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Spring 6-1-2015

Eric Shanower and the Visual Mythography of Age of Bronze

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Recommended Citation

ERIC SHANOWER AND THE VISUAL MYTHOGRAPHY OF *AGE OF BRONZE*

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Arts in English
Department of Literature and Languages

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College of Arts and Sciences

The University of Texas at Tyler
May 2015

The University of Texas at Tyler
Tyler, Texas

This is to certify that the Master's Thesis of

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April 17, 2015
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Acknowledgments

This Thesis is dedicated to Christianne Marie Green, soon to be Christianne Marie Greenhale. I am the luckiest man in the world for your love, your support, your laughter, and your willing acceptance of my marriage proposal. You are *Yer Jalan Atthirari Anni*, the Moon of my Life.

To Susan Hale, my mother: Thank you for having always believed in me.

To Dr. Catherine Ross: You helped me make it through a process I never thought I would have ever made it through – getting my English BA.

To Dr. Karen Sloan: You are a patient, kind hearted and brilliant Graduate Advisor. Your help proved pivotal to my surviving through the MA process. Thank you!

To David Hill and Tamara Hill: Thank you for having taken me in and made me a part of your family. The love and kindness you both showed me will never be forgotten.

To Dr. Paul Streufert: You are a gentleman who so patiently listened to me as I tried to explain how I wanted to explore this topic. Your support of my ideas, from the first Pixels, Panels, and Prose Colloquium, to this Thesis, has been a blessing of generosity.

To Dr. Emily Standridge and Dr. Carolyn Tilghman: Thank you for having joined my Thesis Committee and for your insight in all the things you both shared with me.

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Abstract

ERIC SHANOWER AND THE VISUAL MYTHOGRAPHY OF *AGE OF BRONZE*

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May 2015

In his black and white comic called *Age of Bronze*, Eric Shanower demonstrates how mythography can be joined with the comic book medium to both re-imagine classic myths in new ways as well as to preserve and clarify stories which were not always linked by a unifying author. Shanower focuses on the mythology surrounding the Trojan War as he sorts, edits, and condenses myths from multiple authors so as to be read in a visual fashion. Shanower's mythographic work is defined distinctly as "visual mythography" in that his method for working with mythic is to visually display the characters alongside complex borders and paneling on the comic pages. Shanower experiments with re-vitalizing some myths through experimental art-horror aesthetics, thus demonstrating his ability to condense and streamline many myths into a compact story which exists across only a few *Age of Bronze* issues. Further, Shanower makes use of panel border and gutter art across the whole of the *Age of Bronze*

comic so as to distinctly showcase where he intends for some myths to bear less weight on the overall narrative and where he needs others to be showcased in stronger ways. All of Shanower's art and research ends in the story of the Trojan War being presented in a chronologically and linearly "complete" timeframe with a unified sense of art, character, and chronology.

Chapter One

Introduction

The vast body of mythological stories left to humanity by the people of ancient Greece is staggering. While modern scholars are now divided on whether or not Homer was a singular person, the person we have come to know as Homer left us a monumental work in *The Iliad*. The pages of this single story account for a vast wellspring of iconic characters, images, and themes now known the world over: the immortal Achilles and his duel against Prince Hector, the beauty of Helen whose face launched a thousand ships, and the plea of Priam to Achilles in his tent are just a few of the amazing accounts left to mankind. Still, the story of *The Iliad* is incomplete. Homer's work accounts for only one portion of a much larger war. Still, while Homer's *The Iliad* is famous, it is famous to some for things not present in the text. The Trojan Horse is one famous example of something popularized by Homer yet not actually written about by him in that particular work. Similarly, Homer does not directly present the story of how Helen was abducted, how Troy was destroyed, how Achilles came to serve under Agamemnon, and more. Still, to find out about the ending to the Trojan War, a curious reader need only pick up plays like Euripides's *Hecuba* or Aeschylus's *Agamemnon*. These plays detail events after the Trojan War, events such as what happened to King Priam's family or how King Agamemnon was welcomed home to Greece and then murdered. But, what if the reader

desires then to know *why* Agamemnon was ceremonially killed by his own wife? While the play *Agamemnon* accounts for this murder being on the account of Agamemnon having sacrificed his daughter, Iphigenia, to appease the gods, there is a potentially troubling issue: Homer ascribes no daughter to Agamemnon named Iphigenia in *The Iliad*. Indeed, the desire to locate stories concerning the final accounts of many Greek heroes and their families introduced in *The Iliad* leads to sources which actually contradict Homer's version of the Trojan War story. The vast complexity of not only Greek myth, but its adaptations as well, creates a network of texts, plays, sources, and stories which must in turn be tediously explored and mapped out so as to understand their connection to the greater "whole" of mythology. To value one text or story might mean having to ignore another.

To resolve issues exactly such as were described above, scholars created texts which served as a kind of "mythological reference" for readers, works which allowed one to know the 'core' of a myth, but not a great amount of extraneous detail. *The Bibliotheca* and *The Library of Apollodorus* are two such examples of texts created by mythographers. In short, a mythographer is a person who explores and defines mythology, and they are vital to the lay reader for breaking down complex mythologies into approachable texts. Mythology serves as a complex narrative which is shaped as much by the teller as it is by those listening to it. Even on the surface of very famous myths, myths for example like Theseus and his defeat of the Minotaur, there are layers of subtext relating to the culture doing the telling. A Greek hero slaying the violent and ghoulish Minotaur, a

Cretan monster, can be seen to represent the telling of how Greece came to triumph over Crete in cultural and military matters. Mythographers work to keep mythic narrative and analysis separate. By breaking down the story of Theseus, for example, into its base definitions, mythographers preserve the archetypical elements (a prince, a cruel king, a monster, a maiden, a puzzle to be solved, etc…), thus ensuring that all readers have access to the necessary elements of the story needed to extrapolate any and all meanings required.

Having established how complex mythology can be and what mythographers do to sort out and edit mythology, it should be noted that not all mythographers seek to break mythology down and that not all mythographers work through traditional mediums to achieve their goals. Eric Shanower created a comic in 1998 with one definitive goal: to tell the story of the Trojan War in a linear and chronologically complete fashion. While Shanower could have set out to work on a literary text which accomplished this very goal, he instead committed himself to the creation of a comic called *Age of Bronze*. The plot of *Age of Bronze* focuses on the entire sum of the Trojan War, starting first with Paris being discovered as a lost prince of Troy, to the destruction of Troy itself. Shanower aims to include any myth and account possible of the Trojan War in his massive, chronologically 'complete' story concerning the war between the Greeks and the Trojans. Shanower has scoured accounts concerning Trojan War myths from both the mythological and the real world, i.e.: the comic includes mythological accounts, such as stories about Herakles, and stories dug up from the evidence found at Trojan excavation sites in present day Turkey. Shanower

set out to define the landscape and architecture of the *Age of Bronze* setting as close to the real Trojan and Greek cultures as possible. Shanower also goes to great lengths to omit the gods as palpable and interactive figures within the Trojan War story narrative so as to best fit with the historically accurate aesthetic.

Texts of obviously important value like *The Iliad* are incorporated into *Age of Bronze*, but so are lesser known texts such as those like multiple versions of the Trolius and Cressida story. In one issue of *Age of Bronze*, Shanower draws from multiple sources like the *Trolius and Cressida* opera by William Walton, the play *Trolius and Cressida* by Shakespeare, the poem by Chaucer, and even a second opera by Hassall, all to create a composite story which makes use of elements from each source for only one sequence on the page.

Visually, Shanower's *Age of Bronze* comic in unique in that there is no color save for what is used on the covers, and the design stylings of the characters and landscapes are extremely detailed. This unique combination of colorless pages with rich detail presents a striking account of all manner of hero and villain. Shanower's art allows a reader to connect to the Homer's story, on a complex and multilayered level. *Age of Bronze* is as much an ambitious undertaking in storytelling as those the Greek playwrights attempted to do in that his work must connect on a human level with its audience.

By pursuing an entertainment medium like a comic to achieve his goal of a unified Trojan War story, Shanower exhibits the features of not just a mythographer, but those of a graphic mythographer. Visual mythography, that being the collection and distribution of myths through a visual medium, is the

highlight of what makes *Age of Bronze* comic so important. Whether it is Shanower's attempt to combine multiple myths into one singular narrative or if he is editing and parsing down myths to remove them from their 'mythic' status, the *Age of Bronze* comic consistently demonstrates how Shanower re-structures myths to fit a complete narrative while not actually changing the content of the myths being handled. Shanower's discrediting of the authenticity of The Judgment of Paris myth as having actually taken place within the overall story of *Age of Bronze* shows he is more than capable of presenting certain myths in their totality while still challenging readers to confront their own perceptions of what does and does not fit into the 'real world' aesthetic of the comic itself. No portion of The Judgment of Paris story is edited. The story is explained in its entirety, yet by visually showing the emotional state of the presenter, as well as the perspective of the character hearing the tale, Shanower creates a new way of approaching the myth. Likewise, Shanower's willingness to present a real world aesthetic for the comic means readers must visually and textually confront key elements within the Trojan War story itself, issues like Kassandra's flawless predictions serving as but one example.

While Shanower sometimes experiments with applying different aesthetics to his mythographic comic, such as when he applies an art-horror theme to the 'House of Horror' story, and he always aims to present human drama in a way which both entertains readers and un-clutters mythology into a complete, linear narrative. *Age of Bronze* aims to preserve the human drama which co-exists alongside the violence which often makes for entertaining comic and film

spectacles. While Shanower does indeed preserve the cruel violence which Homer and other mythic artists capture in their accounts of characters like Agamemnon, Achilles, and Hector, he also captures the love of Hector for his wife, Achilles's love for Patroclus, and the broken heart of Menelaus who just wants his wife returned home. By re-organizing the Trojan War stories into a singular visual form, Shanower's work provides a narratively consistent and complete body of stories which allows a reader to delve into the Trojan War without the need of diverse texts written at different periods of time to serve as reference tools. Likewise, Shanower's separation of mythology from the political and personal views of the authors, playwrights, and creators who have had a hand in creating so many diverse Trojan War stories means a reader might not have to immediately reconcile the political background of Seneca and Euripides while reading about Agamemnon and his daughter, Iphigenia. While there is no denying the tremendous value to works like *Agamemnon*, *Hecuba*, *Iphigenia at Aulis*, *Thyestes*, and *Trolius and Cressida*, each work contains wildly different views on the gods, human rights, and the importance of the characters present in the play. *Age of Bronze* strips away the subtexts and leaves only the characters, characters which Shanower then directs visually to ensure that the Agamemnon of Homer can now match the Agamemnon of Euripides, Aeschylus, and others.

Age of Bronze* exists as an astounding monument to the visual and textual complexity achievable through the marriage of mythography and the comic medium. Shanower's comic expands on the ancient myths and incorporates countless texts, plays, poems, narratives and artistic pieces into a new work unto

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itself which preserves the old while adapting to the challenges of the new graphic medium. Shanower's work primarily can be examined on a special issue-centric, micro-level and a larger, comic-wide macro-level. Shanower's micro-level work, work primarily present in the 'House of Horror' story which is present in less than five *Age of Bronze* comics, shows a visual consolidation of mythology. Shanower breaks down myths and stories present in works such as Seneca's *Thyestes* and Aeschylus's *Iphigenia at Aulis*, along with Homer, and combines them into an account which constitutes for multiple variations of the stories which tie into Agamemnon's bloody family history. Shanower borrows from the core myths of Tantalus, Seneca's story of Atreus and the ghastly "dinner" he serves his brother, Aeschylus's account of Agamemnon's time spent on Aulis, and other stories to detail the history of the House of Atreus as a visually complete work. From the foundation of the family by King Pelops to the story of house Agamemnon and Menelaus became rulers of Mycenae, Shanower's *Age of Bronze* 'House of Horror' special demonstrates visual mythography as a tool of condense and consolidate mythology on a wide scale.

