A Student's Commentary on Heroides 5, 16, and 17

Craig Bebergal
A STUDENT’S COMMENTARY ON HEROIDES 5, 16, AND 17

By

CRAIG BEBERGAL

A Dissertation submitted to the
Department of Humanities
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Degree Awarded:
Fall Semester, 2013
Craig Bebergal defended this dissertation on October 3, 2013.

The members of the supervisory committee were:

John Kelsay  
Professor Directing Dissertation

Lauren Weingarden  
University Representative

George Boggs  
Committee Member

Timothy Stover  
Committee Member

Francois Dupuigrenet Desroussilles  
Committee Member

The Graduate School has verified and approved the above-named committee members, and certifies that the dissertation has been approved in accordance with university requirements.
I dedicate this dissertation to any future students, high school through doctoral, for whom this book may offer assistance and insight.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like first and foremost to thank my committee, especially Dr. Stover and Dr. Boggs for their assistance in shaping this dissertation. Dr. Reid has also been an incredible source of assistance and support and stands as the most helpful advisor I have ever had.

I have several friends who deserve recognition by name for their willingness to hold my hand and ensure that I did not give up. AJ, Shawn, Jodi, Patti, and Pando among others have been a godsend. My parents should also be recognized for reminding me that many people complete dissertations and that I will get through it.

I would also like to thank my employer for their willingness to allow me to work full time while essentially being a full time student. My colleagues and fellow Latin teachers deserve many thanks for their thoughts and insights. Dr. Susan McDonald has earned special gratitude for her willingness to disrupt her classroom routine to test out the manuscript.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES ............................................................................................................................................................................. vii
ABSTRACT .......................................................................................................................................................................................viii

GENERAL INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................................................................ 1

1.1 Overview ................................................................................................................................................................................ 1
1.2 The Current Practices and Possibilities .................................................................................................................. 2
1.3 Theoretical Underpinnings ........................................................................................................................................... 4
1.4 Practical Considerations ............................................................................................................................................. 11
1.5 The Blueprint for a Developmental Commentary .......................................................................................... 15
1.6 Framework for Grammar ........................................................................................................................................... 16
1.7 Framework for Vocabulary ........................................................................................................................................ 18
1.8 Framework for Manuscript and Critical Apparatus ...................................................................................... 20
1.9 Framework for Word Order ...................................................................................................................................... 21
1.10 Framework for Literary Analysis ......................................................................................................................... 23
1.11 The Choice of the *Heroides* ...................................................................................................................................... 25

INTRODUCTION TO THE HEROIDES ................................................................................................................................. 32

2.1 General Overview of the Heroides ......................................................................................................................... 32
2.2 Aims of the Commentary ............................................................................................................................................ 48
2.3 Ovidian Meter, Grammar, and Syntax ................................................................................................................... 50
2.4 On Authenticity and Manuscript Tradition ........................................................................................................ 52

INTRODUCTION TO HEROIDES 5 ........................................................................................................................................ 58

HEROIDES 5 COMMENTARY ................................................................................................................................................. 65

INTRODUCTION TO HEROIDES 16 ...................................................................................................................................119

HEROIDES 16 COMMENTARY .............................................................................................................................................126

INTRODUCTION TO HEROIDES 17 ...................................................................................................................................225

HEROIDES 17 COMMENTARY .............................................................................................................................................232

CONCLUSION ...............................................................................................................................................................................289

APPENDIX A: TABLES .............................................................................................................................................................295

APPENDIX B: TRANSLATION OF POEM 5 ................................................................. 301

APPENDIX C: TRANSLATION OF POEM 16 ..................................................................................................................310

APPENDIX D: TRANSLATION OF POEM 17 ..................................................................................................................331

BIBLIOGRAPHY ..........................................................................................................................................................................346

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH .......................................................................................................................................................359
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Table of People and Places.................................................................295

Table 2: Table of Rhetorical and Poetic Devices............................................299
ABSTRACT

This dissertation presents a thorough, line-by-line commentary of Ovid’s *Heroides* 5, 16, and 17 (Oenone to Paris, Paris to Helen, and Helen to Paris) with an eye towards assisting the 3rd year high-school student or 3rd semester college student in translating and appreciating the grammatical, poetic, and allusory skill of Ovid, while still providing substantial textual discussion that will appeal to more advanced scholars.

The introduction explains the theoretical and practical considerations which shaped the commentary, which takes an in-depth view of each couplet presenting the Latin lines of the subject poems along with ad loc. discussions on grammar, syntax, allusion, intertextuality, poetic structure, and character psychology. Additionally, literal translations, tables of mythological references and stylistic devices, as well as a brief discussion on the dating and sources of these poems are included. Through this multi-faceted approach to examining these poems, the reader is able to gain greater understanding of the complexity inherent in these elegiac epistles.

The introductions to each poem and the introduction to the entire dissertation are meant to provide readers insight into the psychological profiles of the characters in question, particularly where they fit into the meta-literary traditions of epic and tragedy from which they are plucked. Special attention is paid to how these characters have been shaped by their past literary lives as well as by their new-found elegiac surroundings.
GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview
I have spent seven years teaching traditional classroom Latin both in public and private k-12 schools, and as a result, I have come to several pedagogical conclusions regarding the goals of teaching Latin and how to best help students achieve those goals. Using the framework of starting with the end in mind, one must ask what the end-goal of learning Latin is. Initially, parents and students will suggest that the goal of Latin is to increase vocabulary and critical thinking skills to make students better writers and increase their performance on the SAT. If that was the only goal, however, we could simply teach root words and logic puzzles for four years rather than teach Latin. A Teacher’s quick answer would be for students to be able to translate Latin and understand what they have translated, but that is only a step towards the ultimate goal: Students should be able to appreciate the literature on an aesthetic level. In plain language, the purpose should be that when students read Vergil’s description of the deaths of Nisus and Euryalus in the Aeneid, they should be in a position to cry; that they should be capable enough with the language that it affects them on the same emotional level as works in their native language. This is how Latin teachers and professors view the language, and so it should be the goal for our students.

At this aesthetic level of comprehension, where language, stylistics, themes, and tones all connect, the student is able to appreciate the text as a work of art. It is where the student moves beyond reading the text, beyond summarizing the text, and beyond identifying the tropes of the text. The aesthetic level is reached when the student reacts emotionally to the text, when the student says “Ovid has made Paris so detestable! I can see where he is manipulating Homer’s Paris and it’s funny in a sad way.” The student has reached the place where the text is no longer just words to translate and
comprehend, but is instead something with which he must reconcile his emotions (Rosenblatt 1995, 63).

How do a wide variety of students achieve the literacies that afford aesthetic reading of Latin texts? With the goal of moving beyond mastery of Latin linguistic elements and comprehension, I reflect upon the current Latin instructional practices and their relevance to secondary students of the 21st century. By doing so, I will trace the features of a method of scaffolding reading-specific Latin texts with appreciation and aesthetic experience in mind.

1.2 The Current Practices and Possibilities

When we consider how class time is traditionally spent at the upper levels (Latin 3 and beyond), students are called on individually to translate phrases or sentences which the teacher then corrects either through a Socratic method or by soliciting the help of the rest of the class. After that, the teacher discusses necessary cultural or contextual points regarding that sentence and might mention some stylistic devices such as assonance or chiasmus. Then another student is called on for the process to begin again. This process places the burden on the teacher as key arbiter of knowledge, and students are expected to take notes and follow along with the class and the instructor (Rosenblatt 1995, 56). The students are not active agents in their learning; they are passive recipients of the teacher’s explanations and privileged codified knowledge. However, the more the students can encounter a commentator (i.e. someone or something providing grammar and vocabulary, noting poetic devices, offering background information), the more time can be spent ensuring comprehension and leading towards an aesthetic understanding of the work. The less time a teacher spends leading students to that aesthetic understanding, the less positioned students are for transformational encounters with the text (Rosenblatt 1995, 56-73).
Students do not generally sight-read authentic Latin. They use textbooks or commentaries to assist them in negotiating the text. One way to help students reach the ultimate goal of learning Latin – to appreciate the aesthetic level of the work – is to create commentaries that scaffold their learning starting from the lowest common denominator and working up to the highest points of the text. This dissertation argues for such a model and provides it. The end product is not simply a commentary of a Latin text, in this case, selections from Ovid’s *Heroides*, but rather a model exploration of how commentaries can be developed and utilized in the classroom to increase student achievement. The goal in this introduction is to explain the practical considerations that shaped the process and to provide a working model of how this different methodology can be applied to other authors and works. This approach would bring many of these ancient texts to the students’ level, and afford opportunities for them to grow both as Latinists and as true readers of literature which depend on grammar, syntax, stylistics, allusion, inter-textuality and a variety of other components.

While grammar is taught in the first two years as a linear process with ever more complex skills, students do not learn to read literature in a linear fashion¹. There is a broad spectrum of skills and concepts which students must develop simultaneously to truly appreciate a work at the aesthetic level. Not only must they apply grammar and vocabulary, but they must have the literary skills to identify sound-play, irony, allusion and other stylistic devices. Students must develop the ability to explain how those tools serve to improve the work as a whole. None of these skills can be developed in isolation from any of the others, and therefore a commentary must address all of these issues as well. It is not enough that a commentary guide the student to an accurate translation, but it must guide the student to an understanding of the work on a deeper level.

¹ For example, present tense first conjugation, then the imperfect which is built from the present tense, etc.
1.3 Theoretical Underpinnings

All learning is a social experience by which the support of more capable others mediates, shapes, and enables less capable others to complete increasingly complex tasks. Scaffolding, which moves students through the Zone of Proximal Development, requires time, practice, and social interaction, where a capable other guides the student through the process of translation and models interpretation (Vygotsky 1986, 187). “The rapid development of young children into skilled participants in society is accomplished through children’s routine, and often tacit, guided participation in ongoing cultural activities as they observe and participate with others in culturally organized practices” (Rogoff 1990, 16). Children learn by watching and listening and they learn by doing, but only by doing with assistance (Rogoff 1990, 66). During classroom instruction, the teacher provides that scaffolding, providing guidance to students. Rogoff (1990, 94) notes the six principle functions of the adult in learning situations:

1) Recruiting the child’s interest in the task as it is defined by the tutor.
2) Reducing the number of steps required to solve a problem by simplifying the task, so that the learner can manage components of the process and recognize when a fit with task requirements is achieved.
3) Maintaining the pursuit of the goal, through motivation of the child and direction of the activity.
4) Marking critical features of discrepancies between what a child has produced and the ideal solution.
5) Controlling frustration and risk in problem solving.
6) Demonstrating an idealized version of the act to be performed.
The object of Rogoff’s principal functions is to assist the student in internalizing not just the facts such as endings and grammatical terminology but also the skills and steps for how to translate and interpret Latin. Internalization is the process by which the student goes from struggling through a task assisted to being able to apply the skill on their own without having to think about it. Just as a new driver must be reminded to check the mirrors then internalizes the processes for driving a car and eventually becomes someone who turns the car on and goes without having to go over the steps out loud, so too does a novice Latinist transform from a student who must check the charts and be reminded of what cases mean into a scholar who simply reads across the page and comprehends the text. All of the hard decoding skills become internalized in a seamless invisible process. During class time, teachers work with students to help foster these skills by scaffolding the reading process and providing support where needed as the concepts become increasingly automatic.

What happens, however, when there is no access to a capable other? The internalized voice of the instructor from classroom experience, while useful, is not always sufficient. The text must be arranged in such a way that it can support the student while they internalize the grammar and translation skills as they progress towards looking at the Latin and piecing it together instantaneously and invisibly. To this end, commentaries should provide substantial guidance and support both for grammar and for the deeper literary issues which students encounter in texts. The commentary itself should be a teaching tool rather than merely part of the text. Currently, most commentaries give students information which is deemed necessary by the author for students to translate the material. A better system would be a commentary that is in and of itself a teaching tool; a tool which guides and scaffolds the student through the process not only of translating but of developing skills as a reader of Latin.
Students do not advance in a linear fashion in their linguistic skill (Vygotsky 1986, 160). They have periods of improvements, recursions, regressions and leaps forward (Verspoor, Lowie, & van Dijk 2008, 229). To that end, the amount of fundamental help given throughout a commentary needs to remain constant not only for the event that a student experiences forgetting or recursion, but because students use the same help in different ways over time. Initially it may be a means of scaffolding to get them through the translation. Later, it may be a means of checking to see if their assumptions and reasoning are correct, increasing their self-efficacy. Beyond that, a student can use the same help as a means of exploring the text at a deeper level, perhaps comparing notes between sections of the text or deciding that they do not agree with the commentary. While grammatical help is a sine qua non for students to work within the language, a commentary should go beyond that. Because a text is a work of literature, the commentary must acknowledge and explain the different facets of meaning which the author presents through allusions, inter-textuality, poetic usages, themes, and tones. This allows the student to comprehend the work on a level above literal translation.

It is necessary to consider how the student utilizes the assistance that a commentary can provide. In traditional face-to-face instruction, a teacher gets a sense of the class as a whole and the individual students; pedagogical content knowledge enables teachers to determine how much help or what type of help to offer a specific student or the whole class (Grossman 1991). The teacher reads the expressions of the students and asks questions to check comprehension. When a student struggles, the teacher guides him into a higher understanding by strategically providing additional encounters with the concept.

Students who have already internalized grammar and have a working grasp of literature (i.e. the very high performing students) will not need the grammar notes at
all. The weakest student has the option to start with the commentary before they even begin the process of tackling the sentence, attempting to make sense of the notes so that they can use the commentary to guide them from their initial point on the ZPD continuum, barely able to do the rudimentary parts of the task with maximal assistance. The intermediate student can use the commentary and the text simultaneously, going back and forth as she reaches sticking points or to add nuance to the translation. The strongest student may still find use in the commentary as a means of self-check and may go to it at the end of translating and internally say “It says here that this is a dative of end in view. Yes! That is exactly how I translated it.” When a student makes intuitive leaps about how to translate or interpret a text and then uses the commentary to verify or disprove his theories, he is self-scaffolding, using the tools provided in a commentary to assist himself in the Zone of Proximal Development. He can use it to see if his theories about sound play or ironic speech are accurate by comparing his own thoughts to the thoughts of the commentary author. Students might need training on how to use the commentary to maximize the benefits and to self-scaffold, but through modeling and demonstration by the teacher, providing a basic-to-complex grammatical and literary commentary enables Latin reading experiences that drive the development of students, who are all at various points on the continuum of development so that they can reach the point where “The task execution is smooth and integrated” (Tharp & Gallimore 1988, 38).

Latin instruction is bolstered by a commentary that can aid students’ self-scaffolding. Rather than spending time going through the clauses and vocabulary issues with the class, since those problems would have been resolved the night before, the teacher now has an opportunity to share in a discussion on how the text moved the students, what they found in it, and how their translations reflect their thinking and vice versa. Teachers have the opportunity to discuss the text with the students, for
example, to ask why the author may have chosen a particular word or what the effect of a poetic device has on a line in the poem. Since the commentary serves as an additional instructional resource, the teacher and the students may negotiate both the text and the commentary. They may agree with it, disagree with it, and find new points that the commentary does not make using the text to support their points. The discussion is not about how to get through the Latin but rather a broad spectrum of issues from stylistics to themes².

A student’s self-efficacy is one of the greatest factors in getting students to persevere in the analysis of Latin poetry. Self-efficacy is the belief that one can achieve a goal, rather than the actual capacity, as initially described by Bandura (Bandura 1995; Ormrod 2000, 450; Santrock 2004, 426; Schunk 2004, 85). Consistent success builds the momentum and willingness to tackle ever more challenging content. Conversely, lower self-efficacy correlates with failure. The un-graduated skill increase from Latin 2 to authentic Latin inherently leads to failure, which leads to lower self-efficacy regarding a student’s ability to translate (Argetsinger 2006, 69). Even the more successful students in second year Latin invariably need help in sentence after sentence of authentic Latin. Their self-efficacy (and self-esteem) will take repeated assaults as they attempt to tackle the clauses of the Gallic wars or the Catalinarian. As the more skilled student struggles, their weaker classmates will begin to surrender on the grounds that they cannot possibly succeed if the best students are unable to do it (Ormrod 2000, 452; Schunk 2004, 114).

As with all skills, “Children’s beliefs about their ability to decode and comprehend a particular text will influence their motivation to read that text, the strategies they select, how they monitor their reading progress, and their reading

² Davis (1989; 1995) SWIMTAG method, discussed below, presents various literary fronts on which a text can be examined.
effectiveness. Therefore, the best way to help students increase these skills is cognitive apprenticeship, “wherein teachers make thinking visible” (Horner & Shwery 2002, 102; 105). Much like a tradesman shows an apprentice the process for laying brick or carving stone, teachers should show students how they perform operations such as translating and interpreting. In as much as possible, particularly in literary analysis, the commentary in this dissertation has attempted to explicate why a particular option (such as whether a word is genitive or dative) was chosen when the answer is not clear cut. In short, the intention is to explicate the behaviors that scholars use in terms that students can work from and model.

