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HUNTING-MATURATION MYTH

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**MELEAGER AND ODYSSEUS:
A STRUCTURAL AND CULTURAL STUDY OF
THE GREEK HUNTING-MATURATION MYTH**

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The Greeks of Homer's time and earlier told two myths of hunting and maturation which were very much alike, except that one ends tragically and the other does not. A young man goes off to hunt with his maternal uncles, who have come along to certify his passage to manhood. Each youth kills his animal. But only one of them, Odysseus, receives his uncles' acceptance. The other, Meleager, offers the trophies of the hunt, the boar's tusks and hide, to his fellow huntress Atalanta, with whom he has fallen in love. His uncles object, a quarrel breaks out, the uncles are slain, and Meleager's mother, furious over the death of her brothers, flings into the fire the wooden brand upon which her son's life depends. Meleager dies before reaching manhood; Odysseus goes on to woo and win Penelope, fight at Troy, have his adventures and live to an old age.

The two tales belong to a wider group of Greek stories of hunters and hunting: one thinks of Heracles, Orion, the Aloades, Actaeon and others. Such stories invite systematic comparison, which J. Fontenrose has recently tried to provide (1981). His attempt is interesting, but in our opinion seriously flawed. Fontenrose lifts story motifs from any source and any century, conflating versions and thus in effect inventing a plot all his own. This would make no difference if Fontenrose could show that his plot was once told by the Greeks; but such demonstration is on the whole eschewed. He is content instead to describe patterns which supposedly reveal the form of a metaphysical entity called "the myth"; for us, a plot without a text that exists, or once existed, is a scholar's fantasy. Unsecured historically, Fontenrose's patterns cannot be placed in any cultural context; the insights such a context can give into a particular story's meaning are therefore lost. While abstracting and simplifying his patterns, Fontenrose freely blurs such distinctions as father and son, god and mortal, male and female: sometimes the result is harmless, more often it distorts. Fontenrose is not well versed in narrative theory: this would not have mattered had he merely presented the evidence, and not bent it to fit his own patterns.

To make a fresh start towards Fontenrose's goal of systematically comparing hunting myths, the authors have elected to begin with just two of them, the myths we shall call *Meleager* and *Odysseus*. We have chosen only one version of each: Homer's source for Phoenix' tale of Meleager in *Iliad* 9, and the story of Odysseus upon which the *Odyssey's* scattered allusions to his early youth must be based. Choosing these versions means reconstructing plots, and thus seeming to run the risk of engaging in Fontenrose's eclecticism. But we can demonstrate that our plots are based upon texts that once existed. Indeed in the case of *Odysseus* no demonstration is really needed: our version is what the *Odyssey* must necessarily presuppose and in fact what, in scattered places, it actually says. In the case of *Meleager*, we have much more work to do; but the task is worth it, for it gives us two tales which are roughly synchronic and arise from similar cultural contexts in the Dark Ages. Our stories prove to be rich in the details of male maturation rites; without knowing this, successful interpretation would be denied us. We therefore classify our stories not merely as hunting myths, but as myths of hunting and maturation. This gives us a new basis for comparing them not only to other stories, to *Heracles* and *Hippolytus* and *Orion*, but also to each other. We come to see that Meleager, in contrast with Odysseus, is tragic because in his maturation test he confuses the semantic domains of hunting and sexuality. Hence we shall be concerned to show how these domains can be properly conjoined as well as tragically conflated.

To analyze our tales, we have adopted and slightly modified L. Doležel's stratificational model (1974). Doležel posits three levels of narrative:

Motif texture — the level of the text, the precise words the author uses. Not all sentences on this level are narrative sentences: "motif texture" is a technical term for those which are. They verbalize the plot, in contrast to, say, purely descriptive sentences.

Motif structure — the level of motifs, abstractions from the actions of the text, of the pattern, "a specified character (or agent) performs a given action."

Motifemic structure — the level of motifemes, abstractions from selected kernel motifs, of the pattern, "an actant performs an act." Actants are character-types: hero, villain, helper, adversary: while acts, in this definition, are actions directed towards definable outcomes. If an actant's *state* is expressed — e.g., Hero lacks Wife — this is called a *situeme*.

Between motif structure (our level 2) and motifemic structure (our level 4) we have inserted a third level, the *structure of motif-types*. Motif-

types are abstracted from motifs; like motifemes, they have unspecified agents, but unlike motifemes, their acts do not necessarily have a function within the whole narrative structure.

The totality of all motif textures helps comprise the *text* — which, of course, also contains non-narrative elements such as descriptions, statements of character's thoughts and feelings, indications of the situation, and so on. The totality of motifs in their sequential (usually chronological) order gives the *plot* of a given text; the totality of motif-types gives a *plot-type* for similar texts; and the totality of motifemes in their sequential order is called the *fabula*. Motifemes are normally related to each other causally and tied together in a tightly linked sequence moving toward denouement. Motif-types which do not function causally or point to the denouement will normally not be abstracted into motifemes.

Some examples may be helpful. The sentence σὺν ἄγριον ἀγριόδοντα . . . υἱὸς Οἰνῆος ἀπέκτεινεν Μελέαγρος is a motif texture, occurring in the text of *Iliad* 9 at level 1. "Meleager kills the boar" is the corresponding motif at level 2. We use the symbolic "H kills A" ("Hero kills Animal") for the motif-type at level 3. The corresponding motifeme is "H passes (or partly passes) the initiatory test."

The question of the role in narrative theory of our motif-type level cannot be discussed in detail here.¹ That it describes something which would otherwise be omitted is clear from the following consideration: "H hunts A" is a narrative element common to all hunting tales; it is not a motif, because it is not specific to any particular hero or animal; and it is not a motifeme because it gives no indication of its function within an ordered sequence. Motif-types are particularly useful in revealing similarities and differences where these might not be apparent at level 2; e.g., "Meleager gives trophies to Atalanta" and "Odysseus woos Penelope" are motifs of the types "H courts W"; at level 3, "Oeneus offends Artemis" is evidently the negation of "Autolycus placates Hermes."

We have found it convenient to group fabulae together into fabula classes: the fabula class of hunting-maturation tales includes the successful and the tragic fabulae. We call our successful fabula the "O-fabula," our tragic the "M-fabula."

Doležel further classifies fabulae into four modalities that give the parameters within which actants act; these are distinguished by the kinds of constraints they place on human actions. The four are:

axiological — constituted by concepts of goodness,
badness and indifference

<i>deontic</i>	—	formed by concepts of permission, prohibition and obligation
<i>alethic</i>	—	consists of concepts of possibility, impossibility and necessity
<i>epistemic</i>	—	represented by concepts of knowledge, ignorance and belief.

We find the maturation tales to show characteristics of two of these modalities, the deontic and the axiological. To the extent that the hero is assigned a task, fulfills the task, and is rewarded or, conversely, is given a prohibition, violates it, and is punished, we have the deontic modality. To the extent to which the hero himself undertakes a quest for some value (such as a trophy, a bride, etc.), completes the quest and obtains the value, we have the axiological modality. Our two heroes are obliged to undertake the initiatory hunt; success is rewarded, failure punished. But to the hero and his family the trophy of success resembles the object of a quest; it is a sign of his worth, his goodness, not merely a proof that he has passed a test. From their perspective especially the axiological modality is operative.

Common to virtually all Greek hunting tales are various *interpretants* to which we apply the semantically related Greek terms *kosmos*, *kairos* and *hubris*.² *Kosmos* means “order,” usually connoting good and proper and moral order; *kairos* refers to what is fit, appropriate, seasonable; *hubris* is wanton violence, the (usually) deliberate disregard of *kairos* and violation of *kosmos*. Many of the other hunting tales, like *Meleager* and in contrast to *Odysseus*, include violations of *kairos* and *kosmos*. This is the case even though they do not appear to exhibit the sequential form of the maturation fabulae nor their full array of motifemes.

The O-fabula gives us the ideal form of the successful hunting-maturation tale. The hero passes the test of hunting (a rite of passage); he then courts and marries the appropriate woman at the appropriate time; he encounters and defeats adversaries, and survives to old age. The telos or object of this tale seems to be double, to prove one’s worth and to fulfill obligations; hence its classification as both axiological and deontic. The M-fabula has a tragic outcome because the narrative sequence as given in the O-fabula is disturbed: the hero courts his woman while engaged in the maturation hunt. To do this is to violate the principles of *kairos* and *kosmos* and to commit *hubris*. This puts the tale in the deontic as well as in the axiological modality.

Before these assertions can be justified, we must clarify what is meant by “hunting-maturation tale”; and to do this we must first examine

the cultural phenomenon of *hunting as an initiatory rite*. Once the cultural context is established, we can proceed to the identification and analysis of the individual tales.

In his classic study, van Gennep includes initiation among the rites of passage, and divides it, like the others, into three stages: separation from a previous (preliminal) condition; the transition, or margin (liminal); and aggregation, incorporation into a new (post-liminal) condition (van Gennep 1960:21). The ritual is intended to ensure a change of status, and it is of course possible for the correct change not to occur, for the would-be initiate to fail. Even if failure is relatively uncommon, it always exists as a powerful possibility in the mind of the person who must undergo the trials of transition from adolescent to adult. Indeed the assumption of the rite must be that if it is not carried out properly, the initiation will not succeed; all rites assume this. And all rites are precise about what is and is not proper. If a ritual fails, it was not done correctly.

The course of everyday life may seem to lack beginnings and ends, but it is otherwise with ritual. Aristotle's Beginning, Middle and End, *archē*, *mesos* and *teleutē*, forms a precise parallel to van Gennep's tripartite structure (*Poetics* 1450b, chapter 7). In fact Bremond's extension of Aristotle, his movement from Possibility to Procedure to Achievement (or Failure to Achieve), is even more useful in that it brings out the character of each stage (Bremond 1973, 1980.*passim*).³ Thus the period of separation opens up the possibility for successful change from adolescence to adulthood by forcing a break from all that has been familiar hitherto. The novice is removed from family and community and segregated in a space which is frequently at the geographical boundary, a spatial margin providing the setting for the ritual margin. Separation is violent; there is a loss of the secure order of childhood.

