

CHAPTER III
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF
CHRISTINE MANNON AND CLYTEMNESTRA

Christine Mannon is a major character in *Mourning Becomes Electra* and so is Clytemnestra in *Oresteia*. Both of them are dynamic characters since they are modified by actions and experiences that make them undergo a lot of changes. Christine Mannon first appears as a woman who has self confident. She plans the murder of her husband with a belief that after the death of Ezra she can live happily with Adam. But after the murder, she begins to lose her confident and finally she commits suicide for she lost Adam. Clytemnestra first appears as a powerful woman that can arrange the murder of her husband deliberately. She begins to lose her power and confident when she has a nightmare and finally she begs Orestes not to kill her, but Orestes still kills her. Furthermore, they are also called round characters because they are fully described that they can be recognizable and understandable, and they are individually different from other characters in the same works. Christine Mannon and Clytemnestra are described through a number of methods of characterization that the audience can understand their characterization, such as from their actions, speech, environment, etc. Both

Christine Mannon and Clytemnestra are different from the other characters . Nobody in *Mourning Becomes Electra* has Christine's characteristics and so does in *Oresteia* has Clytemnestra's characteristics .

3.1 Christine Mannon as a Wife and a Mother

Christine Mannon is a wife of Ezra Mannon, a general of the army . Christine and Ezra have two children, Lavinia and Orin Mannon . Christine is a tall striking-looking woman of forty but she looks younger . She has a good and voluptuous figure and thick curly hair, which is partly copper brown and partly a bronze gold . Her face is unusual, handsome rather than beautiful . There is a strange impression in her face that looks a life-like mask, but her deep set eyes, of a dark violet blue, are alive . She has got black eyebrows, strong nose, heavy chin, and a large and sensual mouth . Actually she is not like the other Mannons, who are cold, but however she has the Mannon look, that is the life-like mask she has got after being a Mannon for more than twenty years .

First Christine loved Ezra, it was before their marriage . At that time Ezra was a handsome and romantic lieutenant . But their wedding night and honeymoon were like hell . Ezra was cold and his romance turned into disgust . Christine was very dissapointed and soon her

love turned into hatred . Since the wedding night, she hated him . As a wife, she just gave him her body, not her love .

Christine : I loved you when I married you! I wanted to give myself! But you made me so I couldn't give! You filled me with disgust!

(Homecoming, p.746)

Christine never does her duty as a wife willingly . She feels that she has been used by her husband . She does not give any response to her husband who is always cold and it seems impossible to break his mask . Ezra knows that she has forced herself to give her body to him and he feels like a beast when he makes love with her . Even he will feel better if he does it with a prostitute than doing it with his wife .

Mannon : You let me take you as if you were a nigger slave I'd bought at auction! You made me appear a lustful beast in my own eyes!-as you've always done since our first marriage night! I would feel cleaner now if I had gone to a brothel! I would feel more honour between myself and life .

(Homecoming, p.745)

The relationship of Ezra and Christine as husband and wife never goes smoothly . They could not communicate well for Ezra is cold and stiff, and as a Mannon, he always hides behind his mask . While, Christine herself never tries to get closer to him .

Mannon : Then all the years we've been man and wife would rise up in my mind and I would try to look at them . But nothing was clear except that there'd always been some barrier between us—a wall hiding us from each other!

(Homecoming, p.739)

Since the beginning of their marriage, they felt dissatisfied to each other . Christine is dissatisfied for Ezra is not as romantic as she thought before, but he is so cold, so she feels humiliated when she makes love with him .

Christine : You've called me vile and shameless!
I want you to know that's what I've felt about myself for over twenty years, giving my body to a man I-

(Homecoming, p.714)

Ezra himself, who does not realize that he is the cause of his wife's hatred, is dissatisfied for his wife never loves and gives response to him .

Mannon : It has always been hard for me to talk about feelings . I never could when you looked at me . Your eyes were always so-so full of silence! That is, since we've married . Not before, when I was courting you . They used to speak then ...

(Homecoming, p.738)

The situation is getting worse when both Christine and Ezra look for their own way . Ezra turns his love to his daughter, Lavinia, but then he realizes that a daughter is not the same as a wife . He knows that Christine does not love him anymore, so he wants to get rid of her by doing

many jobs and going to the wars .

Mannon : I turned to Vinnie, but a daughter's not a wife . Then I made up my mind . I'd do my work in the world and leave you alone in your life and not care . That's why the shipping wasn't enough - why I became a judge and mayor and such vain truck, and why folks intown look on me as so able! Ha! Able for what? Not for what I wanted most in life! Not for your love! Able only to keep my mind from thinking of what I'd lost!

(Homecoming, p.739)

Ezra still loves Christine . He feels sorry what he did to her in the past . The war has changed him and now he wants to love . He removes his mask and unveils his feeling, things that he has never done before, to get back Christine's love . He wants to make up their sick marriage .

