

# **Slaves in Ancient Greek tragedy: visual analytics**

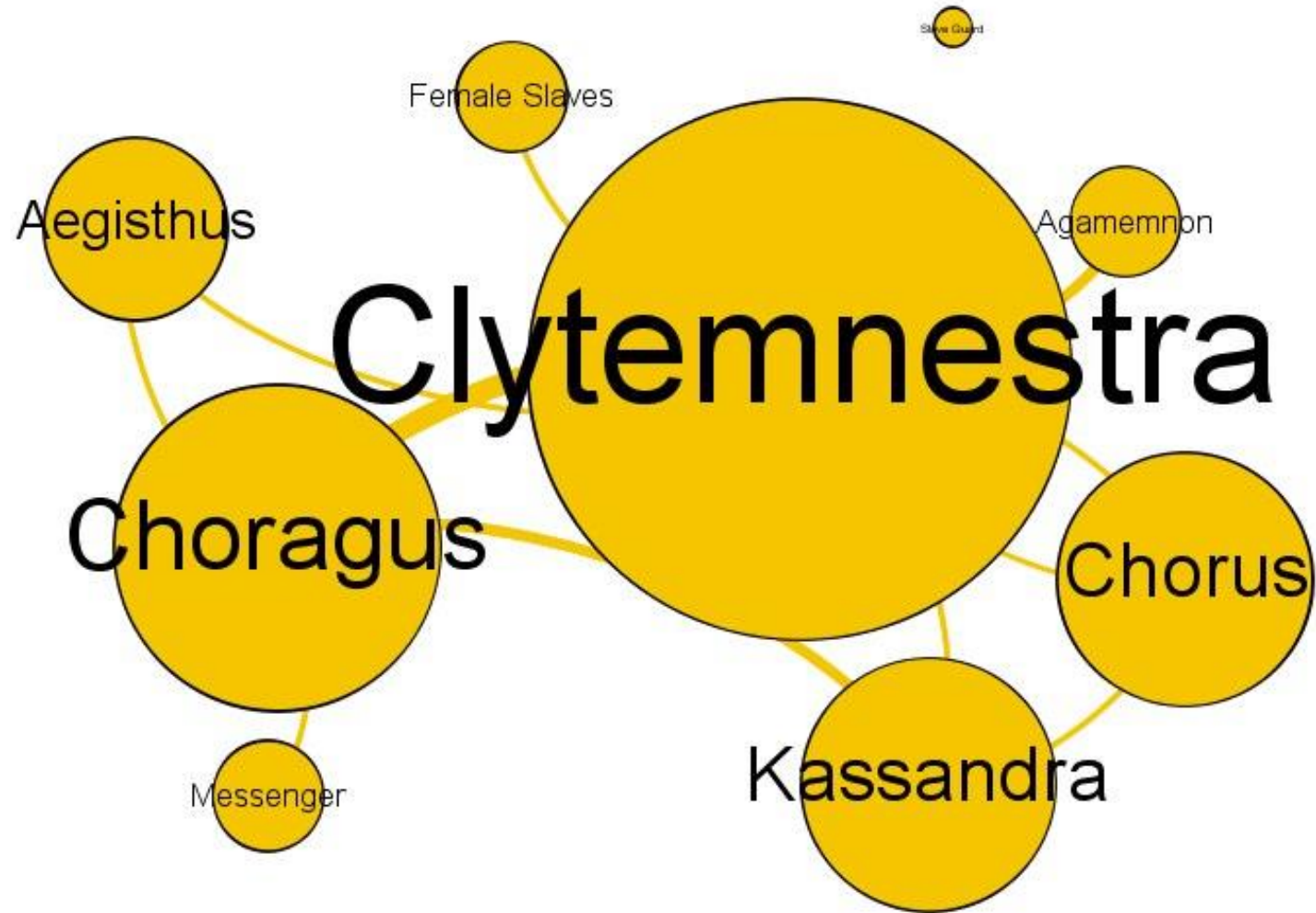
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- The Ancient Greek culture tends not to classify slaves as the part of the community

“the barbarian and the slave were by nature one” (*Aristotle*, “Politics”, 1252b)

