path to destruction, repeating the errors of previous generations. The fault is not Tantalus', as in the original myth (cf. *Or.* 1-10, 345-47, 986).<sup>332</sup> It is Pelops' ingratitude to Myrtilus, lack of reciprocity of *charis* (*Or.* 982-96).<sup>333</sup> This is replicated by Menelaus; he fails in his duty of recompensing the *charis* due to Orestes when the latter is under threat; this obligation of Menelaus' is owed on the basis of his debt to Agamemnon, who helped him get his wife back (*Or.* 642-43, 646-57, 651; cf. 243-44).<sup>334</sup> Menelaus thus re-enacts the ancestral sin and leads the *oikos* to the brink of annihilation.<sup>335</sup> This dismemberment of the *oikos* is visually enacted in the fire which is about to be set loose on the building of the *oikos* (*Or.* 1618-20).<sup>336</sup> Apollo's intervention and the marriage with Menelaus' daughter dramatically defuse this crisis, creating the missing reciprocity between Menelaus and Orestes (cf. *Or.* 1672, 1675-77).<sup>337</sup>

From some angles this marriage seems to be a satisfactory one, although it is doubtful whether the audience could ever think of it as such.<sup>338</sup> Orestes takes a good wife, the model *parthenos*. Thus finally the last male descendant will continue this *oikos* through his marriage and new family.<sup>339</sup> Another settlement which contributes to a certain establishment of reciprocity and order is Electra's marriage to Pylades. This is largely

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<sup>331</sup> Kyriakou (1998) 287.

<sup>332</sup> Kyriakou (1998) 287-88, cf. 292-93.

<sup>333</sup> Kyriakou (1998) 291-92.

<sup>334</sup> Kyriakou (1998) 283-4, Konstan (2000) 51-52.

<sup>335</sup> Kyriakou (1998) 297. Menelaus is constantly criticized for his behaviour (e.g. *Or.* 628, 652, 665-68, 718-20, 794) (Konstan (2000) 52). On the parallel between Menelaus and Pelops, see Kyriakou (1998).

<sup>336</sup> Dunn (1996) 172.

<sup>337</sup> Willink (1986) ad 1643-59, cf. Dunn (1996) 159-61.

<sup>338</sup> Synodinou (1988) 308, cf. West (1987) 35.

<sup>339</sup> Kyriakou (1998) 282, 287, 297, cf. Lefkowitz (2002) 52-53.

due to the nature of this alliance, which occurs in a manner familiar to the Athenians and very much like their marriage practices. Orestes gives his sister to his *philos*.<sup>340</sup> This is the most desired (*Or.* 1078-81) marriage of all three provided for by Apollo.

More importantly, Electra's preoccupation and concerns with the issue of her marriage, already pronounced in the play, are now accommodated. It is she in particular who has expressed her agony regarding marriage: she feared that she will not have a family and children and thus will not fulfil her destiny as a woman (*Or.* 206-7).<sup>341</sup> Apollo's arrangement (*Or.* 1658-59) ends this anxiety.<sup>342</sup>

Thus, all characters are provided for through marriage, among other arrangements. All of them, Orestes, Electra, Pylades and Hermione, are settled in Greek cultural terms. The marriage for Menelaus is not a certain fact of the plot, but with so much marriage in the immediate context the case for the authenticity of the disputed line *Or.* 1638, which refers to it, becomes a little stronger<sup>343</sup>. So, Menelaus has a chance for a second marriage in place of the wife he lost ([*Or.* 1638]). This last arrangement in tying up the

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<sup>340</sup> Pylades has proved himself a real *philos* to Orestes, in contrast to Menelaus, who was his relative after all and did not help as he should (Konstan (2000) 51-52, 54-55: according to Aristotle's *Rhet.* 1386a18-23 *philia* is what is required from a relative – here Menelaus – and not *eleos*.). Both Pylades and Menelaus are contrasted in the text with the word *philia* in reference to Orestes (*Or.* 717-28, 804-06) (Willink (1986) p. xlv). Of these two Orestes does not find support inside his family but outside it (Konstan (2000) 55).

<sup>341</sup> Synodinou (1988) 307-08.

<sup>342</sup> Cf. in contrast Synodinou (1988) 317 with reference to Schein (1975) 54.

<sup>343</sup> The severe structural problems (structure, succinctness, causality and notional connection) make it evident that there are problems in the textual transmission. The lack of an 'unsignalled address to Menelaus' –at least– shows that if it is genuine, there may be some lines lacking (Willink (1986) ad 1638-42, cf. Manuwald and Manuwald (1994-95) 95). Yet, this is not enough reason to deduce that the line is not genuine. The best discussion till now can be found at Manuwald and Manuwald (1994-95) 93-96; see also Willink (1986) ad 1638-42.

last loose end gives the impression – if the lines are genuine – that the closure is complete.

However, despite this organic relation and the impression that order is reconstituted, these alliances, especially for Electra and Orestes, are inherently flawed and largely unsatisfactory.<sup>344</sup> First and foremost, Orestes' marriage is introduced very abruptly and is at odds with the development of the play so far. Not only has there been nothing to lead us to expect such a change of direction in the plot,<sup>345</sup> but also Orestes was about to kill Hermione only minutes earlier. Yet, Orestes has to take his victim-to-be as wife.<sup>346</sup> This last grim absurdity is underlined by the staging: Apollo says clearly that Orestes still has his sword on Hermione (*Or.* 1653-4).<sup>347</sup> This is then a deeply defective marriage.

Moreover, Orestes is on poisonous terms with her father. The deeper grounds for enmity are not addressed. Even though Menelaus gives his formal approval, at a personal level this alliance seems implausible. Orestes and Menelaus do not seem to regret or reconsider their previous attitude to each other. This kinship may have been hypothetically possible in a world of arranged marriages but in theatrical terms it is emotionally unsatisfactory for all concerned. The marriage to Hermione cannot really

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<sup>344</sup> I would like to note here that there are elements in *Orestes* which have been regarded as comic (cf. Dunn (1989)). This could perhaps be taken to relieve any negative implication in the conclusion. Nevertheless, though marriage figures as part of what has been regarded a comically happy resolution, the comic features are not so extensive as to erase the impression made by the cynical violence of the central figures nor the ironies that it generates (cf. Roberts (2005) 143, 146; cf. also Dunn (1989) 237-9, 248-51 on the mixed tone of *Orestes* (contrast Gregory (2005a) 265-7).

<sup>345</sup> Dunn (1996) 160-1, 170-1, Lefkowitz (2002) 46-8, Kovacs (2002) 277.

<sup>346</sup> Dunn (1996) 160-1, 170-1, Lefkowitz (2002) 46-8, Kovacs (2002) 277.

<sup>347</sup> Dunn (1996) 160-61.

solve the tensions of this blighted *oikos*. It is rather forced,<sup>348</sup> conceivable only in a world which admits of direct divine intervention and created only to bring reconciliation and save the *oikos*.<sup>349</sup> Yet, even within this fictive world marriage seems to work only on the surface. The impasse does not seem to be resolved, but confirmed.<sup>350</sup> The situation is exacerbated by the fact that the audience see Orestes walk away unscathed from his second (attempted) homicide. And because the crisis in the *oikos* is closely connected with the crisis in the *polis*, neither realm returns to a real restitution of order, but only to a superficial one. Formal closure is at odds with the myth it closes.

There is arguably less of a problem with Electra's marriage to Pylades. Yet even here the viewer may query the desirability of the match in view of Electra's character. Pylades has condemned the baseness of character in women (e.g. *Or.* 1134-36, 923-25). Electra on the other hand has done too much evil here.<sup>351</sup> Nevertheless, if Electra is an unattractive character, so, too, in important respects is Pylades. Pylades was not just an assistant but an active conspirator in murder and mayhem (cf. *Or.* 787).<sup>352</sup> In a sense they deserve each other. Electra and Pylades display a kind of *homophrosyne* (viewed by Odysseus and Pindar as the bedrock of a good marriage<sup>353</sup>) and thus provide a suitable match the one for the other. Yet, the *homophrosyne* consists in a shared capacity

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<sup>348</sup> Cf. Kovacs (2002) 278.

<sup>349</sup> Willink (1986) ad 1643-59.

<sup>350</sup> Dunn (1996) 170-71.

<sup>351</sup> Electra is portrayed in a negative light. Her actions prove her to be as bad as Helen or Clytemnestra. Electra's own criticism of their actions may be used against herself and makes her situation worse (Synodinou (1988) esp. 307-9, 315, 319-20). Especially Electra's eager contribution to the plans against innocent Hermione underlines the baseness of her character (cf. Synodinou (1988) 313-14). However, the chorus feel sympathetic towards her; this impacts on the audience's attitude (West (1987) 33-34, Kyriakou (1998) 286).

<sup>352</sup> Nisetich (1986) 50, 53, Synodinou (1988) 312.

<sup>353</sup> See pp. 67-9 and also ch. 5 *passim*.

for indiscriminate violence. This means that, if in *Orestes* the impasse remains unsolved, this is in accordance with the play's dramatic momentum. All of the main characters are deeply corrupt and this wickedness is inextricably linked with the crisis confirmed in the closure.

But the most disconcerting preannounced marriage is the one in *Medea*. The conclusion of the play is offered by Medea *ex machina*. Here the situation is rather elusive. There is a marriage: Medea's to Aegeus, hinted at with the word συνοικήσουσα (*Med.* 1385). This participle contains connotations of marriage,<sup>354</sup> since this word is the technical term for being married.<sup>355</sup>

Speaking in terms of thematic relevance it is true that there is nothing in the play that immediately and directly leads to this marriage. Yet, this tragedy is engaged very much with matrimony. Medea's failed marriage is one of the central themes and an important thread of the plot<sup>356</sup> in that it is very closely associated with the destructive events in this tragedy. It transforms Medea from victim to aggressor and leads her to retaliate for Jason's trespass of their marriage by destroying his wedding with Glauce and the offspring of her own marriage with Jason. So despite the fact that this is a very brief allusion, its load is immense and it *is* an arrangement of critical importance.

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<sup>354</sup> Cf. Mastrorade (2002) ad 1385. Even if he is wrong the idea of marriage is enclosed in this word. The audience know the myth of Medea, Aegeus and Jason (cf. Sfyroeras (1994-95) 127). Any reference to Medea at the *oikos* of Aegeus would have provoked the remembrance of her marriage to Aegeus and her behaviour in this frame. Of course Aegeus is already married (*Med.* 673). Immediate or future, meaning strictly the marriage or hinting at it, Medea's role in the *oikos* of Aegeus will at some time be that of wife.

<sup>355</sup> Its use for populations living in the same city (*LSJ*, s.v.) cannot be applied here. This significance is collective.

<sup>356</sup> See for instance, *Med.* 17-36, 160-65, 1354-57, 1388, cf. 1366.

At first glance it seems that Medea, who destroyed every *oikos*<sup>357</sup> she was a member of, found a refuge and will go unscathed.<sup>358</sup> Yet, the dramatic irony behind the marriage implied in her announcement undermines the impression of a complete success for Medea in this play for those alert to the ending of her story in myth.<sup>359</sup> *Med.* 1385 actually contains a bleak implication regarding Medea's future. To begin with, this marriage with Aegeus is by no means a good one; it lies on rotten foundations and stems from a violated *philia* (*Med.* 663-823): she hides things from him, traps and deceives him.<sup>360</sup> Moreover the word συνουκήσουσα encloses two negative aspects. She will pose a threat to Theseus and through him to Aegeus' *oikos*, as she has also annihilated Jason's *oikos*.<sup>361</sup> More importantly, in her attempt to harm the *oikos* of her future husband she will destroy herself in that she will again have to go into exile.<sup>362</sup> Nevertheless, this time her plans will not succeed according to the myth.<sup>363</sup> Thus in a way Medea gets her punishment too.<sup>364</sup> Therefore, the implications of marriage in *Medea* work in a negative manner. Though they seem triumphalist, instead of securing happiness and prosperity, they undermine the optimism of Medea for her future. The

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<sup>357</sup> She, too, has no *oikos* (*Med.* 255-58, cf. 166-67).

<sup>358</sup> Cf. Segal (1996) 41-42, Mastronarde (2002) 32-33.

<sup>359</sup> Mossman (2011) ad 1385; cf. Mossman (2011) 30.

<sup>360</sup> Mastronarde (2002) 31, ad 663-823, Segal (1996) 62-64, Mossman (2011) 30. See also *Med.* 824-65.

<sup>361</sup> Sfyroeras (1994-95) 126, 139-40, Mastronarde (2002) 54-55, ad 664-823, Mossman (2011) ad 1385; cf. Easterling (1977) 187. Jason's loss of *oikos* is mentioned at *Med.* 114, 130, 138-9, 562, 597, 608, 794, 1259, cf. 487, 502 (Cunningham (1954) 154). See also Segal (1996) 41-42, Knox (1977) 208.

The threat she poses at Aegeus' *oikos* may be also implied at *Med.* 717-18: πάυσω γέ σ' ὄντ' ἄπαιδα καὶ παίδων γονὰς / σπεῖραι σε θήσω· τοιάδ' οἶδα φάρμακα. These lines can be interpreted in three ways. Either Medea lies once again or she means the child, Medus, whom she will physically bear to Aegeus, or she refers to the tricks which she will use against his own child Theseus (cf. Sfyroeras (1994-95) 128-30).

<sup>362</sup> Easterling (1977) 191.

<sup>363</sup> Cf. Sfyroeras (1994-95) 127.

<sup>364</sup> Cf. in contrast Mastronarde (2002) 32-33.

end brings no relief but only shows two traumatized and guilty people and also a threat for another *oikos*.<sup>365</sup>

Marriage then frequently appears in the plays' conclusions as unable in itself to give full closure. It cannot undo actions or events already done, it cannot cancel deaths or change characters and mentalities. What marriage as *telos* can do is fix the problems directly associated with it: the perversion and structural irregularities in the *oikos* which figure throughout the play and devastate the lives of the characters. Order in the *oikos* is restored because marriage sets up another *oikos* with one of the members of the destroyed *oikos*, a new one ideally with no problems. Even more because the marriage usually concerns a royal *oikos* this has an impact on the *polis* and offers a reestablishment of order in it. This effect is enhanced by the rest of the actions to be taken and ordered by the *deus ex machina*. But this is as much as a new marriage arrangement in the end can achieve. Marriage then does not have the capacity to resolve all the issues of the play.

### **c. Remarriage as closure**

It would not be appropriate to conclude our discussion of marriage as a closural device without some mention of 'remarriage', i.e. restored marriage, in Euripides' *Alcestis* and *Helen*. Although these plays end with reunion, not marriage in a purely literal sense, the text invites us to regard this as a re-marriage enacted as wedding. They can therefore

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<sup>365</sup> Mastronarde (2002) 34, Sfyroeras (1994-95) 139-40, Segal (1996) 42; cf. Mossman (2011) 30. On the mixed reaction generated by the conclusion see Mossman (2011) 48.



legitimately be considered as variations on the formal closures treated in my previous discussion. However, remarriage functions in a decidedly different way from what we have seen so far in Euripides. In particular, firstly, these re-marriages are more obviously central to the plot. Also they are not overshadowed by any gloomy context, which could undermine the elation of the reunion. Instead, these are unambiguously happy conclusions. Thirdly, they are the focal event of the closure in that these reunions are not narrated or predicted but enacted in front of the audience in the form of wedding ritual.

To begin with their origin from the plot, these tragedies not only have marriage as one of their themes; they further make it a major aspect of the plotline. In *Alcestis*, the central issue and plotline is the sacrifice of Alcestis for her husband. Her devotion and self-sacrifice as a wife is praised throughout the play. Marriage also features in prospect or retrospect: for example Alcestis remembers her own wedding at *Alc.* 248-49, or asks Admetus not to remarry at *Alc.* 304ff. (cf. *Alc.* 328-68, 371-73, 412-14, 460-62, 463-6, 470-74, 577, 612, 734, 840-42, 878-88, for instance). Also, in *Alcestis* the comparison between the marital and the parental relationship regarding their strength and value is explored as a theme. Alcestis sacrifices herself for Admetus, something which his natal family, his parents, could not.

*Helen* is also about a pair unwillingly separated.<sup>366</sup> Helen's devotion to her husband and especially her need of him are stressed right from the beginning. Among the main events in the play are their first recognition and reunion. The latter however is threatened and

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<sup>366</sup> Cf. Dunn (1996) 134.

may not be permanent due to an unwanted marriage. Marriage is everywhere; it is even involved in their trick on Theoclymenus, where she promises that she will marry him.

In *Helen* however the case is slightly different from *Alcestis*. The reunion is made secure in the *deus*' speech, but this is not the sole concern of his arrangements; the focus is shared between provision for Theonoe (*Hel.* 1647-9, 1656-7) and Helen's and Menelaus' marriage and their future after death (*Hel.* 1646, [1650]-[1655], 1658-9, 1662-79). Nevertheless, Helen and Menelaus dominate the conclusion in that their joint escape from Egypt to Sparta is part of the staging.

In *Alcestis* this notion of a re-marriage, not merely a reunion, is created by the use of standard motifs of an Athenian wedding in the final scene, a scene with deep irony: the agreement between the woman's *kyrios* and the future husband (*Alc.* 1025-29, 1035-36), the unveiling of the girl (she is unveiled at *Alc.* 1123), the joining of hands (*Alc.* 1115ff., cf. 1113), the procession and reception in the new house (*Alc.* 1011-22).<sup>367</sup> In *Helen* certain patterns of the Spartan wedding ritual are repeated. After the recall of Helen's first marriage (*Hel.* 638-43, 722-25), she and Menelaus have disguised their reconciliation as a funeral. In this framework, Menelaus is going to abduct the bride, whose hair is cut short, in the way marriage rites were enacted in Sparta.<sup>368</sup> This presents Helen as a typical Spartan bride abducted by her bridegroom.

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<sup>367</sup> Halleran (1988) 124-29, Rehm (1994) 89, Parker (2007) ad 1112, ad 1113, ad 1119-20.

<sup>368</sup> Foley (2001) 312.

In both plays marriage ritual is conflated (as often in tragedy) with death ritual.<sup>369</sup> In *Alcestis*, although the wedding ritual and its feast are virtually enacted in front of the eyes of the audience and cover a substantial number of lines in the conclusion (*Alc.* 1108-1158), the element of death is starkly present there. Not only does Alcestis come back from death, but she still retains this status even though she participates in her ‘wedding’. She does not speak throughout the wedding ritual, nor before. This is important enough to be pronounced by Heracles:

οὐπω θέμις σοι τῆσδε προσφωνημάτων  
κλύειν, πρὶν ἂν θεοῖσι τοῖσι νερτέροις  
ἀφαγνίσηται καὶ τρίτον μόλη φάος (*Alc.* 1144-6).

Alcestis is thus placed between her death and her new life. Wedding and funeral are present at the same time. To some degree the conflation arises naturally from the plot itself, since Alcestis is brought back from her death.<sup>370</sup> This also applies to *Helen*.<sup>371</sup> As we saw, Helen and Menelaus devise a funeral rite and disguise their ‘elopement’ as such (*Hel.* 638-43, 722-25). But the parallel of the remarriage pattern with *Alcestis* suggests that this combination of wedding and death is not mere coincidence and there is more to it.

This conflation of marriage and death rituals in the remarriage endings is used to illustrate the transition from the past to a new happier life.<sup>372</sup> Since it combines both the past with its unhappy events and the future, it then absorbs and replaces the past with the

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<sup>369</sup> For a thorough discussion of this issue, see Rehm (1994).

<sup>370</sup> Rehm (1994) 89-96.

<sup>371</sup> Rehm (1994) 123-7.

<sup>372</sup> Cf. in contrast Rehm (1994) 126.

bright notes for a better future which conclude the play. The elimination of a past life and the transition to a new one is also central to the mourning which is expressed in the *epithalamion*.<sup>373</sup> This is crucial in both *Helen* and *Alcestis* because the past life was dominated by mourning, despair and death, especially for Helen and Admetus but also for Alcestis. The use of wedding ritual seals this passage from the past status full of misery to the new life which inaugurates happiness for them. Admetus explicitly speaks of the felicity of a better ‘new’ life, distinct from their previous one: *νῦν γὰρ μεθηρμόσμεσθα βελτίω βίον / τοῦ πρόσθεν· οὐ γὰρ εὐτυχῶν ἀρνήσομαι* (*Alc.* 1157-8). In *Helen*, there is more in prospect than lifelong happiness. Menelaus’ and Helen’s prosperity transcends the limits of mortal life and reaches their afterlife: Helen will become a goddess and Menelaus will live in the Island of the Blessed (*Hel.* 1666-1678).

Finally, I argue that the effectiveness of marriage as ending in these two plays is facilitated by the presence in the plays of humorous or lighter moments.<sup>374</sup> These contribute to a smooth transition to marriage as the happy conclusion.<sup>375</sup> In general terms the use of marriage as finale is more characteristic of comedy, where (as we shall see) marriage is regularly used for closing celebration<sup>376</sup>. The fact then that these are plays whose content is not exclusively tragic is closely correlated with the use of marriage as a blissful epilogue.

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<sup>373</sup> Cf. Seaford (1987) 113, Badnall (2008) 17, 18, 22, 24-5. Cf. also Introduction, pp. 19-20.

<sup>374</sup> Cf. Mastrorade (1999-2000) 28-29.

<sup>375</sup> For this idea of preparation, see Lloyd (1985) 129, Dunn (1996) 133-34.

<sup>376</sup> See below ch. 2, pp. 115-37.

For *Alcestis* these are characteristics which arise directly from its status as ‘prosatyric’, in that it occupies the position normally occupied by a satyr play.<sup>377</sup> These are Heracles who is inebriated at *Alc.* 773, the dialogue between him and the servant when Heracles discovers Admetus’ lie, Apollo’s trick with the fates, the associations between the plot and fairy-tales, Death as *dramatis persona* and the happy resolution.<sup>378</sup> The tragic status of both plays has understandably been queried.<sup>379</sup> Nonetheless, both are tragedies both in form and in theme, since they address serious ethical and existential issues. Their lighter elements then rather point to a degree of playing with genre limits, than undermining their status as tragedies.<sup>380</sup> But they also contribute to an atmosphere which is less grave than in other tragedies and which leaves room for celebrations and emotions in the conclusion not so suitable to the solemnity of most tragic endings.

#### **d. *Gamos* as *telos* in Sophocles**

Marriage is rarely used in Euripides’ predecessors as a structural device, to judge from the surviving corpus.<sup>381</sup> Nevertheless marriage as *telos* has a prominent role in the

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<sup>377</sup> See Marshall (2000) and also Parker (2007) pp. xx-xxiii.

<sup>378</sup> Marshall (2000) 234, Parker (2007) pp. xxi-xxiii. I do not mean that the features in question specifically reflect the influence of the satyr-play, merely that they are tonally befitting for a satyr play. Likewise those features regarded as comic in *Helen* are not derived from comedy – Euripides predates and even helps to shape the comedy form in question – but potentially at home there (Cf. Mastrorarde (1999-2000) 34-35).

<sup>379</sup> See Marshall (2000) and also Parker (2007) pp. xx-xxiii.

<sup>380</sup> In *Helen*, for instance, these elements were those which were claimed to originate from comedy or appear as melodramatic, to speak in anachronistic terms. There was no genre as such for *Helen*: the exotic landscape, the evil master of the place, the couple who are devoted to each other but are separated and the happy resolution; also the devices of recognition, intriguing plans, supplication and escape (Allan (2008) 36, 68-69).

<sup>381</sup> Aeschylus uses the cult of Eumenides, a cult embracing human marriage as well, as an end in his *Oresteia*, but this use is substantially different from the rest of the Greek drama corpus and so I will not discuss it here. On this, see ch. 4, pp. 225-33.

*Trachiniae*. Sophocles treats marriage in a manner which bears many affinities with Euripides, but is at the same time radically different from it. The similarities lie in the use of the device of *deus ex machina* and also in the tensions inherent in the ‘marriage arrangement’. Yet, in the case of the *Trachiniae*, Sophocles makes a profound use of these tensions which is not to be met elsewhere, as I will argue below.

To begin with, as in Euripides, marriage as *telos* is placed in the context of the arrangements made by a figure suggestive of a *deus-ex-machina*. Although Heracles is not a god and, unlike *dei ex machina*, he is not a figure outside the action,<sup>382</sup> he assumes some of the main characteristics of a *deus ex machina* in the play, in a similar way to Medea in Euripides. This is an attempt authorized by the gods to put an – even partial – end to the unresolved issues of the plot.<sup>383</sup>

Heracles acquires this power through his implied capacity to understand the divine will through oracles.<sup>384</sup> Immediately after Hyllus has mentioned Nessus, he recognizes the prediction of the θέσφατα (θεσφάτων, *Trach.* 1150) relevant to present calamities (*Trach.* 1149-50). Moreover, Heracles’ orders on his death and Iole’s marriage are framed by the oracles on his fate and often use a language of divine determinism which hints at a superior force and necessity, both of which suggest a larger divine perspective

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<sup>382</sup> Cf. in contrast Dunn (1996) 41.

<sup>383</sup> Dunn (1996) 34-5, Davies (1991) pp. xix, xx.

<sup>384</sup> It has even been suggested that he sought his relatives before his death, because he knew precisely and wanted to reveal this divine dimension (cf. Goward (2004) [43], cf., however, on the subject Goldhill (2012) 15-16). I do not think that this can be stated with certainty.

beyond these arrangements.<sup>385</sup> Heracles appears to have acquired the late knowledge which is a prominent motif in the *Trachiniae*.<sup>386</sup> He has understood the oracles<sup>387</sup> and the prophecies given to him (*Trach.* 1145, 1150, 1159-1173, 1275-8), at least to some extent; his language hints at the divine origin of his orders to Hyllus (*Trach.* 1246).<sup>388</sup> Thus Heracles, hard as he undoubtedly is and selfish though he seems,<sup>389</sup> is also an authoritative figure,<sup>390</sup> but equally importantly a decisive character who acts upon some unspecified knowledge.<sup>391</sup>

Again, as in Euripides, although the marriage is not the natural result of the plot, it has an obvious relevance to the issues of the play. In *Trachiniae*, marriage is a major theme, aberrances in this realm and specifically the devastation of order in Heracles' *oikos*.<sup>392</sup> Heracles' marriage to Deianeira is transgressed.<sup>393</sup> The most important subversion is the replacement of Deianeira with another bride. This is underlined in the marriage ode (*Trach.* 205ff.): the bridegroom to be received back brings a second wife.<sup>394</sup> But marital

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<sup>385</sup> Easterling (1982) 10, Goward (2004) [41]. This larger divine perspective is also suggested by Heracles' speech and words after he has come to understand the oracles (*Trach.* 1159, 1169ff.) (Goward (2004) [43]). This is reinforced by the vocabulary of obligatory action and obedience: *χρή*, *Trach.* 1193; *δραστέ*(α), *Trach.* 1204, cf. also 1777-78); by the reference to Zeus' oak, the prohibition of lamentations (*Trach.* 1198f., 1208-09); by the strange declaration that the death on the pyre will relieve Heracles (*Trach.* 1255-56, 1263-64, 1270, 1272) (Goward (2004) [43]-[44]). This is finally sealed by the last line: *κούδ' ἐν τούτων ὅ τι μὴ Ζεύς* (*Trach.* 1278): everything, not only Heracles' orders. This kind of death for Heracles, then, is part of the course of the mysterious fulfilment of Zeus' will (Easterling (1982) 10).

<sup>386</sup> Easterling (1982) 6, 8, Davies (1991) p. xix.

<sup>387</sup> Dunn (1996) 34.

<sup>388</sup> Segal (1981) 103.

<sup>389</sup> Segal (1981) 103 and fn. 126, 107, Segal (1995) 90.

<sup>390</sup> Segal (1981) 107.

<sup>391</sup> The divine perspective in his orders is implied when he invokes the gods to prove that his demands are just (*Trach.* 1247-50). Perhaps this is also suggested by *Trach.* 1185, 1188, 1239-40, 1246.

<sup>392</sup> Segal (1995) 69-94 on marriage and its perversion in the *Trachiniae*, esp. 69-70.

<sup>393</sup> Segal (1981) 74-7.

<sup>394</sup> Easterling (1982) 5-6, cf. Seaford (1986) 56-7.

aberrance is also illustrated by other distortions of marriage and marriage ritual in the play:<sup>395</sup> Deianeira's wedding is succeeded by fear instead of the usual after-wedding joy (*Trach.* 1-51, 104ff., 551).<sup>396</sup> The marriage symbols themselves are irregularly used and the vocabulary used for marriage is ambiguous.<sup>397</sup> There is a subversion of marriage ritual in Deianeira's death scene: she dies on her wedding *peplos* and bed (*Trach.* 915ff.). Lastly, at a first glance, the concluding marriage arrangement between Hyllus and Iole is in itself of a distorted nature: in emotional terms it is self-subverting, as he does not want her (especially *Trach.* 1217ff.). This marriage is arranged contrary to all Greek practices of forming a marriage. The peculiar way in which Heracles obtained Iole and now passes her to his son, because 'he has already had her in bed and wants no other man to possess her',<sup>398</sup> as well as the resistance of the latter make this marriage inherently flawed. Thus, thematically, it is linked with the larger perversion of marriage in the play.

More importantly, marriage has an organic role in the ultimate restoration of order in Heracles' *oikos*. Although, as we have seen, the marriage between Hyllus and Iole is problematic, it may have a further, deeper meaning. To the viewer or reader, armed with historical hindsight, a larger divine purpose is underlying in the conclusion; there are hints that beyond this distorted marriage there is a glorious future for Heracles' *oikos*: this matrimony will be the foundation of the Dorian race;<sup>399</sup> a successive *oikos* is created

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<sup>395</sup> Cf. also 497-530, 563 for marriage as theme. On the subversion of wedding ritual see Seaford (1986).

<sup>396</sup> For this suggestion, Seaford (1986) 54-5, cf. Segal (1995) 69-73.

<sup>397</sup> Segal (1981) 75-6, cf. also Easterling (1982) ad 1124 and Segal (1995) 85-7.

<sup>398</sup> Segal (1995) 86; cf. Easterling (1982) 5-6, cf. Easterling (1982) ad 1138-9, ad 1179-1258, ad 1218.

<sup>399</sup> Cf. Segal (1981) 82.



to compensate for that destroyed.<sup>400</sup> This is not explicitly stated in the play but effected through dramatic irony. The marriage is not only closely related to the themes of the play, but adds an important dimension to it.

Unsurprisingly in view of our previous discussion of the *deus ex machina*, there are strong tensions in the arrangements made. Yet these are here explicit in a more pronounced manner than in Euripides. Although this ‘intervention’ is accepted by the person concerned, namely Hyllus (*Trach.* 1230-51, *passim*, especially 1246-51), his strong objections are uncommon for the *deus ex machina* interventions, as far as we have seen. This naturally reflects the unconventional nature of the ‘*deus*’ figure, but the fact remains that this is the most unwanted of all marriage arrangements in the conclusions of tragedy. Hyllus does not want Iole, whom he regards as the reason for his mother’s death and his father’s sufferings (*Trach.* 1233-7), and it is probable that she would not want him either. The nearest Euripidean parallel is Orestes and Hermione. Heracles’ arrangements are not to bring about comfort and relief to the people concerned.<sup>401</sup> Thus, as in Euripides, this gives the impression of an incomplete resolution and it may raise other issues, as serious as those it seeks to solve.<sup>402</sup>

The role of marriage as *telos*, however problematic, is closely linked thematically to the plot.<sup>403</sup> Indeed, *telos* is an undercurrent in the *Trachiniae* as a whole, especially visible

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<sup>400</sup> Segal (1981) 102, 108, Segal (1995) 92.

<sup>401</sup> Cf. Nicolai (1990) 33.

<sup>402</sup> Cf. Roberts (2005) 143, 145-6; on the ambiguity of endings in tragedy, see Roberts (2005) 143, 147-8.

<sup>403</sup> Cf. Segal (1995) 71, 72.

in the conclusion.<sup>404</sup> Marriage is used in this larger framework. Yet, it combines different aspects of fulfilment and crucially the personal element is completely absent in this case. Marriage is not here to provide for fulfilment in the form of individual happiness for the people involved, but for fulfilment in terms of fate and destiny and on a collective level.<sup>405</sup>

*Telos* for Heracles is prominent in the last scene of the play.<sup>406</sup> The *teleuta* of Heracles' life was preannounced in the beginning (*Trach.* 79-81, 167) and is resumed and revealed in the end through the oracles.<sup>407</sup> *Telos* here concerns both Heracles' death and his 'ritual initiation into a new state',<sup>408</sup> both of which function as 'the fulfilment of a divinely appointed end'.<sup>409</sup> Hyllus' marriage functions in the framework of this larger *telos* for Heracles. The fulfilment of Heracles will come through the subsequent generations of the Dorian race inaugurated by the marriage of Hyllus and Iole.<sup>410</sup>

The tensions in the marriage arrangement serve also to articulate a most important issue of the play: the achievement of knowledge, the gap between mortality and divinity which humans try to bridge by struggling to achieve knowledge and civilization. This is

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<sup>404</sup> Goldhill (2012) 15-17, 23, 25. The strong oracular background in the play illustrated both in the beginning (*Trach.* 76-81, 164-70; cf. *Trach.* 46-8) as well as at the end (*Trach.* 1159-63, 1169-73) (Bowman (1999) 340-1) underscores the notions of fulfilment; there is also an emphasis on oracles and prophecy both in the unauthorized way of Nessus' guidelines to Deianeira (*Trach.* 568-77; cf. 680-8) as well as in the authorized oracles of Zeus (Bowman (1999) 335-48).

<sup>405</sup> Cf. Goldhill (2012) 15-17, 23, 25.

<sup>406</sup> Goldhill (2012) 15-6.

<sup>407</sup> Segal (1995) 71.

<sup>408</sup> Goldhill (2012) 15; cf. Segal (1996) 72.

<sup>409</sup> Segal (1995) 61.

<sup>410</sup> Cf. Segal (1981) 82. See above pp. 112-3.

never achieved by anyone in the play, not even Heracles, who is closest to it.<sup>411</sup> This is underscored in the last lines of the play. As for Deianeira and Iole, for Hyllus, divine will is beyond his understanding, a cruel and violent will.<sup>412</sup> Thus the arrangements of the ending and, most importantly, Hyllus' marriage to Iole leave him in a painful situation (*Trach.* 1264-78). The gap between human and divine is confirmed. Therefore although the marriage opens a window towards a positive development, the close is still pendant and the resolution is implied only, always just beyond the perception of the human participants.

### 3. Comedy

Marriage also figures as a closural device within comedy as one of a number of alternative moves. As in tragedy, marriage forms part of a larger stylized trend, but in a manner which is at once both formalistic and more consistently organic. First and foremost, in comedy, it is consistently integrated into the plot. Marriage is a suitable way for a comedy to end: Old Comedy concludes with the celebration of the comic hero's success. Wedding festivities stand out from other events focusing on the achievement of the individual in that the wedding was a spontaneous communal celebration. It also (to a greater degree than in tragedy) often takes the form of a ritual enacted in front of the audience. In particular, it shows strong features of the *hieros gamos*. Through the implications of marriage and wedding ritual, the text and its conclusion acquired an extra – figurative – layer of meaning, as we shall see. And this is centred on the ideas of transition, fulfilment and renewal, of the *oikos* and of the *polis*.

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<sup>411</sup> Segal (1981) 107-8, Segal (1995) 63.

<sup>412</sup> Segal (1981) 103, 107-8, Segal (1995) 94; cf. also Easterling (1982) 10-1, Cropp (1997).

Thus, in comedy it gives an impression of a firm closure,<sup>413</sup> in contrast to its more ambiguous use in tragedy.

**a. Aristophanic *gamos*, *hieros gamos* and the comic genre**

In contrast to tragedy, wedding as conclusion in Greek Old Comedy is firmly linked not just with specific writers but with the strong formalistic tendency of the genre as a whole. There are specific patterns which are discernible in the comic structure, such as the *parabasis* and *agon* and other epirrhematic *syzygies*.<sup>414</sup> This pronounced formalism is also found both in the sequence of structural components and in the presence of recurrent plot themes and dramatic structures.<sup>415</sup> *Gamos* fits into these structures very well. It is assimilated to the final success and the *komos* in the form of wedding feast and celebration,<sup>416</sup> as in *Birds* and *Peace*. In its specifics this ending matches with a common ritual sequence in Aristophanes' comedies, namely: a procession, followed by a sacrifice, preparation for the feast, and a celebration.<sup>417</sup> The wedding, then, finds its place in the conclusion in that it becomes one of the forms that this *komos* as the celebration of the victory takes in the conclusion.

Above and beyond the simple compatibility of celebration, the integration of marriage in Aristophanes may embrace the themes of the play, as in some of the Euripidean

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<sup>413</sup> The closure of comedy as a real and unambiguous one has been challenged, most recently by Wilson (2007) esp. 270-287.

<sup>414</sup> Handley (1985) 358-62 offers a good overview.

<sup>415</sup> See Handley (1985) 356, Reckford (1987) 451, 483-98, Silk (2000) 9, 263, 265, 270-71, 333.

<sup>416</sup> Reckford (1987) 444, Bowie (1996) 4, Silk (2000) 333.

<sup>417</sup> Sfyroeras (2004) esp. 252, 256-7. This sequence is co-extensive with the plot sequence (Sfyroeras (2004) 259).

examples. In its relationship with the *oikos*, marriage may be part of Aristophanes' general tendency to entangle *oikos* and *polis*,<sup>418</sup> but this takes also a form specific to each play. *Lysistrata*, where the plot is focused on marital dissonance as both generated by and offering a solution to civic and Hellenic discord, is the most straightforward case. Here the war between the sexes drives the plot, which makes the (re)marriage at the close a natural way to image the final removal of the obstacles to Greek peace. But marriage is also thematically embedded in *Peace*. Here peace, poetry, feasts, eating and drinking, and weddings, are components of the definitive celebration throughout the play (*Pax* 775-80, 974-7, 1318-21).<sup>419</sup> The poet uses all these as a set of shared associations on which he can draw. This thematic chain, of which peace is a part, is also featured in the finale. The wedding feast of the conclusion (*Pax* 1316-59) is used as the kind of celebration which combines every pleasure, consummation, eating and drinking, and gives them their place in the play (cf. also *Pax* 1339-40).<sup>420</sup>

The wedding bears a far stronger bond with the play in that it is firmly incorporated in its agricultural imagery and thematic area, which runs throughout the play as a whole. There is a close link between peace and agriculture. *Opora*, 'Harvest', is presented as a companion to *Peace* (*Pax* 523). Moreover, agricultural products are part of the *agatha* of peace for humans (*Pax* 338-45, 999-1015).<sup>421</sup> *Peace*'s return has an immediate effect on two agricultural products (*ἀμπέλους*, *Pax* 557 and *σुकᾶς*, *Pax* 558), as did her departure. Similarly, the extinction of agricultural products is correlated with the extinction of

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<sup>418</sup> Hutchinson (2011) esp. 48-50, 68-70.

<sup>419</sup> See Olson (1998) ad 974-7 and Ruffell (2011) 414.

<sup>420</sup> Silk (2000) 244.

<sup>421</sup> Cf. Silk (2000) 132-33.

peace (*Pax* 612-4). More importantly, the link between agriculture, which Opora represents, and the establishment of peace in the human world, which Peace represents, is articulated through the special relationship between peasants and peace (*Pax* 548-63), and the way the removal of peace harms them especially (*Pax* 625-3, 1178-90). The peasants were chosen to save Peace (*Pax* 508-11, cf. 479-80). It is only they that finally manage to rescue Peace (*Pax* 508-16) and take pleasure (*Pax* 556-7, 583-600; cf. 546-8) in her return (cf. *Pax* 1198-1206).<sup>422</sup> The intimacy of their connection is particularly illustrated through the description of the positive effects of peace on agriculture in a characteristically erotic tone (*Pax* 571-600).<sup>423</sup> When Trygaeus greets Peace upon her restoration he uses the word ‘βοτρυόδορε’ (*Pax* 520) and links her directly with rural agriculture and not with the *polis* and its problems with war, to which she is more naturally related. The wedding belongs to this framework. Hermes speaks about βότρυς at *Pax* 708 in the lines at which he gives Opora to Trygaeus in marriage.<sup>424</sup> This is a produce selected specifically for emphasis: Trygaeus will ‘cultivate’ Opora to produce grapes.<sup>425</sup> Crop and harvest themselves are related to human sexuality (*Pax* 1322-5, 1339-40, 1348, 1351-2).<sup>426</sup> Human and agrarian fertility are juxtaposed in the text as if they were the same thing (*Pax* 1322-7).

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<sup>422</sup> Cf. Olson (1998) ad 556-7. This benefit to the peasants is illustrated by contrast through the dissatisfaction of the arms’ dealer (*Pax* 1210-64), but also of the crest maker, the sword smith and the spear maker (*Pax* 545-7, 549).

<sup>423</sup> See Olson (1998) ad 582-600.

<sup>424</sup> Cf. Odysseos (2001) 721-2.

<sup>425</sup> On the agricultural aspect of this marriage, see below pp. 122-4.

<sup>426</sup> Badnall (2008) 220-1.

In *Birds*, though *gamos* is not so firmly integrated into the central thematic concerns of the play,<sup>427</sup> marriage to Basileia emerges naturally from the plot, serving as the means for Peisetaerus to secure his sovereignty (*Av.* 1534-45). So in all cases where marriage is the conclusion of the comedy, it is a theme which is smoothly and effectively tied with the plot and not a development which appears suddenly in the ending.

But the use of marriage as an end in Aristophanic comedy is organic in a much more essential way. To begin with, it is especially appropriate to the origins of the comic genre. According to Aristotle, comedy arose from phallic rituals (*Poe.*, ch. III, IV, V, especially 1449a11-2).<sup>428</sup> Whether or not the reality is so straightforward,<sup>429</sup> a *phallos* was always part of the costume of the comic actor.<sup>430</sup> Thus connotations of sexuality were inherent in the genre; and since Aristophanes did not invent the comic costume, this was an embedded feature in comedy from very early on. Sex is often prominent in the conclusion of Aristophanic comedy, frequently combined with feasting.<sup>431</sup> And of course marriage has sexual implications.

Since the ritual element of comedy probably has a solid presence in the plays, it is not surprising that the weddings in the ending should have a ritual aspect, too. There is however an added dimension, in that the form of these wedding rituals is that of ‘sacred

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<sup>427</sup> There are some scattered references which link marriage and weddings with happy occasions of life (*Av.* 126-34, 161). Only, *eros* is a – minor – theme (*Av.* 671-96, cf. 1284); cf. Slater (1997) 81.

<sup>428</sup> On the ritual origins of comedy, see Reckford (1987) 449-51.

<sup>429</sup> Cf. Pickard-Cambridge and Webster (1962) 132, 162 and Handley (1985) 362-7.

<sup>430</sup> Handley (1985) 357.

<sup>431</sup> Sommerstein (1980) 11.

marriage', *hieros gamos*.<sup>432</sup> *Hieros gamos* is a recurrent mythic motif. It denotes the union between superhuman powers<sup>433</sup> which establishes order and system. It is then a constitutive act, a creative process with theogonic and cosmogonic implications. In Greek myth, the original *hieros gamos* is the union of Heaven and Earth, attested in Hesiod and Aeschylus. The lovemaking of Zeus and Hera in the *Iliad* (*Il.* 14.347-51) is like its depiction in literature. These unions bear a strong fertility element.<sup>434</sup> This archetypal divine union was represented in human religious activities and this representation was also considered as a sacred marriage.<sup>435</sup> The enactment is performed by two humans and takes place in the framework of a ritual.<sup>436</sup> The most well-known example is the sacred marriage at the *Anthesteria* (Dionysos and Basilinna).<sup>437</sup> The socio-political benefit generated through this particular sacred marriage<sup>438</sup> is an extension of agrarian fertility; the latter ensures that the *polis* flourishes as a political entity.

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<sup>432</sup> On *hieros gamos*, see Kerényi (1976) 105-8, Burkert (1985) 108-9, 132-4 and Avagianou (1991) 199-202. See also Kerényi (1950), Freymuth (1964), Cremer (1982), Bermejo Barrera (1989), Albert (1991).

<sup>433</sup> For examples of *hieroi gamoi*, see Kerényi (1976) 107; cf. Avagianou (1991) 199-202.

<sup>434</sup> The aspect of agrarian fertility in *hieros gamos* has been an object of a debate, but it is probable that it existed (cf. also Badnall (2008) 222-225.). It is particularly attested in the *hieroi gamoi* described in Hesiod (*Theog.* 969-74), Aeschylus (fr. 44) and Homer (*Il.* 14.347-51; cf. in contrast Janko (1992) ad *Il.* 14.346-53, who is slightly sceptical about the fertility caused by the union of Zeus and Hera).

<sup>435</sup> Avagianou (1991) 192-3, cf. also in contrast Pickard-Cambridge (1968) 12, Parke (1977/1986) 113, Simon (1983) 93, 98.

<sup>436</sup> Cf. Avagianou (1991) 201.

<sup>437</sup> See Avagianou (1991) 199-202. The bride as the wife of *archon basileus* and Basilinna represented the *polis* (Avagianou (1991) 192). The union has been interpreted as representing the communion between divine and human (Munn (2006) 39). The *polis*, represented by the wife of the *archon basileus* is benefited in that this *gamos* was supposed to generate the agrarian fertility of the land. See a summary of the scholarship on the issue of agrarian fertility in the Anthesteria in Avagianou (1991) 192-3. The evidence for the socio-political benefit is ps.-Demosthenes' *Against Neaera* (59.73-8), cf. Pickard-Cambridge (1968) 11-12, Avagianou (1991) 192-3, Seaford (1994) 263, fn. 126 and 266.

<sup>438</sup> Avagianou (1991) 192.



The marriages in the endings of Aristophanic comedy are *hieroi gamoi*. These are divine marriages, where at least the bride is a goddess and the groom has divine attributes. In particular, in *Peace*, *hieros gamos* is present in the form of a marriage with a divinity (*Pax* 853-4), since Opora is a goddess. Also, Trygaeus is considered as the next best after the gods (*Pax* 917); thus he is given an elevated status, even if he is not – literally – a god.<sup>439</sup> Therefore, both partners bear some features which make them divine.

In *Birds* in the wedding which ends the play the bridegroom and the bride are modelled on the marriage of Zeus and Hera (*Av.* 1720-65).<sup>440</sup> The marriage of Peisetaerus and Basileia is likened to their prototype: ἐν τοιῷδ' ὑμεναίῳ (*Av.* 1735).<sup>441</sup> Peisetaerus is equated with Zeus, since he is turned into the 'most superior of gods' (*Av.* 1765). Moreover, in the manner of divine succession myths he defeats Zeus and he forces the latter to give him Basileia.<sup>442</sup> This is an important element because it endows him with Zeus' power which is personified by Basileia (*Av.* 1537-43),<sup>443</sup> as her identity and attributes (*Av.* 1537-43) indicate.<sup>444</sup> Basileia

ταμιεύει τὸν κεραυνὸν τοῦ Διὸς  
καὶ τᾶλλ' ἀπαξάπαντα, τὴν εὐβουλίαν,  
τὴν εὐνομίαν, τὴν σωφροσύνην, τὰ νεώρια,  
τὴν λοιδορίαν, τὸν κωλακρέτην, τὰ τριώβολα (*Av.* 1538-41).