Mannon (Suddenly he reaches over and takes her hand)
I want to find what that wall is marriage put between us! You've got to help me smash it down! we have twenty good years still before us! I've been thinking what we could do to get back to each other . I've a notion if we'd leave the children and go off on s voyage together-to the other side of the world-find some island where we could be alone a while . You'll find I've changed Christine . I'm sick of death! I want life! Maybe you could love me now . I've got to make you love me .

(Homecoming, p.740)

When Ezra thinks that their marriage is worthy to be saved, Christine feels that it is too late to be cured . It can be seen from their feeling about their twenty year marriage . For Christine the years were like a nightmare,

but Ezra said they were good years . Christine can not love her husband anymore . All she feels about him is hatred . Moreover, she has got Adam, whom she loves very much .

As a wife, Christine is unfaithful . She has a love affair with Adam Brant, Ezra's nephew . Brant came to the town to take revenge to Ezra but then he fell in love with Christine . At the same time, Christine missed Orin, who was sent to the Civil War . She was longing for love, so Adam just came at the right time . They fell in love to each other and become lovers .

Christine is not an honest wife . She does not doubt to lie to keep her relation with Adam safe . She lies that Adam is Lavinia's boyfriend, though actually he is hers .

Christine (with an easy smile) you had better ask Vinnie! He's her latest bean! She event went walking in the moonlight with him!

(Homecoming, p.734)

Christine is a tricky wife and mother she prepares everything carefully to murder her husband . She plans every step of the murder minutely that no one is suspicious, except her daughter, Lavinia . But Lavinia herself does not have enough proof to accuse her mother, that Orin, her brother, does not believe her easily . It is clear that Christine kills Ezra with a trick .

Orin (in anguish) You lie, damn you! (Threateningly)

You dare say that about Mother! Now you've got to prove it or else-! You've not insane! You know what you're saying! So you prove it - or by God, I'll -- !

(The Hunted, p.785)

To get Orin's trust, Christine tells him that Lavinia will lie about Adam and Ezra's death, she even accuses Lavinia out of mind .

Lavinia . No! (Bitterly) Has she succeeded in convincing you I'm out of my mind ? Oh, Orin, how can you be so stupid ?

(The Hunted, p.782)

She is both a wicked wife and mother . She does not mind to hurt her husband and her daughter's feeling . She even plans and does the murder of her husband by herself .

She is also hypocritical, both as a wife and a mother . She pretends to love and care about her husband, although in fact she hates him and prays him death in the war . She tells Lavinia that she would take care of Ezra if she had the chance . She is not sincere in telling that since she just wants to avoid Lavinia's suspicion that she is the murder of Ezra . She also tells Orin how she loves and misses him when he was at the Civil War . Actually she only loves and cares about her lover, Adam .

Lavinia : So that's what she told you! As if I could mistake Lamar for Adam Brant! What a fool you are, Orin! She kisses you and pretends she loves you - when she'd forgotten you

were ever alive, when all she's thought of is this low lover of hers - !

(The Hunted, p.785)

Christine does not raise her children well . She does not love and care about her daughter, Lavinia, since she just reminds her to her hatred to Ezra . Where as she loves Orin, her son, very much for she finds out that Orin can fulfill her need of love . As the result of her attitude toward her children, they do not grow well . Lavinia grows up as a daughter who is always jealous to her mother, where as Orin grows up as a restless and immature one . It is obvious that Christine is not a wise mother . She ruins her son and her daughter's life .

Christine is also a selfish wife and mother . All she cares about is herself . She wants to be happy and free without thinking a bit about her husband and her children . She does not care whether her family is happy or not, she just cares about her own happiness .

3.2 Clytemnestra as a Wife and a Mother

Clytemnestra is the daughter of Tyndareus . She married King Agamemnon of Argos and has got three children, Iphigenia, Orestes, and Electra . King Agamemnon has left Argos for ten years since he leads the Greek armies to Troy to get Helen, the wife of his brother, back . During Agamemnon's absence, Clytemnestra becomes

the ruler of Argos .

Clytemnestra has got a secret lover named Aegisthus . He is the son of Thyestes who wants to take revenge to Agamemnon for what Atreus, Agamemnon's father, did to his father . Both of them share the same hatred for Agamemnon and begin to conspire to kill him . And they do not only conspire but also become lovers .

It is clear that Clytemnestra is not a faithful wife, she is an adulteress . Although she has a husband, she makes love with Aegisthus . She even does not doubt to compare her husband to Aegisthus . She accuses her husband as an adulterer, but she praises that Aegisthus is loyal to her .

Clytemnestra : By the avenging Doom and Fiend whom I
killed this man .
For me hope walks not in the room of
fear .
So long as my fire is lit upon my
hearth .
By Aegisthus, loyal to me as he was
before .
The man who outraged me lies here .
The darling of each courtesan at Troy,
And here with him is the prisoner
clairvoyante,
The fortune-teller that he took to
bed,
Who shared his bed as once his bench
on shipboard, A loyal mistress . Both
have their deserts .