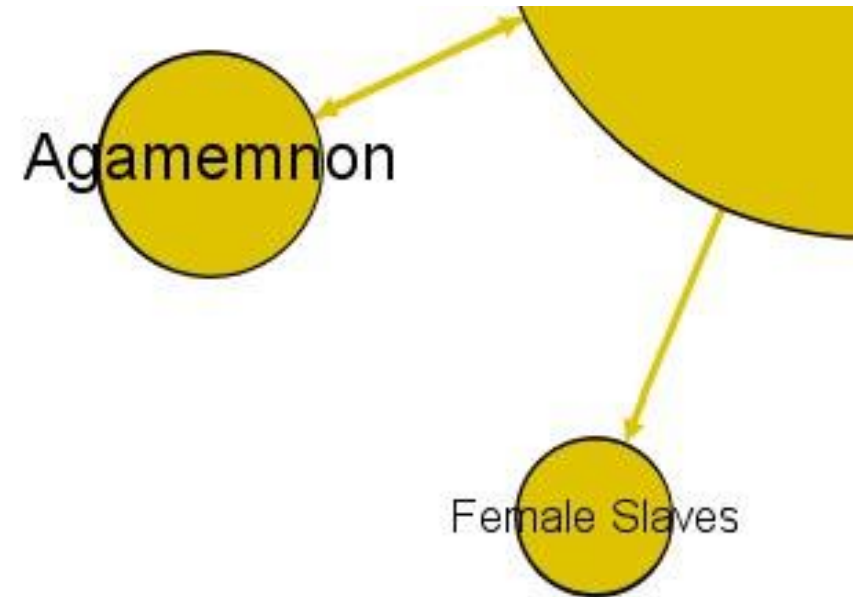
- In Greek tragedy, there are some slave characters. We analyzed six tragedies supposing that the slaves may have a distinct role in the plot comparing to other characters (principal or secondary)
- Their distinction may be quantitatively expressed by their extraordinary position in the network
- We made a network for each tragedy. A speech act is counted as a link; the weight of the link is the number of interactions in different acts of the tragedy