<sup>439</sup> Cf. Bowie (1996) 149, Olson (1998) ad 718-9.

<sup>440</sup> Sommerstein speaks of them as 'the new Zeus and the new Hera' (Sommerstein (1987) ad 1720-65).

<sup>441</sup> Badnall (2008) 221-4.

<sup>442</sup> Dunbar (1995) ad 1731, cf. Bowie (1996) 163, Badnall (2008) 221-2.

<sup>443</sup> Avagianou (1991) 33-5. It is true that the last vowel of βασιλεία is short and therefore she cannot be a personification of the kingship due to her name (*Av.* 1536, 1753) (Dunbar (1995) ad 1531-6 and ad 1753, cf. Craik (1987) 27).

<sup>444</sup> Cf. Dunbar (1995) ad 1531-6. Basileia means power for her possessor. Basileia carries with her the thunderbolt and everything else that makes him important (*Av.* 1538-43, especially 1543).

In a typical Aristophanic manner, Basileia is again an abstraction transformed to person,<sup>445</sup> a figure whose name makes her the embodiment of sovereign, divine power.<sup>446</sup> Basileia then guarantees her husband's sovereignty (*Av.* 1536-43),<sup>447</sup> as Hera does for Zeus<sup>448</sup>. Thus, Basileia is implicitly assimilated to Hera and may substitute for her.<sup>449</sup> Through the thunderbolt of Zeus, then, now in Peisetaerus' possession, he has in effect replaced Zeus.<sup>450</sup> The song at the end (*Av.* 1720-65) resembles a cultic hymn (esp. *Av.* 1744-58): it includes three important parts of the genre: firstly, the appraisal of the god, since it likens him to an all-bright star praising the new god (*Av.* 1709-10), secondly the exaltation that he confers blessings to the *polis* (*Av.* 1725), a reference to his attributes (*Av.* 1713, 1716), and finally a short narrative (*Av.* 1731).<sup>451</sup>

Yet, it is not only the divine attributes of the persons involved that make these unions sacred. More importantly, these marriages themselves in their nature and function resemble the *hieros gamos*. In *Peace* the marriage of Trygaeus to Opora has a strong agrarian fertility aspect, which is an important aspect of *hieros gamos*. Opora is not just a goddess, she is a fertility goddess. This is denoted by her name: *opora* means

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<sup>445</sup> Newiger (1957) 121-2, Silk (2000) 240, 331-2, Badnall (2008) 211.

<sup>446</sup> Dunbar (1995) 8.

<sup>447</sup> Badnall (2008) 223-4.

<sup>448</sup> In Greek myth, Hera guarantees Zeus' sovereignty through their intercourse. Hera is not the only goddess on whom Zeus' sovereignty depends; but she is one of these and it is their intercourse that realizes this through the significant forces it generates, namely war, youth and procreation personified by Ares, Hebe and Eileithyia (see on this issue Munn (2006) 32, 34, 37).

<sup>449</sup> Holzhausen (2002) 42, Munn (2006) 39-40, Badnall (2008) 223; cf. Sommerstein (1987) ad 1720-65. Basileia may also echo the name of Dionysus' bride, Basilinna (Anderson and Dix (2007) 323-4). If so, then the *polis* is probably represented in this union, which in turn points to the Anthesteria (cf. Munn (2006) 39-40). If there the bride, the wife of the *archon*, represented in a way the *polis* (Avagianou (1991) 192), here Peisetaerus is the tyrant (*Av.* 1708).

<sup>450</sup> Cf. Avagianou (1991) 33-5.

<sup>451</sup> Dunbar (1995) ad 1720-65, p. 750, Badnall (2008) 221.

‘harvest’.<sup>452</sup> Trygaeus is an invented name and originates from τρυγάω: he is the one who gathers the (grape) harvest.<sup>453</sup> This relation between the significance of the names and the reality in which they participate (cf. *Pax* 1339-40)<sup>454</sup> is crucial: the union of Trygaeus is both of concrete and abstract nature, both literal and symbolic.<sup>455</sup> The metaphorical aspect is registered in the term βότρυς in the *engye* (*Pax* 708), employed for their offspring instead of τέκνα:

ἴθι νυν ἐπὶ τούτοις τὴν Ὀπώραν λάμβανε  
 γυναιῖκα σαυτῶ τήνδε· κᾶτ’ ἐν τοῖς ἀγροῖς  
 ταύτη ξυνοικῶν ἐκποιοῦ σαυτῶ βότρυς (*Pax* 706-8).<sup>456</sup>

Marital consummation itself is conflated with the agricultural activity of harvest: the phrase used for this marriage is τρυγήσομεν αὐτήν (*Pax* 1339, 1340).<sup>457</sup> At one level this is just typical Aristophanic inventiveness in the sphere of sexual vocabulary; but it also reveals the metaphorical interpretation of this union.<sup>458</sup> This reading is reinforced by the identification of the female and male genitalia with a fig (*Pax* 1351-2).<sup>459</sup> These connotations are also communicated to the context. Thus, it is very probable that the phrase συκολογοῦντες (*Pax* 1348) has sexual connotations, too.<sup>460</sup> This interpretation is

<sup>452</sup> Sulprizio (2007) 164, cf. Silk (2000) 240, 331-2.

<sup>453</sup> Hall (2006) 328-9. Quite interestingly the term that Aristophanes uses here for comedy is again originated from τρυγάω; it is τρυγηδία (cf. Olson (1998) ad 190). Maybe Aristophanes wants to link comedy, or at least this very play, with agriculture (cf. Compton-Engle (1999) 324-9).

<sup>454</sup> Cf. Olson (1998) ad 1340-3.

<sup>455</sup> Newiger (1957) 110-1, 121-2.

<sup>456</sup> See Olson (1998) ad 706-8.

<sup>457</sup> Henderson (1975) 65, 167; cf. Olson (1998) 1340-3. See below pp. 130-1.

<sup>458</sup> Cf. Olson (1998) ad 706-8 based on Paley.

<sup>459</sup> Henderson (1975) 118 with 135; cf. Olson (1998) ad 1354-6 and 1359-60.

<sup>460</sup> Henderson (1975) 65; cf. Olson (1998) ad 1354-6.

supported by the use of the phrase ἡ δίφορος συκῆ as a metaphor for genitalia in comedy.<sup>461</sup>

The context of this wedding is also reminiscent of the context of the sacred marriage of the Anthesteria. Both the names of Trygaeus and Opora refer or can refer to vintage, new production of wine is celebrated (*Pax* 916), and *khytrai* (χύτραις, *Pax* 923; χύτραισιν, *Pax* 924) echo *khytroi*, the third day of the Anthesteria feast, possibly hinting at them.<sup>462</sup> The stagecraft during the performance of the wedding song also communicates this agrarian attribute: the goddess of harvest, Opora, stands among Trygaeus, a vinedresser, and a Chorus consisting of farmers.<sup>463</sup>

As well as the agrarian aspect there is also a socio-political aspect. The marriage of Trygaeus and Opora guarantees the safety of agriculture and establishes peace and prosperity for Greece (*Pax* 1319-1328). In *Peace* the political character of the rescue of Peace refers not only to Athens, but to Greece as a whole.<sup>464</sup> Trygaeus has saved the Greeks (*Pax* 866-7, 914-5, 1035-6, cf. 203-4).<sup>465</sup> This is a Panhellenic benefaction (*Pax* 59-62, 93-4, 105-6, 204-9, 211-9, cf. 261, 435-6, 542, 657-9).<sup>466</sup>

In the *Birds*, the political aspect of Peisetaerus' wedding and the fact that this marriage has an effect on the *polis* (*Av.* 1725) are stressed in the text.<sup>467</sup> Despite the fact that

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<sup>461</sup> Henderson (1975) 117-8; cf. Olson (1998) ad 1359-60.

<sup>462</sup> Bowie (1996) 147-8.

<sup>463</sup> Badnall (2008) 220.

<sup>464</sup> Athens plays the leading role as Trygaeus is an Athenian.

<sup>465</sup> See Olson (1998) ad 866-7.

<sup>466</sup> Cf. Silk (2000) 407 and Olson (1998) ad 93-94. Cf. also Bowie (1996) 149.

<sup>467</sup> Cf. Craik (1987) 27-8.

Peisetaerus' success is more individual than collective, his marriage is described as *μεγάλοι ... τύχαι* (*Av.* 1726) and a benefaction (*μακαριστὸν ... γάμον*, *Av.* 1725)<sup>468</sup> for the civic community of the *Birds* (*Av.* 1723-8);<sup>469</sup> also *Av.* 1706-7 and 1708 are in context; the birds may be *τρισμακάριον γένος* (*Av.* 1707) for this marriage. In fact, this marriage introduces the constitution of a new, glorious age for the birds and their *polis*.<sup>470</sup> By the end, their city has achieved everything that a *polis* would wish to possess: festivity, independence, wealth, rule and last but certainly not least food and drink, especially wine, and sex and a life without worries.<sup>471</sup> Although the medium of all this achievement is not the wedding with Basileia, this liaison is the chance to exhibit the festivity of this city, and it is the main source of the power of the birds (*Av.* 1543, 1706-8, 1725-8). Thus, the wedding in the end seals the foundation of a new *polis*.<sup>472</sup>

Yet, the most important aspect which makes *gamos* an organic element in comedy is its significance for the comic hero. Through marriage his new standing is cemented. This is of material essence in Aristophanes. Trygaeus had a relatively low status at the

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<sup>468</sup> The birds' status is ameliorated; for this, see Rosenbloom (2006) 265-71.

<sup>469</sup> There is a potential for ironic reading here, on which see Hubbard (1997) and Romer (1997); cf. also Bowie (1996) 169-77, Slater (2002) 144-5. I see no real evidence for irony in the text (Henderson (2003) 172). It is true that the new rule is good for Peisetaerus but also within the fiction of the play it is good for the birds (Henderson (2003) 172). Peisetaerus' power derives from the sovereignty of the *polis* of the birds and is ultimately in their interest, which it protects (Henderson (2003) 172). It also seems that the benefit to the birds is specific (see Rosenbloom (2006) 265-8): they are masters instead of commodities and slaves (Rosenbloom (2006) 265); their divinity is restored and so in a way is their kingship (Rosenbloom (2006) 268). Although Peisetaerus eats the birds, nobody objects (as birds certainly might in real life if they were able); he eats only the traitors and this might well be acceptable for an Athenian audience, who regularly killed them. More crucially, the ironic readings miss the element of legitimate self-indulgence and the fact that comedy is in many respects fundamentally antinomian (see for instance, Dover (1972) 37-8 and most recently Platter (2007) 24, 41).

<sup>470</sup> Badnall (2008) 224.

<sup>471</sup> Henderson (1997) 137.

<sup>472</sup> Cf. Dunbar (1995) 10, and ad 1723-4.

beginning of the play; he was a simple vine-grower.<sup>473</sup> However, by the end of the play he gets his marriage as a reward for what he has done (*Pax* 865-6). As usual with comic heroes, this achievement involves sexual satisfaction as a central component (*Pax* 709).<sup>474</sup> But through his marriage Trygaeus is also rejuvenated;<sup>475</sup> this means *eudaimonia* to him (*Pax* 859-65).<sup>476</sup> He now becomes the first, except for the gods (*Pax* 917). He also gets a new *oikos* and descendants, both of which were crucial for an Athenian. So through *gamos* he achieves youth, happiness and almost reaches the divine. In the *Birds*, marriage brings a radical change in Peisetaerus' initially reduced circumstances and a new superior status. To begin with, his fulfilment through marriage consists in rejuvenation<sup>477</sup> and 'the sensual awards of the typical comic hero',<sup>478</sup> namely, sex and also power.<sup>479</sup> Yet, marriage also plays a crucial role in effecting the achievement of the comic hero. Peisetaerus manages to obfuscate the hierarchical structures of the *oikos* and the *polis* and in the end to prevail over them.<sup>480</sup> The means through which he seals his success is marriage and its natural consequence, the creation of his own *oikos*. It is thus that he definitely and absolutely imposes himself on the *polis*. Furthermore, Peisetaerus has gained great power (*Av.* 1748-54); in the end as a god, he rules the whole universe.<sup>481</sup> And this is achieved through his marriage, which actualizes his new advantageous position, on the one hand, and on the other it illustrates

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<sup>473</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 217.

<sup>474</sup> Cf. Henderson (1997) 14.

<sup>475</sup> Cf. Olson (1998) ad 856-8, ad 860-2.

<sup>476</sup> Olson (1998) ad 335-6.

<sup>477</sup> At *Av.* 1256 he was old but at *Av.* 1723 he appears as young.

<sup>478</sup> Henderson (1997) 141.

<sup>479</sup> Silk (2000) 286-9.

<sup>480</sup> Hutchinson (2011) 68-70, cf. 54-6.

<sup>481</sup> Silk (2000) 406-7, Badnall (2008) 217; cf. Konstan (1990) 201-2.

and represents the possession of Zeus' power.<sup>482</sup> Marriage then secures his sovereignty (*Av.* 1536-43).<sup>483</sup>

However, though many of our sources foreground the importance of marriage for the female, here once more the male comes to the fore. Female *telos* through *gamos* is not an issue here mainly because Old Comedy is not – or not usually – concerned with female subjective sexual experience, but also because *Opora* and *Basileia* are not mortals, but abstractions.<sup>484</sup> It is male fulfilment that matters and needs to be effected: it is the male that needs *Basileia*'s attributes. *Basileia* has the active role and communicates her qualities to *Peisetaerus* (*Av.* 1538-43) and not vice-versa as is the case in the *hieros gamos*, for instance of Zeus and Hera.<sup>485</sup> This makes these unions more the fulfilment of the men than of the women.<sup>486</sup>

The sense of fulfilment is underlined in the way *Peisetaerus*' achievement is hailed in the end as victory in the context of the wedding celebration.<sup>487</sup> The concluding lines of the *Birds* with the words *τήνελλα καλλίνικος* hint at the victory song by Archilochus, which we have seen in Pindar:

ἀλαλαλαί, ἰὴ παιών,

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<sup>482</sup> Cf. Dunbar (1995) 8.

<sup>483</sup> Badnall (2008) 221, 223-4.

<sup>484</sup> Newiger (1957) 121.

<sup>485</sup> Cf. Dunbar (1995) ad 1538-43, Avagianou (1991) 32-3 and also here, Introduction, pp. 21-5.

<sup>486</sup> Cf. for the ritual, Avagianou (1991) 33.

<sup>487</sup> Calame (2004) 178-81, Wilson (2007) esp. 267-8, 277-80; cf. Badnall (2008) 217-8.

τήνελλα καλλίνικος, ὃ δαιμόνων ὑπέρτατε (Av.  
1763-5).<sup>488</sup>

So, this is not only a wedding celebration, but simultaneously a victory celebration. The end of the play is his triumph and the last three lines explicitly address him as an athletic victor (Av. 1763-5; cf. also *Ach.* 1227-34).<sup>489</sup> This conflation is eased by the fact that marriage with Basileia combines gaining Zeus' power and attaining sovereignty, as we saw above. Thus, the wedding *makarismos* addressed to Peisetaerus in the conclusion can be read as a *makarismos* not only for his wedding but also for his triumph, underscored by the elements of cultic hymn.<sup>490</sup>

#### **b. Aristophanic *gamos* and the creation of utopia: a case of Aristophanic myth-making**

As I argued above, the Aristophanic *gamos* has elements of sacred marriage.<sup>491</sup> We have seen how this relates to the origins of the comic genre. But the concept of sacred *gamos* is also strongly correlated to notions of the creation of the world in one of its forms: the primal union of Heaven and Earth. The way Aeschylus describes it is telling:

ἐρῶ μὲν ἀγνὸς οὐρανὸς τρῶσαι χθόνα,

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<sup>488</sup> Carey (2012) 33-5.

<sup>489</sup> Dunbar (1995) ad 1764-5, also ad 1720-65, p. 750. There is probably another way in which the celebration of the victory of the comic hero is assimilated to the wedding celebration. The sacrifice taking place before the wedding celebration seals the success of the plan that the comic hero had (Sfyroeras (2004) 256-7). This sacrifice is not explicitly linked with the wedding following, but there were sacrifices preceding Greek weddings offered both by the bride and the groom (Rehm (1994) 12, 14). Thus, the sacrifice is to be understood as part of the weddings. Since the sacrifice seals the comic hero's success, it does not only introduce the wedding celebration, but also the victory celebration.

<sup>490</sup> Dunbar (1995) ad 1720-65, p.750, Calame (2004) 176-81, Badnall (2008) 221, Carey (2012) 34-5.

<sup>491</sup> See pp. 119-28.



ἔρωσ δὲ γαῖαν λαμβάνει γάμου τυχεῖν·  
ὄμβρος δ' ἀπ' εὐνάεντος οὐρανοῦ πεσὼν  
ἔκυσε γαῖαν, ἣ δὲ τίκτεται βροτοῖς  
μήλων τε βοσκὰς καὶ βίον Δημήτριον·  
δένδρων τ' ὀπώραν ἐκ νοτίζοντος γάμου  
τέλειός ἐστι· τῶν δ' ἐγὼ παραίτιος (fr. 44).<sup>492</sup>

In that sense cosmogony and sacred *gamos* are closely connected. There is something primal in these unions and this is what associates them to the creation of the world and the relevant myths. This is confirmed by the fact that wedding itself is often used as a conclusion to myths of foundation.<sup>493</sup>

These implications then make this kind of wedding particularly useful in the framework of Aristophanic myth creation. Aristophanes sometimes plays with already existing mythic material;<sup>494</sup> equally he may invent myths in order to create extreme situations for the comic hero. This element of *mythopoiia* increases the significance of the events of the play, universalizes what is happening in the plot, aggrandizes the ideas and enriches the *world of ideas*. Thus, it expands the limits of dramatic expression.

In *Peace* and *Birds*, Aristophanes presents a myth of the creation of a utopian world which combines food, drink, sex and fertility.<sup>495</sup> This is the quest from the beginning

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<sup>492</sup> The text is taken from Sommerstein (2008c), with a typographical misprint corrected; the punctuation follows Seaford (2012) 305. The numbering of the fragment refers to *TrGF*.

<sup>493</sup> Bowie (1996) 163.

<sup>494</sup> Handley (1985) 370-73.

<sup>495</sup> Ruffell (2011) 386, 420-1.

and is reflecting an urge to change the world in which the comic hero lives. Sacred marriage is of the essence in the inauguration of this new reality.<sup>496</sup> This is more pronounced in *Peace*, but is also lurking in *Birds*.

In *Peace* the sacred *gamos* is modelled on one essentially cosmogonic and primeval, the union of Heaven and Earth. This is the ultimate sacred marriage, the marriage of vines and harvest. Given its explicit connotations of fertility,<sup>497</sup> if this wedding stands for the new world of peace it creates,<sup>498</sup> it follows that this dream-world is not only one of absolute sensual pleasure, of food, drink and sex, but also a utopia of plenty and peace. Yet, not only does it contain every kind of pleasure; most importantly in inaugurating a cult for Peace, this may be the most comprehensive utopia in Aristophanes.<sup>499</sup>

Moreover, this new *modus vivendi* is communicated to the *polis*. Sex, food and drink are pleasures for the whole community. It is significant that the word *τρυγήσομεν* metaphorically used for the marriage of Trygaeus and Opora (*Pax* 1339, 1340) is in the plural; this suggests that the consummation of the marriage would be done by all of them, not only by Trygaeus.<sup>500</sup> Moreover, Trygaeus urges all the members of the chorus and probably his audience as well, as we will see in the next section, to join the feast of drink (*Pax* 1353-4) and food (*Pax* 1357-9). And in a (historical) sense this is literally true, since the benefits of (the real-negotiated) peace will be shared. The new mythic

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<sup>496</sup> Newiger (1957) 122, Konstan (1997) 4.

<sup>497</sup> See above pp. 117-21, 123-4.

<sup>498</sup> Dover (1972) 139.

<sup>499</sup> Carey (forthcoming 2013).

<sup>500</sup> Henderson (1975) 65, 167; cf. Olson (1998) 1340-3. Olson in contrast suggests that the plural is probably used as a joke (Olson (1998) ad 1340-3).

world created by the *hieros gamos* of Trygaeus and Opora is a utopia *in the lived present of the play* (unusual in comedy) where peace and plenty coexist and everybody enjoys the pleasures of food, drink and sex.

Moreover, in this case marriage is used as a comic mirror of the procedures for the negotiations for peace. In this play, a comic hero is created after the mythic heroic prototypes, and in particular that of Bellerophon.<sup>501</sup> The comic hero achieves the impossible: he ascends to heaven and brings back Peace. At the same time, like Bellerophon, his model, he also wins a bride.<sup>502</sup> In order to manage the settlement with Peace and the agreement for her return, apart from his joint venture with the farmers, Trygaeus has first to negotiate with the gods, Peace (see *Pax* 657-705, esp. 705) and Hermes. The marriage subsequently offered by Hermes (*Pax* 706-8) between Opora and Trygaeus, the *hieros gamos* of this play, is the culmination of this successful venture to save Peace and establish peace in Greece.<sup>503</sup> It seals the success of the negotiation procedure and the achievement of peace.

But there is more to this marriage. There is throughout a dialogue of the reality of the comic play with live events in Athens and Greece. In attempting to generate peace on the divine and mythic level, Trygaeus parallels the human negotiators.<sup>504</sup> On the human level, politicians achieve peace through negotiation, but in a world where divinity is

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<sup>501</sup> The play commenced with this parallelism, since the name of the dung beetle (Πηγάσιον) which transports him to heaven recalls the winged horse of Bellerophon (cf. *Pax* 76-8, 135-6, 154-72).

<sup>502</sup> Bellerophon flying on his horse Pegasus killed Chimera. He also managed to vanquish the Amazons with the help of Pegasus. His success in this, as well as in a battle against Solymi, that Iobates assigned to him, resulted in his marriage to the daughter of Iobates, Philonoe as his reward (*Il.* 6.155–203).

<sup>503</sup> Dover (1972) 137 with 139.

<sup>504</sup> Cf. Dover (1972) 137.

everywhere, success on the human level implies accomplishment on the divine plane. The achievement of peace is then overdetermined, in that Trygaeus manages on the divine level what the negotiators attain on a more mundane level.<sup>505</sup> But there is a substantial difference between these two attempts for peace. Here, Trygaeus' task requires only several lines to be successfully completed (*Pax* 458-516 and 657-708). By contrast, in the mundane reality, the negotiation for this is a hard and time-consuming procedure. Here it appears to be so easy, even fun<sup>506</sup>, and its outcome is as celebratory an occasion as marriage. This is ultimately, then, a comic fantasy representing a more banal reality.

This mythopoetic approach to plot-building is also applied in *Birds*. This play begins with Peisetaerus and his dissatisfaction with Athens. By the end of the play he manages to create a new *polis* in heaven, inhabited by birds. Peisetaerus' marriage makes him, as noted above, a 'new Zeus' with a 'new Hera'.<sup>507</sup> This presentation of the hero takes us beyond the plot into a kind of *mythopoiia*. In inventing a new divine pair and in representing their sacred *gamos* Aristophanes offers a new theogony as the basis of a new world. This is underlined by the intertextual relation of the *Birds* to Hesiod's *Theogony*.<sup>508</sup>

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<sup>505</sup> See on 'overdetermination', Dodds (1951) 7 and fn.32, Lesky (1961), Hammond (1965), Lesky (1966), Kullmann (1985) 3-5, 15, Gaskin (1990); cf. also Buller (1979), van Erp Taalman Kip (2000) 391-2 (and for the combination of human action and divine will Van Erp Taalman Kip (2000) 400-1); see also Scodel (2009) 425-9 on divine intervention.

<sup>506</sup> See for instance, the joke on Sophocles, *Pax* 695-9.

<sup>507</sup> See above pp. 121-2.

<sup>508</sup> Holzhausen (2002) 34-45.

In this new mythic world there is one *polis* with absolute power. This is essentially the *alter ego* of Athens.<sup>509</sup> The most important affinity of the birds' city with Athens is its expansionism and the supremacy it achieves by the end.<sup>510</sup> This is a *polis* which through its tyrant has the hegemony of the world and its rulers are the substitutes for Zeus and Hera. This city has commodified all food supply and has achieved the objectives of Athenian imperialism.<sup>511</sup> It is not only self-sufficient but more crucially it has become the undisputed master of the new *cosmos* created; their power and sovereignty is secured.<sup>512</sup> This is then a new more successful Athens in heaven.<sup>513</sup>

### **c. Aristophanic *gamos* and the victory of the comic poet**

There is a further dimension to the wedding celebrations which maps on to the larger comic tendency toward overt metatheatricity. Aristophanes employs *gamos* to communicate to the audience the message that the poet will win in the comic competition. As we saw above, the wedding celebration at the end of the plays is also a victory celebration.<sup>514</sup> Yet, this notion of triumph is developed even further, in that, ultimately, it is communicated to the play in its essence.

This is managed through the combination of two confluences: the conflation of wedding and victory celebration, on the one hand, and the conflation of the victory of the comic hero and the victory of the comic poet, on the other. Aristophanes ends several of his

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<sup>509</sup> Konstan (1997) 13-7.

<sup>510</sup> Konstan (1997) 17.

<sup>511</sup> Rosenbloom (2006) 265-8.

<sup>512</sup> Cf. Rosenbloom (2006) 265-8 and Hutchinson (2011) 55-6.

<sup>513</sup> Konstan (1997) 13-7.

<sup>514</sup> See pp. 127-8.

comedies with the representation of the comic hero's triumph and his *exodos* offstage to a place where he will celebrate his victory (*Ach.* 1227-34, *Av.* 1720-65, *Pax* 1316-59; cf. *Eq.* 1407-8, *Ran.* 1500-32, *Lys.* 1316-21, *Vesp.* 1535-7; cf. *Eccl.* 1163-83, which is not an *exodos*)).<sup>515</sup> The comic hero exits to the city where he will celebrate his victory jointly with the *polis*.<sup>516</sup>

In *Peace*, this is done in two ways.<sup>517</sup> Firstly, the comedy is envisaged as a sacrifice ritual in which the audience is invited to participate.<sup>518</sup> When offering the sacrifice, Trygaeus addresses the spectators and asks them to taste the offerings, ἄγε δὴ, θεαταί, δεῦρο συσπλαγχνεύετε / μετὰ νῶν (*Pax* 1115-6). It has been plausibly suggested that what Trygaeus does in these lines is treat the play itself as a sacrifice, and by συσπλαγχνεύετε, 'tasting the guts', he implicitly asks them to taste and enjoy the comedy.<sup>519</sup> At the same time, because this is a sacrifice preceding the wedding-victory celebration, the sacrifice implies the ultimate success of the play.<sup>520</sup>

Secondly, Trygaeus is more than a successful comic hero. He is also likened to the *chorodidaskalos* (*Pax* 1192-6, 1197-1310, 1316-28; cf. the chorus' reply, *Pax* 1311-5).<sup>521</sup> More importantly, Trygaeus is addressing both the *choreutai* and the audience and asks them to join the celebration and rejoice together with the chorus (*Pax* 1317 and

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<sup>515</sup> Wilson (2007) 267-9.

<sup>516</sup> Wilson (2007) 268.

<sup>517</sup> In *Peace*, there are many references to the audience and its metatheatrical character is particularly well-known (Cassio (1985) esp. 37, Sfyroeras (2004) 260, 265, fn. 39).

<sup>518</sup> Sfyroeras (2004) 259-60.

<sup>519</sup> Sfyroeras (2004) 259-60.

<sup>520</sup> Cf. Sfyroeras (2004) 257.

<sup>521</sup> Calame (2004) 174-6.

1357-8). Thus the festivity for the comic victory and the wedding is to be shared by the whole audience, and ultimately becomes a celebration for the triumph of the comic play in the festival.<sup>522</sup> Once again the victory of the comic hero and the comic poet are assimilated.<sup>523</sup> This assimilation, with its transference of the intra-textual celebration to the extra-textual domain, underscores the implied expectation that the poet will win. The play claims that it has been a success; like its hero it has achieved its target, its *telos*.

In the *Birds* again the comic poet uses the closing celebration to express his anticipation of victory.<sup>524</sup> The three final lines and the *exodos* include elements which encourage this metapoetical reading. In the conclusion itself, the wedding procession heads towards the *polis*, offstage.<sup>525</sup> Here, the chorus of the birds make hints at the poetic victory, as Calame has argued.<sup>526</sup> ἀλαλαλαί (*Av.* 1763) is triumphal, success is also implied through the cry ἦ παιῶν (*Av.* 1763) – often employed in celebrations of military victory – and through the phrase τήνελλα καλλίνικος (*Av.* 1764), which was part of the victory song of Archilochus.<sup>527</sup> These last lines are addressed to Peisetaerus and then there is no reference as to where the procession is going: this facilitates the metatheatrical interpretation of the *exodos* as a procession offstage to celebrate the poet's victory.<sup>528</sup>

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<sup>522</sup> Calame (2004) 175-6, Wilson (2007) 279-80.

<sup>523</sup> Wilson (2007) 279-80.

<sup>524</sup> Calame (2004) 178-181.

<sup>525</sup> Calame (2004) 179-80. In a similar way to *Peace*, again the comic hero may be understood as the *choregos*, the person who leads the dramatic action, in that he gives the directions to Basileia for their dance, but this is not necessarily so (Calame (2004) 180).

<sup>526</sup> Calame (2004) 178-181.

<sup>527</sup> Calame (2004) 180-1, Carey (2012) 33-5.

<sup>528</sup> Calame (2004) 181.

A similar ambivalence with reference to the celebration and the song may be traced in *Lysistrata*.<sup>529</sup> The reconciliation and reunion of the couples is presented as a remarriage. And this remarriage in turn both results from and is celebrated as the victory of the women's project to bring peace to Greece. The women had used the power of Aphrodite in order to persuade their husbands and so it is natural with this background that the wedding-remarriage song for the reconciliation would figure in the ending. But this is again a victory song celebrating the outcome of the play:

ἀλαλαί, ἰὴ παιῶν.

αἴρεσθ' ἄνω, ἰαί,

ὥς ἐπὶ νίκη, ἰαί.

εὐοῖ εὐοῖ, εὐαὶ εὐαὶ (*Lys.* 1291-4).

The lack of specificity here means that this victory song can refer both to the success of the women of the play and also to another victory, the anticipated triumph of the poet in the dramatic contest.<sup>530</sup>

In *Lysistrata*, the two mixed choruses<sup>531</sup> at the end of the play, the Spartan and the Athenian, express the communities to which they belong respectively, and eloquently illustrate the mutual agreement for peace on the behalf of both Athens and Sparta.<sup>532</sup> If, as others have suggested and I have argued, the ending also anticipates the triumph of the comic poet, the audience is implicitly invited to celebrate the poet's success in a

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<sup>529</sup> Calame (2004) 167-72.

<sup>530</sup> Calame (2004) 168-9.

<sup>531</sup> This wedding song is performed by mixed choruses and expresses the communal voice which spontaneously celebrates the wedding (Swift (2006) 135-6, Carey (forthcoming 2013)).

<sup>532</sup> Carey (forthcoming 2013).



similar, spontaneous way, encouraging the audience with its response to invite the judges to award the victory to the comic poet. The use of communal celebration draws the audience into the poet's predicted success and constitutes an implicit appeal for *eunoia*.

Marriage then is far more fully integrated into the fifth century comic plot than is often the case in tragedy. This difference is surprising, given that discontinuity in language, style,<sup>533</sup> characterization<sup>534</sup> and – more interestingly to my purposes – plot<sup>535</sup> are typical of Aristophanes. There is however nothing in the plot to prepare us for a wedding in the conclusion, in contrast to New Comedy, as we will now see.

#### 4. New Comedy and Menander<sup>536</sup>

Menandrian comedy is well-known for its penchant for plots with love interest, and – unsurprisingly – marriage is the *telos* of his plays.<sup>537</sup> The conclusions in New Comedy usually consist of a marriage agreement, an *engye*, and preparations for a wedding celebration. This formalistic aspect of marriage as a closural device links Menander with Euripides and is a first indication that here as elsewhere in Menander (as I shall argue)

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<sup>533</sup> Silk (2000)136-7, 140.

<sup>534</sup> Silk (2000) 242-4.

<sup>535</sup> Silk (2000) 257, 270, cf. also 403.

<sup>536</sup> In this section I follow Arnott's (1996, 1997c, 2000) numbering.

<sup>537</sup> This seems to be the case in most of them; *Kolax* probably did not conclude in this way, and it is impossible to know for *Theophoroumene* and *Leukadia*. *Dis exapaton* is an exception, too; it ends with the reconciliation between friends and the restitution of their relationships with their *pallakai*. There are other plays (*Phasma*, *Perinthia*, *Karchedonios*, *Koneiazomenai*) where there are hints at wedding, but the ending does not survive and so there is no guarantee for this. *Epitrepontes* ends with the reconciliation of Charisios and Pamphile but this may be considered as a case of re-marriage; it is also probable that even if wedding is not the closure, a *komos* might have been the finale as the celebration for the happy outcome (Arnott (1997c) 521).

comedy and tragedy come together. Yet marriage in Menander is a far more organic *telos*, in that it is the end towards which the plot is striving. The pronounced element of celebration which is generated has its origins in earlier comedy. All these make marriage as an ending deeply integrated into the plot to a degree unattested in Greek drama (as far as we know) before Menander. Furthermore, marriage is not simply employed as the thematic foundation for the plot, but also, as in tragedy, as a way to speak about other issues.<sup>538</sup> So, it is used to explore different kinds of human character and behaviour. And yet, although New Comedy is clearly influenced by fifth-century tragedy and comedy, it differentiates itself from its origins not only in terms of plot and emphasis on marriage but also in that it places its focus on the individual, and not on the *polis*.<sup>539</sup>

#### **a. Marriage as an element of the plot**

In Menander, romantic relationships, love and marriage are central part of his plots,<sup>540</sup> many – if not most – of which are based on a formulaic pattern: a young man is in love, aims at marrying his beloved and living happily with her, but there are always obstacles

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<sup>538</sup> Cf. Rehm (1994) 136, Foley (2001) 14, Badnall (2008) 109.

<sup>539</sup> Zagagi (1994) 95, Heap (1998) 115, Traill (2008) 265. The *oikos* receives rather limited attention (Traill (2008) 253). Although Menander is undeniably engaged with the individual rather than the civic community, such plots known as *ad hominem* plots already existed before Menander (Csapo (2000) 119-21). What seems to have changed in the fourth century is the dominance of comedies focusing on the individual over those focusing on *polis*, but the two styles already co-existed in fifth century (Csapo (2000) 131-3).

<sup>540</sup> Hunter (1985) 83, Wiles (1989) 42.

which in the end are overcome and the conclusion of the play is *gamos*.<sup>541</sup> *Eros* itself is there in all surviving Menandrian plays, even the fragmentary ones.

In one important respect the relation between sexuality and achievement is unchanged between Aristophanes and Menander. Male *eros* remains central in Menander.<sup>542</sup> The girl is the object of desire.<sup>543</sup> By contrast, female *eros* is largely ignored. The dominant impression is that the romantic interest is confined to the area of male desire only. There are of course exceptions. Female *eros* is expressed in two of the surviving Menandrian plays, in *Perikeiromene* (see *Per.* 185-90 and 1019-23) and *Misoumenos* (see *Mis.* 968-70). These are cases where the young men were already, before marriage, in relationships with their girls, as their *hetairai*.<sup>544</sup> The important thing is that these women are either not citizens or not known to be citizens. These women have far more public visibility than the (ideal) female citizen. Thus, the fact that the real civic identity of these women is concealed and unknown allows for them to express their thoughts and desires.<sup>545</sup> The element of reciprocity in love can receive dramatic expression but only in the case of *hetairai*.<sup>546</sup> In the case of Athenian women citizens, silence about their

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<sup>541</sup> See for instance Wiles (1989) 42, Lape (2004) 19, 21-39, esp. 22. Nevertheless, in the surviving corpus, there are departures from this format: The plot of *Samia* is not quite compatible with this outline, nor are *Epitrepontes* and *Dis exapaton*. *Perikeiromene* is a variation of the pattern, although the conclusion and the use of obstacles are consistent with the usual pattern; it is an instance that there must be plays where marriage is not always sought from the beginning due to the non-Athenian status of the girls and their attribute as concubines.

<sup>542</sup> For instance, *Dysk.* 50-2, 54, 191-3, 345-9, 677-8, 682-3, cf. 201-3; *Mis.* 819; cf. 721-3, 807.

<sup>543</sup> Konstan (1994) 56, Traill (2008) 1-13.

<sup>544</sup> Wiles (1989) 46-7. By contrast, although Plangon in *Samia* had known Moschion before their marriage, she is not allowed to express her feelings, precisely because she is a citizen girl.

<sup>545</sup> Lape (2004) 34-5, 38.

<sup>546</sup> Wiles (1989) 44-5.

feelings is dictated by social norms,<sup>547</sup> to which New Comedy generally adheres.<sup>548</sup> Thus in *Epitrepontes* Pamphile expresses loyalty (*Epit.* 801-35, esp. 804, 816-30), not desire.

In a manner which resembles the patterns of heroes in myth and of Pindar's athletes and mythic figures, the winning, or rewinning of the bride, in the case of restoration of the relationship, is set as the target of the efforts of the comic 'hero'<sup>549</sup> (*Dysk.* 214-7).<sup>550</sup> In this connection it is not irrelevant that the achievement of marriage by Sostratos is expressed in terms of winning a bride (*Dysk.* 384-89, 764-7, 862-5, esp. 389: πῶς οὐκ ἐπιτυχεῖν ἔστι ταύτης μακάριον;). Sostratos' willingness to undertake the agricultural work to which he is unaccustomed, to undergo pain (*Dysk.* 390-2, cf. 348 with 349, 379-80, 522-45) and remove his *khlanis* (*Dysk.* 364-5)<sup>551</sup> makes him worthy of Gorgias' sister and thus he receives his bride as reward.<sup>552</sup>

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<sup>547</sup> Zagagi (1994) 69, Lape (2004) 31-2. Unlike *hetairai*, they were not entitled to public speech but were confined at home (cf. Wiles (1989) 44-5).

<sup>548</sup> Zagagi (1994) 69, Lape (2004) 31-2. Of course, this is creative literature and so it is natural that Menander should take liberties in adhering to current social practices. Sostratos' encounters with the daughter of Knemon would not take place in fourth-century Athens (Zagagi (1994) 97) and is one of the exceptions in the way social conventions are followed in Menander. *Dyskolos* has several more instances, where social conventions are not followed (Zagagi (1994) 95-8).

<sup>549</sup> By 'hero' I mean *dramatis persona*. These are ordinary people. There is none of the individual grandeur of the Aristophanic hero. There is none of the isolated achievement that we associate with the winning of the bride in Pindar and Aristophanes. Nonetheless, these characters by dint of effort and decency do ultimately achieve something collaboratively and in this sense it is not entirely inappropriate to use the term 'hero'. For all their faults these people are ultimately worthy.

<sup>550</sup> Zagagi (1994) 47, Lape (2004) 22-3.

<sup>551</sup> The *khlanis* symbolizes his wealth and social status (Rosivach (2001) 130). This is a striking gesture (Lowe (1987) 77).

<sup>552</sup> Rosivach (2001) 131-4, Lape (2004) 123-4. Although it is basically their co-operation (Zagagi (1994) 67) and Gorgias that win her for him (Lape (2004) 120), the text verbally attributes the achievement of marriage to him and this is expressed in terms of winning a bride (*Dysk.* 862-5). This is however perfectly consistent with Menander's general tendency to engage with collaborative achievements and not individual (see here, p. 140, fn. 549).

So, success is never simple. Usually there are obstacles and misunderstandings which need to be overcome in order to effect the wedding. These are obstacles due either to others, as in *Dyskolos*, or to issues of citizenship and mistaken identity, usually in relation to the girl<sup>553</sup>, or misunderstandings threatening the marriage, as in *Samia*. Finally the ‘hero’ succeeds in his wishes and efforts, wins his bride (as in *Dyskolos*) and achieves his marriage to her. These are marriages which are to be perceived as happy unions which secure the *olbos* of the pair, at least of the young man (*Sik.* 380-1). Marriage in the end is brought about as the result of a sudden revelation which brings the denouement. There are two kinds of resolution. The first is the revelation of Athenian citizenship – usually of the girl. This opens the road to a legal wedding. In *Sikyonioidi*, for instance, the citizen status of Stratophanes and Philoumene matters for the status of their relationship (*Sik.* 72-109; 193-275 (as a false allegation), 354-73 (as truth); 246-57, 274-5; cf. 144-5).<sup>554</sup> The second is the elimination of a misunderstanding. In *Samia* only when Moschion eventually reveals the truth to his father (*Sam.* 521-32, esp. 528-30), and when Nikeratos also realizes that his daughter is the mother of Moschion’s illegitimate child (*Sam.* 532-6, 540-6), are the obstacles to the wedding removed so that the marriage can take place. Sometimes the resolution is mixed: in *Misoumenos*, it is the revelation of Krateia’s citizenship (*Mis.* 611-[39]) as well as the refutation of Krateia’s charges against Thrasonides<sup>555</sup> that generate the wedding. In *Perikeiromene*, the disclosure of the girl’s identity proves both her innocence of her lover’s accusations (*Per.* 984-9) of infidelity (*Per.* 153-64, 369-71; cf. 708-25) and her Athenian citizenship. Thus, instead of a mere celebration of

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<sup>553</sup> Traill (2008) 2-3, 252-3.

<sup>554</sup> Arnott (1997a) 8-9.

<sup>555</sup> See Arnott’s reconstruction of the plot (Arnott (1996) 341).

reconciliation (*Per.* 991-1000), it is a legal Athenian marriage that will take place, since both are Athenians (*Per.* 1012-5).<sup>556</sup>

With all obstacles removed, the marriage is agreed (for instance, *Dysk.* 748-89) and the wedding takes place. The ending with the preparations for the marriage, which will seal the (now more modest and personal) success of the comic 'hero', recalls Aristophanes, where as we saw celebratory endings were generated through *gamos*.<sup>557</sup> The wedding ritual typical in Menander's endings takes the form of *engye*. These rites are more nuanced in *Dyskolos* where the *engye* (*Dysk.* 759-67), the reception of the couple by the mother at the shrine (*Dysk.* 847-78 *passim*), a preliminary *komos*<sup>558</sup> (*Dysk.* 850-2, 855-60), dance (*Dysk.* 957-63) and the procession towards the new *oikos* (*Dysk.* 963-4) constitute the wedding celebration.<sup>559</sup> Yet as in Aristophanes the celebration, in its full form, does not take place on stage, even in *Dyskolos*. It is confined to the announcement of, and the instructions for, its preparation. Thus, the audience have a foretaste of the wedding festivities but never actually see them.

As we observed above, the closural use of *gamos* continues a structural strand as old as Aristophanes and possibly as old as Comedy. Another feature shared with Aristophanes

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<sup>556</sup> The rest of the conclusion does not survive.

<sup>557</sup> Hunter (1985) 41. Of course here the sexual aspect is less prominent and is withheld through the solemnity of *engye* and the wedding ritual. This is very different from the sexual satisfaction of the comic hero, in Aristophanes' weddings, in *Peace* and *Birds*, or the ending of the *Acharnians*.

<sup>558</sup> Lape (2006) 97-8, 100-2, 104; cf. Lape (2004) 135-6 with fn. 64.

<sup>559</sup> A particularly interesting case is in *Perikeiromene*. Since the opening speech of *agnoia* reveals that the misunderstanding of Polemon about Glykera will be resolved in the end, the cutting of her hair and the bath that Glykera receives from Myrrhine (*Per.* 305-6) acquire a second meaning and can probably be seen also as stages of the wedding ritual, prefiguring thus the final wedding ritual and celebration which finished the play (May (2005) 285-7).

is the metapoetical implications of *gamos* which are now fully developed into a larger metatheatrical device. Menander firstly presents the bridegroom as victor. The wreaths and torches of the closure (*Dysk.* 963-4, *Mis.* 989-90, *Sik.* 418-9) were symbols of the wedding ritual, but also have more general connotations of celebration and revelry.<sup>560</sup> So, when Moschion crowns himself with the wreath (πύκαζε σὺ / κρᾶτα καὶ κόσμει σεαυτόν, *Sam.* 732-3) for the wedding procession (*Sam.* 729-32), he is both groom and victor. Nevertheless the conflation of wedding and victory in the comic plot is most explicit in *Dyskolos*, even if there is a variation of this motif. Here, the success of the comic play is contextualized (*Dysk.* 965-9) not with that of the protagonist, but with the attainment of Getas and Sikon in changing the difficult character of Knemon who was the main problem of the play:

ΓΕΤΑΣ            συνησθέντες κατηγωνισμένοις  
 ἡμῖν τὸν ἐργώδη γέροντα, φιλοφρόνως  
 μειράκια, παῖδες, ἄνδρες, ἐπικροτήσατε.  
 ἢ δ' εὐπάτειρα φιλόγελός τε παρθένος  
 Νίκη μεθ' ἡμῶν εὐμενῆς ἔποιτ' αἰεὶ (965-9).<sup>561</sup>

At the end, the chorus addresses the audience, merges success in the dramatic contest with the wedding<sup>562</sup> and asks for their *eunoia* and for victory (*Dysk.* 965-9; cf. *Mis.* 993-6, *Sam.* 733-7, *Sik.* 421-3).<sup>563</sup> So, all three elements together, the winning of the bride,

<sup>560</sup> See Gomme and Sandbach (1973) on *Dysk.* 964; cf. Lape (2006) 101-2.

<sup>561</sup> Dworacki (1977) 29-30, Lape (2006) 97, esp. 101-2.

<sup>562</sup> Belardinelli (1994) ad 420c-23, Arnott (1997b) 101, Lape (2006) 96-7, esp. 101-2, cf. Katsouris (1976) 248-50, 255-6 and Dworacki (1977) 38-40 on the Aristophanic influence.

<sup>563</sup> It seems that this prayer for victory was a formula in the ending of Menandrian comedy (Katsouris (1976) 243-4, 255-6, Dworacki (1977) 35).

the victory of Getas and Sikon, and the victory of the poet and the chorus in the dramatic contest are conflated.<sup>564</sup>

Before moving to the next section, it is important to note that from a purely realistic perspective the viability of these marriages may be questionable. Viewed outside their narrative context and theatrical conventions these arrangements are to some degree flawed. They are the result of rape, often drunken rape, and are a kind of objective exchange on which the female's opinion is not sought.<sup>565</sup> All these aspects could be taken to undermine the quality of the marriage arranged in the end and may suggest an ironic reading. Yet, there is no indication in the text that those who are not consulted do feel excluded. Secondly, in such a reading there is an inherent danger that prominence of the rape may be exaggerated. In the text itself, rape though invariably something negative is usually downgraded in terms of emphasis. In most cases in Menander, it is placed in the pre-plot, in the events preceding – and not constituting – the main events of the play. Therefore, the plot never focuses on it, not even in *Epitrepontes*, where it is very brief. Therefore, the marriages discussed here are more likely to be regarded as a positive outcome. Resolution comes about because people make an effort to put things right.

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<sup>564</sup> Lape (2006) 101-2.

<sup>565</sup> Nelson (1990) 54.



