

Athena: Goddess of War

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One cannot “discuss Donne or Byron, the Elizabethan stage or the modernist poem, the films of F. W. Murnau or *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, without talking about gender” (Showalter, 1989, p. 1); neither can one discuss antiquity. The growth in publications, including the recently established web-site *Diotima*,¹ is evidence of the prominence of the approach in a classical context. Classicists interested in issues of gender, particularly in gender questions concerning females, are confronted with a vast array of fascinating female characters. In Homer’s *Odyssey* alone a reader is introduced to a world inhabited with a medley of mysterious females, ranging from the faithful Penelope to the sensual Helen, from the innocent Nausicaa to the gruesome female monsters such as the Scylla and Charybdis. Athena, the only goddess who plays a major role in the *Odyssey*, is the focus of this article. Although she is a female deity she delights in assuming male gender roles, the most conspicuous being her role as a goddess of war.

Athena’s bellicose nature is apparent in both Homeric epics. This aspect of her character is certainly more prominent in the *Iliad* owing to the subject matter of the poem, but on the one occasion when there is military activity in the *Odyssey*, at the battle of the suitors, she is also there in fighting form. The goddess’s militant activity contrasts sharply with the relationship of females and war in the mortal world. Whereas Athena succeeds in operating as a powerful force in the realm of warfare, in Homer’s mortal world women have little part to play in war. In this paper I examine this paradox and offer some possible reasons for the goddess’s exceptional behaviour.

Athena’s association with war is shown in two of her epithets. The first is $\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\alpha$ meaning she that “drives or carries off the spoil” (Cunliffe, 1963, p. 3), or, as A. T. Murray translates it, “she that leads the host”.² She is also referred to as $\lambda\alpha\omicron\sigma\sigma\upsilon\omicron\gamma\eta$,³ a rare epithet meaning “rouser of hosts”. The goddess actively guards those she loves and ensures they are victorious. It is with her help that Achilles succeeds in vanquishing Hector. Not above employing deception to further her goals, she achieves this by disguising herself as Deiphobus and assuring the doomed Hector she will fight beside him. Hector, believing he has the support of his brother, enters the battlefield to meet his death (*Il.* 22.214ff). Diomedes is another of her favourites, as was his father Tydeus.⁴ Indeed, her most memorable martial activity in the *Iliad* must be during her intervention during Diomedes’ *aristeia*. He prays to her for help. Answering, she draws near (5.123) to him and gives him the strength of his father (125) and the power to tell gods from men

(128). Her help enables him to wound two deities, Aphrodite (335ff) and the god of war himself, Ares (855ff). As suits Athena's temperament she is closely involved in the action. After arming herself for war — exchanging her robe for a tunic, donning her aegis and helmet and grasping her spear (734-45) — she actually joins Diomedes on his chariot (835ff): “a goddess eager for battle” (ἄθυγα θεῶν, 838).

Athena also uses her warrior talents to support her favourite protégé, Odysseus. In the *Iliad*, when the hero is wounded by Socus in battle, the goddess ensures the blow is not fatal (*Il.* 11.438), and she also guards both him and Diomedes on their spying expedition (*Il.* 10.272ff). She is as vigilant in the *Odyssey*, and her succour is precious: Odysseus tells her that if she stood by his side and helped him (*Od.* 13.389-91) he would fight three hundred men. Disguised as Mentès, she is the first to suggest the slaughter of the suitors (*Od.* 1.296), and when Odysseus first hears of their presence in his halls he immediately asks for her help:

ἄλλ' ἄγε μᾶτιν ἔφηνον, ὄπῳ ἐποῖσμαι ἀΐτοῦ·
 πῆρ δ' μοι ἀΐτ' ἄσφι, μῆνοϊ πολυκάρῳ ἄνευσα (13.386-87).⁵