# *Eschil's "Agamemnon"*

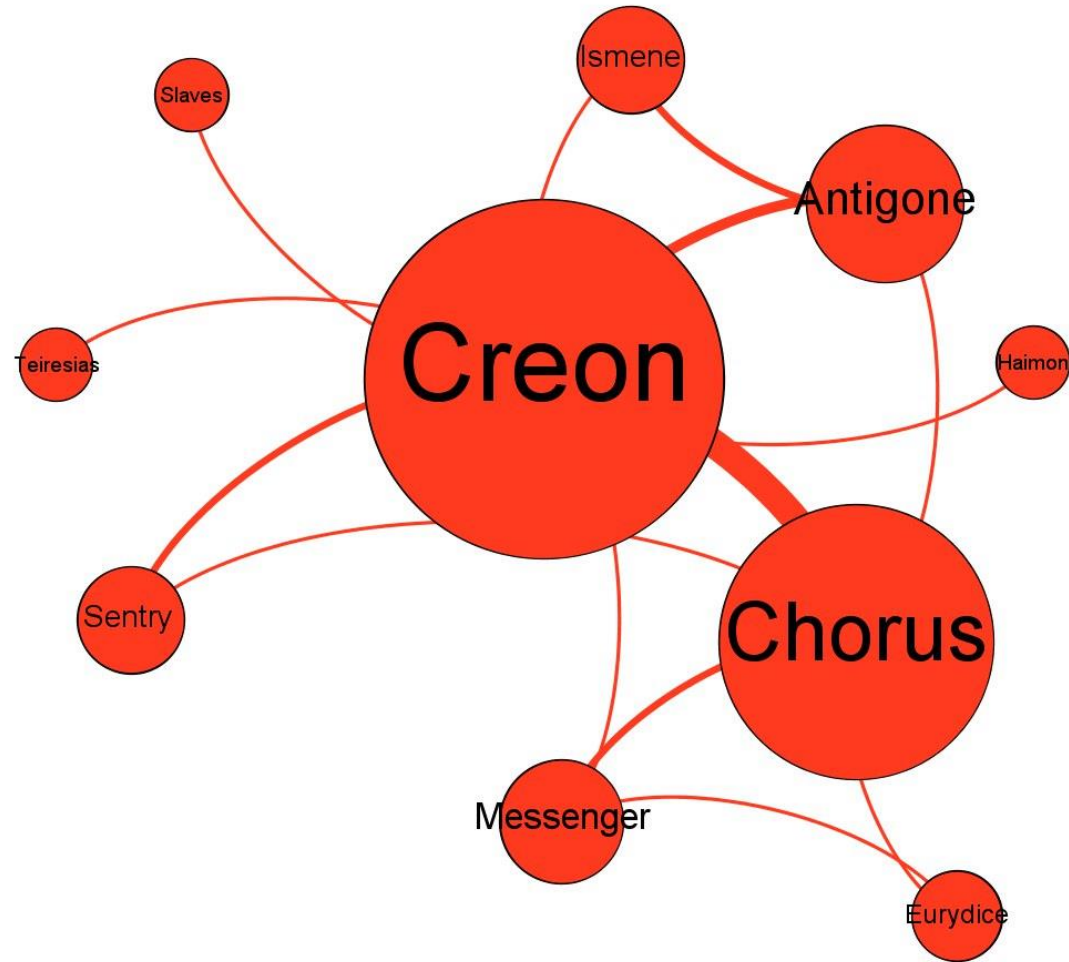


# *Eschil's "Agamemnon"*

- The slave is separated from the others and connected only to the lead character (Clytemnestra)
- He doesn't speak: it is the feature that distinguishes the slave from the secondary characters
- The other slave has a small monologue; in fact, he doesn't take part in the tragedy as a legitimate character

