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The Seeds of Feminism in Euripides' *Medea*

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Dedication

We dedicate this work to our dear parents

To our sisters and our brothers

To all our families

To our friends

To all our teachers

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, we would like to express our full gratitude to our supervisor, Mr. Djelloul Bourahla, who provided untiring help, guidance and prompt feedback in preparing the present work. Also, we extend our sincere and warm appreciation to all those people who have never hesitated to give help whenever needed.

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Greek literary and philosophy work had overtly or covertly concerned with the subject of position and role of women in society .Literature has engaged with the women issues since ancient times. Women were marginalized and live under the authority of men. They have no rights, their voice was hidden and their position was neglected. No one dare to deal with their great role in building a society but some writers use literature as tool to express this idea. Women were totally ignored in different domain of life; politically, socially and economically. They had inferior class in society and not allowed to participate in public life .Their role restricted as household and reproduction of children.

Euripides has engaged as early as antiquity with the issue of the position and role of women in society. He established the starting point of the modern feminist theory through his critic toward Greek society in their treatment of women that manifests itself in several literary works. One of his plays is Medea. Euripides through the major character Medea tense to convey his thought that women have intellectual capacity and they have decision like man

Aim of study

The study aims to show the ways in which Euripides' play Medea is the precursor of the core principles of Medea feminist discourse .Through the study of the form and content of the play we will demonstrate that Medea ,the main character of the play is the embodiment of the salient features of feminism .

Problematic

How is Medea the forerunner of modern feminist discourse?

Hypothesis

We hypothesis that Euripides 'Medea features the core principles of modern feminist discourse. Medea represents the main women issues that were discussed in Greek time and manifest in modern literary work as a whole theory.

Research questions

To discuss the main point in this study we must raise the following questions

- 1-What are the principles of modern feminist discourse that Medea features?
- 2-How and why did Euripides come to fashion a feminist discourse in the modern sense at a time when women were totally marginalized in all aspects of life?
- 3-How does the form of the play serve and reinforce the feminist content of the play?
- 4-How does Medea the heroine represent women?

Methodology Research

To achieve the aim of this study, we use two types of orientation in order to analyze the play overtly and covertly. Intrinsic approach is used to focus on the study of the text itself. It helps us to deeply understand and analyze deeply the language used by the writer (Euripides). In other words, we work inside the literary text taking into consideration interior monologue, dialogue and speech. Extrinsic approach is used to focus on the content. It means the hidden message that the writer wants to convey through plot, characterization, themes. Extrinsic orientation facilitates our comprehending to the main point that the play turned around.

Feminist literary theory will be the tool used to analyze Medea as heroine character introduced by male playwright in order to show the seeds of modern feminist theory in Greek works. The feminist theory which appeared in the nineteenth century has come back to the Greek time when Euripides through his work Medea shows the central principle of feminist theory from a male perspective. Many scholars believe that the feminism theory has emerged in modern time but the Greek works prove the opposite.

The structural of the study

The present study is divided into four chapters; the first one under the title general and personal background. It includes two parts. In the first one, we have tackled the whole context of the play including historical, social, political and religious context and we focus on the estate of women and their role in each field. The next part, we deal with the personal information of Euripides. It contains his own life, style and women in his works.

The second chapter is concerned with women position and feminist discourse. It began with Greek writers who deal with feminism as Aristotle and Plato .Then, we deal with women in Greek mythology. In addition, we speak about women through male perspective and female in Greek tragedy. At last, we discuss the modern feminist theory and its main principles

In the third chapter ,we have analyzed the form of the play extracting the different techniques that Euripides uses to enrich the content of his work .This through double argument , soliloquies, diction, tone, symbolism and imagery that shaped the play

The last chapter concerns with the study of the content of the play. It starts with the analysis of the protagonist who represents the female status and their circumstance in Greek time. This is through studying Medea as representative figure of female. Taking into consideration her major faces "heroine, mother, victim and unusual mother".

Chapter one

General and Personal Background

Introduction

Euripides is Greek playwright who tried to present his world view and attitude towards society through his works. His plays influence many thinkers and literary figures during the past to the present. Euripides, mainly known by his tragedies. Aristotle calls him "The most tragic of all the poets". Medea is one of his most famous plays. This chapter contains two sections; the first one represents the historical background during the Greek time. It is apt for us to study the whole situation of ancient period from different ways historically, socially, politically, religiously in order to analyze the concerned play in the practical part. The second one under the title Euripides' life and works, involves Euripides' biography, style, and women in his works.

1 Historical, Political, Social, and Religious context**1-1 Historical context**

The records of the archaic period are extremely rare. Some information is still in existence about the status of women there in the latter half of the period. It is taken from the law system of two city-states. The law system of Sparta was collected in the seventh century and was accredited to Lycurgus. The main role of women in archaic Sparta was the giving birth to children. For this purpose women were to be fed equal rations, educated and trained in athletics. In other city-states women married at an earlier age but the Spartans were capable to marry at a later age and consequently faced less risk of death in pregnancy and childbirth. All this contributed to raise the number of healthy women and reduced the population by rejecting to bear many children. Spartan women were representing as heroic and proud. (Plutarch 1977)

In the law system of Gortyna, women had many rights, to own, control and inherit property. A certain proportion of what a woman produced through her work went to her. In divorce a woman preserved half her property. (ibid)

This period shows the appearances of nine women poets, only few of them are known by name, such as Corinna and Sappho, but little of their poetry has been conserved. These women were from the upper class of society and they were educated. They lived in liberty and the pleasure to be capable to write. None of them lived in Athens (Pomeroy)

Woman situation in archaic and classical Athens was more restricted than in other Greek city-states. . Women were totally excluded from education and political life. In addition to that, the sixth-century show law code of Solon legalized prostitution

The main duty of woman in ancient Athens was to marry and to bear children so that her family unit might continue. If there was no son, a daughter might inherit, but was compelled to marry her next of kin. Divorce might be start by either partner, but there are few records of divorces begin by the wife, who had to be help in the procedure by her father. In divorce, the children were considered the property of the husband and remained with him. (Pomeroy)

In Athens, Marriages were arranged by parents. A girl was expected to marry by the time she was fourteen. This left few years for her education, which was restricted to the home and concerned primarily with domestic affairs. Women were expected to work, but within the home. They were responsible for the home affairs and managing their slaves. The homes had separate women's quarters When their husbands entertained guests, women were not permitted to be present. Yet women did go out of the home to attend festivals and funerals. It is probable, but not certain, that they were able to go to the theater. (Aristophanes)

The Hellenistic period of Greek history starts with the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC and ends with the conquered of the Greek peninsula and islands by Rome in 146 BC. The Hellenistic queens in Greece, Syria and Egypt held actual political power. The mother of Alexander, the Macedonian queen Olympias, ruled Greece when her son was away on his conquests. (Plutarch)¹

1- 2 Political context

“Democracy” literally means “rule by the demos,” i.e., by the Athenian male citizen body (women, children, slaves, and foreigners were excluded)." the Democrats are allowed to vote and speak.

At the beginning of fifth century, Most Greek states were ruled by groups of rich landowners. These powerful families called aristocrats; the word come from 'aristoi'

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Representation_of_women_in_Athenian_tragedy her.

which means best people. In other word, it was a system known as 'oligarchy' the rule by the few. (Blondell 1999)

The new system (city state) give the opportunity to the male citizen to defend and protect their community .Some scholars argued that origins of the democracy come back to the ancient communities in the eastern Mediterranean but others claimed that this fact is not true because the concept of citizenship did not existed before . (Norris 2000)

The lack of facts about Athenian women is directly linked to their public unobserved . Women were not allowed to contribute in the public life of the polis: they could not take part in an election at the meeting, serve on juries, testify in court, own possessions, or hold more than tiny sums of money without the permission of a man During her life every female stayed lawfully a minor, beneath the rule of a male relative known as her "kurios"—usually her father or brother until marriage, then her husband .It is occasionally suggested that women taken a position similar to slaves, in relationship to the free male master of the home the" oikos" However, there were essential social and legal distinctions in the position of free women and slaves. Free women were better than slaves because they did not bought or sold; a man could only have one legal wife, but many slaves; the relationship between couple was ideally based on personal comparability and affection, while slaves were strictly a commodity; and a free woman in trouble could turn to her male relatives for help. (Blondell 1999)

The development of Athenian democracy sharpened the difference between oikos and polis as the appropriate fields of action for female and male respectively, demanding analogous behaviour and character qualities. Men were intended for the military and government, women for the oikos .(ibid)

