METAMORPHOSIS OF FEMALE VOICES: A STUDY OF THE VIOLATION OF WOMEN IN GREEK AND ROMAN MYTHOLOGY AND FEMINIST REWRITINGS RECLAIMING THE NARRATIVE

SENA TUĞÇE GÜRKAN

JUNE,

2022

METAMORPHOSIS OF FEMALE VOICES: A STUDY OF THE VIOLATION OF WOMEN IN GREEK AND ROMAN MYTHOLOGY AND FEMINIST REWRITINGS RECLAIMING THE NARRATIVE

BY

SENA TUĞÇE GÜRKAN

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MA

IN

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

YEDİTEPE UNIVERSITY JUNE, 2022

PLAGIARISM

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Sena Tuğçe Gürkan

ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to study feminist revisionist rewritings of selected ancient Greek and Roman myths to show the violation of women in myth, its links to today's society and how feminist rewritings change the narration and empower mythological and real women by giving these mythical women voices to tell their own versions of the stories. The mythical women in question are; Daphne, Pygmalion's Statue, Circe and Medusa. They are all studied firstly through Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, then secondly the other ancient texts (Virgil's *Aeneid*, Homer's *Odyssey*, Parthenius's *Erotika Pathemata* etc.) that have originated or added to their myths and lastly some feminist rewritings of these myths by contemporary writers in different genres such as; Carol Ann Duffy, Ann Stanford, Nina MacLaughlin, Alicia Stallings, Madeline Miller and Micheal Kasenow with the use of feminist theories and theories about the psychology of violation of women.

Keywords: rewritings, mythology, feminism, violation.

ÖZET

Bu tez; feminist revizyonist yeniden yazımların Yunan ve Roman mitolojilerinde, kadınların taciz ve tecavüzünü, bunun bugünün kadınlarına olan bağlantısını, bu anlatıyı değiştirmeleri ve bu kadınlara hikayelerinin kendi versiyonlarını anlatmaları adına ses olarak mitolojideki ve gerçeklikteki kadınları güçlendirmeleri üzerine araştırmayı amaçlar. Bahsedilecek mitolojik figürler; Daphne, Pygmalion'ın heykeli, Circe ve Medusa olacaktır. Bu karakterlerin hepsi önce Ovid'in *Metamorphoses* ile, daha sonra mitlerinin başlatılmasında ya da mitlerin üzerine eklenmesinde katkısı bulunan diğer eski Yunan mitleri (Virgil'in *Aeneid*, Homer'ın *Odyssey*, Parthenius'un *Erotika Pathemata* v.b.) üzerinden ve son olarak da günümüz yazarlarının, Carol Ann Duffy, Ann Stanford, Nina MacLaughlin, Alicia Stallings, Madeline Miller and Micheal Kasenow, farklı edebi türlerden feminist yeniden yazımlarında, feminist teoriler ve kadınların tacizi ve tecavüzünün psikolojine dair teorilerle araştırılacaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: yeniden yazım, mitoloji, feminizm, tecavüz.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express her deepest gratitude to her supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Catherine MacMillan for her brilliant guidance, un-ending encouragement, through feedback, letting her express what she wants to say, mostly how she wants to say it—mostly— and for never giving up on her throughout the research process. This thesis would not have been possible with anyone else.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Plaigirism..... i

Abstract..... ii

Abstract (Turkish) iii

Acknowledgements..... iv

Table of Contents..... v

1. INTRODUCTION 1
2. THEORY AND BACKGROUND……..…….. 5
   2.1 Feminist Rewritings And Language Theories…… 5
   2.2 Angels and Monsters……..……. 9
   2.3 The Origins Of The Myths…….……12
   2.4 Rape And Trauma Studies……. 15
   2.5 Ancient Greece And Ancient Rome And Rape……. 18
   2.6 Ovid And Rape…….. 21
   2.7 Chapters To Come……. 24
3. GOOD WOMEN…….…… 27
   3.1 I Am Daphne……. 27
   3.2 I Am Galatea……. 42
4. EVIL WOMEN…….…….. 58
   4.1 I Am Circe…….…… 58
   4.2 I Am Medusa…….…… 82
5. CONCLUSION…….……...…. 103
6. REFERENCES…...…….. 108

1. INTRODUCTION

"One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman."

(Beauvoir, 1989, p.267)

We have all been monsters in someone else's stories, feared, abhorred, beaten. Men of Greek mythology, in common with other patriarchal mythologies, have been telling stories that do not belong to them for centuries. In these stories of heroes' journeys, women have become the stops, the gateways, the princesses/damsels to be rescued, and the monsters to be conquered. We have become something in relation to them, never a person with her own journey and reasons. This objectification of women created such an unequal narrative that, even in rape and violation, women have been condemned for their own victimization. Thanks to contemporary feminist rewritings, we are now presented with an alternative perspective that may even be closer to reality than the ones that have been traditionally shoved down our throats. Yet still, the roles given to these women in mythology, and what happens to those who try to go beyond the boundaries that were created for them, have been the warnings used to deter and control anyone who would try to go the same way.

> Daphne, Medusa, Cassandra, and the other women and female spirits who are harassed and assaulted throughout Greek and Roman myth are not given crossover stories, like the superheroes in the Marvel Avengers universe. They are never allowed to meet up and compare notes about their experiences or take collective action and call out the men and gods who have victimized them. Myth here does the work of an abusive partner: it isolates the women. They are never given a #MeToo moment. (Morales, 2020, p. 70)

Circe found herself on an island alone out of the confines of patriarchy, Medusa has become a 'monster', Daphne has become a tree; even the statue Pygmalion created became nothing but a wife trapped under a possible psychopath from her birth to her death. However, today we have women speaking up for women, artists such as Carol Ann Duffy, Margaret Atwood, Nina MacLaughlin, Adrienne Rich, Christa Wolf, Alicia Ostriker, Helen Morales and more amazing women, as well as some men who, having understood that the equality of the sexes is natural and will benefit both genders greatly, have (re)written these stories from the perspective of the female characters. This thesis intends to celebrate those voices and to show how the change in the narrative point of view gives the readers a different perspective on the metamorphosis of women as well as saying to today's women that we were never truly alone. Others have been in the position where we find ourselves, they were just hidden in dusty history pages written by men. Joseph Campbell (2020) states that; "(…) all I can tell you about mythology is what men have said and have experienced, and now women have to tell us from their point of view what the possibilities of the feminine future are." (P. 452) Thus, it is now time for women to tell their own stories, write their own history, as it has never before been truly ours.

Owning one's own story is a strong statement against the perpetrators of violence. This thesis will therefore focus on how the violation of women has been so normalised in Greek mythology in the male-dominated narration, meanwhile comparing the acts of rape, their possible reasons, and outcomes from a female perspective in today's retellings of these myths using strong, female perspective oriented texts such as; poetry by Carol Ann Duffy, Alicia Stallings and Ann Stanford and prose by Nina MacLaughlin, Micheal Kasenow and Madeline Miller. The main focus will be on Circe as a strong figure who uses traditionally feminine wiles to scare

possible rapists and how Medusa, Pygmalion's statue, referred to as Galatea in this thesis for reasons that will be mentioned below, and Daphne were empowered by outing their rapists as they are; not gods, not divine beings but fancies of weak men, adorned, as will be explored in the relevant chapters, with toxic masculinity and obvious narcissistic traits or issues with the image of self which they reflect on women they deem weaker than themselves. Therefore writing this feels like some kind of reparation is being obtained from the pages of male history, through showcasing the violation that has been done to women in myth for ages and comparing these acts of oppression and violence to today's women's experiences. This will be carried out using the original texts, mainly by Ovid but also by Homer, Hesiod, Virgil and Parthenius and the feminist revisionist rewritings from the perspective of the silenced and violated women in these great myths.

"We are, I am, you are by cowardice or courage the one who find our way back to this scene carrying a knife, a camera, a book of myths in which our names do not appear." (Adrienne Rich, 1971) So here we are, as Rich puts it so openly, to put our own voices into our own stories. To rewrite our pains, our loves, our screams. To say;

'This is what happened to me. This is my story. And you shall hear it.'

The violation of women has been considered 'normal, 'necessary' and 'natural' for so long that most of our myths include some form of rape. "There are more paintings displayed in art museums in Europe and North America that feature a mythological rape scene than there are paintings displayed by female artists of color. Look up into the night sky and you will see ancient rape scenes emblazoned there too: Jupiter's Galilean moons are named for his victims Io, Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto." (Morales, 2020, p. 69)

Although real-life statistics of women being violated are not so different from myth, these stories are still potentially dangerous. They arguably normalise oppression and dehumanisation by painting rape as love, as seduction or as a momentary weakness of the male sex. There should be no justification whatsoever for forcing your will on someone that is somehow weaker than you (in position, hierarchy, physically etc). But it is not art that is to blame for telling the stories, it is the voices of patriarchy that slips through and into them, how they talk about rape, how they still silence the female voice, mock it, blame it, oppress it, transform it to their will. This is exactly why this thesis will focus on how today's female artists give voice to our sisters whose tongues were taken from them, who were robbed not only of their bodily autonomy but also of their voices in history and myth. For so long, women in myth have been painted as victims, properties, and villains in relation to men's stories but in the contemporary works analysed in this thesis, we have a more realistic picture of how the stories might go if women were given a chance to tell their side of it. This thesis will take a closer look at some of the myths in Ovid's Metamorphosis, while also detailing the other writers who have told the original myths and their retellings by contemporary authors. Although the focus of this thesis will be mainly on the rape and violation of women and the reclaiming of the female self in general, with the power struggle and the trauma it causes, rape is never just physical so this study will not only focus on the bodily penetration aspect but rather more generally on the violation of a person's life, their identity and, ultimately, on how, in the midst of such terror and oppression, how they have found their own empowerment through the feminist voices of today. As Helene Cixous (1976) suggests, women must write women (877), for we know that men have written themselves enough.

2. THEORIES & BACKGROUND

2.1 Feminist Rewritings and Language Theories

Critics such as Helene Cixous and Alicia Ostriker explore how female voices talking about the female experience affect our current reality. Helene Cixous's (1976) claim that "women must write women" (p.877) will be our touchstone while analysing the rewritings in this thesis. The shift from the vocabulary and tone of the abuser affects women's experiences of surviving violation and empowers them by allowing them to identify with the 'feared' or 'abhorred' or 'ignored' women and their experiences. Changing the narrative from the oppressor's language in "a book of myths/ in which/ our names do not appear" (Adrienne Rich, 1971, Diving into The Wreck) to a series of rewritten myths in which women are the heroines of our own stories is profound in changing the misogynist history of myths.

Helene Cixous (1976) explains why writing as a woman for women will provoke a change in women's oppressed state. She claims writing will be the precursory movement transforming the cultural and social structures. (P.879) And for that to happen women should seize the language that has its basis in her suppression. (P.880) "Seize" is an important word here; as women do not have a language of their own and they use the language of the oppressor, it is crucial for them to seize it, not wait for it to be given freely. She must take control of the language and make it say what she wants it to say. For she has been driven away from the language as violently as she was from her body, with the goal of oppressing her. (P.875) Cixous similarly plays on the word "voler" which is a word that has a double meaning: to fly and to steal. "By using this double-sided word Cixous relays the message that if women are to ever

"fly" and soar on their own, they must first "steal" back from men their right to speak." (Vanderbilt, n.d.)

Alicia Ostriker (1982) has the same idea in mind when she says;

> (…) the language we speak and write has been an encoding of male privilege, what Adrienne Rich calls an 'oppressor's language' inadequate to describe or express women's experience, (…) without access to authoritative expression, we must also have it in our power to 'seize speech' and make it say what we mean. (p.69)

Seizing the language to make it our own makes women, as her title suggests, 'the thieves of language'. Thus, with the feminist retellings what women are doing is seizing, or stealing, the language and also the narration. The narrative of patriarchy created the stories we call myths today, so by taking these stories and retelling them from a feminist perspective women are effectively rebelling against the years of injustice they have faced. From this perspective, women are stealing back what was supposed to be theirs as much as men's in the first place.

As Ostriker (1982) suggests, "(…) revisionist myth-making in women's poetry may offer us one significant means of redefining ourselves and consequently our culture." (P.71) Revisionist myth-making or feminist rewritings of myths offer a shift from the patriarchal perspective of how women and their stories exist in the world. Western culture has been greatly affected by the Greek myths ; how women are presented in the myths is therefore crucial, as myths not only reflect the situation of women in ancient societies but can continue to influence society's images and expectations of women as it paints an idea of how women have existed in history. Men have written enough in their "(…) self-admiring, self-stimulating, self-congratulatory phallocentrism." (Cixous, 1976, p. 879) Although the statement here is "men" what is meant by that is patriarchal language; notably Cixous also gives

examples of men writing with the *écriture feminine*. The stories told in patriarchal language created the archetypes and stereotypes of women which feminists are still battling to deconstruct today. Revisionist myth-making allows us to create a new world, a new culture of our own in which women have a say in who they are. It disrupts the patriarchal narrative by presenting relatable women who have experienced attacks from society similar to those faced by many women today. It creates a space where women can identify themselves with other women, rather than craving to be the hero of men's stories but finding themselves irrelevant. Not only does female writing help with creating 'a heroine's journey[1]' (just as men have a 'hero's journey[2]'), but it also, by deconstructing the myths, gives the modern reader a sense of vindication, as she has been most likely put into the same situations herself. "It is by writing, from and toward women, and by taking up the challenge of speech which has been governed by the phallus, that women will confirm women (…) in a place other than silence." (Cixous, 1976, p. 881) Therefore the writing by women for women, the representation they cast for themselves frees other women from the shackles of patriarchal oppression. Another important figure who talks about the issue of female language is Luce Irıgaray (1994), who claims that "To re-establish elementary social justices (…) we must restore the missing pillar of our culture." (P.112), the missing pillar here being the voice of women. Women's absence in history is chilling. "(…) women have been put in the schizoid position of being simultaneously in history and not in history — 'written out of history by male power" (Pinggong, 2018, p. 250) As will be observed in the thesis as well, women have been

[1] Heroine's journey by Maureen Murdock is a female-centred version of Hero's Journey. (See second footnote)

[2] Hero's journey is written by Joseph Campbell to theorize a hero's journey starting from their home, showing their struggles, gateways, fighting the monsters to end up back home having completed an inner personal development as well as the actual journey they have been on.

violated in more ways than just rape. The violation of their boundaries, their voices, their bodies, their minds, their history, and their stories is an attempt at erasing a gender. Being 'written out' or excluded from history is one of those violations, as well as having no language to speak for one's self. As if a hand was clamped on her mouth while her body is violated, She is violated in the narrative of subjective patriarchal history and myth. And 'they' have taken away her words that can speak of it, her voice to say 'no'. With what Irıgaray calls '*parler femme*' and Cixous '*écriture feminine*', we are presented with new understandings of how women should be able to reassert themselves in language and the narrative, and how patriarchal language differs from women's writing. With some sort of seizing and stealing the language which has been like a foreign land to women, they are one step closer to having their own language and narrative that will allow them to display a whole new perspective.

Women have been silenced in written pages for a very long time, the writing and, by that, the right to proclaim themselves has been taken away from them as a systemic violation. For centuries, they were not taught to write, discouraged from speaking, and knowledge censored from them; however, some of them have learned it, earned it, claimed it, and journeyed to free themselves from the clutches of the oppressor. Then, they helped other women to do the same, by claiming their stories, writing them, and teaching other women how to read and write themselves. As Miller tells the story of Circe or MacLaughlin writes from Medusa's mouth, female characters who were once silenced speak up through these feminist writers' pens. But it is not only Circe's story that is being told in those pages, it is the story of many women, so one can suggest revisionist myth-making is not only rewriting a myth or a character in mythology but it is also rewriting one's self:

> By writing herself, woman will return to the body which has been more than confiscated from her, which has been turned into the uncanny stranger on display — the ailing or dead figure, which so often turns out to be the nasty companion, the cause and location of inhibitions. Censor the body and you censor breath and speech at the same time. (Cixous, 1976, p. 880)

Thus, the writing of women for women puts them back into their bodies and their stories. Women, dissociated from their own bodies by a series of generational traumas, have found the rusty cages, tucked under the years of oppression, in which their identity was imprisoned and hidden away from them and reclaimed it, with all its blood and gore, as theirs. Revisionist myth-making, therefore, fights the erasure of women from history and myth alike.

2.1 Angels and Monsters

In this context, it is also equally important to see the archetypes or rather the stereotypes created about women by men. Beauvoir (1989) says; "(…) humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him" (p.15) which is significant because all these stereotypes are created in the world of patriarchy and for patriarchy, women have always existed in relation to men, their importance has changed according to their value in commodification. "(…) wives, daughters and sisters have value only in that they serve as the possibility of, and potential benefit in, relations among men." (Irıgaray, 1953, p. 172) Women are there either to be made a profit off or to be used. They are depicted as either angels or monsters. As angels, they either dwell in the houses of men as virgin daughters owned by their fathers or they are wives who are owned by their husbands, meek and quiet. Or better yet, dead.

They are "(…) art objects: slim, pale, passive being whose 'charms' eerily recalled the snowy, porcelain immobility of the dead." (Gilbert and Gubar, 2000, p. 25) 'Monstrous' women, however, are those who possess some kind of individuality and power in a man's world, they are the ones who dare to leave the confines of patriarchal society. Monsters, witches, evil women, or whores, no matter what men call them, are the ones who refuse to conform to their angelic ideals. "All the stories about monstrous women, about creatures who are too gross, too angry, too devious, too grasping, too smart for their own good, are stories told by men." (Zimmerman, 2021, p. 10) It is almost as if the women are not really monsters but thought of or painted as such. This monstrification of women has its roots in patriarchy:

"(…) male dread of women (…) has historically objectified itself in the vilification of women, while male ambivalence about female 'charms' underlies the traditional images of such terrible sorceress-goddesses as the Sphinx, Medusa, Circe, Kali, Delilah, and Salome, all of whom possess duplicitous arts that allow them to both seduce and to steal male generative energy." (Gilbert and Gubar, 2000, p. 34)

The 'monsters' are feared, invoking the unknown and individuality therefore they are ostracised from society, even if they are not dangerous, just like Circe was not at first. Patriarchy does not let rule-breakers live amongst its ranks: "The woman who oversteps the boundaries of her gender role risks becoming a Scylla, Weird Sister, Lilith ("die erste Eva," "la mere obscure"),17 Bertha Mason, or Gorgon." (Cohen, 1996, p.9) However, the freedom of the monster women can inspire others to escape the standardisation of the oppression against women. Chimera, Scylla, Sirens, Medusa, and all those female monsters who were made to be a part of a man's journey —his hero's journey. As Beauvoir (1989) points out, "She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is incidental,

the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject (…) she is the Other." (Beauvoir, p.16) They were his villains to be murdered, decapitated, hunted down even if they have done nothing to him. "These just-born creatures are predestined from birth to be battled and defeated. They will never be heroes; their deaths will be the feats the heroes achieve." (Zimmerman, 2021, p. 214) In a world where men do not want women to (fully) exist, without her use-value for him, existing and taking up space is the boldest thing a woman can do, and these 'monsters' surely take up space.

However for women, even if they are classified as angels, it is impossible to exist in the confines of men's ideals as it is not realistic. Patriarchy wants women to be objects, breathing but not loudly, alive but also dead, warm but never fiery, prudent but also sexually open to receive, unmoving in bed but also pleasing to them. Beauvoir (1989) suggests, "(…) she is simply what man decrees; thus she is called 'the sex', by which is meant that she appears essentially to the male as a sexual being." (p.15-16) She is not a person, her worth comes from her sexuality or rather from how her sexuality appears to a man. In this thesis, the mythical women that will be analysed will be grouped according to these ideals. The 'Angels' will be Daphne and Pygmalion's statue as they both start as virgins and are depicted as close to the ideals of patriarchal norms, Daphne as a beautiful virgin, who doesn't want to have sex, and 'Galatea' the literal statue who is only born because of the desire of a man. Galatea[3] (if we can call her that as she originally does not have a name) is the epitome of what a man wants. She, a nameless, identity-less statue, made from the idealisation of a misogynist male sculptor, is the 'perfect woman'. She is not alive, yet she grows warm under his touch, she starts her life in his bed, and she is awakened by his touch.

[3] This name is already used in another myth for someone else but Madeleine Miller, just like some others before her, names her Galatea and as we will talk about Miller's stories it is only logical to name her as she does. However, it should be stated that in the ancient Greek versions of the myth there is no mention of the name Galatea.

One can even say she is a child, born at the moment of her rape, not eager to have sex, shy and weak. She is only for Pygmalion, therefore who she is, does not exist outside of his opinions. Daphne refuses to have any intercourse with a man, she is a chaste 'flower' waiting to be picked by Apollo, in his eyes that is of course. She is young and her character is not yet constituted by her experiences. Youth is a common preference for men, one can even suggest this is pedophilic in more than one way. In a study on pedophilia, Finkelhor and Araji (1986) note that "A final, currently fashionable point of view, holds that pedophilia is not really sexual at all (Sgroi,1982). Just as rape has been redefined by theorists as a crime of violence, pedophilia has been redefined as a crime of power and domination (Sgroi)." (p.150) To have domination and power over the target, they prefer virgins, shy, weak, not able to run very far, small, childish, not able to talk very well or indeed know anything about the world they live in except the ideas of the husband or the father. Fantasising the infantile condition of women is common in Greek and Roman mythology as it is everywhere else.

2.3 The Origins of the Myths

The four characters that will be discussed in this thesis all appear in Ovid's *Metamorphosis* yet this is not the only place they were mentioned. Daphne's earliest completed story was first mentioned by Parthenius of Nicaea (1st century BC) in his *Erotika Pathemata.* This version depicts a slightly different story than Ovid's. In Parthenius's story (2021, p. 48-49) Daphne is pursued by another lover who dresses up as a woman to join Daphne and the other maidens so he can get close to Daphne, which results in this lover being killed by the hunter maidens. An interesting note on this version of the story is that Daphne is portrayed as a hunter maiden blessed by

Artemis, she shoots straight, hunts, she kills a man. She only ever flees once she is faced with a god, when Apollo persecutes her, as she knows she will be powerless against him. Parthenius's version portrays her as more capable than Ovid's. She is bold. Another, slightly less important difference is the god Daphne prays to when she is in flight. She prays to Zeus in Parthenius's myth; however, in Ovid's, she is praying to the rivers of her father. Her father is significantly closer to her, she invokes her own patriarch. On the other hand, she is praying to Zeus, the all-father, in Parthenius's story. They are both father figures and patriarchs so the difference is not very significant in our reading of the myths.