(Agamemnon, p.71)

Clytemnestra is wicked, she does not have a pity at all . She plans and does the murder of her husband by

herself . She displays the dead bodies of her husband and Cassandra and considers that their death as an appetiser to her own bed's pleasure .

Clytemnestra : He lies so, and she who like a swan
Sang her last dying lament
Lies his lover, and the sight
contributes
An appetiser to my own bed's pleasure

(Agamemnon, p.71)

As a wife, she does not love and respect her husband . She hates him and her respect to him just shows her hypocrisy . She does not give a proper burial for him, who is a great king and hero .

Clytemnestra : By my hand he fell low, lies low and
dead,
And I shall bury him low down in the
earth
And his household need not weep him

(Agamemnon, p.73)

Clytemnestra does not doubt to declare her love to Aegisthus in front of the elders . Her adultery is not covered at all, everybody knows it, including her children, Orestes and Electra . Her children are very disappointed and angry knowing their mother killed their father and has a lover . Both of them then plot to kill Clytemnestra and her lover and Orestes does not feel sorry for murdering his mother .

Clytemnestra is hypocritical . It can be seen either in her roles as a wife and a mother . She shows what a

good and dutiful wife she is in front of the elders and her husband, though she hates and wants to kill her husband .

Clytemnestra : ... Tell this to my husband
 To come with all speed, the city's
 darling;
 May he returning find a wife as loyal
 As when he left her, watchdog of the
 house,
 Good to him but fierce to the ill-
 intentioned,
 And in all other things as ever,
 having destroyed
 No seal or pledge at all in the length
 of time
 I know no pleasure with another man,
 no scandal,
 More than I know how to dye metal red
 Such is my boast, bearing a load of
 truth,
 A boast that need not disgrace a noble
 wife .

(Agamemnon, p.55)

As a mother, she is not less hypocritical . She pretends that she is a good mother who loves her children and worries about their lives . In fact she does not care about them . She is not even sad when she is told that Orestes is dead .

Clytemnestra is a very wicked woman . She is compared to a poisonous animal . She is not considered as a human being by her son . Orestes hates her and recalls her not as a mother but a killer of his father . Furthermore, in Electra's opinion, she is a murderess and a wicked mother who has no pity .

Electra : Hers they could never be, the murderess,
 My mother too, though now unmotherly
 In spirit to her children, impions!

(Choephoroe, p.49)

Clytemnestra is not an honest one . She lies to get people's sympathy and smoothen her plan to murder her husband . She tells her husband and other people that she lived in sorrow when Agamemnon was at the Trojan War .It is so easy for her to tell lies . The words are very fluent and Agamemnon trusts her .

She is a tricky wife and mother . She plans the murder of Agamemnon minutely that nothing is missing from her consideration . She makes Agamemnon trust her and then she stabs him since Agamemnon is not ready for the attack .

The relationship between Orestes and Clytemnestra as a son and a mother is described in Clytemnestra's nightmare . She dreams that Orestes, her son, turns to snake and kills her .

Orestes : Since, issuing from whence I saw the light
 The serpent-child was wrapt in Swaddling-
 clothes
 And since it mouthed the breast that nour-
 ished me,
 With kindly milk mingling a curd of blood
 Whereas she cried in terror,
 It must be that,
 Even as she gave that monster life,

So, she must die a violent death, and I,
The dragon of her dream, shall murder her

(Choephoroe, p.52)

Although Clytemnestra has died, she still lives on as a cause of pollution, even more threateningly than before . She sends the furies to chase Orestes, to hunt and torture him . Her death does not stop her from being a wicked one .

In the tribunal of Athene, Clytemnestra is not considered as the parent of her children . According to Apollo, a mother is not a progenitor of a child . So, Orestes can not be accused as the one who has spilled the blood of his parent .

3.3 The Similarities and the Dissimilarities of Christine Mannon and Clytemnestra

It has been said that Christine Mannon adopts some parts of Clytemnestra's characterization since *Mourning Becomes Electra* is written based on *Oresteia* . Christine is in the same condition with Clytemnestra . Both of them are left by their husbands to the war . Christine's husband, Ezra Mannon, a general of the army, goes to the Civil war. During his absence, Christine falls in love with Adam Brant and has a love affair with him . She often meets him in New York under the reason that she wants to visit her sick father . Adam himself first went to New

England to take revenge to Ezra, since Ezra had neglected his mother till her death . There he meets Christine and loves her . Then Adam helps Christine to kill Ezra by buying some poisons out of town . Agamemnon has left Clytemnestra for 10 years . He goes to the Trojan War with his brother, Menelaus . During his leave, Clytemnestra rules the country with her lover named Aegisthus . Actually Aegisthus comes to Argos to take revenge to Agamemnon, but then he falls in love with Clytemnestra and so does Clytemnestra . Moreover, at that time Clytemnestra hates Agamemnon since Agamemnon killed Iphigenia as a sacrifice to the god and Agamemnon has other lovers in Troy . Then both of them plot to murder Agamemnon .