What students need are mastery experiences (Bandura 1995, 2). Mastery experiences are successes that lead to the belief that a student can accomplish a task. Using a Vygotskian approach, what students should encounter is a series of learning tasks which progress from simple to complex and are supported by the teacher and the text as the students become more and more competent. The experiences of students need to be scaffolded so that students work in the Zone of Proximal Development and move from the tasks which they cannot do to those that they can do by being supported by capable others such as teachers (Tharpe & Gallimore 1988; Santrock 2004, 51; Ormrod 2000, 45; Schunk 2004, 295). The teacher’s spoken assistance progresses into the child’s self-talk which then turns into silent automatic execution so that “What is spoken to a child is later said by the child to the self, and later is abbreviated and transformed into the silent speech of the child’s thought” (Tharp & Gallimore 1988, 44). The focus should not be on a student’s current skills, but rather on the scope of their ZPD. What the student is able to accomplish with assistance is indicative of the size of their ZPD, which contains the skills they will one day demonstrate on their own. Thus, instead of designing instructional tools on what students can now do, they should be designed with the widest range of the expert skill set in mind.
Students should have the opportunity to scaffold themselves using their own inner speech and the tools provided by the task itself (i.e. the text and commentary). The purpose of the teacher is to guide and instruct in skills and tasks when students need assistance. This balance of self-scaffolding and expert-scaffolding continues until the student has mastered all of the skills and has become an expert. As students proceed through this process and successfully demonstrate increasing skills, their self-efficacy will increase. The commentary allows students to practice examining the text alone, secure in the knowledge that should they stumble, then the commentary will be there to assist them. This security reduces anxiety and increases the odds that students will be willing to tackle more advanced sentences and passages, able to have deeper discussions with the teacher if the passages they were willing to tackle truly are beyond their current skill levels.

High self-efficacy is correlated with persistence, which is what will motivate students to power through increasingly complex Latin and develop further mastery (Zimmerman 1995, 204; 210). This feedback-loop of mastery, efficacy, and persistence is essential to student success and student texts need to be arranged so as to maximize that success.

Lave & Wenger (1991, 29) discuss the concept of “Legitimate Peripheral Participation”, which states that novices, in the process of gaining expertise, are active participants in a circle of people within the discipline. In the beginning, their participation is limited or peripheral but as they progress, they become more and more members of the community of learners and eventually possess the skill-set of an expert. It is through social interaction, both with experts and with other novices that this

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3 Hall (2006) reminds teachers that students who have difficulty decoding text are not generally lazy or unmotivated but they simply may not have developed the strategies necessary to succeed and may be dissuaded by the teacher’s responses to their attempts or by their peers’ results.
transformation occurs. As the learner moves from peripheral participant to central participant the learner changes both in what they can do and in how they view themselves (Lave & Wenger 1991, 53; 85). They eventually view themselves as part of the community in a full capacity. The caution for teachers then is to avoid becoming “pedagogical authoritarians, viewing apprentices as novices who ‘should be instructed’ rather than as peripheral participants in a community engaged in its own reproduction” (Lave & Wenger 1991, 76). To view students as participants rather than passive absorbers of knowledge requires the teacher to consider what it is like to be the novice while being mindful to avoid falling into the expert blind spot of being unable to recognize the specific instructional needs of their students.

1.4 Practical Considerations

Part of the difficulty with the majority of commentaries available on the market is that they are written by experts for experts, often college professors who teach very advanced graduate students. The types of things that experts find interesting (such as obscure manuscript issues and metrical minutiae), while important and worth pursuing, are not what the typical novice needs for success. Furthermore, their target audience, graduate students and advanced undergraduate students, is not the same as high school students or third semester college students. The developmental gap and the difference in linguistic skill and facility are startling. “What we as adults understand and appreciate seems of self-evident value and interest. But to the student the same idea can seem opaque, abstract – without meaning or value. A challenge we face as designers is to know the design users well enough – the students – to know what will need uncoverage from their point of view, not ours” (Wiggins & McTighe 1998, 21).

Teachers and commentary authors need to remember that “Grammar should be taught from the point of view of a reader, not a writer, of Latin” (Perry 1998, 112). The audience’s skill set need to be considered to make the commentary effective. The
National Research Council (2000, 31) has noted six major differences that must be kept in mind when considering a novice audience:

1) Experts notice features and meaningful patterns of information that are not noticed by novices.

2) Experts have acquired a great deal of content knowledge that is organized in ways that reflect a deep understanding of their subject matter.

3) Experts’ knowledge cannot be reduced to sets of isolated facts or propositions but, instead, reflects contexts of applicability: that is, the knowledge is ‘conditionalized’ on a set of circumstances.

4) Experts are able to flexibly retrieve important aspects of their knowledge with little attentional effort.

5) Though experts know their disciplines thoroughly, this does not guarantee that they are able to teach others.

6) Experts have varying levels of flexibility in their approach to new situations.

Commentaries such as Palmer (1898) or Knox (1995) are written for experts. The information provided is of interest to scholars and professors, but does not help students organize or consider the information in ways that are meaningful for a novice. They often fall victim to the expert blind spot, which is:

The claim that educators with advanced subject-matter knowledge of a scholarly discipline tend to use the powerful organizing principles, formalisms, and methods of analysis that serve as the foundation of that discipline as guiding principles for their student’ conceptual development and instruction, rather than being guided by knowledge of the learning
needs and developmental profiles of novices. (Nathan & Petrosino 2003, 906)

To create any curricular material, be it a textbook or a commentary, requires not just expert subject matter knowledge of the variety that Palmer and Knox have, but also the pedagogical content knowledge to understand how novices view subject matter and how they learn it (Grossman 1991).

Therefore, much energy was spent examining the role of the legitimate peripheral participant and even of the novice in the construction of this dissertation. I used my own experience as a teacher to think about where students struggle. My own experiences as a teacher provided examples of the skills with which peripheral participants of Latin struggle most frequently, and I consulted former students to find out what they wished commentaries did and where they felt the support was lacking. At every point, I asked myself, “What skills might a third year student struggle with?” and “What skills might a third year student need?” and used that as a starting point for writing the commentary. Additionally, differences between novices and experts exist not just in the depth and breadth of knowledge, but in how it is mentally organized and how well it can be executed in practice. Novice students for example, see each verb as a discrete item that must be memorized where experts see verbs as following standard patterns and simply memorize and internalize the places where irregular verbs are irregular. Likewise, experts can summon vast volumes of information about various myths that relate to a theme such as transformations, novices often cannot do so but must be led to build those connections. Experts have well organized schema regarding topics of grammar and culture that they can access and utilize to make sense of the text (Gruber-Miller 2006, 13). Finally, experts have much wider circles of participation in the field of Latin. They are able to bring together all of the different interpretive and lexical
skills into one cohesive force rather than attempting to utilize discrete skills (Lave & Wenger 1991, 20).

Often, students are novices not just in Latin, but in poetry analysis. While Latin poetry is often much more concrete than abstract modern poetry, there is still a gulf between what students can draw from a poem and what experts see almost instinctively (Peskin 1998; Zeitz 1994). This commentary has very specifically provided discourse about sub-textual concepts within the works to scaffold the novice’s interpretive abilities. The discourse provides modeling not just in what meaning can be drawn from the text but how to draw that meaning and how to discuss it.

While the student by definition begins as a novice, it is not always the case that a teacher is an expert. Many beginning Latin teachers more closely resemble the novice than the expert. The curricula and the preparation given to Latin teachers vary greatly from college to college. Most universities do not offer specific teacher training in Latin pedagogy and instead students take courses in Latin and courses in general education and perhaps a course in teaching modern languages. Depending on the program, future teachers may not even have read the authors or texts which they will eventually teach (LaFleur 1998, x; Singh 1998, 92). Many teachers have never been shown how to discuss a Latin text with students; they can explain grammatical concepts but they do not have the experience to help students see the beauty of the work. This type of commentary, with its questions and thorough discussions, can give instructors just as much pedagogical content knowledge as students. The student and the teacher can negotiate the text and the commentary together. They can agree or disagree with the points made, justify their answers using evidence from the text, and expand their understanding. The commentary itself serves as a teacher’s manual that can allow a novice instructor to build the framework of class discussions and help teachers to anticipate and respond to potentially common problems and issues.
1.5 The Blueprint for a Developmental Commentary

This new commentary examines several of the challenges students encounter when going from the Latin on the page to the appreciation of the passage. Grammar, vocabulary, textual issues, stylistic devices, and background knowledge all present difficulties for students, but moving beyond the hard Latin skills, the commentary supports students in the process of becoming Latinists. It offers them opportunities to participate in ever more complex practices in Latin scholarship with the eventual goal of creating true participants in the discourse rather than mere peripheral participants (Lave & Wenger 1991). While each individual student has different needs from a commentary, a commentary should be an aid to as many of those needs as possible.

Again, the focus is to get the students to the point where they can discern not what the text says in the most literal sense, but rather what it says to them and what it can say to 21st century culture (Rosenblatt 1995, 56; 61). Throughout the course of the commentary, I have attempted give insights and provide discussion for all the major concepts and skills that participant of Latin literature could want to discuss or want the text to discuss with them. The basic framework for discussion comes from the needs of students to be able to write analytic essays for the AP exams as AP courses often serve as the ultimate sign of success in the Latin sequence. An essential component is the SWIMTAG method, which Sally Davis (1990; 1995) uses to help students analyze poetry by focusing on Sounds, Word Choice, Images, Meter, Mood, Tone, Theme, and Grammar. While it is neither practical nor advisable to give students all of the possible analysis on every single line, the goal is to take those elements, mention them when they seemed to stand out, but still allow room for the classroom teacher to pick up and focus on the parts they found most interesting as well as for the students to find the pieces that are most intriguing to them. Curriculum designers must balance the depth (how far to investigate) against the breadth of the material (how many topics). In as
much as was possible, I have sought to go as deep as possible without entering into things that are simply beyond the majority of students (Wiggins & McTighe 1998, 102). In the same way, I have tried to balance the breadth (i.e. all of Sally Davis’ items) against the fear of creating a tome so unwieldy that students would be intimidated by its sheer size.

In the process of crafting a commentary built specifically to lead novices towards mastery, specific considerations had to be made for grammar, vocabulary, manuscript tradition and critical apparatus, word order, and literary analysis. The format of the new commentary and how the needs of novices have reshaped it are outlined below.

1.6 Framework for Grammar

Many commentaries lack grammatical support for students. “Those Readers which provide ‘hints on translating’ however good the hints may be, unavoidably leave the pupil to step forward alone into the deep water of Latin passage, full of dangerous currents and lurking crabs” (Vellacott 1962, 31). In their first real encounter with authentic Latin, students have just recently been taught the subjunctive and are still not completely solid on their cases, especially when it comes to uncommon uses of the ablative (e.g., circumstantial) or the dative (e.g., dative of purpose). There are also constructions which students might not have encountered in their first two years since not all textbooks teach all structures (Strain 1937). The commentary must therefore warn students when rare forms or easily confused forms occur. Students can often translate these uses if only they know which type of clause or use they are looking at, so the simplest solution is to identify the grammar for the student. Stronger students will simply skim over these parts of the commentary, the weakest students will cling to them as a life raft, and the majority of students will use them when they get lost. The goal is to provide students with the grammatical scaffolding that they need so that they
can figure out what the Latin literally says so that they can consider its meaning and implications.

Ellsworth and Ball (1989) use a similar methodology in their college level courses at the University of Hawaii through interlinear translations which are gradually reduced as students master concepts of a more advanced level. Since it is impossible to know what level of grammatical skill a student has the first time he or she encounters an authentic text, either at the high school level or at universities that do not build their curricula from the ground up, it makes sense to leave in those notes for as long as possible so that students have the opportunity to consistently reconnect with grammar concepts until they simply no longer bother looking down for the help.

A spiral curriculum is necessary for the teaching of grammar for second language learners (Martin 1978; Wiggins & McTighe 1998, 153; Schunk 2004, 453). The essential premise, which has been mirrored throughout the commentary, is that students need encounter and practice tasks and skills multiple times with other tasks interspersed as a means of increasing the odds of students developing these skills at more and more complex levels so that they can eventually self-scaffold. To that end, grammar concepts and poetic concepts are re-articulated line by line, so that students constantly receive the repetition and practice necessary to internalization.

A corollary challenge occurs regarding the use of the descriptions of grammatical terminology. Not all textbooks use the same terms for concepts such as the ‘dative of end in view’ and the ‘accusative of duration of time’. Therefore the commentary needs a referential point which students can return to if they are unsure of how to translate a particular form into English. Thus, wherever possible, students are directed back to Bennett’s New Latin Grammar, which has the benefit of being thorough without being

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4 Hook (1962) demonstrates this methodology in the teaching of English Grammar.
5 Hale (1905) presents a complete discussion on the problem of differing grammatical terminology.
overbearing. In the instances that Bennett omitted a construction, this commentary references both Allen & Greenough and Wheelock.

1.7 Framework for Vocabulary

Another difficulty for students relates to vocabulary. Assuming that students have learned and can recall all of the words they learned in their first 2 years of textbook Latin, they will have a vocabulary of a couple of hundred words, with only one or two functional definitions for each Latin word. While this is a necessary starting point, students discover that they do not have either the depth or breadth of vocabulary necessary for authentic Latin (Deagon 2006, 35; Muccigrosso 2004). Students need practice and experience in order to expand their vocabulary not just so that they know a large number of definitions, but so that they can apply them in the context of the text and discuss how the author has used those words to achieve multiple layers of meaning.

Once the student approaches a Latin dictionary, they discover that there are lots of definitions for words and are unsure of which one they need. Often students approach vocabulary by making word lists that provide almost no tangible benefit to the act of translating and can actually become an impediment (Anhalt 2006). Consider this example of two students and the problems of vocabulary utilization:

The first of these students recognizes the pattern res, and the meaning ‘thing’ is activated in his memory. The second student, on the other hand, has a broad tree of meanings, which is activated by the same pattern, e.g. ‘thing, event, deed, reality, fact, property, benefit, account, lawsuit, history, Augustus’ Res Gestae, Cato the Elder’s dictum rem tene, etc. (Hamilton 1992, 167)
For common words where colloquialism and time have evolved a multitude of divergent meanings, students often struggle with contextualization.

Announcing to children the meaning of a word, concept, idea, or theme does not mean that they can then use it to comprehend what they read. As Vygotsky (1987) has pointed out, the acquisition of a word meaning proceeds well in advance of the ability to control the concept on the level of production. Although children have the definition of ‘willpower,’ they cannot use the concept as a tool of thought. (Tharp & Gallimore 1988, 237).

Essentially, words are tools which students learn to use in more and more complex ways through practice, experience, and help. As students gain proficiency with words both in L1 and L2 they are able to use their newfound tools to negotiate the meaning of even more abstract or difficult words. Thus for more complex ideas, even if students know the definition of a word, they may not be able to use it correctly, let alone be able to contextualize it or understand what implications the choice of that word has. Students have difficulty grasping the meanings of new words in their target language which are compounded by the difficulties of transfer from a second language with its own cultural idioms.

Meaning is learned through a process of interaction where hearer and listener engage in a process of figuring out the unspoken context, working through the missing elements, or figuring out how words, usually confined to one domain, have been extended to another. Listen to a foreigner as she compliments your ‘weird’ cooking. The occasion, the tone, the food tells you that she means ‘unique’ although both suggest a ‘standing out,’ a ‘noticing.’ (Feinberg 1998)
Learning to choose the correct definition for a Latin word is a complex process which requires substantially more practice than the 2 years most students have had in a course (Deagon 2006). It requires a deep knowledge of the cultural connotations of words (Rosenblatt 1995, 25; 106). Additionally, an assumption is made that students know the meanings of the possible English definitions that are provided, which should not always be assumed.

This dissertation gives students definitions (along with OLD citation) whenever a word’s usage varies from its most common base definition. Such an approach facilitates discussion in places where more than one definition makes sense and should help students build facility in considering word choice and stylistic devices such as double-entendre and paronomasia.

1.8 Framework for Manuscript and Critical Apparatus

In creating a dissertation for students a consideration had to be made regarding the presence of notes regarding manuscript variances. College level commentaries provide critical apparatus which high school level texts often leave out.