The low class including female and slaves were not allowed to participate in politics and public life because they were naturally characterizing by inferiority in both cognitive and ethical considering them unable to participate in community together with man. Women in Classical period in Greece had not the right to vote and they take their legal state from husband . citizen women could give citizenship to their sons who were citizen and daughters who become the wives of citizen (M.Blytch)

1-3 Social context

Greek society was divided into two groups, free people and slave. Free people had a high position and they use slaves as servants. Free men were divided between Citizens and Metics. The first group, a citizen was born with Athenian parents and was the strongest group that could take place in the government of the Polis. After compulsory service in the army they were expected to be government officials and take part in Jury Service. The metic was of foreign birth that had migrated to Athens, to either trade or practice a craft. A metic had to pay taxes and sometimes required to serve in the army. However, they could never achieve full right of a Citizen; neither could they own houses or land and were not allowed to speak in law courts. The Second group was the slaves. They had a low position and they work as servants. Most Greek states were ruled by groups of rich landowners, called aristocrats; this word is come from 'aristoi', meaning best people. This was a system known as 'oligarchy' the rule by the few (Blondell 1999)

what was the estate of woman in fifth-century Athens? There is no easy or one answers because it depends on different areas (politic, law, religion, oikas, myth, etc.) and the social class of the woman concerned. In terms of spatial seclusion, for example, with woman 'ideally' restricted to their own quarters within the house such an total separation between interior and outside cannot have been thoroughly maintain by poorer women, since they had to go out to work. All women in spite of their social class were marginalized in Athenian polis. So alongside this relative lack of power and self-determination must be set women's essential role as mothers, that is, as bearers of the male citizen-soldiers who would defend the city against the enemies (Allen 2002)

1-4 Religious context

In the Greek time religion was dominated in all subjects of life It included practices and formal ritual (animal sacrifice) The ancient people believe in the power of gods .Each god has essential role and represent abstract idea for example during the war we need the power of Ares and Hera for wedding. There are many gods and goddess as Athena, Apollo, Poseidon, Hermes, Hera, Aphrodite, Demeter, Ares, Artemis, Hades, Hephaistos, and Dionysos . Zeus is the king of gods and controller of the them and responsible of anything related to the sky Zeus is ("guardian of oaths") (Smith 2006) It is not easy to break the oath. "Oaths were of ancient origin and

authority, and were used at all kinds of significant and solemn moments in an attempt to guarantee good faith. They are primarily associated with the public, male realm, for example in cementing a relationship of guest-friendship" (Blondell 1999). Also he is the protector of stranger. The ritual practices were introduced in the drama such as prayers, oaths, supplications, sacrifices, offerings, and evocation of girls' transition rites.

According to Aeschylus the ancient gods were real, and could appear on his stage. Sophocles had less willing to introduce the gods on stage. Euripides was the tragedian most likely to making the gods engaged in the action of his plays. Euripides through his plays dramatize the gap between the reality of gods as they were traditionally portrayed (anthropomorphic superhuman with all the failings of mortals) and the ideal as imagined by human beings (Storey and Allan 2005)

Gods and goddess oversaw a broad range of areas of human life, counting maturation, marriage, sexuality, fertility, materia law, government, the arts, medicine, warfare and social relationships. Greek believes that the gods play an essential role in their daily live and they consider them as a part of reality. They think that all the goddesses and gods have role in the events that appears in their existence and that according to the movement of the planets and stars. The Greeks try in every occasion and festival to thank their goods by prayers, gifts and wishes. They hope from the holy place of gods to protect them. They looked for the favors during the life but not the salvation in their afterlife. Because of that they offered faithfulness, surrender to Gods. (ibid)

Women had a essential position in religion because most of religious practise had to be presented by females and they play the role of oracles. The oracles deduce the determination of the holy being to man who had entreaty for solution to serious trouble. There were some special ritual in which group of maidens participate in panathenaea, female of high class come earlier than those of low families. and citizen woman a play role in Demeter and kore ritual. Every woman in Greek has to participate in the diasia (festival of Zeus Meilichios). There were several other religious practise related to certain occasion in which women could take a part such as: public sacrifices and cry in funerals (Blondell 1999)

2 Euripides' life and works

2-1 Euripides' life

Euripides was born in the island of salamis an Athenian settlement in about 485 BC. He lived in isolation in his cave facing the sea. He disliked the public, and fixed up in a cave where he did his writing (the cave has recently been “discovered” by archaeologists, but this state should be viewed with doubt). Ancient sources present some surprising details about Euripides’ life. Among them: His lowborn mother made her living selling vegetables "mother sold green vegetables in the market is a repeated joke in comedy (Acharnians478,Women at the Thesmophoria 387,Frogs840)"(Storey and Allan 2005) .

He was sexually betrayed by his wife and he divorced her for an affair with his friend Kephisophon (ibid) , "They say that when he had married Choirile, the daughter of Mnesilochos and had witnessed her immoral behavior, he wrote his first Hippolytos, in which he trumpets the shamelessness of women"(ibid),and he wrote many other plays deals with women’s infidelity, offending females audience members .This personal event effect his life and he try to took revenge by portraying females with unpleasant traits. (Blondell, 1999)

Euripides career as dramatist begin year after Aeschylus death in 456 .His first tragic production was Daughters of Pelias in 455. His opening success came in 441victory at the Dionysia .He try to win in the dramatic competition twenty-two times but he succeeds to won the first prizes only five times. In contrary of his contemporaries who won it several times Aeschylus won thirteen and Sophocles at least twenty.

The well -known playwrights in his time were Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Aristophanes. They were dominated the Athenian stage throughout the fifth century B.C.E. Euripides wrote eighty- eight plays but survived to our time only nineteen plays as: Children of Heracles (429), Hippolytus (428), Andromache(430?), Trojan Women(415 Suppliant Women 423 ,Iphigenia among the Taurians 414-410 B C

Elektra, Medea. Helen 412BC, Bacchae . He left Athens in 408 for the court of the Macedonian king Archelaus in Pella (northwest of modern Thessaloniki. He died in 406 , by being torn apart by King Archelaus’ hunting dogs. This information can not be taken as truth because all the sources came after Euripides and it based on his works, not his life .He left three sons, one of them named Euripides (Blondell, 1999)

2-2-Euripides style

Euripides usually employ in their dialogue the ordinary language and colloquialism which the Athenians people actually spoke in their everyday life. Aristotle (1404b) critic Euripides more than any playwrights in his rhetoric ,he claimed that Euripides succeed in creating art by constructing "element taken from the common language of everyday life .For example character may stop each other in mid-thought (IA1133). In Euripides plays the form and the content are different from one play to another. Euripides' plays characterize by discontinuities he left the audience fell that it is not one natural entity this contradictory presented in different levels of language, character, plot, and theatrical technique. Bertolt Brecht (1964) called this "alienation effect". According to him it is "a process of turning an object from something ordinary, familiar, immediately accessible, into something peculiar, and unexpected". (Blondell, 1999).

Euripides is known by the variation in tone; in single scene we find several tones like comedy follows high seriousness or vice versa. In *Iaklytemnestra* and *Achilles* play a hilarious comedy of errors (819–54), but the scene changes suddenly when the Old Man reveals the plot to kill Iphigenia. Scenes often have opposite meanings for different actors , as in the dialogue between the servant in mourning and the drunken Herakles (*Alcestis*773–820), or that between the innocent Iphigenia and the guilty Agamemnon (*IA*640–85) (*ibid*).