Both Christine and Clytemnestra are not faithful wives . They have lovers although they are married . But they do not feel guilty for their adultery .Christine says that she deserves to live happily and she is happy when she is with Adam . Christine does not care that she has betrayed her husband since she does not love him anymore .

Christine : Very well! I love Adam Brant . What are you going to do ?

Lavinia : How you say that—without any shame! you don't give one thought to father - who is so good - who trusts you! Oh, how could you do this to father ? How could you ?

Christine (with strident intensity) you would understand if you were the wife of a man you hated!

(Homecoming, p.713)

Clytemnestra, who does not feel guilty for what she has done, even blames her husband for having lovers in Troy and she kills Cassandra, Agamemnon's lover, for the same reason. She and her husband actually share the same mistake, that are being adulterers, but she does not think that she is as guilty as her husband. She announces her love to her lover before the dead bodies of Agamemnon and Cassandra and at the same time blames Agamemnon. Actually Clytemnestra's jealousy to her husband is one of the reasons why she kills him.

Clytemnestra : By the avenging Doom and Fiend to whom
 For me hope walks not in the room of
 fear
 So long as my fire is lit upon my
 hearth
 By Aegisthus, loyal to me as he was
 before.
 The man who outraged me lies here,
 The darling of each courtesan at Troy,
 And here with him is the prisoner
 clairvoyante,
 The fortune-teller that he took to
 bed,
 Who shares his bed as once his bench
 on shipboard,
 A loyal mistress
 Both have their desert.

(Agamemnon, p.71)

Christine and Clytemnestra do not love and respect their husband. Christine hates Ezra, but she loves Adam very much. She wants to see Adam as often as she can and declares to commit suicide if Adam dies, on the other hand

she avoids to see Ezra and pray him dead in the war .

Christine : Seeing you in New York should have been enough for me . But I loved you too much. I wanted you every possible moment we could steal! And I simply couldn't believe that he ever would come home . I prayed that he should be killed so intensely that I finally believed it would surely happend (with savage intensity) oh, if he were only dead!

(Homecoming,p.721)

Adam : If ever I laid hands on him, I'd kill him!
Christine : And then? You would be hanged for murder! And where would I be ? There would be nothing left for me but to kill myself!

(Homecoming,p.721)

Christine : I don't want to talk! I prefer the dark
Mannon : I want to see you . You like the dark where you can't see your old man of a husband, is that it ?

(Homecoming,p.744)

Clytemnestra also loves her lover very much . Her lover to Aegisthus can be seen from her willingness to share the throne with them . if she wants to kick him out, it is easy for her, because she is clever and powerful . On the other hand, Aegisthus is less clever and weaker than her . Usually it is the man who takes revenge, in this case it should be Aegisthus who kills Agamemnon, but since he is a coward, he lets Clytemnestra do the murders . Even it is said that he is like a cock beside his hen (Agamemnon,p.76)

Leader : Indeed! So you are now to be the king of

Argos,
 You who, when you had plotted the king's
 death,
 Did not even dare to do that thing yourself!

(Agamemnon,p.75)

Actually Clytemnestra is the one who controls the plot of the murder and does the murders by herself .

Aegisthus : No For the trick of it was clearly
 woman's work

Leader : Why with you cowardly soul did you your-
 self
 Not strike this man but left that work to
 a woman whose presence polluter our
 country and its gods ?

(Agamemnon,p.75)

Yet Clytemnestra hates Agamemnon and does not respect him as her husband . As a king, actually Agamemnon deserves to have a great burial ritual, but Clytemnestra does not do it and she humiliates his dead body before the elders . She also refuses to be recalled as his wife .

Chorus : And who above this godlike hero's grave
 pouring praises and tears
 Will grieve with a genuine heart ?

Clytemnestra : It is not your business to attend to
 that
 By my hand he fell low, lies low and
 dead,
 And I shall bury him low down in the
 earth,
 And his house hold need not weep him .

(Agamemnon,p.73)

Clytemnestra : Do not cozen yourself that I am
 Agamemnon's wife .
 Masquerading as the wife
 Of the corpse there the old sharp-
 witted genius

Has paid with a grown man's life
The due for children dead .

(Agamemnon, p.72)

Christine and Clytemnestra's adulteries are known by their children and it makes them hate their mothers . Lavinia, Christine's daughter, is the first one who is suspicious that Christine has a lover . She does not believe that Christine's visit to New York just to see her grand father . And finally she finds out that actually Christine sees Adam in New York . Lavinia is very dissapointed knowing that her mother has betrayed her father .

Lavinia : You don't give one thought to Father-who is so good-who trust you! Oh, how could you do this to Father ? How could you ?

(Homecoming, p.713)

Orin, Christine's beloved son, is mad when he overhears Christine's conversation with Adam . He then kills Adam for he is jealous to him .

Orin : I heard her asking him to kiss her! I heard her warn him againts me! And my island I told her about-which was she and I-she wants to go there-with him! (Then furiously) Damn you! Why did you stop me ? I'd have shot his guts out in front of her!