Odysseus needs Athena and depends on her intervention, and she duly aids him in planning their destruction,⁶ and is eager for battle (16.171). However, she does not fight as openly as in the *Iliad*. Whereas she eagerly joins Diomedes in his chariot (*Il.* 5.835), in the *Odyssey* she prefers to supervise the battle in the form of a swallow sitting on a roof-beam (*Od.* 22.239-40). Her help proves indispensable. The suitors hurl their spears: τὸ δ' ἐπὶ τῆσιν ἄκον' ἄκονη (22.256).⁷ Odysseus' comrades, on the other hand, hurl their spears with sure aim (265-66), and each of them is successful in killing a suitor (266-68). The enemy retaliate but Athena protects them again, and, brandishing her *aegis* (297) she brings the battle to a close. This formidable weapon is described in the *Iliad*:

ἄμφ' δ' ἄρ' ἔμοισιν βῆλετ' αἰ...δα κῆρσιν ὄσσαν,
 δεινῶν, ἔν περ ἄ μῆνοϊ ἐπὶ τῷ ἄσφιν ἄνευσα,
 ἄνευ δ' ἄρ' ἔμῳ, ἄνευ δ' ἄλκῳ, ἄνευ δ' κῆρσιν ἄνευσα ἄνευσα,
 ἄνευ δ' ἄρ' ἔμῳ...ἄνευ δ' ἄλκῳ ἄνευσα ἄνευσα,
 δεινῶν τε κῆρσιν τε, δεινῶν τε κῆρσιν τε (Il. 5.738-42).⁸

The *aegis* is so powerful that Zeus's lightning cannot even prevail upon it (*Il.* 21.401). Not surprisingly, the suitors' minds are terrified and they flee throughout the halls. Odysseus is victorious and his victory is due to the goddess of war, Athena.

Paradoxically, Athena's most prominent way of supporting men, through her martial prowess, is injurious to some men, including the suitors in the *Odyssey* and Hector in the *Iliad*. As a goddess of war this is unavoidable, but Athena is not bloodthirsty, unlike her male counterpart, Ares. Although often associated together in Homer the goddess's rational nature distinguishes her from the more volatile god.⁹ Of the

two she seems to be the stronger; at least in the battle of the gods it is Athena who is victorious. Smiting him with a stone she knocks him out and, laughing, she declares how much mightier she is than he (21.410). Walter Burkert observes their differences: “Athena is no exponent of derring-do — this is captured in the figure of Ares — but cultivates the war-dance, tactics and discipline” (Burkert, 1985, p. 141). She knows when it is time for war and when not. For instance, on one occasion, fearing for all the gods on account of Zeus’ wrath, Athena restrains the furious Ares who wishes to avenge the death of his son (*Il.* 15.123ff). She takes his helmet, shield and spear from him and wisely counsels the madman (mainōmene, *Il.* 15.128), not to enter the fray (cf. *Il.* 15.29ff). In line with her rational character it is Athena who ensures that peace and harmony prevail at the end of the *Odyssey*, ordering Odysseus to †sceo, paàe d_ ne<koj _ moi_ou pol_moio (24.543).¹⁰ In this respect she resembles the Celtic goddesses of war whom Mary Condren believes could be better described as one of “those responsible for turning back the streams of war” (Condren, 1989, p. 35). These goddesses did not enter war and, with the exception of Medb in *The T·in*, (Condren, 1989, p. 226, n. 64) even shunned weapons (Condren, 1989, p. 35). Athena is not comparable to them with regard to this, but in a similar fashion she advocates peace, as is seen in the ending she orchestrates in the *Odyssey*. This is due to the restraint and practicality, which characterise her nature, and also because of the respect she has for men which prevents the destruction of the suitors’ families.

Athena’s status as a goddess of war strikes one as rather odd, even paradoxical, when examined in light of the relationship of females and war elsewhere in Homer: women in both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* do not participate in warfare. All warriors are men, the only mortal exception being the Amazons, to which there are only two brief references.¹¹ In fact, violence in general is limited to men, and women rarely constitute a physical threat to others. The major exception is Clytemnestra who kills her husband Agamemnon. Another minor exception is the daughter of Pandareus who slew her son in ignorance (*Od.* 19.253). Hecabe, in an exceptional outburst, wishes she could fix her teeth in Achilles’ heart and feed on it (*Il.* 24.212-13). However, the most this amounts to is a threat, a threat which has no prospect of fulfilment.