During the margin, the *mesos*, the Procedure, all effort is dedicated to the eventual creation of a new post-liminal order, whereby the individual will be able to take part in the adult group. The activity can be mimetic of the adult order: hunting, for instance, in a hunting society. Or it can be semantically related: hunting in a military society, where exposure to danger and death and the use of weapons is valuable in a different context. Or it can be a reversal: homosexuality and transvestism may be appropriate, and even prescribed, in the margin, in societies where they are largely out of place in the adult world.⁴ The kosmos of the margin thus ranges from a reflection of the kosmos of later life to a set of procedures which would be inappropriate — would violate the principle of *kairos* — later on. Whatever rites may be prescribed for the margin, it would obviously be untimely, in-

appropriate, to engage in any activity having a different set of rules: this too would violate *kairos*. If hunting is the prescribed rite, the rules of the wilderness must be followed: one must not kill with wanton violence, with hubris; one must constantly treat the forest as a realm of threat and danger. Similarly, sets of rules belonging to the civilized center of the community do not belong here: they are *akairetic*. In particular, courtship and marriage in the wilderness, during the hunt, violate propriety: the forest belongs to the virgin goddess Artemis, and adult sexuality is out of place.

The novice learns to observe *kairos*, to avoid hubris, to submit to *kosmos*. If successful, he enters the final stage, aggregation, Bremond's Achievement, returning to the community as a new person, an adult. Scholars are not in agreement as to what rites constitute the *teleutē*: does initiation end with marriage? With marriage for women but military status for men? Or does it end before courtship, for both sexes? If the Spartan Carneia, for instance, celebrates the integration of young men into the warrior group, it would appear to belong to van Gennep's third stage; yet Claude Calame, at least, feels that it came later, that it was the previously celebrated Hyacinthia which marked the return of the initiates to society (Calame 1977.355). Van Gennep himself cites a case where the third stage involves *both* rites of separation from the marginal environment and rites of aggregation into the usual environment (van Gennep 1960.83 and our note 3). Given these uncertainties, we shall indicate several points at which a *telos* is recognized without attempting to state which marks the "final end" of initiation. Thus after Odysseus completes his ritual hunt successfully, his maternal uncles give him a gift and embrace him as a member of his mother's family. This is the first *telos*. The lad returns home, where his own parents embrace him, a second ending. He then woos and marries Penelope, and that too may be *teleutic*. One thing is clear, and vitally important to our analysis: courtship and marriage cannot fall *before* separation and aggregation, before the various steps which may constitute the third stage of initiation.

But the end of a narrative may be Failure of Achievement, and initiation may not succeed. The new *kosmos* may not be reached. In reality, failure will consist of the death or disgrace of the initiate, permanent separation from the community. In the myths, we expect failure to be followed by a symbolic disintegration of *kosmos*. Thus Meleager quarrels with his uncles, war breaks out, and his mother brings about his death.

The length of duration of the margin appears to vary from a few weeks to a number of years. If tribal initiation was to have time to make adults of adolescents (Calame 1977.39), it cannot have been brief. There-

fore when we identify the hunt of our tales as initiatory, we do not imply that in the cultures from which these tales reach us the ritual hunt was necessarily the sole event of the margin, even if the story gives us no glimpse of any other. The story-teller is selective. Of Odysseus we learn only of the hunt and its attendant circumstances; a non-fictional child of his culture may have done much more. The brevity of the margin for Odysseus is no argument against the initiatory character of the tale.

Nor is the fact that Odysseus' initiation was a family matter. This is only to be expected in a loosely organized state such as Ithaca; Sparta, which was more highly structured, naturally made initiation into a community affair.

One might expect hunting to be initiatory only in a society where hunting was the overriding economic activity. This would appear to carry us back to the old stone age in Greece; and though *Odysseus* and *Meleager* can be shown to antedate Homer, we cannot safely put them several millenia earlier. But this too is no argument against the initiatory character of these tales. They are at least as old as the Dark Ages, when hunting was probably *an* important factor in the economy, especially hunting the lion or boar to protect the flocks and fields (see below, note 20). They may well go back to Mycenaean times, when hunting was popular, and livestock economically very important. But even if hunting was not economically vital, it would be a natural part of a rite of passage. It belongs to a category of activities defined by exposure to danger, the use of weapons, the inflicting of death. This category includes adult male activities in any society in which the male citizen can expect to be a warrior, or even a citizen competent at self-defense.⁵ The head of the *oikos* in Dark-Age Greece clearly needed to know how to fight, even in peacetime. Who would argue that Odysseus' experience in hunting the boar was not good training for even the less fantastic and flamboyant side of his later career?

The positive evidence for the historical existence of the initiatory hunt in ancient Greece has been set forth by others, and will not be rehearsed here.⁶ Suffice it to focus on elements common to our maturation tales and to Greek cult, or to rites in other cultures which it is reasonable to suppose that the Greeks shared:

The marginal stage of initiation usually takes place *outside* the community. Artemis Limnatis presides over initiations at the border of Laconia and Messenia, Artemis Caryatis in the mountains separating Laconia from Arcadia (Calame 1977:253-76); the Spartan ephebes and their chosen lovers lived in the forest, where they hunted (Calame 1977:422); young Athenian girls went to Brauron to serve Artemis (Brellich 1969:240ff.); and

of course all boar and lion hunting takes place in the wilderness. Thus Odysseus separates himself from his mother and father by going for his initiation to his grandfather's home near Parnassus; and from that home he travels several hours' journey to the mountain and one of its valleys, where the boar has its lair. Of Meleager's hunt we know only that it took place near Calydon.

The goddess *Artemis* presides over Meleager's hunting and its failure. Calame has argued, powerfully and persuasively, that the virginity of Artemis expresses her role in the adolescent phase of female life (Calame 1977:43-44). She is especially linked to tribal initiation; hymns are sung to her at the beginning and the end of this process (250).⁷ Calame does not speak at length of her role, as the virgin huntress, in the life of adolescent males; the latter are usually under the protection of Apollo. But he correctly says that Hippolytus "vit la vie adolescente d' Artémis" (415); and indeed it is inevitable that a goddess of virginity, of the wilderness, of the hunt, will have impact upon the initiation of the young man.

That Artemis is indeed a virgin who rules the wilderness and the hunt is not an assertion that will cause any great surprise: evidence to support it has been assembled by one of the authors elsewhere (Sale 1977:133, footnotes 11 and 12; cf. also Wilamowitz 1959:174-77 on "Herrin des Draussen"). But we must stress here that Artemis is the goddess of virginity in the strict sense. Calame seems to want to deny this, speaking of "une conception de la virginité bien différente de celle imposée à notre culture par vingt siècles de piété mariale" (Calame 1977:65). He calls this the status of a woman not yet married, adolescent (65,67), pointing to passages where *parthenos* is used of someone who has given birth, and to myths where a girl is seized by a male god from a chorus honoring Artemis, and later gives birth (176-77). But what Calame calls the paradigm myth of the "jeune vierge" is Alpheus' aborted attempt on Artemis herself, who cleverly "conserva son caractère d' éternelle vierge" (177) — i.e., who remained *intacta*, not merely unmarried (and certainly not adolescent!). Calame also says that "c'est précisément vers la *suppression* de ces unions virginales hors règle . . . que tendent ces rituels" — these "fêtes consacrés à Artémis" (189, emphasis supplied). Myth expresses Artemis' hostility to any violation of adolescent virginity by describing the sufferings of those who do not respect it: Comaetho, priestess of Triclaris (Paus. 7.19.1); the Messenians who violated the Spartan maidens worshipping Artemis Limnatis (Paus. 4.4.2); the Messenians who violated the dancers of Carys (Paus. 4.16.9); the tyrant responsible for Aspalis' death (Antoninus Liberalis 13); Aristocrates, rapist of the priestess of Hymnia (Paus. 8.13.1); Callisto (Sale 1965); Aristo-

melidas (Paul. 8.47.6); Orion et al. Religion expresses it by calling Artemis a virgin, παρθένος and ἀδμήτα (Aesch. *Suppl.* 149, Sophocles *Electra* 1239).

Hippolytus refuses to grow up; he seeks to prolong the margin by spending his life hunting and worshiping Artemis in the Inviolable Meadow.⁸ His story provides an example, if an extreme one, of the goddess' role in the life of the adolescent male. We cannot show here how extensive this role was in Greek cult; but it is obvious that the boy hunting in the wilderness cannot avoid the Virgin goddess. And myth reveals that she will tolerate neither the random neglect of the rules of the wild, nor untimely sexual acts. She is not mentioned in *Odysseus*, the story of success; but she is vital to *Meleager*. There she is the savage Laphria, honored in cult with a holocaust of wild animals, worshiped by a virgin priestess; she inflicts the destructive boar upon Oeneus, and is enraged at Meleager for his courting Atalanta during the maturation hunt.

We return to elements common to Greek initiation rites and our tales: the *boar* and the *lion*, since they are not hunted primarily for food but are extremely dangerous and highly suitable to a test of manhood, are animals often encountered in the marginal place; they can play the role of initiator insofar as they transmit the powers of the wild and uncivilized to the novitiate through contact.⁹ It is the boar whom Meleager and Odysseus must kill.

Odysseus bears for life the *scar* earned at his initiatory hunt. And scars and other sorts of mutilation function generally as initiatory signs.¹⁰ Many interpretations of mutilations have been ventured; it is at least clear that they mark the initiate indelibly as one of the group. Surely the hunting scar will also symbolize success in surmounting danger — a proof to the group and a source of pride to oneself. Moreover, using Frazer's notion of contagious magic, a scar conveys to its receiver some of the feral powers of the beast who delivered the wound.