Students are usually told something about the manuscripts on which our printed texts depend, but few teachers make much of the fact that experts regularly disagree over what text to print in the first place. By the same token, the rules of grammar are not presented as a matter of approximation or debate; they exist to solve problems, not to deepen the complexity of the reading process. Undergraduates, of course, especially beginners do not concentrate on textual variants and grammatical cruces. (Farrell 1998, 24)

To beginning students, the apparatus at the bottom with its funny squiggles and alternate readings becomes background noise. High school students are at a place
where they can not truly appreciate what the variances mean nor can they fully grasp
the full extent of how manuscripts, as scholars see them, are developed. The goal then
should still be to give them a taste of these things without every page being footnoted
with cruces and Greek symbols for manuscript designation. They

Need to know that the relationship among author, text, and reader
of Roman literature differs in significant ways from that relationship in
say, nineteenth-century English novels. They need to be introduced to the
concept that reasonable readers can argue not only about the
interpretation of a text, but also about the very words and letters
themselves. (Pearcy 2002, 432)

Rather than include a full apparatus then, as a college text would, this dissertation
moves the variances into the commentary itself. When a discrepancy of the text matters,
it has been noted alongside an explanation of why the accepted emendation has been
utilized in the text. The format produces actual discussion rather than providing a
seemingly irrelevant footnote, and it allows the students to get a taste of manuscript
tradition without being overburdened by it. It means that students and instructors can
use it as a jumping off point for discourse as they are navigating the text for meaning.
This approach scaffolds students’ legitimate peripheral participation in the discipline.

1.9 Framework for Word Order

The word order, particularly in poetry, is integral to understanding what the
author means on the deeper levels of understanding, but students are often not able to
bridge that gap and make sense of looping clauses and postponed verbs. It is critical
that they be taught to understand Latin in the order the author provides so that they
can begin the arduous task of rewiring their thoughts so as to grasp that Romans
thought in clauses rather than sentences (Claflin 1927).
The first problem is, of course... how to grasp the thought units of the original just as they stand... the original order should never be deserted, even for the moment. It should not be deserted because to abandon it is to throw away the chief clue to the meaning... To neglect it is like trying to force a door after throwing away the key. (Claflin 1943, 133)

The commentary notes where the word order varies from the normal conventions and shows students how the word order achieves meaning. The placement should not be a stumbling block to get over, but instead an opportunity to stop and discuss why the author put the words in their current order, even if the answer is something as simple as metrical convenience. Assuming the student has either the grammatical and lexical chops or the proper scaffolding to produce a translation, the student will often be confounded by the problem of contextualization or integration. Hamilton (1992, 170) explains that the depth of the student’s background knowledge determines what they get out of the reading, i.e. whether or not they are able to make actual sense of it in context. Students who do not know all of the variances of the Paris and Helen myth will miss pointed irony and more advanced literary pleasure. Students who do not even have a firm grasp on the basic myth, however, will not be able to make meaningful sense of the work at all (Tharpe & Gallimore 1988, 20). Thus, the commentary cross references major plot points so that the student can build context needed for accurate translation without simply giving them the answers so that they can develop true comprehension, “The weaving of new information into existing mental structures” (Tharp & Gallimore 1988, 108). It is important to consider comprehension specifically as a weaving of the text, since the derivation of the word text is from texere—to weave. “Instructional conversation (the text that is continually becoming) – the fabric of book, memory, talk, and imagination that is being woven – that instructional conversation is the medium, the occasion, the instrument for rousing the mind to life” (109). Students
can only build meaning from what they already know and what they are given. Therefore, the more threads that are provided, the bigger the web students can weave. Additionally, preface material has been given in the commentary for chunks of lines that form sections so that students can get a preview of what they are about to read. This will give students much needed context to assist them in helping to choose definitions and translations that make sense in context (Markus 2004).

1.10 Framework for Literary Analysis
The next consideration is the student’s ability to analyze the text; to move from words’ literal meanings to their implications and how they can evoke emotions. Much like the self-actualization of Maslow’s hierarchy, this aesthetic position is one that very few students were able to reach. But the goal for a novice level commentary is not for the readers to be there; it is instead to start them on their way to appreciate of the text for its own sake.

Students interact with the text, using background knowledge that they bring to the comprehension process as well as the linguistic and rhetorical features of the text themselves… identity, gender roles, and student engagement play no small function in achieving linguistic proficiency. (Hoover 2000, 57)

Also consider that

The self is a major source of assistance for all performances, and so it is with comprehending text… In all ages and stages of human development, the literate life can be seen as continuing discourse with the text. Eventually it becomes the most common activity setting for learning… individual learning from text is the occasion for lifetime acquisition of new information and analytic tools. That learning, too, is through
discourse. We dispute text, we praise it, we may throw it on the floor, and we write on it, so intense is the urge to engage it in conversation. Good text is like a conversational companion; it does speak back to us and is responsive to our available schemas of understanding. Flaubert and Thomas Jefferson do not say the same things to us at age 50 as they urged at 25. (Tharp & Gallimore 1988, 159)

Not only does the commentary provide the necessary background information and analysis to help guide students in the process of navigating the source text, but it provides questions to encourage them to stop and try to decide what they think. These same questions can help teachers guide the discussions with students, particularly if they are newly experiencing the text themselves as many beginning instructors are.

Appropriate scaffolding within a commentary extends the thought processes being shared from the connoisseur to the apprentice in face-to-face interactions. In this sense, the ordering of each line’s commentary moves from the concrete to the abstract. Students are first given reference points regarding the plot (i.e. background information), then they are given assistance with grammar and vocabulary so that they can get a sense of the line. Then, once they have a loose translation to work with, they are given thoughts on poetic and stylistic issues as well as comparisons to other literature so that they can build from their foundation. This process is repeated over and over again allowing the commentary and the teacher to co-scaffold the text and each other; this allows students to develop the skills for using the commentary since knowing how to utilize a text is as much a learning process as the language itself. Students will still need some modeling and hands-on instruction to fully utilize the commentary based on the student’s individual skill level.

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6 This structuring follows the same strategies which assist students with learning-disabilities in the Latin classroom such as making it real, organizing the material, and being explicit (Hill 2006, 61-64).
1.11 The Choice of the *Heroides*

While this commentary design will improve student achievement regardless of that actual text being commented on, it is worth discussing the specific reasoning behind the choice of the *Heroides*. The selection was not haphazard; it was a means to meet students on a developmental and emotional level that they can connect in a way that other works are less able to achieve. Curriculum designers should focus on what they call the ‘Backwards Curriculum’. Teachers should begin with the end goal in mind and work backwards to determine what needs to be taught to reach that goal (Wiggins & McTighe 1998). Since the goal for students who make it the entire way through four years of Latin is to be able to read and interpret Latin competently and perhaps to complete the AP exam, the objective is to introduce something authentic but easier between the textbook and Vergil. Students need more opportunities to gain proficiencies and grammatical skills before they reach the *Aeneid* since, “Controlling task difficulty and sequencing tasks from easy to difficult” are the two most critical factors in predicting student success (Margolis & McCabe 2004, 249).

The selected text, therefore, had to be something that fit into the Vygotskian scaffolding model that the commentary notes are based on. It needs to be something authentic but less taxing than the *Aeneid* so that students can progressively improve their skills while still getting the feel for how classical Latin functions. It needs to be something students can relate to through their human experiences (Miller 2002, 426). The material has to be something that matches their emotional and linguistic development (Rosenblatt 1995, 69). Finally, it need to come in logical chunks so that teachers can do a lot or a little based on the needs of their students and how quickly they grasp the intricacies of authentic Latin without losing context. Based on its structure, vocabulary, and subject matter, the *Heroides* met all of the requirements for an intermediate text.
The vocabulary is fairly simple: the *Heroides* doesn’t use Lucretius’ scientific vocabulary or Plautus’ abundance of rare archaic words. Most of the words used in the *Heroides* are common enough for students to work through the text without constantly referring to a dictionary. It might not be the most nuanced definition readily available, but students can get that basic literal translation of the word which allows them to move on to using it in the sentence. Furthermore, the *Heroides* has content that students can easily reach. Wilson (1956, 197), discussing Caesar and Cicero, rightly notes that “Neither of them seems to a schoolboy to represent anything imaginable as actual human speech. Caesar appears impersonal to the point of not being human; Cicero, despite his invective, infinitely artificial.” Students must be presented with texts that feel human. The *Heroides*, with its epistolary nature, is perfect for this aim. Each letter has a known speaker and a known subject, which does not change, which makes following along with the plot easier. Students are used to reading letters, and the idea of a love-letter is something students can relate to. These stories work for the students without the need for some sort of contrived neo-Latin with modern sensibilities to make it relevant at first sight.

The ability of students to compare the world of mythology with the modern cultural mythos is useful in developing critical thinking skills, so it is best to choose texts and materials that students can actively connect to, such as Ovid’s more humanistic poetry (Pharr 1925). Because “Textual material becomes meaningful when it is hooked by sense to everyday concepts and hooked by system to the whole structure of meaning given by schooling” (Tharp & Gallimore 1988, 148), students must understand how their reading material relates both to their educational goals and to their understanding of the world around them (Rosenblatt 1995, 41; Frauenfelder 2005, 211).
Students should be presented with materials that they can appreciate and which are developmentally appropriate (Hutchinson 1935, 483). Since the function of this commentary is to meet students where they are, considerations must be given not only to their Latin skills, but also to their development and to the mindset of the 21st century learner. Students do not possess the old-fashioned kinds of skills deemed necessary for learning the subject that we love to teach...Nor should we delude ourselves into thinking that we can return to the education system of the past... And yet most of us still teach according to the model from which we once learned and the methods employed in textbooks now out-of date and inappropriate for today’s students... We must recognize their characteristics – both their abilities and their deficiencies – and adapt our instruction accordingly. (Ellsworth & Ball 1989, 1)

Moreover, the way in which students approach the world and literacy has changed (Yancey 2004). Writing is no longer simply essays and novels; it now includes PowerPoint, multi-media, hyperlinked web pages, blogs, instant messages, and emails. While Yancey’s focus is on the need to revise the rhetoric and composition curriculum for college freshmen to meet not only where they are coming from but where they are going, the implications across the curriculum are present. Latin, just as English, must consider how students interact with writing and what they consider text to be.

The literature that students encounter in their coursework must be both interesting and relevant to them. The <i>Heroides</i>, specifically 5, 16, and 17, fit this criterion perfectly as the characters represent the internal changes which students undergo in their transition into young adulthood. Oenone tries desperately to figure out who she is without her husband; Paris attempts to navigate his changing status and genre; and
Helen must decide whether to become a Trojan or remain with her Spartan husband. The internal conflicts that adolescents experience are represented in the literature, which means that the students can relate to the characters in ways that are meaningful for their current stages in life. They can work through the search for their own identities by examining how their inter-personal relationships and romantic lives can parallel to those of the principal characters (Makros & McCabe 2001, 624; Rosenblatt 1995, 79; 135). The classroom must be a ‘safe-zone’ for students where they have the opportunity to try-on and view identities without fear of criticism (Hamman & Hendricks 2005). In the same way, teachers can present texts which allow for students to see representations of the crisis of identity and to view others who are in the midst of resolving their own identity formations, because, vicarious or observational learning can occur using fictional characters (Schunk 2004, 86).

Furthermore, the *Heroides* presents a wide variety of female perspectives. Whether the reader wishes to consider Ovid a feminist or a representative of the oppressive patriarchy, the text is written almost exclusively in female voice. This is a far cry from Caesar’s soldiers stomping through Gaul and would begin to mitigate the absence of a female voice in ancient text and its effect on female student achievement. Several analyses have been done on the gender disparities in beginning Latin textbooks as well as the systemic marginalization of women in many of the reading materials that are commonly presented to students. Early editions of *Wheelock*, for example, did not even introduce the word *femina* until chapter 17 (Hoover 2000, 58). Harwood (1989) presents a thorough identification of the lack of female characters and interest in *Latin for Americans*. Churchill (2006, 89) cites the 10:1 ratio of male to female characters in the
Female characters are often inserted into textbooks without any active role or without agency. This gender disparity is further compounded in later Latin experience as students go from Caesar’s male-centric military campaign to Cicero’s male-centric political world, straight into Vergil’s song of a man and arms. It is entirely possible that a Latin student can go through four years of authentic Latin in the current curriculum without seeing a strong female character until they reach Dido in the fourth book of the *Aeneid*. One of the challenges with the teaching of Latin then is the reduction of sexism and gender-bias in the curriculum without departing from traditional Latin which has virtually no female authors and few female protagonists (Hemelrijk 2004). Texts must be included in the Latin curriculum that show the agency and capabilities of ancient women (Hanson 1997, 126) as education and Latin learning no longer belong to white upper-class men alone (Harwood 1989, 358; Hoover 2000, 58; Churchill 2006, 88). The *Heroides* offers teachers an opportunity to show women with agency and power.

Presenting poetry as the first authentic Latin which students offer may seem counter-intuitive; on the contrary,

First year Latin students can, in fact, read, enjoy, and benefit from an encounter with real – not invented or adapted – Latin poetry. Experience suggests that younger students, freer of the sophistications and inhibitions of adolescence, can enjoy even more than older students the sounds, and rhythms, and narratives of verse (LaFleur 1985, 153).

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7 For an example, lesson (lectio) iii story in *Latin for Americans* level 2 book, *The Women Have Their Say*, in which the little girl Secunda laments that all women do in ancient Rome is wait for men to come home. Her mother and older sister then produce a brief catalogue containing the names of famous Roman women such as Lucretia and Cornelia without any substantive discussion.
It gives students more opportunities to learn how to identify and interpret poetic devices, which is an important component of the AP Exam. Some teachers may have trepidation over whether students are developmentally ready for poetry but all

Students are just as lost as Aeneas is when he climbs the crag in book 1 and looks for his lost ships. Like Aeneas, they may not find what we want them to or do it at our pace, but they will discover things that we have never seen or noticed before. In almost every class a student offers an interpretation, asks a question, or translates something in such a way that I am forced to reexamine the text and my assumptions, even my understanding of the Aeneid. (Connor 2006, 171)

This is the goal of teaching and learning: that the students and teachers negotiate meaning of the text together. The purpose of the study of authentic Latin authors, is “To bring the student into vital touch with the language, and to such an appropriation of it as to cause him to feel through its medium the values of a life rich in so much that underlies our modern life in literature, art, and law” (Eastman 1907, 295).

Since there would not be enough time in a school-year to uncover all of the Heroides, it is necessary to decide how much and which parts of the work to include in the commentary. The decision to choose one section over another requires a trade-off that alters how students see the text. Consider for example the difference between reading the first six books of the Aeneid versus reading the last six books. For the former, students will see the work as a travelogue much like the Odyssey but if they only encounter the latter, the text is much more of a standing war such as the Iliad (Boyd 2006), just as when the blind sages in the parable were asked to describe an elephant, having only touched one part of it, each understood the elephant to be something completely different. The end result, though, is that the decision to add or
subtract from a text requires careful consideration and a willingness to acknowledge what is being lost and what is being gained. To that end, much consideration was given to what various poem combinations would reflect on the collection as a whole.

Consideration had to be given both to the stories’ relatability for a high school audience and their thematic relevance to each other. Oenone, Paris, and Helen worked for the target age group and show the best of all the parts of the *Heroides*: The nice girl who did everything right, the too-cocky pretty boy, and the secretly bad girl who likes to be chased. It is like an ancient version of *Cruel Intentions*. The poems not only make sense thematically but present a fairly good sampling of the *Heroides* in and of themselves.

Furthermore, by the start of Latin 3, students have generally had at least a preliminary introduction to the Trojan cycle and should therefore be familiar with Paris and Helen without having to introduce them in great depth. If the goal is to prepare them for the *Aeneid* in AP Latin, using Trojan characters and a pre-story makes perfect sense because Paris and Helen are big names that students readily recognize.

In conclusion, this dissertation is a bridge between the novice Latinist and the expert. I have shown what a student commentary needs to have in order to allow students to reach full aesthetic appreciation. Various educational theories have been introduced and incorporated into a series of guidelines for teaching and learning authentic Latin text. This final result is an example of a conceptually rigorous pedagogical tool for developing successful Latin readers and a starting point for conversations about the effective use of pedagogical content for knowledge in Latin instruction.
INTRODUCTION TO THE HEROIDES

2.1 General Overview of the Heroides

Ovid’s *Heroides* are both deceptively simple and simply deceptive. On the surface, they consist of 21 poems--15 in the guise of letters from mythological women who have been abandoned written to the men who abandoned them. The remaining 6 are paired letters from mythological men courting ladies and the ladies’ replies. This overly simplistic analysis of the *Heroides* pervades nineteenth and twentieth century scholarly discussion, placing them as something to read simply to pass the time and not as Ovid’s best work (Jacobson 1974, 3)--certainly not on par with his *Metamorphoses*. However, *Heroides* scholarship has vastly improved over the last thirty years. Recent scholarship acknowledges that the *Heroides* were not written in a vacuum. What should seem like an obvious statement, considering these are letters written by women (and men) from Epic and Tragedy has somehow eluded previous scholars. The classical (and presumably modern) reader of the *Heroides* knows how this story ends, and often knows the different versions. Scholars are finally looking at how Ovid references, manipulates, and toys with his predecessors and the mythological corpus at large. Therefore, it is worthwhile to take a moment to examine current trends in Heroidean scholarship.