Opposite of Shanower's micro-level, condensed visual mythography style is his large-scale, comic-wide visual mythography techniques. As the story of the Trojan War is vast and made up of complex accounts of the Greek gods at different states of power, Shanower's comic must visually present a singular style, this being a realistic and historically accurate view of Homer's characters, while still acknowledging where the overall narrative demands the gods exist. Shanower uses the borders of his comic paneling to insert the gods as visual

symbols into the *Age of Bronze* comic so as to ensure that deities such as the

Trojan thunder god or Apollo exist within the story while not subsequently

shattering the narrative style. Shanower's visual approach to the issue of the

divine ranges in severity, yet the impact as a whole still follows through with his

mission: to present an entertaining and complete account of the Trojan War, from

start to finish. While Shanower has not yet completed his comic series, the work

covered in the following chapters demonstrates how Eric Shanower's *Age of*

Bronze comic stands alone as a fascinating and complex piece of visual

mythography, with Shanower himself standing out as the preeminent visual

mythographer working in the comic format today.

Chapter Two

Shanower and the Mythography of Horror

1: The History of the House of Atreus

Before continuing on to direct discussion about the mechanics of graphic mythography Shanower puts on display in the *Age of Bronze* comic and how he experiments with a horror aesthetic in his 'House of Horror' storyline, there should be a brief recounting of the major events behind the House of Atreus story which Shanower draws from. While some of the major components of the story come from different authors or sources, the common outline of events proceeds as follows: King Tantalus, a close associate of Zeus who knew his mysteries, tests the omniscience of the gods by feeding his son Pelops to them at a feast. The gods punish Tantalus by damning him to hungry forever while Pelops is restored to life. Pelops grows up to challenge King Oenomaus to a lethal chariot race for the hand of his daughter, Hippodameia. Oenomaus kills any suitor who fails the race; however Pelops cheats by consorting with the King's chariot assistant, Myrtilus, who rigs the game so that the King dies and Pelops wins. Myrtilus was promised either sexual relations with Hippodameia or wealth by Pelops, depending on the myth's source. Oenomaus dies, Hippodameia is won, and Pelops double-crosses and murders Myrtilus. Before dying, Myrtilus curses Pelops by inciting his father, the god Hermes. Pelops becomes King of and sets up the House of Pelops, as depicted by Shanower in Figure 1.

Pelops has not only two natural sons, Atreus and Thyestes, but a bastard named Chrysippus as well. Chrysippus is kidnapped by his mentor from another land, causing great distress for the House and also worry from Hippodameia and her biological sons. Hippodameia conspired with Atreus and Thyestes to have Chrysippus murdered. The founding myths behind Tantalus and Pelops's rise to power harken back to darker, stranger times in the mythology of Greece, one populated by characters with direct relationships to the gods, such as Tantalus, and those who wrestled or challenged other kings for their daughters and power. This era is covered the least by Shanower, however it is commented upon in Section IV as to in what way, visually, Shanower ties Tantalus and his descendants together.
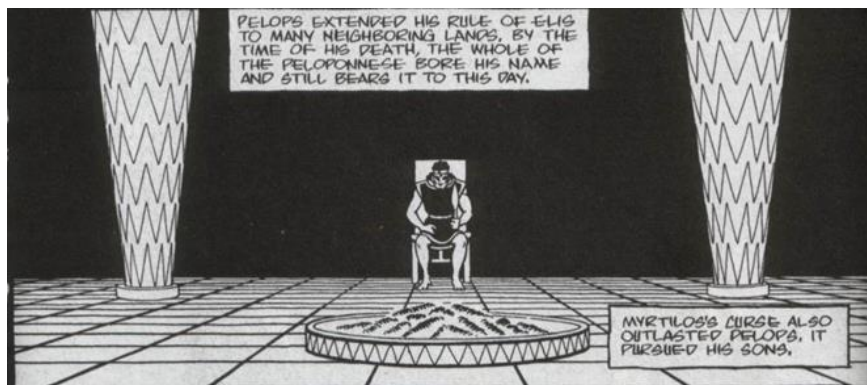
Figure 1. "Pelops Victorious" *Age of Bronze* #4A Special (1999), 17.

Atreus and Thyestes would later grow up to feud over the rite to be King after Pelops died. The arrival of Pelops's two sons to Mycenae is depicted in Figure 2. The feud, in brief, started with Thyestes gaining the upper hand by seducing Atreus's wife and attaining the fabled Golden Fleece. Atreus used trickery to conspire with Zeus and turn the sun backwards, thus having won a

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wager he made with Thyestes, Thyestes having had agreed to step down as

King if Atreus could make the sun set in the sky backwards. Atreus, not content

to have then only banished Thyestes, eventually lured him home in order to fulfill

a prophecy which would end a drought plaguing the land. Atreus then murdered
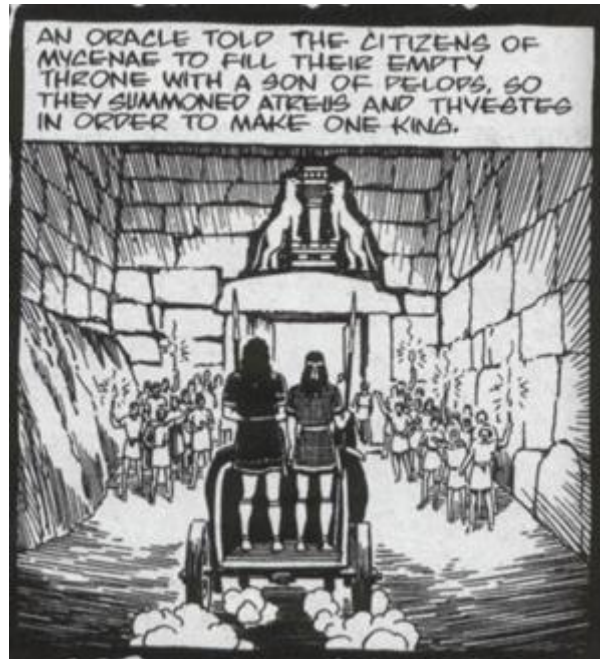
Figure 2. "The Sons of Pelops," *Age of Bronze* #4A Special (1999), 8.

and cannibalized the children of Thyestes, feeding them to their father.

Regardless of whether it Tantalus or Pelops and Myrtilus who started the curse

which ravaged the House of Atreus, the killing of Thyestes's children is seen as

the highlight which would then define the next two generations of the family.

Atreus is eventually murdered by Thyestes's incest-created son, Aegisthus.

Aegisthus was conceived by the order of an oracle which told how Thyestes

could avenge the deaths of his children: he would need to father a child with his

daughter, the result of which would be the killer of Atreus. Thyestes and

Aegisthus would jointly rule the kingdom. The story of Atreus and Thyestes, which is covered extensively in Section IV, is the precursor story of sorts to the material made use of by Homer in *The Iliad* and which was covered extensively by Seneca's play *Thyestes*.

Agamemnon and Menelaus, the sons of Atreus, would be exiled from their kingdom only to return later with the aid of Sparta. The flight of the brothers from their home, as well as their violent return, is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. "Triumph and Return," *Age of Bronze* #4A/Special (1999), 9.

Agamemnon became King with his wife, Clytemnestra, who bore him Electra, Orestes, and Iphigenia as children. During the Trojan War, having assembled his fleet, Agamemnon finds himself trapped at Aulis where he offends the goddess Artemis. Artemis demands the sacrifice of Iphigenia. Agamemnon completes the sacrifice, angering his wife who, while he is away at Troy, conspires with Aegithus. Agamemnon's wife desires his murder out of anger over the loss of Iphigenia. When the war ends, Agamemnon returns home and is

murdered by his wife and the man who slew his own father. Electra, unable to stand the shame of knowing her mother killed her father, saves Orestes from being killed and has him then murder both his mother and Aegithus. The murder of parents by children causes the Furies to hound Orestes until, at last, he has the gods confront the paradoxical nature of being cursed for avenging the death of his father, even if it was his mother who did the deed. The restoration of Orestes ends the curse upon the house of Atreus. Agamemnon and his brother are among the dominant characters in the *Age of Bronze* comic series; their history is fleshed out through Shanower's *Age of Bronze Special Issue* series, one of which is covered in Sections IV through Section V.

The importance of understanding the summary of the events which start the curse that lingers over the House of Atreus, as well as knowing that the major contributing factor to the 'origin' of the curse can be disputed, is understanding the greater whole into which each of the various parts of the myths fit. Not every mythographer uses certain pieces to make his or her own interpretation; however, Shanower takes the lengthy summary of mythology and turns much of the presented story data into visually represented characters with their own rhetoric. For Shanower, the aesthetic he will use to define the 'House of Atreus' is horror, but the system through which he will accomplish this is mythography.

2: Defining Mythography & Shanower's Visual Mythography

Having established the core elements of myth which Shanower makes use of, that being characters like Pelops, Atreus, Thyestes, Agamemnon, and

Menelaus, there can now be an exploration of how Shanower makes the characters come together in a visually cohesive and unique fashion. The actual definition for working with mythic literature and sources is called "mythography." When working with myths, there are serious points which mythographers, those who physically maneuver through the myths themselves to sort and document them, need to consider. In their introduction for the e-book *Apollodorus's Library and Hyginus' Fabulae: Two Handbooks of Greek Mythology* the authors R. S. Smith and M. Trzaskoma write:

> Delineating a myth – that is, answering a question like 'what is the myth of Oedipus?' or 'What's the story of the Trojan War?' – is tricky business, particularly when it comes to Greek myths, since evidence for them comes from a complex literary and artistic tradition that spans almost two millennia. All information about a myth has to be organized, the different versions evaluated for reliability and interest, the contradictory bits accounted for (or smoothed over to give a better presentation), and a decision reached as to how much detail to include.

These kinds of considerations, chiefly the area regarding contradictions, are important and many famous mythographers have weighed in on the approach they feel should be pursued when tackling mythography. Robert Graves, the author of *Greek Myths*, commented on his own section of mythography in which he detailed the story of Atreus and Thyestes. Graves writes in *Greek Myths* that "[T]o understand the story [of Atreus and Thyestes], however, one must not think allegorically nor philosophically, but mythologically; namely in terms of the

archaic conflict between the sacred king and his tanist. The king reigned until the summer solstice, when the sun reached its most northerly point and stood still; then the tanist killed him and took his place." For Graves, as well as the mythography he envisioned when he compiled, edited, and annotated his sources, the stories of the Greeks were gateways to something else: stories with layered meanings that went beyond simply 'who became King in this date.' Graves's approach to tying in solar connections to his view of Greek myths was his own unique mythographical style, one which was aided by his poetic nature and one which Shanower openly admits be borrowed from, as well as numerous other sources. Still, what allowed Graves to make the kinds of claims he did about Greek myth?