The hunter was not invariably wounded, and the *spoils* of the hunt might function as an index of valor. If the animal's hide were worn by the initiate, as Heracles wears the hide of the Cithaeronian lion, it, like the scar, could carry with it the animal's power. Further, as evidence of past success it might be expected to aid in future encounters.

The *weapon* of choice was the spear, not the bow and arrow or traps. Here too valor is emphasized; economic efficiency plays no role in the *rite de passage*. In a hunting society, we might expect initiation to be more mimetic of adult life; but when the hunt is less directly related to the economy, it is natural to stress such semantic links between hunting and war, or

hunting and self-defense, as exposure to risk and direct contact with death. The spear is used by both Odysseus and Meleager.

One of the most striking features of the hunts in our stories is the presence of *matrikin* identified specifically as the children of the novitiate's grandfather ("sons of Autolycus" and "sons of Thestius"). Whatever the full explanation of their presence may be, they are obviously on hand to represent the boy's mother's family, and to certify for that family that the boy has been successfully initiated. No other explanation is available, so far as we can see. They are not casual hunting companions, for they do not live near the boy's home: Odysseus indeed must undertake a long voyage to be with them.¹¹

The rules of the margin may be *violated*. In *Meleager* and in hunting myths which may be related to it, violation takes the form of inappropriate sexuality. In ordinary life, homosexual activity was not precluded (Calame 1977.420-39), but courtship and marriage were; they comprise a rite of passage themselves, one assigned to a later time of life. (Later than the initiatory *margin*, that is; the authors do not wish to enter the dispute over whether marriage was a final act of initiatory aggregation.) Whatever belongs to Artemis Parthenos excludes adult heterosexuality. Her activity may push up to the very edge of marriage, but it does not cross over. Hence Meleager's falling in love with his fellow-hunter Atalanta and giving her the spoils as a love-token is clearly akairetic and akosmetic.

With these characteristics of the initiatory hunt in mind, let us turn to a detailed examination of *Odysseus* and *Meleager*. Since by the narrative time of the *Odyssey* Odysseus has long since matured, our only direct accounts of his childhood occur in encased, or embedded narrative: the story of his maturation hunt is told to explain the boar-tusk scar by which Eurycleia recognizes Odysseus. To supplement this narrative, we interpret two signs in the text: the clasp (Penelope's parting gift to Odysseus) and the marriage-bed (which Odysseus himself built as a young bridegroom).¹² The marriage-bed actually occurs in encased narrative. The clasp of Penelope does not, and so we employ knowledge of the semantic domains of hunting and sexuality to bolster the interpretation and reconstruction put forth.

In Book 19, the poet tells the story of how Odysseus obtained the boar-tusk scar, a story which the youth once told his parents upon his return from the house of his maternal grandfather Autolycus — "how, as he was hunting, the boar had struck him with his white tusk after he had gone to Parnassus with the sons of Autolycus" (19.465-66). This adventure marked Odysseus' passage to manhood.

Our first clue that the hunt is initiatory comes when Autolycus names his baby grandson (405-09). He promises to give him gifts freely “when he grows up” (*hēbēsas*) and “comes to the great house of his mother’s line, and Parnassus. . . .” Besides this specification of the very moment of physical puberty,¹³ there are other indications of initiation in the description of the hunt itself (for these see pp. 143-46 above). The *victim* is a boar (439: σῦς). This particular boar is no menace to the countryside; there is no reason to hunt him, except to expose Odysseus to danger and to see whether he can meet it. And he can: Autolycus and his sons interpret the defeat of the boar as a proof of valor, and give Odysseus gifts as trophies. The hunting implement is the *spear* of valorous manhood (448). Odysseus receives a mutilating *wound*; the boar’s tusk penetrates him just above the knee, dangerously and nearly fatally (449-51). The uncles tend it, Odysseus boasts of it to his parents; it is there for good as a sign of manhood and symbolic seal of initiation.

That Odysseus engages in the hunt with his *maternal uncles*, sons of Autolycus, is a point that the poet lays considerable stress upon: “they went out on their way to the hunt, the dogs and the people and very sons of Autolycus themselves and with them went splendid Odysseus” (429-30). “The hunters came to a mountain glen, and see, before them leapt the dogs, scenting the tracks, and behind them the sons of Autolycus, and among them splendid Odysseus went close behind the hounds, shaking his spear far-shadowing” (435-37). Thus just as the mother’s father named the baby, so the mother’s brothers are insistently present to preside over the youth’s rite of passage: they certify his manliness, they heal his wound, they and their father give him gifts. The bestowing of Odysseus as he parts from his matrikin, rejoicing, forms a first point of closure of initiation, a farewell to the margin.¹⁴ Then Odysseus returns home and recounts to his parents the initiatory hunt. This retelling, and the gladness of his mother and father, mark a second point of closure, the aggregation into the adult community. And the story of Odysseus’ hunt will then be added to the traditions which bind and preserve Ithacan society.

By going to Parnassus, to his maternal grandfather’s home, for initiation, Odysseus internalizes and affirms features of his character which derive from Autolycus. This man, Homer tells us, surpassed all others in thievery and the art of the oath: “The god Hermes had endowed him, for he had pleased him by burning thigh bones of lambs and kids, and the god freely gave him his favor” (396-97). Autolycus has the unusual double quality of being legitimately antisocial, a thief with divine sanction. In addition to the specific gifts he gives his grandson on this important visit, he

also transmits to Odysseus an inherited right to transgress legitimately; without this right such transgression could well be deemed hubristic and would by poetic logic lead to early demise. Odysseus does indeed pay for his bold behavior, but not the ultimate penalty. In fact, because a god, Hermes, indirectly blesses his actions, he can explore social, moral and sexual boundaries with relative safety. He is socialized by a liar and a thief, but by one who has endeared himself to a god.¹⁵

In one of Odysseus' most important lies, told to Penelope before the hearth, Odysseus the beggar claims to be Aithon of Crete who entertained Odysseus twenty years ago. Casually he describes his guest's woollen mantle of purple "with two folds. Moreover, it had a clasp (*peronē*) fashioned of gold, with twin holders for the pins. And on the face of the clasp was a work of art (*daidalon*): in his front paws a dog was holding a dappled fawn, gripping it as it panted and writhed. And everyone was admiring the fact that, though the figures were made of gold, the dog was gripping and strangling the fawn, while the fawn, anxious to escape, was writhing with its feet" (226-31).¹⁶ On the most literal level, the scene on the clasp depicts a moment of conquest in the hunt, the hunting dog's capture of its prey. If we adopt the notion of the hunting dog as an icon of his master the hunter, then the depiction represents (on a second semantic level) Odysseus' own hunting *technē*: he was not one to let his prey escape. Given, also, the familiar metaphoric relation between the domains of hunting and sexuality, the depiction commemorates the sexual conquest by Odysseus of Penelope. Of course the scene, by itself, cannot do all this. Though arrestingly lively and realistic, it is too conventional in what it portrays. The clasp gains its rich meaning from its context. It was Penelope's gift to her husband when he departed for Troy. Through this intimate gesture she revealed that she treasured the moment of conquest as much as he. It is the circumstance which occasioned the gift, their moment of parting, which allows the clasp to say that Penelope is the fawn struggling to escape, yet held captive; it is the desire to give this gift that says that she has joyfully accepted her captivity.¹⁷

Thus in commemorating the first sexual encounter, the clasp preserves the moment through which husband and wife safely passed to attain a stable marriage. In doing so, it keeps the two rites of passage, initiation and marriage, in their proper order. As we have seen, Odysseus was not married when he went upon the ritual hunt, and he did not allow sexuality to intrude into it. Courtship and marriage came later. The clasp says something about Odysseus' entrance into the domain of sexuality, and does so by drawing upon the domain of hunting, already established as a part of Odysseus' life. It uses the imagery of the familiar to express the unfamiliar.

But the familiar, to be familiar, must precede the unfamiliar; and so the clasp, in its nature, assures us that hunting preceded courtship. (The reverse order might be expressed if a spear used in the ritual hunt were treated as, or even fashioned to resemble, a phallus.) For the known to announce the unknown is kosmos; and for hunting to precede courtship is kairos.

The *marriage bed* shared by Odysseus and Penelope is important to us in two rather different ways. First, the building of the bed is part of the narrative of Odysseus' youth; it belongs indeed to the early days of marriage commemorated by the clasp. A stout olive tree was growing inside the courtyard; the young husband built his *thamos* around it, then shaped and planed it into his *lechos*. Wild nature is tamed into a marriage bed, just as marriage itself tames and regularizes sex, in contrast to the hasty illegitimacy of the *panos gamos*. The forest, the domain of Artemis, gives way to the realm of Aphrodite and Hera. The rite of initiation is over, the rite of marriage dominates. As we expect with Odysseus, the principle of kairos, proper time and place, is upheld. Second, the marriage bed is brought into the narrative as a *sēma* of recognition between husband and wife. The dalliance which surrounds it in the narrative allows us to retrieve Odysseus' courtship of Penelope, not otherwise given by the text in any detail.

We can now present the level-2 sequence of motifs in the hunting-maturation tale of *Odysseus*. They all occur in the *Odyssey*, either expressed in its words or implied by its signs. Should we then simply identify the level-1 text of our tale with the appropriate passages in Homer? (For of course we must have a text — see above pp. 137-38). This procedure seems acceptable; on the other hand, it is very probable that Homer drew upon an earlier narrative in which the youth of Odysseus was presented in its approximate chronological sequence. Indeed the clasp and marriage-bed signs virtually require such a predecessor. We shall therefore take this pre-Homeric poem for our text.