(The hunted, p.801)

Whereas Clytemnestra's adultery is known by everyone in the country, including Orestes who is in Phocis . Orestes realizes that Aegisthus has replaced his father both on

the throne and in his mother's heart . Orestes can not forgive both his mother and lover for their adultery and crime in killing Agamemnon .

Orestes : Come with me - I mean to kill you by his side.

While he lived, you preferred him to my father; So sleep in death beside him, since you loved him, and hated whom you should have loved .

(Choephoroe, p.63)

Both Christine and Clytemnestra are hypocritical, either in their roles as wives and mothers . She pretends to love and care about her husband, although inside she hates him very much, betrays him, prays him dead in the war, and plans to kill him . She does it all to cover her real intention, to murder him . She tells him how she worries about him when he was at the war and she lives under the stress for it . The fact is she does not care about him even she expects him get killed in the war so she can marry Adam and get the inheritance .

Christine : I prayed that he should be killed in the war so intensely that I finally believed it would surely happen! (with savage intensity) Oh, if he were only dead!

(Homecoming, p.721)

Christine : If he had only been killed, we could be married now and I would bring you my share of the Mannon estate .

(Homecoming, p.722)

Christine (staring at him) You don't look well . But

probably that's because you're so tired .
You must go to bed soon, Ezra .

(Homecoming, p.733)

Christine : You can't realize what a strain . I've
been underworrying about Father and Orin
and you .

(Homecoming, p.736)

But however, she can not hide her real feeling from her
husband . He can feel her hypocrisy, that she only
pretends loving him, while actually she waits for his
death .

Christine : What would I be waiting for ?
Mannon : For death - to set you free!

(Homecoming, p.745)

Mannon : You were lying to me tonight as you've
always lied! you were only pretending love!

(Homecoming, p.745)

Her hypocrisy also can be seen in her relation with
her children . She tells Lavinia how she had been a good
wife for her father and she would be if Ezra was alive .
The truth is she would never love him again and when he
was alive she would find a way to leave him .

Christine : I had been a good wife for twenty-three
I admit . But I repented and put him out
of my life . I would have been a good
wife again as long as your father had
lived .

(The Hunted, p.763)

She tells Orin how lonely she was when he was at the war .

The fact is she is not, for there is Adam, who replaces Orin in her heart . So, she does not have much time to think about Orin .

Christine : If you knew how lonely I've been without you-

Orin : So lonely you've written me exactly two letters in the last six months!

Christine : But I wrote you much more! They must have been lost-

Orin : I received all of Hazel's letters-and vinnie's It's a darned funny yours should be the only ones to get lost!

(The Hunted,p.770)

Lavinia : What a fool you are, Orin! She kisses you and pretends she loves you - when she'd forgotten you were ever alive, when all she's thought of is this low lover of hers-!

(The Hunted,p.785)

Clytemnestra is not less hypocritical than Christine . She shows what a good and dutiful wife she is in front of the sider and her husband, though she hates her husband very much . When she talks about her husband she shows how she loves him and never betrays him . In the same time she has a secret lover and plans to kill him .

Clytemnestra : ... Tell this to my husband
 May he returning find a wife as loyal
 As when left her, watchdog of the
 house,
 Good to him but fierce to the ill-
 intentioned,
 And in all other things as ever ,
 having destroyed
 No seal or pledge at all in the length

of time
 I know no pleasure with another man,
 no scandal,
 More than I know how to dye metal red
 Such is my boast, bearing a load of
 truth,
 A boast that need not disgrace a noble
 wife .

(Agamemnon,p.55)

She is not even ashamed to call herself a noble wife . She does not doubt to announce her love to her husband . She tells him how difficult it is to be a wife whose husband is at the war and that she lived in sorrow . It is so easy for her to tell lies . The words are so fluent and her husband trusts her .

Clytemnestra : Men of the City, you the aged of you
 my love
 Towards my husband . Shyness in all of
 us
 Wears thin with time . Here are the
 facts first hand .
 I will tell you of my own unbearable
 life
 I led so long as this man was at Troy.

(Agamemnon,p.55)

To conceal her wicked plan, she asks Agamemnon to walk on a luxurious crimson tapestry that is spread on the ground. Agamemnon refuses it for such excessive splendour thing only fits for the gods . But Clytemnestra does not easily give up . She gives her arguement and finally Agamemnon agrees to do what she wants . People will think that she loves her husband very much and wants to honour him, but

actually it is only a part of her scenario to kill him . Agamemnon, who does not realize her true intention, walks on the tapestry and gets closer to his death .

As a mother, she is not less hypocritical . She pretends that she is a good mother who loves her children and worries about their lives . She tells Agamemnon that she sent Orestes to Phocis for she was afraid that the child would be killed . But, in fact, she worried that Orestes might interrupt her plot to kill Agamemnon . Orestes realizes it accuses her for casting him off, but she does not admit it .

Clytemnestra : Have you no dread, my child, of a mother's curse?

Orestes : Your child indeed, until you cast me out

Clytemnestra : No, not cast out-I sent you away to friends.