Medusa is first seen in Hesiod's Theogony in the 8th century BC, where, she is briefly mentioned as;

> (…) Medusa who suffered a woeful fate: she was mortal, but the two were undying and grew not old. With her lay the Dark-haired One in a soft meadow amid spring flowers. And when Perseus cut off her head, there sprang forth great Chrysaor and the horse Pegasus (…) (2012, p.12)

So her entire story is told in three sentences, two of them mentioning a man each. She, although a mighty beast, is not mentioned more than the men who have raped and slain her. Her rape is defined as 'laying' by Hesiod, language incognito, hiding rape in soft and flowery images, and softened euphemisms. In Ovid however the rape is there, it is not glorified or made into something it's not: "One day Neptune Found her and raped her, in Minerva's temple," (2018, Line 797-798, p.106) Later Minerva's revenge is displayed. Although the act is clearer in Ovid's version, in no way or form can we say it does justice to Medusa or women in her situation. Depending on the translation, the word 'raped' can turn into 'seized' or 'riffled' which, in itself, is a translation issue as much as it is an issue with the original writing: "Some translators

veer from Ovid's original language in only a few details—but details are crucial. *Vim* becomes "advances" (Stanley Lombardo) or even "ardent wooing" (Frank Justus Miller). It is distressing how breezily violent rape becomes insistent courting." (McCarter, 2018) Humphries' translation also provides euphemisms, which undervalues the severity of the action. The article quoted above refers to examples of the differences these translators present in translating Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; it is evident that the differences in the translations affect the narration so much that there is a visible confusion between rape and courtship.

Circe was mentioned, for instance, in the Odyssey by Homer, the Telegony of Apollonius of Rhodes, the Aeneid by Virgil, and lastly in the Metamorphoses by Ovid. She is mentioned as an enchantress, a witch that has transformative powers. In the Aeneid, she is first mentioned briefly as "The infernal lakes and Circe's island Aeaea," (Virgil and Ferry, 2021, line 561, p.132) but in Book Seven Circe is depicted as a horrifying sorceress that takes away humanity from men. "These are the men whom the cruel goddess Circe / Had with her herbs and potions turned into beasts, / Robbing them of their humanness with her witchcraft." (Virgil, 2017, Line 23-27, p. 286) Virgil does not mention why she does this, nor does he give- any indication of Circe's character. She is just a cruel witch goddess, one of the monsters who hurt men.

The most complete version of the story of Pygmalion and his statue appears in Ovid's *Metamorphosis;* we have only a little knowledge about where it comes from originally.

> He is mentioned by Apollodorus (III, 14, 3) as king of Cyprus but only casually as the father of Metharme, who became the mother of Adonis. (…) Two late

> Christian writers of the second and third centuries, Arnobius (Adversus Nationes VI, 22) and Clement of Alexandria (Protrepticus, p. 17, 31) also refer to Pygmalion, both giving as source Philostephanus' *History of Cyprus*, a Hellenistic work no longer extent. (Law, 1932, p.337)

Therefore, we do not have certainty regarding the origins of the story. The origins of the myths will be discussed further in their individual chapters.

2.4 Rape and Trauma Studies

The theories that will be discussed in this thesis will include various rape and violation studies, such as Ann Cahill's Rethinking Rape, Susan Brownmiller's Against Our Will, and other resources that will be mentioned along with the writing. However, as this study not only focuses on how violation works it will incorporate these theories alongside feminist theories about women's writing and their places in society, such as Helene Cixous's Laugh of Medusa, Alicia Ostriker's Stealing the Language, and other feminist authors (Gayle Rubin, Luce Irıgaray, Helen Morales, Simone De Beauvoir, etc.) while also mentioning previous studies done by other academics about metamorphosis, psychology of violation and trauma, women's place in myth and today's retellings.

There are multiple perspectives on why rape happens and although this thesis is not a study on why men rape women, it must be mentioned briefly. In Beverly A. McPhail's research "Feminist Framework Plus" we are presented with those perspectives. McPhail claims that the radical feminist perception of rape, which suggests that rape is about the control of and violence towards women and power over them, is not enough to explain the reality. The article explains five different theories about rape and claims to knit them together leading us to Ann Cahill's and Susan

Brownmiller's books, which explain the issue and its effects further than the article, which will help the thesis uncover the reality behind the stories and their motives. Thus;

> (…) rape cannot be defined or understood as theft, mere assault, or virtually identical to the other forms of heterosexual intercourse. Rather, it is a sexually specific act that destroys (if only temporarily) the intersubjectivity, embodied agency and therefore personhood of a woman. (Cahill, 2001, p.13)

The idea of 'violence not sex' was commonly used by liberal feminists in the 70s and this theory suggests that rape is not a sexual act but it instead arises from the need to dominate and degrade women, so that it is an act of violence without a sexual motive. Although this argument holds for some cases of rape, saying it is not sexual at all is not a good argument, as rape is sexual, even if it is not sexy. The act itself involves the sex organs and that is how it distinguishes itself from any other violent act. It is not just violence, it is, by its sexual nature, a violation of a person in the most intimate way. Therefore, it is possible to suggest that rape is not just sexual or just violent. It involves taking away a person's bodily autonomy and their boundaries. As Cahill also suggests; rape is violent precisely because of its (hetero)sexual meaning. (2001, p.3)

There are other explanations on why rape happens, one of which is "(…) some rapists report that they did not rape because they wanted power or control over an individual woman, but instead she was an object to be used to prove their manhood to their other male companions. (Scully & Marolla, 1985)" (McPhail, 2016, p.325) This brings to mind the attempted rape of Daphne by Apollo which will be explained further in the rewritings of the myth. In Scully and Marolla's (1985) study of rapists and their motives in *"Riding the Bull at Gilley's": Convicted Rapists Describe the Rewards of Rape* we are presented with multiple reasons including but not limited to;

gaining sexual access to women who are not willing to have sex with those men, revenge, punishment, momentary decision while attempting another crime. (p.254) No matter the reason, the crossing of another's boundary and the lack of acceptance of consent traumatizes women in a way that breaks apart their self-image. At that point is it important for our study to see how these women react to trauma and the universality of those reactions. Recent studies on polyvagal theory showcase the trauma responses as not only fight or flight but also freeze and fawn. In the fight response victim fights, she reacts. In flight, she flees. In freeze, she is frozen in the moment of her trauma, her body shuts down in order to survive the event as if she is playing dead. The psyche separates from the body which is in danger. Lastly, in the fawn response, the victim manages the situation she is in by people-pleasing. By giving what the perpetrator wants, she hopes to escape the situation. These responses are not voluntary and they are not decided by the victim. The theory is further explained in *The Pocket Guide to The Polyvagal Theory* by Stephen W. Porges. We see Medusa in a fight response although she is put in that situation by Athena. She becomes a monster and she petrifies men who dare to look upon her again. Circe is put in a flight response as she literally lives on an island alone, but yet again in Miller's novel when she is raped we see her freeze during her rape, accepting her fate and later on living in dissociation and hyper-sexuality, near the end she fights and takes her power back. The ultimate freeze response is shown in Daphne's situation, however. While victims of abuse with a freeze response turn into trees metaphorically, she turns into one in reality in the myth. Being turned into a tree to escape rape, staying inside the trunk safe while Apollo touches her and takes her leaves still, is her trauma response. Most victims with a freeze response dissociate from the reality of the situation by separating their mind from their body

unconsciously. Daphne turns into a tree, safe from penetration but rooted in the spot of the abuse, which most victims again can relate to. Pygmalion's statue, in the rewritings that will be discussed in this thesis, displays the fawn response. She, forever in the act of submission, bows down and tries to fulfil the wishes of the abuser in the hope of being free herself and not furthering her abuse.

Rape, then, is not just violence, it is, by its sexual and degrading nature, a violation of a person's boundaries and growth in the most intimate way. And these women are not only violated in a physical way but they also are violated through the writings of men who have not given them a voice, who have silenced them yet again even about their most intimate experiences for ages.

2.5 Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome and Rape

Rape seems to be quite widespread, at least in myth and literature, throughout ancient times. Mary Beard in her lecture "Lucretia and the politics of sexual violence" says:

> Early Roman history, whether you like it or not is bound up with rape. Almost all stories of the foundational moments of Rome feature violence against women as in a sense the immediate course of political change and these are moments that have become part of Western literary, musical, visual, and the intellectual repertoire of the West. (Beard, 2019, 2:45- 3:25)

She talks about how most Roman marriages were made upon rape and although these stories she talks about are stories and myths, she argues it makes it all the more important because they are stories. Referring to the mythic Rape of the Sabine Women, she says; "The first Roman marriage was also a rape." (Beard, 2019, 7:50) The start of the Roman myth shows Romulus and Remus were born from a priestess

who had been raped by Mars. She talks about two more prominent rapes in Roman culture, one of which is the rape of the Sabines that happens in a new settlement that Remus has started. He realizes they are only men and need women to be a society, so they invite the Sabines for a festival, and during the festival with a signal, they capture random Sabine women to rape, procreate, and to create their society.

The other one is Lucretia who is known to be a very chaste, virtuous married woman who gets raped and kills herself in front of her father and husband. The rape of Lucretia paves the way for Roman freedom from the monarchy. Beard talks about how the rape of women has been politically used further. This rape is interesting because somehow as Mary Beard also suggests, there are still people who blame Lucretia for her rape. This is a reminder of the narrative of victim blaming: 'She was very chaste' becomes 'She killed herself for vanity." Incredibly, these narratives around rape in ancient Roman culture are very similar to the views we face today in modern society. Making excuses; blaming it on war, on women, on urges, on procreation, on everything but the perpetrator of the act still works the same in modern society although the excuses[4]are a lot more detailed today. Mary Beard suggests these myths are important mostly because they are myths, the myths have always been a mirror to the society and their culture. Maybe if the events were based on reality we could have classified them as occurrences that have nothing to do with each other yet these were the stories told by the society, these were the stories that stayed alive through the generations with a lot of repetition.

Marilyn Katz (1992) in her research on women's standing in Ancient Greece says that;

[4] Helen Morales talks about these excuses for rape in greek mythology in a chapter called "#metu" in her book *Antigone Rising: The Subversive Power of The Ancient Myths* (pages 68-82)

> Becker appended to Charicles an excursus on "The Women," in which he acknowledged that "a variety of views have been entertained on the social position of the Greek women, and their estimation in the eyes of men. The majority of scholars have described them as despicable in the opinion of the other sex, their life as a species of slavery, and the gynaeconitis [women's quarters] as a place of durance little differing from the Oriental harem; while a few writers have stoutly contended for the historic emancipation of the fair sex among the Greeks. (462) (p.76)

She goes on to quote Becker and talk about her and other researchers, such as Pomeroy's, approach to the issue. Katz undertakes a study of the perspectives on women in ancient Greece and the motivations behind them. She says that there is no consensus on how it was, that it changes depending on the narrator and the culture around them. From a feminist perspective, Simone de Beauvoir (1989) sheds light on the women of Greece, Sparta, and Rome in her book *The Second Sex*. "In Athens, the wife was shut up in her quarters, held under severe constraint by law, (…) all her life a perpetual minor, under the control of her guardian," (p.112) She later goes into detail about the subject and talks about inheritance, law, children, her place in the house. The misogyny in Greek society is evident from her writings. In Rome however, she gives a different account. She suggests that in the times of the Monarchy, perhaps until Tarquin, Rome had practised exogamy under a matrilineal regime, and they established a patriarchal regime after the death of Tarquin with the need for family units as the basis of agricultural property and the privatization of lands. (1953, p.115) and women's role in that patriarchy, although not as misogynistic as Greece, was still far from being one of equality to men. "She was, of course, excluded from public affairs, (…) in civil life she was a permanent minor. She

was not directly deprived of her share in the paternal heritage, but by indirect means, she was prevented from exercising control of it" (Beauvoir, 1989, p.115) Therefore it is possible to say that both societies were misogynistic in nature yet Roman society due to its previous history granted more rights to its women, at least on paper. Katz (1992) concludes her research on this subject with;

> This can only be achieved, not by dismissing as outdated what has gone before, but by exposing the ideological foundations of a hegemonic discourse that has dominated the discussion of ancient women, and that continues to make its powerful influence felt in the discussion of women generally as part of civil society at the present moment in history. (p. 97)

So even in historical accounts, women have to draw attention to what has been done, and to how they have been excluded, and to reassert themselves back into the pages of history.

2.6 Ovid and Rape

Metamorphosis has a lot of rape stories in it and whether it is so because Ovid wanted to make a point or it was just such a common motif in Roman society is uncertain. Ovid does not give a feminist approach to rape; however, it is also unfair to see his writing as completely misogynistic when you compare it with other important classic authors of his time. Morales (2020) also suggests for Ovid that "This was during the reign of the emperor Augustus, who imposed strict moral laws upon Rome. (…) By association, he suggests that Augustus is autocratic and abusive. It is an effective technique. It gives Ovid an out: he avoids direct criticism of an emperor who was prone to exiling his opponents (and who did, eventually, exile Ovid) but allowed readers at the time to join up the dots and make the connection between Augustus and

the rapist gods." (P. 75-76) Morales explains here that the reasoning for Ovid's seeming obsession with rape and violence in Metamorphoses could be attributed to his wish to criticise the emperor. While Morales sees it from a political stance, Leo C. Curran in his very detailed study of rape in Ovid's *Metamorphosis* defines his attitude as; "For him it is no contradiction to present rape simultaneously as both an outrage committed upon a woman and as a grotesque caricature of masculinity." (1978, p. 218) This grotesque caricature is evident in his portrayal of Apollo's attempted rape of Daphne. Apollo got struck by the arrow of Cupid because he felt he was bigger than the god of love, that he was more important, thus showcasing his toxic masculinity even before the chase of rape begins. "Apollo, with pride and glory still upon him (…) O silly youngster," He said, "What are you doing with such weapons? Those are for grown-ups! " (…) Do not meddle/ With honors that are mine!" (Ovid, 2018, lines 453-464, p.16-17) Apollo underestimates Cupid to overestimate himself, he sees himself as so grandiose he hates the idea of some god, especially a god of 'love' using arrows which are supposed to be his symbol. His attitude towards beings he sees as lesser than himself is stereotypically narcissistic and toxic. Ovid shows this as a caricature of a man with his pride and ego. Curran also states; "Apollo is a fatuous pest who will not take 'no' for an answer in Ovid's burlesque of him" (1978, p.221) Of course it is not only Apollo who is shown as a rapist in Ovid's *Metamorphosis*. In his commentary to the 2018 edition of the book Joseph D. Reed tells;

"120 [5.415–16] Proserpina / Should have been asked, not taken: Cyane, trying to stop Pluto, advances a principle of consensuality in sexual (and marital) relations: a woman is to be asked, not seized (roganda, non rapi- enda). Compare Apollo's appeal to Daphne (even as he chases her down) on page 19 [1.530–31] or the crow's story of

her rape by Neptune on page 46 [2.574–6]: “He found he wasted time in pleading, / In using flattering words, so then he offered / Force.” Cyane’s chagrin at her failure reduces her body to water; the metamorphosis destroys her anthropomorphic side, especially her voice, without, however, reducing her mind (cf. and contrast Arethusa’s change on pp. 126–7). Her transformation is not explicitly a punishment by Pluto or anyone else, but people—especially females—who try to stop rape or squeal on rapists may be punished in ways that destroy their ability to speak, necessitating new modes of communication if any is to be had.” (2018, p.435)

With all these rapes in Ovid, especially as they are described in somewhat euphemistic language, it is easy to read *Metamorphoses* as a sexist text but this is not what this thesis will be doing, whether Ovid was being misogynistic or not does not have much significance in this research which is about showing and analysing the violation done to women in Greek (and Roman) mythology. As an addition to the discussion of rape, an important theme in *Metamorphoses* is that of transformation after the rape. “(…) transformation into the non-human is uniquely appropriate in the case of rape, for the process of dehumanisation begins long before any subsequent metamorphosis of women’s body.” (Curran, 1978, p.229) So the transformation into non-human begins before the rape when the objectification of a human occurs and she is threatened. She is no longer in control of her own body, no longer has the boundaries she once had thus it only makes sense to change as a survival mechanism, and in *Metamorphoses* this transformation has a physical manifestation. Ovid, consciously aware or not, shows how rape victims react to rape, and how they are transformed because of the violation. As will be discussed further in the chapters on the characters; Daphne reacts by going into a catatonic state, becoming a tree, which is with today’s knowledge is the trauma response called Freeze. But as Curran

suggests this transformation occurs before the act of rape, she is muted by the god who will rape her. Daphne, Circe, Medusa, and Galatea all show symptoms of trauma from the violations they face in Ovid. So knowing it or not, Ovid gives the readers a baseline to analyse the reality of rape in mythology. Stories and myths about rape that persist, as Mary Beard would agree, show much more about how people think, and how they live more than the individual acts of violence and violation in history. Therefore Ovid's repetition of rape is not individual, it is not unique to his stories but it is a mirror of the society he lives in and perhaps even of ours.

2.7 Chapters to Come

In the upcoming chapters of this thesis, there will be mainly two parts and in them, there will be four characters that will be analysed both by their first known versions of the myths and with their rewritings. All the myths have Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in common, but other Greek texts will also be discussed as they have affected the outlooks of these mythical women greatly as much as Ovid did.

Firstly, there are two chapters; Good Women and Evil Women. The reason for this is not that these characters are necessarily evil or great, or deemed that was in my personal belief. It is because they have been regarded so because of the role they serve in the patriarchal narrative. These women clearly show that in a patriarchal world there is no place for women no matter how perfect they are, even by society's standards.

As Daphne is a beautiful young virgin, she is seen as pure. Her beauty, her virginity and her youth are factors in her goodness, as these qualities are expected from women. She also belongs to a respected father, a river god, that makes her station higher than mere mortal women, yet of course, no level of status protects

women in myth from being raped by a god as we clearly witness in *Metamorphoses*. The works that will be used to analyse her are Parthenius' *Erotika Pathemata*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, MacLauglin's *Daphne* and Stallings' *Daphne*.

Another quality that is expected from women would be motherhood and wifehood, which would make Galatea (Pygmalion's statue) an example to 'Good Women', not only these but she is also born to her husband, you cannot get more virgin, nor 'purer' than that. She also has the 'created for me' beauty and possession element. She is created for Pygmalion, by Pygmalion, he made her in the exact way that he likes so she is the most beautiful woman for him. She belongs to him as a virgin, as a wife and at the end, a mother. She fulfils every role that can be filled by women in patriarchy. Galatea will be discussed in light of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Miller's *Galatea* and Duffy's *Pygmalion's Wife*.

On the other hand, the second chapter is named for the women who were deemed 'bad' and 'evil' for generally nothing more than living in the narrative that was pushed upon them or protecting themselves in a world that continuously tries to violate them someway. These are the outcasts, the monsters, the witches.

Circe was a nymph or a small goddess in her own right, exiled for her powers of witchcraft and transformation to a lonely island. Yet even on an island, she was bothersome to many, the stories of her witchcraft told as scary stories. She was painted as a jealous lonely woman who dabbles in witchcraft as she is not accepted in society as a virtuous woman. Parthenius's *Erotica Pathemata*, Virgil's *Aeneid*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Miller's *Circe* and Duffy's *Circe* will be examined to understand and show what happened to Circe.

Medusa, one of the Gorgon sisters, has been told as a monster. Raped by Poseidon, punished by Athena and blamed for what these gods have done to her. Her

beauty ‘caused’ her rape, her ugliness ‘caused’ fear among people and some of the Olympians and her self-defence ‘caused’ her death. For Medusa, we will analyse Hesiod’s *Theogony* briefly, Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, MacLaughlin’s *Medusa*, Micheal Kasenow’s *The Rape Trial of Medusa* and Stanford’s *Medusa*.

These chapters are all named “I AM” as nearly all women share some of the experiences of these mythical women even in today’s society. The violation they endure, the punishments and the disrespect they take are very much alike what women in any patriarchal society, one way or another, experiences just because they are women. They exist in stories but they also exist in women of today. So they are, you are, I am and we are.

3. GOOD WOMEN

3.1. I am Daphne

Daphne's story in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* starts off with;

"Now the first girl Apollo loved was Daphne,

Whose father was the river-god Peneus,

And this was no blind chance, but Cupid's malice." (Ovid, 2018, line 450-452, p.16)

We are -right from the start- presented with her name in relation to three men/gods. Apollo; the pursuer/the 'lover', Peneus; the father, and Cupid; the god of love. All three lines tell us one thing; that Daphne has nothing to do with what is happening to her. She is first of all 'someone's daughter' then she is the girl 'he' loves, and her destiny is nothing more than a lesson that the god of 'love' Cupid is trying to teach Apollo. This 'love' is not kind to women, it obliterates them, dismisses who they are, not very differently than the other aspects of patriarchy. Daphne exists in relation to these men in Ovid's story. She is not her own person, she is an object to be owned or to be desired.

Daphne does not originate from Ovid however, she was in Parthenius's *Erotika Pathemate* first. She was first loved by a boy who dressed up as a woman and became her companion to get close to her. Apollo, getting jealous, puts it in her and the other maidens' minds to bathe together, they realise that they were being deceived by this man and they strip him naked then, seeing that he is a man, they kill him. Later, Apollo takes up the job of creepy courting and he pursues the running Daphne. Daphne, understanding she has nowhere to run to, prays to Zeus to be stripped of her humanity.