## **b. Marriage as a metaphor**

As we will see in the following chapters, marriage has an expressive capacity which makes it a uniquely effective vehicle to discuss other issues.<sup>566</sup> The marital relationship is perhaps the closest relationship between two individuals and this makes it a very useful vehicle for the exploration of other relationships.<sup>567</sup> Moreover, as we will see, because of the nexus of associations, implications and consequences surrounding marriage, which was the guarantor of the continuation of the *oikos* and the body of the legitimate citizens of the *polis*, it had the potential to examine any kind of relationships, behaviours and ethics that extended to the whole society.

Menander also uses marriage as a means of articulating larger issues, as we will see that tragedy also does in the following chapters, but with an important difference. Although the *polis* matters for tragedy, in fourth-century comedy it is not the central concern. So the themes explored do not have the gravity that they have in tragedy; Menander rather focuses on the individual and his life as member of society. But though he distances himself from Aristophanic comedy in moving away from the *polis* as the focus of the comic plot, he still engages with larger subjects, though more obliquely. In that sense, Menander resembles Jane Austen. Romantic plot is employed for the exploration of human character and behaviour and through these larger social and ethical issues. I will begin with the social ones.

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<sup>566</sup> Cf. Rehm (1994) 136, Foley (2001) 14, Badnall (2008) 80, 109.

<sup>567</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 80, 109.

*i. Social issues*

Marriage is a suitable medium for the discourse of social status, which is of great importance in New Comedy,<sup>568</sup> in that difference in this domain is often an obstacle in marriage. Comedy sometimes explores status difference through the plots involving mistaken identity, which enables this contrast to be pronounced and then dismissed, as in the case of a *hetaira* and an Athenian woman citizen.<sup>569</sup> In this framework marriage is employed both to articulate and to resolve the social gaps.<sup>570</sup>

*Dyskolos* more than any other Menandrian play is engaged with class divisions, poverty and wealth.<sup>571</sup> This is facilitated by the fact that no rape has taken place, as in most Menandrian comedy; rape would make marriage compulsory. In its absence the social gaps have to be eliminated in another more effective way.<sup>572</sup> Marriage is uniquely suitable for this purpose in that it effectively highlights (*Dysk.* 271-87, 293-8, esp. 794-6; cf. 831-4)<sup>573</sup> and erodes boundaries. The marriage agreement across social classes expresses in deed the *philia* (*Dysk.* 791-4) which is based on mutual appreciation (*Dysk.* 815-6, cf. 615-7 with 823-4) between two people of different social classes, and confirms Sostratos' open social ideology (*Dysk.* 797-812).

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<sup>568</sup> See Gutzwiller (2000) 124-5, who, however, has a different approach to the issue.

<sup>569</sup> McC. Brown (1993) 51, 54-5; von Reden (1998) 269.

<sup>570</sup> Konstan (1994) 58, Zagagi (1994) 102, 111, Lape (2004) 28-9, cf. Lape (2004) 129-36. The bridging of the social gaps then generates the communal solidarity which is prominent in New Comedy (Konstan (1994) 58).

<sup>571</sup> Lowe (1987) 78, Rosivach (2001) 127.

<sup>572</sup> Lape (2004) 114.

<sup>573</sup> Rosivach (2001) 127-30, Lape (2004) 114; cf. Lowe (1987) 77. On the other hand, poor farmers do not want rich people (*Dysk.* 356-7; cf. 754). The expression of the mutual views of rich about poor and poor regarding rich indicates that Lape (2004) 26 is rather mistaken, in suggesting that 'comedy represents wealth as a good thing and poverty as something to endure and to hide'. The reality is a little more complex.

Yet for all the capacity of marriage to explore these boundaries, in this as in other features of Menander there is a pronounced element of idealization. The barriers can only be eroded in this way in comedy. The way Sostratos persuades his father is also too quick and effective to be realistic. Similarly, Kallipides' positive attitude towards love in marriage is unrealistic, too.

*ii. Exploration of human characters and behaviours*

Apart from social discussion, marriage is also a device to explore typical human characters and behaviour, a core concern in Menandrian comedy.<sup>574</sup> Thus for instance in *Aspis*, marriage is used to explore the human type of the hypocritical, greedy and self-seeking man. Here, marriage underlines the character of Smikrines as *πονηρός* and *μιαρώτατος* (*Asp.* 308-16), in that he is striving to marry the *epikleros* for the money that comes with her, as he declares (*Asp.* 137-46, 181-187, also 252-6, but esp. 269-73). But this marriage also articulates his unfeeling character in that he takes no pity on the girl, due to his greediness (cf. *Asp.* 177-86, cf. 250-78a *passim*, esp. 269-73).

The play where marriage is most pronouncedly used to illustrate a character is Menander's *Dyskolos*. Knemon's insufferable temper (cf. *Dysk.* 5-34) is already articulated through his quarrels with his wife and step-son, but marriage contributes to illustrate his difficult personality in that it presents a seemingly insuperable obstacle for his daughter's marriage (*Dysk.* 179-88, 323-7), and also in that he stubbornly refuses to

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<sup>574</sup> Hunter (1985) 139. The use of 'moralizing', to use Hunter's term for describing the exploration of these behaviours, is an influence from Euripides' *Orestes* and *Electra* (Hunter (1985) 139; cf. Zagagi (1994) 105).

join his daughter's wedding (*Dysk.* 867-79, 893-5).<sup>575</sup> Getas' and Sikon's eventual success in making Knemon join the wedding celebration of his daughter equals the ultimate definite change of his character (*Dysk.* 902-5, 957-66).

But marriage in *Dyskolos* is used to explore another human type, one with Euripidean affiliations; the good poor farmer (cf. *Dysk.* 791-3) represented by Gorgias. This is evident in his censure of Sostratos when he misunderstands the latter's intentions for his sister (*Dysk.* 271-98 *passim*; cf. 303-9), as well as in his initiative (*Dysk.* 233-58 *passim*; cf. 321ff.), his loyalty as friend and son (*Dysk.* 234-54), his independence and sense of dignity.<sup>576</sup> All these are illustrated through his attitude regarding his sister's marriage as well as regarding his own marriage to Sostratos' sister. This in turn allows the play to touch on the issue of the relationship between wealth and virtue, an issue of perennial interest in Greece.

### **c. Menander in his contexts**

In my discussion so far I have referred to the aspects with reference to which Menander in his use of *gamos* as an ending device was influenced by fifth-century drama, despite the differences. Here I look more generally at the way Menandrian comedy effects a fertile hybridization of elements derived both from tragedy and comedy. I will firstly deal with comedy and then move to tragedy.

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<sup>575</sup> Zagagi (1994) 109, 112.

<sup>576</sup> His sister's marriage articulates the aspect of his character as a good brother, and his own marriage exhibits his sense of decency and honour.

As we have seen, in deploying a wedding celebration to seal the play's conclusion and celebrate victory and success,<sup>577</sup> Menander is following a model at least as old as Aristophanes, where marriage is one subset of a formal tendency for celebratory endings, with feasting, dance, song, food and wine; there the comic hero's success is conflated with a wedding feast.

Despite this fundamental continuity between Menander and Aristophanes, Menander differentiates himself in the aspect of sensual pleasure, which, as I have argued above, is a distinct feature of the Aristophanic conclusion. In Menander's endings, this element exists, but it is at most implicit. Indeed, it seems that if the link with the origins of comedy suggested above is real, this fertility element has been so fully absorbed into the comic plot by the time of Menander that it has become a barely perceived foundation to what is now a fully embedded feature. Nevertheless, Aristophanes often foregrounds the sexual dimension to a degree we do not find in Menander.<sup>578</sup> Aristophanic endings are much more interested in the element of fulfilment of physical desire. In Menander though sexual desire is presupposed, the emphasis at the end is on the relationship. There are no pronounced implications of birth, rebirth and procreation and therefore of fulfilment and renewal of the comic hero, even less of the (re)constitution of the larger civic or cosmic order. Moreover, for Aristophanes marriage is a means of underscoring the hero's victory by giving him the physical embodiment of success, while in Menander the element of success has been dispersed more generally among the families at the heart of the plot.

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<sup>577</sup> Hunter (1985) 41.

<sup>578</sup> *Lysistrata* is unusual in the interest it takes in relationships, though still always expressed through the medium of sexuality.

Continuity between Aristophanes and Menander is unsurprising, in that both belong to different phases in the evolution of the same genre. But Menander's marriage endings also reflect a rapprochement between tragedy and New Comedy. This is not surprising in view of the way that New Comedy associates itself and establishes links with tragedy.<sup>579</sup> One obvious point of convergence between the two genres is the use of marriage in the conclusion of a domestic-orientated plot. Marriage or reconciliation is the norm as closure and thus fits within a larger formalist tendency which has its roots in late fifth-century tragedy and particularly in Euripides. As we saw, Euripides is distinctive for the recurrent use of *gamos* as *telos* among the *deus ex machina* arrangements, who appears suddenly to reveal unknown truths, explain things and restore order. Menander drew this element of sudden intervention from tragedy and refocused it. As we have seen above, marriage as resolution is the standard ending in Menander and emerges from the sudden revelation of an ignored truth or a recognition, both in the Euripidean manner.<sup>580</sup> In some respects however the character of Menander's happy endings is essentially different. In Euripides, marriage is rarely a logical result of the plot in an Aristotelian sense.<sup>581</sup> It often provides a formal closure while leaving a number of complex issues hanging. Menander's endings are radically different; they are decidedly positive. Euripides' endings are interrupted cadences with question marks, in contrast to Menander's perfect cadences.

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<sup>579</sup> The issue has been much discussed. For recent discussions see Csapo (2000), Traill (2001), Vogt-Spira (2001), Marshall (2002), Cusset (2005), Papastamati-von Mook (2007).

<sup>580</sup> Traill (2008) 260-3.

<sup>581</sup> See p. 88, fn. 293.

We should not however overstate the gap between Euripides and Menander. The aspect of marriage as the logical conclusion of the themes of the play is not entirely Menander's innovation. It has its precedent in the use of marriage as a closural device in the form of 'remarriage' in Euripides' *Alcestis* and *Helen*.<sup>582</sup> Menander's innovation is to generalize this organic use of marriages to provide a firm plot closure.

There is another aspect of marriage which aligns Menander with Euripides. These are ordinary marriages; there is nothing divine, nor fantastic in them. This differentiates Menander from the profound element of fantasy in Aristophanes' comic marriages. The fundamentally human character of these weddings is radically different from the abstractions of Aristophanes. It seems, then, that Euripides is probably the source of Menander's more realistic approach to *gamos*.

The influence of Euripides is clearer in a major aspect of the general use of marriage in Menander. Marriage is used as a social microcosm and a metaphor in both genres. As we have seen, Menander is using marriage to explore other issues like ethics and relationships in a similar way with tragedy in the fifth century, as I will show in chapters 3 and 4. Marriage again is medium rather than merely a plot gesture. Yet, Menander's plays differ in that they show ultimately positive models of behaviour, where Euripides explores the destructive aspects of human conduct.

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<sup>582</sup> Although these plays end with reunion, not marriage in a pure literal sense, the text invites us to regard this as a re-marriage enacted as wedding, as I showed above. This makes them variations on the formal marriage closures.

Therefore, marriage is one of the areas in which comedy, despite the radical changes in plot and structure in the fourth century, retains its continuity with fifth-century Greek drama. Menander's genius combined elements of the uses of marriage from his predecessors and deployed marriage as a *telos* which is both formalistic and organic. Thus, in his use of marriage Menander emerges, as in other respects, as a poet of convergence. The resilience and flexibility of comedy as a medium over the two centuries in which we can (imperfectly) trace its history is reflected in the way it both absorbs and blends these two different strands so effectively, and in Menander's ability to give fresh life to a plot feature which make have its roots in the very origins of the genre.

## **5. Conclusion**

*Gamos* as *telos* proves a most versatile device in Greek drama. It varies from being an external, unexpected arrangement imposed at the end, though – usually – related to the play, if only to a minor plot strand, to being the logical and anticipated conclusion, and finally to being an inevitable and deeply organic element. As effect it shifts from being part of a pendant closure to marking a happy outcome with celebration and joy.





## Chapter 3: Missed *gamos*

### 1. Introduction

Given the crucial importance of marriage in Greek culture it is natural that its absence creates serious problems at multiple levels. As mentioned in the introduction, in the case of the premature death of both girls and boys, loss of marriage was a recurrent theme of lament in the funeral monuments.<sup>583</sup> In oratory by contrast it is more specifically in the case of girls that loss of marriage is treated as a serious problem (Lys. 13.45, Dem. 45.74/75, 59.8, 59.112). In this section I will explore the use of missed marriage as a motif in tragic texts.<sup>584</sup>

In tragedy this choice of motif is in agreement with the larger ‘grammar’ of the genre. Greek tragedy makes systematic use of the language of ritual<sup>585</sup> and it is not surprising that a highly ritualized activity like *gamos* should become part of this usage. Thus it takes the motif of premature death of virgins from the everyday burial and mourning practice and employs it in a variety of ways to achieve a variety of effects. It is these uses and effects that I will examine in this chapter. Naturally, the motif of missed *gamos* in tragedy is at its most basic level used to generate pathos. Yet, the communicative capacity of this motif is frequently extended to articulate key themes of the play, priorities and more importantly to underline the element of distortion in actions, decisions, as well as detriments and losses that the *oikos* suffers in consequence.

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<sup>583</sup> See Introduction pp. 23-4.

<sup>584</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 79.

<sup>585</sup> Goldhill (1997) 130ff.

## 2. Enhancement of pathos

As we have stressed, missing *gamos* in ancient Greece meant that one's life was seriously deficient. This loss was a cause of pain and regret both for the individual and for the family.<sup>586</sup> This made it a useful tool in the hands of tragedians. The dependency of tragedy on emotional effect was already recognized by Gorgias and emphasized by Aristotle.<sup>587</sup> Emotion was inextricable from the intellectual aspect of tragedy and it was prominent in the evaluation of tragedy (both positive and negative) in ancient theory with regard to its effect on the audience.<sup>588</sup> In this framework, the motif of missed *gamos* was of great rhetorical value due to its capacity to evoke pity. This section addresses the first and most basic dramatic use of the motif of missed *gamos* in Greek tragedy, which is the enhancement of pathos. I will focus on five tragedies: Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris* and *Electra*, and Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*, *Electra* and *Antigone*.

In *Oedipus Tyrannus* Oedipus on his return to the *skene* after his self-blinding and the suicide of his mother confronts the implications of what he has done, not just for the previous generation and himself but also for the whole future of his family. The missed *gamos* of his daughters is singled out for emphatic mention. He predicts a life of desolation for them<sup>589</sup>:

καὶ σφῶ δακρύω· προσβλέπειν γὰρ οὐ σθένω·  
νοούμενος τὰ πικρὰ τοῦ λοιποῦ βίου,

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<sup>586</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 118-9.

<sup>587</sup> Taplin (2003<sup>2</sup>) 169.

<sup>588</sup> Taplin (2003<sup>2</sup>) 169-70.

<sup>589</sup> *O.T.* 1487, 1502-3, 1506, 1513-4.

οἶον βιῶναι σφὸν πρὸς ἀνθρώπων χρεῶν (*O.T.* 1486-8).

Missed *gamos* is here primarily a means of articulating guilt and grief. The pathos of their situation is expressed through two groups of attributives: χέρσους .... κἀγάμους (*O.T.* 1502) and especially with πτωχὰς ἀνάνδρους ἐγγενεῖς ἀλωμένας (*O.T.* 1506), which stress the appalling situation in which his daughters are now placed as a result of their father's actions. The iteration of the word ποίας underlines the miserable future of his daughters: ποίας γὰρ ἀστῶν ἤξετ' εἰς ὀμιλίας, / ποίας δ' ἑορτάς (*O.T.* 1489-90). As well as being directed inward towards himself and outward towards his daughters, the hyperbole is also used to supplicate Creon (οἴκτισον, *O.T.* 1508; ξύννευσον, ὦ γενναῖε, *O.T.* 1510) to take care of them and their marriage (*O.T.* 1506), which is part of his request to Creon for a general provision for them (*O.T.* 1503-14). In illustrating Oedipus' powerlessness and complete dependency on others,<sup>590</sup> these lines are a prelude to the following scene, in which Oedipus begs Creon not to deprive him of his daughters (*O.T.* 1515ff.), where all Oedipus can do is supplicate Creon to show pity (*O.T.* 1521). These two scenes together show clearly how Oedipus' situation has been reversed, as the chorus note:

ὦ πάτρας Θήβης ἔνοικοι, λεύσσετ', Οἰδίπους ὄδε,  
ὄς τὰ κλείν' αἰνίγματ' ἦδει καὶ κράτιστος ἦν ἀνὴρ,  
οὗ τίς οὐ ζήλω πολιτῶν ταῖς τύχαις ἐπέβλεπεν,  
εἰς ὅσον κλύδωνα δεινῆς συμφορᾶς ἐλήλυθεν.  
ὥστε θνητὸν ὄντ' ἐκείνην τὴν τελευταίαν ἔδει

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<sup>590</sup> Cf. Budelmann (2006) 52.

ἡμέραν ἐπισκοποῦντα μηδέν' ὀλβίζειν, πρὶν ἂν  
τέρμα τοῦ βίου περάσῃ μηδὲν ἀλγεινὸν παθῶν (*O.T.* 1524-  
30).<sup>591</sup>

In the case of Sophocles' *Electra* both situation and effects are different. The emotive potential of the motif of missed *gamos* here goes far beyond the evocation of pity.<sup>592</sup> Electra's missing marriage makes her life wasted, as she declares in a powerful expression of her suffering (*Soph.El.* 185-8).<sup>593</sup> It forms part of her many miseries: her father is dead, her brother is in exile, she has no protector and her mother killed her father and is married to her collaborator in this murder. Electra shares a home with the killers, degraded and hated, and stays unmarried with no children (*Soph.El.* 164-172, 185-92). Marriage – specifically, the lack of it – is an aspect of the general oppression that Electra suffers at their hands (cf. *Soph.El.* 1183). In the catastrophic situation in which she finds herself, it would be difficult to argue that it is the most important of her misfortunes. But given her age and sex it is the one which offers the greatest degree of pathos and so it is singled out as the one which encapsulates the rest.<sup>594</sup> Despite its limited role,<sup>595</sup> the lack of *gamos* effectively articulates the complete despair and the pain of Electra for her situation (*Soph.El.* 164ff.): Electra has lost any hope (ὁ πολὺς ἀπολέλοιπεν ... / βίωτος ἀνέλπιστον, *Soph.El.* 185-6) and she wastes away in this

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<sup>591</sup> These lines have been suspected; see especially Dawe (2001). The most recent article on the ending of *O.T.* as (partially) interpolated is Kovacs (2009). The lines are successfully defended most recently by Finglass (2009) and Budelmann (2006); the first defends the text on philological terms and the second on dramatic-thematic grounds.

<sup>592</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 121-2.

<sup>593</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 121-2.

<sup>594</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 121-2.

<sup>595</sup> Missed *gamos* is mentioned only in four *loci* (*Soph.El.* 164-172, 185-92, 1183, cf. 964-6) but always at key moments, in the context of Electra's personal impasse, her *agon* with Chrysothemis and in the recognition scene.

unmarried and desolate state (ἄνευ τεκέων<sup>596</sup> κατατάκομαι, / ἄς φίλος οὔτις ἀνὴρ ὑπερίσταται, *Soph.El.* 187-8).

Nevertheless, it is striking that despite the amount of the pathos caused through the reference to missed *gamos*, Electra's argumentation to Chrysothemis (*Soph.El.* 962-3) ignores this aspect and focuses on marriage as a material issue which should cause action against Aegisthus. Electra does not treat it as a loss which causes personal grief but she coldly regards it as a serious deficiency for which Aegisthus is to blame and which they can resolve only if they kill him. Multiple effects co-exist. Given the opportunity for action her treatment shifts fluently from personal and emotional to practical and calculating.

The emotional effect is complicated further by the fact that some of this is due to Electra's character and temper, which is in many ways typical of the Sophoclean hero.<sup>597</sup> In terms of the behaviour expected of a Greek female Electra is self-willed and she herself views her conduct as excessive.<sup>598</sup> Her grieving is problematic both ethically and practically and this is emphatically underlined in the play.<sup>599</sup> Electra's insubordination ultimately makes Aegisthus' mistreatment of her worse: Aegisthus and

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<sup>596</sup> *Soph.El.* 187 is disputed; the reading of the manuscripts is τεκέων and it has been defended by Finkelberg (2003). Her most important argument is probably that τήκομαι is used in this play only in the context of a certain 'heavy calamity' (Finkelberg (2003) 372). Yet loss of marriage was crucial for girls. Moreover if ἀνὴρ in the next line is to be interpreted as husband, which is very probably, this would support the reading τεκέων. For these two reasons I would prefer the reading τεκέων.

<sup>597</sup> Knox (1964) esp. 19-26, but also 28-35, Juffras (1991) 99, cf. Lloyd (2005) 78-80, 96-7. For a negative evaluation of Electra's heroic character as ironic and negated, see Ringer (1998) esp. 172-85.

<sup>598</sup> *Soph.El.* 131-3, 221-5, 254-257, 307-9, 606-7, 616-8 with Knox (1964) 38-9, Ewans (2000) 126-7, Foley (2001) 150 with references, MacLeod (2001) 58, Lloyd (2005) 78-80, 96.

<sup>599</sup> Seaford (1985) 320-3; cf. Foley (2001) 156.

Clytemnestra cannot bear her any more and want to get rid of her (Soph.*El.* 378-84). She even comes to define female virtue in terms of male virtue (Soph.*El.* 973, 981-3, 986-7, 989, cf. 997-8 and 1014).<sup>600</sup> There is something unfeminine about her role.<sup>601</sup> Yet although her cognitive capacity<sup>602</sup> and her state of mind<sup>603</sup> have also been questioned by modern scholars, her self-awareness is clear.<sup>604</sup> Electra has a sense of *aidos* and the fact that she acknowledges with shame her partial failure in this respect is to her credit.<sup>605</sup> She is alert to the fact that she cannot be *sophron* because of her circumstances.<sup>606</sup> It also seems that although this situation does not entirely vindicate her conduct, it at least justifies her choices and actions.<sup>607</sup> In that sense, she is not like Clytemnestra. Even if their behaviour is similar, Electra's conduct is dictated by different motives and circumstances.<sup>608</sup>

Moreover, there is an important factor for the evaluation of her conduct, and especially for the determination of the proper reaction to her evident lack of moderation and of stereotypical female submissiveness, and consequently to the potential piteousness of her unmarried state: (as the text stresses) Electra is placed in an impossible situation, in which the only alternative is capitulation, like Chrysothemis'. Adherence to everyday cultural norms loses its overriding appeal in a context so far removed from everyday normality. So though the emotional reaction to Electra may be complicated, sympathy is

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<sup>600</sup> Foley (2001) 160-1, 151.

<sup>601</sup> Wheeler (2003) esp. 379, 383; cf. Badnall (2008) 123.

<sup>602</sup> Goldhill (2012) 48-9.

<sup>603</sup> Seaford (1985) 323, Kitzinger (1991) 325 and especially Wheeler (2003) 381.

<sup>604</sup> MacLeod (2001) 59.

<sup>605</sup> MacLeod (2001) 54, cf. in contrast Cairns (1993) 241, 248-9.

<sup>606</sup> MacLeod (2001) 59.

<sup>607</sup> MacLeod (2001) 54.

<sup>608</sup> MacLeod (2001) 171.

certainly part of the effect. Also important is what her missed *gamos* means in larger terms. The pathos is not purely personal. With Orestes gone, possibly forever, she and her sister Chrysothemis are, like the *epikleros* in classical Athens, the remaining blood link with the *oikos* of her father. The virginity to which she is condemned is the end of the bloodline.

If in Sophocles' *Electra* the motif of missed *gamos* concerns a fear for the future, the contingency that Electra will never manage to make her transition to marriage status,<sup>609</sup> in *Iphigenia in Tauris* it is an affair of the past, a lost opportunity to which Iphigenia looks back. Missed *gamos* in *I.T.* becomes a way of encapsulating and emphasizing the awfulness of displacement and exile. To the general importance of marriage for a woman in ancient Greece is added the prestige of alliance to Achilles. In this case, missed *gamos* takes away all she had and the fact that it was spurious but still resulted in her removal to Tauris heightens the devastation caused by its loss. The result of her lost *gamos* was not only deprivation of fulfilment as a woman and of status but also confinement in a detested barbarian society; missed *gamos* (*I.T.* 215-7) equals Tauris as its substitute (*I.T.* 218-9). Iphigenia is made a priestess among the Taurians; but – in sharp contrast with the wedding ritual – the rites over which she presides are repellent to her and she is not and cannot be integrated into this society.<sup>610</sup> Her theatrical space mirrors her physical state: inviolate, set apart, unintegrated. Marriage thus reinforces her alienation from her past and from her present.

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<sup>609</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 121.

<sup>610</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 79.



The use of the motif of missed *gamos* to generate pity recurs in the case of Antigone. The use of marriage is not as extensive as in other cases and the motif puts in an unusually late appearance, emerging after the one third of the play has passed.<sup>611</sup> It is also surprising in another sense. Her character is self-willed and in many respects (like that of Electra) unfemale (*Ant.* 484-5, cf. 61-2) when viewed in the context of fifth-century Athenian society.<sup>612</sup> Antigone is absolute, immoderate, uncompromising, lonely in a dead end.<sup>613</sup> She is fierce and obstinate in her choices. Here however it is important to cast off the presuppositions of a world in which marriage is ultimately and primarily about individual *emotional* fulfilment. Her yearning for marriage is not at odds with her masculine character, since marriage is not, or at least not principally, a matter of love but of roles and expectations.<sup>614</sup> There is thus no inherent contradiction between the wilful nature of Antigone and her association with more normal female aspirations to attract pathos.<sup>615</sup>

In contrast to other cases, Sophocles never places Antigone in front of a real dilemma between missed marriage and duty.<sup>616</sup> This justifies why the motif of missed *gamos* is exploited only late in the play, as we have seen. The reference to the engagement to Haemon is only introduced after Antigone has taken the decision to disobey Creon and bury her brother and it is Ismene who first brings this issue in discussion. She has not mentioned this to Antigone when trying to dissuade her from fulfilling her plan (*Ant.* 1-

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<sup>611</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 117-21, and also 122.

<sup>612</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 112, 123. For the association between Sophocles' Antigone and Electra, see Lloyd (2005) 78.

<sup>613</sup> Knox (1964) 17-26, 32-35, 39-43, Winnington-Ingram (1980) 9, 317, 322, cf. Lloyd (2005) 78-80.

<sup>614</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 112.

<sup>615</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 118.

<sup>616</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 117-8, 120-1, 123.

99), but she does to Creon (*Ant.* 568-75). Nor does it appear in the discussion between Antigone and Creon. It seems that Ismene's reference to missed *gamos* in Antigone's presence is designed to prime the audience for the scene where Antigone laments her missed marriage. This choice has implications for the portrayal of Antigone. Had Sophocles chosen instead to give us an Antigone who reflected on her alternatives, who carried out a cost-benefit analysis in terms of the price of compliance and the price of defiance, we would have a more reflective figure. But we would have lost the stark sense of resolution and Sophocles would have blurred the sharp contrast between the values which Creon and Antigone espouse. Once the competing positions are mapped out and the result for Antigone is fixed by Creon, Sophocles introduces us to what Antigone has surrendered in pursuit of her principles. Antigone dies aware, as we are aware, of all that her adherence to principle has cost her in personal terms,<sup>617</sup> and ironically in terms of her family, since with the brothers dead she and Ismene are the last links with the *oikos* of her father. Antigone is not an immediately attractive character but the play invites its audience to sympathize with her situation, principles and character, if not her manner, and the missed *gamos* is part of this. At the same time by keeping the *gamos* dilemma for the moment when death is so close to her, the dynamics of the pathos are much more powerful; the emotional impact is greater.<sup>618</sup>

Pathos is articulated here in many ways.<sup>619</sup> Antigone admits now that this situation is a curse for her: ἀραϊός ἄγαμος (*Ant.* 867-8, cf. 917-8). Repeated negative statements (οὐθ' ὑμεναίων / ἔγκληρον, οὐτ' ἐπὶ νομ- / φείοις πῶ μέ τις ὕμνος ὕ- / μνησεν, *Ant.* 813-6) and

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<sup>617</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 177-9.

<sup>618</sup> Badnall (2008) 120.

<sup>619</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 122.

iterated privative alphas<sup>620</sup> emphasize the absence felt due to the lack of marriage at *Ant.* 876-82:<sup>621</sup> ἄκλαιτος, ἄφιλος, ἀνυμέναι- / ος (*Ant.* 876-7), ἄλεκτρον, ἀνυμέναιον (*Ant.* 917), and illustrate her misery (ταλαίφρων, *Ant.* 877).<sup>622</sup> She expresses her desire for the marriage lost through the synecdoche of the torches missed (*Ant.* 879-80). She also uses the (almost clichéd) paradoxical and metaphoric language of marriage to death<sup>623</sup> to underline her pain. Her procession towards the new *oikos* is led by Hades: μ' ὁ παγ- / κοίτας Ἄδας ζῶσαν ἄγει / τὰν Ἀχέροντος / ἀκτάν (*Ant.* 810-13, cf. 891ff.).<sup>624</sup> She will marry Acheron himself: Ἀχέροντι νυμφεύσω (*Ant.* 816). Her tomb is her bridal chamber: ὦ τύμβος, ὦ νυμφεῖον (*Ant.* 891). All these are ways to articulate the pain and isolation of Antigone and create pathos at a critical moment, as she looks back on opportunity lost. This combined with the reconsideration of her behaviour and the firmer reaffirmation of her choices allows the audience to feel the misery and desolation of her situation and also (and in consequence) helps to reinforce the growing shift of sympathy from Creon; at the same time the firmness of her choice is expressed more fully, since the passage shows what this *prohairesis* cost to her and how much she valued her brother and the divine laws.

I offer one final variation of the way missed *gamos* articulates pathos. In Euripides' *Electra* missed marriage is explored from another, different angle, namely its implications for a woman's role in society. This is a peculiar case, because Electra is married but the marriage is unconsummated and she is still a *parthenos*. Therefore this

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<sup>620</sup> Badnall (2008) 120.

<sup>621</sup> Cf. *O.T.* 1501-2, 1506.

<sup>622</sup> Badnall (2008) 120.

<sup>623</sup> Rehm (1994) 59-71, Badnall (2008) 114-21 *passim*.

<sup>624</sup> Rehm (1994) 63-4.

is (in essence) a missed *gamos*. The reason for its non-completion is that this is a socially inappropriate marriage for Electra. Therefore, missed *gamos* is here ultimately about civic identity, as we saw in chapter 2,<sup>625</sup> and is used rhetorically to exacerbate the sense of pain.

Exclusion from society was of critical significance even for women. Although they did not participate in an active way in the political life of the *polis*, they did have a role to play in society, particularly in the area of religion. Apart from giving birth to the citizens of the *polis*, they participated in festivals. As the only formal role they had in public space, it was a very important one. So when Electra declines to join the chorus for the festival of Hera, this emphasizes her anguish and shame at her reduced circumstances (Eur.*El.* 175-89), due to her socially degrading marriage. Electra describes her miserable situation in stating that her appearance is most inconsistent with the glory of her father (Eur.*El.* 184-9):

σκέψαι μου πιναρὰν κόμαν  
καὶ τρύχη τάδ' ἐμῶν πέπλων,  
εἰ πρόποντ' Ἀγαμέμνονος  
κούρα τᾷ βασιλείᾳ  
τᾷ Τροίᾳ θ', ἃ' μοῦ πατέρος  
μέμναται ποθ' ἄλοῦσα.

But this is not simply a matter of personal sorrow or resentment. Her refusal to participate in the festivals and public celebrations (Eur.*El.* 175-189, 310-3) and thus

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<sup>625</sup> See also Zeitlin (1970); cf. Papadimitropoulos (2008) esp. 114-115, 117-8. See ch. 2, pp. 95-6.

fulfil her proper social role expresses her social marginalization.<sup>626</sup> Her missed *gamos* to the *autourgos* as the reason for her abstinence from social activity articulates her inability to behave as member of the *polis* (see *Eur.El.* 246-7) and her minor position in society.

### 3. *Prohairesis*

A recurrent use of the motif of missed *gamos* in tragedy is its employment as a way of articulating what Aristotle calls *prohairesis*. *Prohairesis*, ‘choice’, for Aristotle is that deliberate choice<sup>627</sup> which is made in morally unclear, extreme and difficult circumstances,<sup>628</sup> and which therefore emphatically expresses the moral agent’s *ethos* (*Poe.* 6.1450b8-10).<sup>629</sup> ‘[*P*]rohairesis is a matter of conscious desire and intention, a deliberate moral choice’<sup>630</sup>, or in Halliwell’s words: ‘the deliberate framing of ethical intentions’.<sup>631</sup> This is why it is closely linked with and highlights the agent’s *ethos* (*Arist.Poe.* 1450b8ff.: ἔστιν δὲ ἦθος μὲν τὸ τοιοῦτον ὃ δηλοῖ τὴν προαίρεσιν, ὅποιά τις ἐν οἷς οὐκ ἔστι δῆλον ἢ προαιρεῖται ἢ φεύγει (διόπερ οὐκ ἔχουσιν ἦθος τῶν λόγων ἐν οἷς μηδ’ ὅλως ἔστιν ὃ τι προαιρεῖται ἢ φεύγει ὁ λέγων).<sup>632</sup>

In the case of missed *gamos* this *prohairesis* involves ‘extreme choice’. By this I mean a choice that is decided and carried out in extreme circumstances, such as threat of death

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<sup>626</sup> Zeitlin (1970); cf. Papadimitropoulos (2008) esp. 114-115, 117-8.

<sup>627</sup> Halliwell (1986) 151f., cf. Foley (2001) 109 and fn. 1.

<sup>628</sup> Cf. Foley (2001) 119, 121.

<sup>629</sup> Cf. Foley (2001) 109: the Aristotelian *prohairesis* is ‘a process of undertaking commitment in which a person chooses to act or to abstain from actions in circumstances where the choice is not obvious.’

<sup>630</sup> Foley (2001) 109 fn. 1 based on Halliwell (1986) 151.

<sup>631</sup> Halliwell (1986) 151f.

<sup>632</sup> The text follows Halliwell (1995).

or of threat of loss of a very important thing or challenge of a crucial principle, as in the case of Antigone. What the poets do through lost marriage is articulate in a most emphatic way<sup>633</sup> the significance and impact of the choices made.<sup>634</sup> This motif is used in tragedy primarily in the case of young unmarried girls. In the case of a young male such as Menoeceus in *Pho.* 991-1018, missed *gamos* does not attract the same emphasis. In fact he says nothing of this loss. Duty to the country and death form the focus of *prohairesis* with no reference to marriage, at all. There is only one exception, Hippolytus, and this is a very peculiar case which I will treat independently.

The articulation of extreme choice through the missed *gamos* of girls rests on three interrelated factors: firstly, women were widely regarded as incapable of taking authoritative decisions (*Arist.Pol.* 1260a13-4).<sup>635</sup> In addition, they lived under a certain restriction and lack of freedom<sup>636</sup> with respect both to the *oikos* and to society. Last there was a lack of alternatives in a woman's life. Marriage was the only option for girls.<sup>637</sup> They simply *had* to get married.<sup>638</sup> They were not granted 'moral autonomy'.<sup>639</sup> All these factors make women, to use Foley's words, 'ethically speaking a marked category'.<sup>640</sup> Precisely because they had very little, the fact that they gave up what little they had is a very significant gesture. Of all three social categories of women – mother,

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<sup>633</sup> Foley (2001) 116: 'women are ethically speaking a marked category... they offer unusual dramatic opportunities'.

<sup>634</sup> Foley (2001) 119, 121.

<sup>635</sup> Cf. Hall (1997) 109.

<sup>636</sup> Cf. Foley (2001) 111, 118-9. Naturally, there were variations and differences in these restrictions of women depending on their social class (Foley (2001) 111).

<sup>637</sup> Swift (2010) 249-50.

<sup>638</sup> Cf. Just (1989) 40.

<sup>639</sup> Foley (2001) 181-2.

<sup>640</sup> Foley (2001) 116.

wife, virgin<sup>641</sup> – the virgin is the most convenient category for tragedy to articulate extreme choice. Virgins are the social group which is the least empowered, the most dependent upon others, and in the most sensitive position: they have a liminal status and they are subject to irresistible emotional and social pressure to marry.<sup>642</sup>

This special importance of marriage made it a valuable tool in the hands of tragedians because it allowed them to endow the *prohairesis* and the sacrifice of virgins with much greater emotional load than any other sacrifice would have. As well as placing women in a context where they must give up their only viable future,<sup>643</sup> it also offered a vital means to explore one of the key themes of tragedy, the conflict between social roles.<sup>644</sup> Tragedy places females in deliberately created impasses and asks for very difficult choices. Though these crises take place in the *oikos*, the consequences affect the entire community.<sup>645</sup> *Gamos* is prioritized in the rhetoric and becomes a way of articulating what is lost, while it also occasionally associates women in tragedy with the moral values of the epic hero, as they opt for *kleos* over life.

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<sup>641</sup> Cf. Foley (2001) 119 and for the categories of women in tragedy see Hall (1997) 106.

<sup>642</sup> Cf. Foley (2001) 123.

<sup>643</sup> Cf. Foley (2001) 116: ‘In so far as women in tragedy and epic are moral agents with a difference, they reveal in a positive sense important social and ethical alternatives’. Cf. also Foley (2001) 118: ‘Women in tragedy can nevertheless take ethical stances that either prove to be superior to those of men in particular instances or appropriate but different from those of men due to the constraints of their social role or status.’ Also Foley (2001) 121, 123, 125.

<sup>644</sup> Cf. Humphreys (1978) 202-3 and Neuburg (1990) 67.

<sup>645</sup> Cf. Hall (1997) 103-4, Badnall (2008) 79. On the other hand this was an unavoidable setting for these crises due to the huge importance that the *oikos* had for the *polis* and the interrelation that it had with the *polis* (cf. Hall (1997) 104.) After all, the conflict between the social roles (cf. Humphreys (1978) 202-3 and Neuburg (1990) 67) could not be manifested if the *oikos* was not to be taken into account. This also explains the prominent role of women in Athenian tragedy (cf. Hall (1997) 105).

A straightforward example can be seen in *Heraclidae*, where, despite the initial statements of the maiden that she has already lost her chance for marriage, the actual existence of a choice between marriage and death (*Hclld.* 523-7) becomes clearly articulated. She emphatically sacrifices herself for her priorities: her brothers (*Hclld.* 531-2) and Athens as well (*Hclld.* 503-5). She rejects marriage for the glory she will gain with her sacrifice (*Hclld.* 591-2). Death for her priorities withholds the life she would have as a married woman (*Hclld.* 579-80).

A more sustained and emotive presentation of this stark choice is found in *Iphigenia in Aulis*.<sup>646</sup> Iphigenia also chooses duty to country – and the *kleos* resulting from this action – over marriage, only in this case she chooses between a marriage which is very close to being real (and not a hypothetical one) and death.<sup>647</sup> Iphigenia sacrifices her marriage and herself for Greece (*I.A.* 1378-1401 *passim*).<sup>648</sup> It is of course true that Iphigenia does not have complete liberty to choose; her freedom is only relative.<sup>649</sup> The decision on her death has already been taken without her permission and Achilles' efforts to save her were ineffectual, primarily because of pressure from the army (*I.A.* 1349-57).<sup>650</sup> In this sense any decision by Iphigenia is in a practical sense irrelevant. However, in the end she chooses to die voluntarily for her country and the glory

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<sup>646</sup> The text of *Iphigenia at Aulis* is notoriously corrupt, but this goes beyond the scope of my present discussion. See the recent treatments of Michelakis (2006) 105-114, Gurd (2005), Kovacs (2003), Michelakis (2002) 128-42.

<sup>647</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 207.

<sup>648</sup> Cf. Foley (2001) 123, Badnall (2008) 205-6. This choice resembles Menoeceus' choice to sacrifice his life for his homeland in the *Phoenissae* (*Pho.* 996ff.: ἐλευθερώσω γαῖαν (*Pho.* 1012); cf. Foley (2001) 123-4).

<sup>649</sup> Cf. Foley (2001) 124 who believes that Iphigenia made her choice to die 'under unbearable pressure' and sees her choice very much as a matter of attachment and commitment to the natal *oikos* and mainly her father. Cf. also Badnall (2008) 198-9.

<sup>650</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 202 fn. 659.



resulting from this sacrifice (κατθανεῖν μὲν μοι δέδοκται· τοῦτο δ' αὐτὸ βούλομαι / εὐκλεῶς πράξει, *I.A.* 1375-6, cf. *I.A.* 1383-4).<sup>651</sup> This is not a mere submission after a vain resistance. The ideals that she expresses in her speech (*I.A.* 1378ff. *passim*) and her values confirm this freedom of action.<sup>652</sup> Even in her decision speech she has not changed<sup>653</sup> – as Aristotle thought (*Poe.* 1454a31-3: τοῦ δὲ ἀνωμάλου ἢ ἐν Αὐλίδι Ἰφιγένεια· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔοικεν ἢ ἰκετεύουσα τῇ ὑστέρᾳ); she remains the *parthenos* she was in the beginning, only she has been improved in her character and mentality.<sup>654</sup> She has now become a heroic figure.<sup>655</sup>

Her priority is Greece and its salvation (*I.A.* 1378ff., esp. 1384, 1397, 1420, 1473-4). But the way she expresses this choice deserves particular attention. This Iphigenia envisages her sacrifice in terms of a wedding, a *gamos* (*I.A.* 1399).<sup>656</sup> She describes her choice as a marriage to her priority (*I.A.* 1397), a truly remarkable expression: she is

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<sup>651</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 198-9. McDonald (1990) argues that Iphigenia's decision to sacrifice herself is not only due the love for her country but also due to her *philia* for her father and Achilles. I do not think that this idea is very much encouraged by the text.

<sup>652</sup> Iphigenia's values as expressed through her sacrifice are *arete*, *megalopsychia* and *philia* to her friends (Mc Donald (1990) 71-84). In *I.A.* Iphigenia is a typical innocent (see for instance *I.A.* 1380-1) *parthenos*, emotionally attached to her natal family and with the same wishes that every *parthenos* had, namely *gamos* (cf. Foley (2001) 125). The only thing that is unique in her and varies from the social expectations is her superior way of thinking that leads her to sacrifice (cf. Foley (2001) 125).

<sup>653</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 198-9.

<sup>654</sup> Cf. Foley (2001) 124.

<sup>655</sup> Griffin (1990) 148.

<sup>656</sup> See Foley (1985) 76-8, Badnall (2008) 195-200. The chorus dance that she asks for (*I.A.* 1480-1) and in such a locale as Artemis' meadow (*I.A.* 1463), all these prompt to her missed *gamos* and *proteleia* (*I.A.* 676) (Foley (1985) 76). She rejects any mourning from her mother and instead requests the ambiguous sound of a paean (*I.A.* 1437-8, 1442, 1467-9) (Foley (1985) 76, who further notes that here the function of the paean is ambiguous, as the paean was sung both in weddings and before the start of battles). In Foley's (1985) 77 words: 'Indeed, she brings to her acceptance of the sacrifice much of the form and content of her lost marriage, and her imagination has undoubtedly been stimulated and shaped by her preparations for it.' In this context, Foley compares the bridal crowning of Iphigenia by Clytemnestra (*I.A.* 905) with the sacrificial one before her sacrifice (*I.A.* 1477-9) (Foley (1985) 76-8).

married to Greece (*I.A.* 1397).<sup>657</sup> This expression is an *hapax*, which combines the most important thing in her life, the desire of her ‘previous’ life with her priority for which she sacrifices this desire. Pathos, as pity and admiration, is increased by the presentation of the sham marriage as a reality<sup>658</sup> and by the plot, which at one point threatens to subvert the tradition and make the marriage real by having Achilles expressing the intention to marry her in his speech to the Greeks (*I.A.* 1355-6: τὴν ἐμὴν μέλλουσαν εὐνήν, cf. *I.A.* 1354, where the Greeks called him γάμων ... ἦσσαν’),<sup>659</sup> in the framework of his attempt to save her (*I.A.* 1350-1). Ultimately Achilles comes to admire her and again the language deserves attention: he declares that he would be μακάριος (μακάριον, *I.A.* 1404) if he were to marry her (*I.A.* 1404-5; cf. 1411). The language is highly significant, since it echoes the traditional *makarismos* of the wedding song.<sup>660</sup> He even proposes to marry her (*I.A.* 1412-3). The significance both of this proposal and of her choice is heightened by its (arrested) ritual context. The marriage ritual has already started from Argos, Clytemnestra has started performing the prenuptial rituals (cf. for instance *I.A.* 435-9, 639-11, 695-6, 718, 905), and has brought her daughter from her natal *oikos* to join her husband.<sup>661</sup> Iphigenia too, has actually ‘already performed part of

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<sup>657</sup> Cf. Foley (1985) 76-7.

<sup>658</sup> Foley (1985) 73-4, Badnall (2008) 188-9, 202. Indeed, Achilles is called Iphigenia’s husband (*I.A.* 908: ἐκλήθης γοῦν ταλαίνης παρθένου φίλος πόσις) in the play and Iphigenia his wife (*I.A.* 904: τῇ τε λεχθείσῃ δάμαρτι σῆ, cf. *I.A.* 936: ἐμὴ φατισθεῖς’, cf. also *I.A.* 1355); this must refer to rumours and talks in Argos where it was believed that Achilles would marry Iphigenia.

<sup>659</sup> Badnall (2008) 186, 188-99, esp. 195.

<sup>660</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 185.

<sup>661</sup> Cf. Foley (1985) 68-78.

the wedding ritual'<sup>662</sup> and begun her transition to the married status.<sup>663</sup> She is very close to being a *gyne*.<sup>664</sup>

This choice gains in value in the background of the choices made by others, as is also the case in *Antigone*, to which I will come below. For within the constraints of her situation she behaves with greater freedom than both her father and Achilles, who are men. The first did not want to sacrifice his daughter but could not resist Menelaus (*I.A.* 97-8) and the army (*I.A.* 513-42). The second struggles to save Iphigenia but in contrast to his Homeric archetype does not have the strength to resist the army (*I.A.* 1345-68). Only Iphigenia is able to do what she really wants. She decides on the collective good and her own *kleos*, and on her own initiative. There is a genuine idealism behind her choice which is exhibited through the noble sentiments which she expresses in her final speech.<sup>665</sup> In contrast to texts which treat her as the victim of Helen's wrongdoing (for instance *Ag.* 205-47) she even chooses to see her sacrifice as a means of punishing the barbarians on behalf of Greece (*I.A.* 1378-82).<sup>666</sup> Her noble choice is confirmed in the play by the visual representation of the *kleos* (*I.A.* 1605-8) which she gains through her

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<sup>662</sup> The play creates a wedding background. Of course marriage is present through the trick of Agamemnon but it is also constantly referred to by implication through the conflation of the rites of marriage and death. This is the effect, for instance, of the references to the wreath (*I.A.* 905, cf. 435-9) and the *proteleia* (*I.A.* 433-4, 718, 1111-3). The motif is also present in the use of the meadow as the locale of the sacrifice, which is a perversion of its original use 'before a rape or marriage'. In addition, wedding ritual is conflated with her imminent sacrifice in their common capacity as transitional passages in the first encounter of Iphigenia with her father (esp. *I.A.* 668-80, and 718-21). (On the conflation of marriage and death in the play see Foley (1985) 69-74, 77, and also Badnall (2008) 185-208, esp. 196-7, 206-7, who also discusses the issue of perversion of wedding in *I.A.*)

<sup>663</sup> Foley (1985) 73-4.