Euripides' plots is also characterize by the variety in events .Aristotle criticize episodic plots in which the episodes do not follow one another in a probable or inevitable way," and praises those in which the events follow the logical sequences(*Poetics*1452a).The tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles usually raised in logically order with closely linked events ,in contrary Euripides s' play contains surprising event which change the direction of plot in unexpected ways as in *Helen*, for example, within only over two hundred lines Menelaos arrives in Egypt is refuse hospitality, learns that there is a second woman just like his wife Helen,meets her, rejects her, then accepts her (*Helen*387–623). In *Helen*,Teuker seems to have wandered in from a different play and threatens to take the plot in a totally new direction, then disappears as quickly as he came (68–163) (*ibid*)

Euripides would often take a myth and investigate into a problematic event or action that identifies the rest of the myth's ideology into question. In *Alcestis*, for

instance, he takes a story of a wife's goodness and transforms it into an indictment of her husband, and, by addition, an indictment of the patriarchal values that the old legend promote . He involves the happy conclusion of his original mythic source but leaves us knowing that the characters are unworthy of this happiness.((Storey and Allan 2005)

The chorus (Greek khoros) is the main feature of the Athenian drama "In Euripides time, the tragic chorus had fifteen members " (Blondell, 1999 P38).They attend in the play early usually after the first scene .they sing parodos (entry song) which establish their personal information and their connection to the essential character. They present other songs with dancing called stasima ("songs in position"),between the scenes. This feature is unusual for modern audiences and it is difficult to integrate into a modern drama. One uncommonly successful example is Lee Breuer and Bob Telson's The Gospel at an American Gospel intepretation of Sophocles' tragedy Oedipus at Colonus.(ibid)

He is the first one who introduce the psychologicalal motivation and he focus on the interior conflict inside the single character. Also Euripides was the first one who deals with the psyche of the main characters and presented their sexual and psychological motivation some have called Euripides the father of the modern psychological tragedy(Smith 2006)

In Euripides' plays, hero and heroine was typically as ordinary human being "as they were". They were normal people without any supper natural power. Aristotle criticize Euripides 'hero because they lack the nature of protagonist. Euripides ' characters repeatedly change their thinking and behavior totally and suddenly from time to time inside the same play as Alcestis quickly changes from fever to calm rationality (271–80). Blondell argued that "Medea's repeated changes of intention (1021–80), like Agamemnon's during the first third of IA, a fragmented personality whose thoughts and impulses are at war with one another". character s' reaction to the quick change of events differ : one of them they give up despair as Menelaos in Helen, and others they controls the events to became beneficial for them like Helen and medea.

In Euripides' play, the dialogue usually between two characters with third looking on. They use semiformal debate and they make long, highly rhetorical speeches.

This reflects the influence of contemporary rhetoric, especially the teaching of the sophists. The character usually uses grand narrative style, influenced by epic and the

uses of imagination through this speech allow the audience to interact with some location which is absent on the stage such as wilderness. After 415, the plays divided into two groups. The first called romance it has a sharp change in the middle of the events but finished with a happy ending as Iphigenia and Helen. The second are true tragedies. It expresses fear, bitterness and punishment for example: Medea, Hippolytus and Orestes (ibid)

2-3 Woman in Euripides works

Euripides one of the greatest Greek writers, thought his theater had three main interests, realistic, pacifist and feminist which is our concern. Athenian women take attitude against Euripides for slandering them in his plays such as killer, bad mother, and disobedient wife etc. Euripides portray a woman not as a bad creature but he makes her as the motor of the events and give her the essential role in his play.

Zeitlen argued that Euripides known for favouring heroine characters and "affinity for feminine". among his contemporaries' Thirteen of his nineteen survived plays have a female protagonist (Alcestis, Medea, Hippolytus, Andromache, Hecuba, Electra, Trojan Woman, Iphigenia in Thauris, Ion, Helen, Phoenician Woman, Orestes, Iphigenia in Aulis) Sophocles had two plays (Elektra and Antigone) which had a female protagonist while Aeschylus had just one play (Agamemnon) among seven plays. (Blondell 1999)

Euripides wrote four Plays concerned with the relations between man and woman (the Alcestis, Medea, Ion and Andromache). The four plays deal with the problems of motherhood and children. In three plays; children play an essential role in the action. According to Euripides the motherhood is woman's normal sphere and woman without children is abnormal woman. In each of the four plays a woman is the central on which the events turn, changing roles from object to subject (Medea, Helen, Iphigenia) or vice versa (Alcestis) in which woman was not the central or the motor of the events in contrast to the three previous plays. (Wright 1973)

Euripides' Alcestis was a famous play performed in 438. The play starts when Apollo the god decided that Admetos can be sacrificed by someone to avoid his death. No one accepts to be the victim only his wife Alkestis she asked him to not get married again he promise her more than that: He will banish all entertainment and joy from his palace. he break the promise after the coming of his friend Herakles. At the end,

Herakles wrestling with Death and come with Alkestis. It is drama about a good wife who sacrificed herself to save her husband. This play present the sexism in the Greek soceity .man had authority over women. He can ask her to sacrifice herself for him It is tragedy with happy ending as Blondell explain “ the play has a change of fortune rather of the comic kind. The drama is of the satiric kind in that it turns to joy and pleasure at the end, contrary to the tragic kind.”

Conclusion

It is hard for us as modern reader to comprehend the ancient works without relating it to its historical context. It is necessary to understand the whole background of the period .The historical situation enhance our understanding and analyzing to literary work.

The first chapter is divided into two sections, the first one include general background about the Greek civilization which cover the period from prehistory to the Hellenistic age .In this section we talk about ; history, politic. Religion , and social context in details focusing in the place of woman in each field . Also we portrays the whole picture of discrimination between gender in that time. In the second section we concerned with Euripides' life and works taking into consideration his style and the position of woman as a principal issue in his plays .

Chapter two

**Women Position and Feminist
Discourse**

Introduction

Literature is a valuable source of information about the history, society, culture, and religion of its time. Literature in itself cannot be accepted as a perfect account of activities of the past, but can tell the opinions, at least at a certain point in time, of the writers. Ancient Greek literature has been described as highly self-conscious, (Sealey,) that is, the writers took great care to ensure what they said suited their purpose at the time of the writing. However the more subconscious choice of words, and even the order of the words can reveal some of the more subtle ideals of a society. That is the same thing about feminist theory. In this chapter (Feminist discourse) several points will be discussed. Starting with Greek writers and the position of woman in Greek society (Aristotle and Plato) then, woman position through male perspective. Also woman in Greek tragedy. Ending with, modern feminist theory.

1. Greek writers and the position of woman in society

There are few Greek writers who dealt with feminism. Euripides, Plato, Aristophanes and Aristotle have all as we will show directly or indirectly depicted, studied, depicted or philosophized about the position and role of women in life and society. Their works depict women in many different ways.

Aristotle

Aristotle is one of the literary giants of the history of Greek literature. The student of Plato was less friendly to women because he considered that women had less right than men. He saw women as a subject of men, but at the time higher than slaves: "The slave is wholly lacking the deliberative element, the female has it but lacks authority, the child has it but it is incomplete". He also saw that women had lower mental capacities that is the reason to make men responsible to keep them under authority, and can kill them among harem, women are regarded as not in the least, inferior to men (Wright 1973).

According to Aristotle's view of the sexual matter he embraces that the real meaning of the things is known by its role in other words it is known by what it is for and nothing is created arbitrary but it must have function (Fricker 2000)

He separated human into two layers, high and low "The lower always exist for the sake of the higher" Also, he divided them into two parts, body and soul. He believed

that the soul is superior than the body "the 'body' comes from the female and 'soul' from male" that means men were greater. He added that the higher should be separate from the lower. In case the two 'soul, body' mix to gather. He denominated that 'the business of generation or the role of production. 'Because it concern both of them. He believe that women were inferior than men, that is to say, women are created to be a slave to men Aristotle says that a husband rules his wife as a master rules slaves"(Blondell and others1999)

Aristotle make essential difference between position of "free women and slaves" among the difference there were : free women were not bought or sold the opposite of the case of slaves ; a man could have many slaves and they treated as a article of trade ,in other hand man could have just one lawful wife and the relationship between husband and wife was based on affection and she treated as free woman ,and she could turn to her husband family if there she need help especially in difficulty (Blondell 1999).

Plato

Plato broke the Greek time treatment of woman ,he describe woman in a very different way unlike his contemporaries such as Euripides and his student Aristotle. He was not influenced like them by the actual state of inferiority to which Athenian women had been reduced (Wright 1973)

Plato's feminist principle are most clearly affirmed in four books(in the fifth book of the Republic and the sixth, seventh, and eighth books of the regulation).

These works are available to English readers and they could be considered as source for Plato' feminist principals to give a brief summary of his argument.(ibid)

Some recent scholarships assumed that Plato' feminism is not more that superficial (Fricker 2000) because in his works he did not focus on wife and children unlike many other writer that issue makes his work far from reality and natural feminist. Because most of the other Greek writers deal with feminism by engage children and he broken the statute. Because they consider woman as a tool to give birth to generation which named Reproduction (Wright 1973).