As Williams notes, “Though it would be misleading to claim that Parthenius was the single source which Ovid has transformed, the version he transmits must have been available to Ovid,” (1999, p. 47) Therefore, although the stories are different in multiple ways, we can say the origin, or rather the known origin, of Ovid’s Apollo and Daphne story, could be Parthenius’s *Erotika Pathemate*. Some of the differences between the stories are as follows: Ovid’s version does not have this other lover, she prays to her father the river god instead of Zeus. Moreover, Daphne is not mentioned as a gifted shooter in Ovid’s version which is interesting as in Parthenius she has this attribute as she is a favourite of goddess Artemis. Therefore, she is much more a fighter, a huntress in Parthenius’s story which gives her character a three dimensional feeling, a real personality whereas Ovid’s story is mostly about a race between Cupid and Apollo which does not include Daphne as a person, rather she is there as the target. Thus, she is much more objectified in *Metamorphoses* than she is in *Erotika Pathemate*.

The Ovidian version of the story starts with the dialogue between Apollo and Cupid “, which leads to Cupid's revenge: he fires a leaden arrow at Daphne which has the effect of suppressing sexual desire, and a golden one at Apollo which induces it. (466-77)” (Williams, 1999, p. 45) Later we see Cupid’s arrow hurting her rather than making her fall in love; Apollo obsesses over her, yet she is just hurt by the arrow, she is crippled by the love this patriarchy offers to her, or rather forces on her. Apollo’s attempted rape being initiated by Cupid sounds a lot like the modern excuse ‘I loved her so much, I had to own her.’ So one might question whether this would be the case if Cupid had not shot his arrow at Apollo. Looking at Parthenius’s version of the story, this excuse for a god of love does not exist, we are only told of the chase Apollo sets out on. Moreover, Parthenius tells us more about Daphne whereas Ovid focuses

more on Apollo. She runs away, Apollo chases her, she turns into a tree by praying to Zeus, it takes no more than four lines for Parthenius to tell this story. He blatantly states what is going on, without many descriptions but that does not mean his writing is more feminist than Ovid's.

Ovid tells the story in a more detailed way, sometimes even calling out or at least giving the readers the space to question Apollo: "He sees the long hair hanging down her neck Uncared for, says, "But what if it were combed?"" (Ovid, 2018, Lines 498-499, p.18) The word "uncared for" here is important as there is no need for that extra statement for the storyline but it is a comment he makes on Apollo's character. The words have no importance to the storyline other than showing that he told her to brush her hair without being asked; he gave his opinion on something he has no right to without a care if anyone wants to hear it, and Ovid manages to say all of that with the word "uncared for". The unwanted comments of men about women's appearance and their audacity in always feeling the right to state their opinions on women's bodies is possibly due to their being raised believing they are a superior gender deserving to be heard and entitled to everything, thus never learning the boundaries between themselves and others. Apollo, a god, is no different. He has all the power in the world so he feels entitled to everything, to comment on Daphne's body, telling her what to do, not respecting her boundaries, chasing her with the intention of raping her.

Starting from here, we see Apollo introducing himself in a high and mighty manner, we see him not believing Daphne could not want him, we see these things because his narcissism shows in Ovid's telling. Further down the chase, things get a little more problematic, "(…) she was lovely / Even in flight, her limbs bare in the wind,/ Her garments fluttering, and her soft hair streaming,/ More beautiful than ever." (Ovid, 2018, Lines 431-43, p. 19) Thus, she is described as even more

beautiful when she is running away, the reader is presented with a description of Daphne running which is mostly physical and rather erotic. Her limbs being bare, her hair being soft, her clothes flowing provides an obvious sexual imagery. The problem is that she is being objectified, even when she is running from rape. Moreover, she is sexualised even more because she is running from the rape. When she transforms, the imagery of her transformation is depicted by Ovid; right after that, we see that Apollo does not intend to stop. "Apollo loved her still. He placed his hand/ Where he had hoped and felt the heart still beating/ Under the bark; and he embraced the branches/ As if they still were limbs, and kissed the wood,/ And the wood shrank from his kisses," (Ovid, 2018, lines 553-557, p.20) He keeps touching her without consent, Ovid also states the lack of consent when he says "the wood shrank from his kisses,". If as a tree she is able to shrink from his touch, it is safe to assume that the human Daphne surely did not want to be touched by Apollo. Although Apollo does not interpret this shrinking as unwillingness on Daphne's part he is quick to assume that the tree stirring signifies assent. Therefore he ignores the physical clues that would not serve him while making assumptions about the others that are beneficial to him. "The laurel,/ Stirring, seemed to consent, to be saying Yes." (Ovid, 2018 Line 564, p. 20) The leaves of a tree can be shaken by the wind or any small change in the air, but Apollo is looking for anything to hold on to so he assumes even the stirring of a tree, an inanimate object a woman prayed to become because she was so afraid he would rape her, is consent. Her silence is his assumed consent, just like the modern excuse for rape that implies if she has not said 'no' then she wanted it to happen.

The story of Daphne is not very different from that of any other survivor. Chased, scared, terrorized by a man who is stronger than her in most senses, never taking 'no' for an answer and thinking he has the right to take her body without needing any

permission. She runs but she can't outrun him, a god; this can be thought of as a metaphor for women through history trying to escape patriarchy and the judgement it executes, yet failing miserably each time, so she turns herself into a tree by divine intervention from her father, the river god. She is, yet again, helped by another man as she is powerless by herself against a system that empowers men and men alone. Turning into a tree is very much like a freeze response that a survivor's body goes through to enable her to survive the trauma. The body shuts itself down, literally freezing where it stands and the real self dissociates, hiding from the reality of what is occurring. "In a nutshell, the theory is that when we feel threatened or are faced with a stressful situation, we don't always stay and fight, or turn and run: sometimes we freeze. This "freeze" response is said to come from the ancient, reptilian part of our brain, which decides, in a flash, that a threat is too great to be overcome, and that we must immobilise instead" (Hone, 2022) It is a response that our body uses when the danger is too great and impossible to escape, so our head dissociates while our body takes the pain. In the sexual context, the freeze response exists as Dr Stephen Porges, the founder of the polyvagal theory, states in a teleseminar session with The National Institute for the Clinical Application of Behavioral Medicine;

> These abused clients often describe a psychological experience of not really being there. They dissociate or pass out. For these individuals, the abusive event actually triggered an adaptive response, maybe not fully, but part of it, to enable them not to experience the traumatic event. (Porges, p.10)

In the case of Daphne, turning into a laurel tree is a lot like her dissociating from her body during sexual abuse. In MacLaughlin's (2019) Wake, Siren she expresses this as; "I'm not here, I thought. I've gone. He can't hurt me. He kept rubbing me, pressing and grinding himself into me. I'm not here. You're too late." (p.11) Her body

has shut the external events down in terms consistent with the polyvagal theory. Thus, Daphne executes one of the four strategies of survival during her trauma, which is, as mentioned above, to freeze: “Daphne as a tree is an exact analogue of a victim so profoundly traumatized by her experience that she has taken refuge in a catatonic withdrawal from all human involvement” (Curran, 1978, p. 230) Her catatonic withdrawal, in other words, her freeze response is represented by her turning into a tree, although in polyvagal theory this transformation to in-animation is not literal and conscious, Daphne prays to be changed into something that will save her, so in this context, the prayed-to god is very much our vagal nerve which helps us to survive. In another context, her freeze response is also considered a way of fighting by the feminist authors who have rewritten the myth. “I laughed to myself. I’d won. Stick your dick in this and you’ll get splinters.” (MacLaughlin, 2019, p.11) MacLaughlin’s Daphne, then, feels victorious, not stuck. Stallings’s Daphne is very much the same, “Find then, when you seize my arm / That xylem thickens my skin” (Stallings, n.d.) They see this as this ultimate revenge of not giving the abuser what he wants, of becoming something he cannot reach, protecting themselves and being stronger than him for it.

Therefore, even without the context of the response to trauma , Daphne transforms into a laurel tree to avoid Apollo’s violation of her body, although it can be understood as a strong stand against the oppressor. Stallings writes a very strong Daphne with a lot more power than she has in Ovid. Daphne, in her poem *Daphne*, ceases to run and stops Apollo, calling him not by his godly name but as “pursuer”. Although, he is a god and she barely a nymph, she exerts power by not recognising his authority, his identity and, with conviction in her words, she stops him in his tracks saying she will stop running and he can now do as he wishes. But she warns

him, “What blood you've set to music/ I can change to chlorophyll,” (Stallings, n.d.) She is saying that she can fight his authority over her, that she has power too, power to transform. She goes on with her power to resist and transform later, “Find then, when you seize my arm/ That xylem thickens in my skin/ And there are splinters in my charm.” (Stallings, n.d.) She is stating that ultimately her body is hers, and he will not get away with it. He will find out when he ‘seizes’ her that her skin which is now wood will thicken even more so, suggesting a protection she, by herself, casts upon her own body. Interestingly enough, in Stallings poem she is the one that transforms herself, unlike in the original versions of the myth in which she prays to a father figure (her father the river god or the all-father Zeus). This creates the narrative that Daphne is strong enough to protect herself, that she can transform herself to an unreachable, protected form. She says she has splinters on her charm which might hurt or at least annoy him. Her newly transformed form is protective and in Stallings’s poetry, her words are also very self-protective and confident. She ends with the lines: “I may give in; I do not lose./ Your hot stare cannot stop my shivering,/ With delight, if I so choose.” (Stallings, n.d.) Whatever happens, she can not lose as she does not yield, she stands tall and sure in her power like an old wise tree. She is shivering under his stare, which is a good indicator that she is scared. However, her being scared does not shake her attitude of strength, therefore showing that you can be scared but also very strong still.

Although this strength imagery is presented in the choice she makes, Apollo finds a way to violate her anyhow. He uses her leaves as his symbol. “Syrinx and Daphne sacrifice their humanity to avoid male domination through sexual violence, only to be dominated through their speechlessness and the possession of the transformed bodies by their rapists.” (Bloch, 7, 2014) Although she is not taken in the literal sense, she is,

as a tree, used as his symbol for all his eternity. He takes her leaves and fashions a crown for himself from them, wearing her as a prize. While she is in a catatonic state, , Apollo assumes her leaves shaking signal her consent, although she was obviously not consenting to any move from Apollo since the beginning, hence her running away, her horror and her transformation into a tree. Thus, "The myth of Daphne illustrates how the association of women with nature can demean both. When Daphne was turned into a tree, she escaped being raped by Apollo because the loss of her body made rape impossible. But as a tree she was no less an object for his use than when she was a woman" (Morales, 2020, p. 77) However, as Morales suggests here as well, even transformation does not relieve women of being violated. "(…) transformation into the non-human is uniquely appropriate in the case of rape, for the process of dehumanization begins long before any subsequent metamorphosis of the woman's body." (Curran, 1978, p. 229) The idea of transformation is key to Ovid's Metamorphosis, but as Curran suggests the real transformation begins long before the victim turns herself into something that is no longer penetrable. Transformations of women begin with the terrorism of men, the constant threat of being forced, raped and violated hangs over the heads of women like an axe. This axe keeps them in a constant state of terror, which in turn helps the patriarchy to sustain control over them.

Radical feminist theory about rape as "violence not sex" comes to mind when Daphne says,

> It was making him feel small, and when men feel small they are dangerous." (MacLaughlin, 2019, p. 10) Apollo, coming from a place of toxic masculinity, aims to prove his power by getting what he wants when he wants it: "(…) manhood acts are inherently about upholding patriarchy and reproducing gender inequality. (Schrock and Schwalbe, 2009, p.287)

So he is claiming his superiority over not only Daphne but also Cupid, whom he sees as a lesser man, a lesser god than himself. This obsession with proving his superiority is a good indicator of his toxic masculinity. The Cambridge Dictionary defines toxic masculinity as; "ideas about the way that men should behave that are seen as harmful"[5] which is a very general way to explain it. For a more modern explanation Urban Dictionary describes it as; "A social science term that describes narrow repressive type of ideas about the male gender role, that defines masculinity as exaggerated masculine traits like being violent, unemotional, sexually aggressive, and so forth."[6] This idea of proving manhood is not generally directed towards women but to the other men they compete with. Therefore, "Women become props that men use to affirm a heterosexual identity. Gender inequality is reproduced when sexual harassment, or the threat thereof, limits women's public mobility (Gardner 1995) (…)" (Schrock and Schwalbe, 2009, p.287) Therefore Daphne becomes a prop for Apollo's act, yet in her life, his abuse became a limiting threat she had to run away from.

In McLaughlin's story, Apollo is struck by Cupid after he boasts about how great he is, and he tries to undermine Cupid as a god. This toxic rivalry between men leads to hurting women who are not viewed as humans but as possessions, ideals, objects in the eyes of patriarchy. Daphne suggests that when men are weak, in this case, Cupid's arrow makes him so, they seek to make someone else feel smaller. (MacLaughlin, 2019, p.8) Apollo deals with it by pursuing Daphne. We also see Daphne has been hit by an arrow from Cupid too, but the arrow just hurts and cripples her. The arrow as a phallic object penetrates her with Apollo's obsession, therefore her inevitable

[5] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/tr/sözlük/ingilizce/toxic-masculinity
[6] https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Toxic%20Masculinity

violation. She is first violated by a god's, or a man's will when she is penetrated by the arrow. If we were to analyse the arrow as a phallic object defined by patriarchy, we can say she is crippled by the forceful nature of men and their desires over her. It is Apollo's weakness that leads him to seek to prove his masculinity. In the story we hear from Daphne's mouth, Apollo boasts about himself and how Cupid is nothing in relation to him so Cupid shoots his arrows to prove otherwise, as we have mentioned above. This race of who can go farther, be more toxic, be the 'better man' between men hurts women mostly, as toxic masculinity seeks to undermine, to belittle, to conquer just to prove its worth.

McPhail (2016), in "Feminist Framework Plus", states that, "Cassins theorizes that men are not men due to biological processes but rather social ones.[7] Therefore, men are in a constant process of engaging in masculine social practices in order to prove their manhood." (P. 320) Consequently, in the context of gender performativity, we are presented with a kind of testosterone race that keeps asking, who is more mea enough? However this question or the race does not define what manhood is, it defines toxic masculinity in social constructs. Men, who are performing their toxic masculinity to fit into the patriarchal structure that their equally, if not more, toxic ancestors have built, have been hurting women to prove they are strong, mocking them to prove that they are superior, raping them to prove they can get whatever they want. This all feels so crippling when one thinks about how much they try to prove themselves according to the social constructs they themselves insist on keeping alive. MacLaughlin's Daphne calls this out as; "They wouldn't know it was fear they were feeling, but they wouldn't like what they felt and they'd want to make themselves feel

[7] This is reminiscent of Simone De Beauvoir's idea that one is not born a woman but they become one through social processes, albeit reversed.

brave and strong. They were overbold to hide it, to try to prove—mostly to their own selves—how tough they were, how courageous, how dominant." (MacLaughlin, 2019, p.8) Over-performing masculinity to hide the fear of not being masculine enough is the toxic behaviour that causes this much suffering because, in the attempt to prove themselves to themselves or to other men, men tend to hurt women. Seeing women as the other or an object, the respect for the individuality of another flies through the window leaving only the need to prove one's superiority by making another inferior. Although it is not the responsibility of this thesis to psychoanalyse Apollo, one can infer his act of 'proving his manhood' as a cry for attention, maybe from his all-powerful father Zeus, maybe from the whole world of patriarchal values.

The reason Daphne is categorised under the 'good woman' category has its roots in how patriarchy views virginity and chastity in women. It seems to be her choice to join the path of Artemis, live as a hunter, with women and without sexual intercourse with men, which seems to suggest she might have been a lesbian or, otherwise, just abstaining and living how she desires. We do not have the knowledge that her virginity was sacred to her. "As a doctrine, virginity has been a cultural artefact. For much of human history, (…) virginity has been an essential quality for determining their market value." (MacLachlan, 2007, p.3) Thus, women have been regarded according to their virginity by patriarchy for a very long time. Virgins have been thought to be pure but, more than that, they had the exchange value of a new 'thing'. A father's property to be given to a husband, untouched by other men, unpenetrated, thus keeping its shine. Therefore "(…) wives, daughters, and sisters have value only in that they serve as the possibility of, and potential benefit in, relations among men." (Irıgaray, 1985, p.172)

On this basis, then, Daphne's being a really good person or an impressive woman has nothing to do with her designation as a 'good' woman in patriarchal terms. The

difference between the titles ‘good women’ and ‘bad women’ is meant to show that however patriarchy categorises women, it is never our reality. Women (or in this case nymphs, witches, goddesses) are much more complex than simply being good or bad, they are human, . But however they are labelled, this thesis aims to show they have all been violated one way or another. A ‘good’ woman like Daphne, a young virgin who is living her life according to her choices—as much as she is allowed to make them— is interrupted by a god, by a man, violated and transformed completely for all eternity. Once a woman full of life, a youth in her spring, she is transformed into a hard impenetrable object because Apollo chased her, taunted her, cornered her and tried to penetrate her. She was an object to men as a woman, after her transformation she is a real object but she is no longer objectifiable for them. The objectification women go through and the violations they endure change them, maybe not literally like Daphne but metaphorically. In this sense, the myths tell of the human experience. Daphne, although mentioned as a victim here and Apollo’s lover in Greek mythology, is also a woman that is very skilled in a somewhat traditionally masculine field, hunting, and who has decided on her own life and sexuality: “One way to assess a woman’s autonomy is to ask whether she controls her own sexuality.” (Schlegel, 1991, p. 719) She seems to be freer than most before the chase begins, but this threatens the grounds of patriarchy as she is a young woman that can make her own decisions and, as can be seen from Parthenius’s story, is capable of telling her father what she wants. This is not the case with most women and certainly not with the women written here, at least before they realised they could not please the patriarchal narrative so, therefore, they would be better off on an island alone, like Circe or labelled as a monster like Medusa.

MacLauglin’s Daphne is very aware of her surroundings, she is more like an educated modern woman rather than a mythological figure which makes her character feel more

relatable to the modern reader. One can see herself in her. She does not blame herself or act as a victim, she plainly explains toxic masculinity and what it has done to her which in return awakens in the reader the sense of closeness to her and her experience: ""When men are weak and they're scared, they'll try to prove themselves, which is how Apollo came to insult Cupid and Cupid came to seek revenge. (…) And to feel even bigger, it helped him to make someone else feel smaller, the true sign of the weakest sort of man." (MacLaughlin, 2019, p.8) As can be seen from the words she has chosen to refer to a god, she is a brave representation of Daphne. She calls Apollo a man and a weak man at that, and she goes on to mock the competition between Cupid and Apollo: "So, a pissing match. Whose is bigger? Whip it out. Show me. Both small." (MacLaughlin, 2019, p.9) She mocks their masculinity as it is the most important thing to them and yet the fighting between them does not feel like the behaviour of men who are confident in their masculinity, it rather seems like they are trying to prove what is not there or what they are doubting about themselves. This appears to motivate some real rapists too. According to a rape study; "(…) some rapists report that they did not rape because they wanted power or control over an individual woman, but instead, she was an object to be used to prove their manhood to their male companions." (Scully & Marolla, 1985, p. 325) So the rapist's mindset of proving his manhood correlates with Apollo's chase after the competitive 'who is greater' race between him and Cupid. Yes, the god of love shoots Apollo to prove a point but it seems like Apollo is also trying to prove a point to Cupid by seizing what was not his, overpowering Daphne in order to show his superiority among men.

Daphne's transformation scene is very interesting as the author uses words like "penetrating into the warm, wet soil", her hips narrow, her chest rises and falls and she is overcome by a deepest relief (MacLaughlin, 2019, p.11) which seems to be a sexual connotation. So she seems to find herself in her transformation, although it is an escape

from penetration, . This appears to be a welcome one though, in contrast to Apollo's attempted rape as she feels this 'deepest relief'. She is the one penetrating and growing, it is a penetration she is consenting to. After becoming a tree, she is much more confident. (MacLaughlin, p.11) She challenges Apollo in MacLaughlin's rewriting just as she does in Stallings's poem. She has protection now. Yet her enemy does not really care about her womanhood but rather he wants to own her, so he goes on to violate her anyhow. Apollo licks her trunk, presses against her, grinds against the tree and when all that does not give him the access he wanted this does not deter him, he continues his violation through the ages by making her leaves his symbol. Apollo, still trying to have power over the situation, tells Daphne that; "I'm going to have you on me all the time. And you're never, never going to lose those leaves. You get it? They're going to stay through every season like that unbrushed hair of yours. You understand?" (MacLaughlin, 2019, p.11)

His constant insistence on her understanding feels forced as if he is frustrated that he couldn't get anything he wanted and now he is trying his best to use the situation to get back his broken pride. If we consider that Apollo's symbol is a crown of Daphne leaves, it seems like an eternal violation of Daphne. Her virginity, her body could not be taken so he has taken her leaves as his forever symbol. His name is all over hers now, no one mentions Daphne on her own terms. She is referred to as Apollo's lover, his obsession, his crown. She is always referred to by her attempted rape, called by her rapist's name. The myths by Ovid and Parthenius, which are the base of the myth of Daphne, call it a chase, a rape, a violation yet through the ages, mouth to mouth, the story loses its horror. Sometimes the rape becomes a love story, sometimes Apollo becomes a god that commemorates his lover forever which is not fair to Daphne. She was a woman first, a hunter, a nymph before being known as Apollo's lover or victim. Her defiance and strength in both MacLaughlin's story and Stallings's poem take her farther than her role for a man. MacLaughlin (2019)

turns Daphne's later violation into a victory for her; "And I shook my leaves. I shook them and all of them rustled. My whole crown. These leaves would wreathe the heads of the victorious. Because I was victorious. I'd won. I shook and shook. As if I were nodding. As if I were telling him yes." (p.11) The shaking of her leaves was assumed consent to Apollo in Ovid's story, here MacLaughlin takes that image, keeps it as it is but makes it so it was an act of defiance rather than a forced consent. She shakes her leaves as if telling him, yes, but it is not the yes Apollo wants, it is the yes of 'Yes. You will see me. You will see me everywhere and remember that I was victorious over you.' Stallings (n.d.) also ends her poem on that note, " I may give in; I do not lose." (n.d.) Yet her Daphne takes a different route of defiance, telling Apollo he cannot stop her shivering with his hot stare. As the sun god, Apollo can be interpreted as always looking with a hot stare from above her, his gaze constantly on her, yet Daphne defies his constant gaze with her own movements which she chooses. Stallings uses the word choice here which is very important as Daphne gains her autonomy by making a choice over her own body. Apollo's constant hot stare can be interpreted as the male gaze and Daphne's defiance as a feminist response. Under the constant violation of the male gaze, women challenge the patriarchy they live in by asserting their rights over their own bodies and lives. Daphne's crown may be Apollo's symbol, but every time he looks upon that crown he will know she has beaten him and every time someone wears it in the name of Apollo, it will actually be her name they are praying toor being victorious with.