Odysseus' maternal grandfather Autolycus gives Hermes gifts and earns his sanction, thereby gaining legitimacy for his lying and thievery. His daughter, Anticleia, marries Laertes and moves from her home in Parnassus to Ithaca. There they conceive Odysseus, and, on a visit, Autolycus names his baby-grandson for his own quality of being hated.^{17a} He promises his grandson gifts when, upon reaching manhood, he visits him at Parnassus. Odysseus, while still a boy, goes on an errand, sent by his father and the other elders. He returns, presumably successful, with the bow of Eurytus, which Iphitus gave him before perishing at the hands of Heracles. When Odysseus is sexually mature he journeys as prescribed to his grandfather's home. There he accompanies his mother's brothers on an initiatory

hunt, and the boar wounds him above the knee. But he dispatches the beast, thereby earning the admiration of his uncles, who heal his wound, and of his grandfather. Carrying their congratulatory gifts of goodwill he returns to Ithaca, and tells his parents the story of his successful hunt. They embrace him joyfully. Some time later, he courts and wins Penelope, daughter of Icarius. They marry and, in the tree-bed he constructs, the bridegroom “conquers” his half-willing, half-resisting bride (fawn). They conceive Telemachus.

This, strictly speaking, is the end of the maturation tale. We do not imply that it was the end of the initiation, which may have fallen earlier; but the *tale* cannot end before the successful completion of Odysseus’ passage to marriage.

All these motifs are organized by the following motif-types:

1. H(ero’s) G(randfather) placates deity [potential D(ivine) Adv(ersary)]
2. H(ero’s)M(other) born, leaves home, marries, moves to H(ero’s)F(ather’s) home: H born
3. HGf names H
4. HGf instructs H
5. H has minor exploit: leaves, receives *xenia*, returns home
6. H reaches point of maturation
7. H leaves home
8. H goes to HGf’s home
9. HGf organizes hunt
10. HMat(rikin) join hunt
11. H hunts A(nimal)
12. A wounds H
13. H kills A
14. HMat heal H
15. HMat begift H
16. HMat embrace H
17. H returns home
18. H recounts tale
19. HM and HF embrace H
20. H courts W(oman)

- 21. H wins W
- 22. W accepts H
- 23. H and W conceive H(ero's)S(on)

The motifemes essential to the O-fabula can now be given:

<i>O-fabula motifemes</i>	<i>Corresponding motif-types</i>
A. H seeks certification of manhood	6
B. H departs home for margin	7
C. H takes test at margin	8-12
D. H passes test	13
E. Cert(ifiers) certify passage of test ¹⁸	14-16
F. H returns home as adult	17
G. H Par(ents) acknowledge and embrace H	18-19
H. H courts wife	20
I. H marries W	21-23

We turn now to the tale of *Meleager*. Our methodology changes, since the level-2 version we seek cannot be abstracted from a level-1 text which still exists or which can be immediately reconstructed from a single source. It did exist at one time, for it was the source of Homer's narrative in *Iliad* 9. Our task will thus be the reconstruction of that source. To get our bearings, let us look at the totality of motifs as they group themselves into three separate strands:

A *folk-tale*, in which a woman gives birth to a boy and is told by the fates that he will live until a brand burning on the fire is consumed. The mother snatches the brand from the fire and hides it in a chest. Years later, the boy is hunting with his mother's brother or brothers, quarrels with, and kills them. The mother, enraged, hurls the brand in the fire and the lad dies. We know of this version first in an allusion by Phrynichus; but as Pausanias says, the tale must have been famous all over Greece in Phrynichus' day (fl. 500 B.C.). The reconstruction is by Kakridis (1949.11-18).

A *hunting-tale*, in which the hunt is the story of the Calydonian boar, sent by Artemis in anger with the boy's father Oeneus. The reason for the family quarrel is the love of the youth, Meleager, for the huntress Atalanta. Upon killing the boar, Meleager awards the hide and head to

his beloved; his uncles object, and Meleager kills them. We know of this version chiefly through Euripides, Ovid, Apollodorus and Diodorus.

In the *epic version*, in which the Calydonian boar-hunt is followed by war between the Curetes and Calydonians, the motif of the fire-brand death is dropped in favor of the mother's cursing her son, and Meleager dies in battle. In this version Meleager is married to Cleopatra, and is not in love with Atalanta. His uncles now fall by his hands in the course of the war. When he hears of his mother's curse, he withdraws from battle; beseeched by priests, parents, friends and wife, his city about to fall, he returns. This version is given in *Iliad* 9, Apollodorus, and the post-Homeric epos.¹⁹

We propose to establish a pre-Homeric date for the hunting story and show that it is indeed a maturation tale of hunting and sexuality, tragic by contrast with *Odysseus*. In order to avoid the risk of devising a plot founded on a scholarly fiction, we show that a specific text once existed of whose motifs we can be certain. Several advantages accrue to an early dating of this text. As tales develop, they take on motifs reflecting the idiosyncracies of later tellers: hence the earlier we can put the version, the better. And since hunting as an initiatory rite goes back to palaeolithic times, the older our version is, the closer it comes to its cultural context. Of course we cannot approach a palaeolithic date; and in any case the ritual hunt lived on long after the close of the old stone age (above, p. 143). But even a date in the Dark Ages is satisfying: the economic revolution ending this period and ushering in the Archaic period was dramatic, and the Dark Ages are culturally much less sophisticated.²⁰ Finally, since *Odysseus* is all drawn from Homer and may well be pre-Homeric we naturally prefer to have our contrasting tale be roughly contemporaneous.

The story of Meleager as given in the ninth *Iliad* is a composite of a hunting tale and a war story. But the hunting tale is imbalanced and incomplete. We hear of Oeneus' religious failure and Artemis' wrath (534-37); of the great destructive boar (538-42) which Meleager is destined to kill (543); of the gathering of many hunters (544) and dogs, of the boar's size and how many hunters be killed (546) — then suddenly Artemis is stirring up a hue and cry over head and hide (547-48) and the Curetes and Aetolians are plunged into war. Why Artemis is still angry we do not know. Of the boar's last hours and the details of the quarrel we are told nothing. The poet is willing to spend time speculating over the reason for Oeneus' failure (527); he will lavish detail on the great harm the boar wreaks (538-42, 546), but on the climax of the hunt and its disastrous consequence he is silent. Clearly there are things he does not want us to know, and he would rather omit than refashion. He sets a tone of sin and doom to echo in his later nar-

rative, by stressing Oeneus' lapse and the boar's great mischief; how the boar died and how the quarrel began are, for him, irrelevant or worse.²¹

If we are familiar with all versions of the myth of Meleager, we can at once guess why Homer proceeded as he did. Homer's original must have told of Meleager's love for Atalanta, of how this love offended Meleager's maternal uncles and the Virgin Goddess, of how Artemis vented her wrath by stirring up the uncles against him. And Homer must omit all this, because he needs a Meleager who is devoted to his wife Cleopatra, the person who finally succeeds in persuading Meleager to return to battle. As we proceed to scrutinize the hypothetically omitted motifs, the roles of Atalanta and the uncles, we shall see good reason for arguing that they formed part of the pre-Homeric myth of the Calydonian boar and that Homer did indeed remove them.

Most sources for the hunting tale include the uncles; and what is striking is that they are included *as* matrikin. They are rarely named; they are regularly called, after their — and their sister's — father, the "children of Thestius." Apollodorus gives us a list of all the famous hunters present from all over Greece, and simply adds, "And along with them were the *Thestiou paides*" (1.8.2). Ovid introduces them as *Thestiades* (*Metamm.* 8.304). Euripides' messenger, in naming the hunters, speaks of Telamon, Atalanta, Ancaeus, and the *Thestiou paides* (Frgmt. 530). They are the *Thestiou paides* in Diodorus (4.34). Names of these uncles are occasionally transmitted; and, as we should expect, they vary from source to source: Iphiclus, Euippus, Plexippus, Eurypylus (Apollodorus 1.7.10, among the genealogies; they are unnamed in the recounting of the myth); Toxeus and Plexippus (Ovid. *Metamm.* 8.439-41); Prothus and Cometes (Scopas apud Paus. 8.45.6); Iphiclus and Aphares (Bacchylides 5.128-29). The individuals are nothing; they are "children of Thestius," precisely parallel to the "children of Autolycus" of *Odyssey* 19.4.3-66.

Clearly this must be an initiatory hunt: nothing else will explain the presence of these shadows among the rest of the boar-hunters, the most famous Greeks of the pre-Trojan War generation, most of them also Argonauts.²² The matrikin take part in the hunt in order to certify Meleager's manhood and readiness to enter the family. But rather than certify him they precipitate a quarrel over the skin and head of the boar. We shall see that the reason for the quarrel is Meleager's love for the virgin huntress Atalanta. He wishes her to have the spoils; the uncles object. If Meleager foregoes the prize, then it must go to his matrikin, *kata genos*. This phrase, found in Apollodorus and echoed in principle by Diodorus and Zenobius, is really most arresting. What has *genos* to do with the matter? Why should

the victor not do as he pleases with the spoils? Because the hunt is indeed a family affair. The spoils are the proof of Meleager's passage into manhood, the passage whereby he is fully taken into the maternal side of the family; the family needs this proof and cannot let it go abroad.