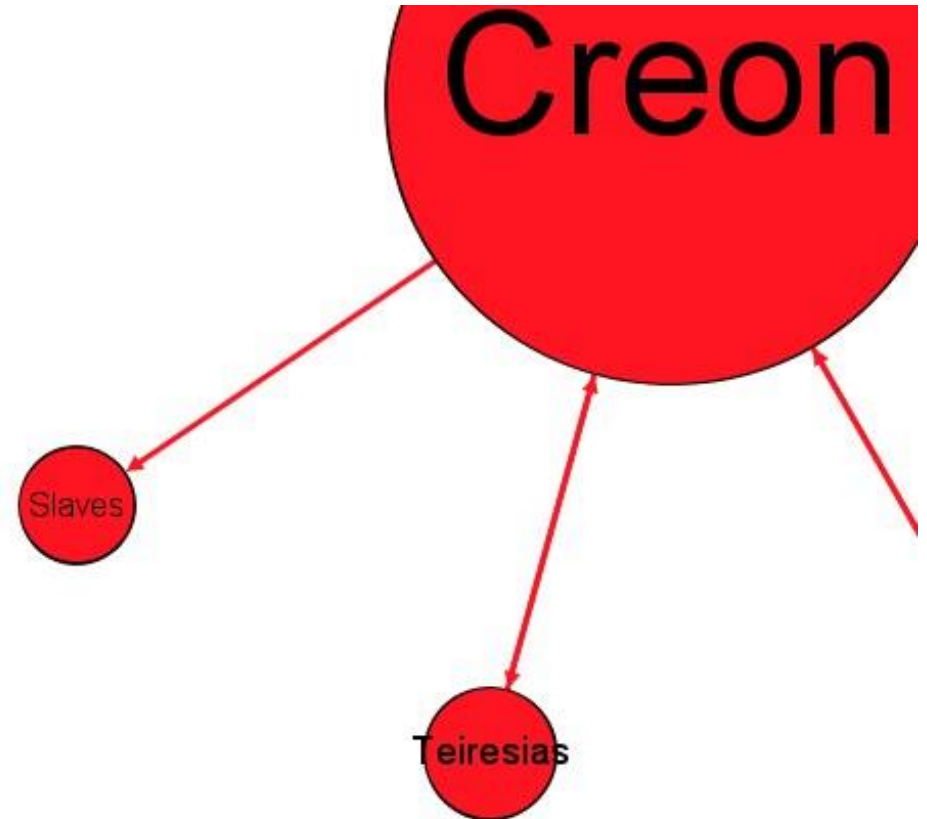


# *Sophocles' "Antigone"*

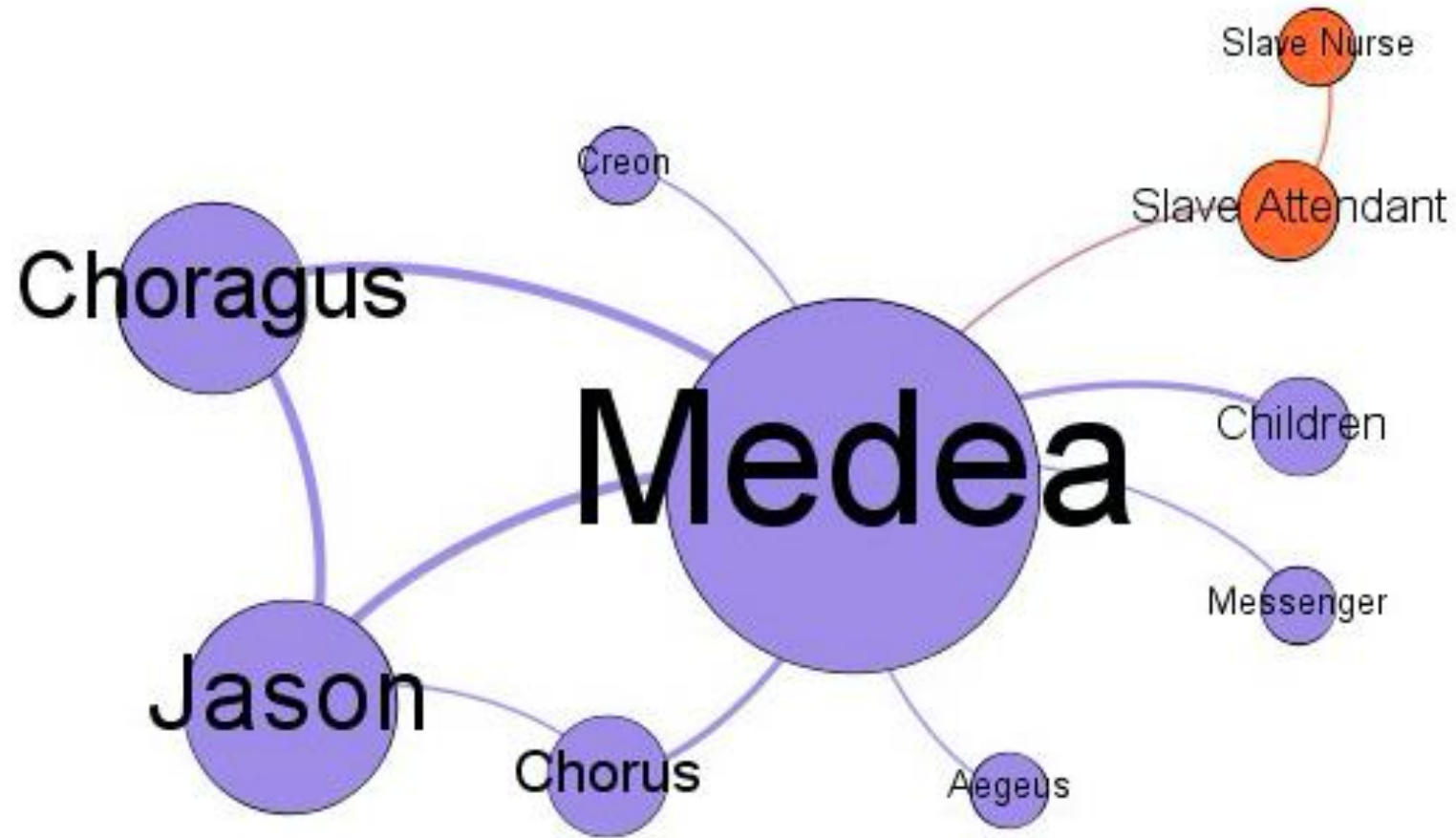


# *Sophocles*' "Antigone"

- The slave doesn't speak; it is just the intention of other speech acts
- He is connected only to the main character (Creon)
- Three characters which have only one link are slaves, Teiresias and Haimon, but the last two have a certain number of speech acts