Thanks to the feminist rewritings of MacLaughlin and Stallings, Daphne is presented with a chance to speak for herself "hence her shattering entry into history which has always been based *on her suppression*." (Cixous, 1976, p. 880) She now has the power of her words against the patriarchal erasure of the history of women, of her story. Her story is

our story, just like those of the other characters that will be mentioned in this thesis and many more.

3.2 I am Galatea

Another mythological woman represented as a 'good' woman is Galatea, who is Pygmalion's statue. Although originally Pygmalion is a king presumably based in Cyprus in Greek mythology, Pygmalion's myth as we know it seems to originate from Ovid.

Galatea is considered under the 'good' women category for many reasons. Daphne was the virgin archetype, Galatea is the ultimate wife. The ultimate wife because she is literally born to her 'husband'. In Ovid's myth, she does not even have a name[8], she only has a purpose which is to be Pygmalion's bride, toy, lover, whatever one would like to call her slavery. She is created by him, given life by a goddess for him and used by him. Thus, she is the ultimate representation of what patriarchy wants from a woman as a wife. She is a stone that is not responsive to touch until her husband decides he wants it, then she is a warm body ripe for use. She comes alive at his will. She is 'good' as she is pure, basically a new born, but she is also a wife and soon to be the mother of Paphos. She is this obedient figure that is cold to anyone else but her husband. She is the ultimate patriarchal fantasy; untouched, only warm in the marriage bed, a virgin -or one can say a literal child-, a mother and wife who waits for her husband all day, all her life in a secluded space and who only exists for him. It is clear Pygmalion does not want a woman but he wants a fantasy of one. He falls in love with this fantasy that is created by his own hands and ideas. Pygmalion's scorn for real woman is apparent in the first stanza; "One man, Pygmalion, who had seen these women/ Leading their shameful lives, shocked at the vices/ Nature has given the

female disposition" (Ovid, 2018, lines 243-245, p. 241-242) No matter the vices he talks about, it is clear that he has no interest in any woman; whatever his standards may be it is not really possible that he cannot find any woman meeting them. Therefore, it is more likely that he hates woman in general, and his misogyny gets clearer as he says it is their nature that they are shameful.

In Miller's (2013) short novel Galatea this scene is much more modernised and realised; Galatea asks "Would it not have been easier to marry a girl from the town?", he answers; "Those sluts, I would not have them" (p.9) Miller's Pygmalion is obviously more overt than Ovid's in saying that he sees women as sluts but the misogyny is clear as day in both, just that Miller's nameless Pygmalion is written as he is seen through the eyes of a feminist. He is a textbook narcissist[9] who likes nothing but himself and his creation and he likes them as long as they are not alive as it seems, which will be observed further as this chapter continues. The story continues with "The image seemed/ That of a virgin, truly, almost living,/ And willing, save that modesty prevented,/ To take on movement." (Ovid, 2018, p. 242, lines 251-254) Thus, he fantasises about a virgin that is almost alive but not really because she is apparently too modest to move her body which seems ridiculous as modesty has nothing to do with one's movements let alone a woman's being alive. His expectation from a woman is for her not to be one. Even if this text will not mention Browning's poems, Catherine Maxwell (1993) points out Ovid's obsession in the best way possible when she states; "His poems show how male subjects, threatened by woman's independent spirit, replace her with statues, pictures, prostheses, corpses, which seem to them more than acceptable substitutes for the real thing." (990) It is exactly the case for Ovid's Pygmalion, and Pygmalion in the rewritings by Miller and Duffy which will be discussed in this chapter. Pygmalion wants a suspiciously young

wife figure that obeys, does not move, and who essentially is not really, alive, Miller's (2013) Galatea interprets that she is "(…) only warm so that he might fuck me. But it does seem foolish that he didn't think it through, how I could not both live and still be a statue." (p.14) It is clear that Miller's Pygmalion is uncomfortable with Galatea, he keeps coming back to his original fantasy, makes her act like she is coming back to life all over again when he visits. At other times, however, she is the mad woman in the attic, drugged, alienated, separated from her daughter, imprisoned in a room not very different from that described in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's short story "The Yellow Wallpaper" where the female protagonist, whose husband and his supporters claim she is, ill, is imprisoned. We see both the narrator of "The Yellow Wallpaper" and Galatea go through the same stages, slowly losing hope, trying to bargain with the perpetrators, using the 'fawn' trauma response to stay alive by pleasing others. Pete Walker, who coined the term 'fawn' explains it as follows;

> A fourth type of triggered response can be seen in many codependents. [Codependency is defined here as the inability to express rights, needs and boundaries in relationship; it is a disorder of assertiveness that causes the individual to attract and accept exploitation, abuse and/or neglect.] I have named it the fawn response...the fourth 'f' in the fight/flight/ freeze/fawn repertoire of instinctive responses to trauma. Fawn, according to Webster's, means: "to act servilely; cringe and flatter" (…) and so she relinquishes the fight response, deleting "no" from her vocabulary (Walker, n.d., p.1)

Although he talks about this response in a parental context, it still rings true for Galatea. If we think about the fact that she was born to him, he might be considered as her parent as well as her husband. However the narrator of The Yellow Wallpaper is another case, although they are very similar in their codependent and

fawning behavior their end is quite different; Galatea ends her story by taking her power back, avenging herself and making sure her daughter does not go through what she has under her father's care. Although Galatea turns into a murderer at the end of Miller's short novel, she starts of as the impossibly perfect patriarchal ideal. She is just like "(…) art objects: slim, pale, passive being whose 'charms' eerily recalled the snowy, porcelain immobility of the dead." (Gilbert and Gubar, 2000, p.25) That is what he likes, that is what he craves; the immobility of the dead, the warmth of the living, the coldness of the statue, that is why it is impossible for even this perfect creation to fit into this patriarchal ideal of a woman. When Pygmalion comes back to her room where she is supposedly being taken care of, which is far from the truth, "(…) that's when I'm supposed to open my eyes like a dewy fawn, and see him poised over me like the sun, and make a little gasping noise of wonder and gratitude, and then he fucks me." (Miller, 2013, p.10) He wants to keep living that moment of raping his newborn creation as he wants her to be non-responsive and statuesque still, although he, himself, has prayed for her to come alive in the beginning.

"Back where the maiden lay, and lay beside her," (Ovid, 2018, line 281, p. 243) He sees her as a maiden, which also indicates his preference for virgins and younger girls and although she is a stone statue, he puts her to bed next to him, he is clearly attracted to her as a statue not as a woman, at least not yet. He wants to tell Venus to make *his ivory girl* (Ovid, 2018, line 276, p.243) his wife; he does not define her as my beautiful woman but as his ivory girl, he is aware that he is attracted to her being a statue. So Miller's Galatea is not such a far-fetched interpretation of Pygmalion's intentions as it seems, he only wants the statue to be warm enough to penetrate.

Ovid then continues with Galatea's birth/rape scene. The moment she is born she is being raped, the first scene she sees is a man on top of him, the first thing she feels is someone pressing to her breast: "And stroked her breast, and felt the ivory soften/ Under his fingers, as wax grows soft in sunshine,/ Made pliable by handling." (Ovid, 2018, lines 283-285, p. 234) He continues to talk about her in terms of objects; first starting with ivory then upon her waking up she becomes wax that can be made 'pliable' by 'handling'. These words are important as this is what Pygmalion wants from a woman. Pliable only to his touch, taking shape with his handling only, growing warm under him.

This scene is interpreted by Carol Ann Duffy (1999) from Galatea's point of view as Galatea changing tack, becoming warmer herself, seeming to be wanton, enjoying herself under him in order to stop his harassment of her ivory body. (p.55) That is her revenge against Pygmalion, she takes away what he likes, the forced intercourse is no longer forced, the unmoving body is now moving, she is not an object anymore but a human woman, and that makes him lose interest. "And haven't seen him since,/ Simple as that." (Duffy, 2017, p.55) As we have already stated more than once, what he wants is not a human woman, so when she shows the characteristics of one it is a turn-off for him.

We see Ovid's Pygmalion still using "it" for his newborn wife, still considering her an object: he "Plays lover again, and over and over touches/ The body with his hand. It is a body!" (2018, lines 287-288, p. 243) Playing 'lover' is an interesting way of rephrasing touching someone who has not given you their consent to do so. Love has nothing to do with this scene, force maybe, violation, crossing someone's boundaries or rape are more like it. From there, Ovid's account for what happens is very simple and seems covert. He kisses her, acknowledges that she is

finally real, she blushes and responds. We do not know how she responds, but her eyes look on him and to the skies at the same time and they are 'blessed' with a child nine months later. (Ovid, 2018, p.243) We have no idea how she responds or what she feels or anything about her for that matter, and the story skips quickly to Paphos's birth. The first moment she opens her eyes is after he is kissing and touching her and after her 'response', the moment of her birth is the moment of her violation. Women are sexualised from a very early age, yet this is a brand-new fantasy, sexualising someone's birth. Miller talks about this in her story as it is mentioned above; Pygmalion's fantasy of violating that moment of birth. Duffy's perspective on this scene is no less chilling. We witness the scene from Galatea's eyes; "Cold, I was, like snow, like ivory./ I thought *He will not touch me*,/ but he did." (Duffy, 2017, p.54) These first lines of the poem show us that the violation comes as a shock, she assumes she is protected as she is a cold stone but, just like a real woman,~~;~~ no boundary, no caution protects her from being violated. She, still believing the freeze response would save her, acts dead. "He kissed my stone-cool lips./ I lay still/ as though I'd died." (Duffy, 2017, p.54) He goes on to touch her, to talk to her "what he'd do and how./ His words were terrible." He speaks to her of what he would do to her and even though she does not have a real body, she feels violated. Clearly, she is disgusted by his words. She tries to use her sculptured body as a defence, trying to drown his voice under the sea. Even then we see him shout, as if his need to violate her will always win against her nature or efforts. (Duffy, 2017, p.54)

Ovid talks about how Pygmalion brings her presents, adorns her with things he finds nice. "pays her compliments, and brings her presents/ Such as girls love, smooth pebbles, winding shells,/ Little pet birds, flowers with a thousand colors,/ Lilies, and painted balls, and lumps of amber." (2018, p. 243) Duffy has these lines in her poetry

in a different tone; “He brought me presents, polished pebbles,/ little bells./ I didn’t blink,/ was dumb./ He brought me pearls and necklaces and rings./ He called them girly things.” (Duffy, 2017, p.54)

Although from Ovid’s point of view it seems like he is in love with her, Galatea’s account in Duffy’s poem tells the reader that she did not blink, did not move, she acted dumb. She is clearly not interested. She also narrates that he calls the things he brings ‘girly things’ as if she is mocking him. As if she is saying; ‘what do you know about the girls, you who have not talked to anyone but a statue?’ He then continues to use these gifts as his permission, he touches her body. She calls them ‘clammy’(Duffy, 2017, p.54), which portrays, or rather develops, an image of disgust. She says that she did not shrink as she ‘played’ the statue. (Duffy, 2017, p.54) That wording is important as Duffy’s poem makes the reader question a little bit whether Galatea is actually a statue or if she is a woman being raped and under the control of her freeze response, ‘playing’ the statue to stay alive. As Cahill notes, “Rape cannot be defined or understood as theft, mere assault, or virtually identical to other forms of heterosexual intercourse. Rather, it is a sexually specific act that destroys (if only temporarily) the intersubjectivity, embodied agency and therefore personhood of a woman.” (Cahill, 2001, p.13) So from another point of analysis, we can rethink Galatea as the statue and maybe consider she might be a woman acting the part of a statue, or we can see her as a metaphor for women who are violated or in constant danger of violation: losing her personhood, becoming the object she has long been identified as by the male gaze, distancing herself from her body, losing her bodily autonomy and personal agency.

On that note, a similar but different response to trauma is depicted in Miller’s Galatea. Where Duffy’s Galatea seems to react by freezing, Miller’s Galatea fawns

over her abuser in the hopes of staying alive and minimising the abuse. Galatea tries to escape the room they imprisoned her in but her plan fails, so she does what she can when no escape is possible from repeated abuse. Today, her situation would be called complex trauma; a trauma that does not happen in an instance or by chance, complex trauma comes from an abuse that persists and keeps you away from safety, such as being in an abusive household and as a child and having no escape or an outlet for their emotions. Galatea's situation seems to be similar; she has nowhere to go, no escape, no outlet, no support system. She acts pleasing and obedient to everyone, to the doctor, the nurse and her husband, she takes the abuse, she even tries to act the way everyone wants her to, to be able to see her child, to go for a walk or maybe to escape. But everyone around her is gaslighted into believing she is crazy and hysterical. When she tells the truth about her being a stone, she is treated as mad and gets scolded. When she tries to argue for her health she is treated like a child in a tantrum. Yet, this scene is not unfamiliar to women living in patriarchal society, for so long, husbands and fathers had a say in a woman's life, not the woman herself. All the 'mad woman in the attic' narrations, all the 'hysteria' cases show us how women were gaslighted about their own body and health, and how their choices about their autonomy was taken away from them. Campbell (1997) suggests, albeit in the context of memory, that "This strategy relies on the presentation of women as unable to maintain a stable enough sense of self or identity to be trustworthy testifiers to their own harm." (p.51) Patriarchal sources use gaslighting over women to suggest women are not smart, intellectual, rational or in general whole enough to make their own decisions. The doctors that take care of both Galatea and the narrator of *The Yellow Wallpaper* both trust the husband rather than listening to their patients. If a man was sick this would certainly not be the case. "She is visualized as a 'hole' or 'lack'

opposed, in this binary economy, to the male subject as the other, or object. She has no identity of her own. The symbolic violence of this repression is that she has no language with which to represent herself." (Pinggong, 2018, p. 255) Not only does she have no language to represent herself but she also has no independence to stand up for her own body or her daughter's for that matter. As a woman, she has no power, neither over her child, nor over her marriage, nor even over her own body.

It is also important here to state that married women and their testimonials were long ignored by justice systems in the West, and still are in some parts of the world. "Rape, as the current law defines it, is the forcible perpetration of an act of sexual intercourse on the body of a woman *not* one's *wife*." (Brownmiller, 1975, p.950) It was believed, some people still do, that rape simply cannot exist in a marriage, because it is believed that marriage is a contract in which a woman signs her body away to her husband and his wants/needs. Marriage bed violence has been thought of as the duty of a woman or a husband's right for so long in the patriarchy that scenes like Galatea being visited by Pygmalion for his sexual purposes in her prison of a bedroom, where she is being 'taken care' of, and her taking the abuse because she has no other option is, although scary, a very common experience of women through the ages. As Brownmiller argues "A sexual assault is an invasion of bodily integrity and a violation of freedom and self-determination wherever it happens to take place, in or out of the marriage bed." (Brownmiller, 1975, 952) A human being's right to decide their own consent at any moment of time should not be disputed or should not be readily signed off just because they are getting into a marriage. This idea is not modern, it is not feminist, it is simply out of respect for a living being. Although asking for consent for each encounter with someone's possible boundaries should have been the norm all along, women have been stripped of the

control of any kind of boundaries in the name of marriage, family and society under the rule of patriarchy.

Yet there is one thing that the author gives Galatea in the story; she has a name. As has already been discussed in the introduction to this thesis, the name Galatea does not actually belong to the original myth, although some authors, including Miller, have adopted it. More significantly however, in her story, Pygmalion is not named - he is just referred to as "the husband." Not naming a person can be analysed in terms of their not being important or significant to the story. Ovid does not name Galatea, and Ovid's Pygmalion does not either, she is nothing but a vessel of his love, his artwork come to life, and later the mother of his child. However, Miller's not naming him seems more intentional as Pygmalion is crucial to her Galatea's story as the abuser husband and a possible threat to her child. He is the enemy, yet he is not named. It is almost as if by not naming him, she refuses to recognise his authority and his power over her story. In contrast, Duffy does the opposite, she places his name in the title and calls Galatea his bride. Galatea is not named in her poem just like she is not named in the original, almost like she is hiding herself in the poem intentionally which is reminiscent of her 'acting', not moving, not blinking in order to not be seen by Pygmalion. However, calling her a 'bride' seems ironic; this is no wedding and she is not human.

Duffy's poem (2017) continues with this untouchable stone imagery as Galatea says; "He let his fingers sink into my flesh,/ he squeezed, he pressed./ I would not bruise." (p.55) As the abuse goes on, she seems physically unaffected. As Pygmalion keeps on searching for clues that his touch hurts her, bruises her, she states; "I showed no scratch, no scrape, no scar." (Duffy, 2017, p.54) The word 'show' however tells the reader that although the abuse did not leave any marks on the surface, it is because

she is still resisting. The violation turns into rape as she says; “He propped me up on pillows,/ jawed all night.” (Duffy, 2017, p.55)- Despite the hurt he tries to cause to Galatea she calls her heart ice and glass. Breakable yet cold. She distances herself from the rape; she is simply not there. But this technique of hers does not stop him, her non-responsive nature does not deter Pygmalion from insisting so Galatea changes tack. She becomes a human woman, the opposite of what he wants, she starts responding and enjoying herself during their intercourse which makes Pygmalion leave her alone. Not only does she act as if she enjoys it, her imagery that Duffy (2017) presents is reminiscent of a snake; “arched, coiled, writhed,” (p.55) The snake can be interpreted as the representation of Lilith who was Adam’s first wife. She refuses Adam’s preferred sexual position preferring to decide on the position herself, which is above him, which in turn angers both Adam and God. Just like Lilith, we see Galatea act like she enjoys herself; she takes control and dominate rather than be dominated. Snakes are often used in relation to evil women such as Medusa and the Gorgons, Echidna Lilith, Bai Suzhen, and Lamia. The snake imagery is also reminiscent of Eve being seduced by the snake, which has been thought of as possibly Lilith by some. Eve gains knowledge through the snake, albeit giving up ‘Eden’ which can also be seen as a patriarchal heaven where ignorance is bliss. However, snakes are also symbols of rebirth and regeneration which, by empowering herself and owning the archetype he despises, Galatea undergoes. She is shedding her skin, changing her status from one of victimisation to freedom. Although she does not traditionally become a villainess (the concept of a villainess in this way, can also be interpreted as any woman who is a threat to patriarchal structures), she becomes what he does not want her to be: Real. Woman. Human.

What Pygmalion wants is clear, a non-responsive child-like girl. A statue and a very young child have a lot in common; they are both unaware of their or anyone else's sexuality, they have not had any experience in life, they are both somehow forced into this unknown event. So when he is sexually interested in a statue he has made, it is disturbingly close to him being interested in his own daughter. Miller takes this analogy further by making him go after their own daughter Paphos when he is bored of his wife. His wife is no longer young enough for him. We hear that he is making another statue, he says the girl he is making is ten years old:- "I had expected him to say "young." When I had once asked him how old he meant for me to be, he had said, "A virgin."" (Miller, 2013, p.11) She is obviously not a virgin anymore, after being with Pygmalion. She is now 'used' goods, albeit she has been used by him. He needs someone even younger, untouched, yet again, unable to respond. His pedophilia becomes even more obvious as this conversation goes on;

"Ten," I said. "Not twelve, perhaps?"

"No," he said.

"I do love girls at fifteen," I said. "The other day the nurse brought her daughter, and she was so beautiful. Her whole face was filled with light."

"I have no interest in fifteen," he said. "Or the nurse's daughter." (Miller, 2013, p.11)

He clearly states that he has no interest in girls who are past puberty, even though they are also children, virgins themselves, his preference is more than specific. Galatea, maybe with an unconscious understanding, suggests girls that are little bit older or like the nurse's daughter, possibly trying to change his aim to someone else rather than their daughter. Pages later, she consciously realises: "My daughter is ten. Paphos is ten." (Miller, 2013, p.18) This realisation changes her motives completely,

she surrenders the survival mentality and goes into protection mode. When she runs away from the nurse with her plan of feigning pregnancy, she runs to Paphos's room. After seeing her daughter, she goes to his room. She finds the statue he made;

> "She looked younger than Paphos because she was so small. She was perfection, every inch of her, from the sweet curls of her ribbons to her sandals painted gold. She had no scabs, and no sand beneath her fingernails. She did not chase the goats, and she did not disobey." (Miller, 2013, p. 22)

The Paphos he created is not very different from how Galatea started her life. She is small, young, a virgin, perfect, obedient and more than that she cannot disappoint him as she is a stone, not a real girl wanting and doing things real people would. Galatea feels for her, even though she knows that it is not her daughter. She, herself, born from his hands, abused in them, can identify herself with the statue of Paphos. "There were silks on her, draped like blankets, and I slipped them off. There was a bracelet of flowers on her wrist, and I pulled it away." (Miller, 2013, p.22) She then whispers to her that she is sorry and calls her daughter. (p.23) She takes away the adornments Pygmalion has put on her, reliving what has been done to her with those 'pretty gifts that girls like', he is following the exact same path with her that she followed with Galatea. He adorns the statue just like fattening a chicken before killing it, he prepares his victim to be raped. Seeing both the statue and Paphos as her daughter she is sure of her plan of execution.