Barchiesi (1993) in examining Medea (Her. 12), whose story has been told so many times, suggests that:

“Medea implicates her readers in a difficult question: in a different setting, she could be different. Drama and elegy have different and conflicting codes, and literary consciousness diffracts the identity of mythical personae. It is difficult to say how far this Medea – seen through Appolonius and Euripides, Ovid’s tragedy and elegiacs – is still one” (345).
Barchiesi’s work asks his audience to consider how Ovid interacts with the stories it already knows (i.e., how Ovid varies from the traditional story and how Medea varies from the confines of her legacy). Such thinking allows the reader to expand their understanding of the world of these mythological characters and to consider the possibilities of how these poems interact with their predecessors.

Verducci (1985) also asks the reader to consider how the women in Ovid’s writing vary from their canonized personalities and the effects of this difference, particularly in the representation of their emotions and self-presentation. Verducci’s chapter on Briseis examines how Ovid takes a character that was a mere pawn in her source text, unable to affect any sense of agency, nearly mute, and turn her into a round character narrator. Fulkerson’s (2005) monograph likewise asks a similar question although her focus is within the corpus. She asks the reader to consider the possibility that the Heroines have encountered each others’ letters and have manipulated their own letters accordingly. In her section on Medea and Hypsipyle, Fulkerson suggests that Hypsipyle has encountered Medea’s letter and decided that since a witch is currently what Jason wants, she must be more of a Medea than Medea. Fulkerson (2005) posits that Medea’s killing of her own children may be due Hypsipyle’s curse and that “Taking this notion into account, however, briefly, will indeed change the way we read Euripides’ Medea” (53). The idea that the letters influence, reference, and corrupt each other (and their writers) invites the reader to think further on both the Heroides and on the greater mythological corpus. Such questions and theories create space for greater literary enjoyment and intellectual reflection.

Another fascinating and fruitful trend in the discourse of the Heroides is the notion that the characters who write the letters have motives and desires. Flaherty (1994) examines how the Heroines use their letters as a means of self-presentation and Mazurek (2006) examines how what the characters say and omit allows them to self-
present and move themselves out of one genre and into another. While her examination focuses on Paris, which is pleasantly germane to my interests, there is also now an opening for discussion on the ways in which the Heroines self-present and move between their respective genres.

Jacobson (1974) argues that the Heroines represent cases of abnormal psychology, “given the extreme circumstances which afflict most of the heroines... a peculiarly intense interest in the abnormal is clear in much of [Ovid’s] writing” (375-376). Examination of the psychological behavior and pathology of the heroines (and heroes) presents fascinating opportunities for discussion at the intersection of science and literature, particularly for those heroines who attempt to engage in incest (Phaedra and Canace), sexual transference (Laodamia), or otherwise deviant behavior.

The very epistolary framework of the Heroides is something that has been largely ignored by critics who considered the poems to be monologues guised in the form of letters with perfunctory salutations and closings. The new trend is to accept that these were genuinely conceived as letters and to then explore how and why they break away from the confines of the form. Connelly (2000) does an excellent job of defending the Heroides as epistolary by asserting that:

“Ovid manipulates generic boundaries and expands the possibilities of the epistolary form to create a different engagement between the reader and the text and to call attention to the ways in which his heroines narrate and reread their recent abandonment” (2).

Connelly’s disclosure of the notion that the form and the function of the epistles (i.e., to communicate with the men who have left them) are interrelated presents new considerations for the Heroides. This shift to big picture ideas, which expands rather than limits the interpretation and understanding of the text, can help to broaden the
intellectual stimulation gained from analyzing these works. The scholarship now has an opportunity to examine how the *Heroides* fit into Roman society in the 1st century.

Duncan Kennedy (1984) examines how the epistolary nature of the double *Heroides* impacts our understanding of them by examining both the exact moments in which the letters are written and the motives of both the male initiator and the female respondent (414 et seq). Kennedy (1984) also attempts to justify the format of the single *Heroides* by reminding the reader that “In epistolary fiction, the very implausibility of the circumstances of writing can be a commentary on the writer’s character or situation” (416). He then uses the example of the scene in *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* where Valmont actually writes a letter on the back of his courtesan. Kennedy is opening the floor for extensive discussion on how the time and space of the letters within the character’s canonized myth informs the letter and the psychological state of the writer.

Bolton (2009) continues this trend by examining the physical movement of characters within their letters. She compares those heroines who do not move during their writing (e.g., Canace who writes with pen in one hand and sword in the other) with characters who move about during their writing (e.g., Oenone who travels throughout the woods). Bolton argues that those movements represent desires for movement in the plot of their stories. Her article, like much of the new scholarship, represents bold and unique angles of examination through which one can gain a better understanding of the *Heroides*.

The letters have often been criticized for losing their epistolary quality and becoming monological, especially in the case of Deinara’s letter where the news of Hercules’ death actually reaches her in the midst of writing.⁸ It has even been hypothesized (Sargeant, 1996; Cunningham, 1949) that the *Heroides* were not meant to

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⁸ For further discussion, see Fulkerson (2000), chapter 5.
be read as poems, but rather acted out as pantomime. The secret to good epistolary, however, lies in never letting the reader forget that these are letters, while making the reading so engrossing that they can hear the writer’s voice in their minds, which may be what leads people to dismiss the epistolary as a veneer. Consider the case of Mary Shelly’s *Frankenstein*, where the narrative spans hundreds of pages within the thin frame of a letter written from the doctor to his sister. Connelley (2000) points out that Ovid’s portrayal of the heroines’ engagement in the composition of their letters allows him “to imagine all of those moments when they lose themselves in their writing, when they forget about the recipient and the immediate goal of their epistle” (35). Just as with real people, sometimes our heroines get so caught up in the moment that their words get away from them.

On the other hand, upon closer inspection one sees that Ovid plays puppeteer with his heroines (and heroes). Ovid changes their stories, plays with the readers’ knowledge of how these stories are supposed to end and sometimes how they began. Most importantly, Ovid has given his women their own voices: a chance to say what they think and feel not just about their current situations, but about their genres and ultimately their own stories. The removal of third person omniscience and the entrance of first person writing create a whole new field of interpretation. Oenone, Paris, and Helen now have the opportunity to persuade, to bend the truth, to omit, and to lie outright. As Rosati (1992, 74) notes, “L’elegia si offer cioe a Ovidio come una retorica capace di modellare l’esperienza di amore infelice delle sue eroine secondo i propri schemi e il proprio linguaggio: gli fornisce sia la forma del contenuto che la forma dell’espressione” (The elegy offers itself to Ovid as a rhetorical space to model the experience of the unhappy love of the heroine following the proper schema and language: It supplies the form of content that is the form of expression). Consider for

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9 For further discussion, see Barcheisi (1986, 69).
example, *Les Liaisons Dangerouses* by Laclos, which might be the ideal of perfection in epistolary novel, in which the principal characters write letters to one another about how they are writing deceptive letters to others. For our heroines, the letter is the medium through which they are able to say the things which they are not able to say out loud either because their reader is not there (e.g., Ariadne, Penelope, etc.) or because their words are too shameful to utter (e.g., Phaedra, Canace, etc).

Our ill-fated heroes do not know their fates, only their current situations and they sometimes do not even grasp those. Drinkwater (2003) also points out that we as readers must ask ourselves several important questions such as “where are we in the heroine’s story” and “what do we know that the imagined author does not know” (9)? This second question is perhaps what allows Ovid to have so much fun with his marionettes. We, both ancient and modern readers, know how this story ends; we also know how it began and all of the stops along the way. More importantly, we know variations of the story that may or may not have come to pass but which can be referenced. For example at 5.89-90, when Oenone says “*Denique tutus amor est; ibi nulla parantur bella, nec ultrices advehit unda rates*”, the reader is reminded of a version of Oenone’s story where she sends her sons to guide the Greeks to Troy, literally allowing her love to bring those same avenging ships. The reader knows that this could happen but even we are left in the dark because there is no indication of whether or not it will happen in this version of the story. The same happens at 16.185-6, where Paris suggests that Helen will be greeted by a dense line of Trojan mothers. Paris does not understand that this will be the women of Troy screaming for her death as portrayed in Eur. *The Trojan Women*.

Hinds (1998, 104 et seq) examines Ovid’s version of the *Aeneid* as it appears in the *Metamorphoses* and suggests that what Ovid has adeptly done is to reframe the focus. It would be an arduous, perhaps even impossible task, to beat Vergil in the telling of
Aeneas’ travels, so instead he focuses on the parts that Vergil had left out, such as the back stories of smaller players. In the same vein, Ovid focuses his *Heroides* on the parts that are glossed by his literary predecessors, especially where Homeric texts are involved. He expands Briseis for example, whose capture (so pivotal to the action of the *Iliad*) is almost completely glossed and expands Penelope who, despite being a central figure in the *Odyssey*, says almost nothing and simply sits in her window pining. In creating his *epistolae*, Ovid is able to insert himself into the Homeric texts in places which are not thoroughly crowded by the shadows of his literary predecessors.

Barchiesi (1986, 66) suggests that the poet’s aim is not to compete but rather to fill in the prior space, the after space, with the same body of recollection as a surgeon operating without damaging and leaving no traces of his presence. Instead of trying to go over the mountains of the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*, Ovid simply works around them, leaving the major points in tact and filling in the spaces that are still somewhat untouched.

Barchiesi (1997; 1986) analyzes the fundamental problems of examining inter-textuality, which are quite relevant for a text in which all of the principal players have been plucked from past literature and mythology. We as modern readers cannot help but examine Ovid’s heroines in light of their previous adventures (e.g., Helen in the *Iliad*), but one concern is that we do not have all the evidence. Barchiesi (1997, 213) discusses some lines of Vergil, which are identified as being inter-textual borrowings from Catullus who borrowed them from Callimachus, which ultimately begs the question, from whom did Vergil actually borrow? We do not have the lost texts that perhaps show our players in a different light from the ones that we currently are able to see. We have an embarrassment of riches when it comes to references to Helen, but even amid all those sources, what did Ovid have that we do not? Barchiesi (1997, 215) suggests that allusion functions as a choice through possibilities already taken, traditions, not only as the additions of choices; that to allude is to decide which
previous incarnation of the subject matter to borrow from. Unfortunately, we do not know which paths Ovid may have wandered in the process of building his heroines; we do not know when he takes the road less-traveled, which often leads to confusion when the narrative travelers act in ways which we have not seen them before. In light of these facts, the allusions referenced in the commentary itself are not meant to be exclusive, but merely to highlight points where Ovid’s heroines have successfully reused their own words or the words of others to enhance their message or to toy with the reader.

Throughout the commentary proper, an attempt has been made to focus on the words as being the speakers’ rather than Ovid’s as often as possible as Ovid’s mission was to write these letters so well that the reader could forget Ovid’s voice and hear the writer’s voice in its place, especially in light of the fact that Ovid’s task was to write as a woman convincingly for the majority of the letters. Rosati (2005, 162) notes that the intention of the external author (the poet) is the characterization of the internal author (the heroine) to speak appearing in a world still virgin, still in formation, in which their personalities are not yet defined. In a sense, it is Ovid’s job to make the reader forget there is an Ovid.

As elegy, the Heroides, specifically the single epistles do not follow the standard pattern of the genre where the male is romantically enslaved by his domina as Catullus is by Lesbia, Propertius by Cynthia, and Ovid by Corinna. In elegy, it is the man who must beg and plead and cajole his mistress into opening the door. Here, however, Ovid has inverted the cycle. The heroines are the ones begging to be let in, often located worlds away from their lovers (as Penelope and Phyllis), and without even a harsh janitor to plead with. As Drinkwater (2003) notes, “the Heroides present the puella as the ‘lover’. She is no longer in control as the domina to her lover’s servus; it is for him to turn a deaf ear to her pleas. She finds herself powerless and vulnerable to the vagaries of her lover’s moods and of her epic circumstances” (6). Rosati (1992) suggests that all of the
heroines, including Oenone, are reduced to utilizing the same elegiac tactics that Catullus and Propertius use to appeal to Lesbia and Cynthia. Ovid has overturned the schema of elegy returning the woman to the role of protagonist-victim of love through the use of elegy, by transferring it into elegiac Latin, utilizing the elegiac “Ego.” The heroines rewrite the story of unhappy love adapted to a well defined rhetoric modeling of the already structured schema and language following a form already willing: the elegy with its meter and gestures is exactly the form of the letter (85, 92-93). Farrell (2003) also considers that

Apart from the epistolary forms, the range of heroines whom Ovid represents in the collection, most of whom had already led rich and diverse lives in the pages of Greek and Latin literature, involves him in inter-textual negotiations with epic, tragedy, comedy, pastoral, lyric, and other genres (401).

Essentially, not only has Ovid reversed the gender and social roles of his ‘writers,’ but he has also plucked them from their native genres forcing them to work a new task. In the introductions to the individual commentaries, specific attention will be paid to how our epic, pastoral, and tragic heroines (and hero) must now navigate the world of elegy which has neither soft glades nor bronze armor, only the trials and tribulations of love.

Verducci (1985), in Ovid’s Toyshop of the Heart, opens her second chapter with a discussion of the importance of Jason, who has the privilege of being the only man to whom two letters are addressed (56). Verducci overlooks that Paris is even more blessed than Jason in that he benefits from receiving two letters and a chance to speak in his own voice both to woo Helen and to exculpate himself from his actions towards Oenone. Of the three male voices in the Heroides, Paris is the only one whose story radiates out past his love in the literary tradition. Acontius and Leander only matter in relation to Cydippe and Hero. Paris’ actions radiate throughout the entire ancient
world, bringing Greece and Asia into war. In essence, Paris’ letter creates the need for Penelope, Briseis, Laodamia, Dido, and Oenone to write their letters.

It is important to consider not just modern scholarly articles’ and commentaries’ presentation of the *Heroides*, but also how they have been historically received. These poems have existed for 2000 years and their historical impact is an important consideration. The *Heroides* were certainly read during Antiquity and were engaging and interesting enough that other authors felt the need to respond to them, such as Sabinus’ replies to the Heroines. Fifty years later, the satirist Persius, criticized the tendency of other poets to write imitations of the *Heroides*:

> Whereupon some fellow with a purple mantle round his shoulders lisps out with a snuffle some insipid trash about a Phyllis or a Hypsipyle or some other dolorous poetic theme, mincing his words and letting them trip daintily over his palate. The great men signify their approval; will not your poet’s ashes be happy now? (*Sat* 1.32-37)

While Persius may not have appreciated the quality of those imitations, the fact that he was compelled to complain about them is sufficient evidence that the Ovidian Heroine was reinvented repeatedly.

The *Heroides* also had an impressive reception during the Middle Ages and Renaissance and were historically one of the first texts that boys were exposed to in the schoolhouse (White 2009, 16; 49) since these texts were considered an introduction into persuasive writing. It is fitting that a text which was considered appropriate for children’s first encounter with authentic Latin over 300 years ago is still valuable today.
During the 16th century, Ovid’s *Heroides* underwent a transformation from school text to focus of scholarship. Between 1499 and 1580, 42 editions of the *Heroides* were printed not including editions of the full Ovidian canon (White 2009, 41).

As White (2009, 17) notes:

First, those commentaries of the first third of the century with their encyclopaedic erudition and their interest in Ovid’s description of the psychology of passion, more or less adapted to the conventions of contemporary morality; then, beginning in the 1530s, the obsession with rhetoric which makes the mid-century editions read like manuals in the art of literary imitation; and lastly, when these seem to lose their relevance after 1570, the narrowing-down of literary studies to problems of textual criticism.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, however, the *Heroides* truly reached supremacy as a work of literature. Imitations and other works responding to the *Heroides* flourished. Heroidean influences can be seen in Dante, Boccaccio, Chauncer, Pope, and Colardeau (White 2009, 25). During the second half of the 18th century, roughly half of all love poetry was written in an epistolary style (26). Furthermore, in addition to the works inspired by the *Heroides*, there were an enormous amount of translations into other languages. White (2009, 146-186) provides a catalogue of known translations of the work, starting with Maximus Planudes translation of the work into Greek prose in the thirteenth century. Juan Rodriguez translated the work into Spanish in the mid-fifteenth century while adding three new letters of his own, a trend seen frequently in translations of the *Heroides* where authors feel compelled to add their own epistles. For example, Octavien de Saint-Gelai’s French version included additional letters and was redrafted and republished 19 times between 1500 and 1550. The work was translated
and redrafted repeatedly by Fontaine in the second half of the century. The function of the Heroides was not just poetic and rhetorical but served as a moral guidebook, warning against adultery, incest, and other spiritual failings.