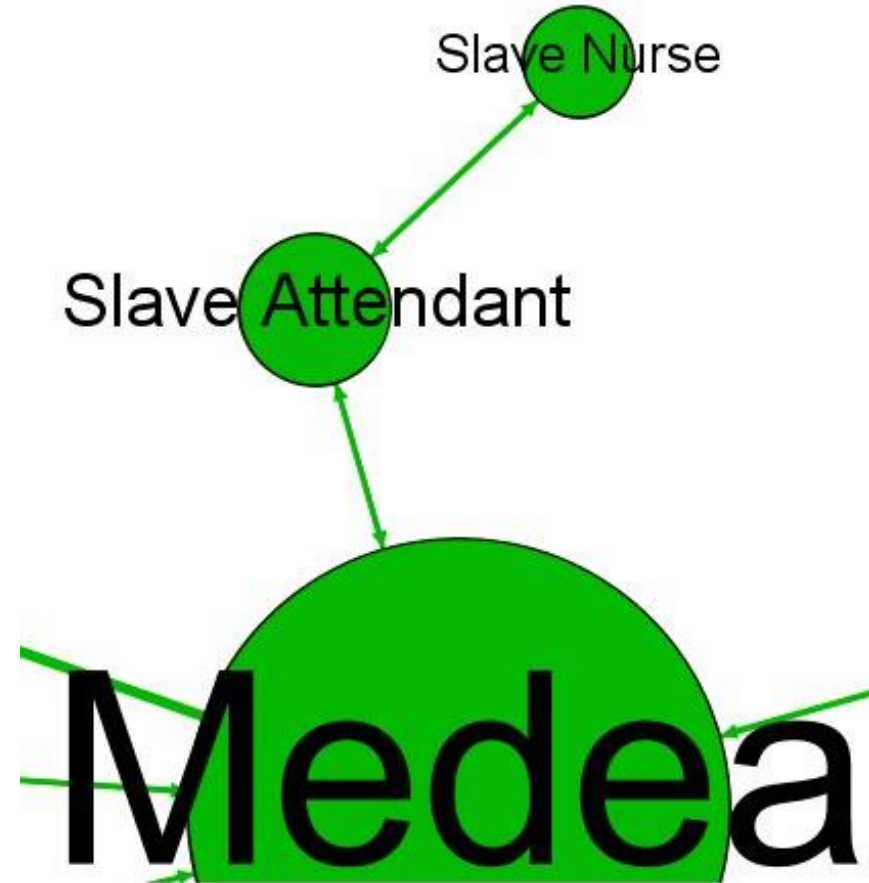


# Euripides' "Medea"



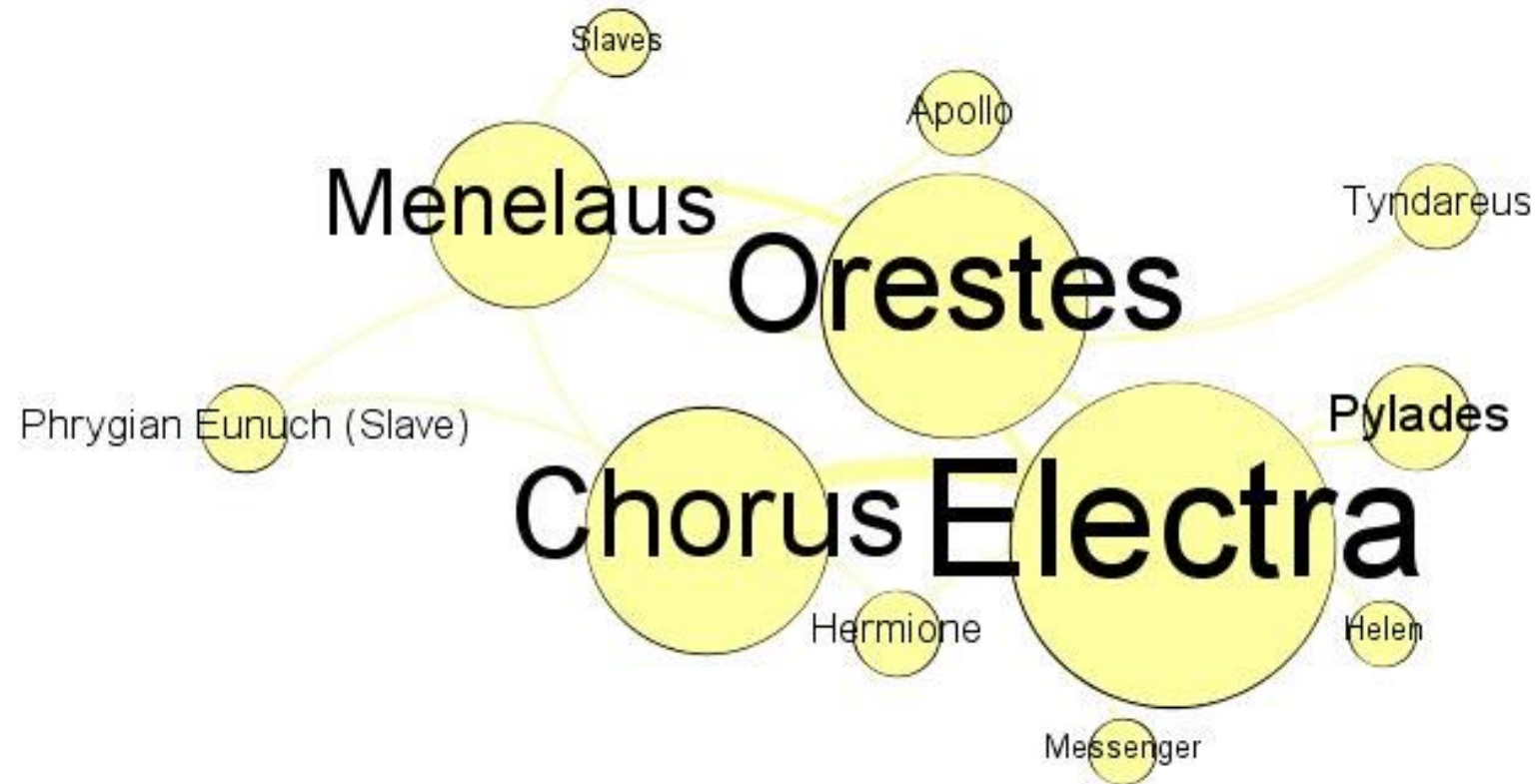
# Euripides' "Medea"