General Robert Barrow, a former commandant of the US Marine Corps, arguing against the inclusion of women in war today, believes “the very nature of women disqualifies them from doing it. Women give life. Sustain life. Nurture life. They don’t take it” (*New York Times*, 21 July 1991, quoted in Muir, 1993, p. 17). His attitude highlights a fundamental reason for the disqualification of women from war in Homeric society. Women could not participate in military activity because they were needed to produce more warriors. Men, to an extent, are expendable: one man can father many children, but a woman’s motherhood is limited and thus she is a precious resource.

As well as being excluded themselves from participating in warfare, Homeric women tend also to distract the male warriors from it.¹² Sheila Murnaghan isolates two

main ways women accomplish this: the desire he has for her may cost him his goal or, secondly, she may betray him. Helen's betrayal of the Greeks, by calling to them in their wives' voices while they are hidden in the Trojan horse (*Od.* 4.274-89), is one occasion where both methods are neatly linked (Murnaghan, 1987, p. 121). In contrast, in Book Three of the *Iliad* Helen urges Paris to return to battle (428-33). However she follows her advice immediately by a plea for him to stay lest he be killed (433-36). She clearly uses his desire for her to detain him. Never has love (442), Paris tells her, taken hold of him so strongly since he first took her from Sparta. She similarly encourages Hector to stay but unlike Paris he resists (*Il.* 6.360ff). Andromache also begs Hector to stay on the rampart, away from war (*Il.* 6.431). Marilyn B. Arthur views Andromache's plea in a different light, seeing her as counselling Hector to adopt a more defensive strategy. In effect she sees the hero's wife as offering some military advice (Arthur, 1981, pp. 34-5). If so, her action is exceptional. In any case, Hector chooses to discount her advice and, as he sets out for battle, he tells his wife to return to her loom, reminding her that: *pÒlemoj d' Ξndressi mel»sei* (*Il.* 6.492).¹³

Yet, despite their exclusion from war and tendency to distract men from war, women are often viewed as the source of it. Helen is arguably the cause of the Trojan War. It is for her sake the Greeks are fighting.¹⁴ Helen herself sees herself as responsible, although she also implicates Aphrodite (*Od.* 4.261-64). Priam does not blame her but the gods (*Il.* 3.164), as does Penelope (*Od.* 23.218-24). As Sue Blundell observes:

We are not invited to see the war as something the fighting parties have brought upon themselves. The responsibility lies either with the gods or with a woman (Blundell, 1995, p. 49).

On occasion, it is true, the effeminate Paris is viewed as the cause¹⁵ and Menelaus also claims the war was for his sake.¹⁶ However, leaving aside the question of blame, it is clear that if Helen had not left Sparta, either by her own will or otherwise, there would have been no war. Thus, she must be considered as the primary cause of it. Similarly, in the *Odyssey*, Penelope can be viewed as the cause of the battle against the suitors. At any rate, if she was not there, neither would the suitors be. In the *Iliad*, Briseis, although not the cause of a war, is also the source of conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles.

The only *direct* part women play within warfare is as war booty. This is part of the larger role women play within the economy in which, to a degree, women are just another possession. In a society where slaves are a prominent feature, men are also bought and sold,¹⁷ but the reification of women is much more pronounced. In offerings of gifts, prizes and spoil from war women are often included among other possessions. In his false tale to Laertes, Odysseus pretends to have given gifts to himself. Apart from money (*Od.* 24.274), cloaks (276) and other goods there were four beautiful women (278). Perhaps the most overt example of this is in the gifts Agamemnon offers to Achilles. Among the seven tripods (*Il.* 9.122), gold (122, 137), bronze (137), horses (123) and seven cities (149-56) he also offers him twenty-eight women, among whom is