Figure 4. "*The Iliad*," The Graphic Canon V.I (1999), 35.

Michael Grant, in his book *Myths of the Greeks and Romans*, describes the "traditional but elastic framework" of the Greeks as to how they used their mythology, a framework which "gave the fullest scope for their originality" (Grant 115). But, regardless of the pliable nature of Greek myths, how does Shanower

craft a mythographical style through visuals? How does one establish a "graphic

mythography?" Knowing that there are specific concerns for what a

mythographer must work around to clearly define his mythological content, what

sets Shanower apart from other artists who deal with mythology? Are these too

"graphic mythographers?"

Figure 5. "Zeus Approves" Trojan War (2009), 2.

Shanower should first be compared to artist Alice Duke and the pairing of

Roy Thomas and artist Miguel Sepulveda. Duke created an artistic piece

focusing on the duel between Paris and King Menelaus for the work *The Graphic

Canon* series while Thomas and Sepulveda combined their talents with Marvel

Comics to create a book called *Trojan War* in 2009. Alice Duke's artistic style, as

it appeared in *The Graphic Canon* series, is highly beautiful and stylized in earthy

tones of bronze and brown. Her work is clearly a strict adaptation of the contents

in Book III of *The Iliad.* A sample of Duke's work is depicted in Figure 4. While

her art is magnificent, can she be considered a graphic mythographer?

Technically, no. Duke's work is a stunning adaptation; however, she does not

work within multiple mythic narratives, adapt the story according to any other

sources outside of the *The Iliad*, and her work is clearly meant to mirror the

events of *The Iliad*'s third book, complete with the gods of the Greeks assisting

Paris in his duel and ferrying him to freedom at the end. Thomas and Sepulveda

on the other hand show a different approach to their handing of Greek myth. A

sample of Sepulveda's art is depicted in Figure 5.

In his introduction to the book *Trojan War*, Thomas writes "the most

important source for the graphic novel, along with what remains of the Epic

Cycle, was *The War at Troy* (*sometimes called The Fall of Troy*) by Quintus of

Smyrna." This reference, along with numerous others to works from Antiquity

which went into the book's story, showcase that Thomas, as a true

mythographer, delved into the sea of myths and selected those which worked for

the book and which did not. Thomas even comments about some stories not

being able to be brought into the text itself because they either were too long or

because they were too similar to the main contents of *The Iliad* and might be

viewed as repetitive. *Trojan War* is meant to be longer than the illustrations Duke

was commissioned for in *The Graphic Canon*, as it is a composite text meant to

house numerous stories which are to be read as one larger work. In this regard,

Thomas and Sepulveda's work definitely constitutes graphic mythography.

Sepulveda's art is luminous and bright, a rich series of pictures which contrasts

the work Duke put forth as her final version for *The Graphic Canon*. The gods are depicted often in their larger, grandiose forms, both as characters but also as living incarnations of power. So, does Shanower's work line up similarly to either Duke or Thomas/Sepulveda?

Shanower's unique lens for *Age of Bronze* is the dramatic reality in which he presents his characters, characters like Agamemnon and Prince Paris, a reality colored by a historical aesthetic across the whole comic series. While Shanower never establishes that his characters were real in how they are presented, he does take great care in crafting a realistic Greece for them to populate and exist in. Shanower removed all mentioning of the Greek gods as active characters wherever possible and any reference to their power is subtle, dreamlike, and mysterious. His style contrasts the bright and colorful work of Sepulveda and even the reserved but stylized palate of Duke. His art is presented in black and white only, a choice which immediately contrasts his with Sepulveda in terms of both style and aesthetics. Where Sepulveda's rich art is full of bold colors and powerful depictions of the characters, Shanower's style is more down-to-earth and more aligned with, as said earlier, reality as opposed to the flashy and stylistic mythology where Zeus interacts with mortals. The choice for an author to depict his characters, as Thomas and Sepulveda do, in the way that they do, this being with striking dynamics and action, is more in line with what is normally expected. To be sure, C. M. Bowra in his book *The Greek Experience* says striking and action-packed depictions are how such stories have seemingly always been told. Bowra writes "[Greek art] aims at showing gods and

heroes in action and displays their strength and courage. Even in Homer's own day […] artists portrayed scenes like his own, such as sea-fights, funeral pyres, battle scenes, and shipwrecks. In later centuries, when the heroic ideal had found new significance in the city-state […] artists made it convincing …" (Bowra 110). So, with Sepulveda and Thomas playing into a style which mirrors that of a kind which the Greeks themselves sought to capture, where does that leave Shanower?

In regards to the parts of mythology which Shanower does not directly play into with his lack of gods and superhuman depictions of characters, he confronts the same issues as Thomas and all mythographers: he needs to confront the tangled system of myths and stories and then, from that chaos, he must visually impose order through visuals and edits. In a letter to a fan in *Issue #6* of *Age of Bronze* Shanower writes how "[o]ne of the reasons the Trojan War captured my interest is the wide range of variations the story has accumulated through the centuries. Trying to integrate these variations into one coherent storyline is a fascinating challenge. [Other myths such as *The Odyssey*, *The Aeneid*, etc…] don't present the same challenge" (Shanower 21) This is the heart of mythography, as well as Shanower's passion; recreating and redefining mythology is an artistic and scholarly passion, one which has captured Shanower's interest and his time. His view of the Trojan War story as being a "challenge" is important because it showcases Shanower's stance of the history of Greek myths, i.e. some have, historically, been more popular and thus have become harder to sort through. *Age of Bronze* exists as a kind of answer to the

complexity of the myths themselves, a sword to cut through the Gordian Knot of intermixed and puzzling mythological fragments and texts which make the Trojan War so utterly dense a story to explore. The complex nature of myths, and how to parse them, is perhaps commented upon best by scholar Liapis in the article "The Fragments of the Early Greek Mythographers." Liapis says "[c]learly, trying to establish a date for this miscellany of texts is as futile as trying to identify a single author for it" (Liapis 239).

Equally problematic is the attempt to distinguish the truly mythographic fragments from, for example, the "purely theological ones" (Lipais 237). So if Shanower is trying to make distinctions between the various mythographic fragments, as well as the depictions which might have more theological than realistic roots (like, say, how Zeus is depicted), who does Shanower come closer to emulating in terms of his mythography? While Graves's mythography emerged from his poetic mind, a view made by Shanower himself in his letters to fans found in the back of the *Age of Bronze* issues, where does the "historical and realistic" mythographical view emerge from? Perhaps the two closest sources who can be seen as sharing a similar mythographical view as Shanower would be Thomas Blackwell and Robert Wood. In the book *The Rise of the Modern Mythology: 1680-1860*, a work compiled and edited by Burton Feldman and Robert Richardson, Blackwell and Wood's writings are presented and commented upon. Regarding Blackwell, Feldman and Richardson write: "Blackwell's approach to Homer, as he summarizes it in his *Letters concerning Mythology* (1748), is also a model of the analytic-rationalist method: to

understand one must analyze back to the 'first beginnings" or causes or origins, and then scientifically reconstruct the chain of causes and effects" (Feldman and Richardson 100). This mirrors the nature of how Shanower attempts to piece together the 'story' of Tantalus, Pelops, Atreus, and Thyestes and, indeed, the whole Trojan War, as a chronological, linear story with clearly defined causes and effects. Further, Shanower's adherence to reality in his story showcases that he has a style which is inclined to seeing the characters in a historically accurate, although, certainly not a way implied to tie into actual history. This aligns Shanower with the views of Robert Wood. According to Feldman and Richardson on page 191 of *The Rise of Modern Mythology*,

> Wood began by assuming – as Schliemann was to assume later – that the tale of Troy was based on fact. He argued, accordingly, that *The Iliad* was in fact based on real, discoverable historical events. The implications of this simple assumption were startling. For if the old heroic stories reflected actual events, it might mean that myth too was grounded in [historical reality].

But why use comics as a medium to explore mythography? Shanower's bold attempts to depict his characters in the way that he desires requires a medium beyond prose. The mythography Shanower needs is visual because his characters will be required to exist in a way that must depict their reality, much in the same way that Thomas and Sepulveda required a format that could showcase their character's majesty and prowess. For Shanower, black and white, realistic drawings are a language he can make use of so as to best

visually present his mythographical accomplishments, thus proving that he has earned the title of graphic mythographer. Having then established Shanower as a graphic mythographer, thus showing how and why Shanower assembles his stories in the way that he does, what unique takes on mythology does he bring to the table? While there must first be a careful definition of the term, perhaps it is 'horror' which most entertainingly encapsulates the vision of Shanower and where he takes his visual mythography.

3: Defining Horror

Seneca's *Thyestes* a dominant work that Shanower calls upon for visual recreation and reference for the inspiration of the 'horror' content in the *Age of Bronze* 'House of Horror' special issue content and should be examined alongside it. Great care must be taken to provide a definition of what horror is, how horror operates, and how the definition of horror can be applied to both Shanower and Seneca's works without error. Horror should be defined by how the characters operate within the text, i.e.: how they respond/react, and what common themes or objects exist within the text. For the purposes of the different mediums used by Seneca and Shanower, this being artistic works such as comics and plays with the purpose of enlightenment and entertainment, horror should first be defined as the "art-horror" of Noël Carroll's article "The Nature of Horror." Carroll calls art-horror a cross-art genre which "like suspense, works [to] illicit a certain kind of response. We shall presume that this is an emotional state whose emotion we shall call art-horror" (51-52). Carroll then goes on to explain

how art-horror aims to pull a certain kind of impact, chiefly *nausea*, *disgust*, and *loathing*, from the audience/readers as sensations which should be incited because of a particular monster's actions (53). Carroll's notion of art-horror might at first seem to fall flat as neither Seneca nor Shanower's works have monsters in the same sense that Carroll writes about. To understand how Shanower and Seneca's human villains are monstrous, Carroll's criticisms of horror should be supplemented with the commentary of Berys Gaut. Gaut, who writes in his article entitled "The Enjoyment Theory of Horror: A Response to Carroll" the reason for why human villains should be examined with the same care as monstrous ones in horror works, says how "[human killers] break through the limits of what we are permitted to do, or are even capable of imagining" (Gaut 284). By viewing Atreus and Agamemnon as humans who commit monstrous deeds, rather than stripping them of their humanity entirely, their actions become even more critical to understanding that it is their human faults and fears which feed the horrors they partake in.

Having thus shown that human characters can be the monstrous focus of horror texts, the third scholar to give context to the tropes and tools these human villains use is Jack Morgan. Morgan's article "Towards an Organic Theory of Horror" postulates that horror is the reverse-side of Comedy and that it has roots within atavistic, ritualistic performances and chthonic elements (60-61). Key among the elements Morgan brings up are horrors established by "our proprioceptive awareness of our own physical being, our embededness in a vast organic matrix. But rather than fertility, [organic horror] focuses upon withering;

rather than on growth, it focuses on morbid deterioration" (66). The kind of horror to be explored in both Shanower and Seneca's works is thus the kind enacted by normal humans upon other men and women; acts which entail ritual, biological inversion (*incest*), and destruction; acts which mark the practitioners as beings worthy of revulsion and loathing. While the definitions by which this "organic art-horror" operates seem simple enough to comprehend for how prose stories operate, Shanower and Seneca's texts take drastically diverse routes in conceptualizing their notions of horror when visuals are intermixed and used as a plot medium. While Seneca will be discussed in Section IV, Shanower's visual take on Thyestes, Agamemnon, and the horror behind the House of Atreus should be approached first so as to see the whole story.