- The slaves are *clusterized*
- Only the slave attendant speaks to the protagonist but the slaves intercommunicate
- They open the play (the same is in "Agamemnon")
- Slave attendant is closer to the center as he's more important to the plot



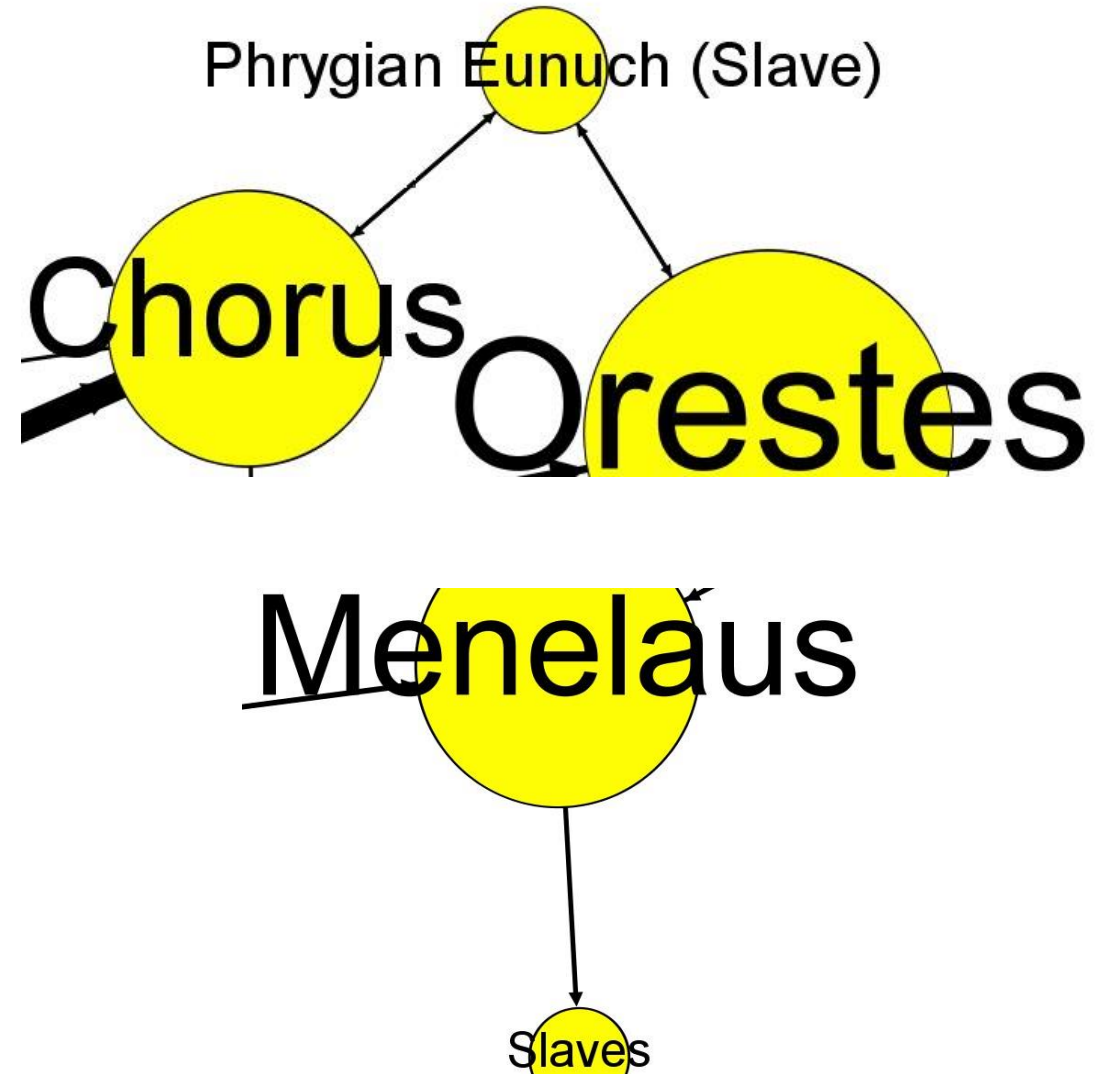


# *Euripides' "Orestes"*

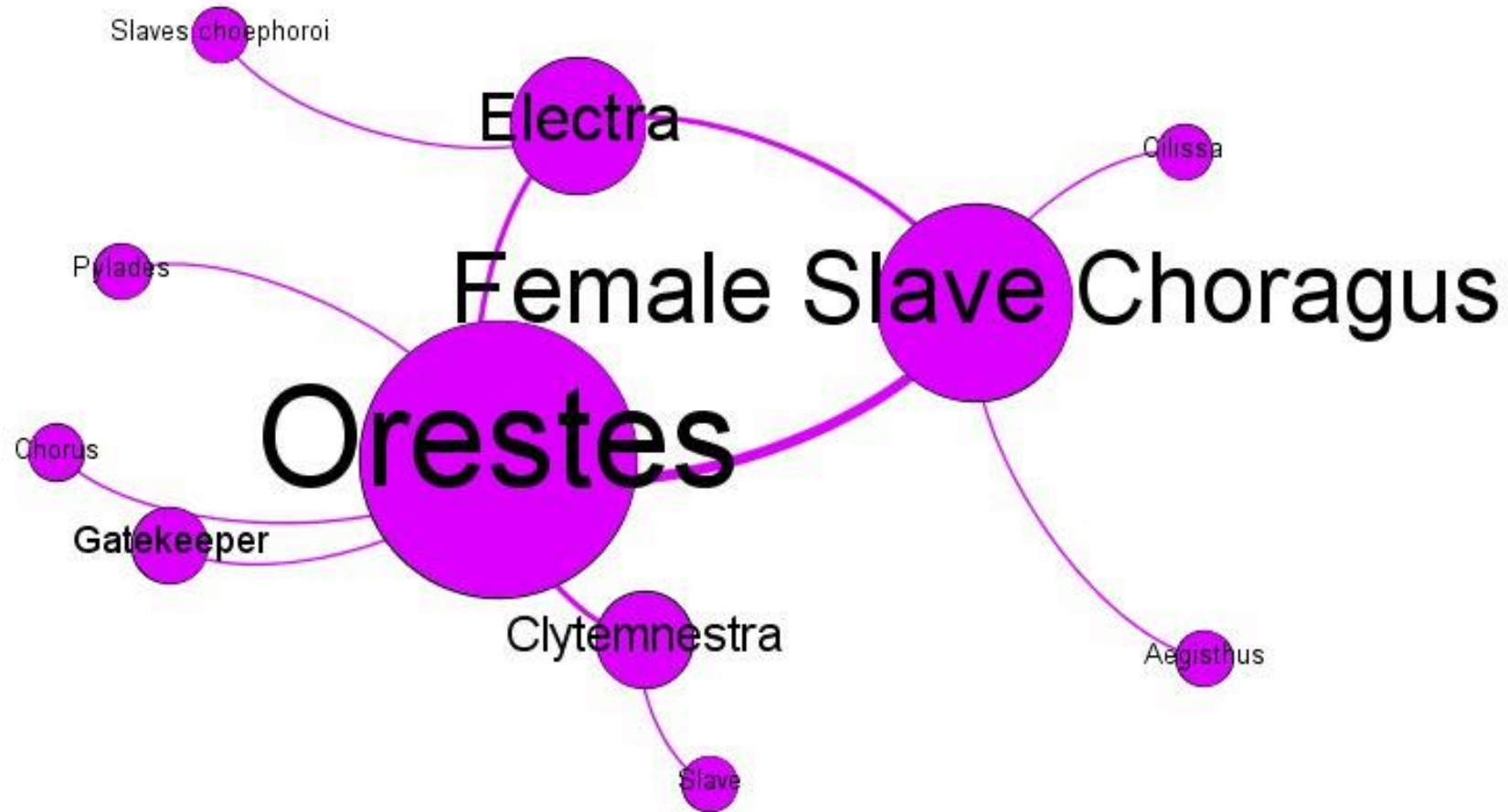


# *Euripides' "Orestes"*

- The structure is specific: most secondary characters have two or more communication acts
- The Phrygian Eunuch is a legitimate character of the tragedy despite being a slave: he has two links and he's not even called a slave
- The “real” slaves don't speak: their only appearance in the tragedy is an irresponsible order