Her plan gives the feeling of catharsis. The relief coming after all that abuse, all that horror being witnessed by the reader, you feel stuck with Galatea, unable to move, reliving the violation every single time, trapped in a room with no-one believing you and everyone out to hurt you, even women (the nurse). It is easy to identify with her story as most women today have lived a somehow similar story of

being or feeling violated in some way, people not believing you, being gaslit, your choices being taken away, feeling trapped or being trapped in a situation you have not consented to. And although Duffy ends her poem on a very strong, empowered note, one cannot help but be more satisfied with Miller's ending as, after all those times you feel trapped alongside Galatea, frightened for her and for yourself you finally get rid of her abuser for good and you do it using his abuse against him. He falls into his own trap, he is killed by his own creation and he is killed because he made her that way, treated her that way. She goes to him saying "Ah, my beauty is asleep" (Miller, 2013, p. 22) which is what he says every time he comes to her room to rape her, he wants her to act asleep so he can rape her without anything resembling consent. So she comes in with his words, making him live the horror she lived every single time. She runs, he follows, she gets in to the water and swims out to the open sea, he follows. He is angry and entitled, therefore it does not occur to him to stop and see what she is doing. He follows her directly without thinking about it. Once she is far enough away, she lets him catch her ankle. Again he does not think she could hurt him, he catches her foot, pulls her in, puts his hand on her throat and his face on hers. "I think he expected me to fight and claw. I didn't fight. I seized him close around the ribs, holding my wrists so he could not get free. The sudden weight pulled us both under. He kicked and flailed back to the surface, but I was heavier than he had thought," (Miller, 2013, p.23) He expects her to fight, as he expected her to run away but that is not her plan. She knows that he will hold her, catch her, follow her, she trusts in that. She is using his abusive and narcissistic nature against him. She wraps herself around him, dragging him down using her body. "(…) no matter how he kicked, he could not haul us back up to the air." (P. 24) He is trapped just like she was, he is dying to get out but she does not let him, just like he did not. "He had no chance, really. He was

only flesh." (P.24) The fact that he made her from stone, together with his nature, becomes the end of him. He is killed by his own evil, drowned with it. What he made was stone, much heavier, stronger and resilient than him as, in the end, he was only human. Dragged to the deep like his own darkness, he dies just like he made her live. While she is dying Galatea is finally at peace, she thinks of how both the statue and the real Paphos would be safe. She feels like she is lying on pillows rather than the sandy floor of the ocean, death comes as a friend to her after all she has been through, knowing that he will no longer be a threat to anyone else and that she was the one to take him out. Although this scene could've been read in terms of the patriarchal idea of a self-sacrificing mother, what Galatea is doing is not simply sacrificing herself for her child. The murder and her suicide are much more than that, they are an act of rebellion, standing in solidarity with other women and protecting them from abuse by taking out the abuser with an act of self-sacrifice. She is a mother and what pushes her to the edge is realising that he will attempt to rape their child as he did to her, but even before that Galatea is stuck, she has no way out and keeps searching for one. That becomes the last straw, she has nothing to lose now and she can risk it all because of it. She might be read as still a patriarchal ideal but it does not take away from her act of rebellion and her journey to empowerment. She self-actualises herself by both taking out her abuser and what he and the patriarchal ideals have created; herself.

Both Duffy's and Miller's Galatea have empowering endings yet Miller's story offers the feelings of catharsis by first making you feel what she does and getting her revenge using the methods he abused her with, whereas Duffy sends away the abuser by making Galatea a woman rather than a statue, showing that Pygmalion is not after a wife or a woman but a plaything. Both showcase the violation of Galatea graphically and both turn it into a story of female empowerment. Being able to

transform the patriarchal narrative by (re)writing these women is as empowering as the endings of their stories.

4. EVIL WOMEN

4.1 I am Circe

Circe is mentioned in a lot of important ancient Greek texts; Homer's *Odyssey*, *The Sorrows of Love* by Parthenius, Virgil's *Aeneid* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Here the thesis will mainly explore how she was perceived in Ovid's and Homer's texts but will also mention other Greek texts. The main focus is on the differences between the texts, and how the change in narration between the ancient Greek and Roman texts written by important male storytellers of their time and the feminist rewritings of today affects Circe's story.

In Parthenius's The Sorrows of Love, Circe is mentioned as a lover and a witch with transformational powers. Both Calchus and Ulysses are in love with her, but she gets angry at Calchus's insistence on courting her, and she invites him over, only to change him into a pig. But then she releases him on the condition of his not bothering her, wooing her or coming to her island ever again. She is not depict as evil, she is just powerful and from the ending, it is safe to assume she is also merciful. (Parthenius, 2021, p. 43) Virgil's *Aeneid* portrays a very different Circe however. There are two memorable mentions of her in the Aeneid; the first one is when she is portrayed as a dangerous witch using "wicked herbs" (Virgil, 2017, p.238) to alter and transform people "in brutal shapes confin'd." (p. 238) Then some pages later, she is depicted as a jealous witch.

> For Circe long had lov'd the youth in vain,/ Till love, refus'd, converted to disdain:/ Then mixing pow'rful herbs, with magic art,/ She chang'd his form, who could not change his heart;/ Constrain'd him in a bird, and made him fly,/ With party-color'd plumes, a chatt'ring pie. (Virgil, 2017, p. 246)

She is taken down from her status as a goddess or a nymph and shown as a jealous woman using her witchcraft to punish men who do not love her. Just because she could not make the object of her love love her back, she changes him into a bird. This is very similar to how Ovid portrays Circe in *Metamorphoses*. She appears in two love-hate stories in Ovid, with Picus, the story is nearly the same as in Virgil's telling of it. Picus is in love with someone else, Circe wants to be with him and she does not have her feelings reciprocated, thus, she turns him into a bird. (Ovid, 2018, p. 351) Then when his men come for him, she turns all of them into beasts. Although this suggests a lot of power, the fact still remains that these male authors made her use her great powers for relationships with men as if she can fully exist only in relation to a man. She is not mentioned as a goddess in her own right; in all of these ancient texts we are introduced to her as the daughter of the Sun, and then we face her transformative powers but they are only in the horror stories of men. Thus, as Beauvoir argues: "She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute- she is the Other." (Beauvoir, 1989, xxvii) The story never belongs to her, she is a menial character in some heroes' stories. She exists in relation to these men, she is the visited island, the jealous lover, the cruel goddess who falls in love with these men like she has nothing better in her life than waiting for a possible lover and being obsessed with the men who come to her 'lonely island'.

Therefore, Circe, although called a goddess by many, is shown as a desperate woman rather than a powerful being. This is opposed to how male gods have been portrayed, which is of course in their own right and power with no essential woman or love story mixed in the narrative as their whole purpose. The women in their stories are nothing other than their conquests and pursuits. Ovid also gives the exact same

narrative between Glaucus and Circe. Glaucus, in love with Scylla, comes to Circe for help to make her fall in love with him, yet she tells him to let go of the one who could not love him and look for the one who does; in this case, it's Circe herself. However 'the hero' says; "Leaves will grow on the sea,/ And sea-weed flourish on the mountain-tops,/ Before I change my love, while Scylla lives." (Ovid, 2018, p. 339) Actually, they are both doing the same thing, they are like mirrors to each other; both wanting to force a relationship with someone who does not return their feelings. Ovid humbles Circe. He makes her seem like a jealous witch just like Virgil does. One thing these authors portray differently however, is her symbolism. While Virgil's (2017) account of her house and herself includes her singing and spinning which may be reminiscent of some other feminine figures (p.238), such as Penelope, Ovid's account of her is as very regal and powerful, sitting on a throne with wild animals in her command. She is separated from the feminine image Virgil portrays and put into a witch's imagery when Ovid says she is interested in the herbs and plants only and not the household things. (Ovid, 2018, p.346) Homer and Virgil describe a similar Circe, and it is possible to say Virgil was affected by Homer's writing of her but he takes it to another level: "A closer look at these passages will teach us that Homer's Circe was only a starting-point for Vergil. In the first passage his Circe is still largely the same character she was when Odysseus met her, though Vergil deliberately changes some details in her portrayal. For neither the second nor the third passage we can find direct parallels in Homer; in his epic the sorceress was not involved in this kind of activity. From that point on Circe starts to live a more Vergilian life." (Stoffelen, 1994, p.121) Homer (2002) describes her as follows: "Placed at her loom within, the goddess sung;" (p. 265) and he also refers to the tamed animals, so while he shows a feminine image on the one hand, he creates this dreadful image with wild animals only

controlled and tamed by her. The same contradictory image of her continues when she offers the sailors what she has at home, playing the good host yet poisoning their bread. Playing with the image of a nurturing mother figure and making her poison using those 'feminine' images like cooking and serving can be read as uncanny[8]. She does not appear to be a threat and that is why it is such a horror story to them, she is a woman; weak, meek and serving them, in full trust they do whatever they please, only to encounter her 'evil' side. Circe is considered an evil character mostly because she is a woman who does not conform to the patriarchal society's rules like she should;~~,~~ she is an exile, an outcast, a witch that turns men into pigs. She can be viewed as a femme fatale in that case, seducing men on her island then turning them into pigs and possibly eating them. "The femme fatale, as opposed to other forms of male malevolence, has been categorised as a form of feminine evil in so far that she is a direct threat to men, male dominance, and the patriarchal system." (Guerrero, 2016, P.1) She is seen as a literal man-eater if we were to see her story as we are told. She is an outcast but somehow seems to be alright and still powerful; as will be explained later, this is threatening for patriarchy. Guerrero (2016) continues to discuss other prominent opinions about the femme fatale;

"Virginia Allen states that many of the proto-femme fatales are portrayed as revengeful women whose victim is often a male lover. She is described as beautiful but destructive, erotic, demonic, and dangerous (34). Patrick Bade also notes that the concept of the femme fatale developed over time, originally being merely portrayed as the seductive woman who pleased her victims sexually and then killed them (7)." (p.1)

We know Circe is a goddess/nymph, who are known for their beauty. She is portrayed as vengeful with her stories of transforming men who might have or might

not have done something to her into pigs , with Glaucus and Picus, making them her lover/victims. Although none of them are actual lovers as Glaucus and Picus do not want her and the reason for the sailors who were turned to pigs is not given in the *Odyssey*.We are given no account of why Circe poisons these men that she takes in as guests in Homer's *Odyssey*, which makes no sense: "It's one of the few times that men, in myth, are punished for their appetites—and naturally, it's the work of an unnatural woman." (Zimmerman, 2021, p.43) "Unnatural" is how they perceive Circe, although she is probably better understood as natural, with her witchcraft which connects her to nature and to her feminine roots. Madeline Miller later explains the scene in a much more sensible way; threatened by a group of men Circe, who is alone in her house as a woman, therefore not respected as the host, takes precautions against their attacks of any kind. (Miller, 2018, p. 216) In all these texts, her portrayal is either as a dangerous witch or a weak woman, nothing in between.

Playing with the feminine archetypes in patriarchal culture, these male, classical authors portray her in different ways yet they are all images in the minds of men and their world, not the reality of a woman. Thus, "Anima, the female half of the male, may be spontaneous and intuitive like a young girl; or worldly wise, conniving and ruthless like a witch; or nurturing and benevolent like the earth mother." (Atre, 2011, p. 157) A woman does not only consist of triple goddess imagery; a virgin, a mother and a crone. Triple goddess imagery could be used in relation to feminism and female goddess worship, and ~~it~~ can symbolise the stages of a woman's life or be used as a reference to the goddesses that are related to the said stages. However, it can also be used in connection with names of the roles that are given to women in patriarchal societies; this version encompasses all the fantasies of patriarchal culture which believes women only exist in relation to them; she is a virgin to be conquered, shy and

weak, a mother to nurture and take care of them and their offspring or a crone that is no longer useful, thus, either a jealous bitch or a dangerous witch. These images might be true for some women, just like some stereotypes are in fact true for some people but one thing is for sure, this is not the full reality of being a woman. Circe does not exist merely in relation to her father the sun god, Glaucus, Picus nor to Odysseus and thanks to feminist retellings we can finally see her in a different light. In the stories of these men, excluding Parthenius, she has been the jealous lover, the captor, the victim, the witch, the lonely island; simultaneously cruel to and weak against men. Yet, in the retellings of women who know what is it like to be labeled in this way, she goes through a full arc. She fights her own nature and ends up owning it. Her victimhood becomes her power, her relationships: her lessons, and her loneliness: her freedom.

In the beginning of the novel Circe by Madeline Miller, the readers are presented with Circe as a child. Even before we move on to Circe herself, we are presented with the meaning of the word nymph and what it depicts.

> Least of the lesser goddesses, our powers were so modest they could scarcely ensure our eternities. We spoke to fish and nurtured flowers, coaxed drops from the clouds or salt from the waves. That word, nymph, paced out the length and breadth of our futures. In our language, it means not just goddess, but bride. (Miller, 2018, p. 17)

Both regarding their powers among the gods and how they are perceived by them, the situation of these nymphs is similar to how women are perceived among men in a patriarchal society. Nymphs are the little girls among the gods. They seem to be working with nature in a very soft way and in a world where aggression and power is the norm, they are lesser beings. Not only that but we are also presented with a dual

meaning of the word nymph, which is ‘bride’. Later in the book we see that description to be true to its meaning as everybody looks on them as marriage material. As Simone de Beauvoir (1989) also suggests; “Marriage is the destiny traditionally offered to women by society” (p. 425) and nymphs are no different. All they are to the gods are commodities to be bargained for and novelties, thus they need to be beautiful for that is all they can be. Circe’s brother tells Circe that Scylla escaped her punishment by being a monster for it would have been a lot worse to exist as an ugly nymph then a huge scary monster as "Even the most beautiful nymph is largely useless, and an ugly one would be nothing, less than nothing. She would never marry or produce children. She would be a burden to her family, a stain upon the face of the world. She would live in the shadows, scorned and reviled.” (Miller, 2018, p. 89) The use of nymphs as an allegory for women is very clear here, a woman who cannot marry, please men and be used for their exchange value is nothing in the patriarchal world. Women only exist in the service of men or in the exchange between them.

Just because an ugly nymph could not marry she is thought to be a ‘stain’ upon the world. What a disaster it must be to be immortal, beautiful and in harmony with nature when you do not have a man. Like Zimmerman (2021) suggests; “(…) an unbeautiful woman is an unfulfilled promise to the world.” (p.21) Circe’s brother’s depiction of being undesirable, and thus unmarried, as so much worse than being a monster, shows the reader how the patriarchal mind values women; if she is not in relation to him she is a stain upon the world. “‘But a monster,’ he said, ‘she always has a place. She may have all the glory her teeth can snatch. She will not be loved for it, but she will not be constrained either.” (Miller, 2018, p. 89) Just like the imagery of the Crone, a monster can be by itself as it does not exist in the exchange system anymore, yet even then there is a use for it, she can be used by heroes to be slain and

achieve glory upon her death. Thus as a nymph it seems you are far less valuable than you would be as a monster, but it makes a little difference whether you are a nymph to be conquered or a monster to be hunted down, the approach to both seem the same. A later, transformed Circe sees the reality of being a nymph and a woman in a man's world. "Brides, nymphs were called, but that is not really how the world saw us. We were an endless feast laid out upon a table, beautiful and renewing. And so very bad at getting away." (Miller, 2018, p. 224) From the very beginning, from the ogling eyes of Circe's uncles when she starts to look like a girl to Hermes's joke about nymphs being bad at getting away from rape, the nymphs are ridiculed, used, violated, raped without consequences. Circe's answer to this injustice is to accept her forced isolation and create a new world out of it. Alone, yes but somehow protected and in her own power. She turns her exile into a chance to create her own domain.

The novel is full of transformations, it is as packed with them as *Metamorphoses*, but they all start when Circe is banished and no one lifts a finger for her. She understands that in this world, everyone is for themselves, especially a nymph. Even her brother, who she cared for very much, does nothing but ridicule her. The first clear sign of Circe's transformation is the moment of her packing for her exile. She thinks about a tapestry of a wedding and whether she should take it or not. After Aeetes visits her with his mockery of wisdom, she says; "He left and I considered the tapestry again. Its groom was goggle-eyed, the bride buried in her veils, and behind them the family gaped like idiots. I had always hated it. Let it stay and rot." (Miller, 2018, p. 94) This is the first time she decides using her own judgement. The wedding tapestry represents the life she would have as a nymph; existing for marriage, hiding behind a veil and everyone's expectations on her shoulders. She cannot even remember who made the tapestry, and if we as readers

interpret the tapestry as an analogy for patriarchal oppression , we don't not know either who makes these unfair and mostly stupid, rules, none of us (mostly referring to women here) benefit from them, yet we keep it high on our walls under a constant gaze. When Circe decides to leave it behind, she also leaves this narrative of 'what could have been' behind. And although she has a lot more hurdles to go through before she becomes her own person, this is the start of Circe's journey of self-discovery. Circe as she wants to be, not Circe the daughter of Helios or Circe the jealous lover. Later, on the island, she gets used to how things are;~~,~~ although she is alone, she quickly discovers being alone is not so bad and that she can become anything she wants now. "I did not mind its shadows anymore, for they meant my father's gaze was gone from the sky and the hours were my own. I did not mind the emptiness either. For a thousand years I had tried to fill the space between myself and my family; filling the rooms of my house was easy by comparison." (Miller, 2018, p. 101)

She is no longer pretending to be something, trying to fit into a role, nor is she competing with other women to exist in a man's eyes. Her emptiness and her loneliness are nothing in comparison to the living conditions for women/nymphs her society. She was lonelier in the crowded rooms of those palaces then she is on the island, in her empty house. She is, to some extent, rid of the patriarchal gaze, and when she starts getting used to her island she says, "I did not mind its shadows anymore, for they meant my father's gaze was gone from the sky and the hours were my own." (Miller, 1999, p. 101) Her father's gaze is the ultimate male gaze as he is the sun god, constantly watching from the skies, he is the patriarch. And only the nights belong to Circe, the dark of which reminds us of binary oppositions such as male/ female, sun/ moon, light/ dark, or good/ bad. Sun and light being related to the

male, we see night and dark related to the female. Later, near the end, when she blooms to her full powers she protects the island from being watched completely and, although this is a difficult task for her, she is able to exist outside the constant watch of the male gaze.

As Circe transforms in her hut, her voice becomes more self-assured.

"Then I learned that I could bend the world to my will, as a bow is bent for an arrow. I would have done that toil a thousand times to keep such power in my hands. I thought: this is how Zeus felt when he first lifted the thunderbolt." (Miller, 2018, p. 103)

She starts to cultivate her powers but as she mentions, these powers are not godly, they do not happen in the blink of an eye rather she has to cultivate them, work for them, and use them. Witchcraft is just like cooking, it is learned and to get the right flavour you have to make sacrifices, study the herbs, know the lore and practice well, but maybe because it was not handed to her like the powers of the gods are handed to them, she values it as her own. In a world where nothing is given to women without a lot of effort, witchcraft is an earned power whereas godly powers are privileges that these men are born with. For Circe, being able to bend the world to her will is her act of coming back to herself, as before her exile on the island her identity was determined by the men in control of her. Yet, as she also says, her greatest gift is transformation (Miller, 2018, p. 106) therefore, she goes back to it as if it is telling her that her own transformation is not yet over as well. Of course, while her magic physically transforms, she is also mentally transformed. When Hermes comes to her island, we see her boundaries standing strong;

"In the old days I would have rushed forth with a brimming cup of answers, to give him all he wanted. But I was not the same as I had been. I owed him nothing. He would have of me only what I wanted to give." (Miller, 2018, p. 115)

She no longer exists to please and she no longer believes that the power of these men makes them entitled to her world. This scene is reminiscent of Duffy's poem (1999) when her Circe says; "Of course, I was younger then. And hoping for men. Now,/ let us baste that sizzling pig on the spit once again." (p. 49) Although the levels of aggressiveness of these two works are very different, the mindset Circe reaches is clear in both. She no longer expects the world of men to be nice to her, so she sets her own boundaries. However, the world of men, as we can see in Miller's novel, does not respect the boundaries women set for themselves any more than it respects the said women themselves.

We see Circe's borders being crossed and violated many times and in many ways. She is raped, her home invaded, her mind broken into, her living situation changed by force. Her boundaries are repeatedly violated. The reason for this constant violation can be interpreted as a result of her disruption of the patriarchal idealisation of the female as the angel, mother, the virgin or basically existing for her use-value. Thus, she takes that image and shows that it is possible to be out of the grasp of that society and its rules and still be somewhat happy and able to survive. If that's the case for Circe, won't the other women who are oppressed along with her seek shelter in exile too? Her favourable living-situation is a direct threat to patriarchy and male/god dominance, so she either has to be painted as a wicked, jealous witch who is all alone and miserable because she is an outcast, or she has to be under the constant threat of violation so that others would be too scared to try her way of living. Brownmiller (1975) suggests that rape is "nothing more or less than a conscious process of

intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear." (p.15) and with this constant threat of rape and violence women have been conditioned to find protective mating to safely live their lives. (p.16-17) The constant threat of rape keeps women in check and obedient to the culture that oppresses them. Not only are women threatened by rape directly, but also by the constant possibility of it. If you do not exist inside the boxes that are already designated for you, serve the oppressor, keep the circle going, you will be an outcast. And if you are an outcast, no one will protect you, so you are fair game. Do you know what happens to women who are not protected, who live on their islands playing witchcraft, all alone and defenceless? Circe is made an example of: just like she was made an example for her family and anyone with those possible powers, she is made an example for women who might attempt to take their fate into their hands and become empowered.

Therefore, Circe was not only made an example of but also kept in her 'place' not just by the threat of rape but the actual rape she undergoes. She had not believed that the men she had opened her house to and served and showed kindness were capable of such violation. "All the men were rising now, their eyes fixed on me. And still I said nothing. Still I told myself I was wrong. I must be wrong. I had fed them. They had thanked me. They were my guests." (Miller, 2018, p. 217) She does not see how they do not respect her in the absence of a man that owns her; she is part of the offerings of the island for them, she is not the host, she is one of the prizes. She calls her own worries about being in danger hysterics, and she thinks that if she had called on her father that is how they would see her, this is common among women. Although the survival instinct kicks in and fear overtakes her, she does not believe her own senses, rather she thinks she is exaggerating the situation; of course, in seconds we see that her survival instinct was correct. Even during the act of violence, she does

not believe this is happening. “With his right hand, he tore my clothes, a practised gesture.” (Miller, 2018, p. 218) The word ‘practised’ shows us that he has most likely done this before to other women. She has no protection; she is alone and he silences her with his hand. “I remember what I thought, bare against the grinding stone: I am only a nymph after all, for nothing is more common among us than this.” (Miller, 2018, p. 218) She justifies her rape as she feels like a second-class citizen and that is what is done to nymphs and women who are unprotected by a man. She comes to the point of thinking this is what she deserves. As Brownmiller (1975) suggests, “Women are trained to be rape victims.” (P.801) They are conditioned to believe they are deserving of such treatment because from their childhood they are prepared for it. As girls, women were all warned about our clothes, about men that may act nice to us, and even as children, girls frequently experience the uncomfortable stares and attempts of adults. Girls grow up with either things that happened to us, or we grow up hearing about them. Most parents talk to their daughters about men as if they are referring to predators, they warn them not to provoke an attack and yet an attack can happen without the provocation. The violation of a woman runs so deep that she has no boundaries between herself and the other any longer, so rape feels justified and normal, like it is supposed to happen and she is powerless to stop it. Circe later says;

> Maybe the true surprise, I thought, was that it had not happened sooner. My uncles’ eyes used to crawl over me as I poured their wine. Their hands found their way to my flesh. A pinch, a stroke, a hand slipping under the sleeve of my dress. They all had wives; it was not marriage they thought of. One of them would have come for me in the end and paid my father well. Honour on all sides.” (Miller, 2018, p. 219-220).