In his feminism and educational improvement, Plato was extremely influenced by Spartan philosophy. He based his works on his strength and weakness in idealism assumption not on concrete experience. (Wright 1973) He believes that women are certainly different from men, but both are equal to each other. In other words they are different only their gender and if treated differently. "So women differ from men in the part they play in the propagation of the species ;but that difference does not affect the questions to whether men and women should engage in the same pursuits" In other words Plato is claiming here that certain women should be educated and trained along with men if they are going to be ruling the city side by side with the men and they can word the same job.(ibid)

Plato returns to the conventional vision of woman. He states the virtual differences in which he had made out to be equal would stop woman to be in any manner identical to man. He confirm how he was conscious of the risk of freeing females from their restricted, household role without giving them an alternative role. He also illustrate that women have an inferior virtue than men. He explain by the example of music, that it is necessary for woman to listen to different music . Music was encouraging for males, particularly in war, yet it was more appropriate for women also to listen to affecting music because they were emotionally apt.²

2. Woman in Greek mythology

It noticeable that literature an laws of the period depict the social ,economic and religious position in several ways. Also did the literary works and laws of Athens. It is used to transfer the situation and women position in the light of Greek traditions at that period of time.

When taking into consideration a number of Greek narratives telling stories about supernatural being(Goddesses) and Queens, monster and princesses, we can discover that women in Greek mythology in general were divided into three principal groups, each level had its special characteristics and deferent role in the Greek mythology. (Blundell 1995)

The first level known as goddesses, it composed of the heavenly creature. In geek social order they had great role for the reason that they were legally responsible for fundamental issues for example produce, birth, ect .there were 6 well known

² <http://www.classicsnetwork.com/essays/the-nature-of-women-in-plato-and/786>

Goddesses including (Hera, Athena, Aphrodite, Hestia, Demeter and Artemis) and there are we have the less spirituality ones such as the Muses, the Graces, the Fates, etc. (ibid)

The second rank consists of number of women from the social category. It named the human level. They had the role of households and had deferent tasks in their social order .That law was valid when geek was governed by the monarch. Helen, Electra are example from that level.(ibid)

The third level according to the Greek mythology was the female monsters, they had a strange body structure because they were half woman and half animal such as lioness ,bird or snake etc. They give a picture of the fear that woman motivated in side man gorgons the three sisters who hah golden wings(sphinx and harpies) etc. (Blundell 1995)

The ancient Greek myth tells reader about the situation of women and they transfer the fact about real life of a woman in that time. According to the laws of the Greek mythology women had no right to complain about the life they lives they live under the authority of men, and each level had certain activities "women had no legal or economic power they were dependant, first on their husbands, if abandoned or divorced on their father, finally on their sons ". Also they were obliged to marry if men decide that in order to follow the tradition of the society or they could be sell as slaves to work in Casals of the ruling class "At Athens, while all the men went free, women were kept as slaves, and a stranger in the harem might be killed at sight"(Wright 1973)Women were low-grade in comparison to men and they lack responsibility(ibid).

3. Woman position through male perspective

Most of the works of the Greeks cultural such as poetry, history, philosophy, courtroom speeches, drama were written from male point of view, Which are existing as evidence for the life of women at that period. But it is not complete to represent the position and the actual daily life of the Greek women at that era. Because there are no works about women written from female perspective. *"These problems are exacerbated by the fact that most of our sources are elite texts and art works produced by men, in which representations of women's lives are expressed through, and complicated by, the ideology of gender"*(Blondell and others1999)

Most of the male works present the Greek women as weak human beings, who had no right in managing their lives and they could not make decisions concerning important issues in their society and they could not make business to own money and belongings like males. The young bride in Athens was around fifteen years old and her husband was usually double her age. For example in Xenophon's Household Management (Oikonomikos) a husband portray how he taught his wife to play the role of household and how to manage her home because she was not mature enough to take all the responsibilities of whole the house. When husband had been asked about what his wife know before marriage he replies *"How could she have known anything, since she came to me when she was not yet fifteen, and had lived previously under diligent supervision in order that she might see and hear as little as possible and ask the fewest possible questions"* this extract describe upper class male view concerning the ideology of marriage (Blondel) *"The scarcity of evidence about Athenian women is directly related to their public invisibility. Women were not permitted to participate in the civic life of the polis: they could not vote in the Assembly, serve on juries, testify in court, own property, or handle more than small sums of money without the consent of a man."* (Blondel)

In addition to that Greek writers present women as opposite to men. In the Pythagorean table of opposites, for example, male is linked with limit, odd, one, resting, straight, light, good, and square and female with unlimited, even, plurality, left, curved, dark, bad, and oblong. Aeschylus' Clytemnestra, for example, is imagined to have exercised power legitimately during her husband's absence at Troy and she later becomes co ruler of Argos with Aegis.³

In Greek society the life of both men and women followed different paths at the same time they went through similar point. Teenage years as an example were similar but separate for males and females. In other words both sexes at puberty rites cut their hair, but each gender had precise roles that are the difference. Concerning the religious rituals women did them after marriage whereas young men (ephebes), undergo a period of paramilitary training in which they did duty on the frontiers. Another difference at the event of the Apatouria, boys born that year were registered in the clan but girls

3 - <http://pup.princeton.edu/chapters/s7062.html>

haven't that right. This separation between the two sexes was a sign of ideology of gender and insist on it. In Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*. The main character Lysistrata participate in four different transition rituals The main transition for women, however, was that from bachelor girl (parthenos) to wife and mother (gune). for women were not accessible to remain unmarried and even among men it was extremely rare. (Blondell, 1999)

The ideology of gender describes and restricts behaviors and the personality of men and women. *Alcestis* was an example of gender ideology in Athens. She portray an excellent model of female behavior because she wants to die instead of her husband. As such an exemplar, she establishes that pattern as a measure for excellence in womanhood. Euripides through the character *Alcestis* presented a model of strong relationship between man and woman (ibid).

4. Greek Woman through tragedies

The starting point of tragedies is unknown but it shows a light at the famous Athenian festival of the Greater Dionysia at the end of the sixth century BCE. According to Aristotle poetic (V:1449b) "...tragedy is an imitation of an action that is serious and complete, of certain magnitude, a melody with each kind of ornament, the several kinds being in separate parts of the play, in the form of action, not of narrative, through pity and fear effecting the release of similar passions" (Blondell 1999) It means that tragedy is a perfect unity presented a serious events. Also Aristotle focus on the pity and fear as essential element in tragedy.

The image of women in Athenian tragedy was presented wholly by men but they took a role in the sequence of event also they could play as principle actor in the play but In a society that look down on the women role, their dominance in the majority public of Athenian art-forms comprise a paradox. There was contradiction in the subject because according to the facts we had about the ancient Greek women in theater they were not women but men replace the role of women (men with soft voice and wear masks) "There probably were some real women in the audience, then. But there were certainly none on stage. All speaking actors, members of the chorus, and presumably mute extras as well, were male, including those playing female parts".(ibid)

The playwright Euripides introduces two extremely dissimilar responses to this cultural rule. Firstly, his female hero Alcestis, represents the "ideal wife" sacrificing her own life, so her husband, Admetos, can live. It is also remarkable that the most essential relationships within this play are in fact between the men. Heracles goes to the underworld not for Alcestis, but to honour his male friend's hospitality. Admetos goes against the promise he made to his wife, so as to obey his male friendship. The second example is Medea which we deal with it later ⁴

Although ancient Greece was a masculine society, Sophocles' work *Antigone*, depicts woman as being strong and able of making wise decisions. In this famed tragedy, Sophocles uses the characters Ismene and Antigone to demonstrate the different features and positions that women are typical of interpreting. Ismene represented the conventionally women in ancient Greek (weak and subordinate). Through the character of Antigone, women finally get to present realistic viewpoints about their character. He is even more enraged when he discovers that a woman has broken his laws. The sexist stereotypes introduced in this tragedy address many viewpoints of men at this time. Creon the conceited and tyrant head represented these views more than any one. Antigone was the real woman who was characterized by bravery, passion and fury. She breaks the roles of the land to do whatever she wants. The play is full with patterns in which Antigone is able to make her own decision. First, Antigone goes up against Creon's rule and buries her slain brother. She does this because she is sympathetic and loves her brother very much. Creon tries to show Antigone who's in angry from her making here see the consequences of her behavior by punishing her to a life of imprisonment but Antigone insisted in her decision by accepting her cost with pride and she takes the whole responsibility, she takes all the praise. Despite that she proves is strong enough to stand up to men, which was totally against the norm at this time. She refuses to obey to her society rules unlike her sister Ismene. Ismene is a coward and rejects to help her sister because she feared men. This fear leads her to show less respect and sympathy to her brother. Ismene declares, "We are only women, we cannot fight with men, Antigone!" (Sophocles). This shows that she is reluctant to do the correct thing if it means standing up to a man (ibid). Another point of view about the significance of women's presence in ancient Greek tragedy refers to the importance of

⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Representation_of_women_in_Athenian_tragedy her.

them in Greek mythology "As Aristotle observes, most tragedies come from the histories of a few noble families and take place among close family members (Poetics 1453a, b). It is only to be expected, then, that women should have a prominent place in tragedy, as a result of their importance for the families central to Greek mythology" (Blondell 1999)

This kind of theater hadn't the role of presenting the actual life of Greek women time but it is used to make large number of critical male audience "theater uses the feminine for the purposes of imagining a fuller model for the masculine self". Another reason of involving women in theater, is to encourage males audience to deal with both their own structure of females and their own anxiety about the impartiality of the public and family over which they had claimed exclusive control and to talk about issues of importance to men make use of female figures as it stated "the male audience to confront both their own constructions of the female and their own anxieties about the justice of the civic and family worlds over which they had claimed exclusive control" (ibid)

5. Modern feminist theory

Although the difference at time and place in comparison the 20th century to the Greek, with first glance, seems to suggest the same problem about some notions like feminism that plague occupy human mind, especially literary men and philosophers they till the present time.