If translating the letters into other languages and adding new heroines is insufficient evidence of the popularity and importance of the Heroides in the 16th through 18th centuries, then look no further than the preponderance of reply letters. At least 20 different authors wrote answers from the missing heroes to their abandoned women in Latin, French, Dutch, and English (White 2009, 242). To want others to have access to a work by putting it in another language is one thing, but to be so emotionally affected by a work that an author feels the need to answer to it shows an entirely different level of the work’s impact. The text has something meaningful and impactful to say, not just to the readers of Ovid’s day, but also to the readers of all the centuries that follow, and it is appropriate to teach and share the Heroides with the readers of today who inherit not just Ovid’s Latin but also the lineage and pedigree of enlightened reading that was inspired by it.

Sadly, the Heroides entered a dark period from the end of the 1800s to the 1970s. Scholars shifted their focus from the moral and artistic value of the work to issues of manuscript tradition which transformed the epistles from something to be read and enjoyed into something to be argued over. It was not until Jacobson’s 1974 release of Ovid’s Heroides that the discourse slowly began to swing back into more aesthetic dimensions as discussed at the beginning of this introduction. It is these aesthetic and human reflections within the Heroides that my own student’s found so intriguing. To examine what love looks like, to consider how despair takes shape, and to ponder how their own lives mirror those of the ancient and the mythological are the functions of the Heroides that brought the Latin to life for my own students.
As this commentary only deals with poems 5, 16, and 17, a brief exordium of the principle players is in order. These three poems were chosen to some extent because they form a complete set of the experience of love all revolving around Paris. Like the Phoenix, Paris’ love for Helen rises from the ashes of his relationship with Oenone. Just as any analysis of Medea’s letter must examine Hypsipyle’s letter, true understanding of each of these three letters requires analysis of the other two. At several points which will be discussed ad loc., Paris and Helen make statements that hearken back to Oenone’s letter; the writing of which yet to happen in the true narrative timeline.

Like most ancient mythology, there is no single source in which the details are found, but rather the information is composited from multiple pieces, some fragmentary, some no longer extant, so that often versions and variations in the story differ. More troublesome is that the actual love affair of Paris and Helen seems to be of little interest to authors or was simply lost to the passage of time. The Nostoi (homecoming stories) of heroes such as Odysseus and Agamemnon seem to have been much more common, or at least their survival was, so that most of the story of Paris and Helen is constructed by other people recalling parts of it. The essential texts with some brief description are as follows, but please note that it cannot be exhaustive and that we as modern readers cannot begin to grasp how many smaller works Ovid may have referenced that did not survive.

The Cypria and the Little Iliad, of disputed authorships, are epics based on parts of the Trojan saga that come right before the Iliad; so little survives that they are included in the same Loeb edition as the works of Hesiod along with fragments and scholiastic references of other epics.10 However, references to it from other sources

indicate that it contained a much fuller description of the judgment of Paris and Helen’s exit to Troy. The currently surviving pieces simply give stock facts such as Fragment 13 of the *Little Iliad*: “Menelaus at least, when he caught a glimpse somehow of the breasts of Helen unclad, cast away his sword, methinks.” Most of the fragments are quotes taken from elsewhere, particularly from scholiasts -- ancient commentators on other works who say that a given line is a quote from the *Cypria*, such as from the Scholiast on Homer, *Il. iii. 242*:

> For Helen had been previously carried off by Theseus, and it was in consequence of this earlier rape that Aphidna, a town in Attica, was sacked and Castor was wounded in the right thigh by Aphidnus who was king at that time. Then the Dioscuri, failing to find Theseus, sacked Athens. The story is in the Cyclic writers.

In the same vein, Hesiod’s *Catalogue of Women*, which is mostly fragmentary, provides discussion on Helen and her father and her suitors. The Same Loeb edition contains those fragments as well. We again cannot know how much of it Ovid had that we do not, but it does provide a source for the oath of the suitors in Fragment 68:

> But of all who came for the maid’s sake, the lord Tyndareus sent none away, nor yet received the gift of any, but asked of all the suitors sure oaths, and bade them swear and vow with unmixed libations that no one else henceforth should do aught apart from him as touching the marriage of the maid with shapely arms; but if any man should cast off fear and reverence and take her by force, he bade all the others together follow after and make him pay the penalty. And they, each of them hoping to accomplish his marriage, obeyed him without wavering. But warlike Menelaus, the son of Atreus, prevailed against them all together, because he gave the greatest gifts (ll. 89-100).
Homer’s *Iliad* covers the last year of the war which was fought over Helen agreeing to flee with Paris, both of them principal figures in the story; it provides one of the only first-hand accounts of them in action and ultimately shows that Helen regrets her decision to a fairly large extent. A good deal of the foreshadowing in all three letters refers to events that will be shown in the *Iliad* and has been noted ad loc.

Helen also appears in Homer’s *Odyssey* where she and Menelaus are reunited and forgiven as happy lovers after the destruction of the war. She is the consummate host to Odysseus’ son, Telemachus, and elaborates on her time spent in Troy. Euripides’ *The Trojan Women* represents Helen as vile and manipulative, attempting to justify her actions as the charred ruins of Troy collapse around her and the daughters of Priam are held in chains awaiting their enslaved fates. Euripides’ *Helen*, however, presents an alternative version where Helen had never gone to Troy at all but rather an imposter created in her likeness by the gods. It is an exculpation of Helen.

Likewise, Georgias wrote the *Encomium of Helen*, a legal apologetic justifying her actions. There are several other exculpations.\(^{11}\) Euripides’ *Iphigenia at Aulis* offers the lead up to war where the assembled Greek forces await winds to take them, but must first sacrifice Iphigenia, Agamemnon’s daughter, for the winds will come. Furthermore, Euripides’ *Andromache* presents the fate of Andromache, Hector’s wife, after the Trojan War and her involvement with Helen’s daughter Hermione and Helen’s husband Menelaus wherein further opinions of Helen are revealed.

Aeschylus’ *Orestia Trilogy* (*Agamemnon, Libation Bearers, & Eumenides*) presents Agamemnon’s homecoming and the resultant tragedy. It also presents in snippets thoughts of Helen’s actions. Vergil’s *Aeneid* (esp. book 2) tells the story of the fall of Troy and gives the most detailed account of the famed horse. Helen is not a principal

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\(^{11}\) See Austin (1994) for a full account of non-extant and extant encomium.
star in this work, but the entire work is a result of her actions. Ovid’s own *Ars Amatoria* mentions Paris and Helen at various points, but more importantly provides step by step directions for the perfect seduction, which correlate highly with Paris’ epistle.¹²

As assistance to students, the following section is a brief narration of the story of Paris and Helen. It is not exhaustive but merely an introductory guide. Specific details and variations will be covered as they arrive in the introductions and commentaries.

During her pregnancy, Queen Hecuba of Troy dreams that she is carrying a firebrand that will destroy her kingdom. The interpreters all agree that the child she carries is the torch and that the baby should be exposed to prevent the omen from coming true. Paris is left on the hills of Mt. Ida where (as is common in such motifs) he is found by a kindly shepherd and his wife and raised as their own. While spending his youth in the rural countryside tending the king’s animals he begins a relationship with a nymph, Oenone, who is the daughter of a local river. They may or may not have been legally married but they functioned as a couple. Due to a series of fateful coincidences, Paris is discovered to be the long lost son of king Priam and is restored to prince-hood.

In the meantime, Athena, Hera, and Aphrodite are in dispute over which of them is the fairest because while they were standing together at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis (the parents of Achilles), a golden apple with the inscription “for the fairest” was cast at their feet by the goddess Eris (Discord) who was not invited to the wedding. Each goddess attempts to claim the honor; so they approach Zeus to decide. The king of the gods is not foolish enough to decide between his wife and daughters regarding their beauty.

Zeus chooses Paris to judge the beauty of the goddesses and is torn in his decision until each of the goddesses secretly attempts to bribe him. Hera offers him rule

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¹² See introduction to poem 16.
of Asia and Europe; Athena offers him wisdom; and Aphrodite offers him Helen, the
most beautiful woman in the world. Choosing beauty over wisdom and power,
Aphrodite gets the golden apple and notifies Paris that Helen is in Sparta, married to
King Menelaus. Under the guise of trade negotiations, Paris prepares a fleet and is
received in Menelaus’ house.

Due to a death in the family, Menelaus is called away suddenly and leaves Helen
with instructions to care for their guest in his absence. Paris uses this opportunity to
seduce Helen, which is exactly where the writing of Heroides 16 and 17 fall in the
narrative timeline. Helen and Paris flee Sparta and return to Troy where they are
married, leading to the writing of Heroides 5 in the narrative timeline, when Oenone
realizes she has been abandoned.

Upon his return, Menelaus realizes that he has been cheated of his wife and
prepares to get her back. Due to Helen’s extreme beauty (and the fact that she has
previously been kidnapped), all of the suitors for Helen’s hand in marriage were forced
to agree to a pledge that if she was taken from her rightful husband, each of them
would support the effort to return her to him. Invoking the pledge, Menelaus gathers
the entirety of Greece to bear down upon Troy. Thus begins the Trojan War.

In Lycophrons’ version, Oenone, now abandoned by Paris, sends her sons to help
the beached Greeks find their way to Troy, opening up ten long years of fighting.
Eventually, Paris will be wounded by a poison arrow, which only Oenone with her
knowledge of medicine can cure. She refuses to help Paris who then dies on his way
back to Troy. In some versions, motivated by regret, she hangs herself or journeys to
Troy and throws herself on Paris’ funeral pyre (as in Quintus of Smyrna, book 10).

2.2 Aims of the Commentary
With the exception of small emendations, very little has changed in the *Heroides* since Palmer wrote his commentary in 1898. However, the world has changed greatly. Palmer expected an almost flawless knowledge of Latin and Greek, skimping greatly on the type of grammatical guidance which the modern student, particularly in the 3rd college semester or 3rd year of high school, needs. More modern commentaries such as Kenney and Knox give slightly more support but do not go far enough. One goal of this dissertation is to rectify this situation by providing the type of assistance that more modern commentaries give to help students to struggle less with syntax and more truly appreciate the poetry. Pharr’s commentary of *Aeneid* 1-6 and Ancona’s selections of Horace begin to exemplify the types of assistance students typically need to succeed in advanced Latin courses such as the College Board’s AP Latin curriculum or a typical 3000-level Latin course and their format serves as the point of origin for this commentary.

While a primary focus is on basic assistance, identifying periphrastics is not the major contribution of this work. The commentary also discusses more scholarly issues pertaining to the poems for those who do not need that type of assistance. The notes give special attention to Ovid’s use of poetic devices, specifically his use of word order to create images reinforcing or sometimes counteracting the very words which the writers have composed. Through his use of synchysis and chiasmus (see Table of Rhetorical and Poetic Devices in appendix), Ovid is able to greatly enrich the reader’s understanding of the poetry. Likewise, his use of sound play such as assonance and alliteration is not mere poetic flourish, but often serves to mirror the action of the writing. Consider for example, 5.47-8 *Non sic adpositis vincitur vitibus ulmus, /Ut tua sunt collo bracchia nexe meo*, where the synchysis, the verbal intertwining, mimics the actual wrapping of arms and neck. Ovid consistently uses the order of the words to represent what is happening in the scene. Moreover, Ovid uses assonance and alliteration to
mimic the sound of crying or stuttering. The poetic devices within these lines are not simple ornamentation but rather enhance the experience by mirroring the words themselves.

2.3 Ovidian Meter, Grammar, and Syntax
Every author has their own specific writing style, which is colored by personal preference and the constraints of the genre in which they write. It will be useful to discuss some general trends in Ovid’s writing style, particularly as it pertains to the Heroides, which should assist in translation.¹³

The Heroides (and almost all of Ovid’s other surviving works with the exception of the Metamorphoses) are written in Elegiac couplets which consist of 2 lines, the first written in standard Hexameter (like Vergil and other epicists) and the second written in pentameter, which is a slight misnomer. The pentameter is actually two and a half feet, then a caesura (a pause), followed by another two and a half feet (-uu/-uu/- u -uu/-uu/-). As a general rule, only the first 2 feet are usually exchangeable for spondees.

The fact that the lines naturally come in couplets infer that every two lines is generally a closed unit which presents a complete thought. More often than not, Ovid does not require the reader to bleed down onto the next couplet to get a full sense. It is often suggested to students who are struggling with a line, to remember that each couplet is usually an enclosed unit. While it is immensely beneficial for the novice reader that Ovid prefers these sense units, it does often give the work a choppy feel which might be jarring to some. That is not to say that Ovid writes badly, but that the ideas often seem to abruptly start and stop, which is ideal for the Heroides, where the fictitious authors pour their hearts out and often get caught up in the heat of the moment making the rough stops work very well. As E.C. Kennedy (1948, xxi) notes

¹³ For a more complete analysis of stylistic and metrical functions in Ovid, see Hansen (1993).
Ovid is not really any harder to translate than, say, Caesar or Livy... but his sentences are seldom more than two lines long, and are often shorter, and there is never a series of complicated dependent clauses to be unraveled, as there usually is in Caesar.

An additional boon to the novice student is Ovid’s vocabulary. The *Heroides* as a whole tend to have a fairly small vocabulary, most of which is found in the first and second year texts used by most high schools (e.g., *Cambridge, Ecce, Latin for Americans, Latin for the New Millennium, Wheelock*, etc). Essentially, Ovid’s vocabulary is generic enough to allow most students to initiate unaided. The only places where Ovid’s vocabulary becomes complex tends to be allusive vocabulary (e.g., words referring to people/places).\(^{14}\)

Ovid loves poetic wordplay. His lines are heavily loaded with chiasmus and synchysis, alliteration, assonance and every other type of poetic device, to the extent that some commentators have found it overly worked and almost childish.\(^{15}\) Furthermore, Ovid has an extreme penchant for metaphor, especially simile. Owen (1931, 99 et seq.) points out that there are 51 similes in the *Heroides* out of 3,738 lines.\(^{16}\) Compare this with the *Iliad* which has 202 similes over 15,600 lines.\(^{17}\)

Ovid is not particularly fond of poetic contractions or archaic verb forms although he will use them if the meter requires it. All of those places are noted in the commentary ad.loc. Knox (1995, 25) notes that Ovid prefers straightforward language and avoids archaisms and overly complex forms, particularly as the *Heroides* are meant

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\(^{14}\) These have been noted either ad.loc or in the table of People and Places in the Appendix.

\(^{15}\) See (Cunningham 1958) and elsewhere in the introduction for more on this.

\(^{16}\) Based on Palmer’s edition.

\(^{17}\) A table of common poetic devices with definitions and examples has been included in the appendix to assist students unfamiliar with rhetorical and stylistic devices. For an even more complete discussion of Ovidian poetic devices in the *Heroides* see Michalopoulos (2006, 57-77).
to be letters which imply a level of everyday speech. The majority of his verbs are in simple tenses (present, future, perfect, imperfect) but oftentimes a tense in the present may have a past sense (such as a historical present) in order to fit the necessary metrical requirements. Ovid does not place as much importance on the precision of verb tenses as a prose author such as Cicero would. Although in fairness, Cicero does not need to meet metrical requirements. Ovid is also fond of the 3rd person gnomic statement where, rather than addressing the reader, he places a piece of advice in the 3rd person.\textsuperscript{18} Due to Ovid’s preference for placing words in orders that create visual depictions, there is no clear preference for placing a verb at the start, middle, or end of a line, but rather to make sure that all the ideas are enclosed within the couplet. Knox (1995, p.31) points out that usually Ovid’s “arrangement of words in the line serves to arrest the progress of thought and focuses the reader on the image” (31).