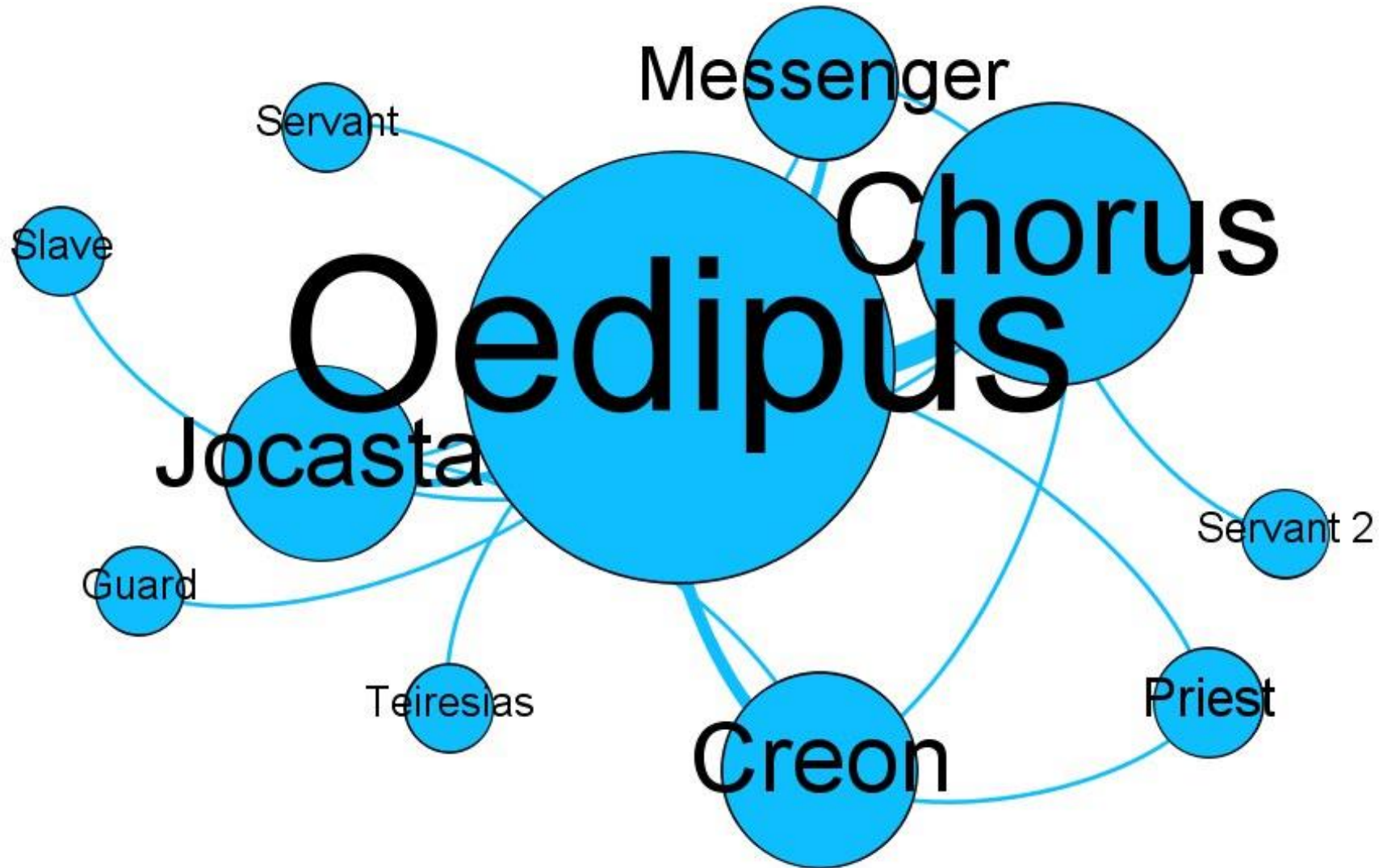
# *Eschil's "The Libation Bearers"* ("Choephoroi")



# *Eschil's "Choephoroi"*

- The lead character is a female slave chorus leader but only as it represents the whole chorus
- The status of the slave is evident in the tragedy's beginning but later it becomes implicit
- Another slave character is peripheral: the only character which is not connected to the three key figures but nevertheless he is speaking

# Sophocles' "Oedipus The King"



# Sophocles' "Oedipus The King"

- The biggest number of slaves (4)
- Three of them are servants: their functions in the plot are specified
- Servants speak because they all have a message for the protagonists
- The only "classic" slave is far from the network centre and speaks to a secondary character

# Summary

According to the graphs, we can conclude that slaves in Ancient Greek tragedy *have an intermediate position*: they're not totally excluded from the plot but generally have a lesser role than other characters

A typical portrait of a slave in a tragedy:

- doesn't speak
- doesn't have a name
- usually appears in non-significant parts of the plot
- connected only to one of the characters
- located far from the network centre