According to Jenifer Rich there were no clear view about feminism. The participants divided into different groups. Number of participants proposed that "feminism was the equal rights between men and women in all the domains of human life for example economic, education, politics etc". Some suggested that is the involved the dismantling of sex and gender system. The third group supposed that it the meander struggle in opposition to the male governance in all its types. An eight years old boy had stopped all discussions and attracted the attention by asking "isn't feminism the belief that woman are human beings?" (Rich 2007)

She added that all feminist theory has been paying attention in different ways to shed light on the subject of women position within society, in order say to that women are human beings and make their real position in the community far from all problems

such as alienation, objectification and prejudice. In addition to that is to make the rights of women equal as men and consider them a principal in building society.(ibid)

Writers and philosophers differ in their views about women. Some of them believes that females are inferior by nature Aristotle said ‘the female is female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities’, and St Thomas Aquinas believed that woman is an ‘imperfect man’. (Selden et al 2005 P) .during its long history, feminism as concept in literary works have appear only into English usage in the 1890s but women’s conscious struggle to resist patriarchy goes much further back to the Greek time for while the word may, has required to disturb the complacent certainties of such a patriarchal culture, to assert a belief in sexual equality, and to eradicate sexist domination in transforming society.

Feminist writers believe in rising the gender equality in all domains; Social, political and economical. They insist on neglecting the differences between men and women in their works .They work in order to make their thoughts performed in the real world not remain just as concepts in their literary writing. Then, they believe in increasing human choice, in other words, it allows males and females to be capable to grow their personal qualities⁵

Conclusion

This chapter deals with the feminism discourse. Starting with the view of some Greek writers who deals with feminism such as Aristotle, Plato who are considered as well-known Greek leading figure. The point of the woman in Greek mythology is very important for one can distinguish three position for women during the Greek period; which are goddesses, woman from the social category and the female monsters .Also, it is concerned with Woman position through male perspective and Greek Woman through tragedies this discussed with examples form literary works . Finally, The focus was on the modern feminist theory and its main principles.

⁵ <http://www.redletterpress.org/feminism101.html>

Chapter three

The analysis of the form

Introduction

This chapter represents the different technique used in Euripides' Medea to support the content of the play. The form and the content are interrelated and complete each other. The technique of choosing a word to creating specific kind of language called style. It defined as "the manner of linguistic expression in prose or verse—a show speaker or writers say whatever it is that they say" (Abrams 1999), or it is a way in which the writer express his thought. We starts this chapter by analysing the main clear rhetorical technique in the play including double argument and soliloquies. Then we move to style focusing on diction and tone. At the end we study the imagery and how it contribute to add more artistic power to the work.

1 Double argument

The art of persuasion which dominated in 5th and 4th centuries influenced the whole literary production especially Euripides' tragedies. all his literary production is no more than a reflection of society which ruled by the sophistic culture where problems were solved in public debate. The rhetorical knowledge which Euripides mostly presents are the agons; the agons composed of parallel speeches where two main brought faces in court-like conditions. They are conceived and formed as accusation and defense speech, following the regulations of rhetoric that in general terms matches with what we later find in the rhetorical treatises of Aristotle and Anaximenes⁶.

The main principle of the sophist school was the use of double argument which is rhetorical technique of creating opposing arguments for a one question. The purpose of this action is to convince the other by this speech (Smith 2006). Euripides uses this technique to emphasize the rhetorical power that woman had through his main character Medea.

Medea has great speaking skill to convince the others by her speech and defend herself. Firstly she tries to convince Creon, the king of Corinth to left her remained for one day in his kingdom. In the beginning of his speech, Creon insists on his decision by

⁶ http://www.rosetta.bham.ac.uk/Issue_03/Velasco.htm

using some harsh words and action verbs " go, take , put and see " because he know that Medea was intelligent and not an obedient woman specially when she was angry

"I order you out of Corinth; take your sons and go
 Into exile .Waste no time; I'm here to see this order .enforced
 And I am not going back into my place
 Until I have put you outside, my boundaries. (p25 248- 284)

Creon declare that he fear medea's reaction against what happen that's why he decided to exile her but medea tries to convince him by using effective language and specific words through using different argument to left her stay for another day .One of them is that he is not her goal because Creon did nothing to her but Jason was the responsible for choosing Creon s' daughter for marriage. She said

"A woman -to wrong a king. You have done me no wrong .
 you have given your daughter to the man you chose .I hat
 My husband -true ;but you had every right to do"(P26L309-311)

Medea starts her first argument by the word "A woman" which is itself has a significant meaning that females are not in the position to stand in the face of king even if he make mistake .Then she specify her speech and applying it to her situation. she start to blame her husband and exclude the king from the responsibility of her misery.

Medea add another argument to emphasize her demand and she tries to use her children for that she claimed that she want to remain another day not for herself but for her sons because she must organize a plan for their leaving and they are too young to see the suffering of the exile. She tries to play with Creon 's emotion when she said that children had no one to take care and they are helpless in addition to that he is a father to understand what parents feels. Medea asks him to show some mercy for the young children .

Medea: This one day let me stay,
 For settle some plan for my exile, make provision
 For my two sons ,since their own father is not concerned
 To help them .Show some pity: you are a father too,
 You should feel kindly towards them .For myself, exile
 Is nothing .I weep for them; their fate is very hard. (P27 L346-352)

At the end Medea succeed in convincing Creon to stay for one day in Corinth and make him submit to her demand by saying :

I'm not tyrant by nature .My soft heart has often
Betrayed me; and I know it 's foolish of me now;
Yet none less, Medea, you shall have what you ask.
But take this warning: if tomorrow's holy sun
Finds you or them inside my boundaries, you die (350 -354 p 27)

In another scene, Euripides show the strong rhetorical ability of his protagonist. She sends a slave to call Jason in order to apologies to him. When he arrive ,Medea starts applying her intelligent plan .She begins to faults herself by using negative adjectives such as: fool and mad .Then she asks him to forget what she had said during her angry temper and forgive her . Also she tries to remember him with the happy days that they had spend together

Medea: Jason ,I ask you to forgive the things I said
You must bear with my violent temper; you and I
Share many memories of love. I have been taking
I have been taking
Myself to task.' You are a fool', I've told myself,
'You're mad, when people try to plan things for the best ,
to be resentful, and pick quarrels with the king
And with your husband; what he's doing will help us all .(P 43 L870 -876)

In order to convince Jason indirectly .Medea use different way to emphasize her thoughts. She turns the speech towards her sons by saying that she loves their father and they must love him too. After this intelligent strategy used by Medea, Jason accept quickly her apologies and forgive her. He was convinced totally that Medea accepts the reality and change her thoughts.

Greet your father as I do, and put your arms round him.
Forget our quarrel ,and love him as your mother does 895 896 p44

2 Soliloquies in Medea

Euripides uses this technique in which he represented the inner thought of his protagonist " medea". Medea deliver soliloquy in first appearances on stage. This soliloquy is about her personal suffering and the sufferings of woman on general.

oh oh ! what misery , what wretchedness !
What shall I do? If only I were dead

This quote shows the psychological state of Medea. She is in the highest point of misery. The same time she is surprised by Jason's deeds and questioning what kind of misery she lives in. The measure of suffering is more than her power. She wants to die instead of living in this situation.

During her soliloquy, Medea represented her future plan in order to take revenge from her husband by killing her children and Creon with his daughter. Medea through her thoughts enters in conflict with herself. It is hard for her to kill her own children. She regrets that she could not see them grow up in the same time they remember her with her worst enemy Jason. She tries several times to convince herself to omit the idea of killing her sons but she hesitates because she knows in advance that if she kills her children she will suffer more than her husband does. That makes her live in internal conflict by questioning herself to kill or not to kill her children.