4: The Family of Blood

Both Seneca and Shanower call upon the House of Atreus for their cast of characters who serve as their villains either in primary or secondary functions. While citing Agamemnon as a villain in Shanower's case presents some difficulty, as will be explained, his character is one who, like Atreus, maintains a course of action for his family that ensures bloodshed and violence. Shanower's comic series details the story of the Trojan War from sources such as Homer, but also from plays by Euripides and his work *Iphigenia at Aulis*, among many, many others.

Multiple issues of *Age of Bronze* are collected into a series of collected-issue volumes, with the second volume entitled *Sacrifice*. In this volume,

Shanower explores the actions of Agamemnon which result in the sacrifice of his daughter, Iphigenia. As a preamble to this story covered in *Sacrifice*, the story directly concerning Agamemnon's actions on Aulis, is Issue #4A, also called *Special Issue* #1. *Special Issue* #1 explicitly covers the story of Agamemnon's cruel family, starting first with Tantalus, Pelops, and then Atreus and Thyestes (See Figure 14 and the footnote on Page 61), often commonly referred to

Figure 6. "The Smiling Host" *Age of Bronze* #4A/Special (1999), 11.

collectively as the House of Atreus, as well as the impact of the curse which clings to their bloodline.

Shanower presents the story of Atreus, which will be explored in depth through Seneca's *Thyestes* further on, as a cruel and vindictive man who butchers his nephews and feeds them to his brother at a feast, due to a lust for revenge for wrongs committed by Thyestes against him in the past. As shown in Figure 6, Atreus is depicted visually by Shanower as a gregarious host who has nothing but happiness in his heart for his brother, a man who had previously

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raped his wife, stolen his throne, and driven him into exile. As Atreus serves the

role of human villain, his actions are capable of allowing him to be depicted as an

art-horror character: he kills and butchers his own family, a violation of what

Carroll references as, here quoting Mary Douglas, as "schemes of cultural

categorization" (55). One does not expect an older family member to slay

younger family members, let alone serve them to their father. It is in violation of

the natural order regarding the actions of life, actions which Jack Morgan calls

the ebb and flow of life, or the elasticity of family (72). Atreus ritually kills his

nephews, withers and corrupts his familial ties, and he uses taboo to perform his

impure deed. Figure 7 illustrates Shanower's use of Thyestes's nausea and

disgust, elements referenced by Carroll, his shadowed frame depicting his bodily

rejection of his brother's 'gift' to him. The complete 3x3 layout of the Tantalus

story as envisioned by Shanower is on Page 62 and listed as Figure 15.

Shanower's gruesome presentation of the smiling Atreus, as well as the horror

reflected upon his brother's face, serves then as one of the catalyzing elements

for the horror which Agamemnon undergoes in *Age of Bronze*. Agamemnon, a

man haunted by the knowledge that his father Atreus butchered and fed his

cousins to his uncle, faces a crisis of his own: he must sacrifice his daughter

Iphigenia to the god Artemis or he cannot sail for the war with Troy he longs for.

The next important aspect to explore is the minimalist nature of

Shanower's horror-visuals, especially in regards to how Figure 6 and Figure 7

are presented with no character dialogue, only a small narration via Shanower

which frames Atreus's reasons for committing his crimes against his family.

Sonja Foss, describing how visual rhetoric operates in her article "Framing the

Study of Visual Rhetoric," explains how "visual rhetoric refers not only to the

visual object as a communicative artifact but also to a perspective scholars take

on visual imagery or visual data" (Foss 305). Shanower creates a smiling Atreus

in Figure 6 to highlight the way Atreus is commonly viewed by academic and lay

readers alike, as a psychopath who masks his 'true face' with grins. Shanower's

depiction of the smiling host with the held out cup frames Atreus as a deceptive

entity, one who is thinking of things, as Gaut put it, beyond what we are "even

capable of imagining" doing to others. For many first time readers of Shanower's

Figure 7. "The Trap Revealed" *Age of Bronze* #4A/Special (1999), 11.

one-page rendition of the Atreus and Thyestes myth, which shows Thyestes's

cooked children being brought out before him, their reactions will mirror those of

Thyestes himself; the visceral response to such loathed horror elements is

mirrored by Thyestes himself who, in Figure 7, wretches upon the floor and contorts his body in shock. Shanower's art vividly suggests ample evidence for the common perspective that scholars have for the story: it is a nightmare which is inflicted upon Thyestes, one which shows the impure and diabolical Atreus corrupting and defiling his own bloodline.

Shanower's Agamemnon, as mentioned earlier, is not entirely the character presented in Homer's *The Iliad*. Borrowing from Euripides's portrayal of him, he is a man conflicted and wracked by not only the horrors of what his family has done, but also by the horrors he himself is knowingly capable of. Agamemnon is sickened and disgusted with himself, thus showing that while he will still ultimately allow the ghastly ritual of sacrifice to be performed, which will then lead to his violent and genocidal confrontation with Troy, his is a complex character who is a man well aware of his role within what Jack Morgan calls "a vast organic matrix" which will be detailed further (65). Figure 8 displays the aforementioned traits which art-horror summons forth from characters who find themselves suspended within the haunted world of murder, inhumanity, and the lust for power which one finds out only too late has a grizzly price. Ironically, Agamemnon is depicted by Shanower in Figure 8 to be the emotional victim of his own machinations as much as his daughter Iphigenia is physically, thus he is briefly the monster and the victim all in one.

The biological matrix commented upon by Jack Morgan which ensnares Agamemnon is a prison that has been created by the murderous sins of his forbearers. Agamemnon is seemingly fated to kill his own daughter. His life is but

one aspect in a tapestry of lives which have been defined by truly heinous acts, thus they define him as much as he defines himself. Figure 14 visually captures the literal and mythological history which Agamemnon is meshed in, the sins of Tantalus and Atreus and Thyestes literally being a part of the King's physical self as a verification of his biological lineage as well as his literary lineage.
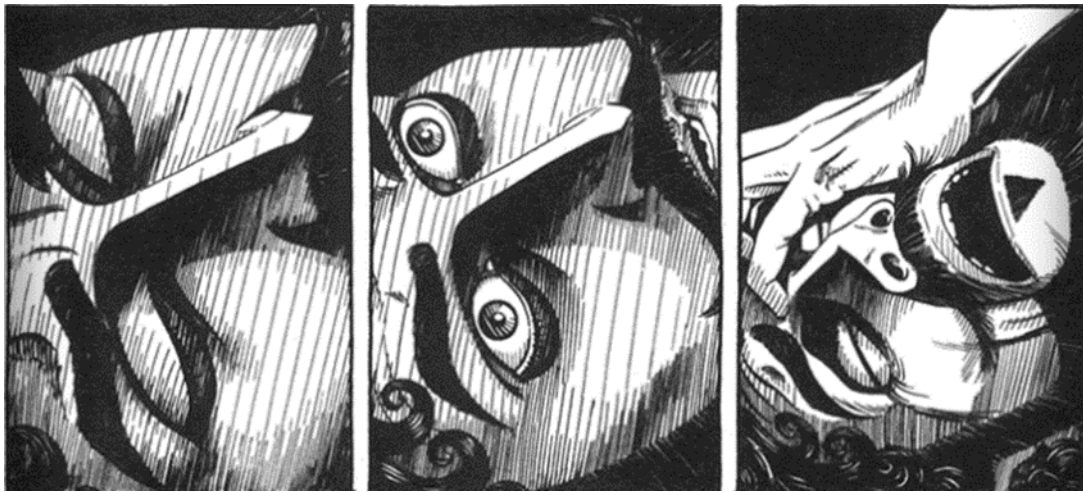
Figure 8. "The Horror" *Age of Bronze* Issue #17 (2003), 13.

Agamemnon's bloodline exists as a ghastly parody, an organism which feeds and breeds upon itself to survive. Jack Morgan, while describing the state of a haunted household, provides commentary which can also be applicable to the 'house' of a bloodline as well as a physical structure. Morgan writes how "areas that are squalid – dust covered, moldy, cobwebbed – reflect malaise and irresolution, an absence of biologically sound human functioning. Only a sick, neurotic animal allows its nest to become befouled" (73). In essence, the 'House' of Atreus is a genealogical building whose biological foundations are corrupted. Agamemnon, as a member of the House of Atreus, serves as a character whom

Shanower presents as being closely tied to organic-horror concepts: family, bloodlines, generational misfortunes, incest, and sibling cruelties. These concepts, according to Morgan's 'organic horror' theories, make the House of Atreus one which is haunted on account of the family's actions as well as by divine action. While Shanower's displays of artistic creation showcase the horrors Agamemnon has grown up under, thus making him sympathetic, his inability to follow through on his human insights and grief to their conclusion (defying his troops and not killing his daughter to create war) leads to his character being viewed as the ultimate monster by Iphigenia's mother, Clytemnestra.

Briefly, there should be commentary on the rhetorical implications Shanower presents visually in Figure 14. Foss writes how, concerning visual rhetoric, "colors, lines, textures, and rhythms in an artifact provide a basis for the viewer to infer the existence of images, emotions, and ideas" (Foss 306). Figure 14 shows a glimpse of the history of the House of Atreus in its entirety, thus giving a hint at how, visually, Shanower has created a work that rhetorically aims to condense down the inverted, horrifying bloodline of Atreus from Tantalus to Agamemnon himself. While it is one thing to read a genealogical outline of the House of Atreus, Shanower visually depicts, in just this one section of a bigger image, how tangled, violent, and circular the horror deeds are among their family. The visual rhythm of the Figure 14 is illogical, with characters emerging from hair and killing one character while they themselves are murdered by others. Shanower's rich detail only serves to highlight the cruelty each character does to the other, thus in a sense visually presenting the "befouled" human nest, as

mentioned by Morgan, of Atreus's family going back to Tantalus himself. It is a road-map of violence which visually captures the essence of the ruinous, morbid house.

Agamemnon's curse is his violation of his humanity by placing his social role as king before his human concerns as a father. The violation of these factors are among what commits his wife to sacrifice him monstrously like a common animal when he returns home from Troy. The cyclical nature of sacrifice and familial destruction linger over Agamemnon and it is Shanower's work in Issue #19 of *Age of Bronze* which perhaps best displays this. Here, after the death of Iphigenia, Clytemnestra curses the Greeks upon news of her daughter's death, thus foreshadowing the next link in the dramatic chain of events which will further befoul the House of Atreus and invert its members through ritual sacrifice, deception, and betrayal. In the end, Atreus and Agamemnon become the foreshadowed agents of Clytemnestra's own villainous transformation[1].

5: Shanower and Seneca

As mentioned previously, horror, regardless of the medium, needs to speak to fears and concerns which are universal. When Morgan writes how horror has roots in ritualistic acts, taboo, and that these things speak to matters concerning biological heritage, how does this connect to the Greeks specifically? To examine this, we must look to the Roman Seneca and his play *Thyestes* as

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[1] Clytemnestra can be see seen rejecting Agamemnon's affections in Issue #14, perhaps reacting to impurity of the man whom she is with. Shanower's rendition of her character presents her as untrusting towards Agamemnon and seems to fit with the mold of her as being the orchestrator of the King's murder, not Aegisthus as some believe

they capture the essence of horror which plagued the Greeks and Romans alike.