<sup>664</sup> Cf. Foley (1985) 73-4.

<sup>665</sup> Cf. Foley (1985) 67, 75-8, who however interprets Iphigenia's sacrifice in an ironic way.

<sup>666</sup> On the association between Iphigenia and Helen in the *I.A.*, see Badnall (2008) 202-3.

choice and which is now enacted in front of the Greek army and the audience.<sup>667</sup> This remarkable *prohairesis* then is used to emphasize a paradox: female freedom versus male lack of it. This is not a blanket statement about the relative freedom of the sexes. Nothing changes in any practical sense in terms of the physical and social constraints on women. But it is a statement, of a sort beloved of tragedy, about the paradoxical mismatch between formal power and freedom. Two males with power and authority were not able to behave with freedom in a difficult circumstance, whereas a female was.

In Sophocles' *Antigone*, Antigone's choice too is not made in a vacuum. It is the response to Creon's own choice between human laws and divine laws, and *polis* and *oikos*. Although her initial choice is not given in terms of forfeit of *gamos*, the text makes clear that this is (in part) the cost to her (*Ant.* 568, 648-58, for instance),<sup>668</sup> missed marriage is used to articulate her choice at the peak of the dramatic pathos (*Ant.* 806-928 *passim*),<sup>669</sup> and her resolution in the face of death (*Ant.* 891ff.) is expressed in terms of marriage versus other relationships.<sup>670</sup> Not only does she retrospectively dwell on the price she pays for performing her duty to her brother, she also (if the text is sound) reflects on her decision at *Ant.* 891ff. in terms of alternative kinds of relationship, natal versus marital (*Ant.* 891-930, esp.898-9, 900-3, 905-15).<sup>671</sup> She says that she would not take the same challenge for a husband or a family from marriage:

οὐ γάρ ποτ' οὔτ' ἄν εἰ τέκν' ὦν μήτηρ ἔφυν

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<sup>667</sup> Zeitlin (1995a) 190-3.

<sup>668</sup> Ormand (1999) 79-80.

<sup>669</sup> Lines *Ant.* 904-20, which include the articulation of Antigone's priorities through *gamos*, have been challenged. Most scholars now treat them as genuine, see West (1999) esp.129; cf. Segal (1981) 201, Murnaghan (1986).

<sup>670</sup> Neuburg (1990) 62, Foley (2001) 174-6, Badnall (2008) 117-8, 120-1, 123.

<sup>671</sup> Seaford (1994) 217; cf. Murnaghan (1986) 198, Badnall (2008) 116-8.

οὐτ' εἰ πόσις μοι καθθανὼν ἐτήκετο,  
βία πολιτῶν τόνδ' ἄν ἠρόμην πόνον (*Ant.* 905-7).

Her complete rejection of marriage<sup>672</sup> is evident in that she disregards Haemon<sup>673</sup> and only refers to her marriage in abstract terms<sup>674 675</sup>.

As (part of) the cost of her choice (*Ant.* 916-8; cf. 891-2) missed marriage articulates Antigone's priorities: her *philoï*, her natal *oikos* (*Ant.* 898-903)<sup>676</sup>, the real *sophrosyne* (*Ant.* 904), the *nomos* and *dike* of gods (*Ant.* 921-4; cf. 925-8)<sup>677</sup>, piety (*Ant.* 924, 943), natal – and not marital – family over *polis* (*Ant.* 907)<sup>678</sup>. As a woman who conceives *nomos*, *dike* and *sophrosyne* in personal terms,<sup>679</sup> her priorities are not rationalistic, but private, personal and strongly emotional but, despite that, eternal.<sup>680</sup> At this point in the play, where the decision and the portrayal of Antigone as a tragic heroine have been established, the missed *gamos* motif explores the other aspect of Antigone's decision, the emotional one. Even from this viewpoint Antigone decisively stays firm on her

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<sup>672</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 117.

<sup>673</sup> It is interesting that when Antigone confronts (Murnaghan (1986) 195) for first time the fact that in effect she has sacrificed her marriage for burying her brother (*Ant.* 806-928 *passim*), she makes no specific reference to Haemon whatsoever (cf. Badnall (2008) 114).

<sup>674</sup> Cf. Murnaghan (1986) 198.

<sup>675</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 114.

<sup>676</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 117-8.

<sup>677</sup> Segal (1981) 168-70.

<sup>678</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 117-8.

<sup>679</sup> Cf. Segal (1981) 157. Both Creon and Antigone understand *nomos* and *dike* in different and personal terms (Segal (1981) 168-70). The degree to which Creon's decree is a law has been challenged (Harris (2004)) but Antigone seems to treat it as a *nomos*, too.

<sup>680</sup> Segal (1981) 173, 201.

decision and remains unchanged,<sup>681</sup> albeit realizing her loneliness<sup>682</sup> and pained by her loss of marriage.<sup>683</sup>

There is however more at issue than Antigone's choice. To understand Antigone's *prohairesis*, we must view her actions in the framework of similar choices made by the other important characters in this play. Practically everyone in this tragedy makes a *prohairesis*, and chooses only one priority. The main choices in this play are *polis* and *oikos*, natal family versus marriage, promised bride (marriage) versus natal family, child versus husband. Antigone makes a choice regarding the first two fields; Haemon chose among the third set of denominators, and Eurydice the fourth. But the greatest interest, after Antigone, falls on Creon. Creon in his speech to Haemon prioritizes the natal *oikos* over marriage (*Ant.* 648ff., cf. 568-9) and demands that he choose his father over his promised bride and marriage. This is precisely what Antigone chose, her natal family. And this is what Creon violated by denying the proper funeral rites to Polyneices and sentencing Antigone to death instead of providing for her marriage, as his niece.<sup>684</sup> It is Creon who has created this polarization of relationships, values and commitments.

The motif of missed *gamos* is used in a unique, complicated but also interestingly inverted way in Euripides' *Hecuba*. As in the other cases, the missed *gamos* is used to create pathos and highlight the importance of the chosen priority. Polyxena prefers to lose her marriage (*Hec.* 416, 421) for her personal priority, her social status and

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<sup>681</sup> See in contrast Schlichtmann (2006) 49, 52.

<sup>682</sup> Schlichtmann (2006) 52.

<sup>683</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 117-8.

<sup>684</sup> Cf. Segal (1981) 177-8.

dignity:<sup>685</sup> a life and a marriage according to her original station (*Hec.* 365-6; cf. 352-3). In *choosing*<sup>686</sup> death Polyxena claims that her other alternative was a life as slave (*Hec.* 362-4) and a marriage to a slave (*Hec.* 365-6). This she rejects unequivocally (*Hec.* 367) and in so doing she dies as a daughter of Priam (*Hec.* 550-2, cf. 349-50).

The use of the motif here is highly unusual. The *gamos* here dismissed is a degrading marriage<sup>687</sup> and not an ideal state, like the marriages dismissed by the other maidens. Precisely because of this reason, this particular rejection perfectly underlines Polyxena's absolute refusal to compromise regarding her life. The motif of rejected marriage underscores the paradigmatic courage and nobility of Polyxena.

This is more however than a courageous act by a socially and politically powerless victim of war. The epic associations here are not as clear as in the case of Iphigenia in *I.A.* and yet the implications are still here. Death as a free and deliberate decision gives it an heroic quality.<sup>688</sup> If rejected marriage relates Polyxena to all these maidens in

Greek tragedy who dismissed their *gamos* for a higher priority, Polyxena's own priority

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<sup>685</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 207. Polyxena emphatically insists on this prestige of hers, her innate and inherent nobility and remarkably high status (*Hec.* 354-5, 365-7, 374, cf. 370-1 and 378). She underlines this superior status when she presents herself ἴση θεοῖσι (*Hec.* 356) in her previous life (cf. Roselli (2007) 136, fn. 177; Collard (1991) ad 374).

<sup>686</sup> Polyxena's choice is emphasized in the text to such an extent that it has struck critics as excessive (Collard (1991) ad 211-5). This is a free choice: although at first in a very real sense Polyxena is not free, as reflected in her initial reluctance, this soon changes and death becomes her own deliberate decision, as she herself proclaims at the very time of her execution (*Hec.* 550-1). The context highlights the importance of dying free again and again in the text (*Hec.* 213-5, 346-9, 367-8, 375-8). This stresses even more her self-determination (cf. Gregory (1999) ad 346-7).

<sup>687</sup> Euripides here invents a degrading marriage for Polyxena, which would normally be impossible according to epic and tragic narrative patterns: Polyxena would not be married to a slave, as she claims (*Hec.* 365-7, cf. 362-4); as a high status female she would probably become a concubine to one of the Greek generals (Scodel (1998) 144-5). By making her a mere normal slave Euripides deprives her future life from any 'distinction' that she may have had and he invents for her the most humiliating alternative.

<sup>688</sup> Gregory (1999) ad 342-78.

associates her more with the moral values of the epic hero; she opts for *kleos* over life. She dies to keep her noble name untainted by slavery (*Hec.* 347-80, esp. 374-8, 550-2). The heroic *ethos* resounded here is underscored by her refusal to be a φιλόψυχος γυνή (*Hec.* 348).<sup>689</sup> The missed *gamos* dilemma here is unique for its epic and heroic impact.

Polyxena's decision to opt for death and *kleos* is confirmed in the scene of her death. Implications of missed *gamos* are part of this poetic process: Neoptolemus holds Polyxena's hand to escort her to her sacrifice (*Hec.* 523-4); the right hand gesture was symbolic of the wedding rituals. This grasp takes place in the frame of the ritual of the sacrifice, easing in hints at the ritual of *gamos*, and thus almost presents her as a bride. After her death, the Achaeans throw leaves on Polyxena: φύλλοις ἔβαλλον (*Hec.* 574). Wedding ritual is here conflated with athletic victory in order to reinforce the glory of Polyxena. So, her death is greeted like an athletic victory (*Hec.* 579-80). These leaves are the prize for her heroic death,<sup>690</sup> but they also hint at the *makarismos* of the newly-wed pair, subsuming under victory celebration the *makarismos* of a bride. This marriage aspect may be contained in the other honours she receives, namely the *peplon* and *kosmos* (*Hec.* 578).<sup>691</sup> Finally, the account of the death of Polyxena emphasizes her beauty, in a similar way to the Sapphic *epithalamion*.<sup>692</sup> Her breasts are ὡς ἀγάλματος / κάλλιστα (*Hec.* 560-1). This erotic dimension of her death<sup>693</sup> reinforces the motif of

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<sup>689</sup> φιλόψυχος has martial connotations; Polyxena expresses herself as if she were a Homeric warrior (Mossman (1995) 160-1).

<sup>690</sup> Mossman (1995) 160-1.

<sup>691</sup> The motif of missed marriage may also be present in Polyxena's death scene through the exhibition of her body which recalls her previous conspicuous appearance among the other Trojan girls.

<sup>692</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 40-1, 45-6, cf. 37.

<sup>693</sup> The erotic dimension entails an element of risk by Euripides. The (naked) statues with whom Polyxena is compared are to some degree eroticized (Stieber (2011) 145-50, esp. 145-6). Nevertheless, the narrative defuses the potential risks. Polyxena controls the exposition of her body, covering what should not be



missed marriage, since it also points to what marriage means in purely personal terms for bride and groom. The effect of this complex use of the motif of missed *gamos* is to make the girl's situation more pitiable as well as to illustrate her *ethos* (*Hec.* 346-9), exhibit her as an *agalma* (*Hec.* 560-1) and generate respect (cf. *Hec.* 577-80) and admiration for her (cf. *Hec.* 591-2). The Greeks respond to her death with honours and they do not touch her body (cf. *Hec.* 573, 578) as she herself had ordered (*Hec.* 548-9).<sup>694</sup> Polyxena succeeded in her pursuit of *kleos* through her death.

There was a strong tendency in ancient Greece to regard women as dangerous and as causing trouble when acting as independent moral agents.<sup>695</sup> It is true that there are disruptive women in Greek tragedy, such as Clytemnestra in *Agamemnon*, or Hermione in *Andromache*. Nevertheless, with regard to the decision-making of the *parthenoi*, this is certainly not the case. These women do not act and cause disruption but act because of the disruption.<sup>696</sup> It is the men who usually generate the crisis which prompts their actions by subverting or disrupting the ideals for which the women stand, as we saw above that Creon did.<sup>697</sup>

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shown (*Hec.* 568-70), defusing any tendency toward a purely sexual voyeurism. Furthermore, in presenting her nudity Euripides is careful to operate within the limits of what the fifth century would allow in art, when the female form is at most semi-nude. Euripides' success in defusing this risk is confirmed by the reaction of the intratextual audience (Zeitlin (1991) 73), as I explain below in my main text. (See in contrast Badnall (2008) 18, fn. 56.)

<sup>694</sup> Zeitlin (1991) 73.

<sup>695</sup> Hall (1997) 106ff. stresses the disruptive nature of the decisions taken by women, and virgins without a *kyrrios*.

<sup>696</sup> Cf. in contrast Badnall (2008) 114-5.

<sup>697</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 123. It appears then that female *prohairesis* violates Aristotle's view of the female character and *ethos*, which are also expressed in the *Arist.Pol.* 1260a11-5 (the text is taken from Rackham (1944)): ἄρχει καὶ τὸ ἄρρεν τοῦ θήλεος καὶ ἀνὴρ παιδός. καὶ πᾶσιν ἐνυπάρχει μὲν τὰ μόρια τῆς ψυχῆς, ἀλλ' ἐνυπάρχει διαφερόντως· ὁ μὲν γὰρ δοῦλος ὅλως οὐκ ἔχει τὸ βουλευτικόν, τὸ δὲ θῆλυ ἔχει μὲν, ἀλλ' ἄκυρον, ὁ δὲ παῖς ἔχει μὲν, ἀλλ' ἀτελές, as well as in the *Poetics*: καὶ γὰρ γυνή ἐστὶν χρηστὴ καὶ

#### 4. Articulating loss: the individual, the *oikos* and the *polis* in the case of male lost nuptials

Missed marriage operates in a different way in the case of males due to the different implications of marriage in their case. As we saw in the Introduction, given the firm interconnection of marriage, *polis* and *oikos* in Greek and especially Athenian cultural ideology, marriage was crucial not only because it fulfilled the individual but most importantly because it provided the continuation of the line of the *oikos* (sc. of the male), as well as of the body of the legitimate citizens of the *polis*.<sup>698</sup> This immediate association of male marriage with the *oikos* and the *polis* comes up in the case of *Hippolytus*. Here too we have *prohairesis*. Hippolytus deliberately misses<sup>699</sup> marriage and what this means for the individual, the *oikos* and the *polis*, electing for a completely opposite lifestyle. In *Hippolytus*, his rejection of marriage represents profoundly problematic behaviour.<sup>700</sup> Apart from the religious implications of his exclusive devotion to Artemis and disregard for Aphrodite, it signifies his failure to do his duty to the *oikos*<sup>701</sup> and more generally it illustrates an aberrant way of life, completely opposite

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δοῦλος, καίτοι γε ἴσως τούτων τὸ μὲν χεῖρον, τὸ δὲ ὅλως φαῦλόν ἐστιν (*Poe.*1454a19-21; the text is cited after Halliwell (1995)). This is his view in the *Rhetoric* as well: καὶ αἱ τῶν φύσει σπουδαιοτέρων ἀρεταὶ καλλίους καὶ τὰ ἔργα, οἷον ἀνδρὸς ἢ γυναικός (*Rhet.* 1.9.22/1367a16-18; the text follows Freese (1926)). See on this issue Foley (2001) 109-11, especially p. 110 fn. 7, where she has more references to Aristotle's views on female insufficiency.

See also above p. 167, fn. 643 on Foley's positive approach to the issue of female decision taking.

For Creon, see above, p. 174.

<sup>698</sup> See Introduction, pp. 20-1; cf. Seaford (1994) 206-9.

<sup>699</sup> This *prohairesis* is not a forced but an elective dilemma, a wilful option with uncontrolled consequences which ultimately destroys the individual.

<sup>700</sup> Cf. Hall (1997) 95, 104. As Hall (1997) 97-8 argues, the 'displacement' out of the community was a frequent theme in Greek tragedy.

<sup>701</sup> Gieseler (2007) 8-12. Of course according to the real Athenian standards Hippolytus was not a legitimate citizen, he was a *nothos* as is mentioned or hinted at several times in the play (*Hipp.* 10, 307-10, 351, 581-2). However, the reality of tragedy is a mixed reality (Hall (1997) 100) and the play has

to the civic cultural prerequisites. In the case of males then wilful dismissal of *gamos* articulates the negation of cultural and social expectations and the ramifications of this choice for the individual.

This is particularly expressed through Hippolytus' death and illustrated in the choral lyrics of *Hipp.* 1131ff. The expectations of the community and Hippolytus' choices are juxtaposed and contrasted in an ironic way,<sup>702</sup> underlining the distorted nature of his way of life.<sup>703</sup> This *stasimon* mourns Hippolytus' exile in its most important social dimension: marriage and personal fulfilment. Exile (φρυγῆ σῆ, *Hipp.* 1140-1) means that he will never be able to marry and will miss his fulfilment, since he cannot be married outside his society. Missed *gamos* equals the destitution of the *oikos*, of the burial and continuously repeated funeral rites, which provide a certain kind of continuation of one's existence after death,<sup>704</sup> the deprivation of the *polis*, which was the worst possible punishment for a citizen. Denial of marriage articulates not only his own choice to miss his *telos* but also his rejection of life in society. These two realities co-exist in this *stasimon* and give a powerful expression of the result of Hippolytus' *prohairesis*.

As mentioned above, missed *gamos* in the archaeological sources surviving is lamented more for girls than boys. In the case of girls, missed *gamos* was a reason for sorrow and

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illustrated Hippolytus' rejection of the *oikos* and the society, as I will show below. Thus his *nothos* status should not be considered as a problem.

For a very different reading of Hippolytus' behaviour as a digression regarding his *oikos* and *polis* see Mitchell-Boyask (1999) who reads Hippolytus as an *ephebe*.

<sup>702</sup> Swift (2006) 125-9, 137-9.

<sup>703</sup> Cf. Swift (2006) 129.

<sup>704</sup> Rehm (1994) 7 with many references to primary material for the importance of funeral rites for a citizen of the *polis* and also Rehm (1994) 160-1 fn. 42.

this was explicitly expressed in the epigrams on their tombs. In the case of the males this loss was lamented but this was done implicitly – and in the framework of other offerings – through the vases on the tombs of young unmarried boys.<sup>705</sup>

The picture we get from drama (including comedy) is more or less consonant with the archaeological one in terms of relative frequency; but there is a variation in that tragedy addresses more explicitly the implications of lost *gamos* in the case of males. Although this is very seldom for the girls, in their laments for their young sons, mothers in tragedy particularly refer to and mourn the missed *gamos* of their sons, or their own missed participation in it. This is initially surprising. But probably again the reason lies in the fact that the death of the boys had more serious implications both for the *oikos* and the *polis*, far beyond those caused by the death of girls.

This is not to say that mothers did not feel pain for their unmarried daughters. We have seen that missed *gamos* of *parthenoi* is a motif which can generate great pathos.<sup>706</sup> In addition, in contexts which do not involve funeral laments and death, pain *is* expressed in references to the contingency of the loss of *gamos* of girls, both in comedy and in tragedy, as does for instance Aristophanes in *Lys.* 593: *περὶ τῶν δὲ κορῶν ἐν τοῖς θαλάμοις γηρασκουσῶν ἀνιῶμαι* (cf. *Lys.* 596-7). Euripides' chaste Helen also worries about her daughter's lost chances for marriage and this issue distresses her among other thoughts (*Hel.* 282-3; cf. 688-90). This is also one of Alcestis' (*Alc.* 315ff.) sources of anguish. Sophocles presents his audience with the only father that expresses grief and

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<sup>705</sup> See Introduction, pp. 23-4, and p. 154.

<sup>706</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 118-9.

concern for the bleak future of his daughters and their fate (*O.T.* 1489ff.).<sup>707</sup> However, missed *gamos* in the case of girls does not usually figure in maternal laments for their death.

This use for the males who die young and unmarried, though striking, is still not frequent in tragedy. For instance when Hecuba learns that Polydorus died, she does not utter a word about his missed *gamos*. The relative rarity means that the extant instances of the male missed *gamos* probably carry extra dramatic weight.

Another striking feature of these laments is the speaker. In the cases of males who died before getting married, no male expresses grief for his loss of marriage and *telos*. In other words the sons themselves do not speak of the issue. The pain for this missed transition is articulated by the mothers only in their laments. The allocation of the grief to the mother focalizes the loss from a family perspective; it also allows a level of emotion which would seem self-indulgent in a male. Indeed, due to the importance of a mother's role in marriage rituals, the mother's grief is a remarkably effective way of articulating larger losses to the individual and crucially to the family. At the end of the procession towards the new *oikos*, it was the mother who received the couple, not the father. Instead of promoting the continuation of their *oikos* through the reception of the couple in the *oikos*, they lament a death which is an obstacle to the perpetuation of the line. This, combined with the fact that a mother's love makes her pain the most intense, shows why the mother's lament became an excellent vehicle indeed for the expression

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<sup>707</sup> See above, pp. 155-7.

of the losses of the *oikos*. Marriage sums up and intensifies this loss, the life that might have been and the lost promise for the *oikos*.

Although the lament for male missed *gamos* is predominantly in the context of death, as so often in tragedy, there are exceptions. In the case of Polyneices missed nuptials are mourned, although Polyneices had not died yet. What facilitates here the use of the motif is that death hangs over the story of the two brothers. A second reason is probably that exile was considered as a kind of civic death. With this background, Jocasta's mourning in the *Phoenissae* is used explicitly to pronounce the loss to the *oikos* and the *polis* due to the missed nuptials of Polyneices'. This is (at least for his mother) a missed *gamos*, in terms of the missed participation of the *oikos*; the wedding ritual took place out of the context of his *oikos* and *polis* (ἀνυμέναια δ' Ἴσμηνός ἐκηδεύθη / λουτροφόρου χλιδαῖς, *Pho.* 347-9), contrary to ancient Greek norms (cf. *Pho.* 345: νόμιμον [ἐν γάμοις] ὡς πρέπει).<sup>708</sup> The procession towards Polyneices' *oikos* never took place (*Pho.* 348-9). What especially pains Jocasta as a mother is that she did not hold the torch to receive the newly-wed couple to their new home (ἐγὼ δ' οὔτι σοι πυρὸς ἀνήψα φῶς / νόμιμον [ἐν γάμοις] ὡς πρέπει ματέρι μακαρία, *Pho.* 344-5). And more importantly his society – here represented by the river Ismenos – did not validate the union (*Pho.* 346-7). Jocasta repeatedly presents Polyneices' marriage not as marriage abroad but as a missed *gamos* (ἀνυμέναια δ' Ἴσμηνός ἐκηδεύθη / λουτροφόρου χλιδαῖς, ἀνὰ δὲ Θηβαίων / πόλιν ἐσίγαθεν σαῖς ἔσοδοι νύμφας, *Pho.* 346-9; cf. 337-43) both for her (*Pho.* 345-6) and her *oikos* (*Pho.* 344-5, 348-9) and the *polis* of Thebes

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<sup>708</sup> Swift (2009a) 60.

(ἀνυμέναια δ' Ἴσμηνὸς ἐκηδεύθη / λουτροφόρου χλιδαῖς, ἀνὰ δὲ Θηβαίων / πόλιν  
ἔσίγαθεν σᾶς ἔσοδοι νύμφας, *Pho.* 346-9).

The problem in missed *gamos* is compounded by the nature of the marriage which substituted for this. It involves marriage not merely outside the family (cf. *Pho.* 337-40) but outside the city. It is a marriage with an enemy of the city and it is contracted against the good of the city (*Pho.* 77-80; cf. 1628-9).<sup>709</sup>

This brings us to the effect of the lost marriage of the males on their *polis*. Due to their important role as citizens of the *polis* and heads of the *oikoi* which formed the *polis*, this absence has ramifications for the larger civic society. This is most explicitly pronounced in the case of the Trojan royal *oikos*. In the *Trojan Women* it is not only the extinction of the *oikos* but most importantly the destruction of Troy that is figured. This play draws together the laments of the women of Troy after the city's sack. Through these laments there is a systematic effort to express their acute pain at the destruction of Troy, the disasters and the deaths that its citizens faced, all the violence and the damage that resulted from the war.<sup>710</sup> It is natural then that Euripides chose the lament of the queen<sup>711</sup> of the destroyed city, Hecuba, as the cap of all these laments, in order to give the final emphasis to what has been lost.<sup>712</sup> The articulation of collective loss through the missed

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<sup>709</sup> Swift (2009a) 58-60; cf. Badnall (2008) 123.

<sup>710</sup> Barlow (1986) 37.

<sup>711</sup> Cf. Goff (2009) 75.

<sup>712</sup> This is perhaps the reason Euripides chose this death to be lamented not by the mother (cf. Goff (2009) 74 on this issue), Andromache, but by the grandmother at Andromache's request (*Tro.* 1142-4). Andromache is taken away by the Greeks by ship (*Tro.* 1129-33). Her inability to mourn for her son (*Tro.* 1133-35, 1145-6) and her request to Hecuba is mentioned just before Hecuba's lament as if this was a way to make Hecuba's lament more legitimate, since it was unusual to have the grandmother mourn and not the mother. This is also indicated by the appellation of Hecuba as 'mother' at *Tro.* 1229 (cf. Goff (2009) 74-5, cf. also Dyson and Lee (2000) 21 on the extension of the pain for Astyanax from Andromache to

*gamos* of the male receives unusual emphasis here; there is no other lament in Greek tragedy so bleak as this.<sup>713</sup>

Behind Hecuba's mourning there is her lament for Hector in the *Iliad*,<sup>714</sup> though the person lamented is not of course Hector, who has been long dead, but the last survivor of the line of Priam, Astyanax. Hecuba grieves for the missed *gamos* of Astyanax, replaced by untimely death (*Tro.* 1209-15 and 1218-25). If Astyanax had lived to marry, he would continue the Trojan *oikos* and then take revenge and re-establish Troy.<sup>715</sup> His *gamos* would mean hope for the restoration of Troy (*Tro.* 1194-5). Its loss stands for the end of the royal line of Troy:<sup>716</sup>

ὦ φίλταθ', ὥς σοι θάνατος ἦλθε δυστυχίης.  
εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἔθανες πρὸ πόλεως ἥβης τυχῶν  
γάμων τε καὶ τῆς ἰσοθέου τυραννίδος,  
μακάριος ἦσθ' ἄν, εἴ τι τῶνδε μακάριον (*Tro.*1167-70).

It also stands then for the expectations<sup>717</sup> and the promises that Astyanax was supposed to fulfil that were not realized (*Tro.* 1180-1), as the emphatic metaphorical ἐψεύσω at

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Hecuba). Andromache herself when she learns that Astyanax will die laments for this but expresses her pain for her own *gamos* (*Tro.* 745), not for the definitely missed one of her child.

<sup>713</sup> Dyson and Lee (2000) 25.

<sup>714</sup> The prototype on which Euripides is building is Hecuba's laments firstly encountered in the *Iliad*. In the *Iliad* Hecuba in the role of the mourning mother laments the death of Hector at two places, firstly at *Il.* 22.431-6 when she learns of her son's death and then at *Il.* 24.746-59. The first lament is the important one for my purposes. As Euripides' Hecuba, Homer's Hecuba, as suits her as the queen of Troy, views Hector's loss from the aspect of the *polis*. She devotes 4.5 out of her 6 lines stressing this loss for the *polis* (*Il.*432-6) and only the first 1.5 lines have to do with the personal side of her grief for Hector's death as the mother.

<sup>715</sup> Cf. Dyson and Lee (2000) 23.

<sup>716</sup> Cf. Lee (1976) ad 1169, and ad 1171-2, and Dyson and Lee (2000) 17, 28.

<sup>717</sup> Cf. Lee (1976) ad 1218-20.



1181 shows.<sup>718</sup> The missed marriage in uniting Troy's past, present and future stands for the very notion of Troy itself.<sup>719</sup>

This association of missed *gamos* with lost future recurs in Euripides' *Heracles* 454-84, in Megara's lament for her sons (*Her.* 476-9, 481-4). Here the motif takes the form of the metaphor *par excellence* for dead virgins, marriage to death (*Her.* 481-4). Again what really matters for Megara is the glorious life of which her sons were deprived. Lost marriage itself serves as the vehicle to express the losses, encapsulating all the future potential of Heracles' *oikos*. This is the last thing she mourns for and the peak of pathos.

But in this particular lament there is a deep irony. Megara mourns these losses when she and her family were facing seemingly certain death at the hands of Lycus. They were eventually saved by Heracles, but Megara and her children are ultimately killed by Heracles himself while in a state of madness sent by the gods. This lament is then a kind of ironic preamble. Throughout these lines Megara stressed the plans for the future of the *oikos*, an issue on which the play focuses throughout.<sup>720</sup> Yet the agent of its destruction was its head (*Her.* 1279-80), the person who most emphatically was presented right from the beginning of the play and during the whole of its first part as their protector<sup>721</sup> and only hope for salvation (*Her.* 490ff., cf. 69-81), and who had even already confirmed these expectations (*Her.* 521-2). Therefore the effect of the use of the

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<sup>718</sup> Cf. Lee (1976) ad loc, and Barlow (1986) ad loc; cf. Dyson and Lee (2000) 23.

<sup>719</sup> Cf. Lee (1976) ad 1169, and ad 1171-2, and Dyson and Lee (2000) 28.

<sup>720</sup> Griffiths (2006) 65.

<sup>721</sup> Heracles is shown as a family man (Griffiths (2006) 72-3).

motif of the missed *gamos* is that the annihilation of the *oikos* is presented as more poignant.

The only exception to the almost exclusive presence of missed *gamos* in the mothers' laments for the death of males in Greek tragedy and not of females is Euripides' *Hecuba*. Here, pain for Polyxena's missed *gamos* is expressed in Hecuba's lament. The burial that Hecuba chooses for her daughter is closely related to her lost nuptials: ὡς παῖδα λουτροῖς τοῖς πανυστάτοις ἐμήν, / νύμφην τ' ἄνυμφον παρθένον τ' ἀπάρθενον, / λούσω προθῶμαί θ' – ὡς μὲν ἀξία, πόθεν; (*Hec.* 611-13). Missed *gamos* in the case of Polyxena is very important thematically. Polyxena herself stressed the fact that slavery deprived her of a worthy marriage and based her decision to die on the fact that servitude threatened her with a socially degrading match.<sup>722</sup> Hecuba's account brings again to the minds of the audience the image of her daughter's brave decisions. If Polyxena articulated her lost life and future in terms of her missed *gamos* to express her decision to die, Hecuba articulates her daughter's lost future in terms of her missed *gamos*, complementing Polyxena's statements by presenting the loss as a counterpoint to her nobility.

##### **5. The language of *non-gamos* as an expression of distortion and perversion<sup>723</sup>**

The language of absence of marriage can be used more or less literally, as in the examples above. But in Greek literature it is also employed to characterize marriages which were literally not consummated, and, more importantly, as metaphor to speak

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<sup>722</sup> See above, pp. 174-7.

<sup>723</sup> See ch. 4, where more literal treatments of this motif are discussed.

about unions which encompass elements of distortion and perversion. A case which belongs to the first category is Euripides' *Electra*. Electra is married (Eur.*El.* 34-5) but the union was never consummated and is in this sense missed (Eur.*El.* 43-4). Its incomplete status is due to the deviant nature of this union. Although consummation had no legal significance for the validity of the marriage, the unanimous assumption (explicit in the attention which the subject receives both from the *autourgos* and from Orestes) is that marriage is followed by sex and ideally by childbirth. Electra's marriage is marriage arrested. She has left her natal *oikos* and cohabits with her husband but is still a virgin. She and the *autourgos* have gone through all the rituals but not the final act and she is thus in limbo.

The reason lies in its distorted nature. Electra herself describes it as a θανάσιμος γάμος (cf. θανάσιμον γάμον, Eur.*El.* 247). She is married below her station. In the text it is emphasized that there is a social gap (Eur.*El.* 46, 249) between her and her poor, albeit noble, husband (Eur.*El.* 37-8, 64-5, cf. 253). Although she is ashamed of her missed marriage (Eur.*El.* 311),<sup>724</sup> her main concern is that this alliance is a disgrace to her (θανάσιμον γάμον, Eur.*El.* 247; στρυγεράς ζόας, Eur.*El.* 121, cf. 181-2, 303ff.). Despite her royal origin (Eur.*El.* 186-7) she lives poorly, doing humble tasks (Eur.*El.* 55-58, 303ff.). But marriage and social status go hand in hand. Since this *gamos* is socially

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<sup>724</sup> Electra is ashamed of her virginity because she is at an age when a woman should be performing her full marital role.

unsuitable for Electra, it results in her social degradation and shame, which she feels deeply (Eur.*El.* 45-9, 175-89, cf. 310-3).<sup>725</sup>

The distortion is more than one of social status, however, since the marriage is considered by the *autourgos* too as invalid, because Aegisthus was not Electra's *kyrios* (Eur.*El.* 259). Moreover, this is a union contrary to the purposes of marriage in ancient Greece. Marriage was supposed to provide for the continuation of the *oikos*. In this case it is arranged precisely in order to stop this continuation: Aegisthus and Clytemnestra planned this marriage in order to deprive the *oikos* of a successor of equal status (Eur.*El.* 39, cf. 22-6), who would take revenge (Αγαμέμνονος ποινάτορ', Eur.*El.* 23) and restore Agamemnon's *oikos* (Eur.*El.* 40-2).<sup>726</sup> Instead this marriage would produce poor offspring of low status and thus powerless. This would prevent revenge, block the continuation of Agamemnon's line and arrest the development of Agamemnon's *oikos* (Eur.*El.* 22-42, 268-9).<sup>727</sup>

Instead of the re-integration of the new *oikos* into the *polis*,<sup>728</sup> the result in this case is that Electra is marginalized both physically and socially: she lives, socially degraded, on the borders of Argos.<sup>729</sup> Her social and sexual marginalization in the play is figured by her marginal location. Electra stands on two boundaries: She is half girl and half woman

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<sup>725</sup> Zeitlin (1970) 649-51; cf. Papadimitropoulos (2008) 117-8. This issue is dealt with in greater detail in the next section, pp. 193-201, esp. 194-7.

<sup>726</sup> It is true that the real continuation of the *oikos* would have been provided by Orestes, who is the exiled son of the *oikos* (Eur.*El.* 15-8). It is equally true that Electra in Orestes' absence is in some sense in the position of the *epikleros* and therefore perceived as capable of providing an heir to her father's *oikos*.

<sup>727</sup> Despite the obvious similarities this constitutes a difference from Sophocles' *Electra*, where Aegisthus and Clytemnestra were trying to block continuation of Agamemnon's line by preventing the girls from getting married and producing heirs, as we will see below on pp. 197-9 (cf. Badnall (2008) 121, 124).

<sup>728</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 79.

<sup>729</sup> Zeitlin (1970) 649-51; cf. Papadimitropoulos (2008) 117-8.

and physically she is at the borders of Argos and also both socially and physically on the edge of Argive society.

The main use of the language of non-*gamos* is however the metaphorical one. In this case perverted unions are called non-*gamoí* by a typical tragic linguistic device.<sup>730</sup> This negative language is used to demonstrate the irregularity of these relationships. There is also a larger social disorder in these marriages and this concerns their terrible consequences. The ramifications of the marriages in question go far beyond the individuals involved: children unable to marry, *oikoi* destroyed, countries threatened.<sup>731</sup> These factors are present in the cases of Electra's (in Sophocles), Hermione's, and Antigone's and Ismene's.

In the cases of the first group, it is the social perversion of the parental marriages that cause the loss of the chance to get married and more generally the social rejection of the children.<sup>732</sup> This is one of the factors that reinforce the grief and pain of Oedipus and Helen. In Euripides' *Helen*, the reputation of Helen's *agamos*<sup>733</sup> marriage (*Hel.* 690) to Paris is a hindrance for her daughter's marriage. In this case, in contrast to Clytemnestra's perverted 'non'-marriage to Aegisthus, it is Helen herself who calls her disreputable alleged union to Paris a non-*gamos*. This strong negative description reflects the strength of her personal feelings. It is firstly grief, because she lays the blame on herself for what has happened both to her daughter (*Hel.* 689-90) and mother

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<sup>730</sup> Breitenbach (1934) 237, Fehling (1968) 142-55, Fehling (1969) 287-9, Kannicht (1969) on *Hel.* 363.

<sup>731</sup> Cf. Allan (2008) ad loc, Burian (2007) ad loc, Badnall (2008) 79.

<sup>732</sup> Badnall (2008) 111-2, esp. 123.

<sup>733</sup> This marriage is *agamos* in two senses: first because it literally did not take place, but also, since for the Greeks it was real, *agamos* denotes the fact that it was an infamous alliance.

(*Hel.* 686-7) due to the story of her relationship with Paris; but also indignation and despair. The effect is to express with greater vividness and intensity Helen's shame, self-blame (†αἰσχύνα†, *Hel.* 690) when she thinks of her daughter's distress for her own lost marriage and distress due to her mother's notoriety (*Hel.* 688-90). Though this union never took place, this does not affect the social consequences; society treats it as both actual and perverted.

This is a further ramification which is explored in *O.T.*, although in this case the problem is not only the guilt arising from their actions but more than that the horror with which the products of Oedipus' incest are viewed and the social stigma attached to the whole family; they are effectively outcasts within their community. This is a far more serious distortion than that in *Helen*, because it is a perversion of nature and not just a social impropriety. Oedipus has killed his father and married his mother. It is the result of these very actions, both the patricide and the incestuous *gamos*, the non-*gamos* (*O.T.* 1214-5, 1255-7), that his daughters are going to miss their own *gamoι*, to his distress (*O.T.* 1492-5, 1500-2). But moreover, the outcome of Oedipus' perverted marriage is the social exclusion of his daughters: they can participate in no civic events (*O.T.* 1489-91); they carry a burden of shame and no-one will marry them (*O.T.* 1492-5, 1500-2). They are social outcasts.

But nowhere is the social perversion explored in more detail than in the case of Clytemnestra's perverted marriage in Sophocles, which is a non-*gamos* for Electra (ἄλεκτρ' ἄνυμφα ... / γάμων ἀμιλλήμαθ', *Soph.El.* 493-4). Here at the core of Electra's

suffering is Clytemnestra's socially distorted behaviour and marriage.<sup>734</sup> Her union with Aegisthus is a social betrayal:

εἰ γὰρ θέλεις, δίδαξον ἀνθ' ὅτου τανῶν  
αἴσχιστα πάντων ἔργα δρῶσα τυγχάνεις,  
ἥτις ξυνεύδεις τῷ παλαμναίῳ, μεθ' οὗ  
πατέρα τὸν ἄμὸν πρόσθεν ἐξάπώλεσας,  
καὶ παιδοποιεῖς, τοὺς δὲ πρόσθεν εὐσεβεῖς  
κάξ εὐσεβῶν βλαστόντας ἐκβαλοῦς' ἔχεις (Soph.*El.* 585-  
90).

The perversion consists in the complete violation of the *oikos*. Though Clytemnestra's union with Aegisthus is not technically marriage, the language of marriage is employed to emphasize the ethical distortion: Clytemnestra gave no consideration to the interests of the *oikos* or the desires of its members and deprived it of the role that the *oikos* had in the wedding procedures.<sup>735</sup> Clytemnestra received Aegisthus into an *oikos* which was not even her own, but her betrayed husband's, although the proper procedure was that a woman should be given by her *kyrios* to her husband and then join her husband's *oikos*.<sup>736</sup> Moreover, the person she introduced into this *oikos* was its bitter enemy. She goes still further in that she also betrays her children. She opts neither for natal nor for marital *oikos* but for an artificial and unnatural (in a Greek context) union which elevates *moicheia* to the status of marriage; and since the royal house is also the state, the perversion is double.

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<sup>734</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 123.

<sup>735</sup> Cf. Ormand (1999) 68-70.

<sup>736</sup> Thus, her marriage 'defies the patrilineal nature of marriage' (Ormand (1999) 69).

Clytemnestra's union to Aegisthus in turn eradicates the prospect of *gamos* for her daughters, not due to a social stigma as in Oedipus' case, but because Clytemnestra and Aegisthus would not allow it, since they do not want descendants to Agamemnon's line (Soph.*El.* 959-66).<sup>737</sup> Orestes has lost his social status of course (cf. Soph.*El.* 71-2), and Electra is the only real obstacle for Clytemnestra and Aegisthus.<sup>738</sup> Through her children with Aegisthus Clytemnestra has replaced Orestes, Electra and Chrysothemis and has made Agamemnon's property and rule accessible to these children.<sup>739</sup> Thus, Clytemnestra's perverted 'missed' *gamos* has as result Electra's missed *gamos*, which arrests her social development.<sup>740</sup> Electra chooses to stand by her father's tables (Soph.*El.* 192): the tables of the virgin's father are a symbol for the proper *kyrieia* and the proper life that the girl lived in her father's *oikos* (Aesch.*Ag.* 243-5, cf. Soph.*O.T.* 1462-5). The place of the maidens at their father's tables before their marriage was so important that its loss can feature in the epithalamial lament when they got married.<sup>741</sup> Therefore, these empty tables in Aegisthus' *oikos* stand for the distortion in Electra's life as a potential bride (Soph.*El.* 1183).<sup>742</sup> So, it is both a perversion and an irony when Electra is eventually parted from her father's tables not because of *gamos* but because of her mother's perverted marriage. Clytemnestra's 'missed' *gamos* destroys the whole *oikos*.<sup>743</sup>

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<sup>737</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 121.

<sup>738</sup> Juffras (1991) 105.

<sup>739</sup> Juffras (1991) 106.

<sup>740</sup> Seaford (1985) 318-319 *passim*; cf. Foley (2001) 150-1.

<sup>741</sup> On the symbolism of the father's tables and Electra's marriage (cf. *Ag.* 243-5), see Ormand (1999) 63-4.

<sup>742</sup> Cf. in contrast Badnall (2008) 121.

<sup>743</sup> Finglass (2005) 206.



More than that, this perverted marriage affects the *polis*. The *polis* is a distinct presence (Soph.*El.* 129, 641-2, 976-85, 1227, 1413-4, 1458-63) at dramatically important moments of the play.<sup>744</sup> Aegisthus' rule is hateful, fearsome and unwanted in Argos and resembles a tyranny.<sup>745</sup> The evil effects of Clytemnestra's perverted union spread outward like ripples and, as in Aeschylus, salvation from Orestes has the potential both to restore the *oikos* and to lead to a better political situation for the *polis*.<sup>746</sup>

## 6. Marriage as microcosm

The implications of missed *gamos* are further used to articulate the themes of the plays.<sup>747</sup> *Gamos* is a way of using established social structures as a communicative medium right from the beginnings of Greek literature. *Gamos* is a highly structured and ritualized process in itself, which makes it a useful image to comment on structure and its absence. Feasting, another important force for and reflection of social cohesion and social order,<sup>748</sup> is more commonly used for this purpose. The perverted feasts of the suitors, for example, in the *Odyssey* stand for the distortion of social order.<sup>749</sup> Marriage too reflects social order. An early example of this use of marriage is the wedding ritual

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<sup>744</sup> Finglass (2005) 202-4.

<sup>745</sup> Juffras (1991) 107, MacLeod (2001) 57.

<sup>746</sup> Harder (1995) 25-6, Finglass (2005) 205. This relationship between perversion in the *oikos* and the *polis* is more nuanced in Aeschylus and will be discussed in detail in the next chapter (See ch. 4, esp. pp. 218-25 and 246-9).

<sup>747</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 80.

<sup>748</sup> Cf. Seaford (1994) 52-3, who speaks generally of feast as ritual and also treats it in the frame of Greek reciprocity. Rundin (1996) sees feasting not as ritual, but as a way to express relationships of political power in Homer and thereafter (see especially p. 205). Still it is a code of society to express order and any perversion in it signals social disorder.

<sup>749</sup> Cf. Seaford (1994) 52-65.

in the peaceful city on the shield of Achilles.<sup>750</sup> There, a proper wedding ritual represents ‘ordered communal life’.<sup>751</sup> The marriage figures as one side of a binary opposition between peace and order and their reverse, represented in the war which encompasses the other city. Marriage then stands for order and thus disruption in the wedding ritual stands for disorder in the community.<sup>752</sup> Furthermore, marriage was a social structure which concerned both the *oikos* and the *polis* and any irregular instance of it had implications for the larger society. Due to the inextricable connection between marriage, the *oikos* and the *polis* and the effects that the first had on the last two, missed *gamos* was a way to articulate larger problems or issues which concerned the *oikos* and the *polis*. Unsurprisingly therefore these were favourite topics for Greek tragedy. In this section I focus on missed *gamos*, which is a device systematically used in both *Electra* plays. Electra’s missed marriage is employed as a device to discuss themes of the play and especially the impasse within which the family finds itself.

In Euripides, as well as presenting Electra’s personal *catastrophe*, in effecting her social marginalization, this missed *gamos* both results from and illustrates the breakdown of the *oikos* due to its failure to escape from self- and mutually destructive patterns of conduct. The family’s impasse and the problematic situation in Agamemnon’s *oikos* in general is a very important theme from the beginning of the play (Eur.*El.* 8ff.). The father of the *oikos*, Agamemnon, is dead (Eur.*El.* 122-4, 200), dishonoured and seeking revenge (Eur.*El.* 318-31). It is from this that all the other disorders of the *oikos* arise.

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<sup>750</sup> On the shield of Achilles, see: Taplin (1980), Hardie (1985), Becker (1990), Hubbard (1992), Becker (1995) 48, 106-110, Scully (2003), Allen (2007).

<sup>751</sup> Edwards (1991) ad 490-508; cf. Badnall (2008) 11-2, 109.

<sup>752</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 11-2.

Thus, the mother<sup>753</sup> is married to Aegisthus, an enemy of the family (Eur.*El.* 833) with whom she has killed the father (Eur.*El.* 8-10, 914ff.). Aegisthus (Eur.*El.* 11-13) and Clytemnestra (Eur.*El.* 314-18) have usurped Agamemnon's place, position, *oikos*, and fortune. Clytemnestra herself expelled her children with Agamemnon from the *oikos* (cf. Eur.*El.* 201-210, cf. also 264-5) and substituted her previous *oikos* with another, perverted one, with Aegisthus by bearing children to him (Eur.*El.* 60-3, cf. 211-12). Clytemnestra ultimately sides with her new 'husband's' bad treatment of her children (Eur.*El.* 1116-31).<sup>754</sup>

This deviation in the *oikos* of Agamemnon, the idea that the *oikos* is fragmented and the family is trapped, is most eloquently illustrated through Electra's missed *gamos*. As we saw above,<sup>755</sup> this marriage was precisely designed in order to prevent the continuation of Agamemnon's *oikos*. Missed *gamos* then is part of the larger nexus of aberrance in the *oikos*.