\subsection*{2.4 On Authenticity and Manuscript Tradition}

The manuscript tradition of the \textit{Heroides} is fairly brief. The ultimate root of the problem is that, as Knox (34-35) points out, all extant manuscripts come from a very small number of medieval manuscripts none of which contain the complete forms of all 21 epistles. The modern 21 poem set comes from composites of those fragmentary and broken pieces. In the Loeb edition of the \textit{Amores and Heroides}, G.P. Gould (1986, 5) gives an excellent overview of the 6 Latin and 1 Greek manuscripts from which all editions come. To help explain how bad the manuscripts are, consider that the ‘best’ of them, \textit{Codex Parisinus}, is missing part or all of 9 of the 21 epistles. This has led to the fact that the largest scholarly discourse on the \textit{Heroides} in the last century has focused on the authenticity or spuriousness of everything from entire poems on down to single lines. In his book, \textit{Ovid’s Heroides}, Jacobson (1974) notes that:

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{18}] See 5.7 for an example of this.
\end{itemize}
“Unfortunately, the nineteenth century did Ovid and particularly the
*Heroides* serious injury that has only of late and with difficulty begun to be
repaired and redressed. It became, so to speak, an arena for scholars eager
to discover interpolations or to condemn passages as spurious.” (3)

Jacobson is correct. Previous discourses on the *Heroides* have essentially boiled down to
arguments over which passages should be excised entirely as spurious and which
should be emended. For example, Palmer opens his commentary on poem 16 (and
therefore the double *Heroides*) by saying “I hold strongly the view (1) that they were not
written by Ovid; (2) that they were all except 16.39-142, 21.13 ad fin., written by the
same author…” Rand (1904), a near contemporary, supports that all of 16 was written
by the same author (128). Knox, in his introduction of the select epistles, likewise goes
on at length about the metrical irregularities of certain lines and how they do not
appear elsewhere in Ovid except those claims had already been refuted. Clark (1908)
undertakes the massive task of examining all of the metrical values in the double
*Heroides* and compares them with the single letters as well as the rest of Ovid’s canon,
concluding that:

> We are then, it would seem, amply justified in concluding that Heroides 16-21
> contain practically nothing in thought, language, or meter to warrant their
> rejection as spurious (132)…The double letters of the Heroides have all the marks
> which distinguish Ovid from other poets (150).

In the same vein, Hansen’s (1993) dissertation focuses on the use of computer models to
determine the authenticity of 16-21 on the grounds of metrical, lexical, and poetic
features by comparing them with the entire corpus of Ovid broken down by early and
late works (attested) and with the other writers of Elegy and Hexameter. Hansen’s
highly statistical analysis makes a good argument against the authenticity of the double

53
Since when he breaks them down into statistical tables, they look unlike both the single *Heroides* and the rest of Ovid’s work. However, seems to miss the conceit that the double letters are unlike the single letters or Ovid’s other works and therefore may not conform perfectly to the models, especially in light of the fact that Ovid attempts to give distinct voices to the male and female writers which may vary from Ovid’s own first person preferences (such as in the didactic *Ars*).

While there is room for this type of discussion, the ultimate problem is that without the discovery of new manuscripts, no new information can be gained in this realm. Everything becomes conjecture; the evidence becomes more and more tenuous; and scholars become willing only to hear the evidence that concurs with their opinion. The discourse became stagnant and impossible to prove. To consider the venomousness of the authenticity/spuriousness arguments, consider Housman’s (1897) statement on the Merkel version of the *Heroides*.

“Merkel and his followers accomplish this result, not merely by depraving the text with a number of bad readings drawn from good MSS, but by two other methods, both efficacious: they expel the emendations of Heinsius, and they insert their own” (102).

Nonetheless, the last thirty years have seen vast improvements in the scholarship of the *Heroides*. Scholars have essentially stopped looking at word frequencies and metrical pattern occurrences to determine authenticity since, as Farrell (1998) notes to some scholars the question of authenticity simply does not matter, either because they do not find it intrinsically interesting, because they feel they lack the expertise to address such questions, or because they despair, in the prevailing state of evidence, of ever settling the matter one way or the other (308).
Farrell is correct: the authenticity cannot be proven and the lines are there. It therefore makes sense to discuss them as part of the work since there is no absolute way to confirm authorship because if Ovid did not write some of these parts, then the interscriptor has proven himself an excellent student of Ovid; even Palmer admits “that there are passages… to which it is difficult to find a rival in Ovid himself” (437); and EJ Kenney confesses that “If the double letters are not from Ovid’s pen, an ignotus has beaten him at his own game” (1996, 20). As for variances within the manuscripts, variations have been noted where they take place. The reasons for accepting or rejecting various emendations have been noted ad loc.

In addition to the difficulties assessing authorship of the *Heroides* (single, double, parts, and the whole) comes the problem of dating the work. Ovid’s writing career spans approximately 40 years (from his early 20s until his death). The best that can be done in terms of pinning a date on the work is guesstimation based on scant available evidence. The issues of deciding whether or not the double epistles and the single epistles were composed at the same time or if the doubles were later conceived (assuming Ovidian authorship) further compound the problem. In terms of narrowing down the date, the following information is helpful which has been enumerated below based on Clark (1908), Gould (1970), Knox (1995), and Palmer:

1) Ovid was born in 43 BC (Gould, 1970, p.2). Assuming he was not a prodigy, we can assume that he may have been approximately 20 when he began writing.
   a. 23 BC - Death

2) Ovid is banished c. 8 AD (Gould 1970, p.3). Since none of his attested post-exile works involve amatory pursuits, it is a good bet that the *Heroides* predate his banishment. Particularly in light of the fact that his banishment was due in part to the erotic nature of his earlier works. Note that it is not provable that he did
not write amatory poetry after exile, and some scholars would suggest that the
exile range is still within probability at least for the double *Heroides*.

a. 23 BC – 8 AD

3) In the 2nd (3-book) version of the *Amores* 2.18.29 et seq., Ovid mentions the single
*Heroides*, which means that the Heroides had to be written before the revised
*Amores* was published, circa 1BC-1AD. Since we do not know if they were
mentioned in the initial publication of the *Amores*, on cannot narrow the date
down any further through that avenue.

a. 23BC – 1AD

4) Since the single letters and the double letters are different enough that they
should constitute separate works, the following dates now exist.

a. Single: 23BC - 1AD   Double: 23BC- 8AD

5) At this juncture, dating the works becomes a blind dart throw. The epistles could
have been written anywhere within the approximate 20 year span. However, the
following thoughts are worth considering as a possible conjecture.

6) It seems reasonable that the *Heroides* were very early in Ovid’s career, not
because they lack polish or seem rudimentary but because they are so similar to
the things Ovid would have learned in school. Imagine if, through the drudgery
of practicing his *suasoria* and *controversiae* (schoolboy exercises on crafting
persuasive legal arguments), Ovid tried making them poems rather than
speeches and this exercise determined his love for poetry. It seems a natural
bridge from his preparations for a legal world to the poetic career that eventually
followed. One could therefore place the single epistles at 23 BC, the earliest post
in the probable date range with a possible initial composition (first draft date)
perhaps as early as when he was 16 (19BC).

7) It does not seem likely that the double letters were written at the same time, not
because they were omitted from his catalogue in the *Amores*, but rather because
they feel like a revisiting rather than a whole. Both because they are just too
different in feeling and purpose and because in the previously mentioned
passage from the *Amores* Ovid mentions that his friend Sabinus had written
replies to the *Heroides*—which would make less sense to mention if Ovid had
already published paired letters as well. Consequently, it seems reasonable to
conclude that Ovid wrote the double letters significantly later. With as much
evidence as any other theory, imagine perhaps that a much older Ovid, one who
had already been worn down perhaps very soon before his exile, wished to
revisit his youth, to re-tread his old stomping grounds as it were and was
motivated to return to his *Heroides* except, this time much older and having lived
through several divorces, no longer wished to focus on the loss of love but rather
on the inception of love, although a jaded one, based on the fictional authors.
Therefore, place the double epistles in 7 or 8 AD, right before his banishment,
when a now 50 year old Ovid would have had time to reminisce on everything
he learned about catching the girl (or perhaps the girl allowing herself to be
cought). This theory has the added advantage of allowing the *Ars* to have already
been long completed so that an audience who read the double letters could
plainly see the applications of his now widely known advice. It would have also
been a nice respite for Ovid having just finished the monumental task of the
*Metamorphoses*. Moreover, with the caution that one can no better prove these
dates than can any other scholar his or hers, the following dates of composition
seem most reasonable:

   a. Single: 19-23BC   Double: 7-8AD

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19 For more on the Sabinus letters, see Rosati (1996).
Oenone, like the rest of her female compatriots, sits down in medias res to write her missing beloved a letter. Unlike Phyllis or Penelope, however, Oenone knows exactly where Paris is. He however returned home to different life than he had left. He did not return to the glades and sheep and soft pastoral world Oenone once shared with him. He returned instead to the life he found right before his fateful voyage to Sparta, the hard lofty world of Trojan epic. This is the ultimate tragedy for Oenone: not that she has been abandoned for Helen, but that her world, her genre, has been abandoned for something loftier. We do not know what Paris has told Oenone about his new enriched circumstances; we have only her description of his delaying the sailors at his tearful departure (5.43-46; 5.49-52). We do not know what reasons he has given her although we can assume he has not told her (or anyone) the true motives of his mission. We do not know if he promised to return for her, only that he had trouble saying goodbye. The absence of any concrete answers to Paris’ actions leading up to his departure and regarding his ascension leave Oenone with no concrete answers to what her future holds.

Oenone is further hindered by a problem of genre. She is a rustic nymph—essentially a creature more suited to pastoral. She should be sitting next to Amaryllis in the Eclogues, not mourning over a lover in elegy and certainly not trying to be a character from epic such as the type that Paris attempts to assert himself as through his social promotions. As Drinkwater (2003) notes, “Rooted in pastoral rather than epic themes, this letter must be composed with two new generic affiliations, that of the elegy in which Oenone now finds herself, and that of the epic to which she sees her love attracted” (94). She tries to be the epic lady, the Helen or Andromache, but despite her slightly better than average lineage and semi-divine beauty, she cannot be what Paris seeks which makes her attempts all the more pathetic. As Spentzou (2003) notes,
She spends her lonely days wandering around the thick woods that had witnessed her idyllic love affair...until the ill-fated day of his encounter [with the goddesses]. The trees with her name carved on them painfully remind her of her absent beloved (5.21-2) and her present misery (106).

Oenone is part and parcel of the woods, not the city with its impenetrable walls. What is worse is the fact that “Oenone is a part of the trapping of Paris’ past life; she is a concrete objectification of his past, an ever-present reminder of his old servility of which he now wishes to be free, mentally and psychologically as well as physically” (Jacobson 1968, 185). Sara Lindheim’s *Why Oenone Should Have Known it Would Never Work Out* (2000), examines in depth the bucolic and pastoral elements of Oenone’s letter in relation to Vergil’s 10th Eclogue, which presents the poet Gallus who, like Paris, has given up his elegiac nature to become a pastoral poet.

Unlike many of the women in the Heroides whose names are central to the myths of the men, Oenone is almost a two-bit player. Whether that is due to an actual lack of importance or from an absence of extant sources is impossible to know. Unlike Medea or Penelope for whom we have large and plentiful sources, for Oenone we have only tiny mentions and blurbs, some of which post-date the *Heroides* and would have been influenced by it rather than the other way around. Knox (1995, 140-141) discusses the scant surviving Hellenistic sources for the story of Oenone with their attested variations and comes to the general conclusion that she must have been a well known figure during Ovid’s lifetime, but we as readers are left in the dark as to how important she might have been, knowing only that Homer leaves her entirely out of his *Iliad* and that the ravages of time have left us with only scraps.

Regardless of how much of a household name Oenone may have been at the time of Ovid, Oenone suffers from a lack of narrative importance. No matter what versions
of the story may have existed, Oenone is not Helen, and Helen is Paris’ only lover that matters. Oenone’s face did not launch a thousand ships. She only matters in later accounts of Paris’ death, so her presence does not affect the outcome. Unlike Medea and Dido, who served as major players in their men’s epics by helping them defeat a monster or by offering them a great city, *Celeberrima Oenone* is not well-celebrated. This fact clearly escapes Oenone herself who writes her letter with the same power and energy as a Medea. She focuses greatly on her importance in the world and her former importance to Paris without fully grasping her own inconsequence both to Paris and to the mythological cannon.

To compound matters, Ovid seems to blatantly disregard what we do know about Oenone. In other versions of her story, Oenone has the power of prophecy, a gift which is completely suppressed in the *Heroides*. Here, Oenone must resort to asking others such as Cassandra what the strange omens mean. Why Ovid may have taken away Oenone’s standard gift is explained by Sergio Casali in his *Enone, Apollo pastore e l’amore immedicabile: Giochi ovidiana su di un topos elegiac* (1992), where he suggests that a common trope in elegy is for lovers to be unable to see visions relating to their own love. Beyond Oenone, he discusses Apollo having the same problem regarding Admetus where he cannot see how it will end (Casali 1992, 95). Just as Medea and Oenone have no magic to cause love, there is no magic to foresee the ends of love. By suppressing this gift, Ovid allows the omniscient reader to enjoy the visions denied to the characters and see the irony in their words. However, at the same stroke, in deleting Oenone’s prophetic powers, Ovid has perhaps taken away her one unique trait, toning down the hue of her brightness yet another degree compared to the glorious Helen.
Nonetheless, as Casali notes, that is the price Oenone must pay to enter the elegiac
world (88).

Reading Oenone’s letter one witnesses a woman with delusions of grandeur
repeatedly trying to establish herself as something more than a simple rustic nymph
with the misfortune to fall in love with a cad. According to Jacobson (1968), Oenone,
“For Ovid, is a rustica heroine in all its senses and with all its implications. She is at the
opposite end of the spectrum from the urban and urbane Phaedra” (189). Furthermore,
Drinkwater (2003) notes that Oenone “Will remain unaware of her incompatibility with
Paris’ epic needs” (77). The light the majority of readers cast on Oenone is truly
pathetic, and tragically the reader cannot attribute her downfall to any wrongdoing on
her part. She is not a murderer like Medea or a perpetrator of incest such as Canace or
Phaedra. With no way to justify that she deserves her end the reader must watch
Oenone slowly degrade herself through the course of the epistle as she begs for the
return of a man whose story dictates that he cannot return.

As Jacobson (1968) notes, “To win Paris back she must seek to present herself as
an altera Helene or at least as Helen’s equal” (186). To win Oenone must give everything
she has and use every trick she can, many of which come from the other Heroïdes;
Oenone utilizes some methods of greater heroines than herself but can never quite
match them. For example, consider Medea who catalogues for Jason the help she gave
him in acquiring the infamous Golden Fleece. Oenone parallels this perfectly except her
great accomplishment was teaching him how to hunt (5.17 et seq). Tragically, Oenone
has no choice but to frame her letter this way. Oenone must attempt to compete against
the most beautiful woman in the world, daughter of the highest of the gods, who has
abandoned the throne of Sparta for Paris. The enormity of this task alone should be
enough to arouse pity, but perhaps, as Hayley (1924), having just finished quoting

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20 See Barcheisi (1986, 95) for more on this topic.
Oenone, says “Though [the heroines] are at times even pathetic enough to arouse our sympathies, the heroines never rise to towering personalities that sweep us along by their sorrows or their sacrifices” (19).

Through the course of her letter the reader gets to see Oenone traverse through a variety of emotions and methods of entreaty from anger to reminders of former love without ever fully grasping that Paris does not care, that he has in fact travelled all over the known world to acquire the woman he does want, Helen. At this point, as she sits down to write, as Helen is installed in the Royal Palace; Oenone must use every tactic possible from rhetorical questions to prayer. Oenone must hope that something sticks. Much like Phyllis who has read Dido’s letters too much into her own story, Oenone tries out other parts of the rest of the heroines in the vain hope that one of those will appeal to Paris.

Duncan Kennedy discusses the importance of the fact that each epistle is a letter which has been written at a specific time. For example, he postulates that Penelope’s letter is the one she has written to give to the stranger that has shown up in her halls which the reader knows is secretly Odysseus. Barchiesi (1986, 65 et seq.) notes that Briseis’ letter is written on the night before the pitched battle at the ships: Achilles’ fateful day. Likewise, Medea writes her letter after watching Jason’s wedding procession to Creusa. Most poignantly, Canace writes her letter just before killing herself and only moments prior to her father and brother deciding that she can marry him after all. While he does not specifically address Oenone, it is worth considering her in the same model. When, then, does Oenone write? She has already seen Helen; she already knows who she is and has heard enough stories about her to know about a man named Theseus and a Spartan husband. She already knows everything she needs to know, but still writes. She is not a Penelope or Phyllis writing with hope still brimming,

21 See Fulkerson (2002).
nor even a Dido who hopes one last ditch letter will allow her to stop Aeneas’ ship in port and change his mind. Oenone essentially writes when all hope is dead and gone and she has already lost. On the other hand, as Bradley (1969) notes, the “Ovidian ars subtly couched in her chaotic letter compels us to hear and answer within ourselves Oenone’s unending cry of despair” (162). Rosati (2005, 159) suggests that the purpose of these epistles is to cross the distance of a past happiness, of a life shared with a beloved that comes with regrets, to confront a present sadness and a past sadness. Their ultimate goal is to secure the return of their absent lover so that they can repeat the past, since in elegy, happiness is elusive, always in the past or in a possible future (which is a return to the past), but never in the present.