one of his own daughters and also Briseïs.¹⁸ The stubborn hero refuses. Briseïs, like many women in wartime, is spoil from a battle.¹⁹ Both Agamemnon and Nestor refer to her as a prize (g_raj), and although fundamental to the plot “she features in this respect as a piece of property — as stolen goods — rather than as a human being” (Blundell, 1995, p. 48). Gerda Lerner notes how Agamemnon “in fact did not actually want her but wanted to win a point of honor against Achilles — a fine example of the reification of women” (Lerner, 1986, p. 84). In addition to constituting spoil, women are also offered as a reward. On seeing Teucer fight so valiantly Agamemnon promises him, if they capture Troy:

¿ tr...pod' °_ dÚw †ppouj aÙto<sin Ôcesfin
 °_ guna<c', _ k_n toi _mÕn l_coj e,,sanaba...noi (Il. 8.290-91).²⁰

In the same vein, it is not only Helen that the Greeks are fighting for, but also for her treasure which Paris took as well.²¹

Another essential and positive role women play within warfare is as part of the male warrior’s mental coping-system. In the first place, women are often visualised as something to fight for (Muir, 1993, p. 238). The Trojans arm themselves eager for battle: prÒ te pa...dwn ka^ prÕ gunaikîn (Il.8.57).²² Nestor counsels the Achaeans to think, each one of them, of his children, his wife, possessions and parents, in order to spur them into battle.²³ Women are also seen as a goal in warfare; men fight to capture women. Nestor, on a different occasion, counsels the Achaeans not to return home: pr...n tina p_r Trèwn çlÒcJ katakoimhqÁnai (Il. 2.355).²⁴ They also play another important part in regard to their psychology: armies whether ancient or modern, need to act as a cohesive group and, to accomplish this, “to be an ‘us’ you need a ‘them’” (Muir, 1993, p. 124). The ‘them’, of course, is the enemy but it is also women. Because women are not warriors they can be used as analogies of incompetence in battle. To call a warrior a ‘woman’ is a common insult. Odysseus complains that his fellow warriors cry like small children or women wanting to return home (Il. 2.289-90). Menelaus angrily declares that the Achaeans are: 'Acai_dej, oÙket' 'Acaio... (Il. 7.96).²⁵ Such comments are used to shame fellow warriors into battle, but they are also, of course, used to insult the enemy. Hector tells Diomedes that he is: gunaikÕj ¥r' çnt^ t_tuxo (Il. 8.163).²⁶ He informs Aias that he is like a puny boy or a woman who is ignorant of the deeds of war (Il. 7.235-36). When Paris succeeds in wounding Diomedes, the ego-bruised warrior retorts:

oÙk çl_gw, æj e‡ me gun_ b£loi À p£_j ¥frwn:
 kwfÕn g_r b_loj çndrÕj çn£lkidoj oÙtidano<o (Il. 11.389-90).²⁷

It is interesting that whilst the warriors exchange such insults, they are simultaneously invoking the protection of a female deity of war.

As a formidable female warrior, Athena does not fit the pattern established in the mortal world. She does not distract heroes from warfare but, in contrast, spurs them into

battle. She is not the source of conflict; instead she resolves it. To suggest that it is Athena's *divine* status that enables her to operate as a powerful war deity is simplistic. At any rate, as Johan Flemberg observes, the "world of the gods always to a significant degree reflects the society that shaped it" (Flemberg, 1995, p. 111). The Homeric heavens are no exception. Most significantly, in this context, they are conceived by the poet as anthropomorphic, but their social customs also reflect those of the mortal world, including, for example, those of hospitality (*Od.* 5.85ff). Thus Athena's role as a powerful goddess of war seems rather peculiar, when women have no such role to play in the mortal world.