This idea of missed marriage and arrested development allows the play to discuss some of these larger issues about freedom, responsibility, and revenge. Firstly, marriage is connected with revenge<sup>756</sup>, in that a marriage with a noble person guarantees the revenge; a degrading marriage supposedly prevents it (Eur.*El.* 39-42, cf. 19-28). But in

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<sup>753</sup> Regarding Clytemnestra's share in the perversion of the *oikos*, it is important to note here that Electra's words should be treated with some reservations and not at face value. Clytemnestra's behaviour in the end, the fact that she goes to assist her daughter, which was something expected even by Electra, indicates that Clytemnestra is not that bad.

<sup>754</sup> Although she had saved Electra from murder at the hands of Aegisthus (Eur.*El.* 25-30), she apparently did it because of her fear of public opinion (Eur.*El.* 30).

<sup>755</sup> See p. 188.

<sup>756</sup> It is also integral to Clytemnestra's revenge against Agamemnon (See ch. 4, pp. 217-8, 220-2).

fact the case seems to be quite the opposite. Electra's perverted missed marriage makes revenge more urgent than ever. Electra can see the resolution of her problems, her social restoration and revenge for her father's death (Eur.*El.* 1093-6) only in the murder of her mother, the agent of all these. It is Electra who wants the revenge and persuades Orestes, who insists on the wrongness of this action, to do it (Eur.*El.* 976). In the account (Eur.*El.* 300-38) of the impasse of the *oikos* and the reasons for revenge expected from Orestes (Eur.*El.* 330-1, 336-8), the reason which is mentioned first and foremost and is thus most emphasized is her social marginalization and degradation due to her marriage (Eur.*El.* 303-13, cf. also 135-8 and 1292-3). The link between 'missed' *gamos* as reason for the revenge is stressed during the actual act of the murder: it is the first thing for which Electra blames her mother (Eur.*El.* 1008-1010; cf. 1004-5). The emphasis on Electra's desire for revenge and not Orestes' is a thematically convenient choice, because as missed *gamos* represented Clytemnestra's distorted behaviour and the perverted situation in the *oikos*, this missed *gamos* and the unrealized offspring of this never consummated marriage was the agent of her own destruction, the trap which led her to death (Eur.*El.* 1123ff.). Missed *gamos* is then intimately connected with the second of the two larger themes of the play, namely revenge.

Although the revenge is presented as Apollo's order (Eur.*El.* 971-3) and is regarded as just by the chorus (Eur.*El.* 479-86, cf. 763-4, 952-8, 1051-4), the play invites us to question both the morality of the revenge and its capacity to offer resolution. The moral issue of the revenge is raised by Orestes (Eur.*El.* 962ff. *passim*, especially 962, 967, 969, 973, 975). More importantly, the way Clytemnestra dies (Eur.*El.* 1238ff.), as a direct result of her generous instincts in a visit to her daughter (Eur.*El.* 650-8; cf. 1123-

33), enhances the horror of the matricide. The final *deus ex machina* speech, while acknowledging that it was Apollo's order (Eur.*El.* 1245-6), explicitly questions the participation of Orestes and Electra in killing their mother (Eur.*El.* 1244). The murder is ascribed to Apollo (Eur.*El.* 1296-7, cf. 1301-2) but still the siblings are punished (Eur.*El.* 1244-91, cf. 1305-7).<sup>757</sup> What the siblings should have done remains unclear. The play does not give a straightforward answer. What is still a fact, however, is that the initial wrong is replicated in the revenge. It is with a revenge as problematic as the act it avenges that missed *gamos* is associated.

The link between perverted and doubtful revenge and missed *gamos* goes deeper still. As we saw in chapter 2, the restoration of Electra's *gamos* to a proper marriage cannot effect the emotional satisfaction of Electra, just as the revenge and what provoked it cannot be undone. Electra gets a husband and a proper *oikos* (Eur.*El.* 1311-13, cf. 1284-7), as well as wealth (Eur.*El.* 1287), but in context this does not satisfy: Electra in the end is emotionally bereft both due to her exile (Eur.*El.* 1314-5, cf. 1334-5) and also because of her separation from her brother (Eur.*El.* 1321-4, 1332). Thus, the restoration of the missed marriage is unable to achieve a full restoration in Electra's life.

In Sophocles' *Electra*, missed *gamos* is used again to underscore the larger themes of the play, though arguably to a lesser extent. Here it reflects the usurpers' attempts to destroy the *oikos*.<sup>758</sup> Although this is less pointed than in Euripides' *Electra*, Electra's

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<sup>757</sup> The revenge is perverted even with regard to Aegisthus. He dies in the frame of a subverted sacrifice ritual (Thorburn (2005) 191).

<sup>758</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 121.

marriage, as well as Chrysothemis', seems to be blocked by Aegisthus in order to prevent revenge for Agamemnon's *oikos*,<sup>759</sup> as Electra claims to Chrysothemis:

πάρεστι δ' ἀλγεῖν ἐς τοσόνδε τοῦ χρόνου  
ἄλεκτρα γηράσκουσαν ἀνυμέναιά τε.  
καὶ τῶνδε μέντοι μηκέτ' ἐλπίσης ὅπως  
τεύξει ποτ'· οὐ γὰρ ᾧδ' ἄβουλός ἐστ' ἀνήρ  
Αἴγισθος ὥστε σόν ποτ' ἢ κάμὸν γένος  
βλαστεῖν ἐᾶσαι, πημονὴν αὐτῷ σαφῆ (Soph.El. 961-6).

Missed *gamos* speaks also for the other crucial issue in the play, namely revenge. Because her father is unavenged (Soph.El. 245-50), while their enemies have usurped the property of the *oikos*, Electra is bound to lament her father and await the resolution from Orestes, while she remains unable to marry, stuck in her natal *oikos* (Soph.El. 164-172, 185-92). Her missed *gamos* binds her to her natal *oikos* with an unbreakable tie and firmly associates her with the need for revenge. She herself links her missed *gamos* and problems and Orestes' return for revenge:

ὄν γ' ἐγὼ ἀκάματα προσμένουσ' ἄτεκνος,  
τάλαιν' ἀνύμφευτος αἰὲν οἶχνῶ,  
δάκρυσι μυδαλέα, τὸν ἀνήνυτον  
οἶτον ἔχουσα κακῶν (Soph.El. 164-7).

But missed *gamos* achieves another more sinister effect: it adds to the sense of discomfort in the ending of the play.<sup>760</sup> When Orestes is reunited with his sister, he

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<sup>759</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 121. See above p. 192.

pities her for her missed *gamos* and for her sufferings (Soph.*El.* 1183), but there is no word afterwards of a marriage for Electra, not even the marriage to Pylades well-known from the tradition, just as there is no ritual restoration for Agamemnon.<sup>761</sup> Scholars have noted that the end of the play lacks a real expression of joy, which Orestes had predicted (Soph.*El.* 1299-1300); the lack of an unambiguous presentation of the victory of the siblings undermines any firm sense of resolution. The language of resolution, *lysis*, in the play is loaded with irony and the employment of this language in the conclusion makes the irony and the sense of open-endedness even stronger.<sup>762</sup> Electra's missed *gamos* adds to the ambiguous character of the ending, to the implication that Orestes' act cannot restore order to the *oikos* and invites the suspicion that there is more at work in the attempted resolution than the events clearly presented to the audience.<sup>763</sup> Not only is the future of Electra and Orestes uncertain, but also the language of irony makes it far from certain that the problems of the *oikos* of Atreus and the *polis* are now resolved through this ambiguous murder.<sup>764</sup> Although Orestes and Electra have managed to free themselves from Aegisthus and Clytemnestra,<sup>765</sup> have saved the *oikos* from them and released the *polis* from their horrible tyranny,<sup>766</sup> the ending indicates that they have a much longer road to go down until they can effect complete release from their problems. Orestes' uncertainty regarding his success reinforces this feeling (Soph.*El.* 1424-5).

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<sup>760</sup> Finglass (2007) ad 1442-1510. The ending is ambiguous (most recently Wheeler (2003) 386-7; cf. Kitzinger (1991) esp. 326-7, Budelmann (2000) 256-68, esp. 268). For a summary of the approaches to the character of the ending, the revenge and the tone of the whole play see MacLeod (2001) 4-20.

<sup>761</sup> Seaford (1985) 322.

<sup>762</sup> Goldhill (2012) 17-21, 51-2.

<sup>763</sup> Cf. Lloyd (2005) 113.

<sup>764</sup> Cf. Budelmann (2000) 256-68.

<sup>765</sup> MacLeod (2001) 161.

<sup>766</sup> MacLeod (2001) 178.

Finally, missed *gamos* again articulates major themes in *Antigone*.<sup>767</sup> I showed above<sup>768</sup> how this motif creates dramatic pathos through the importance of the loss of *gamos* for a young girl.<sup>769</sup> There is a further twist however in that the *gamos* missed (εὐνής ἀποιμώζοντα τῆς κάτω φθορὰν / καὶ πατρὸς ἔργα καὶ τὸ δύστηνον λέχος, *Ant.* 1224-5) is ultimately performed in a perverted form, as described by the messenger (*Ant.* 1192ff.):<sup>770</sup>

εἶθ' ὁ δύσμορος  
 αὐτῷ χολωθεῖς, ὥσπερ εἶχ', ἐπενταθεῖς  
 ἤρεισε πλευραῖς μέσσον ἔγχος, ἐς δ' ὑγρὸν  
 ἀγκῶν' ἔτ' ἔμφρων παρθένῳ προσπτύσσεται  
 καὶ φυσιῶν ὀξεῖαν ἐκβάλλει ροὴν  
 λευκῆ παρειᾷ φοινίου σταλάγματος.  
 κεῖται δὲ νεκρὸς περὶ νεκρῷ, τὰ νυμφικὰ  
 τέλη λαχῶν δείλαιος ἔν γ' Ἄδου δόμοις (*Ant.* 1234-41).

This perverted substitution for the missed marriage reflects the distortions set in motion by Creon, of which it is the result.<sup>771</sup> Marriage and death were mutually informing ritual occasions for ancient Greeks, both of which united the public and private. Furthermore, a certain unity was thought to exist in them: marriage was related to procreation and the start of life and death with its end.<sup>772</sup> Of two crucial rituals, Creon denied the latter, the death ritual and caused the perverted enactment of the first, the marriage ritual (δείξας

<sup>767</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 79, also 110-24.

<sup>768</sup> See above pp. 155-65.

<sup>769</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 118-9.

<sup>770</sup> Badnall (2008) 110-24, esp. 114-5, 117-21, 124.

<sup>771</sup> Badnall (2008) 124.

<sup>772</sup> Rehm (1994) 69-70, and also Segal (1981) 178.



ἐν ἀνθρώποισι τὴν ἀβουλίαν / ὅσῳ μέγιστον ἀνδρὶ πρόσκειται κακόν, *Ant.* 1242-3; cf. πατρὸς ἔργα, *Ant.* 1225) in attempting to deny it.<sup>773</sup> In addition, Creon's behaviour was perverted in another sense: with his edict, he broke the link between the *oikos* and the *polis*, which is central to civic life. His orders forced a choice between *polis* and *oikos*. Through them the harmonious co-existence of divine and human law was broken.<sup>774</sup> These consequences are expressed and represented in the play by the perverted *gamos* of Haemon and Antigone, a dissonant combination of marriage and death.<sup>775</sup> This wedding, the result of Creon's orders and views, embodies the conflict between private and public, the human and the divine, which Creon has generated and shows the destructive potential of this rupture for the *polis* as well as for the *oikos*.<sup>776</sup>

## 7. Articulating the missed passage to completion

There is one final approach to missed *gamos* which plays a minor role in tragedy and does not map neatly onto my discussion so far but still merits consideration. This lies in the double attribute of marriage as ritual and passage.<sup>777</sup> In the case of young people who died unmarried, there is a marked sense not merely of loss but also of deficiency.<sup>778</sup> This is associated with the cultural belief that *gamos* was a passage to maturity and adulthood.<sup>779</sup> In the cases of premature death (cf. *A.P.* 7.649)<sup>780</sup> the passage to death

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<sup>773</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 112, 114-5, 117-21, 124.

<sup>774</sup> Rehm (1994) 69-71.

<sup>775</sup> Rehm (1994) 59-71, Badnall (2008) 110-24, esp. 114-5, 117-21, 124.

<sup>776</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 112, 124.

<sup>777</sup> For the attribute of marriage as passage see pp. 19-20, 23-5.

<sup>778</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 118-9.

<sup>779</sup> See Introduction, pp. 21-5.

<sup>780</sup> It was also a motif in fourth century epitaphs. See on this Tsagalis (2008) 201-3, cf. Neuburg (1990) 68.

replaces the failed passage to marriage.<sup>781</sup> The association is all the more natural, since there was a kind of death in the wedding ritual, acknowledged in some aspects of the celebrations, not least in the *epithalamion*,<sup>782</sup> in that a girl died and became a woman who substituted for the girl.<sup>783</sup> The conflation of wedding and death rituals has been discussed in detail by Rehm (1994).<sup>784</sup> For the purposes of my discussion the important thing is that characters who miss their *gamos* in tragedy due to their premature death make their transition to the status of dead instead of making their transition to marriage status. Equally important is that the tragedians sometimes replace this missed passage with other abstract and figurative motifs in an attempt to offer a kind of recompense or restoration to those missed *gamoí*.

One of the substitutions for missed *gamos* is the foundation of a cult.<sup>785</sup> This is a prominent aspect of *Hippolytus*, but it also occurs in Iphigenia's missed marriage in *Iphigenia in Tauris*.

This substitution for marriage ritual is particularly expressed through the dedication of the lock of hair in the frame of Hippolytus' cult in Euripides' *Hippolytus*. I argued above<sup>786</sup> that Hippolytus in refusing to make his passage to marriage status misses his *telos* and deprives himself of his *oikos* and his *polis*. This refusal led to a violent passage

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<sup>781</sup> Neuburg (1990) 68, Rehm (1994) 29. (Death is a passage (*A.P.* 7.486).)

<sup>782</sup> See Introduction, pp. 19-20.

<sup>783</sup> Redfield (1982) 187, Foley (1994) 104, Ormand (1999) 93.

<sup>784</sup> See Introduction, p. 30.

<sup>785</sup> As we will see in the next chapter, pp. 223-5, there is a precedent in Greek literature for such substitutions. In Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, the problematic situation of the *polis* is a *status quo* largely due to marital aberrance. The marriage aspect of the cult of Eumenides establishes a new order, which replaces the former, disrupted one (Seaford (1994) 386).

<sup>786</sup> See pp. 178-9.

to death. Instead of arriving at his *oikos* at the end of his passage to marriage (cf. *Hipp.* 1148-50), Hippolytus makes his passage to Hades (cf. οὐ γὰρ οἶδ' ἀνεφγμένας πύλας / Ἄδου, φάος δὲ λοίσθιον βλέπων τόδε (*Hipp.* 56-7),<sup>787</sup> ... Ποσειδῶν αὐτὸν εἰς Ἄδου δόμους / θανόντα πέμψει τὰς ἐμὰς ἀρὰς σέβων (*Hipp.* 895-6) and ὄλωλα καὶ δὴ νερτέρων ὀρῶ πύλας (*Hipp.* 1447)).<sup>788</sup>

This development is partially reversed in the end by Artemis' intervention moments before Hippolytus' death (*Hipp.* 1283ff.). Artemis in the introduction of her arrangements for a cult to Hippolytus speaks of a partial restoration of *time* as compensation for his piety:<sup>789</sup>

ἔασον' οὐ γὰρ οὐδὲ γῆς ὑπὸ ζόφον  
 θεᾶς ἄτιμοι Κύπριδος ἐκ προθυμίας  
 ὄργαι κατασκήψουσιν ἐς τὸ σὸν δέμας,  
 σῆς εὐσεβείας κάγαθῆς φρενὸς χάριν (*Hipp.* 1416-9).

To the modern mind it seems at the very least strange that cult could offer any solace to Hippolytus as he faces death.<sup>790</sup> But hero cult involved a kind of reciprocity between the *polis* and the hero who benefited the *polis* (cf. *Erechtheus* fr.370.77ff.: τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἀστο[ῖς λέγ]ω / ἐνιαυσίαις σφας μὴ λελησμη[ένους] χρόνῳ / θυσίαιασι τιμᾶν καὶ

<sup>787</sup> πύλαι Ἄδου is a regular periphrasis for Hades, as in *Hom.II.* 9.312 (Halleran ad loc) or *Aesch.Ag.* 1291 (Barrett ad loc); the effect is to treat death not as a state but as a place, to which Hippolytus moves.

<sup>788</sup> In the ancient Greek thought both *gamos* and death were transitions, passages to another status (Rehm (1994) 29).

<sup>789</sup> Cf. Halleran (1995) ad 1416-39.

<sup>790</sup> Cf. Foley (1985) 22 who believes that the cult is ironic.

σφαγαῖσι [βουκ]τόνοις and *Hclid.* 1028-9).<sup>791</sup> The honour offered to the hero persists, and it does so on the basis that he did not cease to exist despite his death, while the offerings presuppose a belief that he retains an awareness. This honour is the most important function of the cult offered to Hippolytus.<sup>792</sup> Artemis' phrase ἀντὶ τῶνδε τῶν κακῶν (*Hipp.* 1423) underlines the role of the cult as a consolation<sup>793</sup> and a gain (καρπουμένῳ, *Hipp.* 1427)<sup>794</sup> in the place of his sufferings; its capacity as a public cult adds to the importance of this consolation.<sup>795</sup> The focus of this cult on marriage rituals is surprising in view of the fact that Hippolytus rejected marriage.<sup>796</sup> However, it is precisely because Hippolytus rejected marriage that he should get such a cult. His involvement in cult both integrates him into the civic life he rejected and reverses his aberrant connection with marriage.

The main function of this ritual, however, seems to be to reproduce Hippolytus' behaviour and punishment: ἀντὶ τῶνδε τῶν κακῶν (*Hipp.* 1423). The results of his behaviour will somehow be reversed through imitation<sup>797</sup> and reproduction and honour will be offered to him. The girls will offer their hair to him before their wedding and this

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<sup>791</sup> Seaford (1994) 125 and fn. 107, 138.

<sup>792</sup> For another approach of the corrective role of song cf. Pucci (1977) 184-5: 'By utterly losing himself he gains everlasting pity, institutionalized both in a ritual – the cutting of the hair – and in a poetic song. That Hippolytus should feel consoled by the knowledge that poetic song should celebrate Phaedra's love for him, would be a bitter irony, if this poetic song were not indeed that which we are listening to now, this very play by Euripides.' There is no guarantee that Euripides through μουσοποιὸς ... / μέριμνα (*Hipp.* 1428-9) referred to his own composition; yet Pucci offers an interesting approach.

<sup>793</sup> Cf. Pucci (1977) 185.

<sup>794</sup> Cf. Pucci (1977) 184-5, Lefkowitz (1989) 76 and fn.24, Winnington-Ingram (1960) 185.

<sup>795</sup> Cf. Seaford (1994) 125 and fn. 107.

<sup>796</sup> Cf. Halleran (1995) ad 1423-30. See also Segal (1986) 281, Halleran (1991) 120, Seaford (1994) 169, 279-80, 387-8.

<sup>797</sup> Cf. Burnett (1986) 178.

will happen amid tears (*Hipp.* 1426-7).<sup>798</sup> By being implicated in this rite of passage, Hippolytus in some way participates in their successful passage from virginity to marriage. In the liminality that the ritual dictated to them, the girls through the tears will participate in Hippolytus' sufferings and piteous passage to death<sup>799</sup>, honouring him for what he suffered (καρπουμένω, *Hipp.* 1427).<sup>800</sup> This share in Hippolytus' condition is also implied in the offering of the lock, which embodies the transition that the marriage offered but which was unrealized in his case.<sup>801</sup>

In the ritual his fate and death acquire a meaning, as Artemis had said (*Hipp.* 1436). His fate becomes not merely the individual's error but the means by which social norms are preserved. And although Hippolytus is dead, Euripides grants him immortality and a continuous presence through cult and song.<sup>802</sup> In this sense it may indicate that for all the extreme nature of his conduct there is something magnificent about his life and death. This is crucial both for the hero as subject of narrative and for the hero as recipient of cult. Song was known already from Homer to give a kind of immortality to the individual. Hero cult too grants a kind of immortality.<sup>803</sup> This is particularly relevant for this play, which is frequently engaged with the theme of εὐκλεία.<sup>804</sup>

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<sup>798</sup> Cf. Dunn (1996) 95, cf. also Barrett ad loc, who suggests that the hair is an instance of conflation of marriage and death rituals.

<sup>799</sup> Cf. Seaford (1994), 169 and in contrast Dunn (1996).

<sup>800</sup> Cf. Pucci (1977) 184-5.

<sup>801</sup> Seaford (1994) 169-70, 279-80 (cf. p. 383).

<sup>802</sup> Pucci (1977) 185.

<sup>803</sup> Seaford (1994) 123-6 and fnn. 107, 110, 112. See also Pucci (1977) 185-6 on the restoration of Hippolytus' existence.

<sup>804</sup> Winnington-Ingram (1960) 179.

In refusing marriage, Hippolytus also enacted a deliberate excision of his family. This, too, is corrected by the cult. The cult replaces the funeral rites which would be offered by his *oikos*,<sup>805</sup> this *oikos* which through his perverted behaviour he did not choose to continue and destroyed.<sup>806</sup> In place of the perennial family funeral rites Hippolytus gets everlasting<sup>807</sup> cult on behalf of the *polis* (ἐν πόλει, *Hipp.* 1424) as an offer for his death (ἀντὶ τῶνδε τῶν κακῶν / τιμὰς μεγίστας, *Hipp.* 1423-4 and καρπουμένῳ, *Hipp.* 1427).<sup>808</sup>

My second case comes from *Iphigenia in Tauris*. From the beginning of the play Iphigenia repeatedly expresses her distress at her missed *gamos* with Achilles at Aulis (*I.T.* 216ff., 364-77, 539). Though Iphigenia is not offered the *gamos* she lost, and craves,<sup>809</sup> she does receive a cult which to some degree balances the losses and compensates for her passage to death without marriage.<sup>810</sup> The cult is an ἄγαλμα for her (*I.T.* 1465). The honour is not reduced by the nature of the cult, whatever this may be.<sup>811</sup>

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<sup>805</sup> Parker (2005) 27-36.

<sup>806</sup> Seaford (1994) 388 and 206-7 for the perpetuation of the *oikos* through *gamos*. On the issue of Hippolytus as *nothos* and its relation to the issue of marriage and *oikos*, see above pp. 178-9 and also fn. 701 on p. 178.

<sup>807</sup> This is supported by the text: δι' αἰῶνος μακροῦ, *Hipp.* 1426 and ἀεὶ δὲ μουσσοποιὸς ἐς σὲ .... / ἔσται μέρμινα, *Hipp.* 1428-9.

<sup>808</sup> Cf. Seaford (1994) 388 for the continuity and the public character of the cult.

<sup>809</sup> Tzanetou (1999-2000) 209.

<sup>810</sup> There is a multiple substitution of rituals in this play. One ritual (marriage, *I.T.* 216-224) is substituted by another (sacrifice at Aulis, *I.T.* 209-17), and then another (sacrifice at Tauris, *I.T.* 224ff.), then finally by her role as priestess and the subsequent cult. Although it is true that in Iphigenia's case, there is not so much emphasis paid to her death as in Hippolytus' case and it is only treated in brief (*I.T.* 1465), Athena clearly relates her cult with her death (*I.T.* 1464ff.).

<sup>811</sup> The cult has been read ironically by scholars who draw attention to the seeming negative aspects of the cult and in particular to the association of Iphigenia with death in the context of the cult (see for instance, Ekroth (2003) 67). Yet, the negative aspects have perhaps been overstated. The association with death in childbirth could be seen as fundamentally prophylactic. And from Iphigenia's perspective the cult remains a fact in the text of the play. (See also in response to negative readings, Cropp (2000) ad 1464-7). For an attempt to argue for the fictive nature of Euripides' end of play cults see Scullion (1999-2000); cf. Kyriakou (2006) 19-30. See in response Calame (2009b), who suggests that Euripides' aetiology in *I.T.* may be partly historical and that it may have influenced an already existing cult (Calame (2009b) 87-8);

In addition this cult places her in the centre of the *oikos* and the *polis*: this is a cult which refers to all the *oikoi* of the *polis* (cf. *I.T.* 1464-7).<sup>812</sup> She attains an important social function in the *polis*.<sup>813</sup> On the other hand the cult offered by the *polis* again provides for indefinite continuation of her existence on a far higher level than that provided by the funeral cults in the frame of the *oikos*.

So the cult restores for her the important things lost when she was deprived of her *gamos* and confined in the land of the Taurians (*I.T.* 218-24). It does not matter that she will die as a *parthenos*. Her life would not pass in vain, in contrast to the typical funerary presentation of the dead *parthenos* in classical Athens. The compensation is increased by the fact that she achieves permanent honour in the one sphere (religion) in which a woman in ancient Greece could enjoy a public role. Thus, cult offers even some partial compensation to Iphigenia for what she has suffered.

## 8. Conclusion

I hope I have shown how the articulating capacity of missed *gamos* was employed by the tragedians in order to deepen emotional effects and express serious thematic concerns of the plays, choices, losses, distortions or destructions. The multiple role of marriage (for individual, family and *polis*) and emotional load which accompanied any

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see also, Osborne (1985), especially 156-7 and 162ff., 170, Demand (1994), Johnston (1999). In any case the cult remains an honour for Iphigenia (cf. Kyriakou (2006) 29).

<sup>812</sup> Cf. Wolff (1992) 322-3.

<sup>813</sup> Tzanetou (1999-2000) 207-9. Tzanetou in this article, especially on pages 207-9, offers a very interesting reading of Iphigenia's return as a kind of conclusion of a peculiar *arkteia*. She stresses also the fact that the return means that she has now finally got away from the barbarian cult of Artemis (Tzanetou (1999-2000) 207).

reference to marriage made it an ideal medium for addressing themes which embraced all these levels of individual and collective experience.



## Chapter 4: Perverted marriage in Aeschylus

### 1. Introduction

In my previous chapter we saw that various kinds of marital perversion might be figured as missed marriage.<sup>814</sup> But aberration both in marriage and in attitudes to marriage also appears in its own right as a plot strand, large or small. The perversions in question include marriage which is betrayed, abused, malformed or malpractised according to the cultural and civic norms of Greek values and practice. All these aspects of marital aberration fall under what I call in this chapter ‘perverted marriage’ or ‘marital perversion’. I deal here with two salient instances, both from Aeschylus.

As will already be clear from the earlier chapters, marriage offered a valuable way of opening up a range of themes because of its crucial social role.<sup>815</sup> It is perhaps in its form as perverted, more than in any other that Greek *gamos* becomes a thinking tool. In this chapter I will argue that the motif perversion of marital norms in Aeschylus illustrates the way in which deviance in this relationship can be used to explore and underscore specific aspects of the crisis of the *oikos* and the *polis* central to the thematic concerns of the play, and will discuss how the problems extend from the one sphere to the other.<sup>816</sup> In the plays under discussion, the crisis generated by perverted marriage is addressed – among other arrangements – through the inauguration of cults relevant to marriage and its establishment as an essential institution to the function of the *polis*: it

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<sup>814</sup> See ch. 3, pp. 186-93.

<sup>815</sup> See ch. 3, pp. 193-201.

<sup>816</sup> See also Badnall (2008) 79.

secures the fulfilment (*telos*) of humans, stabilizes the function of the *oikos* and ultimately leads to a restoration of the political crisis. Beyond this, the wide spectrum of implications and ramifications of *gamos* in Greek culture enables it to articulate other issues of the play, such as questions of loyalty, victimhood and violence.<sup>817</sup> Naturally there is a variation in the emphases on the use of this motif in individual works.

## 2. The *Oresteia*

The *Oresteia* is a trilogy in which perversions of social and political norms, whether structures, processes or relationships, play a very prominent role. Ritual is repeatedly distorted in the recurrent presence (both metaphorical and literal) of the perverted sacrifice. Socio-political structures are warped in the substitution of tyranny for kingship. Family relationships are ignored or subverted. The administration of justice is constantly compromised by the presence of crime in every act of punishment. As one of the central structures (in both ritual and political terms) in the Greek *polis*, marriage is at the heart of the *Oresteia* to a degree not generally recognized. It is especially important in the *Agamemnon*, but it is also crucial for the other two tragedies of the trilogy. In particular, in the *Oresteia*, marriage is central to the cycle of destruction around which the trilogy evolves.<sup>818</sup> It expresses and illustrates specific aspects of the crisis in the *oikos* and the *polis*, as well as the ramifications of this crisis.<sup>819</sup>

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<sup>817</sup> See also Badnall (2008) 80.

<sup>818</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 106.

<sup>819</sup> See also Badnall (2008) 79, 102-110.

### a. Perversion of marriage and the cycle of destruction of the *oikos*

The self-destruction of the *oikos* of the Atreids in the form of ‘intrafamilial violence’<sup>820</sup> and the *oikos* of the Atreids in itself are at the heart of the *Oresteia*.<sup>821</sup> Here this self-destruction is caused by a sequence of reciprocal perverted actions that the members of the *oikos* commit within and over generations. This is everywhere in the trilogy but it is explored particularly in the first *stasimon* of the *Agamemnon*. In this choral ode all perversions in the *oikos* of the Atreids are treated as being part of one single chain (cf. *Ag.* 1599-1611), where aberrant behaviours are repeated and one perversion leads to another,<sup>822</sup> in the same way that the murders in the *oikos* are also a chain (*Cho.* 806, 888). The cycle involves aberrance in several fields which are correlated the one to the other: persuasion (*Ag.* 385), impiety (*Ag.* 369-84), greed, *koros* and excessive wealth (*Ag.* 374-84, 471), revenge (*Cho.* 461, 556-8, 924-5, 930-1, 932ff., esp. the conclusion of the *Choephoroi* (*Cho.* 1065-76; cf. 471-5)), *xenia* (*Ag.* 362, 399-402), *dike* (*Ag.* 376, 383, 393, 451, 464, 1604, 1607, 1611).<sup>823</sup> Zeus and the Erinyes are divine powers particularly associated with these failures. Marriage is also a link in the chain of ruin in two ways: not only is it closely associated with Zeus and the Erinyes, but also it is a crucial part, indeed a core element, of the crisis of the *oikos* which permeates the trilogy.<sup>824</sup>

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<sup>820</sup> Goldhill (2004) 26.

<sup>821</sup> Cf. Goward (2005) 38-9, Goldhill (2004) 26-7.

<sup>822</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 105.

<sup>823</sup> Cf. Bakola (forthcoming 2013) [12].

<sup>824</sup> Cf. Macleod (1982) 133, Badnall (2008) 79, 102, 105-6. See also Seaford (2012) 181 on the perversion of wedding in *Agamemnon*’s journey from and back to home.

The severity of marital aberrance comes to the fore forcefully in the first *stasimon* of *Cho.* 585-651,<sup>825</sup> but adultery is already present at the beginning of the disastrous events in *Agamemnon* (*Ag.* 1192-4): adultery is the *πρώταρχος ἄτη* (*πρώταρχον ἄτην*, *Ag.* 1192), ‘the ruinous folly that first began it all’. Thyestes defiled the marriage of his brother Atreus by his relationship with Aerope. This led in turn to the subversion of a different ritual, *τὴν Θυέστου δαῖτα παιδείων κρεῶν* (*Ag.* 1242), which was followed by Aegisthus’ revenge (*Ag.* 1577-1611)<sup>826</sup> and the subsequent perpetuation of vengeance and even more perversions. The blow to marriage struck by the adultery initiates a pattern of destructive reciprocity which consumes the *oikos*.<sup>827</sup> This relation of adultery to the ruin of the *oikos* is given its fullest emphasis in the association of Helen’s *moicheia* with the misfortunes of the Atreids.<sup>828</sup>

In *Agamemnon* Helen appears, as often in the tradition, as the archetypal perverted wife in that she betrays the core notion of marriage as loyalty and its centrality to the *oikos*. This literal fact is imaged through the metaphorical description of her liaison with Paris in the language of conventional marriage, but in this case a marriage which initiated a cycle of catastrophe instead of bringing *telos*, fulfilment. This is particularly illustrated in the second *stasimon* (*Ag.* 681-781). The chorus there plays with the two meanings of the word *κῆδος* (*Ag.* 700), ‘kinship through marriage’ and ‘sorrow’ to illustrate the

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<sup>825</sup> Even Orestes’ statement that he would rather miss marriage than take a perverted wife underlines the importance of marriage perversion in this play (*Cho.* 1005-6); Garvie (1986) *ad loc* in contrast focuses on the children missed, but there is no such reference in the text.

<sup>826</sup> Of course, Aegisthus omits his father’s adulterous relationship with Aerope.

<sup>827</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 106.

<sup>828</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 102-4.

results of this perverted ‘marriage’ for Troy.<sup>829</sup> The joyful celebration of the wedding is used to underline the causal link between the relationship and the destruction of Troy by the transition from complete happiness to total annihilation (*Ag.* 700-716; cf. 738-749).<sup>830</sup>

Helen’s relationship to catastrophe is much more central to the thematic concerns of the *Oresteia* in that the victim of her destructive effect is the *oikos* of the Atreids (*Ag.* 403-28; cf. 400).<sup>831</sup> Her link with the *oikos* is intensified by the tendency to create the illusion (in *Agamemnon* at least) of a single house of Agamemnon and Menelaus<sup>832</sup>. This narrows the gap between Agamemnon and Menelaus, thus presenting his intervention against Troy as a direct response to an affront rather than as a favour to his brother.

The direct link between Helen and the problems of Agamemnon’s *oikos* are brought out in relation to the sacrifice of the innocent Iphigenia, in that the text creates an immediate causal link – Iphigenia dies for the sake of an unfaithful woman (*Ag.* 224-7). The marital aspect is underscored by the use of the word *προτέλεια* (*Ag.* 227), which merges the ‘lost’ wedding of Iphigenia and the ‘preliminary ritual of the ships’, to designate the

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<sup>829</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 103.

<sup>830</sup> Seaford (1987) 113, Badnall (2008) 102-5. This is especially pointed with the paradoxical phrase *γάμου πικρὰς τελευτάς* (*Ag.* 745). I discuss the notion of marriage as *telos*, ‘fulfilment’, below pp. 225-33, esp. pp. 225-6 with fn. 882 on p. 233. This notion is important and is evidently one of the meanings in play in *teleutas* here. See further fn. 882 on pp. 225-6.

<sup>831</sup> Badnall (2008) 103-4.

<sup>832</sup> Fraenkel (1950) ad 400, Denniston and Page (1957) ad 400; cf. also Fraenkel (1950) ad 3.

sacrifice.<sup>833</sup> The terrible potential of her death for the *oikos* is illustrated by the violent blocking of Iphigenia's mouth upon her sacrifice:

φράσεν δ' ἀόζοις πατήρ μετ' εὐχάν  
δίκαν χιμαίρας ὑπερθε βωμοῦ  
πέπλοισι περιπετῆ παντὶ θυμῷ προνωπῆ  
λαβεῖν ἀέρδην,  
στόματός τε καλλιπρώρου  
φυλακᾶ κατασχεῖν  
φθόγγον ἀραῖον οἴκοις,  
βία χαλινῶν τ' ἀναύδῳ μένει (*Ag.* 231-8).

The sacrifice in turn is a direct cause of Agamemnon's death, as Calchas indicates (*Ag.* 154-5). Helen's adultery also corrupts the war fought for her sake, which cost the deaths of so many Greek men (*Ag.* 403-5, 429-57, 799-804; cf. 461-2). Naturally then the Trojan War carried inherently the threat of punishment for Agamemnon, as implied by the chorus:

τῶν πολυκτόνων γὰρ οὐκ  
ἄσκοποι θεοί, κελαι-  
ναὶ δ' Ἐρινύες χρόνῳ  
τυχηρὸν ὄντ' ἄνευ δίκας  
παλιντυχεῖ τριβᾶ βίου  
τιθεῖσ' ἀμαυρόν, ἐν δ' αἴσ-  
τοις τελέθοντος οὔτις ἀλκά (*Ag.* 461-467).

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<sup>833</sup> Raeburn and Thomas (2011) ad 227.

The murder of Agamemnon is the actualization of these fears. Agamemnon paid for his decision to reclaim Helen with his death. This link is underlined by the chorus in its lament at *Ag.* 1455-61:<sup>834</sup>

ἰὼ, <ἰὼ> παράνουσ Ἑλένα,  
μία τὰς πολλάς, τὰς πάνυ πολλάς  
ψυχὰς ὀλέσασ' ὑπὸ Τροίᾳ·  
νῦν τελέαν πολύμναστον ἐπηγθίσω  
δι' αἴμ' ἄνιπτον, ἥτις ἦν τότε ἐν δόμοις  
Ἔρις ἐρίδματος ἀνδρὸς οἰζύς.

Since Agamemnon's death is treated as the annihilation of the *oikos*, as we will see below,<sup>835</sup> Helen ἄτλητα τλᾶσα (*Ag.* 408) is a crucial part of its downfall.

This destructive quality is brought out by the word play in the second *stasimon*:

τίς ποτ' ὠνόμαζεν ᾧδ'  
ἐς τὸ πᾶν ἐτητύμως ...  
τὰν δορίγαμβρον ἀμφινεικῆ θ'  
Ἑλέναν; ἐπεὶ πρεπόντως  
ἐλέναυς ἔλανδρος ἐλέπτολις ... (*Ag.* 681-2, 687-90).

Here the chorus have in mind especially her role in the annihilation of Troy. But her attribute as ἔλανδρος applies equally to the Greek army. The innumerable Greek deaths in Troy due to her *moicheia* (*Ag.* 429-55, 681-98, 1455-7; cf. 399-405) in turn raise

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<sup>834</sup> Goward (2005) 89.

<sup>835</sup> See p. 219.

collective hostility (described as a public ἀρά) against the *oikos* of the Atreids: βαρεῖα δ' ἀστῶν φάτις ξὺν κότῳ, / δημοκρά<ν>του δ' ἀρᾶς τίνει χρέος (Ag. 456-7). It is here that Helen has a paradoxical accomplice in that all the destruction is not her sole work but is the joint effect of her misconduct and Menelaus' complementary marital misconduct<sup>836</sup>. His uxorious pursuit of Helen is in itself a kind of perversion.<sup>837</sup> If she values her husband too little, he values his wife too much. Through an effective shift in focalization we are moved from the account of Menelaus' excessive grief for his lost (but living) wife (Ag. 414-26) to the grief of the Argive households for their collective war dead (Ag. 433-57). Menelaus' obsession with Helen led him to pursue her recovery at the cost of a war (Ag. 448-9, cf. 799-804, 823-4) which brought about the destruction of a whole *polis*, very many misfortunes for Greece (Ag. 427-57) and, crucially,<sup>838</sup> the death of a huge number of men.<sup>839</sup> The distortion in Menelaus' evaluation of Helen (εὐμόρφων, Ag. 416) is underscored by the use of the adjective εὐμορφος to contrast her beauty as depicted by her statues with the beauty of the dead warriors (εὐμορφοί, Ag. 454).<sup>840</sup> His determination to restore a corrupted relationship leaves countless *oikoi* bereft of their men. There is a kind of contagion at work, both in the way Helen's faulty judgement of marriage generates that of Menelaus and the way the emptiness of one *oikos* turns into the emptiness of all the *oikoi* in the *polis*.

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<sup>836</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 106.

<sup>837</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 102.

<sup>838</sup> From a purely pragmatic perspective men were more closely linked with the perpetuation of the *oikos* and therefore with the *polis*. Their existence literally mattered more to their communities.

<sup>839</sup> The presence of perversion of marriage in the plot finds resonance also in the use of the terminology of marriage with reference to Iphigenia and Cassandra. See Mitchell-Boyask (2006) 272-85, though I have some reservations on his argumentation as a detail; cf. also Badnall (2008) 104.

<sup>840</sup> Cf. Raeburn and Thomas (2011) ad 452-55.



Just as Menelaus' misconduct counterbalances Helen's transgression, Agamemnon's aberrance<sup>841</sup> is the foil to Clytemnestra's marital perversion.<sup>842</sup> These are two interconnected circles in the cycle of ruin in that the first causes the second. Agamemnon's first and main error is the sacrifice of Iphigenia. As we saw above,<sup>843</sup> the chorus puts Iphigenia in the balance against Helen (as it puts Helen in the balance against the Greek males who died); but not only does Iphigenia die for an adulterous woman. In killing her Agamemnon strikes a blow against the *oikos*. There is moreover a more immediate personal dimension. For Clytemnestra this is not just an act of child murder but a blow against their marriage.<sup>844</sup> Clytemnestra stresses the link between Iphigenia and herself (*Ag.* 1415-8, 1525-6) and views her death as an attack on her and an act of betrayal both of her and of the *oikos* (*Ag.* 1521-9, esp. 1523-4). In provoking Clytemnestra the sacrifice invites the continuation of destruction (*Ag.* 1433) and Clytemnestra's revenge. The implication of *gamos* in criminality extends to Agamemnon's relationship with Cassandra; in this he contrasts with his uxorious brother, who overvalues his marriage. Though Athenian society was tolerant of male infidelity (provided it caused no threat to other *oikoi*), the form it takes in this case pushes the limits of tolerance; it is an insult to Clytemnestra and their marriage (*Ag.* 1438-47), primarily because of the demand for public reception of his concubine.<sup>845</sup> Clytemnestra underscores Agamemnon's marital aberrance (*Ag.* 1438-9), as far as she herself was concerned, in describing Cassandra's concubinage in terms of marriage (*Ag.*

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<sup>841</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 106.

<sup>842</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 106.

<sup>843</sup> See above, pp. 213-4.

<sup>844</sup> This of course finds an analogue in Clytemnestra's removal of Orestes from the *oikos*, on which see pp. 221-2.

<sup>845</sup> Denniston and Page (1957) ad 950; cf. Badnall (2008) 104.

1441-2).<sup>846</sup> Clytemnestra's reaction to Agamemnon's behaviour was his murder (cf. *Ag.* 1438-47). Though this element is at most ancillary (Agamemnon does not die for bringing Cassandra home), this aberration complements the larger sin of Iphigenia's sacrifice as a major cause which led to his death and perpetuated the cycle of ruin in the *oikos*.

**b. The case of Clytemnestra: from the destruction of the *oikos* to the destruction of the *polis***

We saw that the issue of perverted *gamos* is implicated in a series of correspondences, of complementary misevaluations, Helen-Menelaus, Agamemnon-Clytemnestra. Above and beyond any issues of correspondence the marital perversion that dominates in the *Agamemnon* is that of Clytemnestra.

Clytemnestra is a perverted wife in a number of ways and accordingly her effect on the *oikos* is multi-faceted. Her first aberration is her illegitimate relationship with Aegisthus. This is all the more problematic because from a purely physical infidelity it extends to an emotional attachment to Aegisthus in preference to her husband (*Ag.* 1434-7, *Cho.* 893-5, 904-7, 991-3).<sup>847</sup> This devotion is eloquently illustrated by the vows exchanged between Aegisthus and Clytemnestra (*Ag.* 1431, *Cho.* 977-9), which are a subversion of

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<sup>846</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 104.

<sup>847</sup> Goldhill (2004) 80-81, Foley (2001) 214. As Goldhill (2004) 80-81 underlines, however, this is not so much about the romantic aspect of the marital relationship, but rather about mutual obligation.

the legitimate vows at weddings (cf. *Ag.* 877-8).<sup>848</sup> She has thus replaced Agamemnon with Aegisthus as her husband (esp. *Ag.* 1434-7).<sup>849</sup>

In her collusion with Aegisthus Clytemnestra sided with the enemy of her marital *oikos*, treated Agamemnon as her *echthros* (*Ag.* 1374-5) and with her lover killed her husband (*Ag.* 1107-11, 1114-20, 1125-9, *Cho.* 132-4, 909, 930).<sup>850</sup> The subversion is magnified by the element of ritual perversion in the murder (cf. *Ag.* 1542-6), parallel to the perversion of sacrifice in the killing of Iphigenia<sup>851</sup>: the wrapping of a husband's body in a garment was supposed to express the wife's affection in the funeral of her dead husband.<sup>852</sup> Instead, her control of the funeral rites of Agamemnon is the final expression of her hatred for him and thus trespasses against the *oikos*.<sup>853</sup> The *oikos*, which suffered its first blow with the sacrifice of Iphigenia and the final by the anticipated matricide hinted at in *Ag.* 1533-4, falls with the murder of Agamemnon by his wife (*Ag.* 1532). The *oikos* is – almost – destroyed.<sup>854</sup>

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<sup>848</sup> Griffith (1995) 85.

<sup>849</sup> Foley (2001) 219-20. Despite its problematic aspects (on which see above, pp. 217-8) Agamemnon's relationship with Cassandra was not *moicheia* as understood in classical Greece (cf. Foley (2001) 215). Therefore, Clytemnestra's adultery mattered in a way that Agamemnon's relationship with Cassandra did not (cf. *Cho.* 918 and also Zeitlin (1996) 110). In *Choephoroi* when Orestes talks about the killing of Aegisthus, observing that he has received the justice owed to the *aischynter* (αἰσχυντήρος, *Cho.* 990), he invites us to think in terms of Athenian homicide law and the sanction it gave the aggrieved *kyrios* (Carey (1995b) 409-414 *passim*, Ogden (1997) 27-8; cf. also Cohen (1984) 151-2, 155-6).

<sup>850</sup> Cf. Foley (2001) 219-20.

<sup>851</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 105-6.

<sup>852</sup> During this procedure, the use of the hands to take care of the dead body expresses affection (*Soph.El.* 1138-9) and in particular in the case of wife it illustrates the intimacy between husband and wife (Seaford (1984) esp. 248-9, cf. Seaford (2012) 181-2, 191). In the case of Clytemnestra the text hints at this distorted intimacy (*Ag.* 1108-11).

<sup>853</sup> Hame (2004) esp. 513, 524-9, 535, although I think that his argument for the creation of an *oikos* belonging to Clytemnestra after Agamemnon's death and funeral goes beyond the text.

<sup>854</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 106. In this destruction, perversion of marriage has a leading role, although there is another fatal error which caused this malign situation at the *oikos*, namely the misuse of wealth (Bakola

Clytemnestra's action replicates and goes beyond Helen's adultery (cf. *Ag.* 1455-9) and thus perpetuates the cycle of destruction begun a generation earlier:

νῦν τελέαν πολύμναστον ἐπηγθίσω  
δι' αἷμ' ἄνιπτον, ἣτις ἦν τότε' ἐν δόμοις  
Ἔρις ἐρίδματος ἀνδρὸς οἰζύς (*Ag.* 1459-61).

As blood-shedding it responds to a previous act of killing, the sacrifice of Iphigenia (*Ag.* 1414-8, 1432-3, 1525-9) and is an act of the *daimon* which haunts the *oikos* (*Ag.* 1505-12; cf. 1481-4 with *Ag.* 1475-80; cf. already 154-5). In fact Clytemnestra is not just another stage in the endless chain of revenge but becomes the embodiment of the *alastor* of the offences of the previous generation itself, as she herself admits:

Κλ. αὐχεῖς εἶναι τόδε τοῦργον ἐμόν·  
μὴ δ' ἐπιλεχθῆς Ἀγαμεμνονίαν εἶναί μ' ἄλοχον·  
φантаζόμενος δὲ γυναικὶ νεκροῦ  
τοῦδ' ὁ παλαιὸς δριμύς ἀλάστωρ  
Ἄτρέως χαλεποῦ θοινατῆρος  
τόνδ' ἀπέτεισεν, τέλεον νεαροῖς ἐπιθύσας (*Ag.* 1497-504).<sup>855</sup>

Though the chorus rejects her attempt to exculpate herself by these means, they still associate her closely with the spirit of vengeance (*Ag.* 1505-12).