We know indirectly, but certainly, that the children of Thestius were in the original hunting tale which Homer has abbreviated. They must have been; for it was the "din and uproar" over the spoils of the hunt that led to the war between the Curetes of Pleuron and the Calydonians, and the only Curetes named by the tradition as present in the hunt are the Thestiades. The other hunters came from all over Greece; only the Thestiades represent Pleuron. Any hunt which is to lead to war with the Curetes must include the Thestiades.²³

This is confirmed by reflecting on the role of the Thestiades throughout our sources. In every version, Meleager kills his uncles, either right after the quarrel, or later, in battle. And his uncles are the only victims to whom the tradition gives a name. But why is Meleager so choosy in his victims? Obviously because we are interested not in his prowess, but in his mother's motivation. Meleager kills his uncles so that Althaea may plausibly kill her son. That motivation works very well in the Homeric source hypothesized above (p. 153). Meleager is courting Atalanta during his initiatory hunt, an act in itself offensive to the family, to the Thestiades. He compounds the offense by offering her the hunting trophy. Naturally there is a quarrel; by killing his uncles, Meleager is flinging in Althaea's face his opinion of her family and its right to a proper *rite de passage*, its right to proclaim his entrance into manhood. The offensive courtship, the insulting killing combine with sororial affection to give Althaea reason enough to kill her son. But if there is no quarrel, Althaea's motivation is seriously weakened. In Bacchylides, the uncles fall through the fortunes of war, "blind shafts" (*Epinician* 5.132). It is surely a most malicious mother who thus perverts chance encounter in order to kill her offspring. It suits Bacchylides' purpose that Meleager should create pathos for himself at Althaea's expense, and his audience was familiar enough with her history not to question her motivation. But the early narrative had to worry about making the filicide convincing; it required a quarrel; and our sources agree that the quarrel took place during the hunt of the Calydonian boar. Hence the Thestiades were members of that hunt.

In conceiving of how Homer's source told the story, we have been assuming that Meleager's love for Atalanta was one of the motifs. Her presence in the hunt is attested shortly after 600 B.C., and there is no reason to doubt that she was among the "many hunters" summoned by Meleager

(*Iliad* 9.544; the text has *andras*, which usually — not always — refers to the male sex; but of course Homer is dropping Atalanta out.) The motif of Meleager's love for her, however, has often been attributed to Euripides' invention (e.g., Wilamowitz 1925.217; van der Kolf RE.454). Improbably; for both Homer and Bacchylides say that Artemis provoked the quarrel over the spoils, and Atalanta must have been her reason. Consider the facts of the myth. In all of our sources, the hunt begins with Oeneus committing a clear-cut sin against Artemis: he does not know, or neglects the fact, that the queen of the wild must receive offerings of cultivated fruit. The boar comes; wild nature has retaliated. But the divine huntress cannot complain over the fact that people now hunt the boar; she must not only accept its death, but help to bring it about — provided that the hunt is properly conducted. If she now instigates great din and uproar over the hide, if the quarrel is to be, as Homer says, her doing, then she must have been offended by the conduct of the hunt. And the only imaginable offense for which we have any evidence in the tradition is the fact that Meleager makes the skin and head a love-gift to Atalanta. True, Atalanta's presence in an initiatory hunt may be itself offensive; perhaps Cepheus and Ancaeus are right to object to a woman's participating in a young man's *rite de passage* (Apollodorus 1.8.2). But why does she participate? Why is she here? Because Meleager wants her here; because he over-rules all objections; because he is acting out his love for her. And he deepens his guilt by awarding her the spoils. We cannot say whether Artemis would object to having the virgin huntress join in the hunt, but we can be confident that she would object to Meleager's using the hunt to court her. Thus Artemis' continued wrath and Meleager's love for Atalanta are necessarily connected motifs.

This inference gains some support from parallels from other myths in which the outcome is disastrous for the hunter: Orion angers Artemis through his love for Eos; Actaeon, through his love for Semele. Of course, the offense need not always be sexual, nor the offended deity Artemis; but Artemis is the most obvious choice in a hunting myth, and what could offend her, or the hunter's matrilin, more decidedly than Meleager's conversion of the setting for a masculine *rite de passage* into a sexual playground?

The tradition does, however, supply us with an alternative motif leading to Meleager's quarrel with his uncles. When Apollodorus adds to his summary of the hunting tale another version, one which is in many respects Homer's epic version, he says that the Thestiades argued over the spoils because one of them, Iphiclus, had wounded the boar first. Scholars have naturally sought to make this motif part of the pre-Homeric myth, on the grounds that Homer has Meleager married, apparently quite happily, to

Cleopatra. Atalanta is redundant; and we ourselves have agreed that Homer, at least, would find her presence embarrassing. But it is almost impossible to see why, if the argument over the spoils arises out of a dispute over precedence, Artemis should have been mentioned as the divine cause. Homer's words, ἡ δ' ἄμφ' αὐτῷ θῆκε πολὺν κέλαδον καὶ αὐτήν (9.547) are just right if *she* is angry with Meleager and *she* is inciting his uncles. They are just right if the uncles are angry for the same reason as Artemis. But if they themselves have been cheated, and are angry on their own account, it is bizarre to make Artemis and not themselves the cause of the uproar. Why should she *want* to incite a quarrel? How has she been offended? The wrath of Artemis, and a dispute arising because one of the uncles may have a higher claim, are not compatible motifs. Surely it is obvious that this alternative motive for the quarrel was supplied by someone later in the tradition who saw that when the love of Meleager for Atalanta had been dropped by Homer, Artemis' continued wrath was *mal à propos* and that a better reason for the dispute was needed.

An early date for the love of Meleager for Atalanta is offered by the tradition of the plastic arts, though such evidence of course cannot lead us back before Homer. The tusks of the Calydonian boar were displayed together with the sixth-century statue of Athena Alea in her shrine in Tegea in Augustus' time. The ancient temple was destroyed in 395 B.C., and on a gable of the rebuilt temple Scopas depicted the Calydonian hunt, with Atalanta and the Thestiades participating.²⁴ Callimachus knew the boar-tusks (*Hymn* 3.221), and it is almost certain that they were in the temple in Scopas' day. Pedimental sculpture is not always evidently relevant to a temple's contents. But the tusks are known to have been in the temple later; there is no connection between the boar hunt and anything *else* concerning the temple — Athena Alea, Aleus, or his progeny; the presence of the tusks provides a connection too good to be accidental. And the reason they were present is that they had been relics in the old temple. It is likewise virtually certain that Scopas was following Arcadian tradition in placing Atalanta in the Calydonian hunt. The tusks are sacred objects; what makes them sacred is what people say and believe about them; and to argue that Scopas ignored what the Arcadians said and thought, and put on their temple his own views, is almost an accusation of sacrilege. This is, indeed, what Wilamowitz at one time argued, or rather asserted;²⁵ and Robert followed him, finding it scarcely credible “dass sich die Haupt-heldentat dieser arkadischen Atalante so weit ab von ihrer Heimat abgespielt haben sollte” (Robert 1920.1,93). But why? They believed it in Scopas' day; why not at any earlier time? How on earth could it harm

Atalanta's fame and honor to have won the trophies of a far-off hunt made famous by poets earlier than the *Iliad*? By precise parity of reasoning, Achilles cannot really have killed Hector at Troy, "so weit ab von seiner Heimat."

These tusks, sacred enough to be placed alongside the statue of Athena, traditionally in Arcadian belief the tusks of the Calydonian boar — how did they come to be here? Obviously people believed that they were brought by Atalanta and equally obviously she received them from Meleager. She herself did not kill the Calydonian boar, nor does Scopas imply that she did. The tusks are love tokens. This means that long before the time of Scopas, the Arcadians told the story of Meleager's love for Atalanta. Again: a hydria from the mid-sixth century shows Atalanta in a wrestling match with a hero of the Calydonian hunt (Mopsus or Peleus) and alongside, the head and hide of a boar. Kuhnert, we think correctly, concludes that at the very least some connection between Atalanta and the Calydonian trophies lies before us (Kuhnert RL II.2611). And this too puts the age of Meleager's love for Atalanta very early.

One more general consideration. Atalanta was certainly a fellow-hunter with Meleager no later than 600 B.C. It is very hard to imagine her as a mere participant. Objections by other hunters to the presence of a woman at the initiatory hunt of a young man seem appropriate, and are reflected in the tradition (Apollodorus 1.8.1). Her presence is intrusive and needs an explanation.

In the sixth century, then, the Arcadians said that Meleager loved Atalanta and gave her the boar-hunt trophies. Wilamowitz supposed that before this, at some unspecified time, Atalanta was a figure in an Arcadian boar-hunt, which seems *prima facie* probable (Wilamowitz 1925.219). To further close the gap between Arcadia and the pre-Homeric hunting tale must of course be conjectural, but there is one line of development much more likely than any other:

The fame of Atalanta as a great hunter was widespread throughout Greece at an early age. As the hunting myth of Meleager developed, Atalanta was brought into it to be his inappropriate beloved. As the fame of this hunt grew, and only then, it became accepted by the Arcadians: by 600 B.C. this story had supplanted the Arcadian hunting tale (if there ever was one), and the tusks of the Calydonian boar were displayed in the temple of Athena Alea.²⁶

A full discussion of the precise nature of Homer's source we shall defer to the Appendix; a summary of the development of the tale is sufficient here. We begin with Kakridis' folk tale (above, p. 151); this was probably

told all over Greece, with various names for the hero, the mother and the uncle(s). In Aetolian Calydon the hero acquired the name Meleager. The tale was transformed into the hunting story of the Calydonian Boar; Atalanta was added; the theme of failed maturation was emphasized by the conflict between Meleager's duty and his love for Atalanta; and the quarrel led to war between Calydon and Pleuron. This version belongs to the locale: it uses the hunt as a *rite de passage* in a region of Greece where, during the Dark Ages and earlier, hunting was probably of economic importance. Important certainly to protect agricultural land and flocks from the assault of boar and lion, and perhaps important also as a source of food.²⁷ This version, the tragic maturation hunt of the Calydonian Boar, was Homer's source. Let us give it a detailed breakdown into motifs, making the assumption (likely in itself and unprejudicial for the argument) that it contained most of the narrative motifs we believe to be pre-Homeric:

Althaea hears the prophecy, snatches the firebrand from the flames (in the folktale, omitted by Homer because he needs Althaea's curse: Willcock 1966.152; Schadewaldt 1938.140-41).