That interpretation of an Oenone who writes when all hope is gone turns her into a tragic creature, perhaps rightly so, who does not fully grasp the reality of her world. There is, however, a second option for this letter. Connolly (2000) suggests that in Her. I, “Penelope’s return to the past may constitute an attempt to make sense of her present situation, by re-evaluating her life Penelope hopes to make a decision about her future” (52); and regarding Hypermnestra, that she “attempts to piece together this fractured identity and to reweave the story of her life on the pages of her epistle in order to come to terms with this crisis” (72). In his monograph on the Renaissance reception of the Heroides, Paul White (2009) repeatedly uses the phrase “A letter always arrives at its destination,” quoting Jacques Laclan’s “Une letter arrive toujours a destination.” The question then becomes ‘what is the destination of this letter and is Oenone actually writing with the intent for Paris to read it?’ Her opening certainly indicates as such, with a direct question about whether or not he will. However, is it possible that Oenone writes not to reclaim Paris, but to help her sort through her own feelings and arrive at a plan for her future? Could it be the type of letter that psychotherapists might advise us to write when angry and then burn once we are less impassioned? Perhaps in the same
way, Oenone does not write to get Paris back, but rather to help herself fully grasp the impossibility of his return. A close analog to this is Medea’s letter, which is ultimately more of a catalogue of wrongs done than a request for Jason’s return. Medea’s epistle drives home its point in its closing (12.209), *quo feret ira, sequar! “Where my anger leads, I shall follow!”* is not exactly a declaration of undying love. Likewise, consider Canace’s epistle which was meant to be read after her death and serves more as a last testament than a love letter. The surface description of the *Heroides* as letters from women to their missing men is not quite accurate.

Could it be that we, the readers who have intercepted it, have gotten a letter that was never meant to be read at all? Could we have found a letter not destined for Paris, but simply for the burn pile? Could it simply be Oenone’s attempt to exercise her demons before moving on with her life?

When the purpose of Oenone’s letter is shifted in this way, she changes dramatically from a foolish-lover, to a woman trying to help herself through a type of writing therapy. Suddenly, Duncan Kennedy’s temporal importance changes from the actual time to the mental time. In essence, Oenone writes not after she has seen the purple glimmer of Helen on Paris’ ship, but instead, the moment in the grieving process when she can begin to heal, rehabilitating what seems on the surface a broken wretch into a woman on the verge of self discovery.
HEROIDES 5 COMMENTARY

Perlegis? an coniunx prohibet nova? Perlege: non est

Ista Mycenaea littera facta manu!

1 The choice to open with questions, the first only one word long, shows Oenone’s confusion and uncertainty of her status. Coniunx is a common noun, but is feminine here, referring to Helen. Her choice to refer to Helen as a coniunx rather than an uxor is perhaps a subtle means of demeaning her as the word is even used in reference to the female in a pair of mating animals. Haley (1924, 17) specifically mentions the scornful nature of these lines. Consider also that Oenone is by nature rustic, so the analogy may reflect that aspect of her nature, or perhaps, coniunx is how Paris had referred to his relationship with her. Note that Helen will also use that term to describe her desired relationship with Paris at 17.109. Her. 6, 10, 12, 15 also open with questions, which may be Ovid’s way of setting Oenone up for comparison with Ariadne, Medea, and Hypsipyle, three of the heroines who have also been unquestioningly abandoned, rather than the women such as Phyllis and Penelope who could still have their men return to them. Consider also the prefix per- in perlege. Oenone wants Paris not just to read the letter, but to read it all the way through, perhaps in hopes that it will convince him to return to her. Note that Phaedra (4.3) uses perlege as well in a letter she knows at the outset will upset Hippolytus.

2 Ista is highly pejorative (Bennett #246). The synchysis in this line serves to show the intertwining of Helen, a Greek, with Paris, the reader and subject of the questions from line 1. Mycenae (Mycene) is the home of Agamemnon, leader of the Greek forces in the war. Mycene refers to all of Greece by metonymy.

22 For more on the amatory power of letters, cf. Ars. Am. 1.437, Cera vadum temptet, rasis infusa tabellis:/ Certa tuae primum onscia mentis eat. “Let wax make an approach, infused on raised tablets: Let wax aware of your mind go first.”
Pegasis Oenone, Phrygiis celeberrima silvis,

Laesa queror de te, si sinis ipse, meo.

3 Palmer gives several conjectures for Pegasis, including an emendation to Pedasis, the name of a town near Mt. Ida which may have been Oenone’s birthplace. It could simply be an adjective meaning nymph. The best option, however, is to translate it as a patronymic, perhaps as “Oenone descended from the Pegasus.” Since she must compare herself to the semi-divine Helen and place herself as equal to Paris, a recognized prince, the use of a patronymic referring to a divine creature seems reasonable. In this way she is stressing the nobility of her birth which parallels with the use of the superlative celeberrima. She is only descended from Pegasus in the sense that he created the Hippocrene by stamping his hoof and she is descended from the stream’s lineage (OCD). Cf. Her. 16.1 for a further discussion on the importance of status in these poems. Phrygiis silvis refers to the forests around Mt. Ida where Paris and Oenone once lived together. While Oenone attempts to raise her status with reference to Pegasus and her use of superlatives, she ultimately reveals the truth that she is from the woods (and the pastoral life that they represent) from which Paris attempts to separate himself.

4 Laesa goes with unsupplied ego; Ipse goes with the unsupplied tu. The sound from si sinis gives the feeling of sobbing—a nice touch on Ovid’s part considering Oenone’s deteriorating emotional state. It also couples with the alliteration from the previous line as well as assonance with the permeation of ’s’ sounds. The placement of meo, alone at the end of the line, serves as a visual representation of the distance which Paris has created. The meo should be taken with the te, which awkwardly in English can be rendered as “about you, who is/was/will be mine.” Knox (1995) suggests that the meo is to be taken as a term of endearment, but it could also be taken as a strict possessive in the most pejorative way possible. Oenone is still married to Paris, or at least she
suggests that she has yet to be told otherwise. Ovid may have simultaneously had both options in mind.

_Quis deus opposuit nostris sua numina votis?_

_Ne tua permaneam, quod mihi crimen obest?_

5 _Quis_ is used in place of the more regular int. adj. _qui_ with limiting words denoting persons (Bennett #90). _Nostris_ is a poetic plural for _meis_ and its use may be a subtle way of reminding Paris that those prayers were once his too. _Oppono_ and _obest_ as compounds take an accusative and a dative form (Bennett #187). _Deus_ is interesting since the gods are ultimately behind the affair with Helen but it is not clear which one of them is actually to blame. Eris, Aphrodite, Zeus, and even Thetis all played parts. However, the question does allow her to deflect the blame away from her still beloved Paris. It also helps reinforce that Oenone, herself, is completely blameless in this.

6 Ovid places the result clause before the main clause, perhaps stressing the importance of the current situation from Oenone’s point of view. The irony is that Paris’ decision to give the apple to Venus in the judgment is ultimately the _crimen_. This question also flows nicely from the previous one: if some god intervened, then what did Oenone do to deserve it? Once again, the question of guilt is emphasized. Rittenbaum (1997) notes that “her use of _crimen_ signifies the guilt that the one left behind often feels which motivates her to examine her past behavior” (102). While Oenone’s background gives no suggestion of an actual crime since she is essentially the blameless wife like Penelope or the Roman Lucretia, one must wonder what crimes Oenone could invent in her mind to explain her loss. Perhaps, Oenone’s crime is also ‘to have loved foolishly’.

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23 See lines 33–36.
24 See _Her._2.27-8, Tell me, what did I do, unless I loved unwisely? By my own crime, I was able to deserve you (Dic mihi, quid feci, nisi non sapienter amavi?/ crimen te potui demeruisse meo) for a similar thought from another blameless heroine, Phyllis.
Leniter, ex merito quidquid patiare, ferendum est;
Quae venit indigno poena, dolenda venit.

7 Patiare is an alternate form of the second person singular present subjunctive (Bennett #108). Despite being second person, the subject should not be taken as Paris, but rather as a gnomic statement as Knox suggests. One should take Merito in its most pejorative sense, perhaps as ‘fault’ or ‘offense,’ and not as ‘kindness’ or ‘service’ (see OLD for more on the connotation of this word). Ex merito is a common adverbial phrase meaning ‘deservedly’ and here contrasts with indigno (‘undeservedly’) in the next line. It is also worthwhile noting how close merito is to marito on line 9. Ovid, through this paronomasia, is perhaps suggesting that marriage has caused her to suffer. Consider the fates of the different heroines who either deserve their fates for wrong action (Medea, Phaedra, Deianira) or those who do not (Penelope, Dido, Laodamia). Compare this with Medea’s sentiment at Her.12.21-2, Est aliqua ingrate meritum exprobrare voluptas. Hac fruar: haec de te gaudia sola feram25.

8 Indigno is neuter because the statement is gnomic. Oenone is pointing out that one must endure the punishment for their sins, but they are permitted to grieve for the punishment that comes undeservedly as she feels her abandonment did. The use of a gnomic statement helps to remove Oenone from the equation because her plight is all the more pitiable for her innocence. Both ferendum and dolenda are passive periphrastics (Bennett #115).

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25 “There is some pleasure to reproach the ungratefully deserving. I shall enjoy this thing. I shall bear only these joys from you.”
Nondum tantus eras, cum te contenta marito

Edita de magno flumine nympha fui.

9 Oenone again returns to the issue of status. She points out, as many of the women in the *Heroides* do that she could have married better but did not do so. Consider Dido, Ariadne, and Medea who took in men who were in danger and gave up their fathers and kingdoms in the process. Oenone, however, did not lose a kingdom or a parent due to her love. Paris did not know he was royalty when he began his relationship with Oenone. He had been a shepherd. 26

Pearson (1980) rightly notes that Sound patterns reinforce the tone of bitter, wounded hauteur. The repetitive ‘t’ in lines 9 and 10 makes her seem to spit out her words scornfully, while the ‘f’ and ‘ph’ sounds in the final half of the pentameter make her claim to semi-divinity proudly emphatic (11).

10 For Oenone’s pedigree, see line 3.

Qui nunc Priamides, absit reverentia vero!

Servus eras; servo nubere nympha tuli!

11 Supply es. *Vero* is a substantive being used in an ablative of separation (Knox 1995).

*Priamides* is a patronymic for the son of Priam, perhaps derisively used, since he has only recently (*nunc*) become so important. For the second half of the line, which is difficult to render in clear English, Oenone is suggesting is that she will not let the fact that he is now a prince, and therefore due respect, stand in the way of her telling the truth. 27

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26 For *marito* see line 7.
27 See Cf. note on *Her* 16.1. for more on patronymics.
12 *Servus* is perhaps too strong of a word as he was more strictly a shepherd and not a slave. The force of *servus/servo* does, however, fit Oenone’s need to elevate her own status against those of Paris and Helen. *Nubere* takes a dative (OLD def 1). *Tuli* should be taken as ‘I suffered’ (OLD def 16) with an epexigetical infinitive, which works well considering Oenone’s current emotional state. The use of *nympha* serves to again reinforce her place as divine and worthy of Paris’ love while pointing out that perhaps Paris was not worthy of her love but that she gave it anyway. This is an especially important barb when one considers the previous relationship she had with Apollo but was able to still love a shepherd. 28

*Saepe greges inter requievimus arbore tecti,*

*Mixtaque cum foliis praebuit herba torum;*

13-20 Oenone uses these lines to offer a quasi-catalogue of the things they used to do together. The use of catalogues is both a means for Oenone to become more epic and is a fairly common motif in the *Heroides* themselves. Deianira lists the betrayals of Hercules at 9.47-52 and Medea lists the deeds she did for Jason at 12.15-20. 30

13 *Greges* is the object of *inter. Tecti* is the nom. pl. 4pp of *tego* and not from the noun *tectum. Arbore* is an abl. of means.

14 The pastoral image of the loving couple sleeping together on the grass echoes a long pastoral tradition. See Vergil’s *Eclogues* for romanticizing of rustic life and Lindheim (2000) for more on the relationship between this epistle and the pastoral tradition. Note

28 See 5.138 et seq.
29 See book 2 of the *Iliad* with its famous catalogue of ships.
30 For more on the epic functions of catalogues, see Gaertner (2001) who notes that “catalogues may provoke, or at least support the reader’s emotional involvement in the narrative. By furnishing information and consequently directing the reader’s attention, some of the characters are presented as individuals and, in particular, as persons that we know and [for whom] may have some sympathy... this sympathy is even greater if we know a character’s fate, or even know, or rather believe to know, that a character is tragically wrong in interpreting his situation” (300).
also that in the pastoral tradition, the lover often fails to get his beloved and loses his lands in the process, as in Verg. *Ecl.* 1.1-5. Here, however, the pastoral situation has been reversed. Paris (the man) has abandoned his idyllic lady in the process of getting a kingdom. The image also reinforces the humility of their affair: she was content with the rustic way, even though she could have married into ‘high society’ (e.g. Apollo).

*Saepe super stramen faenoque iacentibus alto*

*Defensa est humili cana pruina casa.*

15 Note the alliteration, which either represents Oenone’s sobbing or perhaps the sound of snow hitting their thatched hut. Ovid has placed the *iacentibus* between *faeno* and *alto*, by doing so, he has placed ‘the ones lying’ between the things they are lying on.

16 Based on the chiastic word order, the hoary frost is actually inside the house; perhaps this is Ovid’s subtle hint that not everything was as wonderful as Oenone suggests. Oenone’s admission that the house was *humili* again shows that she does not quite understand what Paris now seeks. *Casa* may also be too generous of a description for a structure made of straw but Oenone has the right to romanticize her memory.

*Quis tibi monstrabat saltus venatibus aptos,*

*Et tegeret catulos qua fera rupe suos?*

17 Oenone suggests that she was the more skilled hunter which can be taken as a subtle attack on Paris’ manliness and abilities as a lover. Cf. *Ars. Am.* 1.45-47 for the relationship between being a hunter and being a lover. Perhaps Oenone suggests that Paris was a bad enough hunter that he needed assistance. Consider also that if the

31 “*You Tityrus, lie under your spreading beech’s covert, wooing the woodland Muse on slender reed, but we are leaving our country’s bounds and sweet fields. We are outcasts from our country; you, Tityrus, at ease beneath the shade, teach the woods to re-echo ‘fair Amaryllis’*” (Tr. Fairclough).

32 “The hunter knows well, where he should stretch his nets for deer, in which valley the gnashing boar delays.”
metaphor is taken to its conclusion (that hunting is actually a sexual act), Oenone is subtly criticizing Paris’ lovemaking skills.

Likewise, she may be using the same tack that Medea (Her. 12.7-132) attempts of reminding the man of all she has done for him. Oenone taught him how to survive in the countryside. The trouble seems to be that in teaching Paris how to ‘be a man’ through hunting, she has inadvertently also taught him how to hunt women. Moreover, consider the story of Venus and Adonis (Met. 10.531-559 and 10.681-739) where the man’s ability to hunt leads to his ultimate destruction. Ironically, it is Oenone herself who brought violence and chaos into her own idyllic setting.

18 Tegeret is a subjunctive in a relative clause of the characteristic governed by qua (Bennett, #283).

Retia saepe comes maculis distincta tetendi;
Saepe citos egi per iuga longa canes.

19 Knox suggests that handling the nets is menial and a sign of a lover’s devotion. The use of comes, ‘a companion, friend, comrade (often in an inferior capacity or of humbler rank)’, perhaps indicates more about Oenone’s self-esteem than she cares to admit (OLD def 2). Cf. Callimachus’ Hymn to Apollo, line 47 et seq. for another example of the degradations a lover is willing to go through. This time, what Apollo was willing to suffer for Admetus:

Phoebus and Nomius we call him, ever since that when by Amphrysus he tended the yokemares, fired with love of young Admetus. Lightly would the herd of cattle wax larger, nor would the she-goats of the flock lack young, whereon as they feed Apollo casts his eye; nor without milk would the ewes be
nor barren, but all would have lambs at foot; and she that bare one would soon be the mother of twins (Mair and Mair).

This is likely the type of devotion that Knox has in mind. Oenone’s mention of extending the nets is also somewhat ironic in that she herself is the one who may have been ensnared by love while teaching Paris. *Macula*, here, means ‘one of the interstices of a net, a mesh’ (OLD def 4), but consider also that it can mean ‘a sign of disgrace, stigma, brand’ (OLD def 5). Perhaps Oenone is making a reference regarding what she and Paris did on those nets.

