

Discussion Questions for Clytemnestra

by Costanza Casati

1. Clytemnestra is complex, and her character changes throughout the book. Discuss her transformation. What do you think was the catalyst for her change? In the end, is she any different from her brutal husband, Agamemnon?
2. Why does Clytemnestra struggle with mothering her remaining children after Iphigenia's death?
3. Do you think it was a mistake for Clytemnestra to equate the life of Iphigenia to that of a king? Was it her downfall?
4. Clytemnestra kills Agamemnon to avenge the murder of her first husband and two children. Would a modern-day jury find her guilty? Talk about the cycle of revenge and how it has affected her life. Did you understand her desire for revenge?
5. What about Clytemnestra's lover, Aegisthus. Why do you think she allowed him to seduce her? Was this a relationship of love or a power play? Would the outcome be different if she did not take him as a lover?
6. Do you think Agamemnon was responsible for his own downfall? Does his background help to make sense of his actions?
7. Do you think Agamemnon was right to murder Iphigenia because the gods demanded it?
8. How is the murder of Clytemnestra's husband and children the same or different from the murder of Agamemnon?
9. Why do you think Clytemnestra did not kill Cassandra, her husband's war trophy. Do you think she planned to kill her at a later time?
10. Tyndareus plotted with Agamemnon to murder Clytemnestra's husband. Agamemnon plotted to sacrifice his daughter. Talk about why this happened and why there was no punishment for either.
11. How did you feel about Leda, Clytemnestra's mother? Was drinking her downfall? Do you understand why she drank? Was she a good mother?
12. Discuss the system of justice in ancient times.
13. What role do the gods play in the story?
14. Which character do you have the most sympathy for? Which do you think is most fatally flawed?
15. Which male character did you hate the most? Like the most?
16. How did this book add to your understanding of Greek mythology?

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