Oeneus offends Artemis (Homer).

Artemis is angry and sends the boar to ravage the land (Homer).

Hunters are gathered from many cities (Homer).

Atalanta joins the hunt (Kuhnert ML II:2592; van der Kolf RE:448).

Meleager's maternal uncles are present. (One uncle in Kakridis' reconstruction of the folk-tale; Homer [9.567] is ambiguous; the tradition almost unanimously gives two.)

Meleager hunts the boar (Homer).

Meleager loves Atalanta (above, pp. 154-57).

Atalanta wounds the boar (a probable inference from the motif "Meleager gives the spoils to Atalanta," below; Apollod. 1.8.2).

Meleager kills the boar (Homer).

Meleager gives the spoils to Atalanta (above, pp. 155-57).

The uncles are offended (by inference).

The uncles claim the spoils *kata genos* (above, pp. 153-54).

Artemis, enraged with Meleager over Atalanta, inspires the claimants to quarrel (Homer, who of course omits her motive.)

The quarrel leads the Thestiades and the Curetes to go to war with Meleager and the Calydonians (Homer, with mention of the Thestiades omitted).

The princes meet on the battlefield (implied by Homer).

Meleager kills his uncles (implied by Homer).

Althaea hurls the brand into the fire (in the folk-tale).

From this list of motifs on level 2 we can proceed at once to abstract a sequence of motif-types on level 3. We put this in the left-hand column of the following table; on the right are the corresponding motif-types abstracted from *Odysseus*:

<i>Meleager-Type</i>	<i>Odysseus-Type</i>
1. HF offends deity (DAdv)	cf. 1. HGf plates deity
2. DAdv assails HF	
3. HF organizes hunt	9. HGf organizes hunt
4. W joins hunt	
5. HMat join hunt	10. HMat join hunt
6. H hunts A	11. H hunts A
7. H loves W	cf. 20. H courts W
8. W wounds A	cf. 12. A wounds H
9. H kills A	13. H kills A
10. H courts W	20. H courts W
11. DAdv assails H	
12. HMat are offended	14. HMat heal M
13. HMat claim gift	cf. 15. HMat begift H
14. H fights HMat	cf. 16. HMat embrace H
15. H kills HMat	
16. M kills H	19. HPar embrace H

This comparison of motif-types reveals very clearly the failure of *kairos* and of *kosmos* in the *Meleager* story. Indeed there is a causal relationship between the two failures. The sequence of motifs in the story of the successful *Odysseus* has “H courts W” as number 20, seven motif-types after “H kills A.” The tale of *Meleager* puts “H courts W” *before* “H kills A,” in clear violation of *kairos*: it is literally “untimely.” And we can observe the effect of this intrusion of sexuality into the initiatory hunt in motif-types 12-16 of *Meleager*. Where in *Odysseus* the matrikin heal the hero, cure the wound incurred in the hunt, in *Meleager* the events of the hunt offend the matrikin, force them to take a hostile stance. Where in *Odysseus* they give the hero a gift, in *Meleager* they wish to take away, for themselves, the gift which the hero has inappropriately offered to the woman. Finally, the events of the hunt in *Odysseus* move towards a union: in motif-type 16 of *Odysseus*, the matrikin take the hero into the mother’s family. By contrast, *Meleager* offers total disarray, total breakdown of *kosmos*. There is strife between the hero and his matrikin: motif-types inappropriate to family

members — and H — are thrust into family relationships. The enormity is signified by the fact that war breaks out. And the story ends with the most violent shattering of kosmos one can imagine, the mother killing her son. By contrast, the close of the hunting portion of the Odysseus story, the hero's mother and father embracing him, represents ideal harmony and order.

We now set forth the motifemes abstracted from *Meleager* — that is, the M-fabula — alongside the O-fabula (above, p 151):

<i>M-fabula</i>	<i>O-fabula</i>
A. H seeks certification of manhood	A. as in <i>M</i>
B. H departs home for margin	B. as in <i>M</i>
C. H takes test at margin	C. as in <i>M</i>
H. H courts W	
partial D. H partly passes test	D. H passes test
neg. E. [Cert(ifiers) become Adv(ersaries)]	E. Cert certify passage of H
J. H defeats Adv	F. H returns home as adult
neg. G. HPar rejects H	G. HPar acknowledge and embrace H
	H. H courts W
	I. H marries W
neg. K. H dies prematurely	K. (implied telos) H lives to old age

The tragic sequence of the M-fabula then entails the akairetic occurrence of motifeme H, the incompleteness of D, the neg. sign before E, the ensuing akosmetic J, and the neg. sign before G and K.

The fabula class just established has only two members, so far. In the other hunting tales of Greek myth, the initiatory details are not so easy to identify. Heracles hunts the Cithaeronian lion at age 18, perhaps the right age for initiation (Apoll. 2.4.9-10); his lion-skin and helmet are trophies of this hunt comparable to Odysseus' scar. More often we find similarities in interpretants; violations of kairos and kosmos and exhibitions of hubris. Orion and the Aloades grow too fast, are too big too soon; their careers are disorderly, they are sexually premature, their sexual objects usually unwisely chosen; they hunt wantonly, carelessly; they challenge the natural and social order. Actaeon is subtle: he violates the rules of

the wilderness by wandering aimlessly; probably against his will or unwittingly, he commits a sexual offense against the Virgin. Aimless wandering is akosmetic; roaming the woods before you know the rules is akairctic; Actaeon has not been (and never will be) initiated. Hippolytus goes further in virtually rejecting initiation into adult society altogether. He refuses to grow up; he shuns the social order in favor of his *akeratos leimon*; he rejects especially passage to Aphrodite.

To summarize our procedure and to suggest criteria for future analysis of mythic data, we have proposed:

1. The selection of texts, where texts are available, guided by an intuitive sense of common subject matter, similar cultural context, and identical interpretants and modality (level 1).

2. The establishment of the plots on level 2, in their earliest form where possible, through literary analysis (as we did with the *Odyssey* for *Odysseus*), historical-philological analysis (*Meleager*), or simple abstraction of motifs from motif textures where they exist; however we proceed, we make sure that a level-1 text once existed. We establish the cultural contexts of our plots, and use them to begin the interpretation: in our tales, keeping before us the themes of maturation, the presence of matrikin, the possible intrusion of sexuality.

3. Organizing our plots by abstracting motif-types and comparing the motif-type structures of the tales we have chosen (level 3). At this point, it becomes apparent what elements are common to the narratives being compared. And by asking how the narrative strings are related (by negations, e.g., and differences in order) we can recognize interpretants for the tales — in our case, *kairos*, *kosmos*, *hubris*. We are also in a position to make comparisons with other tales — Orion and Hippolytus, for instance — possessing common narrative elements and interpretants.

4. Formulation of the motifemic structure. When we have done this, we can relate our tales to any other stories we choose, since motifemes are common to all literary narrative. We can even relate them to non-literary forms, such as ritual, which lend themselves to similar stratificational analysis. Finally, we can determine the constraints which have served as operators in the organization of motifemes, giving us the modalities to which the tales belong (in our case, the deontic and the axiological). This gives us yet another basis for comparison with other tales. And it also gives us deeper insight into — i.e., further interpretants for — the tales we have chosen for analysis.

APPENDIX

The Source of Book 9

We take up here the question of the precise nature of Homer's predecessor: was it an epic *Meleagris* or some other composite of hunting and battle story? Two independent stories, one of hunting, one of war? Or an independent hunting tale which Homer expanded? The case for the *Meleagris* was most recently put forward by Kakridis (1949:18-27). His chief argument is based upon the order of Meleager's suppliants in Book 9: elders, priests, father, mother, friends, wife. In the traditional order the friends come early, before any family members. Phoenix puts them next to last; he would like to put them last, so that they might seem most influential, as he hopes he and Ajax and Odysseus, *philtatoi andres* (204), will seem to Achilles. "And why not the last?" (22). Because Phoenix was "prevented by the tradition; it must have been a fixed element in the story that it was Meleager's wife who appeased him in the end" (23). We submit, on the contrary, that Phoenix does exactly what he wants to do and ought to do. The friends come next to last. Had Meleager listened to them, he might have returned to battle in time to get the gifts offered him. But he did not listen, and returned too late. Phoenix tells his story so as to be able to say, "Meleager did not listen to his friends, and so forfeited his gifts; do you, Achilles, listen to your friends." The last thing Phoenix wants is to have the friends come last and persuade Meleager, given that Meleager is to be a *negative* example (see also Rosen 1976.324).

A somewhat better argument for the *Meleagris* is this: the quarrel between the Thestiades and Meleager is the link, and the only one, between the Calydonian boar-hunt and the war between Pleuron and Calydon. But that link is not to be found in Homer. It seems improbable that Homer should have seen this link as a way to join the hunt and the war, and yet not have mentioned it. It follows that he inherited a story in which the join had already been made.

But whether we should call this composite an epic *Meleagris* is doubtful. Its subject matter apart from the hunt must have been very limited. It cannot have contained Cleopatra, for it must have told of Meleager's love for Atalanta, in order to motivate Artemis' wrath. And indeed a good many modern scholars agree that Cleopatra was Homer's invention. (See Schadewaldt [1938.140] with references. Willcock [1966.150-53] disagrees with Schadewaldt's reasoning but apparently accepts the conclusion.) Our composite probably did not contain the wrath of Meleager or the

curse of Althaea. (See Willcock [1966.153] with references.) If no wrath, then no withdrawal from battle, no appeal to return. Homer's story after the outbreak of the war is mostly free invention.

