

# Women and Eros in Euripides

Medea

# Presentation of Women

- Medea is depicted as manic from the start of the play, and this just intensifies throughout
  - Manic through her rejected love to begin with
  - Manic with vengeance towards Jason from about half way through the play
- Chorus and Nurse play similar roles as mediating voices
  - Try to talk Medea out of killing her sons, and actively trying to protect them
  - The Nurse tells the children to stay away from their mother at the start because she is scared of her plotting revenge
  - The chorus try to prevent Medea from killing her sons by telling her that it will reflect badly on her

# Before – Jilted lover

- “Nurse: ...Jason has betrayed his own sons, my mistress, for a royal bed...”
  - The other characters see Medea as “poor Medea” and as a jilted lover who has been scorned
- However, did Jason ever love her in the first place?
  - “there should be no female sex, then mankind would have no trouble” – Jason has no love for any women, could have ever have loved a Medea?
- Proof that Medea loved Jason:
  - “...Medea, wild with love, set sail from your father’s house...and here, living in a strange country...”

# After – vindictive woman wanting revenge

- Just wants to make Jason hurt, no longer interested in killing him
  - “Chorus: But – to kill your own children! Can you steel your heart?”
  - Medea: This is the way to deal Jason the deepest wound”
- Kills Glaucus, Creon and then her sons
- Then flies off with bodies of dead sons to prevent Jason from burying them

# Sources

- Plato:
  - Different types of love
  - Eros can be good and bad – good for dying for your country and lover, but bad for chasing after a woman
- Ester:
  - Bad things come from eros, but bad if there is not enough eros – you need to have it in balance
- Persian sources:
  - Women being served and represented in the same way as a king
  - Eros for power