Myself? I won't do it. I won't think of it again. (P.49 L 1044-1048)

The characters of the play change their temper and behaviors during the development of events and this creates complicity in the plot. As an example of Medea who changes her mind and thought several times through the play.

what makes me cry with pain
is the next thing I have to do. I will kill my sons (p41L793)
Women my courage is all gone. Their young, bright faces
I can't do it. I'll think no more of it. I'll take them
Away from Corinth. Why should I hurt them (1044-1046 p 49)

In the above quote, the two first lines contain Medea's decision to kill her sons but the following lines represent the opposite of this idea. This contradictory contributes to increase the complexity of the plot and it shows another example of the change in Medea's thoughts.

Also the following quote presents paradoxical views of Medea:

Greet your father, as I do, and put your arms round him.
Forget our quarrel, and love him as your mother does.
We have made friends; we are not angry any more.
There, children; take his hand P44.L893-896

In this quote Medea asks her children to praise and respect their father as she does and orders them to embrace him and disregard the previous problem which separates

the whole family. She adds that the new royal family are their new friends, and they are not annoyed from the second wife.

Medea [indoors]: Do I not suffer? Am I not wronged? Should I not weep?
Children, your mother is hated, and you are cursed:
Death take you, with your father, and perish his whole house!(P20 L109-113)

In contrary to the pervious quote, the second one presents completely different idea in which Medea talks with her sons unlike what she said before .She shows anger from them and their father and wishes death take them all.

3 Style

3-1Diction

Euripides through his personal style play with words to present the image of female in Greek time and shows his feminist thoughts using simple language but expressive one .His rhetorical skills amazes many readers when he constructs creative art by employs colloquial words. In Medea play he uses different levels of language " abstract, expressive and descriptive", in order to transfer the scene as a vivid image.

Thus Euripides represented a woman who was suffering physically, emotionally and mentally in her situations in life and how she treated. So, the words she select are full of pain and misery For example:

Medea [still from indoors]:
Come, flame of the sky ,
Pierce through my head !
What do gain from living any longer ?
Oh, how hate living !I want
To end my life, leave it behind , and die (P 21-22L142-147).
Also this appeared in
(...)but this blow that has fallen on me
Was not to be expected. I t has crushed my hart.

Medea use the pronoun "we" and other words such as "dear friends, our " to generalize her physical oppression with other women. She uses hurting words including "no pleasure, I want to *die*, and Possessor" as it stated:

Life has no pleasure left, dear friends .I want to die
We have bought a husband, we must then accept him as
Possessor of our body . (P24L224-226).

In addition to that, Euripides' representation of woman and her choosing of words to express how woman feel and think to deal with her situation and describe her condition, her thought, and reflect her estate by using a lot of words like: poor, worse, questioning, wrong, life, will, challenge and revolt, free

Medea: you filthy coward !-if I know any worse name
For such unmanliness I'd use it- so ,you've come! (P 31L 465-466)

Also, these quotations are simply express the description of Medea to her husband Jason, using the adjectives like: filthy, worse, unmanliness, and coward in order to emphasis her strong hater to him. This skillful use of diction improves the reader experience in understanding the play.

3-2 Tone

Euripides's tone reflects the environment of the play and his personal attitude. The low status of woman in Greek society make Euripides wrote Medea in very tragic mood. Also He use imaginary tone to create sort of beauty in the style and make the audience engaged with the action of the play. He known by variation in tone for example in Medea

Thus, the tone of the play was sympathetically to Medea at the beginning and describe her as weak person by using words and expression such as : alone, cruel blow, poor medea, grief, crying, not eat lies collapsed and tears. But vary totally in other scenes when Euripides employ words like :clever, proud, strong, powerful and free. This makes the reader interact and connected with the play and tries to catch the real representation of protagonist. Furthermore, this technique makes Euripides explain better the internal struggle of Medea as a strong woman and her way of thinking. For example:

Myself ?I won't do it.I won't think of it again.
What the matter with me ?Are my enemies
To laugh at me ?Am I let them off scot free?
I must steel myself to it .What coward I am,
Even tempting my own resolution with soft talk (P49L 1047-1050)

This quotation shows Medea's conflict personality and divided self also her will to achieve he self respect and to realize fulfillment.

Medea deals with woman seen from Euripides perspective, the mood is the means that expresses both the author's personality and the status of the heroine Medea who depicted a woman in specific stage of life and her attitude towards the conditions she involved in.

Also, the flashbacks of Medea's relationship with Jason reflects a type of mood which is romantic. She was portrayed as perfect lovely and faithful wife. Through using words as it clearly appeared in the following expressions: Jason was my whole life; he knows that well, mad with love for Jason, While to Jason was all obedient.

The shocking event makes Euripides wrote in very horror mood to express the details of the scene by using words as danger, death, sword, blood, revenge, kill, slaughter, violent, burning, poison, bury, mortal, fear, horror, crime, punishment horrible and cadaver

4- Imagery

Euripides uses imagery in the text to build a picture in reader's mind. The text is filled with descriptions which create image to transfer the whole scene of play. Thus, Euripides catch the reader's attention. Also; the imagery used to help in describing the different actions during the play and provides understanding of Medea estate as a woman challenge the patriarchal society, thus, is gives artistic sense to the text.

The following quote describe the main character Medea s' miserable situation. The reader can approached the real image of the personality. Euripides makes the reader imagine Medea state as if it is visible to him in which she was totally destroyed he also describe in detail her feature" eyes, cheek".

she will not eat ;she lies collapsed in agony
 Dissolving the long hours in tears .since first she heard
 Of Jason's wickedness, she has not raised her eyes,
 Or moved her cheek from the hard ground; and when her friends
 Reason with her, she might be a rock or wave of the sea (P18 L23-28)

In addition to that, "I've watched her watching them, her eye like a wild bull's". (P20L93)It allows the reader to observe the hatred that Medea carrying to Jason through seeing her children. He uses metaphor and compares her with a wild bull in angry temper.

Also Euripides describes the movement of children through the Nurse speech. She transfers the vivid image of the children actions through different words" Quick, hurry, go and now "as stated :

There! You can hear; it is your mother
Racking her heart, racking her anger
Quick, now, children, hurry indoors;
And don't go within sight of her,
Or anywhere near her; keep a safe distance (P20 L 101-105)

Conclusion

During this chapter, we have attempt to study the form that Euripides makes in shaping his literary work shed light on the style and techniques that he used. we had started with analysing the dialogue in the play focusing in the protagonist speech. Also presented Medea soliloquies which introduce her inner thought .Then, we moved to Euripides style dealing with diction, tone, and the figurative language which enrich the meaning of the play including imagery.

Chapter four

The analysis of the content

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the analysis of the content. It starts with the study of the main character Medea and her several faces (heroine, woman, victim and mother) taking into consideration the analysis of the major themes dominates in the sequence of events through feminism principles and we exemplify from the concerned play.

Medea represents the woman suffering during the Greek time and even now. She tries to defend herself as females in patriarchal society and protect her right. Medea confront the Greek tradition and show them what weak woman could do if someone hurt her.

1The feminist faces of Medea

Medea the character play the role of protagonist represented different faces like woman; victim, heroine, and mother. In each role, she shows the whole image of feminism and women issues (motherhood, and suffering ...). She represents the mistreatment of a female in male dominant society and her strong desire for change and challenge. In other words, she wants to change the patriarchal society's views about females which classify woman in low position. Then she tries to confront them and prove that woman has several capacities and can take a decision, through all this she emphasize the high position which woman should have in society.

1-1Medea as a Heroine

Euripides shows his feminist views when he breaks the norms of his society and gives the protagonist to a female character, in contrast to his contemporaries who make male play the main role in their plays but minor roles are given for females.

1-1 -1Medea heroine through women revolution

Medea the protagonist has become a timeless symbol of feminine revolt. She did whatever necessary to achieve her goals. When she makes a decision, she never comes back. Medea is an example of a female who challenges her time where woman is totally marginalized. She took very fundamental steps to liberate herself and punished the man who destroyed her life. She rejects to accept the limitations that a patriarchal society set

upon her and she breaks the custom of her time, in doing so she represents modern woman who struggle for her rights and liberation.

So ,I make one request .If I can find a way
To work revenge on Jason for his wrongs to me,
Say nothing .**A women 's weak and timid in most matters**;
The noise of war, the look of steel , makes her a coward .
But touch her right in marriage , and there 's no bloodier spirit. P25 257- 262

Through the above quote, Medea decides to take revenge from her husband because she believes that women are strong when someone touches their right in marriage. They defend their right or become criminal in order to protect their position. But Medea declares that she may accept if they describe woman as weak and timid in several other issues.