This is also reminiscent of Persephone's myth where Zeus is complicit in her kidnapping by Hades. As a nymph or a woman, it is no surprise to be horrifyingly violated. Just like a commodity she can be bought or sold, taken or used. "The suffering of the victim is deemed by others to be secondary to that done to father or husband, since traditionally in Western and other societies, rape is perceived primarily as an offense against the property or honor of men." (Curran, 1978, p. 223)

The rape is very vividly and realistically described by Miller. Circe describes being awake for every moment of it yet unable to react, trapped in her own body which later would feel foreign to her. She describes his sweat dripping on her, focusing on a small inconsequential yet utterly disgusting detail. She dissociates during the event, living it like an out of body experience. Then she feels her throat finally working, she "felt a space open in me" (Miller, 2018, p.217) , symbolising her being silenced both metaphorically and physically. She now has a means to protect herself as the men think she is almost dead after the rape, they do not suspect she can fight them in any way now, that she is weak and vulnerable because the captain has violated her. However, as soon as her throat opens, she uses the herbs she put in their drinks to make them fall asleep, turning them into pigs. Her passive spell becomes deadly because they choose violence against her. In all her kindness, she was giving them the benefit of the doubt, subtly protecting herself with a sleep draught but after being violated she does not go easy on them. We see her cruel coldness coming out, justifiably so. "He screamed, and his men screamed with him. It went on for a long time. As it turned out, I did kill pigs that night after all." (Miller, 2018, p. 218) She has avenged herself but she is still dissociated as we do not see any of her emotions or any kind of feelings being mentioned, only cold distant facts.

This cold attitude also presents itself in Duffy's poem where Circe casually gives the recipe of how she cooks pigs. Although the detachment is clear, the poem gives an uncanny feeling as prior to the poem we know the myth of Circe transforming men into pigs. As Royle explains, "(…) the uncanny is not simply an experience of strangeness or alienation. More specifically, it is a peculiar commingling of the familiar and unfamiliar. It can take the form of something familiar unexpectedly arising in a familiar context." (Royle, 2003, p.1) The sensation of the uncanny is provoked when we read about her cooking them while describing the pigs's organs with adjectives that would suit men who hurt her, and in her use of the symbolism of a nurturing theme, such as cooking, now being related to murder:

> Lay two pig's cheeks, with the tongue, / in a dish, and strew it well over with salt/ and cloves./ Remember the skills of the tongue –/ to lick, to lap, to loosen, lubricate, to lie/ in the soft pouch of the face – and how each pig's face/ was uniquely itself, as many handsome as plain,/ the cowardly face, the brave, the comical, noble,/ sly or wise, the cruel, the kind, but all of them,/ nymphs, with those piggy eyes. Season with mace. (Duffy, 1999, p. 48)

It starts out as a very normal recipe but then we are reminded of the organs and their functions. What she starts describing sounds a little sexual and, keeping the myth in mind, more than disgusting. Duffy uses the word 'lie' which has a double entendre here. One makes the pig humanoid, as lying is an attribute of humans; the other however is how the poem goes on 'in the soft pouch of the face' which takes us quickly back to the recipe. Then she goes on to use, 'handsome', 'cowardly', 'brave', 'comical', 'noble', 'sly', 'wise', 'cruel' and 'kind' as adjectives for the pig faces although these adjectives are obvious human qualities. Referring to humanoid qualities while she is continuing with the recipe has an uncanny effect. Mostly, as

patriarchal culture has taught us to identify women with the nurturing and housekeeping roles, seeing her take that role into a dark place, actually cooking the men who are the symbols of the said patriarchy is uncanny to say the least. She also calls them 'nymphs' which makes you think there are not only men in that recipe, but also others who took part in her oppression. She calls their eyes 'piggy' not 'pig' eyes, therefore making it clear that these were once people or something other than a pig. And right after she continues with the recipe, which adds to our sense of detachment from the act.

"Look at that simmering lug, at that ear,/ did it listen, ever, to you, to your prayers and rhymes,/ to the chimes of your voice, singing and clear?" (Duffy, 1999, p.48) The ear of 'pigs' she says, do not listen to their 'clear' voices nor their prayers nor their rhymes which can be interpreted as meaning that the ears of men do not listen whether you speak openly and clearly, beg them or kindly sing to them, ~~.~~"to the sweetmeats slipped/ from the slit, bulging, vulnerable bag of the balls." (Duffy, 1999, p.48) This part of the recipe seems to be describing the genitalia of a man instead of an organ of a pig. Calling 'balls' vulnerable is very significant as well. Although biologically speaking they are vulnerable to outside forces, culturally they are considered as the symbols of bravery and strength. Having balls or bigger balls has been used to signify being stronger in a manly way ~~in everyday~~in everyday language.

Therefore Duffy's (1999) pointing out the reality of balls being vulnerable does not feel involuntary, rather it seems like a statement which she, right away, continues with the matter of heart:~~.~~ "When the heart of a pig has hardened, dice it small." (p.49) The heart hardening is a symbol for men who stray away from their emotions and live in that detached state where they feel neither empathy for others nor their own emotions. In the actuality of the recipe, a hardened organ will be hard to

chew when it is cooked, therefore cutting it into small pieces is the only way to eat it. Also, while Duffy is creating this image of ~~an~~a hardened heart the reader thinks of a man, which is followed right after with the cutting of the heart. She keeps playing with the images of cannibalism and nurture at the same time which makes the poem very uncanny to the reader, it makes one feel uncomfortable and in some way it feels justified, at least to readers who are familiar with the myth. Then she talks about how she hoped for men when she was younger, she describes an image like a mermaid waiting for them, waiting to find love with the sailors (Duffy, 1999, p.49). However, after all she has been through, she becomes the image of a siren, a witch that cooks the men instead of waiting for love from their 'hardened' hearts. The act of rape also seemed to harden her resolve, although rape or any connotations of it are not stated explicitly in Duffy's poem and no justification is provided for her actions, one can guess what happened in between the Circe who was 'awaiting for love ' and the 'dice it small' Circe[2]. Even just by reading the *Odyssey*, and seeing twenty hungry sailors coming to her house where she is all alone, it is really not that hard to identify with that experience as a woman, and to see the possibility of harassment and rape. Of course, as the narrator is unreliable we have no idea how these men really acted in the *Odyssey*.

In Miller's Circe, the aftermath of rape is described in terms as disturbingly real as the act itself. "I was not shaking any more. I did not move at all. My flesh seemed to have congealed around me. My skin stretched over it like a dead thing, rubbery and vile." (Miller, 2018, p. 219) She becomes a stranger to her own body after it being violated. As she mentally leaves her body as a defence mechanism, she cannot find her way back to it. This is the Freeze response to trauma according to polyvagal theory, where the dissociation degenerates into PTSD. She does not call it

her skin but she calls it ‘flesh’, distancing herself from her own body, she goes on to describe it as a dead thing which is what it is for her now as it does not feel like it is hers. She says it is vile, which shows us that self-hatred is setting in. She feels betrayed by her own body for taking this abuse, not being able to resist it. Although she lives with these PTSD symptoms, she does not give up. She says; “The purple bruise at my throat was turning green at its edges. I pressed it, felt the splintered ache. Tear down, I thought. Tear down and build again.” (Miller, 2018, p. 221) While her outer scars start to transform, she decides she also needs transformation. Although she still feels the pain of it, she is determined to get herself back. Notably, she deals with the sexual trauma inflicted on her by trying to get back her body via hyper-sexuality, a response that has been noted among real rape victims: “Research shows that many adult sexual behaviours may be related to childhood sexual abuse (CSA), ranging from withdrawal and dysfunction on one end of the spectrum to hypersexuality (…)” (Aaron, 2012, p.199) Hypersexuality is, then, a trauma response which can happen when a person who has been sexually assaulted or abused tries to reclaim the control of their body by going through the trauma in a controlled (by themselves) way.

> This highlights the control-mastery aspect of Freud’s repetition theory (McWilliams, 1999), according to which a person may compulsively re-enact an experience of trauma in order to attempt to gain a greater sense of control during the experience—to “master” the trauma. (Aaron, 2012, p. 212)

Circe explores this side of herself with the good men who visit her. Good men here refers to men who do not think of attacking her of course, nothing more. She says, she “might take him to my bed. It was not desire, not even its barest scrapings. It was a sort of rage, a knife I used upon myself. I did it to prove my skin was still my own.” (Miller, 1999, p. 222) Hyper-sexuality as a response to her trauma is clear. As

mentioned before, she is taking control of her own experience and body by making herself do what she thinks she wants. On the one hand, she is trying to make herself relive that memory maybe as a way to make sense of it or maybe to punish herself with it, and to make sure she does not become that vulnerable again. And she is very careful this does not happen to her again, she approaches every other man coming to her island first as rapists then if they prove innocence, as guests. She no longer pretends to be a mortal; she displays her godly qualities. "None of it made a difference. I was alone and a woman, that was all that mattered." (Miller, 1999, p. 222-223) As a woman, neither your status, nor your level of power can protect you from rape as these qualities in a woman are not respected by men. Men respect men, especially manly men. So as a woman, even if you are a goddess that might punish them with thunder or turn them into pigs, you are part of the offering the island makes, you are the feast, you are the prey, you are the nymph 'so bad at getting away.' So she keeps punishing their intentions. "It was my favourite moment, seeing them frown and try to understand why I wasn't afraid. In their bodies I could feel my herbs like strings waiting to be plucked. I savoured their confusion, their dawning fear. Then I plucked them." (Miller, 1999, p. 223) She enjoys the punishment she inflicts on them, it feels justified. Men go hunting for her, expecting her fear, craving it then they become the prey themselves, their bodies changed without their permission instead of hers, their consent not cared for. Acting as nothing more than animals, they become animals. "They moaned and squealed, and pressed their snouts to the earth. We are sorry, we are sorry. Sorry you were caught, I said. Sorry that you thought I was weak, but you were wrong." (Miller, 1999, p. 225)

As can be seen clearly, she does not punish those who do not attempt to rape her, only the ones who do, and they only apologize or seem to regret what they

intended because they weren't able to do it, because they were hunted before they hunted. "When that first crew had come, I had been a desperate thing, ready to fawn on anyone who smiled at me. Now I was a fell witch, proving my power with sty after sty. It reminded me suddenly of those old tests Hermes used to set me. Would I be skimmed milk or a harpy? A foolish gull or a villainous monster? Those could not still be the only choices." (Miller, 1999, p. 237-238) Thus, she transforms herself into a powerful figure who is able to protect herself (at least to some extent), she proves her power with every punishment and therefore she will by now have a reputation as a witch, probably an evil one. In a world where women only have the options of being 'a foolish gull' or 'a villainous monster' she realises she cannot control the narrative the patriarchal order would tell of her. She still rebels against the idea that these are the only choices there are for women, and that shows she has not fully accepted the reality yet. However, her violations do not stop here either, they go on until she has completed her transformation into the real Circe and made her peace with t reality.

Her next violation comes from Apollo, someone we are familiar with as a rapist figure. Apollo uses Circe as a vessel for his prophecy, he inserts images into her mind painfully and forcefully without her consent and orders her to tell Odysseus. He also claims that she should be proud that she has had the privilege of carrying out his prophecy and that her father suggested it. Obviously enough, neither man bothers to get her consent in the matter. Although this might seem like a mild inconvenience, Circe's history of rape and the forcefulness and thoughtlessness of Apollo's act make it a violation. He goes through with the invasion of her mind without her consent. "I shook with rage and humiliation. How many times would I have to learn? Every moment of my peace was a lie, for it came only at the gods' pleasure. No matter what I did, how long I lived, at a whim they would be able to reach down and do with me

what they wished." (Miller, 1999, p. 262) Living in a man's world, with stronger ones than her always present, she realises she'll never be safe when connected to them and their society although she is an exile. She feels unsafe, humiliated and angry all over again as she understands what safety she thought she created can be taken from her in a moment by the whims of these gods/men. Moreover, Athena violates her life constantly as well, as she tries to kill Circe's son in an attempt to protect Odysseus. But this chapter will not be discussing Athena in depth as the chapter on Medusa will include all the relevant interpretations of her that will apply here too. All that needs to be said here is that Athena, the mighty patriarchal warrior that is said to be a woman but has none of the qualities of one, is one of her oppressors and violators as much as the others. However, we see Circe is now able to protect herself even more, as she puts a powerful protection spell on the island which makes it invisible to these gods. The island can be identified with Circe herself, as in her body and mind together, she has been violated many times by the patriarchy, and following each of those events she heals a lot better and she becomes stronger in order to protect herself. Of course, this is not to suggest trauma makes a person stronger but rather it forces a person to reveal their strength to heal, to survive and to protect themselves. Therefore, her last act of protection is to protect herself and her son from the gods, she makes the island invisible to them, enabling her to evade the constant patriarchal gaze of her father or the other gods who watch from the skies. Athena, of course, is one of them.

The issue of women's oppression of other women is very important as we not only see men upholding the oppressions of patriarchy, but also some women who have been oppressed themselves oppress other women as well[9]. It starts with Circe's mother, who keep flaunting her relationship with Helios to her sister and shows no love for her own gender, including her daughter. She finds beauty and charm the most

important, which is how she knows to survive. She ‘manipulates’ Helios into marriage by being ‘not like other girls’, she withholds sex until marriage and then uses it to keep him. At some point, Medea comes to her for help, yet it is clear that she does not respect Circe’s magic which she came for or her life for that matter. She hides the magic from Jason for him not to get scared and run away. She sees Circe as a fallen woman, a witch, not knowing that is what awaits her too at the end[10]. She acts meek in the presence of Jason, attributing all the success, which she made possible, to him to win his love. (Miller, 1999, p. 193) Medea does not see that Jason is already afraid of her, that he shrinks from her, that these men will not remember her as a saviour but a cruel witch who killed her own brother. When Circe points these things out and asks her to stay so she can be free from all this, Medea says; “‘Like you? A pathetic exile, who stinks of her loneliness?’” (p. 200) She is young and she has not been through what Circe has so she does not understand that, as a woman, she is held to different standards from men. “I saw myself now in her eyes: a bitter, abandoned crone, a spider, scheming to suck out her life.” (Miller, 1999, p.201) How Medea sees her is how patriarchy sees her, patriarchy still has a strong hold on Medea, therefore she does not see a free woman but what the society paints her as.

Circe’s relationship with her sister is also very interesting. Circe’s sister constantly bullies her as a child; she never gives her the feeling of camaraderie, rather she acts like an enemy ganging up on her with the rest of the patriarchal society, she conforms and acts like them to survive. Just like Scylla does when she was a beautiful nymph in the halls of the gods. Although her sister acts like this all their lives, she calls for her in her time of need. While she is birthing a monster, trusting that Circe is still the people pleaser that she was, she calls on her. However, we also see that she knows the

truth about the life they live more than Circe does, she is not shocked by it, she has just adapted to it:

> They take what they want, and in return they give you only your own shackles. A thousand times I saw you squashed. I squashed you myself. And every time, I thought, that is it, she is done, she will cry herself into a stone, into some croaking bird, she will leave us and good riddance. Yet always you came back the next day. They were all surprised when you showed yourself a witch, but I knew it long ago. Despite your wet-mouse weeping, I saw how you would not be ground into the earth. You loathed them as I did. I think it is where our power comes from. (Miller, 1999, p. 171)

It is women against men in this world; one must constantly fight battles of will to survive. As Circe and Pasiphae have not conformed in one way or another, they have reclaimed their power, they are both witches who have taken their power to themselves instead of being born with it like gods/men. This can be seen as a metaphor for women. Women often find themselves in a much less privileged situation when they are born, and if they want any kind of power, they have to fight tooth and nail for it, yet unfortunately men are born with some privileges independently of their own character. They are somehow respected as human beings and they do not have to do anything to earn that basic level of respect. Although it seems to be women against men or vice versa, a lot of women uphold patriarchy and hurt other women as part of patriarchal society, as if their bullying of other women absolves them from being ~~a~~ women themselves. Circe has been a victim of this kind of abuse as well as abuse from men. Of course, women bullying and hurting other women is not only a one-way street; Circe does it too. In order to gain Glaucous's

love she hurts Scylla, turns her into a monster; She thus responds to Scylla's bullying by hurting her back, maybe even in a worse way:

> Women deriding women may be a result of 'girls and women in a dramatically patriarchal society' turning 'oppression against themselves and transform the cultural devaluation into feelings of worthlessness and inferiority. (…) that hostility toward men (…) turned inward, subsumed in a diffuse hostility against oneself, in a conversion of outrage into self deprecation.' (Kakar 1982:59) We may say for that abusing other woman or women is an extension of the same attitude of self-deprecation as to the unconscious mind they mirror the self. (Atre, 2011, p.180-181)

As Atre also suggests, aggression towards patriarchal oppression is taken out on other women. We might conjecture that this is because women often do not feel safe enough in any way in patriarchal society, so they cannot express their anger to men about the injustices they have been experiencing. Therefore, their anger is directed towards themselves and towards other women. It is a very likely explanation for why women uphold the patriarchal rules and deride other women if they are not doing so; as the saying goes, victims become victimisers. In addition to being directed towards other women, it is sometimes also directed towards children, like in Circe's mother's case, because they are seen as weaker and it is perceived as safer to do so.

Women who have stepped out of the patriarchal norms have always been derided, scorned or attacked in some shape or form by other women or men who uphold the patriarchal rules. Circe was depicted as a jealous goddess or a wicked sorceress in the original myths, however, in these beautiful postmodern feminist works she is recast as a woman, just like us. A woman with flaws, downfalls, tragedies, an iron will and a compassionate heart capable of both great evil and good,

and whose acts are questionable depending on the reader's moral compass. Women's portrayal as only one thing or one role has always been an issue in ancient writings and also in most modern male writings; however, women are not two-dimensional characters, they do not exist to fit in a role of a man's, a god's or a writer's choosing. They do not exist only as good or evil, they are not only mothers or daughters, and they are not angels or monsters. Women, like other human beings, are capable of containing binary oppositions in themselves and as we see with these feminist retellings of Circe's story, feminism can help to educate everyone in this regard.

4.2 I am Medusa

Medusa is possibly one of the most famous female monsters of all time, which is very interesting as she has always been the victim of the gods' whims. And we call her the monster, why? Because she is ugly? Animal like? Because she is able to turn one into stone if one 'chooses' to look at her? Or is it because this is how we see victims? Not wanting to see the weak in ourselves thus deriding an other for what she has been put through? This chapter aims to dive deep into how Medusa has been seen in both ancient texts and current ones. Although the main focus will be on MacLaughlin's *Medusa,* after thorough research, it seems best to include some other works which might present different ways of seeing Medusa.

First of all, what is a monster? we might ask. Liz Golyn (2020) in her book *Tracking Classical Monsters in Popular Culture* summarises Cohen's basic monster theory as follows;

"Cohen's influential chapter outlined seven cornerstone principles for understanding the cultural creation of monsters:

1. The monster's body is a cultural body – monsters are culturally specific, constructed in a particular moment.

2. The monster always escapes – whenever you think the monster is dead, it comes back, to be read in new cultural contexts and respond to new fears.

3. The monster is the harbinger of category crisis – you can't categorise a monster. It refuses to accept binaries and disturbs familiar boundaries between human and animal, male and female, and so on.

4. The monster dwells at the gates of difference – monsters tend to reflect fears of 'the other'. That can be the fear of a different gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnicity or anything that isn't included in the dominant identity of a culture.

5. The monster polices the borders of the possible – it patrols the behavioural limits both between and inside social units that we cannot cross if society is to continue.

6. Fear of the monster is really a kind of desire – the horror of the monster creates a space in which to express forbidden longings, allowing the wish-fulfilment of dreams that cannot be (acceptably) dreamed. The inevitable destruction of the monster absolves us from enjoying the guilty pleasures they give us.

7. The monster stands at the threshold – as monsters return from our attempts at banishment, they tell us what it is to be human. We define ourselves against their monstrosity, and ask whether they remain as monstrous as they once were." (P.11)

Therefore we can say that the term monster refers to many definitions. In Medusa's case, however, she is the other that disrupts one's boundaries on what it is to be good and evil. She surpasses the borders of society and she physically reflects that crossing between human and beast, she stands as both. Yet to examine Medusa as only 'one of the monsters' is not enough, she should be analysed as a' woman as monster' as being a woman is what leads to her downfall. "Medusa thus becomes a

symbol of female power stepping outside its bounds, yet brought to heel – exterminated by the righteous male order, cut down with the power of a narrative told again, and again, and again. The sight of the fallen body becomes a sight of pleasure for those who wish to see the defiant female defeated." (Golyn, 2020, 143) She thus represents both the defeated female and female vengeance. As will be suggested later here, she forms a binary opposition to herself; she is both the victim and the hunter, she is the monster among men and the liberator among women, or she can be read as such with insights from revisionist myth-making. Feminist retellings gives us a new perspective on Medusa's story. Not only in books but in other types of media, Medusa is a character we can see over and over again, andLiz Golyn details her images in popular media outlets in her book for further reference. Most importantly, what she says about these images through the lens of feminist theory echoes in this work as well:, "The shift to empower Medusa does not diffuse her inherent monstrosity; rather, it reveals where the true monster resides, in the predatory, entitled and manipulative male." (Golyn, 2020, p. 160) Therefore, however monstrous Medusa is, it does not change the fact that she is not the real monster in her story. Because of the male dominated narrative, it is easy to ignore the monstrous nature of the hero or dismiss the problematic behaviour of the gods with excuses such as, 'they all do it', 'they are gods/heroes, this is normal', 'that was the norm back then' or many other justifications that are thrown in defence of men in myth. However, the main differences between Medusa and Poseidon or Perseus are mainly gender hierarchy and power. They are all murderers but how we look at their morality is defined by the patriarchal narrative. As Golyn (2020) says;

"When we tell the stories of myth, we usually tell the stories of heroes. I am tired of heroes. I am fed up of entitled men who stride through the world as if it owes them

something, bringing destruction and carnage in their wake. Does that put me next in line for the chop? Then take me to the monsters." (P.1)

That is the reason this thesis exists as well.