Martin P. Nilsson does not see this as surprising and attaches no particular significance to Athena's role as a warrior. He views her status as a goddess of war as a natural progression from her Mycenaean origins. As they developed into a warrior culture, the Mycenaeans required a war deity and so they adapted their household goddess to suit this need. He believes this "explains the curious circumstance that the Greek divinity of war is a goddess" (Nilsson, 1925, p. 26). However, why did they choose a female deity? Could they not have chosen a male god instead which, given that warfare is an activity largely limited to males, might have been more appropriate? Another view suggests that proud warriors would be more likely to accept advice from a female rather than a fellow male.²⁸ There is possibly some truth in both these suggestions, but neither of these views considers the goddess's martial activity in light of a fundamental aspect of the goddess's nature: her masculinity.

Athena, throughout Greek mythology, is closely associated with men. This aspect of her nature is most vividly illustrated by Hesiod in his *Theogony*, who records that she was born, not from her mother, but from her father Zeus, springing fully armed from his head.²⁹ Her fundamental role in the Homeric poems, as I have illustrated, is to act as the guardian of men. However, not only does the goddess support, protect, advise men and employ their avenues of action, she herself behaves as one. In both epics, when the goddess intervenes, she more often than not prefers to disguise herself as a man, assuming the guise of six different men in the *Odyssey*, appearing as Mentos (1.105ff), Mentor,³⁰ Telemachus (2.382-87), a herald (8.8ff), a man cheering at the Phaeacian Games (8.193-99), and as a shepherd (13.221ff). In the *Iliad* she also assumes male guise, appearing again as a herald (2.280), as Laodocus (4.86ff), as Phoenix (17.555ff), as a mortal man (21.285) and as Deiphobus (22.227ff). She never appears in female disguise in the *Iliad* and only does so twice in the *Odyssey*.³¹ This close affinity Athena has with men marks her as a suitable deity for a largely male activity such as warfare.

In fact, to a degree, her masculine nature is essential. Roles and activities in Homeric society are divided on the grounds of gender. Only men appear to be present at the assembly (boul» or çgor»),³² and the religious, recreational, and of course martial spheres are also largely reserved for men. Some activities generally reserved for women include weaving and other handiwork,³³ and the preparation of food.³⁴ The 'gender code'

or ‘sex / gender system’ in operation is not a strict one and at times there is a cross over in tasks. For example, the Amazons partake in warfare and men also prepare food.³⁵ Nevertheless, adherence to the gender system is the norm, and this is why Athena’s male character is so important. Because the assembly, sacrifice and warfare are largely reserved for men in the mortal world, Athena, to an extent, is obliged to disguise herself as a male when participating in such activities.³⁶ The goddess, as a supporter of the established male social order, is careful to adhere to their gender system. In the same vein, if a female deity is to operate as a powerful force in the realm of warfare she must be of a masculine nature. A feminine nature would not have been appropriate. A comparison illuminates. In the *Iliad*, Aphrodite enters the battlefield in an attempt to save her son, Aeneas. However, her incompetence is such that Diomedes, on Athena’s advice, succeeds in wounding her (5.312ff). She was, as the hero recognizes, a feeble (331) goddess:

οὐδ' ἔγωγε
 τῆν ἀπ' ἑνδρῖν πόλεμον κῆτα κοῖραν_ουσιν,
 οὔτ' ἔρ' Ἀφροδίτην. (Il. 5.331-33).³⁷

In contrast, Athena succeeds in operating as a formidable female force in the realm of warfare and it is primarily her masculine nature that permits her to do so. In this regard, Athena resembles many other historical females who actually dressed and behaved as men in order to partake in a society or social activity controlled chiefly by men. For instance, in the history of the Christian Church, women disguised themselves as men and, in this way, found a route to sainthood. Thecla, a devout follower of St. Paul, dressed as a man so she could preach. Pelagia, Marina, Athansia, and also the legendary Pope Joan are other examples. Modern instances include the famous Dr. James Miranda Barry who disguised herself as a man in 1812 so she could train as a doctor (Stanford, 1998, p. 60).