Orestes : Yes, the son of a royal father, foully sold

(Choephoroe,p.63)

Her true feeling to Orestes can be seen from her reaction when she hears the news that Orestes died . In front of the others, she looks sad and drops a few crocodile tears, but in fact, she is happy . The nurse who was close to Orestes can feel her hypocrisy . She, having seen Clytemnestra go into the house, can reveal the mother's real feeling .

Nurse : Before the servants she assumes a set

There lurks a smile for what has come to pass

(Choephoroe,p.58)

Contrarily, the nurse really feels sorrow, for her the news is the worst thing that has ever happened to her, because she really loves and cares about Orestes . She is the one who took care Orestes since he was a baby and even she breast-fed him until he was weaned . So, in practise the nurse is the real mother for Orestes .

Nurse : ...Oh my heavy grief,
borne
Within these walls of Atreus, and yet none,
No sorrow so insufferable as this!
All else I bore with patiently, but now
My dear Orestes, my life's long loving care,
Entrusted from his mother's arms to mine,
Breaking my sleep with many summon shrill,
with daily troubles multiplied in vain;

(Choephoroe,p.58)

The sadness of the nurse represents her genuine love to Orestes and it sharpens the hypocrisy of Clytemnestra . As a mother, Clytemnestra should love her children, but she does not . Her hypocrisy is obvious, she keeps telling that she is a good mother . When Orestes wants to kill her as the revenge of his father, she reminds him how she breast fed him and grew him up . She is not ashamed to admit things that she never did .

Clytemnestra : O stay, my son! Dear child, have pity
This bosom where in slumber long ago
Your toothless gums drew in the milk
of life .

(Choephoroe,p.63)

Christine and Clytemnestra are tricky wives and

mothers . Both of them are clever . Christine prepares everything carefully to murder her husband . She reads book about medicine and finds out that there is a poison that can kill through the symptoms of heart failure . She issue the gossip that Ezra has got a terrible heart trouble, so his death will not be suspected as a murder . She asks Adam to buy the poison . She, on purpose, raises Ezra's anger by telling him the detail about Brant, that he is the son of Marie Brantome and he is kind and gentle to her and she loves Brant . Knowing this, Ezra has a heart attack and calls for his medicine . But instead of taking his medicine . Christine gives him the poison that finally murders him .

She is also a tricky mother . She tells Orin that Lavinia will make up a lie about Brant and the death of Ezra . She uses Orin's love and affection to trust her . She is not ashamed doing such a thing, she even influences Orin that Lavinia has been crazy .

Christine : I told you she'd gone crazy! She even followed me to New York, when I went to see your sick grand father, to spy on me . She saw me meet a man - and immediately to her crazy brain the man was Brant . Oh, it's too revolting, Orin! You don't what I've had to put up with from Vinnie, or you'd pity me!

(The Hunted, p.775)

Clytemnestra has prepared the murder long before the

coming of Agamemnon . She plans it minutely . She prepares a watchman on the roof of the palace, so she will know soon if her husband comes and she can get ready everything that is needed to kill him . She prepares a warm welcome and she succeeds in hiding her real plan . Nobody is suspicious . People think that she really wants to honour and welcome him . Agamemnon is not suspicious, too . He considers his wife as a good one who loves and respects him . He trusts her and does her order . But unconsciously he is walking to his death . He is murdered easily by his wife . It is undoubtable that Clytemnestra kills her husband with a trick .

Aegisthus : For the trick of it was clearly woman's work .

(Agamemnon, p.75)

Either Christine or Clytemnestra are wicked . As a wife, Christine plans the murder of her husband by herself and she is also the murderer . She has no pity for him and she can not forgive him although he has realized his fault and promised to change .

Mannon : And I hoped my homecoming would mark a new beginning - new love between us! I told you my secret feelings . I tore my insides out for you - thinking you'd understand! By God, I'm an old fool!

Christine : Did you think you could make me weak - make me forget all the years? Oh, no, Ezra! It's too late!

(Homecoming, p.746)

And when her husband needs a medicine, she gives him the poison instead . As a mother, she has the heart to neglect her own daughter since she was a baby . She also does not doubt to hurt Lavinia's feeling . She asks Adam to "blind" Lavinia, by pretending that he loves her, so their adultery will not be suspected .

Lavinia : How can you be so vile as to try to use
me
to hide your adultery ?

(Homecoming, p.713)

Clytemnestra's wickedness can be seen from how she treats her husband and children . She does not have a pity . She murders her husband and his lover with her own hands . After doing the murders, she is not frightened or trembled at all, she can explain how she murdered them . She even considers that their death as an appetiser to her own bed's pleasure .

Clytemnestra : He lies so, and she who like a swan
contributes
An appetiser to my own bed's pleasure

(Agamemnon, p.71)

Since she is very wicked, she is compared to a scorpion . Her own son, Orestes, does not consider her either as his mother or a wife of his father . He considers her as a poisonous animal rather than a human being .