And it was almost certainly Homer and not his source that made Meleager into a great warrior.²⁸ For apart from his maternal uncles, he appears to have killed no one. Bacchylides pretends otherwise, *pollois syn allois*; but he names no names until he comes to the man who got away, Clymenus, son of Daipylos.²⁹ Apollodorus is even more ludicrously explicit. Before the wrath, Meleager kills "some of the children of Thestius," afterwards he can do no better than kill "the rest of the children of Thestius" (1.8.3). What other war hero has ever been so choosy in his victims? Certainly an epic *aristeia* of Meleager would have had to offer other conquests: if it did, why do we hear of none?

This brings us very near Schadewaldt's view, that Homer's source was a story very like Bacchylides'. (Schadewaldt 1938.139). Schadewaldt does not discuss Atalanta nor the quarrel with the Thestiades; our arguments have shown that these motifs were part of Homer's source and that Bacchylides must have omitted them. Which is very plausible, since each omission removes a blemish from Meleager's reputation and allows the poet to indulge all the pathos he seeks. Moreover, Bacchylides took over, from Homer and the post-Homeric epic, Meleager's prowess as a warrior. Now if Kakridis has reconstructed the original folk-tale correctly (Kakridis 1949.11-18), Homer's source must be an expanded version of it. The crime of Oeneus, the wrath of Artemis, the gathering of hunters from many cities, the love for Atalanta, the passing from quarrel to war, the killing of the Thestiades in battle: all these motifs have accrued to Kakridis' folk-story. It is likewise very probable that there were pre-Homeric versions reflecting *stages* of development, including one in which the killing of the matrikin took place right after the quarrel (as in the folk-tale and in Euripides) and was not transferred to the battlefield.³⁰

We have set out in detail the sequence of motifs in Homer's source (above, p. 158). The case that all the rest of Homer's account is his own invention, tailored to fit the *Iliad*, seems to us very powerful. We should emphasize, however, that though he invented motifs, Homer uses several traditional motifemes: the mother cursing her son; the wrath of the hero; the yielding to the wife. That Meleager was a great warrior is, in our opinion, also a Homeric invention. And an essential invention, of course, since Meleager must parallel Achilles. Critics who use the argument that Homer did not inherit what clearly suits the needs of the *Iliad* should use that argument here.

When the post-Homeric epic poets tried to bolster Homer's elevation of Meleager to warrior status, they seem to have found few, if any, victims for him. To add a fallen soldier, with a lineage, to an otherwise silent tradition, was presumably risky. They did what they could: "I could not be killed by might and spear," says Meleager in the *Peirithou Katabasis* (Fgmt. 280 M-W); "No one dared to abide his assault," adds the *Eoiai* (Fgmt. 25.9-10 M-W). To enhance his status, the Hesiodic poets had him killed by Apollo, and they were joined by the *Minyas* in the use of this artifice. Someone also hit on the stroke of letting him kill the rest of the Thestiades, for this is how Apollodorus gives the story (1.8.3); such ingenuity did not seriously challenge the tradition, which had established the idea that uncles — but only uncles — might legitimately fall to Meleager's sword.

It is not, however, the purpose of this appendix to explore such anomalies. There may after all have been pre-Homeric war poetry about Meleager, with names of victims now lost to us. It may be, too, that Homer inherited more material than we think. That does not alter the fact, essential to our analysis, that when Homer set to work on Phoenix' speech, he had before him the tale of the Calydonian Boar, a hunting story in which Meleager's matrikin were present to proclaim him acceptable as a man to his mother's family. And Meleager spun his own tragic destiny by falling in love with one of the hunters and giving her the spoils of the hunt as an emblem of his love.

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NOTES

* This paper had its origin in discussion between Nancy Rubin and her student, Marshall Dayan, to whom the authors wish to express their very great gratitude. It has benefited enormously from the detailed criticism of Lubomir Doležel.

¹ Doležel refers to Propp's "function variants": the motifeme (or "function") "Villain harms Hero" has as function variants "kidnapping, declaration of war, etc." Now for Doležel motifemes are invariant with respect to variable motifs, just as motifs are invariant with respect to variable motif-textures. The relationship invariant-variable is a critical criterion for establishing a system of levels. Hence if we retain Propp's "function variants" — and Doležel does not take a stand on this question — we need a fourth level precisely corresponding to our level of motif-types.

² A brief word on this use of the technical term from Peircean semiotics. Since the “final interpretant” is “the effect the sign *would* produce upon any mind upon which circumstances should permit it to work out its full effect” (Peirce 1966.413), it is logical to say that part of the final interpretant (or one of the final interpretants) of the *Meleager* plot is that hubris, violation of *kairos*, disturbance of *kosmos* during the initiatory hunt leads to tragedy, premature death. For this is the most obvious statement of the *meaning* of the plot. During the process of coming to grasp this final interpretant, we recognize that *kairos*, *kosmos* and hubris are replicated in the *Meleager* plot, as seen in its cultural context and as compared with *Odysseus*. The motif, “Meleager gives the spoils of the hunt to Atalanta,” is only fully understood, or interpreted, when we say, first, that Meleager’s expressing his *eros* for Atalanta by the gift is intrusive, and then, that such an intrusion is an instance of hubris. *Kosmos* and its congeners may be called, confusingly, “previous final interpretants” or, utilizing another passage of Peirce, “second (third, fourth) logical interpretants” (Peirce 1955.277 ff.). The meaning of the plot (hubris leads to tragedy) is an “ultimate logical interpretant” in the sense of “habit-change” (*idem*).

³ For our present purposes, we shall follow van Gennep’s threefold demarcation, since it is traditional, and is useful in that it parallels the divisions of Aristotle and Bremond. Ideally, however, it should be expanded: the three basic states — previous condition, transition or marginal state, and new condition — are separated by two *thresholds* Th₁ and Th₂. Each threshold may contain rites of separation from the preceding state and rites of incorporation into the succeeding state, exits and entrances. So there are really five stages, as van Gennep observes (p. 82): previous conditions; Th₁; margin; Th₂; new condition. If we line up these 5 stages with the traditional 3, we could include Th₁ as part of Beginning and Th₂ as part of End. Thus Initial State plus Th₁ would correspond to Aristotle’s Beginning, Bremond’s Possibility, and Th₂ plus new condition would correspond to End and Achievement/Non-achievement of Possibility.

The authors hope to work out the implications of this observation in future studies. This will involve the development of a stratification model for rituals such as initiation, comparable to that developed by Propp and his followers for narratives. Van Gennep has laid the groundwork for such a stratification model for rites of passage, since his categories, once refined, would correspond to the motifemic or *fabula* level of the narrative structuralists.

⁴ Or it can be a combination from among these three: a reversal, creating a sense of chaos, can be followed by a mimetic rite or a “metaphoric” rite, a ritual semantically related to the order of the adult world. Either of the latter might serve to restore order in preparation for re-entrance to society.

⁵ In note 3 above we have spoken of metaphoric rites of passage; and initiatory hunting in a society not economically dependent upon the hunt is one such. For a discussion sensitive to such metaphoric rites, see Vidal-Naquet 1982c.150-52.

⁶ On the initiatory hunt as a specification of the ordeal through which the novice had to pass, cf. Brelich 1969 (s.v. *caccia rituale*, esp. 77 and 175); he sees it as appropriate to a hunting society, whereas training in agriculture suits an agricultural society, and training in fishing a fishing society (77). Such mimesis, however, may be replaced by a “metaphoric” rite, semantically related to the adult order: hunting in a warrior society, for example (above, notes 4 and 5).

On the difference in function between this adult-like hunt and the “black hunt” of the *ephebe*, Vidal-Naquet (1981a.158-162) is not very clear: one cannot infer from his presentation which type of hunt is truly initiatory. It seems plausible that his “black hunt” is one

possible specification of reversal (above, p. 141 and note 2) whereas what he calls the "hunt of the adults" (61) and what we consider the initiatory hunt par excellence is a frequent specification of mimesis or metaphor. It is success at the latter hunt that culminates a novice's training for adulthood.

On the connection in Greek cult between hunting and homosexuality (an instance of reversal) see Jeanmaire 1939.450-55 for Crete, and Brelich 1969.198 f., with earlier references. For further discussions of hunting in antiquity, besides Vidal-Naquet see Detienne 1979.20-52, with earlier references.

⁷ Calame separates the closure of initiation from the rite of aggregation: "ce n'est plus Artémis ni Apollon qui en (of the latter rite) protègent le déroulement, mais Aphrodite . . . ou Héra" (250). This separation of rites is sound (see above, note 3); but Artemis' influence often extends to the doorsill of marriage: *A.P.* 6.276; Pollux 3.38; Euripides *I.A.* 1113-14. See also Nilsson 1941.464.

⁸ See Sale 1977.55. It is legitimate of course for the attendants of Artemis, nymphs of the woods, to remain lifelong in this marginal, liminal state — more developed than girls but not yet women. In myth they become sources of temptation for adolescents, who are also in that marginal state; to yield to their charms and seduce or rape them would affront Artemis on at least two counts: it would violate *their* natural state, which requires that they not cross the boundary into womanhood, and it would be akairctic sexual behavior from the point of view of the young violators. The nymphs test the strength of adolescent resistance. We may admire especially Odysseus' delicacy in refraining from seducing, raping or forming an alliance with Nausicaa in *Od.* 6.135-85. She and a cluster of nymph-like adolescent companions encounter Odysseus at the water's edge, in a liminal area; Odysseus marvels but does not act.

⁹ On boars and lions and the perils they offer hunters, see Schnapp-Gourbeillon 1981.48-50, Vermeule 1979 and Xenophon *Cyn.* 10.

¹⁰ For mutilation in initiation, see van Gennep 1960.71-74. In semiotic terms, the scar is an index of the wild beast, with whom it once was contiguous and of whom it is a trace. Hence this scar expresses an intimacy between the initiate and the beast whose tusk caused the wound.

