

Researching and Refining Your Thesis

The Birth of a Thesis?



Avoiding the Procrustean Bed



- text \Rightarrow thesis
- **not** thesis \Rightarrow text

A Working Thesis

- Andromache's pleas and laments have a personal focus because her relationship to Hector represents the soldier's duty to his own family.

Reading Notes

- Andromache's lament about H, when she first hears of his death, is strictly personal/domestic. She details the disorder that occurs when a son loses his father. Her speech focuses on the marriage and nuclear family as the foundation of civil order.
- A. doesn't talk about the consequences of Hector's death for the rest of Troy until the funeral scene (context: community). Why doesn't she bring this up earlier when trying to convince him to stay?
- B/c their marriage is emblematic of the rest of the community's good, and its destruction entails the destruction of Troy.
- The funeral speech opens and closes with the personal. First is the lost to the family of the head of the house. Last is A's lament as a wife and lover at the memory stolen from her.
- The center of her speech talks about Hector's role as protector of the city. He has a duty to all the wives and children, not just his own, though A uses herself and Astyanax as examples of the consequences of H's death.

Thesis: Hector and Andromache's relationship presents marriage as the foundation and center for social order.

- I. Parting in Book 6.
 - A. Andromache is found at home, not in the palace of Priam.
 - B. Andromache's appeal.
 1. Opens with a personal appeal not to leave a widow and orphan.
 2. Reminds Hector that, as her husband, he is her whole family. (It's literally true in her case, but also more metaphorically true for any wife, right?)
 3. Andromache's appeal that Hector stay on the walls is again founded on his pity for his family.
- II. Andromache's Lament at Hector's death, Book 22.
 - A. Segal: Andromache's identity as wife is emphasized by the structure of the poetry.
 - B. Talks about the social importance of the father/husband (by talking about the effects of its loss). Notice that the things Andromache complains about would also be problems for an illegitimate son, so her argument really is about the importance of marriage.
 - C. Notice she doesn't mention Hector's role as protector of the city except as it pertains to the name of their son.
- III. Funeral Lament, Book 24.

coherent articulation of truth. And indeed, if we look at Andromache's three speeches in the poem—her farewell to Hector, her lament at his death, and her funeral speech—we find that they are more than just moving expressions of the love and grief of a young wife (though they certainly are that, as well). When we consider the structure and content of Andromache's speeches, we find that her widow's grief is not merely the isolated concern of an individual for the loss of a personal relationship. Rather, she uses her marriage to represent the significance that Hector, as his city's champion, has for Troy. Furthermore, her portrayal of her family's dependence on Hector reveals marriage to be the foundation of the peace and order of the city.

Before we even meet Andromache, we learn something important from where Hector seeks her. Hector has just come from Priam's palace and the private rooms of Paris and Helen. While we have been told of the fifty bedchambers for the sons and daughters of Priam in the palace, Hector's wife is not to be found there. Rather, Hector seeks Andromache in "his own well-established dwelling" (6.370). As his wife, she is concerned with running Hector's household; the adjective "well-established" emphasizes that this is a home that the young couple

Evolution of My Thesis

- Andromache's pleas and laments have a personal focus because her relationship to Hector represents the soldier's duty to his own family.
- Hector and Andromache's relationship presents marriage as the foundation and center for social order.
- [Andromache] uses her marriage to represent the significance that Hector, as his city's champion, has for Troy. Furthermore, her portrayal of her family's dependence on Hector reveals marriage to be the foundation of the peace and order of the city.