Orestes : But she, who planned this horro for her own
Bore offspring, then a load of love, but

now,
 As shown by its sharp fangs, of deadly
 hate,
 What do you think of her?
 If she had been
 Some scorpion or sea serpent, her very
 tough,
 For sheer iniquity and wicked spirit,
 Would breed corruption in the unbitten hand

(Choephoroe, p.66)

As a mother, she sends her young son, Orestes, to Phocis
 without giving it a second thought. She does not care
 whether he is dead, she is ever happy knowing it since she
 worries that he might interrupt her plot to kill
 Agamemnon. She neglects her daughter, Electra. She
 treats her badly, more like a tyrant to a slave than a
 mother to a daughter. Electra is put in a chamber that is
 like a kennel and her mother never talks to her nicely.

Electra : Such was my father's death and I was kept
 Dishonoured, deemed of no account
 Within my chamber kennelled like a dog,
 With tears out stripping laughter in my
 eyes
 In secret streams of solitary grief.

(Choephoroe, p.49)

In the third play, "Eumenides", the ghost
 Clytemnestra urges the Furies to hunt and torturwe
 Orestes. She complains that she suffers disgrace as a
 murderess among the dead and none of the gods has under-
 taken to revenge the matricide done by her son. She
 gives the furies all due propitiation and drives them to

get their prey, Orestes .

We can see that her death does not stop her from taking revenge to her son .

Ghost : Oho! Asleep! What good are you asleep?
 Among the other dead unceasingly,
 Hissed and cast out, homeless, a murderess!
 I tell you they malign me shamefully,
 While I, so cruelly treated by my own,
 Slaughtered myself with matricidal hands,
 No dity is indignant for my sake .

(Eumenides,p.74)

Both Christine and Clytemnestra are not wise . They just follow their heart without considering the result to their family . They have affair with other men to satisfy their own desire, they do not care about neither their husbands nor their children . Christine kills Ezra and plans to escape with Adam without considering the feeling or the condition of Lavinia and Orin when they are left by their parents . Christine does not raise her children well . She hates Lavinia since she was born, because Lavinia just reminded her hatred to Ezra and her terrible wedding night and honeymoon . She was never able to love her .

Lavinia : So I was born of your disgust! I've always guessed that mother - ever since I was little-when I used to come to you-with love-but you would always push me away!
 I've felt it ever since I can remember-your disgust .

Christine : I tried to love you, I told myself it wasn't human not to love my own, born of my body

But I never could make myself feel you were born of anybody but his! You were always my wedding night to me and my honeymoon!

(Homecoming, p.714)

Since she was very young, Lavinia realized that her own mother disliked her. She grew up and began to hate her mother. Then Lavinia turned to her father for love. so there was a close relationship between the father and the daughter. The father and the daughter's relation makes the mother and the daughter's relation worse. The mother and the daughter hate each other, they are not like a mother and a daughter but feuds. They always try to hurt each other. Christine herself does not care about her daughter's feeling, while Lavinia does not respect her mother.

Lavinia : You vile-! You're shameless and evil! Even if you are my mother, I say it!

Christine : I-I knew you hated me, Vinnie-but not as bitterly as that!

(Homecoming, p.713)

Christine : If! I think you do love him-as much as you can love! You little fool! Don't you know I made him flirt with you, so you wouldn't be suspicious

(Homecoming, p.715)

Christine knows that Lavinia loves Adam. She does not care whether Lavinia is hurt when she find out that the man whom she loves is the lover of her own mother and the

man just flirts her, whereas Lavinia's hatred to her mother can be seen from her attitude when she knows that her mother is going to commit suicide . Actually she can prevent her from killing her self, but she lets her do it . She thinks that her mother deserves to die .

Christine (glares at her as if this were the last burst into shrill laughter, stopped abruptly, raises her hands between her face and her daughter and pushes them out in a gesture of blotting Lavinia forever from her sight . Then she turns and rushes into the house . Lavinia again makes a movement to follow her . But she immediately fights down these impulse and turns her back on the house determinedly, standing square-shouldered and stiff like a grim sentinel in black)

(The Hunted, p.811)

On the other hand, Christine loves Orin very much . When Orin was born, Ezra was in the Mexican war . Christine feels that Orin is her child, not Ezra's . That's why she was very sad and lonely when Orin was sent to the civil war . She did not have anyone who loved her and to be loved . However her love to Orin does not give a good influence for him . Her love makes Orin never grow up . She does not care whether Orin is not a child anymore, she always treats him like a baby . This kind of attitude makes Orin a restless and immature one .

Mannon : He's always been restless . (Halt turning to Christine) He gets that from you .

(Homecoming, p.733)

Christine turned her love to Orin when her relation with Ezra was cold . She does not care whether it will make the situation in the family worse . There are two groups in the family, the mother and the son, and the father and the daughter . The hatred and jealousy grow well in the family .

Christine : But we've always been so close, you and I
I feel you are really-my flesh and blood!
She isn't! She is your father's! You're a
part of me!