In his article, Hugh Lloyd-Jones writes how "the evidence for both cannibalism

and the ritual killing of children in Paleolithic times cannot be disputed; and even

if the practice had become obsolete before the Bronze Age, the memory may

have endured" (Lloyd-Jones 89). Seneca writes his own grizzled rendition of the

Thyestes myth which captures this memory in hideous fashion. Seneca writes a

messenger commenting to the Chorus of *Thyestes* how, when detailing Atreus's

killing of his nephews, he says "He was the sacrificial priest, his voice / Boldly

intoned the liturgy of death" and that he "Placed [his nephews] before him, and

took up the knife. / He saw that all was done; and all was done / According to the

rites of sacrifice" (4.96-103). Seneca's depiction of Atreus as a priest who is

inverting the rites of sacrifice, his position as an uncle, and as a King are

mirrored in his deceptive smile and defiant posture in Shanower (*see Figure 1

and Figure 2*). Seneca's writing defines the very ritualistic acts whose memory

certainly lingered within the Greeks and even the Romans, memory that can be

argued still resides in people today.

Seneca writes how, upon summoning Thyestes from his torture at the

play's start, a Fury commands him to "Let havoc rule this house; call blood and

strife / And death; let every corner of this place / Be filled with the revenge of

Tantalus" (1.65-67). While Shanower does not make use of overt ghostly

imagery, he depicts his human villains as the agents of their own damnation; his

art in Figure 14 connects to a theme that Seneca was aiming to demonstrate,

that all the violence which has cursed the House of Atreus is a cyclical repetition

of the same kind of crime which Tantalus himself committed, i.e.: cannibalizing

his family for power, either spiritually, physically, or both. The Fury's reference to

the 'house' can also be read as interchangeable with the bloodline started by

Tantalus and with the physical palace where Thyestes is lured by Atreus.

Seneca and Shanower both emphasize the bodily horror of Thyestes's plight,

which was pictured in Figure 7, as being revolting, but Seneca's rich prose

deserves exploration. Upon gaining the knowledge of what he has eaten,

Thyestes says "What agitation in my stomach swells? / What moves within me?

Some protesting burden / Lies on my heart, and in my breast a voice / That is not

mine is groaning. O my children!" (5.147-150). These lines by Seneca parallel

Shanower's art in presenting Thyestes "responding to [the] violation of nature"

(Carroll 53).

So, while human murder and cannibalism have roots in actions which the

Greeks warned against going back to the character of Tantalus, is that the end of

what 'defines' horror to the Greeks? In essence it was not just 'what' was done to

the bodies of the fallen, but what was done to them after; it was how they died,

who killed them, and what happened to their bodies. Iphigenia is killed by her

father on account, some scholars say, directly because of the crimes committed

by Atreus and Thyestes towards each other[2]. Seneca even links Agamemnon to

the crimes committed by Atreus physically. Seneca has Atreus comment "No –

Agamemnon / Shall be a conscious agent of my plan, / And Menelaus shall help

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[2] Hugh Lloyd-Jones comments how some scholars believe Artemis demands blood from
Agamemnon for the children he will butcher at Troy should he sail while some believe it
is to atone for his father and uncle's crimes

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him with full knowledge. / Their handling of the deed will give me means / To test the truth of their suspected births" (2.24-228). Atreus mentions his children directly in the play so as to bind their stories across any other play or account to the horrors Seneca has Atreus commit. Although hinted at through dialogue by Shanower, he does not directly reference if Agamemnon and Atreus witnessed or took part in these horrific murders, but, like Seneca, he connects Agamemnon and his family to the other crimes visually in his art as can be seen in Figure 14. As Agamemnon grieves in Figure 8 for the state of his bloodline, so too is Atreus concerned with his own. Atreus worries that Thyestes may have fathered his children with Aerope. The horrors of these two men's concerns over their biological heritage contributes to the ritual killings of Thyestes's children and of Iphigenia.

E.F. Watling, author of the Introduction to *Thyestes* in the penguin e-book anthology *Four Tragedies and Octavia* which collects Seneca's plays, writes how Seneca involves "a disastrous event foretold and anticipated from the start, and pursued ruthlessly to its end," a fact which lines up alongside Morgan's comment that horror, at heart, turns on the possibility of "the all too possible victory of morbid forces" (64). Regardless of how sympathetic Agamemnon's past is presented, his victory at Troy is built on the bones of his own child. Iphigenia's sacrifice is a horrific act which is made worse because Shanower so vividly shows Agamemnon's wracked torture over the deed which, despite his best efforts to stop, he still allows. Atreus's sacrifice of his own family and the doom he brings upon his brother are, at heart, horror stories relating to the familial

realm, the domain where all humans have at least some knowledge and experience. These stories show men who become defiled by their own fears and passions and, through this defilement, they become monstrous and destroy their own family members in taboo and terrible fashions. Seneca's writings, which Watling described as being valued "for their moral lessons," speak against the horrors of unchecked passion in rulers who toss aside the concerns of their subjects, although this concern does not, strictly speaking, translate well for modern audiences. Modern audiences will perhaps be more moved by tragedies connecting to more universal themes, themes such as family, the very theme Shanower builds up with Agamemnon so as to build up the horror of Iphigenia's sacrifice. Shanower's incorporation of the Thyestes myth supplements and strengths his Agamemnon content. Both Seneca and Shanower present horror stories in mediums which are directly accessible to the people they wish to speak to; Seneca wrote his plays for private audiences while Shanower writes his for mass-audiences. Regardless, the person being presented to must still be reached through a direct connection which draws out emotions. For Seneca and Shanower, their stories clearly evoke organic art-horror, and both stories compliment the other to show the diverse ways art-horror can be utilized through the same myths. These works serve to shock and awaken audiences to the primal, nameless terrors which have stirred in man since before recorded history, the terror of biology and humanity gone stagnant and wrong. Seneca's *Thyestes* was described by Watling as: "the action [in the play] is placeless and timeless; it presents a series of pictures: the menace of an ancestral curse" and "the horror

climax of the murders." Shanower's simple and blocked out rendition of the *Thyestes* murders is a direct representation of Watling's "series of pictures" reference.

By adapting Seneca's story into almost wordless images, as well as by showing Agamemnon's family in an artistically gruesome fashion, Shanower elevates the primal horror elements within the core Greek myths to that of a raw, emotional experience. Whether reading Seneca's *Thyestes* or visually following the story of *Age of Bronze*, it is evident that the Greeks myths, both when borrowed by Romans or recreated by modern artists today, have roots in unique kinds of horror whose origins extend well into the nightmarish past of pre-history. The memories of these taboos will likely always haunt us, but man will always endeavor to plunge into that shadow world with every new artistic medium at our disposal.

Chapter Three

Shanower and the Borders of Mythology

1: Comic Panels and Visual Rhetoric

Eric Shanower's ability to intermingle multiple mythic stories into his 'House of Horror' plotline in *Age of Bronze* showcases his talent as a visual mythographer. His management of plays by Seneca, Euripides, and of stories by Homer, Apollodorus, and others which are then coupled to a special horror aesthetic demonstrates his ability to adapt core themes from many works into one singular piece of content. Still, Shanower's micromanagement of so many story pieces, variations, and styles is only one component to his visually oriented mythographic talents. The dominant art-horror theme within the 'House of Horror' storyline, which was chiefly present in the #4A Special Issue, is not a theme which exists across the whole of *Age of Bronze*, now presently a comic with over thirty singular issues and two special presentation issues. What does connect these issues is Shanower's singular vision to tell the whole of the Trojan War story in a unified and coherent fashion. Shanower explains his goals in *Age of Bronze Issue #1*'s open letters section being "to present a complete version of the story, synthesized from many version of the legend, while making it as consistent as possible with the archaeological record" (22). While Shanower's art displays his ability to present renditions of the Greek gods and other supernatural events, as was chiefly the case in his depictions of Tantalus and Pelops being re-born in the #4A special, the overall unifying aesthetic of the *Age of Bronze* comic is two-fold. First, Shanower crafts a mythological environment which makes use

of a historical aesthetic to impart a verisimilitude with our own world. Second, and more importantly, *Age of Bronze* is chiefly a character driven narrative comic. While the larger and more violent events of the Trojan War are indeed present, his work aims to evoke a sense of humanity from the pivotal characters who drive the story forwards, primarily characters such as Helen, Paris, King Priam, and Kassandra. But how can a story which aims to achieve a historical aesthetic and showcase human drama get around ignoring the existence of the gods in Homer's account of the Trojan War? While Shanower himself admits that re-telling the Trojan War without the gods is not a new approach to the story in *Age of Bronze Issue* #3 (22), his use of specialized comic panel frame borders afford him a stylized means of controlling the 'divine' dimensions of *The Iliad* and other Trojan War myths. Through special borders which evoke either character memory or mythic memory, Shanower's *Age of Bronze* comic displays an important visual mythographic element which, when examined according to Sandra Foss's elements of visual rhetoric and Scott McCloud's understanding of comic space, show how the classical elements of the Trojan War myth are curtailed and controlled so as to accommodate the specific task the comic sets out to accomplish.

Before the specifics of Shanower's controlling mythology through special comic panel borders can be discussed, there must first be an understanding of what both a comic panel, also called a frame, and a border are. In his work *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*, author Scott McCloud defines comic panels and their borders in the following ways. Regarding the singular,

rectangular comic frames which traditionally break up events in comics, McCloud says "these icons we call panels or 'frames' have no fixed or absolute meaning, like the icons of language, science, and communication. Nor is their meaning as fluid and malleable as the sorts of icons we call pictures. The panels act as a sort of general indicator that time or space is being divided" (99). While comic "frames" then break up events into a sequence which are traditionally read in a left-to-right linear order, what then is the space between comic frames? McCloud writes "That's what comics aficionados have named 'the gutter.' And despite its unceremonious title, the gutter plays host to much of the magic and mystery that are at the very heart of comics" (66). So if comics are broken down into a sequence of pictorial events broken up by a "gutter," this being an artistic device which forces the reader to bring a sense of closure between the depicted images within the "frames," how does Shanower use these comic techniques to control mythology and establish his historical, character-driven aesthetic?

The first kind of border which Shanower makes use of in Age of Bronze to control and regulate mythology is the "memory border." A memory border is a special rendition of the frame's edges in the *Age of Bronze* comic where Shanower expressly means to signify that what is being viewed is the personal memory of a character. Typically the character who is recalling events or people is shown before, during, or after "character memory" sequences play out. Memory borders exist as broken, fragmented, or otherwise hazy and incomplete frame borders. These kinds of frame borders physically break open the barriers between the interior contents of the comic frame and the comic gutter, thus

merging them together into a non-descript and stylized piece of art without the

normal confines of the frame to denote the sequence of events in a concrete

fashion. But how does this help Shanower with his goals as a visual

mythographer who has set out to undo the active existence of the Greek gods?

Further, how does this help Shanower establish character? In the case of

Shanower's presentation of Helen of Sparta in *Age of Bronze Issue #4*, before

she is abducted by Paris to Troy, Shanower's borders are the key to this artistic

and mythographical dilemma.