Another quote support the female revolution

A time come when the female sex is honoured;
That old discordant slander
Shall more hold us subject.
Male poets of past ages, with their ballads
Of faithless women, shall go out of fashion;
For Phoebus, Prince of Music, Never bestowed the Lyric inspiration
(p29-30 L319-425)

Moreover the Chorus represents the female revolution against male domination and refuse to be dependant to them .They wants to change the custom of ancient male poets who portray woman as unfaithful person. Women are now conscious enough to struggle with the aim to prove their position. The chorus stand against the superiority of males and support Medea s' views for freedom and gender equality, Although there were several patriarchal thoughts in the play; feminist thoughts are presented too. Through portrayed Medea as independent woman who is resolving her problems you can observe that gender role are change a little and that woman is becoming more equal to man. Patriarchal ideology is decreased when Medea act very powerfully. She kills her children and she doesn't allow her love for them get in the way.

1-1-2Medea heroine through courage

Euripides give Medea the characteristic of courage which related only to man in Greek s' views. Her courage portrayed in her decision to leave her mother country she was very clever woman who had brave enough to leave her home. another thing emphasize her bravery was her own decision in choosing her husband .Nowadays the

agreement of woman become obligation in marriage but in Greek time woman had no right in choosing her partner but Medea choose Jason herself without caring about her society s' culture .That was a large danger for her to take and many women probably looked at it as a liberating and heroine.

This murder cunningly and quietly. But if fate
Banishes me without resource, I will myself
Take sword in hand, harden my heart to the uttermost,
And kill them both, even if I am to die for it .(P29 L390-393)

Medea's speech emphasizes her brave spirit when she decides gently to apply her horrible plan to kill her enemies. The words cunningly and quietly that she use prove the full confident she have .despite her terrible intention and destroyed psychology she think in calm manner. Also she choose danger tool "sword" which is used mostly by man in war and the person who can kill by sword should be courage enough. In the last line of the quote, Medea confirms strongly her courage because she does not fear from death and she accepts it. According to her the essential thing is to achieve her goals even if it demand to pass way for that .

Another quote that show Medea courage

My central hearth is dedicated, no one of them
Shall hurt me and not suffer for it! Let me work:
In bitterness and pain they shall repent this marriage,
Repent their houses joined, repent my banishment.(P29 L 396-399)

In addition to her plan ,she promise to destroy her enemies and makes them suffer for their deeds and regret with pain because they are behind her marriage fail.

Euripides represents Medea as genius female. She uses her rhetoric skill to make the chorus of the Corinthian woman sympathy with her and they hide her future danger plan, in addition to that she succeed to play with Creon emotion when he left her remain for another day in Corinth. As it appears in the next quote

Medea: This one day let me stay,

For settle some plan for my exile, make provision
For my two sons ,since their own father is not concerned
To help them .Show some pity :you are a father too, (P27 L247-252)
You should feel kindly towards them .For myself, exile
Is nothing .I weep for them; their fate is very hard.

1-1-3Medea heroine through cleverness

Euripides focuses on Medea's slyness and intelligence. These feature bring pain and sadness to her .She hopes to be stupid rather than claver because the cleverness lead her

to negative consequences She is bounded by people less clever and ingenious than she, but social power and respect is theirs. This trait is one of the principals of the modern feminist theory at the 19century which Euripides builds early its foundation. The playwright make medea more clever than the male character that is one of the principles of the contemporary feminist theory which increase the gender equality and make the female have the same capacities as man or higher as stated in the following quote

what do you gain by being clever?
 You neglect your own affairs; and all your fellow citizens
 Hate you. Those who are fools will call you ignorant
 And useless , when you offer them unfamiliar knowledge (294-298 p26)

Euripides construct the seeds of feminism, when he put the female in the contrary to women qualities at that time .Medea show many stereotypically Greek male traits, such as bravery, intelligence, certainty, ingenuity, authority, independence, and the capability to conceive and carry out a plan successfully. In these qualities she exceeds every male character in the play. (Blondel 1999)

Creon declare that Medea is clever woman when he confess directly that he fear from her intelligence .This lead him to take position of defense against Medea cunning and consider her as enemy .He expect that she will not remained silence victim after all that because Creon was certain that Medea characterize by being strong and intelligent female as stated in the following quote

Creon: **I fear you** . Why warp up the truth?I fear that you
 May do my daughter some irreparable harm .
 A number of things contribute to my anxiety.
You 're a clever women , skilled in many evil arts
 You 're barred from Jason 's bed ,and that enrages you.
 I learn too from reports ,that you have uttered threats
 Of revenge on Jason and his bride and his bride 's father.
 I 'll act first ,then, in **self- defence** .I'd rather make you
My enemy now. than weaken .and later pay with tears .P25-26 l 282-290

Another quote in which Euripides deals with Medea intellectual capacity

I have in mind many paths of death for them,
 I don't know which to choose .Should I set fire to the house ,
 And burn the bridal chamber ?Or creep up to their bed
 And drive a sharp knife through their guts? There is one
 fear:
 If I am caught entering
 the house ,or in the act,
 I die , and the last laugh goes to my enemies .
 The best is the direct way , which most suits my bent :

To kill by poison.P28 L 377- 385

Through the above lines Medea confused in choosing which manner she follow in order to take revenge because she has several plans in her mind .She measure the consequences of each strategy separately, at last she wisely choose the most appropriate way to save her life.

1-1-4Medea heroine through revenge

The whole events of the play turned around Revenge but not as usual because in this case the active person is female not men .Revenge lead the plot toward its terrible highest point. Euripides give emphasise to this theme because he was feminist by nature and when someone wants to revenge, he must be strong enough to do so .the writer give this characteristic to his heroine Medea. This idea make Euripides violate from the conventional norms of his society which describe female as weak creature and he basis for feminism. The idea of revenge was the dominant in Medea's mind. She comprehend how cruel her plan is, "*The horror of what I am going to do*" (line 1080, p. 50), but she also know the power of revenge, "*but anger, the spring of all life's horror, masters my resolve.*" (L 1080-1081, p. 50). She thinks that when kill her own kids she would accomplish her revenge on Jason

Chorus: But-to kill your own children! Can you steel your heart?
Medea: This is the way to deal Jason the deepest wound.
(P42L 814-816)

If she did not kill them she would live her rest life with disgrace and that is not a choice for a female full of pride by giving this characteristic to Medea Euripides engaged early in new theory which named feminism in the 19 century. Medea knows the consequences of her decision that she will suffer a lot because she loses the only remain family.

Through the previous analysis, we find that Medea succeeds in playing the role of heroine in the play to emphasize the importance and the powerful of female and show clearly the high intellectual capacity which women possess.

1-2 Medea as a victim

Euripides engages unconsciously with the female suffering as early as antiquity which becomes a principle issue among feminist supporters today. In the play Euripides portrays Medea as victim to husband, herself, marriage and society.

Medea the victim of her husband presents the male authority over female in Greek society. Although she sacrifices herself for him many times and become an exile, she live in isolation without neither father nor friends to protect her but he consider this as normal behaviour for person naturally inferior than him and it was common in male dominant society.

In the following quote the Nurse feels sympathy with her mistress Medea when her husband betrays and make her victim of this marriage although Medea was an obedient and faithful wife .The marriage for any female in Greek time is the only way to save her life

In Corinth;where,coming as an exile ,she has earned
the citizens' welcome ;while to Jason she is all
Obedience-and in marriage that's the saving thing
When a wife obediently accept her husband's will
But now her world has turned to enmity, and wounds her
Where her affection's deepest .Jason has betrayed
His own sons, and my mistress, for royal bed,(P17.18L11-17)

Feminism come against the superiority of men in society who is treated differently in comparison to women .Euripides show his feminist orientation earlier when he reflect the social principle of his time which despite women in all domains in order to get the sympathy for females and show their role in society. In his time women were victim of mistreatment. The whole authority and high position were given to males.

Medea was also a victim of society because she is foreigner .Medea situation was worse than other women because she doubly damned (woman and barbarian) and suffer twice .Firstly, for being woman despite in male dominant society like the majority of females in Greek time .Secondly , for being barbarian live in exile in different atmosphere unlike her mother nation .It was difficult for her to adapt with

new law , tradition and customs and accept the different varieties between the two societies .the coming quote show this idea

But the same arguments do not apply
to you and me .you have this city, your father's home,
the enjoyment of your life, and your friend's company.
I am alone; I have no city; now my husband
Insults me .I was taken as plunder from a land
At the earth's edge. I have no mother, brother,
no any of my blood to turn to in extremity 251 -257 p25

In Greek society women were confined within the parental home until a husband was chosen for her(Nimis, 2007 P 403).Medea talks about the women and the issues of marriage how is not available for women to remained unmarried because for them women without marriage better to die. Men allowed going out home and joining new friends in contrary to women who must stay in the solution of the house and live for their husbands alone.