One of the oldest texts that mentions Medusa's name does not do much more than that. In Hesiod's *Theogony*, she is mentioned as;

> (…) Medusa who suffered a woeful fate: she was mortal, but the two were undying and grew not old. With her lay the Dark-haired One in a soft meadow amid spring flowers. And when Perseus cut off her head, there sprang forth great Chrysaor and the horse Pegasus (…) (Hesiod, 2012, lines 275-281, p. 13)

Medusa is not mentioned with any details related to herself here, she is instead quickly depicted as a mortal and a Gorgon and that is the only information we are given, we are not even informed of the reason that causes Perseus to cut off her head. It is vexing that Medusa is mostly mentioned in relation to Poseidon, her rapist, and Perseus, her murderer as if she is nothing but a victim, her story never more than an extension of those of men. Hesiod's description of Medusa's rape sounds like a love scene, with all the spring flowers, soft meadows and the use of 'lay' to depict the event. It is softened to a point that his narrative does not seem to indicate rape at all. Then again, just after this 'love' scene we are presented with murder straight away, which is contradictory, and Hesiod does not give any reason for her murder; he just notes that, after the murder, she gives birth to two mythical creatures out of her head. One is a giant with a sword, named Chrysoar, which can represent the fight in Medusa; the other is Pegasus, the winged horse, which represents running and flying free. So even in her murder, we can say that her fight and her freedom escapes the bounds of her mortal body. That she resists somehow.

In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, her tale begins with the words; "She was very lovely once, the hope of many" (Ovid, 2018, p. 106) The line indicates that she has lost her beauty and is no longer the hope of suitors, her status as a lovely woman in society is lost after her hair is replaced with snakes and she becomes a monster. It is told almost as a tragedy as losing her beauty means losing the very thing that made her something in society. Her rape however is clear as day, unlike in Hesiod's *Theogony:* "One day Neptune/ Found her and raped her, in Minerva's temple," (Ovid, 2018, p. 106) She is found and raped. No excuses are given for this abuse. She does not look for his affections, he does not look for anything other than rape, there is no love, no passion in these lines, which is arguably the best way to put rape into words. 544-545).

> In addition to blame, punishment is the lot of the victim, while the rapist normally suffers nothing worse than occasional embarrassment. (…) Vengeance may be exacted by a deity of the victim's own sex. Minerva takes vengeance on Medusa for having the presumption to be raped in the goddess's temple with her version of a punishment fit the crime (Curran, 1978, p. 224)

Having the 'audacity' to be raped, Medusa gets punished by Athena, which makes no sense as rape by a god is not something she could arrange herself. It is interesting that a goddess of her stature fails to protect another woman in her temple from her uncle and punishes Medusa for his crime. "And the goddess turned away, and hid her eyes/ Behind her shield, and, punishing the outrage" (Ovid, 2018, p. 106) Athena turns her eyes away from what her uncle is doing although it is raping Medusa and a slight against herself, Medusa being powerless against a god and the act happening under her sacred roof, which should have been under her protection. The insult is to both women but Athena reacts and punishes the only person she can, she

punishes the person whom she sees weaker; the victim. “As it deserved, she changed her hair to serpents,” (Ovid, 2018, p. 106) ‘Deserved’ is an interesting way of stating it here, how does one deserve to get punished for one’s rape in a place one should have been protected?

Athena, the goddess of war, sprung from Zeus’s head, fully formed and apparently fully opinionated in the notion that women are weak, just like her father. It is not only in Ovid or in other Medusa myths that she shows misogyny, she also displays clear favouritism for men in *Eumenides* as well. “No mother gave me birth—that’s why/ in everything but marriage I support/ the man with all my heart, a true child/ of my father Zeus. Thus, that woman’s death/
I won’t consider more significant.” (Aeschylus, 2012, p. 31) Although a woman herself, unlike the rest of the goddesses, we see her abhorring femininity, escaping it like a plague. “(…) we may say that abusing other woman or women is an extension of the same attitude of self-deprecation as to the unconscious mind they mirror the self.” (Atre, 2011, p.180-181) As Atre suggests, this refusal of femininity might account for Athena’s mirroring herself on Medusa and her self-hatred from internalised misogyny. Not only does she not show any ‘feminine quality, but she also blames women for the mistakes of men. Although she is a ‘goddess’ depicted as a female, she is even more masculine than her anatomically male brothers and, indeed, she becomes the embodiment of the toxic masculine, and acts almost as the patriarchal axe falling upon other women. “And even now, to frighten evil doers,/ She carries on her breastplate metal vipers/ To serve as awful warning of her vengeance.” (Ovid, 2018, p. 106) She uses her cruelty to Medusa as her shield, as some women oppress other women to secure a place for themselves in patriarchal societies. As Athena is born from the head of Zeus, the patriarch of the gods, she can be considered

less of a goddess born but a masculine idea created. “Athene is like the murderous angel in Virginia Woolf's house, a male fantasy of what a woman ought to be, who strangles the real woman writer's voice. Athene is the pseudowoman who tells the tale of right order.” (Higgins and Silver, 1991, p. 51) Her punishment for the rape of Medusa is a representation of women punishing other women for the mistakes of men. She punishes Medusa with the snakes, which make every man that looks upon her turn to stone. This can be argued as both a blessing and a curse for a rape survivor. Taking away her prominent features, such as her hair and beauty, and turning them into one of the most phallic symbols of all time, snakes, is definitely not the best thing to do to her but yet again Athena’s jealousy and rage, which sound a lot like toxic masculinity, turns her gaze into something that can turn men into stone. Although it is good self-defence and a sure way to not get raped again, it must be very lonely for Medusa. Never being comforted, or looked upon by anyone again, the scar of being blamed for her own rape is forever in her eyes and her head. So one can argue that this act of turning Medusa into a ‘monster’ is once again violating her. Leaving her no choice but to live in seclusion.

Athena can be seen as the ultimate ‘pick me girl’; Zimmerman (2021) also points out that “The war-like goddess of wisdom, who wasn’t even gestated by a woman (…) is the original ‘not like other girls’ girl.” (P.33) ‘Pick me girl’ is a modern phrase used to define women who do everything for male validation while throwing other women under the bus by ‘not being like other girls’ and judging their actions. Alternatively, she can be seen as an entity who is actually created as a male but given the body of a woman. Although her victim-blaming and punishment paint her as this there is another recent perspective that identifies her not as an abuser but a saviour. In Nikita Gill’s poem *Athena to Medusa*, Athena changes Medusa into a

monster for her own protection. She, in compassion and solidarity, makes her into "a deity of monsters,/ a myth that will scare men for all the years/ and their seasons." (2019, p.158) The poem turns Athena into an empowering woman who stands against patriarchy rather than standing with it. She says to Medusa, "choose terror over maiden, / relinquish your human." (Gill, 2019, p. 158) Being a monster in a dangerous world is a good way of protecting yourself which reminds us of Scylla and how she was perceived in Madeleine Miller's novel Circe. After becoming a monster she was even more respected out of fear, whereas otherwise she would have been just another pretty nymph to whom the gods could do what they pleased. It does not protect Medusa, however, as she quite literally loses her head and becomes a weapon in the hands of another man and Athena herself. In a society where a woman's virginity and beauty are thought of as her value, taking that away from her and creating a monster instead might seem protective and empowering, however, even in this seemingly feminist poem, Medusa is not given a voice or a choice. Athena decides her fate for her. Athena later carries her head as a shield which can be read as either a vicious and cruel act that reminds everyone of her vengeance or, in this other perspective, it can be read as a reminder of Medusa's power even in death. Although there are different ways of reading Athena's behaviour, myths about her seem to suggest that the first one may be a better explanation than the second. Athena perhaps uses Medusa's head to increase her status amongst the gods. Although Athena seems to be doing everything to uphold the patriarchal order, she is not as respected as the big three or even as the god of war Ares:

> On most images of the goddess, at the very centre of her body armour, fixed onto her breastplate, is the image of a female head, with writhing snakes for hair. This is the head of Medusa, one of three mythical sisters known as the Gorgons, and it

> was one of the most potent ancient symbols of male mastery over the destructive dangers that the very possibility of female power represented. It is no accident that we find her decapitated – her head proudly paraded as an accessory by this decidedly un-female female deity. (Mary Beard, 2017, 45)

Thus Medusa's decapitation is more than killing a monster, it is a threat against women in power who might oppose the patriarchal order. It is a bedtime story to scare girls before sleep so they do not cross the lines of the societal structures of men. Medusa was not a monster, she was a girl raped by a god, punished by another and decapitated by one who wants to be a god. She was villainized, monstrified for nothing more violent than what was done to her and the women around her. Athena, upholding the flag of patriarchy the highest, wears her head as the ultimate violation. She has been used as a virgin, a body; she has been made an example of as a monster and then decapitated to further the hero's journey. Even in her death, patriarchy finds a use for her body.

Medusa takes back her power though, in a different context. While the male gaze objectifies women, Medusa's gaze as a female turns men into real objects. Bowers (1990) suggests that; "Freud's and Sandor Ferenczi's psychoanalytic theory conceives of female genitals as terrifying images of male castration because it is rooted in the male perspective. By transforming Medusa's head into the image of profound lack, Freud and Ferenczi deflect attention from the compelling, frightening presence of Medusa's eyes that are watching with all the force of a powerful subjectivity." (P.219) This form of subjectivity in her gaze seems to somehow castrate the male gaze rather than being castrated by it. Medusa freezes the moment of their gaze, holding their fear of the monster as a woman constant in their state of catatonia. The gaze of Medusa is the victim's vengeance, after the act of rape or violation of the self, the rapist is

vulnerable to what he has done and her stare, holding him responsible, terrifies him into confronting the reality of his actions. “This gaze may trap both subject and object in a reflective, destructive cycle.” (Alban, 2017, p. 6) The men that face her are forced to face the consequences of their thoughts and actions in her gaze as much as her if not more. Not only Medusa but all women within the patriarchal structures exist under the patriarchal gaze which strips one of her identity and reduces her to an object, however with Medusa’s gaze or what it symbolises one can free oneself from the male gaze that haunts all the waking hours of one’s life.

Unfortunately, this kind of reflectional freedom is individual and possibly for a short period of time; it is not a systematic change, not yet at least. Gillian Alban (2017) states, “In societies that commonly place women under the panoptic gaze, the Medusa gaze is an inspiring force available for women to claim for themselves.” (P. 16) Medusa’s gaze turns the other to itself, freezes him and forces much-needed self-reflection. Therefore, women’s ability to wield such a mechanism would help their empowerment. It is also very important to say that Medusa comes under the category of Monsters here, and she not only has what we call a survival mechanism but she also has a fighting chance with the use of her gaze, unlike Daphne and Galatea. It is crucial to see her wielding her own power, being her own person; although a ‘monster’, she can be safe in herself. “When women have not grasped power as witches and whores, they have suffered as vulnerable virgins and doormat mothers (…)” (Alban, 2017, p. 9) Daphne and Galatea would make great examples of these vulnerable doormats, although in the retellings we see them morph into empowered women eventually. The metamorphoses of these women come out of survival, as discussed in the previous chapters. As Cixous states, “I am spacious, singing flesh, on which is grafted no one knows which I, more or less human, but alive because of

transformation." (Cixous, 889) Staying alive and safe for women might mean transformation; Daphne transforms into a tree, some women might also transform their lives into a safer one by fitting in with the patriarchy like Athena, some have a transformation of the mind, becoming desensitised like Galatea. Some stay silent, some freeze, some join the oppressor in oppressing but they never escape the scorn themselves and yet for one type of woman, 'the monster' or 'the femme fatale' survival is not enough, they bite, scratch and fight. Medusa is a great example of that type. She takes up her own space as a beast in a world seeking to erase her identity. She is a monster and as a monster, she is worth something outside of her relation to men. "Women's beauty is seen as something separate from us, something we owe but never own." (Zimmerman, 2021, p. 33) And Medusa owns her monster-like beauty as do the women who can identify with her. However ugly she may be in the eyes of patriarchy as Cixous (1976) suggests, "She's beautiful and she's laughing." (P. 885)

In MacLaughlin's retelling of the Medusa myth, she starts by claiming her facts, and talks specifically about how she was as a person, both physically and mentally. Talking about herself as a person who looks and feels a certain way takes her out of the 'Medusa, the beauty and the beast' objectification which was used to make it convenient to ignore her rape and her beheading by men. She remembers how she was, standing straight, carrying herself with conviction. (MacLaughlin, 2019, p. 93) We see this attitude in her words as well, she chooses them, uses her own vocabulary instead of the abusers'. She states;

> He grabbed a fistful of my hair and yanked it so hard I screamed. The words for what happened next are not "seized and rifled." Not "deflowered." And not "attained her love." The word is force. The word is violence. Violation. Force.

> Chaos. Force. Violence. Chaos. Force. Violation. Rape. Rape. Rape. Rape. Rape. Let's say what it was. (MacLaughlin, 2019, p. 94)

She calls out the words and the euphemisms that are most commonly used when referring to rape to make it more digestible, easier to swallow. What happened to her is not that, it is not easy to swallow, it is, as she says, violent, it is force and it is rape. She stands in her truth, slamming it to the readers' faces, not diluting the violation because some may see her as rough and harsh. She insists on the word "Rape" by repeating it many times, every time she repeats it is almost like she is putting her fist on the table, screaming, clawing, yelling at the men at the table. 'THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED TO ME! and you will not be mansplaining it or covering it with your dirty words and lies. This is my truth,' she seems to scream in these pages. The hypocrisy stands out; no one wants to hear her violence, to hear how it actually feels to be violated. The readers may have been fine with being told she was 'taken, deflowered, seized' by Poseidon but they are uncomfortable with the factual narration of it. We face this issue constantly in the language we are currently using. In media, the news, the books, however you are getting the information, we generally encounter passive language that says "she was raped". It is in a passive voice so what happened TO HER is the message, not what HE DID to her. The language in itself allows the responsibility of rape to be slept on.

> Language makes a difference in not only how an event is statistically tabulated, but also in how it is perceived, judged, and even experienced. Words attain their meaning within a context of use, invoking specific connotations and references that may differ a great deal between contexts. (Alcoff, 2009, p. 124)

It is easier, more comfortable to say Medusa was raped, which puts the emphasis on her body as the victim. When you say Poseidon raped Medusa, this language puts Poseidon's action into the spotlight.

> Penelope (1990) suggested that passive forms, in particular truncated, agentless passives, can fulfil various discursive functions that may easily go unnoticed at a conscious level: suggesting universality (e.g. 'it is widely understood that . . .'); obscuring agency by placing the actor in the background, and the victim in the foreground, of discourse (e.g. 'the woman was raped'); or introducing interpretational ambiguity (see also Bolinger, 1980; Clark, 1992). In English, furthermore, the 'get'-passive seems to be especially well suited to suggest direct responsibility of the victim. The sentence 'the woman got raped', for example, may invoke the completion 'got herself raped' and may thus indicate the woman's active participation. (Bohner, 2001, p. 517)

The passive language seems to absolve the rapist or at least take the attention from them to the person who is raped. Although not all rapists are men, this discourse seems to serve the patriarchy mostly. This is also what Helene Cixous refers to in 'The Laugh of Medusa' when she talks about how women must write women. (877, Cixous) "Women must put herself into the text—as into the world and into history—by her own movement." (Cixous, 875) We have to use our own words to showcase how something really happened or, in the case of mythmaking, use our experiences to make the stories closer to our truths. Medusa states, "And in all the tellings and retellings, no one got it right. And my words can't get there either. They're closer though. They're closer, I'll tell you that." (94) Her words are closer to what has happened to her, but yet again, the language we speak has been violated by patriarchy long before we were. So we have to make up our own voices like building blocks, on

top of each other, with support from one another. Or as Alicia Ostriker's book so beautifully suggests, by *Stealing the Language* from them.

There are other retellings of Medusa's story that bring its language and the 'PR' around it into the light. One of these is *The Rape Trial of Medusa* by Michael Kasenow. The novel takes place in the modern world and the gods are basically the backbones of capitalism, a rich and powerful oligarchic family, and Medusa goes to court against such power. Most of the people who see it on the news hate her for it. ""Lock her up!" "Hang her high!" "Slut" "Jezebel"", and they continue cursing Medusa. (Kasenow, 2020, p.19) People do not want to associate with the weak so she becomes the monster instead of her rapist. The Reverend says that Medusa is a frightful woman and the 'Greek Expert' replies "All women are frightful who have been raped" (Kasenow, 2020, p. 16) It is how she is seen, a frightful victim by the Expert. The Reverend however continues to call every woman a potential liar according to the Bible. Being a woman is enough to be condemned and if you are a 'weakened' woman it is even worse as no one will want to identify with you. Medusa knows this too as she says, "I'm an ugly thing in their perfect world. An ugly woman doesn't have a chance." (Kasenow, 2020, p. 18) The book also makes it clear that at the beginning of the trial nearly everyone is ready to believe the man in power rather than a random girl. One says, "I've known Ambassador Poseidon for years; we served in Congress together. I can't believe he's a rapist. The monster's face says it all." (Kasenow, 2020, p. 13) The judgement is made according to who holds the most power in the hierarchy which is, of course, a man and in this case, it is a rich powerful man and his family versus an ugly young girl with no power in the world of men. Medusa knows the fate of women and says,

> We are raised to be perfect, especially women—we are bred to be beautiful. I'm the oddity—the hideous oddity. (…) We are told at a young age not to stare, so we look away and pretend that freaks like me don't exist. We don't ask how it feels to be so ugly, so crippled, so fat, so—odd—unless we want to hurt them (…) (Kasenow, 2020, p. 89)

Medusa's monstrification not only happen with her looks but also with her victim identity and not being perfect in the eyes of the world has its cost. This is true not only for Medusa but also for other women who exist beyond what is seen as appropriate for them.

The depiction of her rape by Kusanow is similar to that in MacLaughlin's poem. She says, "All women remember—the place, the smells, the sights and sounds when they are molested. I was raped. (…) He was disgusting, vulgar, a coward, a brute." (Kasenow, 2020, p. 98-99) The description leaves no room for euphemisms. Similar to these descriptions, Ann Stanford's poem Medusa (2001) describes her rape realistically in the first person as well. "He seized and raped me before Athena's altar./ It is no great thing to a god. For me it was anger–/ no consent on my part, no wooing, all harsh/ rough as a field hand. I didn't like it." (Stanford, 2001, p. 114) She is clear in her words and her consent on the matter, which is non-existent. In the poem, her snakes are not the result of a goddess's wrath but her own: "My hair coiled in fury; my mind held hate alone./ I thought of revenge, began to live on it./ My hair turned to serpents, my eyes saw the world in stone." (Stanford, 2001, p. 114) Her hair reflects her anger, turns into hissing snakes, a kind of protection and a kind of battle cry after an event where she could not do both of those things. She starts seeing the world in stone, in turn, it turns people who look at her to stone, which makes the reader question if the 'victims' of Medusa really turn to stone or is it how she

perceives them now? She goes on to say, “Whatever I looked at became wasteland”. (Stanford, 2001, p. 115) It resembles the feeling of numbness after a traumatic event that leads to dissociation and later into depression. Nothing grows on a wasteland, no hopes, nothing beautiful. Nothing but bare nothingness that envelops a land, just as in depression which is the nothingness state of the mind. Her statement of “I saw the town/ where I was raised to become a stone” (p.115) is telling of how girls are raised to this fate, to live on someone else’s wishes, to be without consent, to be turned into a wasteland where who you are or what you want does not matter, only what you are to the others, what service you can provide gives you a little bit of a value.

Stanford later talks about how Medusa feels after the rape, her longing to get back to who she was and the impossibility of it as she is now attacked by the memories of the event. As she talks she lives it again. She cannot free herself from the memories so she holds on to the fury, and along with that the snakes although she claims she would like to look for herself again. (Stanford, 2001, p. 114-115) Memories do not seem to be the only thing that stays from her after her violation, after vividly describing what happened again, she continues; “the rude circling of the blood-tide not my own/ that squirms and writhes steals from me bone by bone-/ his monster seed growing beneath my heart,/ prisoned within my prison, left alone,/ despised, uncalled for, turning my blood to stone.” (Stanford, 2001, p. 115) The lines seem to be suggesting some kind of pregnancy, as the myth does not include that storyline, this pregnancy can be interpreted as her being haunted by what happened to her body, replaying it in her mind. Both her snakes and herself are despised in the prison now. She is imprisoned in herself, not able to be who she was, too haunted to create herself anew. Her blood turns to stone, her warmth to coldness.

The image of the snakes of Medusa is also a significant symbol. Snakes can be

seen in many ways, including as a phallic symbol. As a phallic symbol, being used by a woman can suggest two things; firstly it may be seen as the idea that the only protection against men is yet again men or what they respect, the phallus. Secondly, it can also be interpreted as a woman taking one of the, if not the, most, valued things in the patriarchy for her use. Instead of her being used as an object in the patriarchy, by embracing the monster she uses the phallus for herself against patriarchal oppression. However, snakes are not only symbols for the phallus, they have been used to signify evil and woman in many myths and stories.