2: Helen, Paris, and Memory Borders

      Helen's introduction in Issue #4 is unique among almost all other

characters in *Age of Bronze*. She is shown praying before an altar with an image

of Aphrodite before it; however, her features are obscured by shadows or when

she covers her hands over her face. Helen is introduced in the middle of a prayer

to Aphrodite during which she implores the goddess to do her will through her

body, even if it means abandoning King Menelaus. Shanower presents close-up

images of Helen's eyes, hands, and mouth, yet Helen herself is obscured as she

prays. In her prayer she begins to think back upon the person who has caused

her to even contemplate abandoning her family in Sparta, Prince Paris of Troy.

The common story which typically binds Helen and Paris together is known in

mythology as The Judgment of Paris. According to Apollodorus, the myth is as

follows,

For one of these reasons, then, Eris threw an apple as a beauty prize for Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite. Zeus ordered Hermes to take them to Alexander on Mount Ida so that they could be judged by him. The goddesses promised to give Alexander gifts: Hera, if she were chosen the most beautiful of all, promised him kingship over everyone; Athena promised victory in war; and Aphrodite promised marriage to Helen. He chose Aphrodite and sailed off to Sparta after Phereclos built him ships.

The Alexander/Paris of *Age of Bronze*, from the very beginning of the first issue, is not a character with divine ties. He was presented as a lazy, teenage cowherd whose acts of impulsiveness and foolishness eventually result in his discovery as a prince of Troy by his biological father, King Priam. Shanower completely divorces Paris from a story connected to the gods, yet it is his memory borders used for Helen which accomplishes Shanower's goals.

Helen's recollections of Paris are framed with the borders of memory, the broken and hazy borders which denote a disconnection from the main, linear narrative of the story itself. Within these recollected fragments of Helen's memory is a sequence where Paris verbally tells the Queen of Sparta the story of the Judgment of Paris. Paris seductively tells Helen how it was the will of the gods that they be together, a statement which Helen desires so strongly that she begs Aphrodite to allow it before the altar where she is first introduced. Before examining the visual contents of Helen's memories, i.e.: how Paris is presented as opposed to Helen, Shanower's body language for the prince, point of view,

etc, it should be noted that Sandra Foss puts forth three aspects which are key in examining visual rhetoric. These elements are presented elements, suggested elements, and third, evaluation and assessment of elements (Foss 307-309). Shanower presents Helen's recollections of Paris as being shown distinctly from her point of view, as if the comic reader were looking through her eyes at Paris himself. Shanower's framing of these point of view images with memory borders creates a burred, hazy look which makes it seem like Helen is recalling the memories in question through a haze. Shanower, in his attempt to comment on the kinds of drama present within *The Iliad* story, says in *Issue #9* how "one of the things that makes the story of Troy so great is that it encompasses an immense range of human experience, all the rawest emotion, the heights of love, and the depths of sorrow …" (21) Helen is presented as being locked within the grip of highest passion, a passion so overwhelming that it has clouded her mind's eye and her memories of Paris. But what has causes this lustful haze and how does Helen's memory borders change the story of the Trojan War?

Shanower's Paris is, simply put, a deceitful and irresponsible teenager. Paris meets Helen because he was en route to rescue his biological father's sister, Hesione. Paris delays while staying with Menelaus as a guest and there he seduces Helen. Paris's presentation by Shanower as a lowly cowherd who ascends to heights too great for his youth is the heart of his character in *Age of Bronze*. Shanower severs the bonds of divine assistance relating to his birth and abandonment on Mt. Ida, instead focusing on his existence as a teenager who has always had a history of seducing local women and in saying more than he

can support. Paris is a figure who is meant to be human, hence his story about mediating in a debate between goddesses is, in Shanower's mythographical universe, a farce. Helen's memories of Paris's vast and staggering lie showcase different and important elements about each character which together underscore the point of why Shanower created the *Age of Bronze* comic. Helen's hazy, passionate memories present her as a very lust filled and impressionable young woman. In Shanower's comic, gone is any hint that Aphrodite personally favors Helen or that Paris is meant to have her. By assigning Paris's recalled "judgment" story to the lust-filled, blurred memories of Helen, Shanower completely undoes the foundational myth which, to Homer and other ancients, started the Trojan War in the first place. Paris and Helen are impetuous, hormonal, and foolish people, people free of any divine intervention on the part of Aphrodite or any other being. Helen's point of view of Paris showcases her obsessive and single-minded view of the handsome prince. Shanower depicts her memories of Paris as being dominated by his face, of his story. Helen is never recalled within her own memories because she is lost within lust for Paris, his appearance, and his farcical story. The few scant moment preceding the depiction of Helen recalling Paris and his story are enshrouded and mysterious. In a sense, Helen recalling Paris and his tale are the first insights Shanower provides for Helen as she is introduced in the comic. Shanower distinctly defines Helen by both her prayers to Aphrodite, ones imploring the goddess to let her act on the urge to go with Paris, and her reflective yet hazy memories of the prince.

Shanower's presented elements are bold and on the surface of the comic page itself: Helen recalls Paris and his story about the goddesses. Shanower's suggested elements, namely those which are demanded due to the nature of the comic's historical aesthetic, are that Paris is a liar; no gods exist physically in Shanower's comic so Paris is deceptive in his wordplay with the Spartan Queen. By examining the borders of the comic and how Shanower has relegated this unique memory of Paris to Helen's obsessive, lustful memories, Shanower establishes a Trojan War narrative unhindered by both Aphrodite as a tangible character who nudges Helen and Paris along and the idea that Paris even stood in judgment over three deities. Helen's hazy, point of view centered recollection of Paris's story can be glimpsed in Figure 9.

Figure 9. "The Con of Paris" *Age of Bronze* Issue #4 (1999), 7.

Figure 9 shows Shanower's use of broken, open borders which bleed into the comic gutter, a hallmark of his indication that the borders of reality, memory, and time are being dissolved.

The Helen depicted in *Age of Bronze* runs counter to numerous other

renditions of the Trojan War in comics. To demonstrate the difference in frame

and border arrangements concerning depictions of Helen and Paris, work by

Alice Duke and Angel Sepulveda can be referenced as comparison pieces

against Shanower's own art. Sepulveda's art from Marvel Comic's *Trojan War*

series presents a singular panel presentation of Helen and Paris embracing

under the watchful gaze of Aphrodite herself. The singular panel depiction,

following McCloud's analysis of how frames break down and control space,

forces a reader to see Helen and Paris's meeting as one not only of divine

influence, but also seduction. By presenting Helen and Paris in this way, the

Figure 10. "The Moon of Love" Trojan War (2009), Page 12.

Trojan War comic team strikes a traditionalist role in 'what' is presented as being

important in the Trojan War story. As adapters of myth who do rely on the nature

of the myths themselves, ones which cast the gods as active characters, the Trojan War authors present a faithful but empty account of Helen and Paris.

Shanower's presentation of Paris, via Helen's memory border specific panels, exists as a character who is deceptive, yet understandable: he longs to possess the most beautiful woman he has ever seen, and Helen similarly burns with passion for him. By contrasting Shanower's multiple frame, POV-specific, character memory bordered presentation of Paris and Helen's first meeting, it can be seen how diligently Shanower works to emphasize human drama over supernatural or divine drama. Lastly, what about Helen herself? How does Shanower's presentation of her lustful memories counter other depictions of her character in comics? Helen's original relationship with both Paris and Aphrodite in Homer's *The Iliad* is one which can best be described as "a marriage gone bad." Helen is soon used by both Paris and Aphrodite for their own ends, and Helen is even threatened by the goddess in Book III of *The Iliad* when she tries to stand up to the goddess of love. Homer writes the following words as being said to Aphrodite by Helen when the goddess tries to summon her to Paris's bedchamber after the goddess saved him from being killed by Helen's ex-husband, Menelaus. Homer writes Helen's words from Book III as "What do you want now, goddess? Why are you always / tricking me? Will you drive me still further on, / to Maeonia or Phrygia and hand me over / to another one of the pretty men you so love?" (374-377). Helen's harsh words evoke a relationship between two characters which cannot exist in Shanower's re-telling of the Trojan

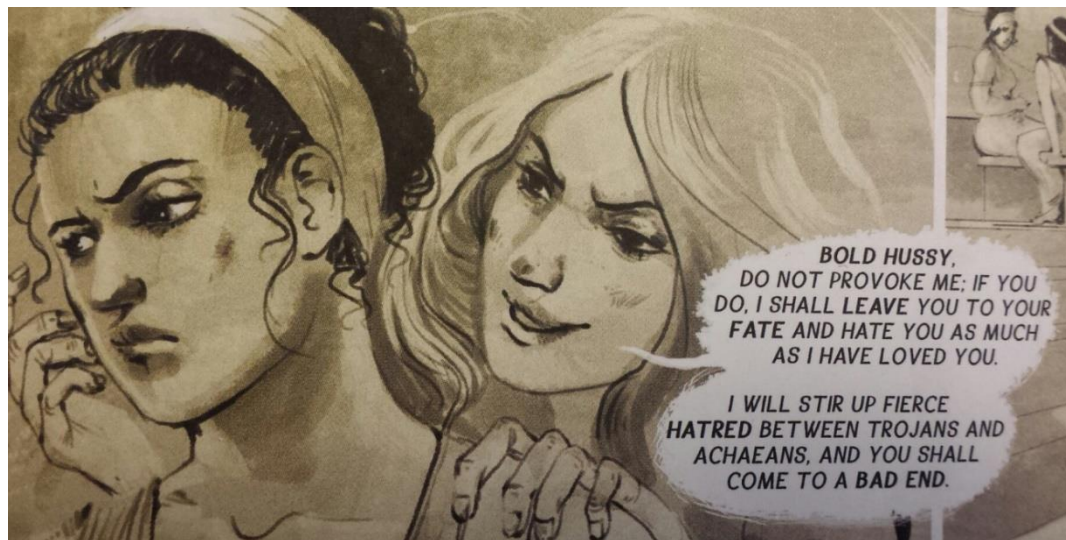War story. Duke's illustrated adaptation of Aphrodite and Helen's conversation is visible in Figure 11.

Figure 11. "Threatening Words" The Graphic Canon V.I (1999), 45.

While Helen is presented as a devout believer in the gods by Shanower, as are almost all other Greek and Trojan characters, there is no 'goddess' to engage with Helen as a sounding board. Shanower's presentation of Helen as a lust-filled and very irrational Queen places the dramatic emphasis on her as the prime agent of her own destiny. Shanower's Helen and her borderless frame memories of Paris strike a different tone that Alice Duke's depiction of Aphrodite's response to Helen's biting comments in her illustrated adaptation of Book III of *The Iliad*.

Duke's depiction of Aphrodite as a threatening, tangible character summons up the same narrative demands as the Marvel *Trojan War* comic. Helen, by being susceptible to and also a victim to the whims of Aphrodite, exists as a character who is less dramatic in that her agency is limited. Shanower's removal of the Judgment of Paris myth, or more precisely his relegation of this

myth to the status of a teenager's fanciful charm technique, means Helen's thoughts and choices carry a different kind of weight than that of her traditional comic counterparts. Shanower's emphasis on Helen's character through a frame sequence without borders, so as to showcase her emotional state and her obsession with Paris, is just one of the two ways Shanower shifts the narrative tone of the Trojan War story to suit his aesthetic needs in *Age of Bronze*. While Paris's story about the Judgment of Paris is one rooted in his role as a teenage charlatan, how does Shanower maneuver around the mythological elements of the Trojan War which play a prominent role and cannot be so dramatically altered? Once more, the borders of the comic come into play.