For a presentation of Peirce's three basic sign-types, icon, index, symbol, see *Introduction* to this volume.

¹¹ The role of the matrikin in the initiatory hunt is critically important. The reasons may be social, political, economic, or all three. In matrilineal societies, property is often passed from maternal uncle to nephew; see Goody 1959.77-78 et passim. Portions of Greece in the Dark Ages must have been matrilineal (this implies nothing in regard to matriarchy!), or at least a combination of matrilineal and patrilineal (bilateral). Nepotal inheritance can be neatly explained in hunting societies, where female promiscuity is common, and the chance of a man's being related by blood to his wife's son may not be very high. If the probability is sufficiently low, he will regard himself as more closely related to his blood sister's son, who is certain to be a blood relation: see Hartung 1981.652-53. Hunting if used as a rite of passage in such societies, would be mimetic (above, page 141) and the maternal uncle might well be keenly enough interested in his nephew's passage to manhood to wish to be present at the ceremony, if not indeed to insist upon certifying its success. If hunting is no longer mimetic — if the economy has become agricultural-pastoral, as in the Greek Dark Ages — the presence of the uncle at the initiation could be traditional. Finally, certification by the matrikin would certainly cement the bond between matriline and patriline, and thus be politically

useful. Cf. Redfield's remark: "A Greek male could make his sons legitimate heirs to the patriline only by securing them recognized matrikin. . . . The system, formally patrilinear, was latently bilateral" (1982.184-85).

- ¹² An extended discussion of signs in the text of the *Odyssey* will be found in a forthcoming paper by Nancy Rubin, from which the following analysis of the clasp and the marriage bed is drawn.
- ¹³ At this point physical puberty and rite of passage to adulthood — i.e., social puberty — coincide. This does not always happen; see van Gennep 1960.65-74. In this regard the aorist participle ἠβήσας must be very carefully translated. The idea of prior time — frequently but by no means invariably expressed by this participle in Homer — should in this case be brought out: "having reached the age of physical puberty." But so too should the idea of punctuality: "upon the moment of reaching physical puberty." For Autolycus certainly does not mean that any time after puberty will do.
- ¹⁴ On the distinction between the exit from the margin (Odysseus leaves Autolycus) and the entrance to the adult state (Odysseus rejoins his mother and father) see note 3 above.
- ¹⁵ In connection with Autolycus as "wolf-man" and Odysseus, see Burkert 1972.148-52; and on the role of wolves in initiation, 97-152.
- ¹⁶ The authors follow the commonest translation. R. Prier (1980.178-80) has recently suggested that the hound is not "gripping" but "gazing at" the fawn (the verb is the disputed λάω). This would appear to suit very nicely the interpretation of the clasp's amorous connotations, to be discussed shortly; and Prier's arguments are attractive. If our views based on the traditional translation are persuasive, they will be even more so if based on Prier's.
- ¹⁷ For ancient references to hunting as a sexual metaphor, see Plato *Symp.* 203 D and *Soph.* 222 D and E; for a discussion of the language of pursuit in homosexual contexts, see Dover 1977.87-88.
- ^{17a} We take ὀδυσσάμενος passively in *Od.* 19.407, though elsewhere it means "hate; be wroth against." In this passage, where the play on words with Ὀδυσσεύς is all-important, such liberties are perfectly acceptable. Autolycus has no evident reason to hate but good reason to be "hated by many" since he is a thief (19.396). And Odysseus, named after this quality (*Od.* 19.409), is not a hating person; but he *is* long-suffering, the persecuted or hated one (*Od.* 1.62 and *LSJ* s.v. ὀδύσσομαι).
- ¹⁸ To the usual enumeration of actants (see p. 138 and Doležel 1972.63) we add "the certifiers."
- ¹⁹ Jacques Peron (1978.318 n. 29) makes a different threefold division: the *Iliad*, in which Meleager is cursed but does not die; later epic, in which he is cursed and Apollo kills him; the tradition of the firebrand, which Peron traces no further back than Stesichorus' *Southerai*. But the *Iliad* makes it pretty clear that Meleager is going to die (9.570-71, where Althaea prays for death for Meleager, not merely dishonor, and the Fury hears her). Worse than this, to write a footnote on "l'évolution du mythe de Méléagre" and make no mention of Kakridis, Schadewaldt or even van der Kolf in RE seems very offhand. And why should we begin the evolution of the myth with Homer, as if he had no forerunners? It is not as if Peron were talking strictly about an evolution within the surviving texts, since the text of Stesichorus' *Southerai* has perished.
- ²⁰ Not that the Calydonian boar hunt is set in a society whose economy was primarily hunting. Calydon was agricultural to a considerable extent; the boar ravages cultivated land (*Iliad* 540), apparently orchards (541-42), and the θαλύσια γουνοῦ ἀλωῆς (534) probably implies agriculture. Of course hunting for food may well have gone on in southern Aetolia,

which was predominantly mountainous and heavily forested. Still, the real economic importance of hunting to Calydon is given by the passages just cited from the *Iliad* — preservation of the crops from destructive animals. On the economy of Greece generally in the Dark Ages, see Snodgrass 1971.378-80.

- ²¹ Other scholars have, of course, felt that this account is abbreviated (see Willcock 1966.149 and n. 1). Willcock does not wholly agree with the scholars he refers to; and they do not use the same arguments as we do.
- ²² It is an astonishing fact that Apollonius Rhodius knew that when Meleager sailed on the Argo, he had not yet entered manhood (1.194.98). If the learned Librarian of Alexandria had before him the text which we are here reconstructing, he may have recognized in it the indices of initiation that we recognize (above, pp. 143-46), and have realized that earlier, on board the Argo, Meleager must have been still a boy.
- ²³ A remark of Strabo's helps to confirm this. He speaks explicitly of warfare "befalling the Thestiades against Oeneus and Meleager" (10.3.6). He seems to be conceiving of a personal quarrel between members of royal houses as a cause of the more general conflict. Of course he may have reasoned as we have just done, that the only Curetes involved in the hunt which caused the war were the Thestiades; but he may have had access to pre-Homeric tradition, for he writes in this section as if he is sifting among accounts. Note that while Homer may have spoken of one brother of Althaea (see Leaf 1900 on *Iliad* 9.567) his source probably had more than one: on this point the tradition is virtually unanimous.
- ²⁴ For these facts on the temple and statue see Frazer's notes on Paus. 8.45.6 and 8.46.1.
- ²⁵ Scopas, he thought, was following "die seinerzeit herrschenden epischen aber nicht arkadischen Traditionen von der kalydonischen Jagd" (Heracles II, 63). It was a relief to discover that by 1925 he had abandoned this perverse view: "die Françoisvase führt Atalante und Melanion verbunden und den Tegeaten Ankaios ein. Damals wird man also wie später den Eberzahn im Tempel der Athena Alea dem kalydonischen Eber zu schreiben haben" (Wilamowitz 1925.219). What Wilamowitz continued to overlook is that the tusk of the Calydonian boar in Tegea presupposes Meleager's love for Atalanta: Wilamowitz wants Euripides to have invented this (Wilamowitz 1925.217).
- ²⁶ The only alternative to this sequence of development is most unattractive, viz., that sometime in the seventh century the Arcadians themselves reshaped the Aetolian and Homeric stories, adding Ancaeus, Milanion, Atalanta and Meleager's love for her. Unattractive first, because the intimate connection between the maturation hunt and the inappropriate courtship is now lost: the Aetolians supply the matrikin to supervise the initiation, the Arcadians supply the reason why the initiation was marred. Unattractive too, because the general tendency for tragic hunters to commit sexual offenses becomes sheer historical accident in Meleager's case. Further unattractive because we now have to suppose that the Arcadians challenged both Homer and the Aetolians so as to reshape Meleager's destiny: Homer is wrong, there was no Cleopatra; the Aetolians are wrong about whatever they thought the reason for the quarrel was. Unattractive because we now have no good reason for the quarrel in the Aetolian version. Unattractive, above all, because we now cannot explain the Homeric text: its obvious abbreviations and omissions, the now inexplicable anger of Artemis at Meleager.
- ²⁷ This story — the tale of the Calydonian Boar, with Meleager and Atalanta prominent in it — was first told in Aetolia, though the cadre, the motifemic sequence, may have occurred earlier elsewhere. We say this because Meleager is a local figure, unlike, say, Heracles, who belongs to several locales (cf. Sale 1965.15). When we say that hunting as a rite of

passage was appropriate to Calydon, in no sense does that imply that it was not appropriate elsewhere. But it makes good sense for the cadre to show up here. Seated between the small coastal plain and the mountains which make up most of Aetolia, Calydon could well have depended for survival on its forests as well as on its farmlands. And if these mountain forests did not offer food, they certainly offered refuge to animals who *threatened* the food supply. Our very tale itself tells us this much. See above, note 20.

- ²⁸ The speaking name *Meleagros* announces him as a hunter, as a tragic hunter indeed, not a warrior. See Euripides fgmt. 521: Μελέαγρε, μελέαν γάρ ποτ' ἀγρεύεις ἄγραν.
- ²⁹ The passage of Bacchylides 5.144-151 can be interpreted to mean "I was in the act of killing Clymenus, having met him in front of the towers, when life faded," or to mean "I was in the act of stripping Clymenus, having come across his corpse in front of the towers." The first is more attractive; but neither one has Meleager actually perform the slaying.
- ³⁰ The most recent discussion of the early history of the Meleager legend is Petzold 1976. It has a different perspective from ours, the development of historical consciousness. As such it is fascinating and persuasive. But its particular arguments as to what is Homeric and what earlier are uneven: his critique of Kakridis (156-161) succeeds; he correctly sees that Homer has omitted much from the telling of the hunt (161); he perversely adopts, without independent investigation, the opinion that Atalanta was a post-Homeric addition (148).

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