A second aspect of Athena’s nature also enables her to wield her power in the male sphere of warfare; this is her virginity. Interestingly, her epithet “Pallas”³⁸ unites these two aspects of her character as it can be translated as “the maid” (Otto, 1979, p. 54) but also can be rendered “weapon-brandishing” (Burkert, 1985, p. 139) from the verb *πέλλω* (Seymour, 1907, p. 426) meaning “brandish” or “wield” (Cunliffe, 1963, p. 310). The goddess’s chastity aligns her closer to men. To an extent, in the context of the Homeric world, virginity implies a rejection of femininity. John C. B. Petropoulos comments:

Female chastity, and especially virginity, removes the assumption that a woman is operatively female and therefore de-sexualises her. Furthermore, it assigns to her a “liminal”, or intermediate, state between masculine and feminine, with a pronounced bias towards the masculine (Petropoulos, 1995, p. 127).

Nicole Loraux staunchly disagrees and believes:

Just because mortal women cannot settle on virginity as a permanent state, it does not follow that the goddess' choice of virginity constitutes some sort of degree zero of femininity (Loraux, 1992, p. 24).

I am not suggesting a "degree zero of femininity". As an androgynous figure Athena encompasses both male and female characteristics but, in the refusal of such a large part of her femininity, she indicates a distinct inclination toward the male. Her chastity contributes to her male identity, which permits her to act as a formidable force within the male sphere of warfare, as I have illustrated above. Moreover, Athena's chastity removes the obstacles which otherwise impeded the participation of mortal females. She is neither physically hampered by pregnancy nor can she be viewed, as General Robert Barrow would see her, as a potential mother. As a virgin female, Athena does not impinge on the male warrior's mental-coping system that I have described above, because she is neither his wife nor his lover, nor a feeble woman. Her chastity also provides a powerful image of wholeness, inviolability, strength, and power. Whereas male strength is often symbolised by sexual prowess, female strength is signified by the ability to resist.

Athena is one of the earliest female warriors we know of. Many females, both mythical and historical, have followed in her footsteps, including Artemisia, Boadicea, Zenobia of Palmyra and Joan of Arc. Like Athena, many of these women who have participated in the male world of warfare have been obliged to assume a male persona. Emma Edmonds was one such woman who disguised herself as a man, Franklin Tompson, along with an estimated four hundred other women, in order to participate in the American Civil War. Even today's images of *fictional* armed women are aligned with men. For instance, Wonder Woman's real name is Diana Prince, associating her with the might of a female divinity but her female power is also tempered by her male surname. Until recently chastity was also, to an extent, a prerequisite for women's inclusion in armies. For example until 1990, once women were pregnant they were not allowed to return to service in the British army, and of course Joan of Arc is also known as *The Maid*. It seems that the powerful image of a chaste masculine female warrior established by Athena nearly three millennia ago, has persisted through the centuries.

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¹ <http://www.uky.edu/ArtsSciences/Classics/gender.html>

² *Od* 13.359, 16.207. In the *Iliad* A. T. Murray translates it as “she that driveth the spoil” or “driver of the spoil” (*Il* 4.128, 5.765, 6.269=279, 15.213). See also Otto, 1979, p. 46. All references to the Homeric epics are found in the main body of the text, except where there are two or more references; in these instances they are found in the corresponding footnotes (as in this case). *Od*=*Odyssey* and *Il*=*Iliad*. All Homeric translations are those of A. T. Murray, unless otherwise stated.

³ *Od* 22.210, *Il* 13.128.

⁴ *Il* 4.390, 5.800-13, 10.290.

⁵ “But come, weave some plan by which I may requite them; and stand by my side yourself, and endure me with dauntless courage” (*Od* 13.386-87).

⁶ *Od* 13.393ff, 19.1-2=52-3.

⁷ “but Athene made it all vain” (*Od* 22.256).