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(forthcoming 2013) [10]-[21]) as illustrated in the famous carpet-scene: walking on such expensive materials, as already shown, illustrates the self-destruction of the *oikos* or the 'excessive wealth' leading to *hybris* (Taplin (2003<sup>2</sup>) 80; cf. also Taplin (1977) 311-2, Goldhill (2004) 59).

<sup>855</sup> Cf. Goldhill (1984a) 92-3, Badnall (2008) 106 on the fury as result of the cycle of destruction.

Of course, as part of the cycle of catastrophe, and indeed the central for the *Oresteia*, the murder of Agamemnon will not remain unpunished, as Clytemnestra wishes (*Ag.* 1568-77). Instead it will invite further acts of murder and the destruction of the *oikos* (*Ag.* 1533-6, 1560-6), as the chorus fear: *κεκόλληται γένος πρὸς ἄττα* (*Ag.* 1566). Moreover, Clytemnestra's deed calls for communal hatred (*Ag.* 1410-1) and a public curse (*ἀράς*, *Ag.* 1409) in much the same way as the squandering of Argive lives earlier.<sup>856</sup> Though she will not be punished by the people, the reaction stresses that Clytemnestra's action must and will be punished (cf. *Ag.* 1429-30).

Yet, Clytemnestra's transgression against the rules of marriage and consequently her betrayal of the *oikos* is more complicated still. As Agamemnon had earlier betrayed the marriage bond by killing his daughter Iphigenia,<sup>857</sup> in dislocating her son from the *oikos* (*Cho.* 912-21) Clytemnestra breaks the marital bond with Agamemnon and her own association with his *oikos*. Orestes, like Iphigenia (*Ag.* 1525-6; cf. 1417-8), is presented as the link between the married couple (*Ag.* 877-9) and would also continue its line as the male successor.<sup>858</sup> Most importantly, the fact that Orestes is deprived of the paternal property, which lies in the hands of the enemies, is a highly problematic perversion of the normal functioning of the *oikos*.<sup>859</sup> Clytemnestra's rejection of her children is manifested further in her hostile treatment of Electra (*Cho.* 189-91, 418-9, 444-6), at

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<sup>856</sup> See above pp. 215-6.

<sup>857</sup> See p. 217 above.

<sup>858</sup> Griffith (1995) 87; see also Denniston and Page (1957) ad 877 and ad 878.

<sup>859</sup> Cf. Zeitlin (1996) 95.

least according to Orestes (*Cho.* 912),<sup>860</sup> and consequently the dissolution of any bond with Agamemnon.<sup>861</sup>

The direct association of Clytemnestra's aberration as wife with the crisis in Agamemnon's *oikos* is foregrounded in the text.<sup>862</sup> Her *moicheia* was at the base of its maladministration (*Ag.* 18-9, 37-9, 1087-92), as stressed right from the beginning of *Agamemnon*. Clytemnestra affects the *oikos* of the Atreids at every possible level: she becomes sexually involved with the enemy of the *oikos*, kills her husband, treats her offspring with hostility, usurps the property of the *oikos*, and works against its survival.

Yet, marriage concerns not only individuals nor just the household. Since it is a fundamental relationship for the *polis* as well, there is a cause and effect relationship between the individual and the well-being of the *oikos* and the *polis*.<sup>863</sup> Thus, apart from the disorder of the *oikos*, perversion of marriage is linked with an abnormal situation in the *polis*;<sup>864</sup> it becomes a political threat.<sup>865</sup>

In the *Oresteia*, the fact that it is the marriage and the *oikos* of the king that are affected by the serial misdemeanours (*Ag.* 1349, 1354-5, 1362-5, 1409-11, cf. 1412) intensifies the relationship between *oikos* and *polis*: the *polis* is in a real sense continuous with the

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<sup>860</sup> Zeitlin (1996) 95. Significantly Clytemnestra is the cause of the liminal status of both Orestes and Electra. Electra is stuck in a liminal virginal status and Orestes is dislocated from his natal *oikos* lingering on a limbo as an *ephebe* (Zeitlin (1996) 95, and specifically on Orestes' passage to adulthood, see Zeitlin (1996) 98-107).

<sup>861</sup> Zeitlin (1996) 95-6.

<sup>862</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 79.

<sup>863</sup> Cf. Macleod (1982) generally 138-44, Badnall (2008) 109.

<sup>864</sup> Badnall (2008) 79; cf. Macleod (1982) 132-3, 134.

<sup>865</sup> Goldhill (2004) 34-41.

royal house.<sup>866</sup> They are almost identified; the threat to the first is a threat to the second (*Ag.* 1349, 1354-5, cf. 1362-5).<sup>867</sup> Agamemnon, in particular, as king, is not only master of his *oikos* but also guarantor of the welfare of the whole civic community.<sup>868</sup> This is confirmed by the fact that the restoration of the *oikos* through the punishment of the perverted Clytemnestra (*Cho.* 790-820 *passim*) is regarded as (a first) restoration of the *polis* (*Cho.* 824-5, 1046-7).

Clytemnestra's action is even more reprehensible when viewed as an action against the *polis*. Emphasis is placed on the fact that she killed not just husband and king but also an illustrious general (*Eum.* 625-8, 636-9). In this respect there is a visible movement in the trilogy. As it progresses Agamemnon, the criminal author of the destruction of Troy, is increasingly seen as victim and as warrior. The effect is to underscore the character of Clytemnestra's action as a social threat. Her transgressive behaviour itself, as a wife and mother and woman, seems all the more heinous, not least because Clytemnestra employed cunning in order to effect the murder (*Eum.* 625-8).<sup>869</sup> As a result, the contrast between open (and external) warfare and surreptitious (and internecine) faction is sharpened. More importantly, Clytemnestra's failings are exacerbated by her more radical appropriation of authority (*Ag.* 10-11, 915-74, 1372-406, 1672-3), both in the *oikos* and in the *polis*, which makes her the personification of the social 'threat from

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<sup>866</sup> Cf. Macleod (1982) 142-4 *passim*, Seaford (1994) 342. Cf. also Griffith (1995) 73-4 on the juxtaposition of *polis* and *oikos* in Attic tragedy.

<sup>867</sup> At *Ag.* 1586ff. *polis* and *oikos* are firmly connected in the whole story of Thyestes because perversions committed in the *oikos* are directly linked to the location and function in the *polis* (cf. also *Cho.* 429-33).

<sup>868</sup> Griffith (1995) 85.

<sup>869</sup> Zeitlin (1996) 93. Though Clytemnestra is throughout presented as an unwomanly female (Zeitlin (1996) 89), she is also tainted with the stereotypical female guile (cf. Zeitlin (1996) 89).

within the system'.<sup>870</sup> During Agamemnon's absence Clytemnestra acquired an ambiguous political power, but evidently in accordance to the norms of the *polis* (*Ag.* 258-60, 914-30). With this power that she has legally gained, *from* the system, she managed to accomplish all her plans and achieve the murder of Agamemnon, thus supplanting the system.<sup>871</sup>

This social threat due to the aberrant behaviour of Clytemnestra as wife was actualized in the establishment of the distorted constitution of a *tyrannis*. There were clear hints at political disorder earlier, during the absence of Agamemnon (καὶ πᾶς; ἀπόντων κοιράνων ἔτρεις τινάς; / ὡς νῦν, τὸ σὸν δῆ, καὶ θανεῖν πολλὴ χάρις, *Ag.* 549-50). But it is after Agamemnon's death that the perversion infects the *polis*. The murder itself is an act of *stasis* on behalf of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, and as such it brings a tyranny with it (*Ag.* 1355, 1365, *Cho.* 377-8, cf. *Ag.* 1117-8, *Eum.* 696),<sup>872</sup> as the chorus feared (*Ag.* 1354-5, 1365, 1638-42, 1664; cf. 1633). The present ruler is Aegisthus, destroyer of the royal *oikos* (*Cho.* 764-5). The behavioural alignment of the new regime with tyrannical stereotypes is illustrated by Aegisthus' attitude towards the chorus, which represents the *polis* as its senior members.<sup>873</sup> He is contemptuous towards them and threatens them with physical maltreatment despite their age (*Ag.* 1617-1624, 1628-32, 1666, 1670).<sup>874</sup> Here, too, sexual distortion is associated with political disorder.

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<sup>870</sup> Zeitlin (1996) 91-3; cf. Kittelä (2009) 125, 129, 137, 141.

<sup>871</sup> Zeitlin (1996) 91-2.

<sup>872</sup> Macleod (1982) 130-1. It also causes a further *stasis* in the *polis*, which brings the liberation of Argos (*Cho.* 973, 1046) (Macleod (1982) 130-1).

<sup>873</sup> Cf. Griffith (1995) 84-5, 87, 90.

<sup>874</sup> His expression πρὸς κέντρα μὴ λάκτιζε, μὴ πάισας μογγῆς (*Ag.* 1624) is particularly stark, but his arrogant and tyrannical behaviour reaches its peak, if *Ag.* 1650 is attributed to Aegisthus, in the actual use of forces against the chorus (*Ag.* 1650).



Aegisthus is seen repeatedly as the unmanly male.<sup>875</sup> His cowardly character (*Ag.* 1625-7, 1634-5, 1643-6, 1665, 1671) underscores his status as a typical tyrant, lustful for wealth and power, concerned only to impose his own will and trespassing on the rights of the *polis*.<sup>876</sup> Though he presents himself as a regicide, Aegisthus' power in all these actions stems from and depends on Clytemnestra<sup>877</sup> and so all goes back ultimately to her marital aberrance.

Thus perversion in marriage maps on to or expands into perversion of the state, the *chora*: Clytemnestra is now χώρας μίασμα καὶ θεῶν ἐγχωρίων (*Ag.* 1645,<sup>878</sup> *Cho.* 572, cf. *Cho.* 716 and also *Ag.* 546-50).<sup>879</sup> Individually and as a 'married' pair she and Aegisthus are the embodiment of 'the perverted world' of the *Oresteia*, as a whole.<sup>880</sup> This rounds off the use of marital aberrance as a theme operating like a series of concentric circles, individual, *oikos*, *polis*.<sup>881</sup>

### **c. Marriage and *telos*: the closure of the *Oresteia***

As we have seen in other contexts an important part of the conceptualization of marriage is the notion of *telos* as ritual, as fulfilment, as completion.<sup>882</sup> And it is this search for a

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<sup>875</sup> Zeitlin (1996) 92.

<sup>876</sup> Bakola (forthcoming 2013) [18]. Agamemnon, on the other hand, respected the opinion of his people: he was afraid of their judgement (*Ag.* 938).

<sup>877</sup> This illustrates his inability to realize his plans against Agamemnon on his own, and consequently underlines his worthlessness.

<sup>878</sup> See Denniston and Page (1957) ad loc.

<sup>879</sup> Cf. Macleod (1982) 132-4.

<sup>880</sup> Cf. Goward (2005) 88.

<sup>881</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 79.

<sup>882</sup> *Telos* is a multifarious term. In the *Oresteia*, it has many potential connotations and scholars are not unanimous in their interpretation of the word. Indeed *telos* as a general notion is of remarkable

*telos*,<sup>883</sup> an end of the problems, a closure,<sup>884</sup> or a more general fulfilment that appears as one of the central thematic concerns in the trilogy.

At the end of the *Oresteia* there is a general sense of a new order replacing an unstable older order.<sup>885</sup> Amid this general resolution the *telos* for which the trilogy is striving is accommodated by the cult given to the Eumenides.<sup>886</sup> This cult effects restoration on more than one level. It seals the conciliation of the Erinyes to Athens. As a counterpart to the creation of the Areopagus it cements the move from centrifugal vendetta to centripetal civic justice. But, among its very many aspects, it is also a cult of marriage.<sup>887</sup> In this capacity, many of the important notions of *telos* in the play are brought together here and corrected.<sup>888</sup> Helen's γάμου πικρὰς τελευτάς (*Ag.* 745) and the perverted προτέλεια (*Ag.* 227; cf. προτελείοις, 65-6) finally give way to sacrifices

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significance to the trilogy and permeates it, taking many different meanings or even combining more than one of its senses at the same time (Goldhill (1984b) 170-4 *passim*). Among the meanings proposed are accomplishment, completion, enactment of ritual, totality, end, target, (absolute) authority, fulfilment, but also payment, penalty for an action. On the meanings of *telos* in the *Oresteia*, see Fischer (1965), Lebeck (1971) 71-2, Goldhill (1984b) esp. 169-74, Goldhill (2004) 66, and most recently Seaford (2012) 65-6, 126-7.

In particular, *telos* in wedding contexts has been translated as 'solemnization' (Waanders (1983) 244), 'consummation' (Lebeck (1971) 69, 71-3, Goldhill (1984b) 170-1; Seaford (2012) 127), 'completion' (Lebeck (1971) 71-3, Sommerstein (2008b), Seaford (2012) 191), 'ending' (Sommerstein (2008b), Seaford (2012) 197), 'fulfilment' (Lebeck (1971) 71-3, Collard (2002)). For my present purposes it is the notions of fulfilment and closure that are particularly important. Collard in particular translates it as 'marriage's fulfilment' and associates the phrase γαμηλίου τέλους (and therefore the cult of Eumenides) with Athenian marriage practice and ideology (Collard (2002) 223 note ad 835). See also Voutiras (1998) 112, 118.

<sup>883</sup> Goldhill (1984b) 171-2, Goldhill (2004) 65-6. This desire is evident already from the beginning of *Agamemnon* (Goldhill (1984a) 12).

<sup>884</sup> Seaford (2012) 192, 194.

<sup>885</sup> Cf. Taplin (1977) 410, Bacon (2001) 52; cf. Taplin (1977) 415, Seaford (1994) 96.

<sup>886</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 107-8.

<sup>887</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 106.

<sup>888</sup> Cf. Mitchell-Boyask (2006) 294, Seaford (2012) 195; cf. Badnall (2008) 107-8. *Telos* is restored in another one of its senses, namely authority with the punitive authority assigned to the Erinyes; the *telos dikes* requested earlier (*Eum.* 243, 729) is also achieved (Seaford (2012) 195). For a less positive reading, see Goldhill (1984b) 172-3; cf. also Darbo-Peschanski (2006).

γαμηλίου τέλους (*Eum.* 834-6, cf. also 854-7, 1006, 1037).<sup>889</sup> This cult is a cult of children, namely human fertility, and γαμηλίου τέλους (*Eum.* 835), namely the fulfilment that marriage brings to the humans<sup>890</sup>. It is in these two capacities that the cult brings together two of the most important themes of the play.

Firstly, it recalls<sup>891</sup> and fixes the perverted *telos* that Clytemnestra asked Zeus for in the carpet scene (*Ag.* 973-4; cf. 972).<sup>892</sup> Apart from his attribute as ‘fulfiller’, Zeus *teleios* is also, and crucially, a god of marriage in his cult with Hera *teleia*.<sup>893</sup> Clytemnestra prays for the fulfilment of her perverted wishes: her ambitions for revenge, wealth and power,<sup>894</sup> but more importantly the death of Agamemnon.<sup>895</sup> This perverted *telos*, Agamemnon’s death (*Ag.* 1459-61, 1503-4),<sup>896</sup> is the final act of Clytemnestra’s marital aberrance. It is the seal of her distortion of the *telos* of her *gamos*.

The acceptance of the cult of marriage on the part of the Erinyes corrects this perversion. It recognizes and protects marriage as an institution.<sup>897</sup> It is a retrospective acknowledgement of the justice of Orestes’ revenge for all its flaws and complications<sup>898</sup> and Clytemnestra’s guilt as wife, since the Erinyes accept at last the

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<sup>889</sup> Cf. Macleod (1982) 136-8 with more on the restoration of ritual, Seaford (2012) 195.

<sup>890</sup> See above, pp. 225-6 fn. 882 with references.

<sup>891</sup> Goldhill (1984a) 222.

<sup>892</sup> Cf. Golden (1961) 160.

<sup>893</sup> See Avagianou (1991) 31-33 and, most recently, Seaford (2012) 147-8. The references from ancient sources include: *Plut. Mor.* 264b; *Plut. Quaest. Rom.* 2; *Schol. ad Ar. Thesm.* 973; *D.S.* 5.73.

<sup>894</sup> Cf. Seaford (2012) 192-3, see also Goldhill (2004) 36.

<sup>895</sup> Lebeck (1971) esp. 72-3; cf. Goldhill (2004) 66.

<sup>896</sup> Lebeck (1971) 70-3, esp. pp. 72-3.

<sup>897</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 106-8.

<sup>898</sup> Apollo’s emphasis on the importance of marriage bonds and his hint at the necessity for revenge is simultaneously giving an important reason for the acquittal of Orestes (see Goldhill (1984a) 222).

importance of the marriage-bond, which they had earlier wilfully undervalued in their fiercely partisan defence of Clytemnestra.<sup>899</sup>

The marriage cult of the Eumenides is simultaneously a reversal of the wider perversion of the *oikos* of Atreus.<sup>900</sup> The Erinyes is at the heart of the destruction of the *oikos* in that she has an active role in the cycle of destruction and is largely identified with the *alastor* of the *oikos* (*Ag.* 681-781)<sup>901</sup> and the *oikos* itself.<sup>902</sup> By offering a cure for the marital aberration in the *oikos* and directly associating the Erinyes, the spirit of the *oikos*, with this cure, the cult treats the perversion deep in its core.<sup>903</sup>

But there is another sense in which the cult of marriage of the Eumenides is an adjustment of Clytemnestra's perverted behaviour in the context of the *polis*. In defending Clytemnestra and disregarding her aberrance as wife, the Erinyes reject not only Zeus, Hera and marriage, but also Aphrodite and her role in the *telos* of marriage (*Eum.* 215). This is crucial because Aphrodite stands not simply for sexual desire but for the loyal affection between husband and wife which is the prerequisite for marriage and the procreation of children.<sup>904</sup> We saw above Clytemnestra's perverted loyalty toward Aegisthus. Clytemnestra transferred the affection and love, which she owed to her husband, to her lover. The Erinyes in their support of Clytemnestra condone even this

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<sup>899</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 107-8.

<sup>900</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 106-8.

<sup>901</sup> Bakola (forthcoming 2013) [17] and fn. 44.

<sup>902</sup> Bakola (forthcoming 2013) [17] and fn. 44; cf. Badnall (2008) 106.

<sup>903</sup> Cf. Bakola (forthcoming 2013) [20]; cf. Badnall (2008) 106-8.

<sup>904</sup> Goldhill (1984a) 222. In the framework of the dispute regarding marital and natal bonds, this aspect of the cult showcases the relative significance of marriage in that blood-bonds cannot exist without *gamos*. In disrespecting marriage Erinyes are wrong in neglecting this aspect of marriage's importance (Goldhill (1984a) 222).

aspect of her failure as wife and wilfully ignore the importance of bonds other than blood-bonds.<sup>905</sup> Thus, their association with marriage in cult is the correction of their earlier imbalance.

In the context of this cult, they ordain the *telos* of human lives in general (*Eum.* 952) and marriage in particular (*Eum.* 834-6). Thus they are associated with and reconciled to Zeus and Hera. Their acceptance of the cult of marriage (*Eum.* 834-6) is the acknowledgement of respect due to Zeus and Hera *teleioi* as – among other things – patrons of marriage, their problem as earlier pointed out to them by Apollo (*Eum.* 213-224, esp. 213-6). Since marriage was at the heart of the conflict between chthonic and Olympian gods as well as of the trial of Orestes, the marriage cult is the resolution of this collision.

But the issue is wider than I have so far presented it. The rejection of marriage represents a more general rejection of social ties, of society and *polis* in favour of blood-ties conceived in the narrowest way.<sup>906</sup> Now this, too, is corrected. This is a public cult which celebrates the establishment of order within the *polis*.<sup>907</sup> By accepting the cult of the *polis* then they are assimilated into the larger social order.<sup>908</sup>

On the other hand, through the cult of Eumenides female sexuality is controlled and human fertility guaranteed (*Eum.* 903-12).<sup>909</sup> The prayer of the Eumenides for the

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<sup>905</sup> Cf. Goldhill (1984a) 221.

<sup>906</sup> Cf. Goldhill (2004) 39.

<sup>907</sup> Goldhill (2004) 63-4; cf. also Goldhill (2004) 73.

<sup>908</sup> Cf. Goldhill (2004) 40, Bacon (2001) 54, Easterling (2008) 219, Badnall (2008) 106.

<sup>909</sup> Zeitlin (1996) 98; cf. Badnall (2008) 106.

cessation of the blood-flow (*Eum.* 979-83) is connected with their general protection of human fertility.<sup>910</sup> In this way the marriage cult of the Eumenides reverses the perverted fertility associated with the murder of Agamemnon by Clytemnestra and the relentless emphasis on blood, from the bloodshed caused by Helen's adultery (*Ag.* 1460) to the general blood split on the ground throughout the trilogy but especially during the carpet scene,<sup>911</sup> the Cassandra scene (*Ag.* 1072-1342 *passim*, esp. 1090-1149 and 1188-90 and 1291-4, 1309-1319, 1338-42) and after the murder (*Ag.* 1389-90, 1426-30, 1456-61, 1478-80, 1509-12, 1533-4 and also 1589-90; cf. 1420 with 1417-8))<sup>912</sup>. This bloodshed perpetuated the cycle of violence and ruin in the *oikos* of the Atreids. At the end of the trilogy, the Eumenides stop this relentless blood flow: μηδὲ πιούσα κόνις μέλαν αἷμα πολιτῶν (*Eum.* 980).<sup>913</sup>

But this cult brings also the restoration of the fertility of the earth and nature (*Eum.* 829-36, 904-9).<sup>914</sup> The association of marriage with earth fertility is natural, since a part of earth's fertility is also human fertility within *gamos* (*Eum.* 834-6). Female infidelity then in contaminating the latter also interrupts the former. The association of marriage with the cult of the Eumenides reconciles female fertility with female sexuality and thus stabilizes what might otherwise be a source of disorder.<sup>915</sup>

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<sup>910</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 84.

<sup>911</sup> Lebeck (1971) 85-6.

<sup>912</sup> Lebeck (1971) 80-91, Bakola (forthcoming 2013) [17]; cf. Badnall (2008) 106. Lebeck's (1971) 81 phrasing is notable: 'The image becomes a concrete object of perception in each of the three plays: the carpet of tapestries in *Agamemnon*, the blood-dyed robe which Orestes spreads in *Choephoroi*, and the robes donned by the Semnae in *Eumenides*'.

<sup>913</sup> Lebeck (1971) 91.

<sup>914</sup> Macleod (1982) 137-8, Porter (2005-6) 2, Easterling (2008) 232.

<sup>915</sup> Zeitlin (1996) 97, Badnall (2008) 106.

Thus through the *telos* of marriage and the resultant and related fertility, the cult mirrors the new social and civic order<sup>916</sup> which has been brought about after the disruptive distortions of marriage;<sup>917</sup> it resolves the problematic situation in the *oikos* and in its public dimension it relieves the perversions of the *polis*.<sup>918</sup> The cult of marriage embraces all the *oikoi* of the *polis* (cf. *Eum.* 892) and puts them under the protection of the Semnae (*Eum.* 834-6). It guarantees the normal function and prosperity of the *polis* as a whole (*Eum.* 762ff., 858-63, 868-9).<sup>919</sup> The benefits of this cult are expanded to contemporary Athens through the explicit metatheatrical aspect of the ending.<sup>920</sup> The installation of the Furies happened in the distant past but it inaugurates a social and ritual practice which extends to the here and now of the audience.<sup>921</sup> Thus, the beneficial aspect of the marriage cult is expanded to the whole *polis*, in its fictional and real form.<sup>922</sup>

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<sup>916</sup> Goldhill (2004) 28, Griffith (1995) 81.

<sup>917</sup> Porter (2005/6) argues for a distorted sexuality running through the trilogy which is not restored in the end. Distorted sexuality is an issue in the *Supplikes* with which he is comparing the *Oresteia* (Porter (2005/6) 4-6). Yet in the latter this issue matters not *per se* but as a crucial aspect of marital aberrance which ultimately has ramifications for the *polis* (Zeitlin (1996) 89-98, esp. 91, 94, 98; cf. Porter (2005/6) 7: 'Instead of suggesting ways in which these powerful capacities can be righted to support society, the end of the trilogy in great measure skirts the issue.').

<sup>918</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 106-8.

<sup>919</sup> Cf. Seaford (1994) 366-7 for resolution, also 102-5, 132-5, 342 and generally 363ff. including on ambiguity in tragedy; cf. also Seaford (1995) 208-9, 216-7. Cf. also Goldhill (2000) 48-56 for an ambiguous reading of the play. These are the two major views on the closure of the *Oresteia*. See Rechenauer (2001), especially 91-2; Porter (2005/6). Macleod (1982) 132-3 speaks of 'goodness achieved' by the end of *Eumenides*, also at 284-5.

<sup>920</sup> Easterling (2008) 232-3, Revermann (2008) 254-6; cf. Wilson and Taplin (1993) 174-7, esp. 175-6.

<sup>921</sup> Easterling (2008) 232-3, Revermann (2008) 254-6.

<sup>922</sup> Wilson and Taplin (1993) 175-6. Though as Scodel (Scodel (2008) 136-8) rightly notes, factional violence remained in the Athens of Aeschylus, as witnessed by the murder of Ephialtes, she is too pessimistic in viewing the cult as a failure. Despite the murder, *stasis* did not break out. It is important to note that the play does not deny the possibility of violence. Rather, a new order is in place to help prevent it and add a degree of stability to collective life.

Therefore, the cult offers a partial restoration of the perversions and crises in the play. The resolution offered by the cult is complemented by the foundation of lawcourts.<sup>923</sup> Cult is at the level of divine agency and ritual, and courts at the human level. Courts and cult are also causally interrelated, in that the successful functioning of the ritual and in particular the new future of fecund marriages arise directly from the new stability created in Athens. Certainly, there is no full reversal of all the crises of the trilogy, actual and potential. The losses of the *oikos* cannot be recovered. The potential of disruption in the *oikos* and indeed in the *polis* is always open (*Eum.* 952-5).<sup>924</sup> Nor do the Erinyes utterly abandon their punitive action (*Eum.* 932-7).<sup>925</sup> There will still be misfortunes for humans (*Eum.* 933-7). The cult of the Semnae has an unpleasant aspect, associated with human grief (*Eum.* 954-5). There is thus an ambiguity inherent to the ‘resolution’ offered in the ending.<sup>926</sup>

Yet, this cannot cancel the general positive character of the resolution, nor the ‘new order’ established in the state.<sup>927</sup> The character of the interventions of the Erinyes has radically changed (cf. *Eum.* 179-90). The new *polis*-focused approach to revenge means that all such acts, as *moicheia*, murder, betrayal, violence, can now be addressed within a system which allows punishment without the endless spiral of violence, and this stability offers a context within which relationships *can* function as they should. Therefore, the end firmly underlines the ramifications of aberrance in the *oikos* and the

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<sup>923</sup> Cf. Seaford (1995) 214-5.

<sup>924</sup> Cf. Goldhill (1984b) 173.

<sup>925</sup> Easterling (2008) 233-4; cf. Darbo-Peschanski (2006) 15-20.

<sup>926</sup> Goldhill (1984b) 173.

<sup>927</sup> Goldhill (2004) 28.



*polis* and thus authoritatively endeavours to prevent any potential major civic disorder like the one presented in the play.

Apart from its literal use, marital aberrance is a means of exploring other issues. As was hinted above, the *Oresteia* raises larger questions of loyalty, which are at the heart of the vendetta. Perverted marriage has an important bearing on this question. In the trial of Orestes, at first glance it seems that the issue is how severe the matricide is as an offence and whether Orestes had any real justification for his actions. But the insistence of the Erinyes on the importance of the matricide and Apollo's on the importance of marriage and Zeus and Hera *teleioi* indicates that the question is ultimately: 'to whom do I owe my allegiance?'.<sup>928</sup> In putting natal *oikos* against marriage the play illustrates the way in which exclusive loyalties fragment and destroy social structures. If all relationships are reduced to the lowest common denominator, then there is no society. This resolution is ultimately about the survival of civilized society.<sup>929</sup>

### **3. The *Supplices***

The notion of marriage as *telos* and its civic dimension are also dominant in the *Supplices*. Problems of marital aberration assume a central and literal importance in this trilogy to a greater degree than in the *Oresteia*. This case is peculiar because it is not clear in the first place how it should be classified within the various categories explored in this thesis. In *Supplices* Aeschylus presents the daughters of Danaus facing the threat

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<sup>928</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 107.

<sup>929</sup> Cf. Bacon (2001) 57.

of an abhorrent marriage. This first play of the trilogy<sup>930</sup> deals with the Danaids' flight from marriage.<sup>931</sup> This might be considered as – but ultimately is not – a 'missed *gamos*'. It is a rejected marriage, at least for the *Supplices*,<sup>932</sup> but it eventually does take place and dominates the remaining two plays of the trilogy. From this aspect it is important that there are hints of the approaching murder of the Aegyptiads in the *Supplices* (*Suppl.* 4-10, 21-2, for instance).<sup>933</sup> This marriage is perverted in all its aspects, both in its beginning and in its results. In the *Supplices* both the Danaids and the Aegyptiads express mutually complementary distorted views on marriage. One aspect of this double-faceted perversion is associated with the Aegyptiads who force this marriage on unwilling partners, and the other with the Danaids.<sup>934</sup> Most crucially, the marriage is further subverted in the next plays: marriage becomes a kind of rape,<sup>935</sup> and the brides' resistance becomes a most notorious murder of the husbands.<sup>936</sup> Thus, the trilogy moves from rejection to a perversion of marriage and destruction of the *oikos* in the form of

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<sup>930</sup> There is still a debate as to whether this is the first or the second play of the trilogy. For the first view see Garvie's reconstruction of the trilogy in Garvie (1969) 183ff. and for the second Rösler (2007) 182ff.; cf. Badnall (2008) 94-5. Personally I agree with Garvie, and my discussion treats the *Supplices* as the first and the *Aegyptiads* as the second play in the trilogy.

<sup>931</sup> There are many efforts in Aeschylean scholarship to judge whether this is rejection of *gamos* in general or just the specific one to the Aegyptiads (Garvie (1969) 221-3, see also most recently, Mitchell (2006) 209-10). As I will argue below, I think it is a development from rejection of this specific marriage to rejection of marriage *per se*.

<sup>932</sup> With specific reference to the end of the *Supplices*, I would like to suggest that in fact the impending perverted marriage takes an almost concrete audiovisual form there, in that the last choral ode has a strong hymeneal form as well as content (Seaford (1984-5) 221-9; cf. Seaford (1987) 114-5, Murnaghan (2005) 188, Rösler (2007) 188, Badnall (2008) 81-97, Swift (2010) 279-97, Seaford (2012) 141).

<sup>933</sup> See Sandin (2003) ad loc.

<sup>934</sup> Cf. Belfiore (2000) 56-8.

<sup>935</sup> Cf. also Badnall (2008) 84-5.

<sup>936</sup> Belfiore (2000) 57-8. Their conduct completes their assimilation to the Amazons at the *Supplices* (*Suppl.* 287), who killed their husbands too. See Johansen and Whittle (1980) ad 287-9 'Pelagus' assimilation of the Danaids to' the Amazons 'is pregnant with unconscious prophecy'; cf. also Turner (2001) 32 fn. 18.

‘intrafamilial violence’<sup>937</sup>, which is the focus of the second and third plays. There is in fact no surviving play or trilogy in which marriage has such a central role or is problematized for its own sake in quite this manner. In this section I examine the way in which the *Supplices* explores marriage in itself in terms of social norms and the problems attached to them. But I shall also look at the deployment of marriage as a means to open larger themes for discussion (though to a lesser degree) in this play too. I will firstly discuss the form that marital perversion takes in this trilogy, beginning with the Aegyptiads’ aberrance.

#### **a. Marital aberrance: views and behaviours**

The first aspect of their perversion lies in the fact that they insist on a marriage firmly refused not only by the brides but by their father as well (*Suppl.* 141-3, 330-2, for instance)<sup>938</sup>, whose agreement was an essential part of the *engye*. This unity of negative wills is emphasized in Danaus’ words: πῶς δ’ ἂν γαμῶν ἄκουσαν ἄκοντος πάρα / ἄγνός γένοιτ’ ἄν; (*Suppl.* 227-8). This is effectively illustrated in the laments of the girls for this marriage in the first *stasimon* (*Suppl.* 58-76, 112ff.; cf. 123-4). The tearing of their καλύπτρα (καλύπτρα, *Suppl.* 122) underscores their detestation of the marriage to the Aegyptiads<sup>939</sup> by its contrast to its literary intertext, namely Andromache’s similar gestures in *Iliad* 22 in grief for her deceased beloved husband. In presenting their situation as analogous to Procne (*Suppl.* 58-76) they underline the intensity of their

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<sup>937</sup> Seaford (2012) 145.

<sup>938</sup> Cf. Mitchell (2006) 214, Seaford (2012) 155; cf. Detienne (1988). On the role of Danaus see below p. 244 with references.

<sup>939</sup> Sommerstein (1977) 67-82.

lamentation.<sup>940</sup> Ultimately the use of violence to effect this marriage (*Suppl.* 226-28, 940-1, 885ff., 943-4<sup>941</sup>) against the will of the brides and their father transgresses marital norms.<sup>942</sup> This image is reinforced by the *hybris* of their herald towards the gods of Argos (*Suppl.* 893-4), as well as to the *polis* (*Suppl.* 911ff.) when they attempt to remove the Danaids, the suppliants of Argos, from there, and the whole of Greece (*Suppl.* 914-5). Moreover, they demand the women as if they were their property.<sup>943</sup> This is a perversion of the character of the marital relationship, even if they have in Athenian terms a claim on the women on grounds of *anchisteia* (*Suppl.* 387-91).<sup>944</sup> Their view of marriage as possession (*Suppl.* 918, 932-3, cf. 906-7) reveals their mentality. The behaviour of the Aegyptiads causes the Danaids to regard this marriage as slavery (*Suppl.* 335) and subjection to a possessor (*Suppl.* 337).<sup>945</sup>

Nevertheless, this is not the whole picture. Although the Danaids so emphatically state in praying to Zeus<sup>946</sup> that *dike* is on their side (*Suppl.* 37, 77-82, 104-11, 168-75; cf. 9-10), it is debatable whether their flight is legitimate.<sup>947</sup> There are reasons in fact to suppose that their opinion about the nature of their impending marriage (as distinct from its manner) is not to be accepted. It is true that the Suppliants claim that nature is against it: for them this is an endogamous marriage (*Suppl.* 37-39, esp. *πατραδελφείαν* (*Suppl.*

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<sup>940</sup> See Sandin (2003) ad 63-4.

<sup>941</sup> ἐκδοῦναι here has marriage implications.

<sup>942</sup> Cf. Belfiore (2000) 56-7.

<sup>943</sup> Seaford (2012) 152.

<sup>944</sup> Sandin (2003) ad loc, 918, 932-3; cf. also Garvie (1969) 217ff., esp. 220-1, who is most uncertain about this and more recently Turner (2001) 33-5. On the role of Danaus see pp. 250-1.

<sup>945</sup> Cf. Seaford (2012) 152-3.

<sup>946</sup> Zeus is a crucial figure in the *Supplices* (*Suppl.* 1,4). His omnipotence being in the background (cf. Sandin (2003) ad 1), he is both the ancestor of the Danaids and the god of supplication, and the god of marriage.

<sup>947</sup> Cf. Gantz (1978) 287.

38, 330-2).<sup>948</sup> Nevertheless, not only Egyptian law in the play, but also Athenian law in the world outside the text accepted such unions. For the Athenians, endogamy was actually preferred<sup>949</sup> unless it amounted to incest. Thus the issue of kinship in this marriage is one on which the Athenian audience are bound to understand the claims of the Aegyptiads, even if this is not a validation of their conduct. Pelasgus himself questions the legitimacy of the claim of the Suppliants (*Suppl.* 387-91; cf. 344).<sup>950</sup> This is clear in the language he uses. He wonders whether the Aegyptiads κρατοῦσι ... / νόμῳ πόλεως (*Suppl.* 387-8). As if questioning their plea, he asks the Danaids to prove that they are legally right: this is illustrated by the several legal phrases used by Pelasgus. Significantly, the Danaids choose to ignore this question.<sup>951</sup> If the claim of the Aegyptiads on them has a degree of quasi-legal validity, their flight is compromised.

But it seems that it is not only the behaviour of the Aegyptiads that causes the negative attitude of the Danaids respecting marriage. The Danaids' failure is deeper and more severe than their above mentioned perversions. The Danaids have distorted views on the institution of marriage itself and therefore a perverted attitude to marriage altogether.<sup>952</sup>

At this point it is necessary to discuss what exactly the Danaids are rejecting, because there is a certain ambiguity in the text. It is not immediately clear whether they detest this specific endogamous marriage to their cousins (*Suppl.* 392-5) or marriage in

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<sup>948</sup> Seaford (2012) 149-152, esp. 151; cf. Mitchell (2006) 217.

<sup>949</sup> Harrison (1968) 21-2. More recently see Foley (2001) 61-2, 68, 72-3 and fn. 74, 102-3, for instance.

<sup>950</sup> Cf. Sandin (2003) ad loc, 918, 932-3 and Seaford (2012) 153; cf. Turner (2001) 45.

<sup>951</sup> Sandin (2003) ad 394-5.

<sup>952</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 96.

general.<sup>953</sup> The uncertainty of their words looks like a strategic blurring of the text by Aeschylus. The Danaids begin with statements of rejection of this marriage only but eventually these statements are addressed both to the institution of marriage as well as to the specific marriage to their cousins. Climactically in the concluding lines they express a total refusal of the institution of marriage, invoking Artemis and wishing for purity. In the end, they are denying marriage *per se* and at the same time they are expressing their strong detestation of marriage to their cousins (*Suppl.* 1062-4).<sup>954</sup>

In their total rejection they fail to understand the immense importance of *gamos* and its relation to fertility.<sup>955</sup> Their transgressive attitude to marriage is indicated by their preference of death over marriage (*Suppl.* 154-66, 784-807). Here despite the superficial similarity they offer a marked contrast to other tragic virgins who choose death in place of their marriage.<sup>956</sup> In the case of the latter, it was an honourable choice of a greater good. In this case there is no greater good beyond the rejection itself. Moreover, in this context, the Danaids supplicate Zeus but in their prayer they commit another perversion

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<sup>953</sup> See Garvie (1969) 215-223 and more recently Turner (2001) 28-32, who has a full list of the passages matching each contingency (p. 29 fn. 10); cf. Bachvarova (2009) 303. Cf. also Rösler (2007) esp. 182-4, who believes that it was marriage in general that the Danaids wanted to avoid because the oracle said that Danaus would be killed by a son-in-law of his. It is difficult to see any hint in the play, but it is likely that this was an issue in the third play of the trilogy (Sommerstein (2008a) 284-6, Seaford (2012) 157). Seaford (2012) 157 believes that it is both the endogamous marriage that is rejected and marriage altogether; cf. Swift (2010) 279.

<sup>954</sup> Cf. Johansen and Whittle (1980) ad 1069.

<sup>955</sup> Gantz (1978) 287, Badnall (2008) 90-3, Bachvarova (2009) 304-5.

<sup>956</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 84. Even in stating their preference of death to marriage, the way of death they choose (*Suppl.* 789-91) has hymeneal implications (Badnall (2008) 84, Seaford (2012) 142), assimilating them to the large group of the girls who missed their marriage, or those women whose marriage was flawed and they committed suicide, as Jocasta and Deianeira in Sophocles. For example, in a similar way to Polyxena (Eur. *Hecuba*) the Danaids prefer death to a marriage (*Suppl.* 784-807) with a person they detest (*Suppl.* 784-99, 802-7), but they do not see Hades as bridegroom unlike other maidens but as king (*Suppl.* 791). Indeed, it is impressive that they see their death as a state in heaven (*Suppl.* 792-9) and not a dark situation. See Badnall (2008) 84.

(*Suppl.* 154-66).<sup>957</sup> They do not confine themselves to asking for protection from their cousins. They blackmail him in stating that if he does not save them from marriage to their cousins they will hang themselves.<sup>958</sup>

Since *gamos* is the *telos par excellence* of women, it is especially ironic that the Danaids constantly speak of and seek their *telos* (*Suppl.* 603, cf. 601, 739, for instance; cf. *τελευτά*<sup>959</sup> (at the beginning: *τελευτὰς*, *Suppl.* 139-40; at the end: *τελευτὰ*, *Suppl.* 1050-1)) but they flee from it in rejecting marriage (*Suppl.* 1050-1, cf. 1040).<sup>960</sup> The *telos*, the *πρᾶγμα τέλειον* (*Suppl.* 92; cf. 139-140), they audaciously<sup>961</sup> ask Zeus for is the absolute absence of any *γάμος* (*Suppl.* 141-3; cf. 150). The vocabulary used in their efforts to support their case is the vocabulary of marriage: *σπέρμα σεμνᾶς μέγα ματρὸς εὐνάς* (*Suppl.* 141, 151). Crucially in the hymn to Zeus (*Suppl.* 524ff.) there is an allusion to Zeus *teleios*<sup>962</sup>, and his capacity as fulfiller and generator of perfection<sup>963</sup> runs throughout this ode and marks its ending lines (*Suppl.* 598-9).<sup>964</sup> It is then potentially

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<sup>957</sup> Burian (1974) 9-10, Sandin (2003) ad 154-61: ‘This threat of suicide is the first clear indication of the undercurrent of violence and aggression in the minds of the Danaids. ... The threat is rather an indication of the *hybris* of the girls, giving an ironical twist to their recurring complaints about this fault in their suitors (31,81, 104, 426, etc.)’.

<sup>958</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 84. Threat was one possible form of supplication but it mostly led to failure of supplication, as Naiden (2006) 84-6 shows. However, I would disagree that the threats of the Danaids have no success. They do make Pelasgus consider their case and bring the issue to the *polis* (*Suppl.* 376-80, 438-54, 468-89; cf. 407-17, 452).

<sup>959</sup> I translate *telos* as fulfilment, completion, perfection, as above.

<sup>960</sup> Cf. Murnaghan (2005) 194-5, Bachvarova (2009) 300. This is also an indication of their bad side and their total blindness with regard to their flight and the right of their case. On Danaids and ‘the deferral of *telos*’, see Seaford (2012) 144-9.

<sup>961</sup> In fact if the reading ἦβαν μὴ τέλειον (*Suppl.* 80; West reads ἦβαν μὴ τέλειον) is correct, it is really a wilfully pushy obstinacy against marriage that they show.

<sup>962</sup> Johansen and Whittle (1980) ad 524-6. On Zeus *teleios*, see Introduction, p. 22 with fn. 46.

<sup>963</sup> Johansen and Whittle (2004) ad 525-6 characteristically translate *Suppl.* 525-6 as ‘of perfecters most perfecting power’ and support this translation with argumentation.

<sup>964</sup> Johansen and Whittle (1980) ad 525-6.

ironic that they should pray to him<sup>965</sup> to bring about a *telos*, end, to their agonies (*Suppl.* 211, 624, esp. 524ff., also 808-16, 823-4), while they are wilfully rejecting one important aspect of his attribute as *teleios*, namely protector of marriage.<sup>966</sup> There is a last irony in that they also ask Zeus for *telos* (as fertility), wishing for the prosperity of Argos (*Suppl.* 689-92), and yet they ignore the relationship of marriage to fertility.<sup>967</sup> The Suppliants fail to understand both marriage and Zeus as the god of marriage.

Their rejection of the *telos* of marriage reaches its climax, fittingly, in the concluding lines of the *Supplices*, where the Danaids do indeed reach a point where they firmly reject marriage outright (*Suppl.* 1030-3). This is so extreme that the subsidiary chorus protest (*Suppl.* 1034ff.)<sup>968</sup> and state the sanctity of marriage and the importance of Zeus and Hera as gods of marriage (*Suppl.* 1035), as well as of Aphrodite (*Suppl.* 1034, cf. 1041), and the significance of the *telos* of marriage (*Suppl.* 1040 and 1050-1), which is wilfully denied by them. Even after this, they still insist on their views, seeking to adapt the will of Zeus to their own (*Suppl.* 1062ff.).

In their absolute and unrelenting rejection of marriage, they ignore its importance as a socio-political entity. In their prayer for the prosperity of Argos, they understand the importance of fertility but ironically fail to grasp that of the institution which guarantees

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<sup>965</sup> Their prayers to Zeus are spread throughout the play: 23-39, 20-175 *passim*, 206ff., for instance.

<sup>966</sup> Seaford (2012) 145-8, 149.

<sup>967</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 96.

<sup>968</sup> Cf. Belfiore (2000) 58, Badnall (2008) 96-7, Bednarowski (2011) 552. There is a debate with reference to the identity of the subsidiary chorus. Recent scholarship suggests that in most probability this is about a chorus consisting of Argive bodyguards and not the handmaids of the Danaids. See on this most recently, Swift (2010) 280-2; cf. in contrast, Bednarowski (2011) 556-65, who argues for two hemichoruses of Danaids.



it, as we saw.<sup>969</sup> They break the cultural link between the fertility of earth, social continuity and marriage that was at the heart of marriage as a socio-political institution, which was vital for the *polis*.<sup>970</sup> There, they associate the continuation of the *polis* with the fertility of the earth.<sup>971</sup> Yet, crucially, they are silent with regard to the institution of marriage, which was the means of providing the continuation of the body of legitimate citizens. Their mistaken approach in this play is repeated and magnified in the next, where they strike at the heart of the institution of marriage and the survival of the *oikos*. Marriage as social construction is eventually confirmed and their aberrance corrected in the finale to the trilogy through the *hieros gamos* of fr. 44, which was one of the prototypes for human marriage in Greek religion and culture.<sup>972</sup> In this fragment, the notions of marriage, *telos*, human fertility and fertility of the earth are all brought together and their link is firmly established<sup>973</sup> in the following way: this is the *gamos* of earth and sky (ἔρᾱ μὲν ἀγνὸς οὐρανὸς τρῶσαι χθόνα, / ἔρωσ δὲ γαῖαν λαμβάνει γάμου τυχεῖν<sup>974</sup>). The outcome of this marriage is fertility of nature and earth (ἡ δὲ τίκτεται βροτοῖς / μίλων τε βοσκὰς καὶ βίον Δημήτριον· / δένδρων τ' ὀπώραν ἐκ νοτίζοντος γάμου/ τέλειός ἐστι). This *hieros gamos* of Earth and Sky elevates sexuality to a cosmic

<sup>969</sup> Cf. Gantz (1978) 279, 284-5. See also here pp. 238-40.

<sup>970</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 90-3.