> The Goddess herself may have taken the form of a serpent, or she may have been accompanied by a serpent. One of the earliest examples of the Serpent Goddess image was a painting of a large fanged serpent in the cavern of La Baume-Latrone, France (about 26,000 BCE), with a body resembling the rounded curves of a woman. (Foubister, 2011, p. 13)

Foubister, later on, goes on to talk about different cultures and their images of the Snake Goddesses. She sheds a light on the images of the snake as both good and evil in different cultures.

After the 3rd Millenium BC, however, the shift in the world from goddess power to the gods' reign happens. In the Editor's Introduction to Marija Gimbutas's book *The Living Goddesses* by Miriam Dexter, she states;

> Early in her career, Marija Gimbutas identified the "Kurgan" culture. These Proto-Indo-Europeans were a patrilineal, patrilocal, pastoral, and seminomadic group of peoples who, she believed, originated in the steppes of Russia. (…) When the Proto-Indo-Europeans arrived at their new homelands, they met

> groups of indigenous peoples who were relatively peaceful, agrarian, artistically creative, probably equalitarian in social structure, and goddess worshiping. (Gimbutas, 2001, p. 25-26)

Therefore the shift from the goddess religion to a patriarchal religion seems to happen around then. Foubister exemplifies this switch with Marduk killing the mother goddess Tiamat, Indra killing the cosmic serpent Vrtra and of course, Perseus's decapitation of Medusa. (Foubister, 2011, p.20) The devaluation of the goddess and consequently, of women, does not stop there, of course, Foubister tells the story chronologically. Christian evil also comes hidden as a snake to the garden of Eden, it convinces Eve, the first woman, to eat from the tree of knowledge. "The story of the Garden of Eden, as described in the Book of Genesis, provided the groundwork for the devaluation of both the goddess, represented by Eve and her sacred serpent." (Foubister, 2011, p. 22) From there, the patriarchal culture takes root while trying to eradicate goddess worship and the female culture: "The sequence from goddess worship to the worship of the goddess with a consort, to a male god heading the pantheon, to the one god, reflects the economic and organizational development of the western world in general." (Foubister, 2011, p. 23-24) So what happens to the goddess happens to the woman in the world. It is not only the goddess worship and culture that is being eradicated, restricted or at least forbidden, women's place in society was also gradually undermined by the use of religion and this new male-dominated spirituality. Evil or not, women and snakes have always been wrapped around each other but as snakes are not necessarily evil and as they are just part of nature, so is woman. Medusa does not necessarily need to be seen as a monster but maybe only, as a woman, as part of nature ; horrifying at times and beautiful at others, powerful and weak, kind but destructive, both the hunted and the huntress.

The idea of the monster as a woman does not have strict boundaries. What is a villainess? A woman who does not bow to the rules of patriarchy or a woman who kills people? What is evil changes depending on who one asks the definition to. Zimmerman (2021) states for today's age that "Creatures conceived as repulsive were gradually reimagined as appealing, even seductive—at least on the surface. The monstrosity remains, but it's no longer visible." (P.9) One other way of looking at the rewritten monsters of today is to see how relatable they are now presented as. In today's world, maybe through the unabridged communication lines now open to us, we have more relatable villains and monsters in general or we have started to identify with them instead of the perfect hero more. So although female evil became less 'evil' per se, the reasons may be both that she is now sexualised for being a monster, which is no surprise as all types and roles of women are open to sexualising and objectifying in patriarchy, and also that she became somewhat like all of us, demonised for who she is, called a slut, a monster, a villain for standing up for herself or doing what has been done to her for centuries. What we would call an earned revenge for the hero, we call monstrosity in her. As Galatea kills her husband for the defence of her child in Miller's short story, she becomes a murderer but Perseus who slays Medusa when she is not even fighting gets to be called a hero, even if we assume both of them are monsters, the hypocrisy is clear. So what makes a hero? Or better yet, what makes a villain? Why is Medusa a monster? She has been raped and unjustly punished for her own victimisation, then because of her punishment she lives with a curse that turns everyone into stones. However, she did not decide one day that she would go on a killing spree and she would do it with this method, this 'curse' was inflicted upon her so if that is not what she chose is it really possible to blame her for it? Isn't it hypocritical that we don't call Poseidon an evil rapist, Athena a jealous monster or

Perseus an incompetent cold-blooded murderer who could not even manage to do what he did without the help of gods but yet, we call Medusa a monster? Not only in its first meaning but considering the word 'rape' related to any kind of violation of women we can say, "the celebration of rape in story, song, and science is the paradigmatic articulation of male sexual power as a cultural absolute." (Andrea Dworkin, 1981, p. 23) Therefore while the culture is as it is, celebrating the male dominance over equality—disregarding its forced nature— it is not possible to claim objectivity on morals. As Gilbert and Gubar argue,

> (…) male dread of women (…) has historically objectified itself in the vilification of women, while male ambivalence about female 'charms' underlies the traditional images of such terrible sorceress-goddesses as the Sphinx, Medusa, Circe, Kali, Delilah, and Salome, all of whom possess duplicitous arts that allow them both to seduce and steal male generative energy. (Gilbert and Gubar, 2000, p. 34)

Being a woman and endangering male domination is what actually vilifies them rather than their horrifying acts, for we surely see male characters getting away with or justifying rape and murder while staying morally untouched and clean as heroes or gods. Thus, it begs the question: have these women been considered evil for ages because they have done as much as a male villain or is it because they are simply women so the standards of evil have been altered for them?

Many more revisionist writers and artists have taken Medusa and rewritten her story from a feminist perspective.[8]Hopefully, many more will continue to do so.

[8] Some of which are; *Medusa* by K. Writerly, *Medusa* by Lauren Goffigan, *Medusa* by DuPlessis etc.

Medusa and Circe have been included under the ‘evil’ category but of course the distinction is not as sharp when the retellings come into the picture. Daphne, a maiden, seems to be fighting with all she has got, Galatea, the perfect wife made out of stone, avenges herself, Circe, the jealous witch of Aiaia, has always longed to be loved and Medusa, the snake-haired monster that kills you on sight, is also a victim. All these go to show that the reality of being human is a grey area. Women, more than men, have been victimised by the unfair standards that they have been held to throughout the patriarchy, the standards were so impossible that revisionist myth-making easily turned it upside down and now, thanks to them, we can see both evil and good in the reflection of the characters, and surely in ourselves. Women, like all creatures, are not two dimensional side characters but they are fully formed human beings that are part of nature. They are not the end of the chapter prize, not the damsel in distress, not a pawn on the hero’s journey but their own person on their own journey. However unlike the hero, their quest is not to slay the beast the gods have deemed evil but to free themselves and other women from the shackles of patriarchy while protecting themselves from being violated, which, it seems, is harder than the twelve labours of Hercules.

5. CONCLUSION

This research has aimed to show how women in Greek mythology were violated and silenced and to discuss the role of feminist revisionist writing in empowering women of today by giving a voice to the women who were oppressed in mythology. Through these rewritings and their analysis we have seen the four characters discussed here have been through what real women for ages have been through and continue to do so, even today. They have been violated in many shapes and forms no matter their role or seeming importance in patriarchal society. Daphne as the virgin nymph is hunted by Apollo for nothing more than being a beautiful maiden. Galatea is created to be the perfect wife— as discussed in her chapter, Pygmalion's idea of a perfect wife seems to be disturbingly similar to a child and a property— and she is raped at the moment of her birth with no possible chance of consent. Circe is labelled a jealous witch because of her transformative powers—which would make a man into a powerful god, she is exiled and violated by whoever happens to come by her island although she is very powerful in her own right. Finally Medusa who has been the victim of a god, a goddess and later a hero's task, is considered a monster for the fate she has suffered at the hands of her abusers. These women represent every role a woman can supposedly fulfill in the patriarchal order but none of them seem to be any the luckier for it. They are judged, raped and/or killed for being beautiful, for being ugly, for being silent, for being loud, for being weak and for being powerful. Whatever role they were put in, whoever they have been born as or transformed into they could not escape violation and/or oppression, so the common denominator in all of them is that they are women, therefore persecuted because of it. Monsters or angels, good or bad, women are judged with different standards than men. While it takes a lot for a man to be considered a villain, it takes nothing more than being a

victim for women. The misogyny seeps through every crack in mythology and the mythology shines a light on the reality of being a woman in the patriarchal world order as it represents the human society through the stories of gods—which can easily be considered a representation of men in their full power, as previously stated.

With the retellings of the myths, women have recuperated their narrative, their journey from their own perspective. Woman is what she prefers to label herself. The power these rewritings have not only comes from being texts written by females but it is more of a narrative takeover as "women have been put in the schizoid position of being simultaneously in history and not in history—'written out' of history by male power." (Pinggong, 2018, p.1) All the stories told by men since the beginning of time, or rather patriarchal time, depicts her as the side character, the monster, the damsel, the prize but 'no more' say the feminist retellings. In all these years, all surviving Greek and Roman myths have favoured men and their narratives, and in this age, with the rising of feminism, we now have our own narratives, our own myths, our own voices and we can now raise a new generation of women with the stories of women that were wronged and got their power back by themselves. They will not learn what it is to be born a woman or to become one from the patriarchal myths that taught us we were either the archetype of the virgin, the mother, the crone, or the evil woman. We are all that and more. These narratives give not only Medusa's, Galatea's, Daphne's or Circe's power and voice back to them but also they allow us, as women of the 21st century, to internally demolish the patriarchal culture that lives within us as internalised misogyny. As apparent from the growing research and rewritings about the myths of the past and their deconstruction by women and by anyone who identifies with the noun or/ and feels oppressed by the patriarchal show of power we have entered a new age. An age in which we are no longer silent and subservient, but

powerful. The power of owning a language of our own: as Ostriker argues "Though the language we speak and write has been an encoding of male privelege, what Adrienne Rich calls an 'oppressor's language' inadequate to describe or express women's experience, a 'Law of the Father' which transforms the daughter to 'the invisible woman in the asylum corridor' or 'the silent woman' without access to authoritative expression, we must also have it in our power to 'seize speech' and make it say what we mean." (Ostriker, 1982, p.69) This is precisely what the feminist rewritings which are analysed in this thesis do. They take the silenced woman in the pages of the male dominated myth and they give them a voice of their own, which in turn affects the voice of today's women as it empowers them to speak their own story seeing they can be heard too. In a way, it is like the 'me too' movement which started in 2006 with rape victims outing their rapists on social media. Revisionist myth-making is the 'me too' movement of myth, calling out the years of oppression, violation and the silencing of women in stories.

With the studies of Cahill, Brownmiller, Curran and McPhail we see the reasons and the psychology of rape while the polyvagal theory and trauma studies shed light on what happens to the victims of sexual trauma after the act of violation. The responses of fight, flight, freeze and fawn reflect the states of the survivors of such acts and although these are fairly new studies that are still currently under research, it is possible to see the reasoning in them and research them in mythical women who are, on so many levels, representations of women of today, the past and the future. The violations of women this thesis draws attention to occur on multiple levels as can be seen in the research. It was important to include multiple genres of writing by different writers to be able to have a diverse catalogue of rewritings that creates the same kind of empowerment through different outlets. The violations that were shown

were also different; although all of them include physical rape—or an attempt at one in the case of Daphne— they have also shown other kinds of violations of women which include, but are not limited to, the violation of personal space, identity, voice and mind. Women have been violated in every way throughout the ages, in real life and in myth, which some might consider as a mirror to the human psyche. Their bodily autonomy has been taken from them, their voices, their stories, their lives, their chances to be anything not in relation to men or for their use. They have been thought of only as nymphs, objects, damsels, prizes, victims but never as human beings who hold their own power and fate in their hands and that has always been the breaking point of these patriarchal narratives. For once the women got hold of their power, they were monsters, they were witches, they were murderers. “All the stories about monstrous women, about creatures who are too gross, too angry, too devious, too grasping, too smart for their own good, are stories told by men.” (Zimmerman, 2021, p.10) As monsters, they were despised, slayed, burned. So as monsters, they now speak. As monsters and witches, they have nothing to lose. Patriarchy hated them, mocked, battled, hunted them. They have tried to erase everything that made women into real people with real lives and wants from their stories. That is why it is crucial today to have feminist retellings of these stories, to give the future our perspective as opposed to the one we had no control over.

With the use of four characters that have been violated in multiple ways, this thesis showcases how ‘women writing women’ changes the narrative for them and for us all. It is not just women’s versions of the myths but also it is a stand against years of patriarchal injustice and crimes committed against women. Helene Cixous (1976) says, “Women must write herself: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their own

bodies—for the same reasons, by the same law, with the same fatal goal" (875) which is to obliterate her as a person and keep her as an object of the patriarchal system. The violation of women in patriarchy does not stop at their bodies or with their identities; but our history, our myths and our stories have been raped and silenced for ages too. As women, when we write ourselves, we write for those who had not, have not or can not write for themselves, and that liberates women from being the second sex, the object or any other narrow box patriarchy has forced them into. Thus feminist revisionist writing is very important not only because it rights the wrongs that were done to women's stories in the past but as it also makes the feminist future more likely, "writing is precisely the very possibility of change, the space that can serve as a spring board for subversive thought, the precursory movement of transformation of social and cultural structures." (Cixous, 1976, p. 879) One might even call it the metamorphoses of women.

So we say, I am Daphne, I am Galatea, I am Circe, I am Medusa and I am YOU as much as you are me. We write to make ourselves a reality and our reality the truth. We write for one another and we are who we are as we write, with all our labels; as maidens, mothers, crones, monsters, witches, victims— as women we are smiling. And we are beautiful.

REFERENCES

Aaron, M. (2012). The Pathways of Problematic Sexual Behavior: A Literature Review of Factors Affecting Adult Sexual Behavior in Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse, Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity. *The Journal of Treatment & Prevention*. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10720162.2012.690678

Alban, G. M. E. (2017). *The Medusa Gaze in Contemporary Womens Fiction* (1st ed.) [E-book]. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Alcoff, L. M. (2009). Discourses of Sexual Violence in a Global Framework. Philosophical Topics, 37(2), 123–139. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43154560

Atre, S. (2011). THE FEMININE AS ARCHETYPE. *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, *92*, 151–193. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43941279

Beard, M. (2017). *Women & Power: A Manifesto* (Illustrated ed.). Liveright.

Beauvoir, S. de, & Parshley, H. M. (1989). *The Second sex*. Louis Braille

Bloch, N. (2014). Patterns of Rape in Ovid's Metamorphoses (dissertation).

Bohner, G. (2001). Writing about rape: Use of the passive voice and other distancing text features as an expression of perceived responsibility of the victim. British Journal of Social Psychology, 515–529.

Bowers, Susan R. (1990). Medusa and the Female Gaze. *NWSA Journal*, *2*(2), 217–235. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4316018

Brownmiller, S. (1975). *Against Our Will Men Women and Rape* [E-book]. Bantam.

Cahill, A. J. (2001). *Rethinking rape*. Cornell University Press.

Campbell, J. (n.d.). Goddesses: Mysteries of The Feminine Divine. Joseph Campbell Foundation. Retrieved April 7, 2022, from https://www.scribd.com/book/489845669.

Campbell, S. (1997). Women, "False" Memory, and Personal Identity. *Hypatia*, *12*(2), 51–82. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3810470

Cixous, Hélène, et al. "The Laugh of the Medusa." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol. 1, no. 4, 1976, pp. 875–893., https://doi.org/10.1086/493306.

Cohen, J. J. (1996). Monster culture (seven theses). Monster Theory. https://doi.org/10.5749/j.ctttsq4d.4

Curran, L. C. (1978). RAPE AND RAPE VICTIMS IN THE METAMORPHOSES. *Arethusa*, *11*(1/2), 213–241. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26308161

Duffy, C. A. (2017). *The world's wife*. Picador.

Dworkin, A. (1981). Pornography: Men Processing Women. Penguin Group.

Finkelhor, D., & Araji, S. (1986). Explanations of Pedophilia: A Four Factor Model. *The Journal of Sex Research*, *22*(2), 145–161. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3812437

Foubister, L. (n.d.). *Goddess in the Grass: Serpentine Mythology and the Great Goddess* [E-book]. https://www.scribd.com/book/206616056

Freud, S. (1919). *The Uncanny*. https://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/freud1.pdf

Gilbert, S. M., & Gubar, S. (2000). *The Madwoman in the Attic: The woman writer and the nineteenth-century literary imagination* (Second). Yale University Press.

Gilbert, S. M., & Gubar, S. (2000). The Madwoman in the Attic: The woman writer and the nineteenth-century literary imagination. Yale University Press.

Gill, N. (2019). *Great Goddesses: Life Lessons From Myths and Monsters* (Illustrated ed.) [E-book]. G.P. Putnam's Sons.

Gilman, C. P. (1981). *The yellow wallpaper*. Virago Press.

Gimbutas, M. A., & Dexter, M. R. (2001). The living goddesses. University of California Press.

Gloyn, L. (2020). Tracking classical monsters in popular culture. Bloomsbury Academic.

Guerrero, Barbara, "Representing Modern Female Villain: On Feminine Evil, Perverse Nationhood, and Opposition in Rómulo Gallegos' Doña Bárbara and Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children" (2016). Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository. 4266.

Hesiod. (2012). *The Theogony* [E-book]. Start Publishing LLC. Retrieved March 10, 2022, from https://www.scribd.com/book/317235729

Higgins, Lynn A., and Silver, Brenda R., (1991), Rape and Representation, (New York: Columbia University Press

Homer. (2002). *The Odyssey*. (A. Pope, Trans.) *Scribd* (11th ed.). Project Gutenberg. Retrieved 2022, from https://www.scribd.com/book/187343558.

https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/4266

Irigaray, L. (1994). Thinking the difference: For a peaceful revolution. Athlone.

Kasenow, M. (2020). *The Rape Trial of Medusa* [E-book]. Michael Kasenow. https://www.scribd.com/book/506995621

Katz, M. (1992). Ideology and "The Status of Women" in Ancient Greece. *History and Theory*, *31*(4), 70–97. https://doi.org/10.2307/2505416

Law, H. H. (1932). The Name Galatea in the Pygmalion Myth. The Classical Journal, 27(5), 337–342. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3290617

MacLACHLAN, B. (2007). Introduction. In B. MacLACHLAN & J. FLETCHER (Eds.), *Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body* (pp. 3–12). University of Toronto Press. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/9781442685109.4

MacLaughlin, N., Ovid, & MacLaughlin, N. (2019). Wake, siren Ovid Resung. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Maxwell, C. (1993). Browning's Pygmalion and the Revenge of Galatea. *ELH*, *60*(4), 989–1013. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2873325

McCarter, S. (2022, March 21). Rape, lost in translation. Electric Literature. Retrieved April 7, 2022, from https://electricliterature.com/rape-lost-in-translation/

McPhail, B. A. (2016). Feminist Framework Plus: Knitting Feminist Theories of Rape Etiology Into a Comprehensive Model. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, *17*(3), 314–329. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26638128

Miller, M. (2013). *Galatea*. *Scribd*. Harper Collins. Retrieved 2022, from https://www.scribd.com/book/163646664.

Miller, M. (2018). *Circe*. Bloomsbury Publishing. https://www.scribd.com/book/372824967

Morales, H. (2020). Antigone rising: The Subversive Power of the ancient myths. Bold Type Books.

Naso, P. Ovidius (2018). *Metamorphoses: The New, Annotated Edition*. (R. Humphries, Trans.). Indiana University Press.

Ostriker, A. (1982). The Thieves of Language: Women Poets and Revisionist Mythmaking. Signs, 8(1), 68–90. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3173482

Parthneius. (2021). *The Complete Works of Parthenius. Illustrated: Love Romances*. (S. Gaselee, Trans.) https://www.scribd.com/book/528021345

Pinggong, Z. (2018). Reclaiming Luce Irigaray: Language and space of the "other". *Linguistics and Literature Studies*, *6*(5), 250–258. https://doi.org/10.13189/lls.2018.060508 Productions.

Prof Dame Mary Beard - Lucretia and the politics of sexual violence. (n.d.). Retrieved April 7, 2022, from https://youtu.be/ZTauOCkvxm0.

Rich, A. (1971). Diving into the wreck: Poems. (N.d.)

Royle, N. (2003). The Uncanny. Routledge Publishing.

Schlegel, A. (1991). Status, Property, and the Value on Virginity. *American Ethnologist*, *18*(4), 719–734. http://www.jstor.org/stable/645449

Schrock, D., & Schwalbe, M. (2009). Men, Masculinity, and Manhood Acts. Annual Review of Sociology, 35, 277–295. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27800079

Scully, D., & Marolla, J. (1985). “Riding the Bull at Gilley’s”: Convicted Rapists Describe the Rewards of Rape. *Social Problems*, *32*(3), 251–263. https://doi.org/10.2307/800685

Stallings, A. E. (n.d.). *"Daphne" by Alicia E. Stallings*. Www.Poemtree.Com. Retrieved January 2, 2022, from https://www.poemtree.com/poems/Daphne.htm

Stanford, Ann, (2001) Holding Our Own: The Selected Poems of Ann Stanford, (Washington: Copper Canyon Press) pp. 114-115

Stoffelen, V. (1994). Vergil's Circe : Sources for a Sorceress. *L'Antiquité Classique*, *63*, 121–135. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41654236

Susan R. Bowers. (1990). Medusa and the Female Gaze. *NWSA Journal*, *2*(2), 217–235. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4316018

Vanderbilt. (n.d.). *How to Uncover and Conquer the Myths*. Vanderbilt University. Retrieved April 19, 2022, from https://www.vanderbilt.edu/AnS/english/English295/albright/conquer.htm

Virgil, Ferry, D., & Thomas, R. F. (2017). The aeneid. The University of Chicago Press. Retrieved from https://www.scribd.com/book/355589674.

Walker, P. (n.d.). *Codependency, Trauma and the Fawn Response*. http://www.petewalker.com/pdf/CodependencyTraumaFawnResponse.pdf

Williams, F. (1999). Daphne transformed: Parthenius, Ovid, and E.M. Forster. *Hermathena*, *166*, 45–62. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23041206

Zimmerman, J. (2021). *Women and Other Monsters: Building a New Mythology*(First Edition) [E-book]. Beacon Press.