Orin (with strange eagerness) Yes! I feel that, too,
Mother!

(The Hunted, p.771)

Christine even drives her son to hate his father and sister by telling bad things about them . She succeeds in doing this . Orin loves her and trust everything she says about them . Christine's love to to her son makes him hate the other family . He even does not feel sorry for his father's death .

Christine : I want to make up to you for all the in -
It may seem a hard thing to say about the
dead, but he was jealous of you . He
hated you because he knew I loved you
better than anything in the world!

Orin : I knew he had it in for me . But I never
thought he
went as far as to-hate me .

Christine : He did, just the same!

Orin : All right, then! I'll tell you the truth
Mother! I won't pretend to you I'm sorry he's
dead!

Christine : Yes. I am glad, too!-that he has left us
alone!

(The Hunted, p.772)

The result of Christine's attitude toward Orin is he wants Christine for himself . He does not want to leave Christine, he refuses to get married, he is jealous of his own father and can kill to get his mother for himself . In his opinion, it is allright if his mother kills his father as far as does not love anybody else except him . His love to Christine is not a love of a son to his mother but a love of a man to a woman .

Orin : And I'll never leave you again now . I don't want Hazel or anyone . You're only my girl!

(The Hunted,p.766)

Clytemnestra kills Agamemnon without thinking about her children . She just wants to satisfy her desire to take revenge for the murder of Iphigenia and the adultery of Agamemnon, and also to live with Aegisthus . She does not care whether her attitude will ruin her family . The result of her attitude is the hatred of her children toward her . The children conspire to kill her since there is no love and respect for her .

Electra : Oh me, hateful heart,
Oh wicked mother!

(Choephoroe,p.49)

Chorus : Blest lords of the dead, lend ear unto this
Intercession, and graciously send unto these
Two children the strength that shall
conquer!

(Choephoroe,p.50)

Either Christine or Clytemnestra are selfish . They do not care about their husbands or children, all they care about is themselves . Christine wants to be happy and free without thinking a bit about her family . Actually if she loves her family, she can have a better relation with her husband and her children . But she does not try at all . She does not do her obligation as a wife as well as a mother . She refuses her husband's wish to make up their marriage, although it is actually a good chance for her to be a better wife and mother . She neglects her family and wants to live with Adam, so she loses the chance . Whereas Clytemnestra also emphasizes her own interest . She does not think whether her children can be unhappy, she just gives priority to her own happiness . As Christine, she neglects her duty as a wife and a mother, for her own interest .

As women, both Christine and Clytemnestra are disappointed at their husbands and it results in a deep hatred toward the husbands . Both of them want to love and to be loved, the things that they do not get from their husbands . Christine does not love Ezra since their wedding night and Ezra himself is cold, so she needs someone to love and to be loved . She then finds out that Orin, her son, can fulfill her need of love . But Orin is sent to the Civil War and she loses him . Finally she

meets Adam, who is romantic and loves her . She falls in love with him and makes him her lover .

Clytemnestra hates her husband since he killed her daughter, Iphigenis, and has a lover, Cassandra . Moreover, Agamemnon has left her for ten years since he goes to the Trojan war . During Agamemnon's leave, Clytemnestra meets Aegisthus and they fall in love to each other . She loves him more when she finds out that Aegisthus is loyal to her, it is contrary to Agamemnon .

Beside the similarities, there are also some dissimilarities between Christine and Clytemnestra . The woman have different motives in killing their husbands . Christine kills Ezra since she wants to have a happy life with Adam . During her marriage life she is not happy . She is disappointed at the way Ezra treats her . Ezra is not the man whom she loved before their marriage, he has changed . He is not as romantic as she thought before . Ezra never shows his love to her . When she meets Adam, she finds out that Adam loves her and treats her gently and tenderly . Besides, she finds the love she longs for in Adam . So, she is motivated by the hope to live happily with Adam, her love to Adam and Adam's love to her .

Christine : He's gently and tender, he's everything you've never been . He's what I've longed for all these years - with you - a lover!

(Homecoming, p.746)

Whereas Clytemnestra kills Agamemnon for she wants to take revenge for Iphigenia's death and Agamemnon's adultery . She also mentions that she is the agent of the avenging Fury of Atreus . So, she is motivated by the desire to avenge .

Beside the motives, the dissimilarities are also caused by their different background . Clytemnestra is an ancient Greek woman who lives in 1200-1100 BC . She is the queen of Argos . She has the authority over the kingdom during Agamemnon's absence . After the death of Agamemnon, she declares herself as the rulers of Argos . Although she announces that she killed Agamemnon and Cassandra, nobody dares to punish her . Whereas Christine Mannon is an American woman who lives in the 19th century . She is not a queen like Clytemnestra, but a common woman . She lives with her family in New England .

The differences of their backgrounds influences their actions . Clytemnestra, as a queen and a ruler, can kill her husband deliberately . Moreover the action of "an eye for an eye" is common at that time . While, in the 19th century, Christine can not do that way . She must plan the murder carefully to avoid the people's suspicion .