<sup>971</sup> There is an emphasis on the fertility of the earth; it seems that it is an important theme in the trilogy: it figures in the hymn to Zeus (*Suppl.* 524ff.), but fertility of the earth and continuation of the *oikos* go hand in hand in the curse of the Danaids to the Aegyptiads upon the arrival of the latter (*Suppl.* 854-7). Its use reaches its peak at the end of the *Suppliant Women* (*Suppl.* 1026-9), and in Aphrodite's speech (fr. 44) in the trilogy of the *Danaids*. See my main discussion, pp. 238-42, 247. This linkage of fertility of earth and *oikos* is also inherent to the cult of the Eumenides at the end of the *Oresteia*, where *telos* had an immensely important role as here (see pp. 225-33).

<sup>972</sup> Cf. also Gantz (1978) 284 and Calame (2009a) 142-3, Seaford (2012) 305-12. These lines are about marriage and match the earlier attitude of the Danaids against the institution: Turner (2001) 32 fn. 16.; cf. in contrast Garvie (1969) 225 and Rösler's reading which focuses only on *eros* and suggests that Hypermetra fell in love with her husband and this is the reason she spared him (Rösler (2007) 189-95 *passim*; cf. Mitchell (2006) 210).

<sup>973</sup> Cf. Bachvarova (2009) 305, Seaford (2012) 305-7.

<sup>974</sup> On the text of fr. 44 used here, see p. 129, fn. 492.

principle in the manner of Hesiod at *Theog.* 116-33.<sup>975</sup> It also places *gamos* at the heart of animal and human life; it is not however merely a sexual union, though it is a validation of sexuality, but a prototype of human marriage.<sup>976</sup> *Gamos* brings *telos*, completion, perfection, fulfilment of fertility (δένδρων τ' ὀπώραν ἐκ νοτίζοντος γάμου / τέλειός ἐστι).<sup>977</sup> Thus, the centrality of *gamos* at all levels from the world of nature to the *cosmos* is confirmed in the *hieros gamos* of Earth and Sky in Aphrodite's speech at the conclusion of the trilogy.<sup>978</sup>

## b. Exploring marriage through its perversion

The perverted attitudes toward *gamos* in this play and trilogy allow Aeschylus to explore marriage more generally, to pose questions about self-definition and loyalty, and the need of the female to move on.<sup>979</sup> Upon marriage women were expected to make a transition from the *oikos* of their father to their new, marital *oikos*, that of their

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<sup>975</sup> Ἦτοι μὲν πρότιστα Χάος γένητ'· αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα  
 Γαῖ' εὐρύστερνος, πάντων ἔδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ  
 ἀθανάτων οἱ ἔχουσι κάρη νιφέντος Ὀλύμπου,  
 [Τάρταρά τ' ἠερόεντα μυχῶ χθονὸς εὐρυοδείης,]  
 ἠδ' Ἔρος, ὃς κάλλιστος ἐν ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι,  
 λυσιμελής, πάντων τε θεῶν πάντων τ' ἀνθρώπων  
 δάμναται ἐν στήθεσσι νόον καὶ ἐπίφρονα βουλήν.  
 Ἐκ Χάεος δ' Ἐρεβός τε μέλαινά τε Νύξ ἐγένοντο·  
 Νυκτὸς δ' αὐτ' Αἰθήρ τε καὶ Ἡμέρη ἐξεγένοντο,  
 οὓς τέκε κυσαμένη Ἐρέβει φιλότητι μιγεῖσα.  
 Γαῖα δέ τοι πρῶτον μὲν ἐγείνατο ἴσον ἑωυτῇ  
 Οὐρανὸν ἀστερόενθ', ἵνα μιν περὶ πᾶσαν ἔεργοι,  
 ὄφρ' εἴη μακάρεσσι θεοῖς ἔδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ.  
 γείνατο δ' Οὐρεα μακρά, θεῶν χαρίεντας ἐναύλους  
 Νυμφέων, αἱ ναίουσιν ἄν' οὐρεα βησσήεντα.  
 ἦ δὲ καὶ ἀτρύγετον πέλαγος τέκεν, οἰδματι θυῖον,  
 Πόντον, ἄτερ φιλότητος ἐφιμέρου· αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα  
 Οὐρανῶ εὐνηθεῖσα τέκ' Ὀκεανὸν βαθυδίνην... (The text is cited after Solmsen (1990).)

<sup>976</sup> Cf. Seaford (2012) 306-7.

<sup>977</sup> Cf. Belfiore (2000) 61-2.

<sup>978</sup> Cf. Seaford (2012) 305-7.

<sup>979</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 108.

husbands. The procession from the one house to the other was an important part of the marriage ritual and ideology.<sup>980</sup> This of course had implications for the self-definition of the girls who got married. They were expected to redefine themselves as parts of the *oikos* of their husband, although the paternal *oikos* always had a kind of claim on the girls and they could in certain circumstances be transferred back.<sup>981</sup> Inability to achieve a successful transfer to the marital *oikos* caused severe problems. This failed transfer meant that the loyalty of the wives did not lie with their husbands but with their fathers.<sup>982</sup> Consequently, this was a threat to the continuity of the *oikos* and to the marriage itself.<sup>983</sup>

This is the case with the Danaids. The efforts of the Danaids to flee from marriage have some affinity to the usual reaction of brides to the seismic change effected by marriage,<sup>984</sup> though the Danaids are an extreme variation on female resistance to marriage.<sup>985</sup> At a literal level the play stresses the importance of marriage, the need for the female to leave her *oikos* and for the *oikos* to let go of the female. These girls are so excessively attached to their paternal *oikos* that even if they did not reject marriage so violently in this specific instance it is questionable whether they could ever marry successfully.<sup>986</sup>

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<sup>980</sup> See Introduction pp. 16-20.

<sup>981</sup> Just (1989) 26-7, 33, 66-7.

<sup>982</sup> See Badnall (2008) 79.

<sup>983</sup> Seaford (1990b) 151-2, cf. Seaford (1990b) 166-8.

<sup>984</sup> Seaford (1987) 110-5; cf. Seaford (2012) 140-1.

<sup>985</sup> Seaford (1987) 110-4; cf. Swift (2010) 279-80, Seaford (2012) 144; cf. also Badnall (2008) 82-3, 97.

<sup>986</sup> Cf. Föllinger (2007) 13-6, Badnall (2008) 87, 90.

It is worth pausing to look at the peculiar relationship they have with their father. With respect to their rejection of marriage, flight and supplication, though they often take the initiative in word and action, it seems that they are not in full authority but heavily influenced by their father. Although they nowhere acknowledge him as their *kyrios*,<sup>987</sup> a fact which has implications for the legality of the Aegyptiads' claim,<sup>988</sup> they admit that he is their βούλαρχος (*Suppl.* 11; βούλαρχον, 970), στασίαρχος (10) and πρόνοος (πρόνοον, 969).<sup>989</sup> Danaus is not only presented as a source of advice and influence by the Danaids in their statements, but enacts the role in front of the audience before the entrance of Pelasgus and towards the end of the trilogy. This is not to say that the Danaids were not following their own desires in refusing marriage, but rather that there is complete unanimity of opinion between the father and the daughters. His will is their will too.<sup>990</sup> Therefore, this is not simply a group of delinquent females but one entire *oikos* which is resisting the inevitable. The Danaids are stuck with their father and their natal family. This extreme attachment threatens 'the continuity of the *oikos*'<sup>991</sup> and finally directs them to the murder of their husbands. This culmination was an almost complete destruction of their *oikos*.

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<sup>987</sup> This issue remains unclear (cf. *Suppl.* 965, where the *polis* seems to take this task as if Danaus was not present) and the Danaids never quite argue their case respecting this legal claim (Turner (2001) 33). Cf. in contrast Föllinger (2007) 15-6.

<sup>988</sup> See above, pp. 236-7.

<sup>989</sup> Cf. ναυκλήρω (*Suppl.* 177). For the role of Danaus (see Föllinger (2007); cf. Garvie (1969) 202, 213, Turner (2001) 45-6); for a view of Danaus as chorus-leader and director, see Murnaghan (2005) 189-91. Cf. Bakewell (2008) for an interesting approach to the character of Danaus.

<sup>990</sup> Cf. Föllinger (2007) 13-6 and her approach to the issue of the relationship between father and daughter in the *Supplikes*. Föllinger puts it nicely: 'im ... Vordergrund steht die Einheit von väterlichem und töchterlichem Willen' (15).

<sup>991</sup> Cf. Seaford (1990b) 151-3. This is the *oikos* where Danaus and Aegyptus belong.

The play, and perhaps the trilogy, also raises the issue of the violation of the will of the individual in marriage. As we have seen above, unwillingness both on the behalf of the brides and their father is stressed in the play. For the first audience there were palpable resemblances between the situation of the Danaids and that of the *epikleros*. Certainly, the Danaids themselves cannot be regarded literally as *epikleroi*, since their father is still alive. Moreover, the protection which the law afforded to the *epikleros* in her new marriage is absent in this play.<sup>992</sup> Yet, they do resemble the *epikleros* in that they have no male siblings.<sup>993</sup> Elements of the *epikleros* cases are here: the kin who is keen to marry his cousin, the unwilling girl who does not want to marry her kin, the inability of the father to make a stand for his daughters and protect them. Through these affinities between the two situations, the play implicitly comments on the *epiklerate* and explores the tensions within the system.<sup>994</sup> It defamiliarizes the familiar and asks questions about the extent to which the Athenians do in fact institutionalize violation of will.

In the framework of the exploration of mistaken approaches to marriage, the play also comments on power ratios within marriage relationships. As we saw above, the Aegyptiads see their cousins as their property and seek to dominate them.<sup>995</sup> But a marriage even in a culture of arranged marriages can only flourish on the basis of shared volition and respect. This is the basis of Odysseus' praise of marriage and it is reiterated in Pindar *O.7.1-10*.

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<sup>992</sup> Seaford (2012) 154.

<sup>993</sup> Seaford (2012) 154.

<sup>994</sup> Cf. Seaford (1987) 117-9, Badnall (2008) 87.

<sup>995</sup> See above pp. 235-6.

From the aspect of marriage which concerns the individual and the *oikos*, the play moves to its political aspects. Marriage and erroneous views on it are the reason for the Danaids' supplication to Pelasgus (*Suppl.* 274ff., 418ff.) and his *polis* (*Suppl.* 330-2),<sup>996</sup> an entreaty which ultimately results in the concrete political destruction of Argos.

As in the *Oresteia*, the *polis* is of great significance in the Danaid trilogy.<sup>997</sup> As we have seen in the Introduction<sup>998</sup> and earlier chapters, marriage and the *polis* were inextricably linked in ancient Greek culture<sup>999</sup> and no less so in democratic Athens. Marriage was the institution providing the continuation of the *oikos* and thus it secured the survival of the *polis* through the provision of legitimate citizens.<sup>1000</sup> Refusing marriage was a political act in a way in that it denied contribution to this continuation.

Although this is not an Argive marriage (cf. *Suppl.* 609), the play creates the link between *gamos* and *polis*. A first way is the association of the Danaids with Io (*Suppl.* 292-24), but the main link between the Danaids and the *polis* of Argos is created through their supplication. It is the whole *polis* that accepts them in Argos (*Suppl.* 957-65, esp. 963-5), and not just Pelasgus. The *polis* has thus linked itself inseparably to the Danaids and fights for them against this unwanted marriage.<sup>1001</sup>

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<sup>996</sup> Cf. Sandin (2003) ad loc. ἐκδοῦς (ἴκδοῦς, 341) in particular is literally marriage vocabulary.

<sup>997</sup> Indeed the *polis* is presented as almost functioning in a democratic way (See Garvie (1969) 198, Burian (1974) 8-12, cf. Rösler (2007) 194-5).

<sup>998</sup> See Introduction, pp. 20-1.

<sup>999</sup> Cf. Turner (2001) 45 speaking of the rejection of marriage as an 'opposition toward the contemporary Greek culture' and Murnaghan (2005) 194-5 for the link of *gamos* and *polis*.

<sup>1000</sup> See Introduction, pp. 20-1.

<sup>1001</sup> Cf. Garvie (1969) 181-2.

This link is reinforced with the prayer of the Suppliants for Argos as an expression of gratitude at *Suppl.* 625ff. while in fact they are destroying it. Certain that the gods' favour is ensured for the Argives because of their supportive attitude (*Suppl.* 654-5), they ask for the absolute prosperity of the *polis* in all fields (*Suppl.* 634-709 *passim*) as reward. Among their specific requests are absence of war (*Suppl.* 634-6) and fertility of the earth (*Suppl.* 663-5, 689-92, 1026-9).<sup>1002</sup> Yet, it is precisely in these two fields that the Danaids' distorted views and actions regarding marriage negatively affect the *polis*. I will begin with the latter.

In denying marriage, they reject procreation and continuity, which are the backbone of *oikos* and *polis*.<sup>1003</sup> Their perverted attitude affects the royal *oikos* of Argos<sup>1004</sup> and the *polis* as a whole. This supplication means dangers for the *polis*, which emerge in the text soon after the dialogue with Pelasgus begins (*Suppl.* 342-3, 357-9) and come close to realization at *Suppl.* 934-7.<sup>1005</sup> This probably prepares for the events in the *Aegyptiads*, namely the war (cf. *Suppl.* 635).<sup>1006</sup> All these make the allegation of the Danaids that

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<sup>1002</sup> As scholarship has shown there is irony in this passage, too. For this and the distortion in the Supplikes' views regarding marriage and fertility, see above pp. 239-42.

<sup>1003</sup> See Turner (2001) 32. See also here pp. 242-4.

<sup>1004</sup> Cf. Turner (2001) 46. The clue for this connection in the *Supplikes* is Pelasgus' consideration about how the acceptance of the supplication will not harm himself (*Suppl.* 411). The dangers emerging in this play with regard to the acceptance of this supplication of the Danaids do not only refer to the *polis*, but also to the *oikos* of Pelasgus (*Suppl.* 434-6). This is dramatically eased by the way the acceptance of the *Supplikes* by Pelasgus on behalf of the *polis* is illustrated, no matter whether Pelasgus was the real authority and the transfer to the assembly of the *polis* his tragic choice (Burian (1974) esp. 5-6); in any case the acceptance of the Danaids had firstly to be subjected to his judgement. So a tragic aspect is there in his dilemma, which was probably continued in the second play of the trilogy; this is underlined by the great pressure of the Danaids to accept their supplication (cf. Garvie (1969), 131-2, Burian (1974) esp. 13-4).

<sup>1005</sup> Cf. Turner (2001) 35-6, 46, Mitchell (2006) 209. Line *Suppl.* 401 is very telling: 'ἐπίλυδας τιμῶν ἀπόλεσας πόλιν' (cf. Mitchell (2006) 215). Indeed, this becomes a debate in the *Supplikes* (*Suppl.* 342ff.) and a motif (*Suppl.* 410).

<sup>1006</sup> Rösler (2007) esp. 182-4.

there is no danger of the wrath of Zeus for the *oikos* (namely the Argive *oikoi*) sound somewhat ironic (*Suppl.* 649-50). The death of the citizens and the political tribulations of the *polis*<sup>1007</sup> result directly from the rejection of marriage by the Danaids and the war it brings.<sup>1008</sup>

The pollution of the *polis* reaches its climax after the perversion *par excellence* of marriage of the trilogy,<sup>1009</sup> when all the Danaids apart from Hypermestra kill the Aegyptiads after their weddings.<sup>1010</sup> Their extreme attitude brings the λοιμὸς ἀνδρῶν, which threatens the *polis* with extinction (*Suppl.* 659-60, cf. 636) and the ἀνδροκμῆς / λογιὸς (*Suppl.* 679-80).<sup>1011</sup> Furthermore, the Aegyptiads were not only the husbands but relatives also.<sup>1012</sup> This reinforces the distortive aspect of the murder. Last, this is the blood of men shed by women (cf. *Suppl.* 476-7).<sup>1013</sup> The πορφυροειδῆς λίμνα, against which the Danaids prayed to Zeus, will be realized (λίμνα ... πορφυροειδεῖ, *Suppl.* 528-30).<sup>1014</sup>

The importance for the *polis* is confirmed by subsequent events, which reverse the disruptions set in motion by the Danaids and Aegyptiads alike. If the trilogy ended with Lynceus' acquisition of political power and the throne in Argos and the foundation of

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<sup>1007</sup> Turner (2001) 36-8.

<sup>1008</sup> This development may not be certain, but it is highly likely that later in the trilogy (whichever is the sequence of the plays) a war between the Aegyptiads and the Argives broke out, an event already foreshadowed in the play (most clearly at *Suppl.* 934-7, cf. 1043ff.).

<sup>1009</sup> Cf. Turner (2001) 38-9.

<sup>1010</sup> Cf. Mitchell (2006) 208 for instance.

<sup>1011</sup> Cf. Gantz (1978) 284-5.

<sup>1012</sup> It is especially the kin murder that is firmly rejected in the play (*Suppl.* 499; cf. Gantz (1978) 283). It is a most severe perversion of *philia* (cf. Gantz (1978) 283 with fn. 17).

<sup>1013</sup> Cf. Gantz (1978) 282.

<sup>1014</sup> Cf. Gantz (1978) 283.



the Argive dynasty through Hypermestra, the crucial role of marriage as an institution is effectively illustrated. The decision of Hypermestra to spare her husband would be triumphantly vindicated. The danger to the continuation of the body of citizens would be relieved.<sup>1015</sup> In view of all this, the confirmation of marriage as an institution<sup>1016</sup> effecting *telos* for humans, as proclaimed by Aphrodite, might have been ultimately actualized in the remarriage of Lynceus with Hypermestra and the foundation of the new royal Argive *oikos*.<sup>1017</sup> This would be reinforced still further by Aphrodite's speech in the finale.<sup>1018</sup>

### **c. Marriage as device for addressing other thematic concerns of the play-trilogy**

Although marriage is an issue of the play for its own sake, it is also a useful device for introducing other issues. To begin with, it provides an occasion for supplication and the protection of the weak to be explored. We saw above<sup>1019</sup> that supplication bound the *polis* with the political effects of the rejection-perversion of marriage on behalf of the Danaids. Although the Danaids claim that their supplication must be accepted because it is a sacred institution protected by Zeus and if it is not granted, the *polis* will pay for it, it is in fact they who 'undermine' the proper function of the *polis*.<sup>1020</sup> The Danaids are refugees, yet their approach to both marriage and supplication is distorted to such an extent that they are eventually transformed to aggressors from victims. Their

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<sup>1015</sup> Mitchell (2006) 211, 217-8.

<sup>1016</sup> Badnall (2008) 94-5.

<sup>1017</sup> Seaford (2012) 309.

<sup>1018</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 85-6, 96-7. A trial is, in all likelihood, the context of the conclusion (Garvie (1969) 205-11). For a discussion on the contingency of a divine reconciliation-remarriage of Zeus and Hera as the conclusion of the trilogy, see Belfiore (2000) 58-62.

<sup>1019</sup> See pp. 247-9.

<sup>1020</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 84.

supplication is the channel through which the ramifications of the perversion of marriage are transmitted to the *polis*. The weak may be in real need of protection, but their acceptance may be potentially dangerous for the man supplicated. The play then examines the dilemmas attached to supplication in a political context, which played an important role in Athenian civic ideology and self-presentation, and explores especially the tensions between ethics, religious scruple and pragmatism.

Aberrance in marriage is also used to explore the interconnection between victimhood and violence. The threat of the Aegyptiads is the tool of the Danaids to cause pity and sympathy for themselves, but their eventual aggressiveness reverses the relative situations of the Aegyptiads and the Danaids. Marriage is a very effective means of representing and exploring this shift through the emphasis on the distorted views of the Danaids on the issue, in that it is the main field where the two genders face each other directly.<sup>1021</sup> The Danaids accuse the Aegyptiads of hubris in seeking an endogamous, unwanted marriage, but in fact the Aegyptiads have some legal claim and the justice of the Danaids' claim does not seem to be so straightforward. In the place of the affectionate loyalty owed to their husbands,<sup>1022</sup> the Danaids have only hatred for the Aegyptiads, just as we saw above in the case of Clytemnestra.<sup>1023</sup> Their violent rejection of a marital partner reaches the point of murder in response to violent insistence on forced marriage from the Aegyptiads. Not only does this show how easily victim

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<sup>1021</sup> Cf. Badnall (2008) 80. This is illustrated by the presentation of the conflict as a war between genders (*Suppl.* 644-5, 913, 950-1, 1068-9).

<sup>1022</sup> Their behaviour is anyway far from the ideal marriage as outlined by Odysseus in *Od.* 6.180-5.

<sup>1023</sup> See above p. 219.

becomes criminal, but it also raises questions about the limits of violence in pursuing revenge and in securing one's desires,<sup>1024</sup> as we see so often in Euripides.

#### **4. Conclusion**

In Aeschylus marriage as a theme on its own becomes a major topic in the tragic discourse in the form of deviation. In that capacity it is also extensively employed to articulate other thematic concerns of the play. Its socio-political implications are particularly useful for expressing aspects of the crisis in the *oikos* and the *polis*.

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<sup>1024</sup> Turner (2001) esp. 35-8, Bachvarova (2009) 297.

## Chapter 5: Good *gamos*

### 1. Introduction

Marriage is at the heart of the writings of Jane Austen and her Victorian successors to a degree arguably unprecedented in European literature. The plot invariably leads (after obstacles) to happy marriage.<sup>1025</sup> Austen gives some information at the end of most of her novels to assure us that these were happy unions.<sup>1026</sup> *Mansfield Park*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Persuasion*, *Northanger Abbey*, *Sense and Sensibility* all end with some concluding paragraphs or chapters on the subsequent events. Charlotte Brontë also devotes a chapter to this in *Jane Eyre*.<sup>1027</sup> Anne Brontë's *Agnes Grey* and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* both conclude with brief information of this kind and assure the reader of the happiness of the marriages. Yet, in literature, the reader is never allowed to view these couples in their marriage in real narrative time; he never gets to see them during

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<sup>1025</sup> 'Reader, I married him', Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, Chapter 38.

<sup>1026</sup> Dickens also ends on glimpses of marital happiness, with some snapshots of the moments after the wedding, in his *Little Dorrit*. *Bleak House* ends with information and a scene of happy everyday marital life.

With reference to the narrative of *good gamos* in narrative time there is an instance where we do enjoy a couple in literature. This is the Harmons in *Our Mutual Friend*. They get married at the beginning of the fourth volume of the novel and enjoy full marital happiness well before the novel ends. But this case is peculiar for two very specific reasons. The first is that this novel very much sets out to undermine the Victorian notions of high society and its importance as well as the idea expressed by its members 'that in these matters [*i.e. marriage*] there should be an equality of station and fortune, and that a man accustomed to Society should look out for a woman accustomed to Society' (Book 4, Chapter 17) and that otherwise happiness is impossible. 'The Voice of Society' is categorically refuted at the end. The importance of money in marriage is a second belief that has to be undermined, because this was Bella Wilfer's firm belief in the beginning and one which threatened her marriage. So it was essential that happiness in a – seemingly – poor couple should be firmly demonstrated.

This brings me to the second peculiarity of the situation. Despite the fact that this marriage may be the most important thread of the plot, it is just one strand of the plot; it is only one of three plot threads at least, so this certainly helps not to end in a tedious happy marriage narrative. There is a third peculiarity that the author experiments with many genres simultaneously in this novel and this peculiar character may speak for the exceptional character of marriage in *Our Mutual Friend*. Dickens' many simultaneously working threads may allow for this, but otherwise this would be impossible to work.

<sup>1027</sup> In this light, the last chapter of her *Villette* is uncommonly disturbing in its ambiguity.

their happy life together, nor have a concrete image of what exactly makes a happy marriage. We admire, we anticipate a good marriage, we remember it, we regret its loss in retrospect but we can never experience it; it is never actually there in literature. Good *gamos* is then a story of absence. This inverse relationship between marital happiness and plot appeal traces its beginnings already from Greek archaic and classical literature. In this chapter I will discuss good marriage in epic and in tragedy.

## 2. Epic

### a. The *Iliad*

The *Iliad* gives us the first example of an ideal marriage. It is associated here not with absence but with rupture, and, as we shall see, it is precisely the fact that it is ruptured that allows it to be exhibited as ideal. But what is a good marriage for the *Iliad*? Achilles describes a good relationship with one's woman as one of affection and regard (*Il.* 9.341-3):<sup>1028</sup>

ἐπεὶ ὅς τις ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἐχέφρων  
τὴν αὐτοῦ φιλέει καὶ κήδετα, ὡς καὶ ἐγὼ τὴν  
ἐκ θυμοῦ φίλεον δουρικτητὴν περ ἐοῦσαν.

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<sup>1028</sup> Cf. Arthur (1981) 25.

The ideal marriage in the *Iliad* is of course that of Hector and Andromache.<sup>1029</sup> Again mutual affection is at its core.<sup>1030</sup> The eagerness of both to meet is expressed both by words and by actions. Hector cannot wait (ἀπέσσυτο, *Il.* 6.390). The distance he traversed covers four lines (*Il.* 6.390-3) and underlines this desire. Andromache, too, rushes<sup>1031</sup> to meet her husband. During this meeting, Hector ὀάριζε γυναικί (*Il.* 6.516).<sup>1032</sup>

It is very significant in this context that the couple meet physically over their son. As well as allowing a tender family moment this also takes us to the heart of *gamos* in ancient Greek culture which is neither solely nor primarily sexual in the hedonistic sense but inextricably connected with the continuation of the *oikos* through reproduction. The union is not just defined in a vacuum but is highlighted (as often in Homer) by contrast, in this case with the hedonistic relationship of Paris and Helen, which is unsurprisingly one without issue in the Homeric text.<sup>1033</sup> In this context the presence of Astyanax further validates the union of Hector and Andromache.<sup>1034</sup> The tenderness in the description of the baby, παῖδ' [α] ... ἀταλάφρονα, νήπιον (*Il.* 6.400) illustrates the fragility of this *oikos* and increases the pathos. But beyond this the space devoted to Astyanax projects the beauty of this child, ἀλίγκιον ἀστέρι καλῶ (*Il.* 6.401). This is the

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<sup>1029</sup> This ideal status is reflected in the veil which was the wedding gift of Aphrodite (*Il.* 22.470). See on this, Segal (1971) 49-50 with Metz (1990) 395, Richardson (1993) ad *Il.* 22.468-72; cf. Pantelia (1993) 495-6.

<sup>1030</sup> Cf. Arthur (1981) 26-7.

<sup>1031</sup> Schadewaldt (1997) 131-2.

<sup>1032</sup> Schadewaldt (1997) 136.

<sup>1033</sup> For the contrast between the two relationships, see Griffin (1977) 43, Arthur (1981) 29, Metz (1990) 389-90, Schadewaldt (1997) 129-30, von Nortwick (2001) 231. I return to this issue in more detail below, pp. 268-9.

<sup>1034</sup> Griffin (1977) 43.

symbol of their union (cf. ὄν τέκομεν σύ τ' ἐγὼ τε δυσάμμοροι, *Il.* 24.727).<sup>1035</sup> Even in the bleak circumstances of their encounter, it is this very baby that resolves the loaded atmosphere of their pessimistic thoughts and even their 'disagreement',<sup>1036</sup> and unites them in making them laugh together in the well-known episode with Hector's helmet (*Il.* 6.466-81): ἐκ δὲ γέλασσε πατὴρ τε φίλος καὶ πότνια μήτηρ (*Il.* 6.471).<sup>1037</sup>

The strength of their relationship is expressed in the way they single out their partner as the most important living person for them.<sup>1038</sup> For Hector, Andromache comes above anybody else, even his parents:

ἀλλ' οὐ μοι Τρώων τόσσον μέλει ἄλγος ὀπίσσω,  
οὔτ' αὐτῆς Ἑκάβης οὔτε Πριάμοιο ἄνακτος  
οὔτε κασιγνήτων, οἳ κεν πολέες τε καὶ ἐσθλοὶ  
ἐν κονίησι πέσοιεν ὑπ' ἀνδράσι δυσμενέεσσιν,  
ὅσσον σεῦ ... (*Il.* 6.450-4)

But he, too, is everything to Andromache both sentimentally and practically, as she fervently tells him:

Ἕκτορ, ἀτὰρ σύ μοι ἐσσι πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ  
ἠδὲ κασίγνητος, σὺ δέ μοι θαλερὸς παρακοίτης (*Il.* 6.429-  
30).

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<sup>1035</sup> Cf. Metz (1990) 391-2.

<sup>1036</sup> Cf. Arthur (1981) 37, Metz (1990) 391-2, Graziosi and Haubold (2003) 71. It seems that basically it is their worlds that are in conflict, not their personalities (Schadewaldt (1997) 135).

<sup>1037</sup> Schadewaldt (1997) 137, Metz (1990) 391-2.

<sup>1038</sup> Taplin (1995) 122, cf. Griffin (1977) 31-2.

Hector is so valued for Andromache (*Il.* 6.429-30, 450-4)<sup>1039</sup> that her life is meaningless without him (cf. *Il.* 6.410-11; cf. 22.481), miserable (*Il.* 6.411-13) and painful (*Il.* 24.742)<sup>1040</sup>. This is confirmed by her reaction upon Hector's death (*Il.* 22.447-76ff.). Particularly her wish for her own death (*Il.* 6.410-11) not only shows the emptiness of a life without Hector but also implies a desire for reunion with him if Hector gets killed.<sup>1041</sup> She knows very well that she will be left alone, a widow with an orphan baby and virtually no protector (*Il.* 6.432-3). Thus, not all of her devotion to her husband is romantic love. Part of it is need of a practical nature. The effect however is not to weaken but to strengthen their bond. Need and strong affection co-exist. Their relationship is made firmer and more complete through the unusual degree of dependency. This is an uncommonly close relationship because Andromache has no living relatives (*Il.* 6.413-28, esp. 413: οὐδέ μοι ἔστι πατήρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ).

Accordingly, Hector's affection for his wife coexists with other more self-regarding emotions. This is inherent in his sense of pride. He insists on the way Andromache's dishonour hurts his honour, too (*Il.* 6.460-1). The content of his prayer for his son shows the same concern for his own honour and standing (*Il.* 6.476-80). This however is inseparable from his status within the heroic world. Still, despite his brusqueness it is for Andromache that he cares most and not for the Trojans (*Il.* 6.540 and 454).

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<sup>1039</sup> Tsagalis (2004) 120-1.

<sup>1040</sup> Cf. Tsagalis (2004) 135-6.

<sup>1041</sup> Cf. Tsagalis (2004) 120.



The depth of their mutual regard is illustrated through the expressions of fear and anxiety and pain for each other.<sup>1042</sup> The contingency of Andromache's loss of freedom (nb. the expression ἐλεύθερον ἤμαρ ἀπούρας, *Il.* 6.455) and slavery (*Il.* 6.454-8) and disgrace (*Il.* 6.459-63) which would follow his death distresses him. He may state that his duty for war comes first, but still it is primarily *for her* that he is pained, cares and even fights (*Il.* 6.450-4). Andromache's anxiety for Hector (*Il.* 6.407-13) is illustrated through her tears (*Il.* 6.373, 405, 496) and grief (cf. *Il.* 6.486). It reaches such a degree that it is expressed in the language of madness (μαινομένη ἔικυῖα, *Il.* 6.389; μαινάδι ἴση, *Il.* 22.460)<sup>1043</sup> at the point of his death.<sup>1044</sup>

Most movingly both of them cry and turn back to the point of their meeting, when they part. This emphasizes their desire to be together – and their pain at not being able to. Andromache obeys her husband and returns home ἐντροπαλιζομένη, θαλερόν κατὰ δάκρυ χέουσα (*Il.* 6.496). Hector's behaviour is almost the same (*Il.* 6.515-6): he, on his part, is just about στρέψεσθ' ἐκ χώρης ὅθι ἦ ὀάριζε γυναικί (*Il.* 6.516), his ἄλοχος ... φίλη (*Il.* 6.495), when Paris interrupts him (*Il.* 6.514-5).

Integral to our understanding of their relationship is the fact that both fulfil complementary social ideals as man and wife. Hector is presented as a great warrior (κορυθαίολος ... Ἴκτωρ, *Il.* 6.440, cf. 468-70, 472, 494-5, 22.471)<sup>1045</sup> and perfectly

<sup>1042</sup> Schadewaldt (1997) 128, 130, 136, 141-2.

<sup>1043</sup> Richardson (1993) ad 22.460; cf. de Jong (2012) ad 460.

<sup>1044</sup> Schadewaldt (1997) 134.

<sup>1045</sup> Notably, we are recurrently reminded in the ὁμιλία that Hector is a warrior (cf. Metz (1990) 392). His armour is always in the focus (*Il.* 6.398, 467-70, 472-3, 494, 498; cf. 403): this aspect of Hector is always in the background of his affection for his wife and son. This is underscored by his response to Andromache's pleas and pain (*Il.* 6.441, 22.105): he is not bent, albeit moved (cf. Arthur (1981) 29).

fulfils the requirement of manly behaviour (cf. *Il.* 6.352-3)<sup>1046</sup> as expected (*Il.* 6.81-2). Andromache also meets the cultural expectations for the proper wife. She acknowledges the full *kyriotes* of Hector. Her task is the *oikos* (*Il.* 6.490-2), as Hector's was the war (*Il.* 6.492-3). The poem also presents her weaving at home, as women of the archaic period used to do (*Il.* 22.440-1). She also tends to her husband; she orders a hot bath for him upon his return from the battle (*Il.* 22.443-5).<sup>1047</sup> She exemplifies the cultural model of the virtuous wife, particularly in her obedience and her devotion to Hector.<sup>1048</sup> Crucially, Andromache is presented as a precious wife due to her noble origin and dowry:<sup>1049</sup> she is the daughter of Eëtion (*Il.* 6.395-8), Hector's ἄλοχος πολύδωρος (*Il.* 6.394; cf. *Il.* 22.472).

An important clue to the *homilia* and the relationship of Hector and Andromache in general is provided by the *Odyssey*, which taught us how essential like-mindedness is for a married couple. The *Iliad* allows us a glimpse of what *homophrosyne* might mean in practice. *Homophrosyne* here is not about identical views, but a general intellectual and temperamental compatibility. As we saw,<sup>1050</sup> their partner matters to them more than anybody else.<sup>1051</sup> Andromache's concern about her widowhood, the fate of their child<sup>1052</sup> and their *oikos* and its survival (*Il.* 6.408-13, 429ff., 22.484-6ff., 24.735-7) is

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<sup>1046</sup> Cf. Arthur (1981) 29.

<sup>1047</sup> Cf. Segal (1971) 55-6.

<sup>1048</sup> Metz (1990) 390 with Segal (1971) 40 and Griffin (1977) 43.

<sup>1049</sup> Segal (1971) 40 with Griffin (1977) 43, and, more recently, Tsagalis (2004) 123-4 and Muich (2010) 98, also pp. 70-1, 88, 119; cf. Metz (1990) 390.

<sup>1050</sup> See above, pp. 255-6.

<sup>1051</sup> Schadewaldt (1997) 136.

<sup>1052</sup> Lohmann (1988) 73, Tsagalis (2004) 134.

shared by Hector (*Il.* 6.450-65, esp. 454-9, 465<sup>1053</sup> with 476-81).<sup>1054</sup> Hector admits this clearly: *καὶ ἐμοὶ τάδε πάντα μέλει, γόνοι* (*Il.* 6.441). The mutual understanding between the pair is evident at *Il.* 6.484. Hector truly understands his wife (*Il.* 6.441-2, 460-5), even if his duties prevent him from doing what she wants.<sup>1055</sup> These concerns and their common ill fate (*ἰὴ ἄρα γιγνόμεθ' αἴσῃ*, *Il.* 22.477; cf. also *δυσάμμοροι Il.* 24.727)<sup>1056</sup> underline their 'oneness in disaster'<sup>1057</sup> in a most eloquent way.<sup>1058</sup>

He understands her and she him as much as she can as a woman. She knows that Hector cannot be held from his martial duties and tries to keep him at least as close to her as possible; she never attempts to prevent him from the war.<sup>1059</sup> The military advice she gives (which so unsettled the Hellenistic scholars) is just an expression of her wifely concern.<sup>1060</sup> Andromache's and Hector's common wish and need to turn back to the place of their meeting after their parting shows a kindred manner of behaviour (*Il.* 6.495-6, 515-6) and underlines their affinity.

The construction of the pair of Hector and Andromache is also effected through the contrast with Paris-Helen and Achilles-Briseis, the couples which give us hints for the

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<sup>1053</sup> Cf. Griffin (1977) 52. This confirms that he does not care about Andromache just because of his manly pride, but also for her own sake.

<sup>1054</sup> Cf. Schadewaldt (1997) 136.

<sup>1055</sup> Stoevesandt (2008) ad 441-6.

<sup>1056</sup> Mackie (1996) 101.

<sup>1057</sup> The description is taken from Tsagalis (2004) 130.

<sup>1058</sup> Seaford (1994) 334ff.; cf. Tsagalis (2004) 130 with fn. 353.

<sup>1059</sup> Andromache does not ask Hector to abstain from war: she tells him *μίμν' ἐπὶ πύργῳ* (*Il.* 6.431) but she immediately explains that what she asks for is right by the wall (*Il.* 6.433-9). She understands that he has to fight. What she attempts is to offer some military advice and find a middle way in which he would not be so far away from her, but remain by the wall. The advice itself has been judged in many ways, but it seems that it actually resembles Polydamas' advice (*Il.* 18.284-5). (See Tsagalis (2004) 126-8, esp. 128, Muich (2010) 58-9; cf. Metz (1990) 393.) Notably it was due to his rejection of one piece of Polydamas' advice that Hector ultimately died (Tsagalis (2004) 128).

<sup>1060</sup> Segal (1971) 55-6.

definition of a good marriage (*Il.* 6.350ff.; cf. 441, 22.105 and 9.341-343).<sup>1061</sup> There is a stark juxtaposition of a life devoted to pleasure with a life devoted to duty civic and marital. The juxtaposition is particularly ironic because it is the one that will destroy the other. Helen and Paris fail to operate as a normal couple, even less as a beloved couple. Firstly there is nothing of the love that there should be in such a couple. In contrast to Andromache, as we saw above, Helen does not have any kind of fear of what will become of Paris on the battlefield. Indeed her attitude is problematic when she encourages Paris to return to the battle.<sup>1062</sup>

And this brings us to their second problem: their relationship is dysfunctional and perverted.<sup>1063</sup> Their gender roles have been lost in it. It is not only that Helen fails to behave as a wife. It is Paris who fails to behave as man and husband in his inability to resist the power she has over him.<sup>1064</sup> And he fails to gain Helen's good opinion and respect (*Il.* 6.350-3).<sup>1065</sup>

As we observed at the beginning, marriage functions largely in contexts of rupture. All these factors outlined above which work out the illustration of the good *gamos* of Hector and Andromache are all the more effective for the fact that this perfect relationship is a doomed marriage. Death, absence and separation are always almost a tangible presence

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<sup>1061</sup> Metz (1990) 389. Cf. Schadewaldt (1997) 129-30, Stoevesandt (2008) ad 313-24; Griffin (1977) 43-44.

<sup>1062</sup> Graziosi and Haubold (2010) ad 337-9.

<sup>1063</sup> Metz (1990) 390.

<sup>1064</sup> Graziosi and Haubold (2010) ad 338.

<sup>1065</sup> Cf. Stoevesandt (2008) ad 344-58 and ad 350-3, and especially Graziosi and Haubold (2010) ad 343-58 on Helen's character and relationship to Paris.

in its background.<sup>1066</sup> The threat of a permanent separation and the absence of a partner create extreme circumstances for those involved. It is precisely these special situations which allow for the sentiments of affection to be shown at their starkest. Not only do they create room for their explicit expression, but they also generate the emotions of pain, grief, anguish and real concern which perfectly articulate genuine love. These feelings would otherwise have been suppressed due to personal or social reasons. The danger of separation and death magnifies and aggrandizes these sentiments and reactions. The fact of imminent separation also gives force to the description of the more mundane aspects of the relationship. The description of the value of Andromache as wife is far more effective in that the context of death gives a special colour to the account of her dowry; instead of a mere exhibition, it creates deep sorrow for herself and Hector's family in general who will undeservedly suffer and were worthy only of the best.

The *homilia* is loaded with the foreshadowing of death.<sup>1067</sup> The certainty of Hector's fate and Andromache's widowhood come again and again throughout the episode both in Andromache's laments (even while he is alive: for instance, *Il.* 6.497-502) and in words (*Il.* 6.407-13, 431-2, 447-9; cf. 454ff.). The separation is even contained in the brevity of the *homilia*. It is crowned into a busy visit to Troy and it gains its force from the fact that they will now separate forever. This brings the pathos to its maximum. Homer makes the most of the factor of 'absence'.

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<sup>1066</sup> Segal (1971) 39, Schadewaldt (1997) 128, 130, 141-2, Graziosi and Haubold (2003) 71; cf. Taplin (1995) 120.

<sup>1067</sup> Schadewaldt (1997) 128, 130, 136, 141-2.

Marriage is given such a focus not for itself but because it serves as a microcosm of Trojan domesticity, of all the victims of war, and of the normality that war will destroy. This encounter of Hector and Andromache is placed in the context of the domesticity<sup>1068</sup> of book 6, where the wives and the children of Troy are recurrently underlined as the innocent and weak victims of the war. The marriage of Hector and Andromache is a casualty of war and it is emblematic of all good marriages and all decent people who will die as a result because war is what pulls them apart. This is illustrated by the dislocation of Andromache presupposed by the place of the meeting itself: Hector did not find her at home (*Il.* 6.371-3), as was expected.<sup>1069</sup> This single phrase expresses in effect the microcosm and the consequences of war on humans. War sends people out, it breaks up families, it distorts normal roles, and the *Iliad* is always conscious of this, in book 6 in particular. For all its thematic importance it should be stressed that this passage is remarkable for its brevity. The narrative lingers only briefly on the good *gamos*. This brief vignette must suffice for the whole of their relationship and all the other doomed marriages of Troy.

#### **b. The *Odyssey***

The marriage in the *Iliad* derives its power and value from the imminence of separation and death, while in the *Odyssey* it is absence that drives the depiction.

In the larger context of Greek literature, the *Odyssey* is unusual in the extensive use it makes of *gamos* and its detailed description of what constitutes good *gamos*.

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<sup>1068</sup> Taplin (1995) 117

<sup>1069</sup> Cf. Morrison (1992) 67

As we noted above, the ideal marriage is essentially one of *homophrosyne*, harmony in mentality (*Od.* 6.180-5).<sup>1070</sup> Nevertheless, the marriage of Odysseus and Penelope, which arguably fulfils these requirements, is at the same time a story of absence. Odysseus and Penelope may constantly remember and desire each other but they are always separated. Thus, even in this marriage, the most likeminded of all Greek marriages<sup>1071</sup> and the one most subtly described, they do not actually come together, except very briefly in the penultimate book and then no more until the end. This paradox underlines the underlines the aversion of creative literature to happy marriage.

*Gamos* in the *Odyssey* is prominent for two very important reasons. Firstly, it is an indispensable part of Odysseus' *nostos*, which is arguably the principal plot thread in the *Odyssey*.<sup>1072</sup> Odysseus ardently desires return to Ithaca but also and emphatically to Penelope. Penelope herself as target is attached to his *nostos*, as we learn from the very beginning:

νόστου κεχρημένον ἠδὲ γυναικός (*Od.*  
1.13).<sup>1073</sup>

‘filled with longing for his return and for his  
wife’

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<sup>1070</sup> Cf. Bolmarcich (2001) 205, 207, and also Garvie (1994) ad 6.180-5, ad 181-2. He also refers to the Iliadic version of *homophrosyne*: ‘The Iliadic equivalent is ἕνα φρεσὶ θυμὸν ἔχοντες (*Il.* 13.487, 15.710) or ἴσον θυμὸν ἔχοντες (*Il.* 13.704, 17.720).’

<sup>1071</sup> Cf. Bolmarcich (2001) 206.

<sup>1072</sup> Cf. Taaffe (1990-1) 133.

<sup>1073</sup> Cf. de Jong (1993) 301.

*Nostos* and marriage are inseparable throughout the poem. Even when Odysseus is crying upon hearing the song of Demodocus on Troy, his tears are likened to the lament of a wife over her husband, killed at war (*Od.* 8.521-34). When Odysseus has to extricate himself from the demands of Calypso, he downplays the charms of his wife in response to Calypso's jealousy (*Od.* 5.215-8). But the fact that he must dismiss Penelope if anything underlines her importance for his return.

But marriage is not just an emotional phenomenon; it is a social one as well. Its social significance, its connotations and impact, is the second aspect of its dominant role in the *Odyssey*. The success of Odysseus' return is inextricably linked with the stability of Odysseus' *oikos* and his power in Ithaca. This means that this successful *nostos* and reestablishment of his rule in Ithaca is absolutely dependent on Penelope's management of his *oikos*, the preservation of Odysseus' memory and her quality and fidelity as a wife.<sup>1074</sup> The misconduct of wives has already been linked with the failure of the man's *nostos* in the case of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra (*Od.* 11.397-461).<sup>1075</sup> In Odysseus' encounter with Agamemnon the latter expresses caution about Penelope, to be withdrawn immediately; but the negative potential remains, as shown in *Od.* 13.335-6. Penelope's contribution to Odysseus' *nostos* is another aspect of her fidelity and her status as the perfect wife.

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<sup>1074</sup> Marquardt (1985) 47, Tsagalis (2003) 50-2; cf. Mueller (2007) 337, also Emlyn-Jones (1984) 12. On a different view of Penelope's memory see Mueller (2007) esp. 340-51. Mueller basically argues that Penelope retains Odysseus' memory, and her fidelity is mental and not physical.

<sup>1075</sup> Cf. Taaffe (1990-1) 135, Tsagalis (2003) 49-54. For the background of evil women in the *Odyssey*, who underscore Penelope's wifely virtues by contrast see Zeitlin (1995b) 139. For the contrast between Penelope, and Helen and Clytemnestra, see Marquardt (1985) 47. For the effect of comparison between Helen and Penelope see Fredrickmeyer (1997) 489 and Morrison (2005) 80. On Penelope's self-comparison with Helen, see Marquardt (1985) 44-5, Morgan (1991) 1-3 and for a view on their difference regarding the preservation of the memory of their husband, see Mueller (2007) 351-7.



And yet, separation is at the heart of this ideal marriage. As ever, we cannot experience it in real time.<sup>1076</sup> The audience is reminded again and again of the fact that they are apart. Odysseus is constantly nostalgic not only for his island but for Penelope as well, already from the introduction (*Od.* 1.13).<sup>1077</sup> He cries in his desperation to return to his wife: *ἰμειρόμενός περ ιδέσθαι / σὴν ἄλοχον, τῆς αἰὲν ἐέλδεται ἥματα πάντα* (*Od.* 5.209-10).

Absence is contained in Penelope's intense reactions, her grief, tears and laments, which fill the whole *Odyssey*.<sup>1078</sup> She cries when she takes hold of Odysseus' bow (*Od.* 21.53-7). Her heart bleeds when she hears of the lack of hope for Odysseus's return (*Od.* 17.150; cf. 19.209-12).<sup>1079</sup> Her constant distress manifests itself in loss of sleep – it is significant that Odysseus' return and presence in his *oikos* mark her first good night's sleep (*Od.* 23.15-9), despite the fact that at this stage she does not know that he has come back. Her distress at his absence, the desire for a reunion with Odysseus and the fear for the possible loss of her husband are always there. Even when the husband and the wife meet again after all these years, their reunion is remarkably brief. When they reunite, emotion is most movingly illustrated at its starkest,<sup>1080</sup>

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<sup>1076</sup> An analogue in modern novels is Austen's *Persuasion*. The whole romance is based on absence, distance and separation. It is only some words, or gestures, but never a revealing discussion between the pair, that sustains their story, until their very final reunion. Their *homophrosyne*, if I may use this word, is depicted through the illustration of their character in their relationships with other people.