If a man grows tired
of the company at home ,he can go out ,and find
A cure for tediousness .We wives are forced to look
to one man only .And, they tell us, we at home
Live free from danger, they go out to battle: fools
I'd rather stand three times in front line than bear
One child (L.244-250) p24-25

In the three last lines of the previous quote Medea make comparison between the woman's role and man 's role. Men is responsible to participate in arms, while woman is responsible to reproduce children .She find that woman role is more difficult than man role also through this example She emphasize the important of female role and show the woman suffering as household

Medea introduce the patriarchal ideology which dominated in Greek society and she express her fully anger about it. She questioned why other creature is free and had will but woman must life under man authority as one of his belongings. This appeared clearly when she said:

surely, of all creatures that have life and will, we women
Are the most wretched. When, for an extravagant sum
We have bought a husband, we must then accept him as
Possessor of our body .Then the great question: will the
man (P.24 229–232

1-3 Medea as unusual mother

One of the main feminist faces of Medea is the face of mother. Motherhood is essential in female life. Women's natural function is to keep the generation. Medea talks of childbirth – of woman's civic role as producers of heir.

Mother love is the strongest one over the world also this view dominant in ancient time. The Greeks consider the mother-love as the most powerful "natural" emotional relation and "the closest by nature". Medea's unsure position in the final scene as both betrayed, mourning mother and child-killing avenger means that the play can be interpreted in very different ways (Allen 2002). Although, what happens in the play; it is recognisable that Euripides does not present Medea as uncaring mother but strongly as a lovely one even when she planned to slaughter her children (Blondel P.155)

Oh, my heart, don't, don't do it! Oh, miserable heart,
Let them be! Spare your children! We'll all live together
Savely in Athens; and they will make you happy....No! (P49-50 L 1056 -1058)

Through the previous quote Medea shows her motherhood feeling. She enters in interior conflict to convince herself in order to let her children live with her in joy and peace. But she prefers to kill them because she knows that if they stay a life, other people would kill them later, as stated in the following quote

Medea: Oh, no! I will myself convey them to the temple
of Hera Acraea; there in the holy precinct I
will bury them with my own hand, to ensure that none
of my enemies shall violate or insult their graves. (L.1379-1382 p.60)

In other words, Medea tries to play the role of good mother. Euripides does not give her any characteristic of bad mother but the ending is very shocking to the audience because the mother love transfers to hate for the sake of revenge. She applies her horrible plan and kills her own children. Medea succeeds to liberate herself as a woman in patriarchal society but she fails to play her natural role as mother when she favors the revenge instead of her own kids.

1-4 Medea as woman

The whole play is about woman and her challenge to emphasise her position in society. The feminist notion appeared clearly through the character Medea. She is a model of strong woman who could transfer her pain and suffering to successful revenge.

Euripides made Medea unusual woman she had extreme of both behavior and emotion. Unlike the other play writers he give her the ability to be strong enough that formulate his feminist before time belonging. He breaks the traditional norms of Greek society which believes that woman is weak and need of others support .

(...)Let no one think of me
As humble or weak or passive; let them understand
I am of different kind : dangerous to my enemies,
Loyal to my friends. To such a life glory belongs.(P41L 805- 808)

Through her speech ,Medea refuses the general views which consider females as lowly and weak and declares that she is unlike the other .Medea with pride describe herself as powerful and harsh in her treatment of the enemies in the same time faithful to her friends.

Also Medea sharing her attitude with other women and generalised her pain wisely to them .She use the pronoun "we" and speak about the universal suffering that women face .They are marginalized in comparison to other who have existence and decision over their life "Surely, of all creatures that have life and will, we women Are the most wretched. p.24 (L.229-230)" .Another quote which show that woman has not the right to select her partner or ask for divorce if her life turned terrible with him.Medea expresses her strong angry for injustices of her society attitude which regard divorced female as unrespectable "*We get be bad or good? For women, divorce is not Respectable; to repel the man, not possible*".(P23L235-236)

Also, Patriarchal ideology is appeared clearly within the play because It shows Jason as strong man who represent the thought which characterize Greek society when he see woman as source of miseries and that their role is restricted in giving birth to children . the coming quote express this idea

If only children could be got some other way
Without the female sex! If women didn't existed
Human life would be rid of all its miseries. (P34 L 571-573)

Conclusion

To conclude, in this chapter we have tried to study the content of the play and analysis the hidden message that Euripides wants to convey. We had began with the analysis of Medea's different faces (heroine, victim, mother and woman) and extract the main themes related to the feminist notion .We see how woman is strong through Medea the heroine with her main feature (cleverness, courage ,desire for revolution and revenge) than we deals with the female suffering through Medea the victim and how her husband and society mistreated her .Then we move to her role as unusual mother who sacrifice her children for the sake of revenge .At last we present Medea as woman between the suffering and the challenge.

General Conclusion

General conclusion

Greek literary and philosophical works had indirectly or directly dealt the issue of the position and role of women in society. The objective of this dissertation is to spotlight on the state of women in Greek society also, the motive behind Euripides' play and the choice of Medea as heroine. It meant how he tackles women issues and represented a female model during Greek era.

As we have seen that Euripides' life experience played a main role in forming his way of writings. From his biography, we can see that literary art reflecting the playwright's life. Also, Euripides has tried to depict his world and criticizes the way women were treated differently than men by giving females principle role in his works unlike contemporaries .

Also, it has deal with the study of women position and their real condition within patriarchal society which represented by the protagonist Medea. The play was written from male perspective and we analyzing it relying on feminist theory.

Medea was model of strong women who breaks the limitation and makes a revolution against female inferiority and male domination in all areas .She succeed in giving herself a position and fight for her rights. Through this Medea presented the main principle of feminist revolution which called in the 19 century modern feminist theory.

This work is divided into four main chapters, the opening chapter entitled general and personal background .It is separated into two sections. In the first one, we have concerned with the whole context of the play including historical, social, political and religious context .In each context, we focus on the estate of women and what is the concerned role they play. The second section deals with the biographical information of Euripides. It contains his personal life, style and women in his works.

Then, we have dealt in the second chapter with women position and feminist discourse. It began with Greek writers, Aristotle and Plato who deals with feminism .Then, we introduce women through, mythology, male perspective and Greek tragedy Also we spot light on the modern feminist theory and its main principles

We have shown in the third chapter the different techniques that Euripides used in enforcing the content of his work through double argument, soliloquies, diction, tone, symbolism and imagery that shaped the play

The content of the play is showing in forth chapter. It shed light on the presentation of women; her position and condition in Greek time through analyzing the main character Medea as representative figure of female. taking into consideration her main faces "heroine, mother, victim and unusual mother".

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to discuss Euripides's play and how he engaged earlier with the basic principles of feminist discourse through the main character Medea. Also, how Medea represent women position and their circumstances in Greek time. Through the analysis of the form and content of the play we had demonstrated that Medea, the heroine is the symbol of the prominent features of feminism. The first chapter involves an overview about historical, social, political and religious context of the play and Euripides background. The second chapter focuses on the feminist discourse and women position. Third chapter concerned with the study of the form through different techniques employed in the play. Finally, the fourth chapter, deal with the analysis of the play focusing on the content.

ملخص الدراسة:

نهدف من خلال هذه الدراسة الى تحليل مسرحية ميديا للكاتب الاغريقي يوريبيدس لإبراز مكانة و دور المرأة حيث كان هذا الأخير السياق في ابراز القواعد الجوهرية للنظرية الحركة النسوية من خلال اعماله الأدبية. و نقد نظرة مجتمعه المجحفة في حقها و منحها الدور البطولي في عمله الأدبي.، و قد استطاعت الشخصية الرئيسية تصوير مكانة و حالة المرأة في العصر الاغريقي. لهذا الغرض ارتأينا تحليل شكل و المضمون المسرحية. و سعينا من خلال هذه الدراسة الى حل شفرات رسالته المنطوية تحت مجموعة من الأساليب والتقنيات الأدبية. حيث جسدت ميديا الدور الرمزي للحركة النسوية في هذه المسرحية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الخطاب النسوي، ميديا، المجتمع الاغريقي، مكانة المرأة، الحركة النسوية.