⁸ “About her shoulders she flung the tasselled aegis, fraught with terror, all about which Rout is set as a crown, and therein is Strife, therein Valour, and therein Onset, that maketh the blood run cold, and therein is the head of the dread monster, the Gorgon, dread and awful, a portent of Zeus that beareth the aegis” (*Il* 5.738-42). On one occasion the goddess lends it to Achilles (*Il* 18.203ff). Elsewhere she uses the aegis herself as she urges the Greeks into war (*Il* 2.446ff). Zeus also has an aegis (*Il* 4.167, 17.593) which Apollo borrows once (*Il* 15.229ff) and uses to great avail (*Il* 307ff, cf. *Il* 24.20-1) On Athena’s aegis see Burkert, 1985, p. 140; Janko, 1992, p. 261; Warner, 1996, pp. 104-26.

⁹ See *Il* 4.439ff, 5.430, 717, 825ff, 840ff, 17.398, 18.516, 20.45ff, 21.391ff, *Od* 14.216.

¹⁰ “hold your hand and stop the strife of war” (*Od* 24.543).

¹¹ *Il* 3.189, 6.186.

¹² One can draw a contemporary parallel. In today’s armies, critics argue against the inclusion of women, on the grounds that they distract men from their job. In particular, it is thought that men’s military ability is marred by their chivalrous instincts, that “male soldiers will protect women at the expense of good judgement” (Muir, 1993, p. 239, cf. p. 144).

¹³ “war shall be for men” (*Il* 6.492).

¹⁴ cf. *Il* 2.161, 3.70, 128, *Od* 11.438, 14.68-9, 17.118, 22.227.

¹⁵ *Il* 3.87, 6.328, 525, 7.374, 7.388, 24.28.

¹⁶ cf. *Il* 3.100, *Od* 4.153, 4.170.

¹⁷ *Od* 14.297, 20.383.

¹⁸ *Il* 9.128-34, 139-48.

¹⁹ *Il* 1.365ff, 2.689-93, 19.60. For other examples where women are included among spoil see: *Il* 2.226-88, 8.165-66, 11.624-25, *Od* 3.154, 7.10, 8.523-30, 9.41, 14.264=17.433.

²⁰ “either a tripod or two horses with their car, or a woman that shall go up into thy bed” (*Il* 8.290-91).

²¹ *Il* 3.70, 255, 282, 285, 7.350, 362-64, 13.626.

²² “for their children’s sake and their wives” (*Il* 8.57).

²³ *Il* 15.662-63, cf. *Il* 15.497-98.

²⁴ “until each have lain with the wife of some Trojan” (*Il* 2.355), cf. *Od* 11.403.

²⁵ “women of Achaea, men no more” (*Il* 7.96). cf. *Il* 2.235.

²⁶ “no better than a woman” (*Il* 8.163).

²⁷ “I reckon not thereof, any more than if a woman had struck me or a witless child, for blunt is the dart of one that is a weakling and a man of naught” (*Il* 11.389-90).

²⁸ This is the view of Wilamowitz, cited in Otto, 1979, p. 55, p. 291, n. 50.

²⁹ *Theogony*, 886-900, 924-26.

³⁰ *Od* 2.268ff, 22.205ff, 24.502ff.

³¹ *Od* 6.20-40, 7.19ff. She also appears in female form at 13.287ff, 16.157ff, 20.30-55, but it is likely on these occasions she is appearing as herself.

³² *e.g.* *Od* 2.6-259, 8.5-45.

³³ *Il* 3.125-28, 22.440-41, *Od* 2.96ff, 4.124ff, 6.306, 7.105-11, 15.104ff, 19.141ff.

³⁴ *Od* 3.479-80, 4.52-6, 15.93-4, 135-39, 17.91-5.

³⁵ *Od* 1.109-12, 141-43, 15.97-8, 140-41.

³⁶ See *Od* 3.36ff, 330ff, *Od* 8.15-7, 8.193-99, *Od* 22.205ff.

³⁷ “and not one of those that lord it in the battle of the warriors, — no Athene she” (*Il* 5.331-33).

Aphrodite does enter the fray on another occasion and successfully saves Paris from the battlefield.

However, her action does not involve any battle skills. Instead she shrouds him in a mist and brings him to his chamber soon to be joined by Helen (*Il* 3.380ff).

³⁸ *e.g.* *Od* 1.252, 3.385, 13.300