3: King Priam and Mythological Borders

While Shanower frames Paris as a bold and brash teenage prince who uses the gods as a rhetorical means to steal the wives of other men, *Age of Bronze* does contain within its pages characters who revere the gods. While some elements of the Trojan War can be relegated to the side, as Shanower does with Paris and the Judgment story, as memories, some facets of Greek myth are retained by him for other reasons. Shanower presents characters such as Helen who are devout believers, but he utilizes their belief in the gods for specific ends. Largely, characters evoke the gods in ways which prompts special borders to become manifest on the pages of the comic. These frame borders are called mythological borders and they manifest when the comic comes to a moment where the story of the Trojan War comes a story moment which

demands that the story account for the gods. These moments bring into sharp focus two of the key questions. The first is "Why was Helen not returned to Greece?" The second question concerns the story of Agamemnon and his sacrifice of Iphigenia, "Why does Agamemnon give Artemis the life of his daughter?" Unlike the story issue of why Helen left with Paris, an issue which Shanower connects to relatable human concerns, the questions mentioned are tackled by Shanower through the borders of the panels in ways which evoke the divinities present within the Trojan War story and yet still affords the over-all *Age of Bronze* comic a mythological setting without direct divine involvement.

Shanower has many moments in the *Age of Bronze* comic to establish the divine in unique ways; however, this decision to showcase mythological borders for the segments he does shows his concern for the "bigger picture" questions readers often face when reading Homer. For Shanower, the characters do exist in a mythological story; however, the demands of the historical and dramatic aesthetic place constrains both on how Shanower presents the divine as well as how the characters present the divine. While answering fan-mail in the pages of *Age of Bronze Issue #17*, Shanower writes,

> The characters in Age of Bronze vary in their beliefs and
> understanding. But generally, when you speak of being children of
> gods, they don't believe this as physical truth, but rather a
> metaphysical truth. A character is said to be the son of a god, yet
> everyone still realizes he has a biological father. It's not posturing,

it's belief in the supernatural, part of their religion, the way they
believe the world works. (23)

Shanower's specific presentation of the divine then demands a special border to allow the art-comic factor of *Age of Bronze* to shine through without undoing his unique mythographical composition. While McCloud comments on frames which define time and space, Shanower's memory borders break down this system and present a timeless quality to the memories of characters which stands somewhat outside the traditional narrative structure. In a sense, Shanower does this with mythological borders, yet these artistic flourishes stand apart from memory borders because, first, there can be no direct memory of the gods, and second, because the borders typically are embodied by things representing the gods themselves. As Helen's memories of Paris show, the gods exist as a belief system held by the characters which might be misused in order to showcase a character, like Paris, acting on his impulsive desires to impress a pretty girl. This fits Paris's role as a teenager and it removes the 'reality' of the Judgment of Paris from the Trojan War narrative. Still, because certain story elements demand the gods and those who believe in them to have a firm role in the *Age of Bronze*, how and where does Shanower make use of mythical borders to tell his story?

If Paris is defined by his role as a selfish teenager, King Priam might best be described by his role as a steward, specifically the steward of the Trojan royal family. Priam's character in *Age of Bronze* is one who is utterly devoted to his family, perhaps even to a level which endangers his whole culture. In the *Age of Bronze* it is evident that, at first, Priam does not want Helen within the walls of

Troy, yet he relents on this impulse as soon as he finds Helen is with child. This child, as a son of Paris, would be one of Priam's grandchildren. At first it is this reason alone that Priam cites for his refusal to return Helen; however, in *Age of Bronze Issue #23*, Priam and his wife Hecuba converse about Helen's fate. In the comic Priam, who is tending a vineyard, recalls to Hecuba the myth of how Ganymede was taken away by the Trojan's sky deity to serve as the wine-server of the immortals. As recompense, the gods granted the Trojans grapes from which fabulous wines were to be derived. Priam uses this story to illustrate how the favors of the gods are not to be turned down, either spiritually or physically. He connects the fate of Helen to the royal line of Troy and further explains that, as he was unable to rescue his sister Hesione from Herakles, he will do everything in his power to ensure Helen and her child are not returned to Greece.

It should be noted briefly that Shanower's stance regarding Priam's refusal to return Helen has always posed a quandary for readers of the Trojan War stories. In his Introduction to his 2011 edition of *The Iliad*, translator Stephen Mitchell comments on why he believes Helen was kept in Troy, writing how,

> The real reason explanation for the Trojan's fatal insanity [in keeping Helen] is the shape of the story Homer was bound to tell. That story could be deepened and expanded and elaborated, but it had to end with the destruction of Troy. However we may feel like begging Priam or Hector to give Helen back (the way early twelfth-century audiences at the Yiddish theater in New York used to yell at King Lear, 'Don't believe them! They're rotten!'), we can be sure

that Priam and Hector won't listen. Heraclitus said that character is

fate; in *The Iliad*, story is fate. The Trojan couldn't return Helen

because they didn't return her. (xxvi-xxvii)

The idea of fate being a key component in the Trojan War is vital to

understanding how tragedy is unavoidable, yet Shanower's mythological borders

for Priam illustrate the reasoning behind the tragedy. Shanower's mythology

cannot be wholly bound to the idea that the mystic Greek concept of fate, the

kind even Zeus cannot escape, yet the divine forces which guide the characters

needs to be accounted for. Mythic borders provides an artistic release valve for

being able to 'show' the unseen forces which guide and shape the minds of

Kings, without also implying that characters are wholly bound to do certain things

solely because Homer or other authors wrote them. Shanower's characters, free

from overt divine influence, are required to exhibit a rationale behind their

choices so as to provide the reader a new source for where the tragedy stems

from. If the gods are not to play a direct part in influencing the Greeks and

Trojans to their fates, characters are dictated by Shanower to espouse their logic

and reasoning in ways which fit the comic medium, even if those fates are still as tragic as when Homer originally told the tale.

Figure 12. "Priam's Logic" *Age of Bronze* Issue #23 (2006), 6.

Shanower's paneling for this comic contains imagery which is similar to the kind utilized in the 'House of Horror' story. Priam is shown being set against a series of grape vines which traverse over the whole page, an effect similar to where Agamemnon's hair weaves through the comic page of the #4A Special to create 'frames' which show the history of the House of Pelops and Atreus. Enclosed within the vines are a symbolic depiction of the sky god of Troy with Ganymede, Priam himself at the lower center of the page, and, set into Priam's hands as visual aids, images of Hesione and Hecuba. The stylized vines help unify various components of Priam's rhetorical assessment of Helen's worth together, unlike the normal comic frame paneling which sequences time and space, or memory borders which shows events as being separate from the 'present' of the story. It is important to note how Shanower does not depict the

Trojan sky deity in a tangible way. Instead, the deity, and Ganymede, are shown as carved images upon a wall. This depiction of Priam by Shanower is visible in Figure 12 and in full on Page 63. The full page version is listed as Figure 16. This stylized variation of the two mythological characters establishes a divide between Priam and his story; the King of the Trojans might believe Ganymede, a person he was never able to meet, ascended to be with a god he also has never directly seen, but Priam's bond to the myth is an impersonal one. It is the vines of Troy, as depicted in the borders by Shanower, which create a bond for the King between his 'mythic' history and his very real 'present.' Where Paris had an apple to serve as a prop for his deception of Helen, Priam has his vines to serve as a tether to his faith. This faith in his gods coupled with his protectiveness of Helen and her child all serve to fill the void left by Shanower's removal of the gods as characters in the Trojan War story. As Shanower commented, the characters believe their links to the supernatural and the divine are real even if they are metaphysical, yet readers, especially those familiar enough with the Trojan War myths to know the gods should normally be present, require additional mythographical support. Shanower's mythological borders provide that support and thus establish the importance to Priam of the Ganymede myth, without requiring Ganymede or the Trojan sky god to have physically existed. While Shanower remains unable to directly insert the gods into his comic, his use of mythic panels provides a way to both maintain Homer's story requirements and unique kind of comic which Image has set out to be published.

4: Kassandra and the Blending of Memory and Myth

      While Shanower uses memory borders to deny the existence of the

Judgment of Paris story and mythological borders to lend credit to the perceived

divine bonds which cursed Agamemnon and which bolster Priam's confidence in

keeping Helen, there is another aspect to Shanower's border usage. While

Shanower clearly relegates some myths to be obsolete in his particular

composition of multiple Trojan War myths, and others he transitions to be

sources of indirect guides for his characters, his handling of the character

Kassandra, daughter of King Priam, pushes the limits of both character memory

borders and mythological borders.

Figure 13. "Remembering" *Age of Bronze* Issue #11 (2001), 4.

      Few characters in mythology are as pitiable as Kassandra. According to

ancient writers she was a woman who had been involved with the worship of

Apollo, yet through differing accounts ranging from rape to offering and then

declining sex to Apollo, she is cursed. Apollo in mythology renders Kassandra

able to see the future yet never to be believed. Kassandra's prophetic abilities

prove one area where Shanower must follow the story, yet he cannot explicitly

render Apollo as a tangible figure. Unlike Paris and his deceptive use of the

gods, or Priam who summons an impersonal bonds with the gods through

Ganymede to justify his choices, Kassandra claims a very direct, very intimate

bond with Apollo as the source of her loud, impolite outbursts of prophecy.

Shanower, faced with a tragic character, uses paneling borders in a way that

combines Kassandra's mythological and character elements: she is a fractured

woman who claims to have known the violent touch of a god, yet gods cannot

take tangible shape for Shanower. *Age of Bronze* reconciles these opposing

elements while still showcasing Kassandra's character as being a tragic one. For

this process to join the mythological and the personal, frame borders play the

starring role.

The illustration present in Figure 13 can be viewed in whole on Page 64

under the listing of Figure 17. Shanower presents Kassandra, as well as her twin

brother, as the victims of a gruesome sexual assault while they were in the

temple of a Trojan deity. In the page, Kassandra whispers to her brother Helenus

about what happened to them in the hopes he will come to her aid before King

Priam and reveal she is not a liar. This page presents a composite of the real

with the mythological, the real being the content framed within the jagged, glass-

like panel frames of the present where Kassandra whispers to Helenus, and the

personal memories of Kassandra with their hazy, non-distinct elements.

However, unlike the character memories of Helen where Paris is in clear view,

Kassandra recalls the personage who assaulted herself and Helenus as non-descriptive. Their attacker is more of a shape than a detailed figure. Because the whole page is consumed by Kassandra's horrific memory, this recollection serves as a mythological border for Kassandra's present conversation with Helenus, should the reader decide to view it as such. Kassandra's broken state of mind presents her as a typically unreliable narrator, yet in *Age of Bronze* she is also a character who cannot lie and is always disbelieved. Shanower's borders create a paradoxical, visual puzzle for the readers of the comic. Is Kassandra telling the truth about her visitation from a deity, which follows Homer yet means disregarding the 'truth' Shanower builds? Or, opposite that, is Kassandra clearly insane from her all too real sexual assault as a child? If the paneling in the background is indeed a mythological memory, then Kassandra, like in most accounts of the Trojan War, is an outsider to the other characters whose prophetic words ring true with their tragedy. If the paneling is strictly a personal memory of Kassandra, one untouched by mythology, then her character remains tragic, yet it also means her family's ignoring of her prophecies are due to the guilt they feel over her past. In either case, Kassandra is cast as a tragic person whose history is tainted by horror.