<sup>1077</sup> See above, pp. 263-4.

<sup>1078</sup> *Od.* 11.177-9, 191-3, 13.336-8, 14.128-9, 16.37-9, 449-51, 17.100-6, 19.509-29, 589-97, 602-4, 20.58-9, 21.56-7, 356-8; cf. 19.204-14, 249-52. cf. for instance Mueller (2007) 348.

<sup>1079</sup> Cf. de Jong (1994) 35-6, Emlyn-Jones (1984) 8.

<sup>1080</sup> Cf. Emlyn-Jones (1984) 7.

Ἦς φάτο, τῆς δ' αὐτοῦ λύτο γούνατα καὶ φίλον ἦτορ,  
σῆματ' ἀναγνούση τά οἱ ἔμπεδα πέφραδ' Ὀδυσσεύς·  
δακρύσασα δ' ἔπειτ' ἰθὺς δράμεν, ἀμφὶ δὲ χεῖρας  
δειρῆ βάλλ' Ὀδυσῆϊ, κάρη δ' ἔκυσ' ἠδὲ προσηύδα (*Od.* 23.205-  
8),

but briefly, and tellingly, not through extensive description of emotion but in a manner later to influence Sappho as a means of externalizing internal emotion, through physical symptoms (fr. 31V). The narrative after the reunion is full of Odysseus' accounts of his adventures past and future. There is just one line describing the consummation (*Od.* 23.300) and then after the recognition scene, when they go to bed, we just learn about the long story Odysseus told Penelope and which announces a final definite separation. The narrative itself is no longer concerned with their marriage. The recognition takes place in book 23 and we do not hear anything about this uniquely good *gamos* anywhere in book 24.<sup>1081</sup>

Moreover, it is only through absence that Penelope's personality can be adequately demonstrated and her unique similarity to Odysseus proved.<sup>1082</sup> This is particularly true with reference to *dolos* and cunning.<sup>1083</sup> These are the principal qualities of Odysseus and are also the qualities for which Penelope is anxious to be judged (*Od.* 19.325-6).<sup>1084</sup>

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<sup>1081</sup> This silence underscores the connection between marriage and *nostos*. Penelope has done her work. She has helped Odysseus to come back to his *oikos*; but there is more work to be done by Odysseus where Penelope is of no use precisely because the *oikos* is her sphere and his next task concerns the community.

<sup>1082</sup> Emllyn-Jones (1984) 14.

<sup>1083</sup> See Marquardt (1985) 32-48, esp. 41-2; cf. Levine (1983) 176.

<sup>1084</sup> Cf. Russo (1992) ad 325-6.

Her outstanding *μητις*,<sup>1085</sup> of which she is well aware (*Od.* 19.325-6), matches that of Odysseus (*Od.* 23.124-6).<sup>1086</sup> *Dolos*, sense and excellent perception are constantly underlined as Penelope's most central features, along with her fidelity.<sup>1087</sup>

Crucially their affinity in *dolos* is what generates the restoration of their *oikos*, better than if they had planned it together.<sup>1088</sup> This is achieved through the trick<sup>1089</sup> of the bow, which is so successful a *dolos* that it gets the approval of Odysseus (*Od.* 19.584-7).<sup>1090</sup> Its effect is to show Penelope's similarity to Odysseus: as he did with the physical dangers and difficulties *en route*, Penelope dealt with the suitors by *dolos*.<sup>1091</sup> *Dolos* also effects their reunion in the form of the trick of the bed.<sup>1092</sup>

Ultimately *dolos* and absence are intertwined: absence exhibits the *dolos* of Penelope and how suitable she is for Odysseus; *dolos* puts an end to the separation of Penelope and Odysseus. These two related features generate a singular *homophrosyne* between husband and wife. Penelope is unique as woman and surpasses all women (*Od.* 18.248-9), as Odysseus surpasses all men (cf. *Od.* 19.267); each of them is capable of trapping

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<sup>1085</sup> de Jong (1994) 46-7; cf. Russo (1992) ad 325-6.

<sup>1086</sup> Doherty (1991) 34.

<sup>1087</sup> Steiner (2010) 25-8; see particularly Marquardt (1985) on Penelope's *dolos*.

<sup>1088</sup> Tsagalis (2003) 52-3.

<sup>1089</sup> Penelope plays for time, knowing that nobody but Odysseus can string it (cf. in contrast de Jong (2001) ad 21.11-41, who however agrees that only a man equal to Odysseus could string it). The portrayal of the suitors in the *Odyssey* does not suggest any equation between Odysseus and themselves (for instance, *Od.* 4.333-4). Therefore they do not stand much chance of success. The narrative suggests that Penelope is insincere in her speech to the suitors (on which, see de Jong (2001) ad 18.250-83) and another trick could fit this picture very well.

<sup>1090</sup> See Marquardt (1985) 32-48, esp. 41-2; cf. Levine (1983) 176.

<sup>1091</sup> Tsagalis (2003) 52.

<sup>1092</sup> See p. 268.

the other through *dolos*.<sup>1093</sup> Penelope's unique *dolos* is eloquently illustrated through the emphasis on her weaving and the metaphorical interpretation of Penelope's activity as weaver of *doloi*.<sup>1094</sup> Very uncommonly for male-female relationships, they are equal and their relationship is a true *philia*.<sup>1095</sup>

Their like-mindedness is not confined to the possession of similar qualities. There is also an unusual degree of mutual understanding between these two people of the same superior *metis*.<sup>1096</sup> Their intercommunication is unique: they can see through each other's thoughts,<sup>1097</sup> as when Odysseus reads Penelope's demand for gifts from the suitors:<sup>1098</sup>

᾽Ως φάτο, γήθησεν δὲ πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,  
οὔνεκα τῶν μὲν δῶρα παρέλκετο, θέλγε δὲ θυμὸν  
μειλιχίους ἐπέεσσι, νόος δέ οἱ ἄλλα μενοίνα (*Od.* 18.281-  
3).

This assured him of her fidelity,<sup>1099</sup> later confirmed by the trick of the bed.<sup>1100</sup> Her behaviour in this scene has caused a variety of interpretations.<sup>1101</sup> It is Odysseus' own

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<sup>1093</sup> Penelope believed Odysseus' fake narrative in book 19, and he failed to understand Penelope's *dolos* with the bed in book 23. For a reading which undermines Penelope's knowledge and authority see Murnaghan (1987).

<sup>1094</sup> Roller and Roller (1994) esp. 11-14, 19; see most recently Marrucci (2008).

<sup>1095</sup> Bolmarcich (2001) 212-3. The language of *philia* is used also in the case of Hector and Andromache (cf. p. 257) and Alcestis and Admetus (see below p. 278). Yet it does not amount to the absolute equality observed in the present case of Odysseus and Penelope.

<sup>1096</sup> Marquardt (1985) 48, Mueller (2007) 342; cf. de Jong (1994) 43-4.

<sup>1097</sup> de Jong (1994) 40-1, 43-4, esp. 47-8.

<sup>1098</sup> Marquardt (1985) 38; cf. Emlyn-Jones (1984) 10-1, de Jong (1994) 41, who believes that Odysseus is wrong in what he thinks and therefore the mutual understanding, at this point at least, does not exist. See fn. 1100 on this page for interpretations on this passage.

<sup>1099</sup> Cf. Levine (1983) 176.

<sup>1100</sup> Zeitlin (1995b) 123-46; cf. Mueller (2007) 348. Penelope has passed the *πεῖρα* (cf. *Od.* 13.333-6).

love of *dolos* and his ability to recognize it in his wife that makes it almost certain that Penelope did not seriously think of getting married again, but that this scene is just one of her tricks.<sup>1102</sup> Odysseus reads her thoughts and perceives her reservations once more in *Od.* 23.115-6.<sup>1103</sup>

But there are other aspects of their *homophrosyne* the illustration of which is facilitated by their separation and the long absence of ten years. Among their other similarities Odysseus and Penelope share a unique self-restraint, an ἀπηνέα θυμὸν (*Od.* 23.97).<sup>1104</sup> Absence and separation had created a most demanding, a stern test of their character. It is separation that makes these narratives possible by creating such extreme situations. Thus, their behaviour is singular, when they restrain themselves from the spontaneity of a joyous reaction for the reunion with their spouse, but both of them wait and act with remarkable consideration. Odysseus does not rush to Penelope upon his return but first waits to solve the problem of the suitors,<sup>1105</sup> as advised by Athena (*Od.* 13.333-8).<sup>1106</sup> His self-restraint<sup>1107</sup> is emphasized in the text (*Od.* 16.191).<sup>1108</sup> He hides his emotions very well.<sup>1109</sup> He even resists his pity when he sees Penelope crying (*Od.* 19.209-12).<sup>1110</sup>

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<sup>1101</sup> See, for instance, Büchner (1940) 147-8, Hölscher (1994), Levine (1983) 177, Emlyn-Jones (1984) 11, Marquardt (1985) esp. 41-2, Murnaghan (1987) 109-110, Byre (1988), esp. 172-3, de Jong (1994) 40-2, Zeitlin (1995b) 140-1, de Jong (2001) ad 18.250-83, Mueller (2007) 340-2. I think that there is not enough evidence in the text to prove that Penelope is seriously thinking of a second marriage (cf. in contrast de Jong (1994) 41-2).

<sup>1102</sup> Cf. de Jong (1994) 40-1 in contrast.

<sup>1103</sup> de Jong (1994) 43-4.

<sup>1104</sup> Zeitlin (1995b) 126-7, 151, fn. 57, Morrison (2005) 76-9, de Jong (1994) 44, 47-8; cf. Emlyn-Jones (1984) 1-2, 12-4.

<sup>1105</sup> Emlyn-Jones (1984) 1-2.

<sup>1106</sup> See more on this scene and the implications it has for Penelope's loyalty, de Jong (1993) 299-300.

<sup>1107</sup> de Jong (1994) 30-8, esp. 34-7 and 47-8.

<sup>1108</sup> de Jong (1994) 37; cf. Taaffe (1990-1) 136.

<sup>1109</sup> Morrison (2005) 76-7.

<sup>1110</sup> de Jong (1994) 35-6, Morrison (2005) 76; cf. Emlyn-Jones (1984) 1-2.

Penelope is as *echephron* as her husband.<sup>1111</sup> She does not rush to Odysseus (*Od.* 23.59-68). She is sceptical and controls herself before accepting Odysseus back (*Od.* 23.97-110, 166-70; cf. 23.181, see also 23.72, 172).<sup>1112</sup> She is moved by the news, she even drops a tear (*Od.* 23.32-8 and 59-68) and yet she restrains herself (cf. *Od.* 23.72):

Ὦς ἔφαθ', ἥ δ' ἐχάρη καὶ ἀπὸ λέκτροιο θοροῦσα  
γρηῖ περιπλέχθη, βλεφάρων δ' ἀπὸ δάκρυον ἦκε (*Od.* 23.32-3),  
  
ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔσθ' ὄδε μῦθος ἐτήτυμος, ὡς ἀγορεύεις,  
ἀλλά τις ἀθανάτων κτεῖνε μνηστῆρας ἀγαυούς,  
ὔβριν ἀγασσάμενος θυμαλγέα καὶ κακὰ ἔργα (*Od.* 23.62-64).<sup>1113</sup>

Their uniqueness is observed by others (Athena and Telemachus), sometimes with wonder, sometimes with irritation:

ἀσπασίως γάρ κ' ἄλλος ἀνὴρ ἀλαλήμενος ἐλθὼν  
ἴετ' ἐνὶ μεγάροις ιδέειν παῖδάς τ' ἄλοχόν τε·  
σοὶ δ' οὐ πω φίλον ἐστὶ δαήμεναι οὐδὲ πυθέσθαι,  
πρὶν γ' ἔτι σῆς ἀλόχου πειρήσειαι ... (*Od.* 13.333-6)  
  
[Athena to Odysseus].

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<sup>1111</sup> de Jong (1994) 48, Zeitlin (1995b) 126-7, 151, fn.57; cf. Emllyn-Jones (1984) 1-2.

<sup>1112</sup> Morrison (2005) 77-9; cf. Taaffe (1990-1) 137, de Jong (1994) 43-4, Emllyn-Jones (1984) 5, 12-4. Her self-restraint is forcefully underlined through the reference to her attribute as wife: ἀντίον ἧς ἀλόχου (*Od.* 23.165) (de Jong (1993) 300).

<sup>1113</sup> Zeitlin (1995b) 126-7.

Penelope's hardness (*Od.* 23.97, 23.172) and self-restraint amazes even Odysseus, as he subsequently tells her (*Od.* 23.166-70). Likewise in book 23, her reserved attitude to the news of Odysseus' return seems provokingly strange to Telemachus, who does not hesitate to criticize her, despite his father's presence:

μη̄τερ ἐμή, δύσμητερ, ἀπηνέα θυμὸν ἔχουσα,  
τίφθ' οὕτω πατρὸς νοσοφίζεαι, οὐδὲ παρ' αὐτὸν  
ἔζομένη μύθοισιν ἀνείρεαι οὐδὲ μεταλλάς;  
οὐ μὲν κ' ἄλλη γ' ὧδε γυνὴ τετληότι θυμῷ  
ἀνδρὸς ἀφεσταίῃ, ὅς οἱ κακὰ πολλὰ μογήσας  
ἔλθοι ἐεικοστῷ ἔτει ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν·  
σοὶ δ' αἰεὶ κραδίη στερεωτέρη ἐστὶ λίθοιο (*Od.* 23.97-  
103).

But Odysseus knows her better than that. Penelope speaks for herself and refers to her reservations but does not reveal the further reason behind the doubts that prevented her from recognizing Odysseus, namely his miserable clothing (*Od.* 23.105-11; cf. 95). Nevertheless Odysseus understands the effect of the clothes on her, though he too is irritated when she persists. He intercedes and speaks of it (*Od.* 23.113-22). As before, his understanding is accompanied by a smile that marks their unique communication (*Od.* 23.111).<sup>1114</sup> Their *homophrosyne* is a fact acknowledged by both.<sup>1115</sup>

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<sup>1114</sup> I may add here that it is a sign of their exclusive mutual understanding and 'personal relationship'; it is an indication of the fact that they had their own codes, their *σήματα*, which they shared with nobody else (*Od.* 23.109-110).

Finally, there is one other marriage in the *Odyssey* which might qualify as happy, Helen's and Menelaus', depicted in *Od.* 4.136-54, 183-5, 304-5, esp. 561-9. This relationship, which underscores by contrast the unique suffering of Odysseus and Penelope, is nonetheless a complicated one, in that it is burdened with the memories of Helen's infidelity and the *homophrosyne* is undercut by their contrasting accounts of Helen's behaviour in Troy (*Od.* 4.258-64 (Helen's account); *Od.* 4.274-89 (Menelaus' account)).

I mentioned earlier that absence tests the emotions and the marriage relationship as well as the personality of the wife. It allows for the quality of the marriage to be revealed in full. The interactive web *dolos-gamos-nostos* is at the heart of the *Odyssey*.<sup>1116</sup> If the marriage is bad, as with Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, the *nostos* is not completed. If the marriage is good, it is.

This poem gives a sustained exploration of successful marriage to a degree we shall not meet again in Greek and rarely in European literature. But the presentation works by separating the married couple. They are together as characters only when they are physically apart. This construction of togetherness through separation in part reflects the difficulty of describing happiness. From a literary perspective Tolstoy's statement in *Anna Karenina* ('Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way') could also be said of marriage. But this is not just about the (literary) dangers of happiness. There is a last subsidiary dimension in the use of the element of absence.

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<sup>1115</sup> Foley (1978) 17.

<sup>1116</sup> Cf. Tsagalis (2003) 50-4.



If this was to be a narrative of good *gamos* in real time a crucial and very efficient narrative thread would have been lost. No narrative thread, with reference to domestic themes, can be compared to the target of the reunion of a most successfully married couple. This is well-known from the 19<sup>th</sup>-century novel. What sustains the narrative there is that we will see the couples together at last and it depends on the artistry of the novelist how s/he brings this about most effectively.

### **3. Tragedy**

In tragedy as well as in epic, presence through absence is the norm for the construction of good *gamos*. Of course, the many dysfunctional and perverted marriages of tragedy offer by implication hints at a definition of what makes a good marriage. The technique of presentation through negation is a familiar one, found already in the contrasts between bad wives and good wives in epic, with the former employed to emphasize the excellence of the latter. Good marriage is thus narrated through its negation. There is another, more effective way of defining good *gamos*. If the good marriage cannot be described in narrative time, it can nonetheless be articulated. Impressions of the defining features of marriage in its ideal form are communicated to the audience in an indirect way. The line-drawing of good *gamos* is again effected through its absence. In Greek tragedy the form that the absence of marriage takes varies from separation (Helen-Menelaus) to rupture (Alcestis-Admetus) and to memory (Andromache-Hector). This recalls the regular practice of the opera of the Romantic and Contemporary period,

especially Verdi and Puccini, to interrupt and dissolve all ideal relationships that it features.<sup>1117</sup> Pain and grief articulate love.

Absence is used to explore good marriage in the *Helen*, as in the *Odyssey*. Given its poetic relationship with the *Odyssey*, it is no coincidence that the *Helen* repeats the Odyssean pattern.<sup>1118</sup> So, absence and separation put the loyalty of the wife to the test; in this the wife succeeds. As there the test allows and in a way effects their reunion and future happy life, this time with no future concerns and separations.<sup>1119</sup>

Despite this crucial similarity, there are two points in which the *Helen* differs greatly from its epic source.<sup>1120</sup> Unlike the *Odyssey*, where friction (*Od.* 23.181-230, esp. 181-3, 209) is depicted as part of the relationship in a gesture toward naturalism, the *Helen* takes a more romantic turn<sup>1121</sup> and lacks frisson and friction between the pair. On the other hand, the undeniably good *gamos* has a severe deficiency. *Homophrosyne*, which is of utmost importance in the *Odyssey*, has a remarkably limited role here. Menelaus cannot reach Helen's intellectual capacity and *dolos*.<sup>1122</sup> Helen is the calm voice of reason.<sup>1123</sup> Although they speak of their one fate (*Hel.* 1034, 1038) and they work together on their rescue from Egypt (*Hel.* 1034, and generally 1032ff.), it is Helen's

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<sup>1117</sup> This statement of course excludes the genre of *opera buffa*, namely Rossini's and Donizetti's comic works, which is a part of the opera of the Romantic period.

<sup>1118</sup> Eisner (1980), Arnott (1990) 13, Holmberg (1995), Torrance (2009) 1; cf. Jordan (2006) 15-6, Foley (2001) 306; for a comparison between Helen and Penelope, see Holmberg (1995) 28-36; esp. pp. 28-33, Jordan (2006) 15-6, Swift (2009b) 420-1 with fn. 14.

<sup>1119</sup> For Helen's chastity see Holmberg (1995) 25-6, and more recently, Torrance (2009) 1-5.

<sup>1120</sup> For the *Helen*'s departure from the *Odyssey*, see Foley (2001) 327-8.

<sup>1121</sup> Segal (1986) 222-4.

<sup>1122</sup> Holmberg (1995) 35-6; cf. Segal (1986) 234-5, Foley (2001) 317-8, 330, Jordan (2006) 15, Torrance (2009) 1 with references.

<sup>1123</sup> Segal (1986) 234.

cleverness that saves them.<sup>1124</sup> Her intelligence is recurrent in the remaining lines of the play.<sup>1125</sup> In contrast to this, Menelaus' poor intellect is emphasized in their attempt to find a plan for their rescue (*Hel.* 1032-4),<sup>1126</sup> and it is further highlighted through his comic representation. This deficiency of Menelaus is a problem in a culture where the man is expected to excel over his woman and the opposite is at least potentially disconcerting.

Despite these differences, absence and reunion are as important here as they were in the epic prototype for the narrative of good *gamos* to work. If in the *Odyssey* absence confirmed what was certain for Penelope, her fidelity, in the *Helen* it exhibits precisely the loyalty that was not a given and categorically proves false her bad reputation. In the mythic tradition, the behaviour which caused Helen's absence and separation from Menelaus, namely the adultery, was the reason for their problems, and perverseness in their marriage. In this play absence proves the opposite about Helen. It explores a scenario (drawn from a revisionist strand of the mythographical tradition)<sup>1127</sup> where Helen was 'actually' a virtuous wife. Furthermore her conduct during this absence showed up her excellence as wife and her qualities, and principally her cleverness.

So, her separation from Menelaus becomes a medium through which her quality as wife is demonstrated, because it gives the opportunity to express her love for Menelaus in all the tears and the pain she expresses over their separation (*Hel.* 123-33, 340-5, cf. 936-

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<sup>1124</sup> Holmberg (1995) 35-7, Foley (2001) 317; cf. Segal (1986) 234-6. For a more positive treatment of Menelaus, see Torrance (2009) 5-7. For Helen's subjectivity, see Holmberg (1995) 21-40.

<sup>1125</sup> Burian (2007) ad 1049-89.

<sup>1126</sup> Cf. Allan (2008) ad 1032-4 and Burian (2007) ad 1035-48.

<sup>1127</sup> See Holmberg (1995) 22-6.

7).<sup>1128</sup> Helen grieves for her bad reputation and the evil that this has brought (*Hel.* 56, 164-251), and defends her chastity (*Hel.* 48, 56-67) even when all hope for Menelaus is lost (*Hel.* 277-9, 293-303).<sup>1129</sup>

Precisely because the absence was entangled with Helen's assumed badness as wife, which is here refuted,<sup>1130</sup> the reunion is used to portray a remarkable intimacy, nowhere to be met in the rest of good couples in tragedy. Their love is finally spelled out (*Hel.* 625-9, 636-7) in their joy at their reunion (*Hel.* 623, 632, 634-5, 645, 654-5). The affection in this relationship is explicit (*Hel.* 625-6, cf. 595).<sup>1131</sup> The mutuality of emotions in this marriage is particularly emphasized in the repetition of their satisfaction of embracing one another (*Hel.* 628-30, 634-7, 650-2, 657-8).<sup>1132</sup> From that aspect it is a representation of the *olbos* of Helen's wedding (*Hel.* 722-5, cf. 719-20) which appears more or less secure for the future and blessed by the gods (*Hel.* 642-3, 1045, cf. 698-9).<sup>1133</sup>

Where *Helen* and the *Odyssey* explore *gamos* through absence, the *Alcestis* does so through rupture. In the *Alcestis* we are allowed to appreciate the qualities of the marriage as it breaks up. The notion of a stable and well-grounded marriage permeates the *Alcestis*.<sup>1134</sup> The benefit of matrimony is by turns stated and negated (*Alc.* 238-43,

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<sup>1128</sup> Burian (2007) ad 936; cf. Segal (1986) 237, Holmberg (1995) 34.

<sup>1129</sup> I think there is here an intertextual play with Penelope's statement at the end of the *Odyssey*, in that if Helen knew that she would return she would not behave badly. Actually here she does not know such a thing and she behaves perfectly even when all hope for return to Sparta is gone.

<sup>1130</sup> Cf. Holmberg (1995) 21, 34.

<sup>1131</sup> Allan (2008) ad 625-6.

<sup>1132</sup> Burian (2007) ad 625-9.

<sup>1133</sup> Cf. Segal (1986) 261. For the ironies in the ending, which reinforce the ambiguities of reality, see Segal (1986) 261-3.

<sup>1134</sup> Cf. Kokkini (2010) 162.

627, 882, 887-8).<sup>1135</sup> Yet, its denial by the chorus (*Alc.* 238-41) does not represent an overarching comment on *gamos* but is to be read in context of Alcestis' imminent death. The acknowledgement of Admetus' immense grief is precisely what allows the narrative to articulate efficiently the emotional aspect<sup>1136</sup> and value of marriage and overlook the material ones, the fulfilment for the individual, and the acquisition of children.<sup>1137</sup> Ultimately, of course, its role in securing happiness is confirmed and re-established in the 'happy' reunion at the end of the play.

This is, in some respects at least,<sup>1138</sup> a warm and stable relationship. Alcestis is arguably a worthy wife, as we will see, but there are ambiguities about Admetus' conduct and his decision to accept Alcestis' sacrifice.<sup>1139</sup> Admetus is an ordinary man;<sup>1140</sup> he is neither ideal, nor heroic, unlike Heracles, who enters to rescue the doomed wife.<sup>1141</sup> He himself acknowledges his limitations. He regrets his decision and is acutely aware of what public opinion will say of him in a culture where public opinion matters (*Alc.* 954-60, esp. 955-7). He feels pain, shame and regret.<sup>1142</sup> Indeed, in the narrative of this marriage, Admetus' self-prioritization against his wife's life is a problem, though perhaps less so for a Greek audience.<sup>1143</sup> Still, his choice is completely opposite to that

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<sup>1135</sup> Cf. Parker (2007) ad 627.

<sup>1136</sup> Cf. Kokkini (2010) 163.

<sup>1137</sup> Cf. Parker (2007) ad 238-9.

<sup>1138</sup> On the tensions in the relationship of Admetus and Alcestis, see Foley (2001) 303-31; cf. Dellner (2000-1) 8.

<sup>1139</sup> Segal (1993) 71.

<sup>1140</sup> Kokkini (2010) 127-40.

<sup>1141</sup> For discussions on Admetus' lack of heroism see Luschnig (1992b) and Rabinowitz (1993) 79; cf. Dyson (1988) 13. On Admetus' unmanly behaviour, see Segal (1993) 51-72; cf. Dyson (1988) 18-23, Kokkini (2010) 127-140; cf. also for a different, but not opposite, approach Iakov (2010) 18-9. For a sympathetic view of Admetus, see Burnett (1971) 45-6, Lloyd (1985) 129, Segal (1993), Siropoulos (2000) 181-90, Buxton (1985) 85-8, Kokkini (2010) 123-80.

<sup>1142</sup> Cf. Kokkini (2010) 135-7.

<sup>1143</sup> Sicking (1998) 57, Padilla (2000) 192-3; cf. Luschnig (1990) 16-17.

of Alcestis.<sup>1144</sup> It also marks his failure to fulfil his own very criterion of love in that self-priority is the reason he rejects his parents. Given his promises to Alcestis, his acceptance of a guest while mourning and, crucially, his submission to Heracles at the end are also dubious actions.<sup>1145</sup> This is therefore not an idealized *gamos*, but a realistic one, in the sense that it admits of flawed individuals, decisions and conduct.<sup>1146</sup> But the marriage of Admetus is a strong one, based on mutual affection; their love is both real and great. Crucially, this is a relationship of genuine *philia* (*Alc.* 201, 231-2).<sup>1147</sup>

In prioritizing her husband through her death (*Alc.* 180-1, 282-4) Alcestis fulfils Admetus' request for love proved in action (*Alc.* 339).<sup>1148</sup> Most importantly, death gives extreme expression to her devotion to her husband in that death is the alternative to a life without him: οὐκ ἠθέλησα ζῆν ἀποσπασθεῖσα σοῦ / σὺν παισὶν ὀρφανοῖσιν, οὐδ' ἐφεισάμην / ἥβης, ἔχουσ' ἐν οἷς ἑτερπύμην ἐγὼ (*Alc.* 287-9).<sup>1149</sup> Her choice gains by the ramifications of her decision for her children, who will be left motherless; this is what

<sup>1144</sup> Cf. Kokkini (2010) 131-2.

<sup>1145</sup> Segal (1993) 145-7; cf. Foley (2001) 330. Admetus' character has been a controversial issue (cf. Segal (1992a) 147). For negative readings of Admetus' behaviour, see Goldfarb (1992) 121-6, Rabinowitz (1993) 90, Rabinowitz (1999) 101; cf. in contrast Halleran (1988) 125-9; for positive readings, see Buxton (1985) 87-8, and most recently, Kokkini (2010) 176-8. I think Buxton's approach is better founded: Admetus' acceptance is against his will, dictated by *philia* and *charis* and, last but not least, in accordance with the wishes and expectations of the audience (Buxton (1985) 87-8).

<sup>1146</sup> Cf. Kokkini (2010) 177-8.

<sup>1147</sup> Scodel (1979), Schein (1988) 194-8, Stanton (1990) 44, Goldfarb (1992) 113-5; cf. Burnett (1965) 244-6, Burnett (1971) 35, Rabinowitz (1999) 100.

<sup>1148</sup> Cf. Rabinowitz (1999) 100, Bacalexi (2007) 11-2, 14.

<sup>1149</sup> Cf. Burnett (1965) 244-5, Luschnig (1990) 24-5. Indeed, she liked her life with Admetus and she implies that it would have been a happy one. Cf. also:

τοιαύτας εἶη μοι κῦρσαι  
 συνδυάδος φιλίας ἀλόχου· τὸ γὰρ  
 ἐν βιότῳ σπάνιον μέρος· ἧ γὰρ ἂν  
 ἔμοιγ' ἄλυπος δι' αἰ-  
 ὄνος ἂν ξυνεῖη (*Alc.* 472-6).

worries her, and yet she resolves to die.<sup>1150</sup> This was then by no means a straightforward choice.<sup>1151</sup> Yet, her love and devotion is tinged with elements of realism.<sup>1152</sup> Her request to Admetus for reciprocity for her sacrifice (*Alc.* 299-325 *passim*, 371-3) indicates that there are complications to her motivation.<sup>1153</sup> This may be justified by her desire to protect her children (*Alc.* 302-19). Nevertheless, the way she stresses the value of her sacrifice (*Alc.* 282-4, 290-302, 323-4) and asks for acknowledgement and reciprocity (*Alc.* 371-3, 299-302) is suggestive of a human aspect in Alcestis.<sup>1154</sup> This likens her behaviour to that of her husband and accounts for a reading of this marriage as a realistic rather than an ideal *gamos*, but still one with palpable strengths.<sup>1155</sup>

For all its deficiency, Admetus' love is real and is articulated after and through Alcestis' death. The loss of his wife makes him confront for the first time the consequences of his actions and the very real problem of life without Alcestis, as he realizes the ramifications of her sacrifice.<sup>1156</sup> His feelings at her loss are intense (*Alc.* 432-3, for instance) and his love is accompanied by respect and admiration.<sup>1157</sup> His fidelity is shown in his promise not to remarry, to suffer and to refuse every pleasure in life (*Alc.* 328-68).<sup>1158</sup> It even reaches an extent of passionate devotion in his choice of perfect

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<sup>1150</sup> Dyson (1988) 15.

<sup>1151</sup> Cf. Dyson (1988) 15.

<sup>1152</sup> Padilla (2000) 193-4.

<sup>1153</sup> Padilla (2000) 189-95, esp. 193-4, Dellner (2000-1) esp. 7-16. Sicking (1998) 54-7 argues for a further complication in Alcestis' conduct and regards Alcestis' sacrifice as a choice compelled by duty and social norms; this has been refuted by Dellner (2000-1) 6-7; cf. Kokkini (2010) 138-9, who also argues that death for Admetus was not a social duty for Alcestis.

<sup>1154</sup> Cf. Padilla (2000) 193-4.

<sup>1155</sup> Cf. Padilla (2000) 193-4.

<sup>1156</sup> Dale (1954) p. xxv, Burnett (1965) 250, Lloyd (1985) 126, Bacalexi (2007) 21-2, Iakov (2010) 18-9.

<sup>1157</sup> Lloyd (1985) 126, Dellner (2000-1) 7, Kokkini (2010) 127, 169-70; cf. Burnett (1965) 250. In Alcestis' requests to Admetus, there can be traced the expectation that (her) absence would prove his loyalty and love to her (cf. Dellner (2000-1) 18).

<sup>1158</sup> Cf. Dyson (1988) 20.

chastity (*Alc.* 1056-61).<sup>1159</sup> He transforms his life into a living death because he cannot bear a life without his wife. His love then is expressed through his grief<sup>1160</sup> and pain.<sup>1161</sup> In any other context it would be improper and incompatible with the cultural expectations for a man to express himself like this.<sup>1162</sup> Even here it has its disconcerting aspects. There is an element of unsettling hyperbole in the love expressed by Admetus, perhaps reflecting in part his awkward sense of his own inadequacy (*Alc.* 950-61). But mixed emotions in the contemplation of marital bereavement are as old as the *Iliad*, as we saw earlier. That does not necessarily undermine them.

Yet, there is a remarkable lack of overt affection. Reticence and absence of direct expression of emotion and love is a crucial element of the narrative of good *gamos* in the *Alcestis*.<sup>1163</sup> This deficiency would not be disconcerting in any other Greek play, since tragedy does not usually feature such things,<sup>1164</sup> but it is in the *Alcestis*,<sup>1165</sup> a play which focuses with unusual precision on a single marriage. The undeniably genuine evidence of affection is expressed without the language of romantic love.<sup>1166</sup> Indeed, there is no sentimental intimate scene between Admetus and Alcestis for their feelings to be expressed or their relationship to be shown in real time. The strength of Alcestis'

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<sup>1159</sup> Dyson (1988) 20.

<sup>1160</sup> *Alc.* 42, 96-7, 144-5, 196-7, 199-203, 221, 224-7, 230-1, 234-7, 238-43.

<sup>1161</sup> Cf. Dyson (1988) 21 and Kokkini (2010) 169-70. His overstated devotion to Alcestis (*Alc.* 897-9; cf. Dyson (1988) 20-1) reaches an extent which is rather alarming: he wants to take a statue of Alcestis into his bed (Parker (2007) ad 348-54).

<sup>1162</sup> On the issue of male lamentation and Admetus' behaviour, see Segal (1992a) 147-53, and recently Kokkini (2010) 170-5. This concept seems to survive even in Modern Greek Literature. To quote N. Kazantzakis and *Zorba the Greek*, 'Now that you are no longer before me and cannot see my face, and now that I run no risk of appearing soft or ridiculous, I can tell you I love you very deeply.' (trans. C. Wildman, London, 1952); *Τώρα που δεν είσαι μπροστά μου και δεν βλέπεις τι έκφραση παίρνει το πρόσωπό μου και δεν κινδυνεύω να φανώ τρυφερός και γελοίος, σου λέω πως σ' αγαπώ πολύ.*

<sup>1163</sup> Cf. Kokkini (2010) 178 for a different approach of the narrative of good *gamos* in the *Alcestis*.

<sup>1164</sup> Cf. Parker (2007) ad 280-392.

<sup>1165</sup> Cf. in contrast Parker (2007) ad 280-392.

<sup>1166</sup> Kokkini (2010) 164-6.



affection for Admetus and her *philia* (*Alc.* 279) is expressed through her choice<sup>1167</sup> rather than through an account of her emotions. She only once implicitly expresses her love for and devotion to Admetus (*Alc.* 282-9), in her public, final encounter with him;<sup>1168</sup> otherwise she rather seems cold and distant.<sup>1169</sup> It is however important to note that there was culturally no discourse of marital love as we would understand it; in a society where marriages were arranged and based on exchange, there was little room for the romantic discourse of the marital relationship as the basis of all happiness.<sup>1170</sup> Yet affection there was, as inscriptions show.<sup>1171</sup> In the absence of romantic discourse, rupture (as in epitaphs) becomes both an occasion and an effective way to illustrate the quality of a marriage rather than language, which is just words and not deeds.

As noted in chapter 2, in the *Alcestis* – as also in the *Helen* – separation and rupture are ultimately reversed through a process which is not merely reunion but is actually remarriage.<sup>1172</sup> The remarriage underlines happiness by revisiting the primal moment. In both plays the closure bears strong elements of wedding ritual.<sup>1173</sup> In the *Alcestis*, the wedding ritual has a clearer presence; it is in fact a wedding.<sup>1174</sup> The play ends at the point of the wedding to mark a happy conclusion for Alcestis and Admetus and restore their marriage. The epithalamial moment is significant because of the element of

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<sup>1167</sup> Burnett (1965) 245, Rabinowitz (1999) 100.

<sup>1168</sup> Parker (2007) ad 280-392.

<sup>1169</sup> In my view, there are even some traces of coldness in *Alcestis* (*Alc.* 380ff.). These can be traced in her speech earlier. Admetus is passionately in despair whereas she coldly declares οὐδέν ἐσθ' ὁ καθ'αυτὸν (*Alc.* 381), nor does she worry about separating from her husband. Perhaps the reason for her coldness is that she is dying and nothing is of any consequence to her.

<sup>1170</sup> Kokkini (2010) 163-6.

<sup>1171</sup> Kaibel (1878) 44.2-3, Lattimore (1942) 275, Pomeroy (1975) 92, Pomeroy (1997) 18, 131; cf. Tsagalis (2008) 187-92.

<sup>1172</sup> See ch. 2, pp. 104-109; cf. Foley (2001) 310-2.

<sup>1173</sup> See ch. 2, pp. 106-9.

<sup>1174</sup> Halleran (1988) 124-8.

idealized *makarismos* prominent in wedding songs and because it inaugurates a new life for the newly-weds and is considered as the peak-time of happiness.<sup>1175</sup> Indeed, the return to the wedding is a constant feature in the articulation of good *gamos* in tragedy.<sup>1176</sup> There is no reference to the events after the ‘wedding’;<sup>1177</sup> marital happiness is illustrated through the moment of the wedding. It is then no accident that we are always just taken to the bedroom door but not into the relationship.

This is also a motif in the conclusion of the *Helen* but less marked. Here again, unsurprisingly for what we have seen about the narrative of good *gamos*, it is at this very point of (re)inception that the play stops. Menelaus and Helen are not to be seen enjoying their settled marital happiness. Despite the illustration of their *olbos* in their reunion<sup>1178</sup> and the confirmation of its durability both during this life and after death, good *gamos* is not to be seen in real narrative time once more.

The primal moment plays another role in the *Alcestis*. We have seen its role as restoration, but it also plays an important role in shaping the contrast of a sad present with a better future. People remember not the relationship but the wedding. In this context, happiness in marriage is articulated through revisiting the joy of the wedding. It is very significant that in recreating happiness all these narratives recreate not

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<sup>1175</sup> Parker (2007) ad 915-7. See also Introduction, pp. 19, 24.

<sup>1176</sup> Cf. *Eur.Suppl.* 990-1008, and also *P.V.* 555-60, *Hel.* 722-5, *Her.* 10-11 (Collard (1975) ad 990-1033 with Dale (1954) ad 914).

<sup>1177</sup> This, in conjunction with *Alcestis*’ silence, has caused ironical interpretations regarding the reactions of *Alcestis*, as well as the extent to which this is a closed happy ending (Burnett (1965) 251-2, Lloyd (1985) 127-9, Segal (1992a) 156-7, Segal (1992b) 20-1, 24-6, Iakov (2010) 24-7, for instance) or an open ironic one (Goldfarb (1992) 125-6, Mignanego (2003) 48-51, 68-9, Kurczyk (2007), Bacalexi (2007) 27-8, for instance; see also O’Higgins (1993) 92-5, on the irony of *Alcestis*’ mute status in the ending); cf. the review by Goldfarb (1992) 109-11. Although Segal regards this as a happy ending he also acknowledges the ironies and considers this as an open ending and one of a solemn character (Segal (1992b) 21-2, 24-6).

<sup>1178</sup> See above p. 276.

domesticity but the moment of union. *Gamos* is not perceived as a relationship, as a process, but seen filtered through one moment in time. Despite its different context, this is a motif in the recognition scene of the *Helen*, too, where it reinforces the happiness of the reunion in the middle of the play (*Hel.* 639-41, 722-5; cf. 568).<sup>1179</sup>

This revisiting of the wedding specifically recurs elsewhere. In the *Trojan Women*, remembrance of the wedding is employed to enhance the pathos of loss, as the frame of Andromache's narrative. Andromache recalls her and Hector's wedding night (*Tro.* 675-6), before she returns to the pain that this is lost: καὶ νῦν ὄλωλας μὲν σύ, ναυσθλοῦμαι δ' ἐγὼ (*Tro.* 677). In the *Andromache*, too, albeit to a lesser degree, the memories of her wedding to Hector and her past *olbos* in a marriage alliance of wealth, offspring and renown (*Andr.* 2-5) accentuate the misfortunes that succeeded it in contrast.<sup>1180</sup> However, its presence in the *Trojan Women*, as part of Andromache's lament, is more substantial. Here good *gamos* takes the form of memory; it is described both in order to grieve for what is lost and from an ardent desire to keep it in memory. The pain due to the new, reduced circumstances in which Andromache finds herself is accentuated by her pain for the loss of her marriage: ἐγὼ δὲ τοξεύσασα τῆς εὐδοξίας / λαχοῦσα πλεῖστον τῆς τύχης ἡμάρτανον (*Tro.* 643-4).

The death of her son signals the loss of the final remnant of her marriage to Hector (as well as of Troy's last hope). Now there is nothing remaining from her union. This

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<sup>1179</sup> Cf. Segal (1986) 248, 254.

<sup>1180</sup> χρῆ δ' οὔποτ' εἰπεῖν οὐδέν' ὄλβιον βροτῶν,  
πρὶν ἂν θανόντος τὴν τελευταίαν ἴδης  
ὅπως περάσας ἡμέραν ἤξει κάτω (*Andr.* 100-2).

definite loss of everything in her marriage, her dead husband, and the imminent death of her son leaves absolutely nothing of this perfect marriage and makes her think of the vanity of her marriage, as if all these never happened (*Tro.* 745-8), despite the ideal form that it reached. In its loss we see all the greatness of this marriage.

It is precisely this loss that is the springboard for her narrative of their ideal *gamos* (*Tro.* 643-56, with 673-6), emphasizing both Hector's generosity to Andromache (*Tro.* 673-4) and her modesty (*Tro.* 645-6), submissiveness (*Tro.* 655-6) and respect for him (*Tro.* 654).<sup>1181</sup> It also allows an opportunity to display her loyalty. Andromache is determined to keep Hector in her memory (*Tro.* 661-3, 665-72), and cares for what Hector will think for her even now that he is dead (*Tro.* 661-3), as Hector in the *Iliad* had anticipated with pain her reduction to slavery. This not only speaks for the strength of the bond she had with Hector, but has implications for the admirable greatness of the character of Andromache,<sup>1182</sup> the Trojan wife *par excellence* in this play.

Finally, in the *Andromache*, another play very much engaged with marriage,<sup>1183</sup> ideal marriage is an issue of the past and is narrated in its absence. In this play, Andromache's perfect marriage (*Andr.* 1-5) is used to underscore the marital aberrance of Hermione.<sup>1184</sup> Hector's death shows up Andromache's devotion and excellence as wife in full.<sup>1185</sup> Her laments for the husband and the marriage lost (*Andr.* 91-9, 107, 111-2) articulate the strength of her bond with Hector. More importantly her lament both

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<sup>1181</sup> See Lee (1976) ad 654.

<sup>1182</sup> Cf. Lee (1976) ad 665-8, and ad 673-4.

<sup>1183</sup> Cf. Kyriakou (1997) 8.

<sup>1184</sup> On Hermione as bad wife, see Phillippo (1995) 360-3.

<sup>1185</sup> Cf. Phillippo (1995) 371.

indicates how her marriage was a benchmark for her; and it also suggests that it was the only crucial thing in her past, since in one of the many Iliadic features of the play she makes no reference to her dead parents and focuses only on Hector's death.<sup>1186</sup> The protection she enjoyed from Hector is expressed through its deprivation now that she is threatened by Hermione (*Andr.* 523-5). Her love and respect is also depicted through the destruction of her life (*Andr.* 454-7) because of his death. It is in its absence that the good marriage is described in the fullest, albeit concise, manner.

And yet this narrative of good *gamos* includes a glimpse of realism in that, in contrast to most other narratives of the kind, it recognizes the potential of friction in the relationship. The text admits that marriage is not a uniform good. Any real marriage then as now would inevitably have points of stress and discord. Very few of our texts acknowledge this in dealing with good *gamos*; from this point of view this text, together with the recognition scene of the *Odyssey* 23, is singular. This text, unlike the *Odyssey*, proceeds to the recommended way of dealing with this friction. There is a great emphasis on the role of the woman and the importance of her virtue in such cases: *χρή γὰρ γυναῖκα, κἄν κακῶ πόσει δοθῆ, / στέργειν ἄμιλλάν τ' οὐκ ἔχειν φρονήματος* (*Andr.* 213-4; cf. 220-1). The focus on female virtue is also the meaning of Andromache's hyperbolic statement that she took care of the many *nothoi* of Hector (*Andr.* 222-5); this comment does not mean to undermine the quality of their *gamos* but exhibit the extent to which female virtue can reach.

#### 4. Conclusion

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<sup>1186</sup> Kyriakou (1997) 9-10.

In sum, in the genres we have studied there is little interest in depicting good *gamos* in real time, in contrast to bad *gamos*. This is also true of the author who began our work, Pindar, who focuses exclusively on the inception of marriage. In this they show an affinity with the wedding song itself, which metaphorically and sometimes literally stops at the bedroom door. In the cases discussed in this section, absence, loss and rupture are the only way such marriages can effectively work. Over and over, they can be idealized by the poet; interrupted as in the *Odyssey* they can be anticipated, hoped, worked or prayed for. Absence makes the narrative of good marriage both convincing and successful. As with ‘the curious incident of the dog in the night-time’<sup>1187</sup>, it is what does not happen that speaks to us.

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<sup>1187</sup> “Is there any point to which you would wish to draw my attention?”

‘To the curious incident of the dog in the night-time.’

‘The dog did nothing in the night-time.’

‘That was the curious incident,’ remarked Sherlock Holmes.’ (Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *Silver Blaze*)

## Conclusion

In this dissertation I have explored the ways in which marriage in a variety of forms is employed in Greek poetry from Homer until Menander. It should, I hope, have emerged that the centrality of marriage to the life of individual, family and community gives it enormous potential both as theme and as image. Marriage itself, because of the various tensions potentially in operation both between families and in the individual transition from one family to another can be the thematic focus, especially in tragedy. More often it becomes a means of exploring other issues. Some of the attributes which made it very convenient for the poets in this framework were its ritual dimension, its roles as public celebration and as transition. From this study it has also emerged how the treatment of *gamos* in poetry responds to and is necessarily skewed according to literary needs. This is evident in its clearest form in my last chapter. Good marriages are never covered and figure only *in absentia* because they are bad literature.

Although I am not writing a history of *gamos* and I am interested in it entirely as a literary phenomenon, nonetheless the foregrounding of marriage not merely in relation to females but also in relation to males suggests that culturally it is much more important in the life of the male than discussion of many ancient sources would suggest. In this respect the verse texts form a useful complement and corrective to the more ideologically driven statements in oratory and historiography. The diverse roles played by *gamos* as a literary phenomenon disclose its cultural significance, not only for the individuals but for their families and the whole civic community.

This work has shown that the study of marriage reveals important aspects of the Greek mentality and that it deserves further research. Naturally, as noted in the Introduction, it was impossible to cover here all instances of marriage in Greek poetry. Issues such as marital aberrance in Euripides or perversion in the form of incest in Sophocles merit consideration. We also lack a systematic study on marriage in Hellenistic poetry, which would certainly be revealing. This thesis is not the last word but I hope the first step toward a more extensive discussion of marriage in Greek literature.



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