Kassandra's paneling in *Age of Bronze* proves to be among the most important in the comic. While Shanower crafts a story which is immersed in a historical aesthetic, his emphasis of human drama, specifically love and tragedy, will run counter to key moments in the over-all Trojan War story. The nature of the comic medium is to visually show readers what is or is not tangible and real

in the *Age of Bronze* setting, hence why not seeing active deities, or being able to see through the eyes of various characters, becomes important is delivering the content Shanower needs to his readers. Yet, Shanower has said that his comic is still mythology, simply one with a certain aesthetic and with a goal to be chronologically complete in its compilation of Trojan War stories. Kassandra's history is vital to not only the Trojan War, but to stories ranging from when Paris/Alexander was discovered to after the Trojan War ends. Shanower's visual puzzle of Kassandra's memories shows where a single reader will provide the comic with a powerful perspective. How does this reader perspective impact the whole of the Trojan War story?

Shanower clearly omits the gods as an active divine force, yet he also never explicitly says in the age of the *Age of Bronze* comic that their forces are imagined. Shanower's depiction of a Trojan War without the gods as active participants still shows characters who believe in something unseen. A reader's response to Kassandra's plight allows the *Age of Bronze* reading audience to decide in what manner they want to believe Shanower, whether it is that his Greek gods are unseen yet real, or if they are completely non-existent. Shanower's specialized borders allow his narrative to move along as much as possible unimpeded by the divine characters of Homer, mainly so as to make his visual mythography flow easier from myth to myth, yet they also hint at the ability of a reader to view the *Age of Bronze* in the same spirit as Homer wrote it. Shanower's emphasis on human drama over divinely guided drama does relegate some myths to being cast as deceptions, yet he still afford his readers

the choice to believe the gods can be present in the story, even if they are not explicitly shown on the page.

Shanower's presentation of character memory, mythic memory, and the moments where these two types of narrative elements converge is important to understanding his role as a visual mythographer. By combining multiple, sometimes non-matching myths into a single comic, Shanower aims to elaborate and build on the rich drama present in Greek stories so that they all might be viewed within a chronologically complete context and enjoyed together. When discussing to a fan in *Age of Bronze Issue #8* on the definition of the word 'entertaining,' Shanower says in *Age of Bronze Issue #8* how "our society has debased the word 'entertaining.' To me 'entertaining' means engrossing, stimulating, engaging" (21). In the same way that re-framing the 'House of Horror' story as an actual horror story was important for showing new ways at exploring classic myths, so too does Shanower's creative use of frame borders help explore new and novel visual methods of delving into the mythology and drama of the Trojan War story.

While *Age of Bronze* strikes a balance between the entertainment found from comics as a recreational media and the idea of entertainment as engaging and stimulating content, Shanower's dominant mission to re-define and re-shape mythology so as to have it fit presently within only thirty-three can be viewed as a success overall. Thanks to the clever use of borders Shanower tip-toes through the complex minefields of divine characters and incompatible mythological texts

by way of a visual mythography that dares to reconcile the unknowable and the

visually presentable.

Figure 14. "Tangled Lives" *Age of Bronze* Issue #17 (2003), 28.[3]

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[3] The crimes of the House of Atreus depicted in order are: Tantalus feeding his son, Pelops, to the gods (upper-left); Pelop's bastard son, Chrysippus, being executed by his half-brother, Atreus (middle); Thyestes's raping his daughter, Pelopia, to father the child Aegithus in order to complete a prophecy and gain revenge on Atreus (middle-left); Atreus, having thought Aegithus was his, is being shown while Aegithus murders him.

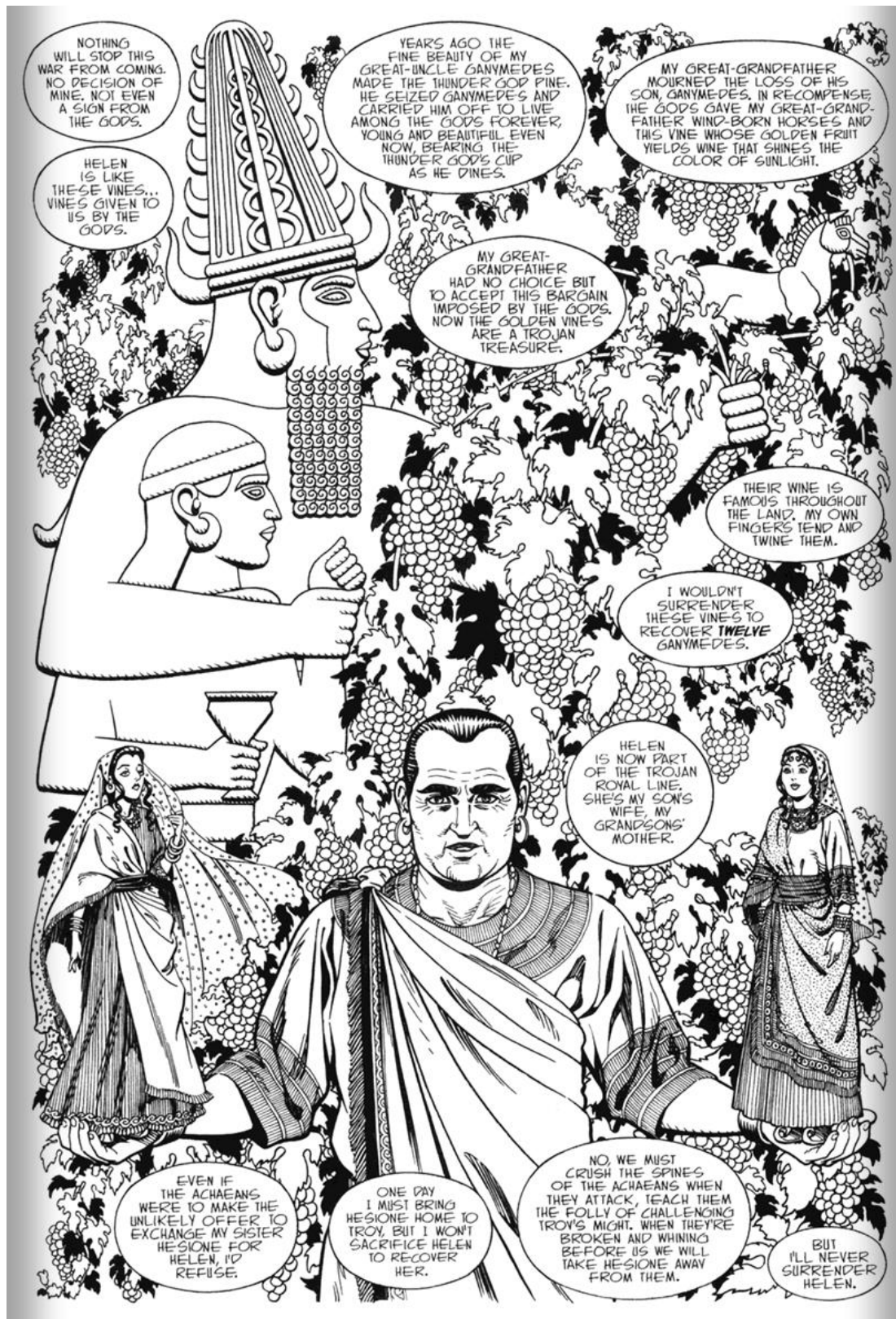Figure 15. "Revenge as a Dish" *Age of Bronze* #4A/Special #1 (1999), 11.

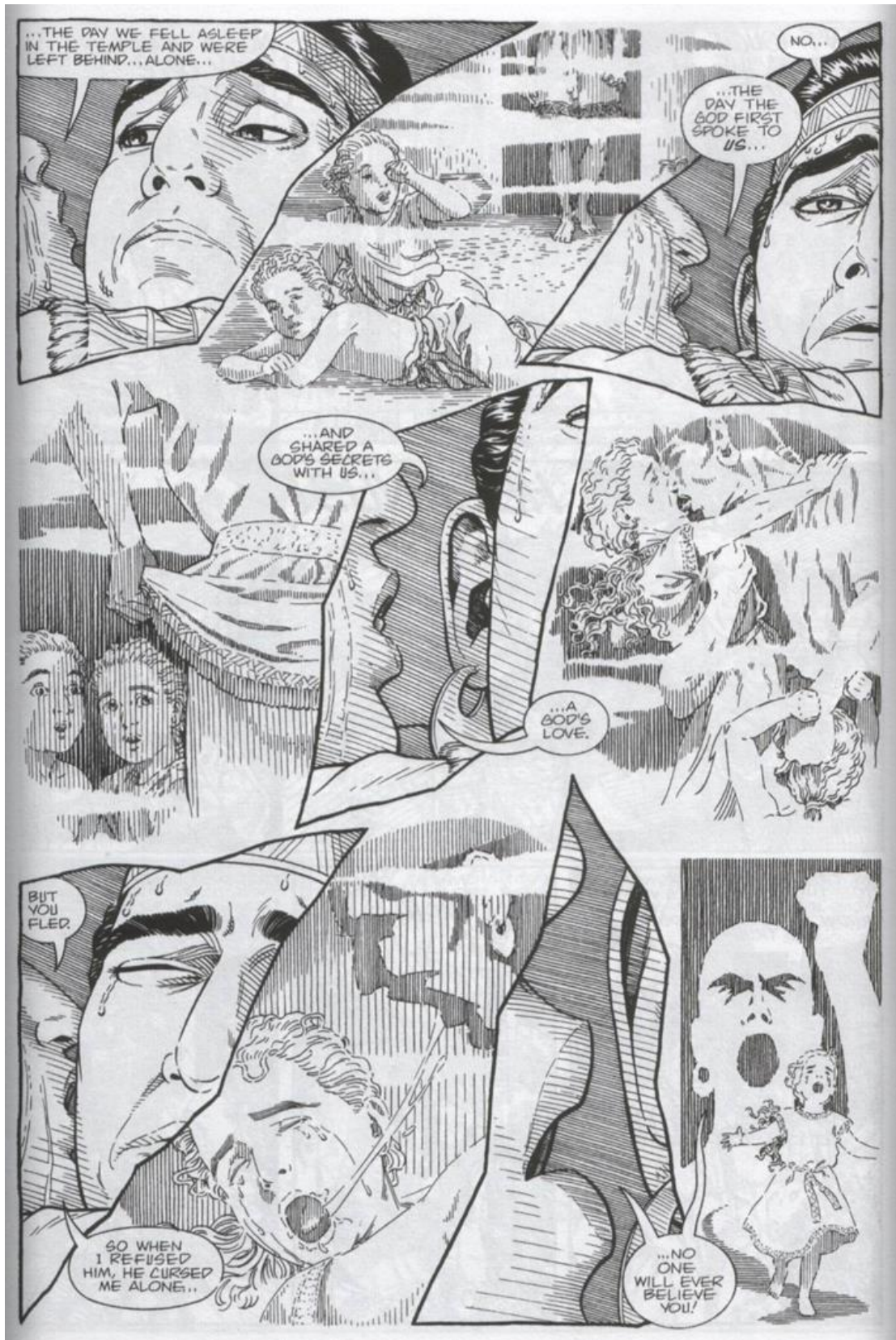Figure 16. "Ganymede" *Age of Bronze* Issue #23 (2006), 6.

Figure 17. "Kassandra's Plight" *Age of Bronze* Issue #11 (2001), 4.

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