*Distincta* should be the 4pp of *distinguo*, translated as “separated with meshes” (Palmer).

20 Visually, the chiasmus on this line reflects Oenone actually funneling the dogs into the ridges. The verb is 1st person singular in order to reflect the importance of her contribution to Paris’ success on the hunt.

*Incisae servant a te mea nomina fagi,*

*Et legor Oenone falce notata tua,*

21 -32 Oenone recounts a particularly romantic scene, where the lover has engraved a love message on some object, here a tree. When examining Paris’ writing within Oenone’s letter, Farrell (1998) states that “From the male point of view, [the writing] is nothing more than an especially good and comparatively safe medium for practicing the duplicity that seduction requires” (322). However, there is nothing safe in this means of writing. Paris has inscribed his love permanently on the tree in a manner which cannot be denied. Spoken words can be misremembered, but for Oenone this tree serves consistently to remind her of his forgotten/broken promises. Spentzou (2003, 86)

33 Consider especially Acontius and Cydippe (*Her* 20 -21) where writing is meant as a trap, just as the nets in the previous couplet (19-20). While Acontius gets his wish, Cydippe is essentially trapped into marriage and nearly dies because of it.
suggests that in elegy, it is mistresses and not wives for whom these things are done, which may mean that Oenone does not understand the real terms of their relationship. Cf. Verg. Ecl. 10.52-54, Certum est in siluis inter spelaea ferarum/malle pati tenerisque meos incidere Amores/arboribus: crescent illae, crescetis, Amores, for Vergil’s description of the same act in his pastoral work. This is something pastoral characters regularly do, perhaps a reminder to Paris that he was once one of those pastoral characters.

21 Fagi, like most trees is fem. Note also that the plural indicates that Paris has done this more than once. Lucan (9.973) states that every rock on Mt. Ida has Oenone’s name carved, luxerit Oenone: nullum est sine nomine saxum, on it as Jacobson notes (1974,183). Knox rightly asserts that a te should be taken with Incisae as an abl. of means. Servant is best translated as ‘preserve’ (OLD def 6).

22 Tua modifies falce, and notata agrees with Oenone, which is nom. But perhaps Oenone would also like Paris to understand it with Oenone, who was his. Legor is somewhat clumsy when translated into English, but ‘I am read’ will have to suffice. Oenone may not just be talking about her name on the tree. Now that Paris has left her, she is little more than writing to him, in the letter he is currently reading, which may tie back to her insistence in line 1 that he read it through (perlegis) in the hopes that she (and his vows) will be remembered.

[Populus est, memini, fluviali consita rivo,

    Est in qua nostri littera scripta memor:]

23-24 These lines were omitted entirely by Palmer but were retained by Knox albeit in brackets to mark them as spurious. Knox gives several good reasons why these lines are

34 “It is certain in the woods among the caves of beasts to prefer to suffer and carve my loves on tender trees: as those grow, you will grow, Love.”

35 Oenone will have mourned. There is no rock without her name.
spurious and unnecessary\textsuperscript{36}. Knox’s point has merit as it is difficult to imagine a nymph confusing the type of tree on which her name is written. The problem with omitting the couplet arises on line 27, at which point the type of tree has suddenly changed from beech to poplar without the benefit of the explanation provided in this couplet. Since omitting the lines makes it appear that Ovid has forgotten in the span of five lines what type of tree he used, it seems reasonable to retain the lines and let the lapsus memoriae fall on Oenone. It is also possible that this is an Alexandrian footnote introduced by menini to some highly allusive description, perhaps in the Cypria, which is no longer extant.

\textbf{23} Populus is also fem., and therefore the antecedent of qua in line 24.

\textbf{24} Memor modifies littera and governs nostri. The sense here is that the inscription remembers what Paris promised even if he has forgotten. Consider two of the definitions from the OLD, ‘mindful of one’s obligations’ (def 2) and ‘commemorative’ (def 6). Oenone wants Paris to be mindful of his promises, but considering the versions where she will ultimately kill herself because of Paris\textsuperscript{37} (e.g., Quintus of Smyrna), they may also be commemorative.

\textbf{25} \textit{Et quantum trunci, tantum mea nomina crescunt.}

\textit{Crescite et in titulos surgite recta meos!}

\textbf{25} Crescunt should be understood with both trunci and mea nomina as parallel syntax governed by the coordinating adverbs, quantum and tantum (Allen & Greenough #414a).

\textsuperscript{36} Knox notes that the lines “may be suspected as an interpolation on two grounds. First, the line-ending fluuiiali consita riuo anticipates the sense of 27 consita margine ripae. One of these phrases is likely to be an imitation of the other, and v.23 is condemned by the tautology in fluuiivali rivo… and the clumsy expression, which tells us that the tree was planted ‘in the stream’. Second, the scansion of littera with a short open vowel before the consonant cluster scr- has no parallel in O.’s verse”.

\textsuperscript{37} See introduction to this poem for more on Oenone’s fate.
The use of the plural is either poetic, or serves to denote that this is something Paris regularly does as discussed above.

26 Titulos can mean either ‘inscription’ (OLD def 2) or ‘honor’ (OLD def 7). Ovid is playing with both meanings as it is both an inscription and her claim to fame. Recta should be taken adverbially. Jacobson (1974, 182) makes the interesting note that while Oenone means for their love to have grown as the carving on the tree has grown, what has actually grown is Oenone’s ego as the focus of the couplet is on her honor and not their love. Perhaps Oenone’s ego has grown as much as her indignation.

*Popule, vive*, *precor, quae consita margine ripae*

*Hoc in rugoso cortice carmen habes:*

27 Supply *es* in the relative clause. Ovid may have chosen to place the tree on a riverbank as a reminder that Oenone is the daughter of a river, once again reinforcing her semi-divine status in competition with Helen. For an added touch of irony, consider that there is a cult worship of Helene Dendritis, ‘Helen of the Tree,’ as a goddess of nature (Meagher 2002, 81 and Paus. 3.19.1039). If Ovid’s readership was aware of this incarnation of the divine Helen, then the irony that Oenone is potentially praying for Helen to thrive would be wonderful.

28 *Carmen* here means an ‘inscription’ (OLD def 2b). In light of the fact that *carmen* can also mean ‘poem’ as a regular elegiac usage (OLD def 2a), Ovid may also be making a meta-literary comment hoping that the *Heroides* as a work, written near the bank of the Tiber in Rome, survives. Consider also, the meaning of *carmen* as a ‘spell,’ perhaps a love spell (OLD def 1). The alliteration of the line is reminiscent of an actual curse or

38 See footnote on lines 23-24 regarding the possible spuriousness of this couplet.
39 Paus. 3.19.10, “They say that this Polyxo desired to avenge the death of Tlepolemus on Helen, now that she had her in her power. So she sent against her when she was bathing handmaidens dressed up as Furies, who seized Helen and hanged her on a tree, and for this reason the Rhodians have a sanctuary of Helen of the Tree.”
spell inscription from antiquity. Is it possible that Oenone is trying to use magic on Paris, or perhaps she is unwittingly using the magical tropes that her co-writers such as Medea also use? Hoc refers to the following couplet (Bennett #246).

Cum Paris Oenone poterit spirare relicta,
   Ad fontem Xanthi versa recurret aqua.

29-30 Ovid, through the juxtaposition of the names, reinforces their former closeness as lovers. Consider also the following speech from the Chorus in Eur. Medea (410 et seq.)

   Back to their sources flow the sacred rivers. The world and morality are turned upside-down. The hearts of men are treacherous. The sanctions of Heaven are undermined. The voice of time will change, and our glory will ring down the ages. Womankind will be honored. No longer will ill-sounding report attach to our sex. (Hadas, 41)

If Ovid did have these lines in mind, then the irony of Paris’ pledge is all the more poignant.

30 The Xanthus is a river in Troy. Versa aqua is the subject of recurret. The vow which Paris has inscribed on the tree presents an adynaton, or extreme hyperbole used to express impossibility, akin to saying ‘when pigs fly.’

Xanthe, retro propera, versaeque recurrite lymphae!
   Sustinet Oenonen deseruisse Paris.

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40 See Sharrock (1994, 68 et seq.) for more on magic in love poetry.
41 See Verg. Ecl. 1.59-63 for another pastoral adynaton: “Sooner, then, shall the nimble stag graze in air, and the seas leave their fish bare on the strand—sooner, each wandering over the other’s frontiers, shall the Parthian in exile drink the Arar, and Germany the Tigris, than that look of his shall fade from my heart” (Tr. Fairclough, 7) and Prop. 3.19.5-10 for another reversed river adynaton: “Sooner shall the flame be quenched amid the burning corn, and streams return to the fountain whence they sprang, sooner shall the Syrtes yield a calm haven and wild Malea give the mariner kindly welcome on its shores, than any man shall have power to check you in your course to break the goads of your headlong wantonness (Tr. Butler, 243). For more on adynaton in general, see Row (1965).
31 *Lymphae* is an elevated poetic form for water (OLD def 2) which also can refer to the water nymphs themselves (OLD def 1). Oenone may have chosen it as another attempt to remind Paris of her nymph status. Oenone’s request that the river run backwards is both comical and tragic at the same time. The reader is struck by the humor in the impossibility of the request, but simultaneously feels Oenone’s sadness at the broken vow; but as soon as that sense of pathos washes over the reader, they are forced to remember that the river actually will run backwards in the *Iliad* when Achilles fills it with so many bodies that it becomes dammed (book 21), fulfilling Paris’ promise. One must question whether Paris has successfully predicted the future without knowing it, or whether Oenone has managed to bring about the fulfillment of the vow through her prayers. Farrell (1998) persuasively notes that

Paris like Ulysses is an archetypal deceiver; but his words contain the seeds of veracity. By writing down his insincere declaration of love for Oenone, Paris unwittingly proclaims an oracular truth; for by preferring Helen to Oenone he precipitates the Trojan War and makes possible, along with so much other woe, the memorable scene in *Iliad* 21 in which Achilles dams up the channel of the River Xanthus so that its waters actually do run back towards their source (328).

32 *Sustinet* is best translated as ‘endures’ which takes a rather awkward indirect discourse with the Grk. acc. *Oenonen* being the object of the infinitive. Notice that the desertion is actually placed between the two characters.

*Illa dies fatum miserae mihi dixit, ab illa*

*Pessima mutati coepit amoris hiemps,*

33-38 Oenone recounts the story of the judgment of Paris.
33 Dies is normally masc. but when referring to a specific day, as here, it is fem. (OLD def 5). The day she is referring to is the day Paris received the apple and judged the goddesses’ beauty. Supply die to go with ab illa.

34 Palmer and Knox suggest that hiemps be translated as ‘storm’ not ‘winter.’ Mutati amoris should be taken with hiemps as an appositional genitive (Bennett #202). Palmer and Knox both praise this line for containing a beautiful metaphor of love as a storm. The fact that it is a golden line heightens the reader’s attention to it by creating a visual representation of a whirlwind with the words entwined around a center point. It is also worth suggesting that the pastoral scenes which Oenone previously mentioned serve as the ‘calm before the storm’. Consider also that in the corpus as it is currently formed, Paris’ experiences immediately precede Leander’s and Hero’s letters (Her. 18-19), which involve a death by storm. If Ovid had already charted out the order of the double epistles at this time, this is a lovely allusion to them. Bate (2004) notes that storms are a representation of epic grandeur. Therefore, Oenone’s decision to reference the judgment as a storm may be an allusion to Paris’ transformation into Homer’s epic hero rather than the pastoral lover of the past.

35 Qua Venus et Iuno sumptisque decentior armis

Venit in arbitrium nuda Minerva tuum.

35 Qua refers to dies in the previous couplet. Sumptis armis should be taken as circumstantial with decentior (Bennett #221), which modifies Minerva.

Knox and Palmer suggest that Oenone is implying that Minerva would have been more beautiful with her armor on. It seems more logical though that decentior be translated as ‘proper’ (OLD def 1) so that Ovid is instead pointing out that while she is beautiful, her duties and functions are not dependent on her beauty. It is also worth noting how instrumental Minerva/Athena is as a warrior in the Iliad in helping the Greeks defeat the
Trojans; this serves as a foreshadowing of the destruction to come from Paris’ choice of the victor in the beauty contest.

36 Nuda goes with Minerva but should be taken by implication with the other two goddesses. Venit is singular by attraction but goes with all three divinities. There are versions of the myth where Paris is said to have asked them to disrobe in order to best determine their beauty which Helen will refer to in Her. 17.115.42

Attoniti micuere sinus, gelidusque cucurrit,
Ut mihi narrasti, dura per ossa tremor.

37 Micuere is syncope for micuerunt as narrasti below is syncope for narravisti. The double use of syncope here may be Oenone’s way of suggesting how quickly (through shortened verbs) everything seems to have happened for Oenone. The sense of Attoniti sinus is difficult. The best solution is to translate it as ‘frightened bosoms,’ a metonymy for her heart (OLD def 6). Metrically, the line has five dactyls, speeding up the line and adding to the sense of foreboding for the reader by aurally representing the rapid beating of Oenone’s heart.43 Sinus is either plural to enhance the sense of Oenone’s palpitations or may be meant to include Paris as a reminder that their hearts were once as one.

38 The object of the verb is the story of Paris’ encounter with the goddesses.

Consului — neque enim modice terrebar — anusque

40 Longaevosque senes. constitit esse nefas.

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42 See Michalopoulos’ note there for literary references to the nudity of the goddesses.
43 Cf. Vergil Aen. 2.550, nunc morere. ‘hoc dicens altaria ad ipsa trementem for a similar use of metrics in the death of Priam.
39-40 Oenone is often portrayed as able to see the future herself, but Ovid has chosen to ignore that ability to make the pathos more intense (see introduction to this epistle and Knox ad. loc.).

39 Anus is acc.pl. Modice is best taken with neque as litotes for ‘greatly.’

40 Constitit is often used impersonally to mean ‘it is agreed.’ Nefas can mean ‘a portent’ (OLD def 3) which is what Oenone means but remember that it is always used negatively. The seers have all agreed that the goddesses coming down can only mean disaster.

Caesa abies, sectaeque trabes, et classe parata

Caerula ceratas accipit unda rates.

41-42 An example of tricolon crescens, with each of the clauses going in the order of building the ships. Rittenbaum (1997, 104) rightly notes that the elision of the verb ‘to be’ helps to show how quickly the actions were accomplished. Bolton (2009, 281-2) rightly notes that “It is ironic that Paris cuts down this pastoral landscape in order to build his ships for Greece, perhaps a subtle warning of his destruction of their love affair which Oenone does not seem to perceive” (281-282). Imagine also for a moment that some of those cut trees are the same ones on which Paris had previously carved Oenone’s name. While there is no certainty, the possibility certainly increases the pathos of the reader towards Oenone and emphasizes the fragility of what had (to Oenone, at least) seemed permanent. The alliteration punctuates the work-like feeling, mimicking the sound of a hammer or saw.

41 Supply est for each of the first two clauses.

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44 For another example of prophecy in the same epistle see lines 113-124.
45 Cf. Met. 8.210 et seq. for similar alliteration and tricolon in the preparations of Daedalus and Icarus with an equally disastrous result. See also Her. 16.105-18 for Paris’ description of the same events.
Wax was used to waterproof ships as a form of pitch.

Flesti discedens — hoc saltim parce negare!

[Preaeterito magis est iste pudendus amor.

43 Flesi is syncope for flevisti. Parce here is best translated as ‘do not,’ cf. Verg. Aen. 1.257; 3.42; Hor. Carm. 1.28.23; Ov. Am. 1.2.50 for this same usage of parce.

44-45 These lines are considered spurious and sometimes eliminated by editors as Knox does, bridging 43 and 46 as one couplet. While the lines do not add anything substantial to the poem, Palmer’s condemnation of the line for the use of epanalepsis, the use of the same word at the beginning and ending of a line, is not substantial enough that it should stand as grounds for removing the lines, especially considering how frequently Ovid repeats words and phrases.

44 Praeterito is somewhat clumsy to translate; the best option is to take it as an abl. of comparison with magis, ‘more than the one that was before’ (Bennett #217).

Et flesti et nostros vidisti flentis ocellos] Miscuimus lacrimas maestus uterque suas;

45-46 The notion that both lovers were tearful seems odd unless, as Knox suggests, Ovid is trying to show that Paris at least displayed sadness at leaving. It may also be that Ovid is attempting to further vilify Paris by having him fake his sadness at leaving Oenone. Another possibility may be that Oenone has incorporated more sadness into her memory than was actually there in an attempt to remind Paris of his past love.

45 For flesti, see 43. Flentis is gen. sg. and should be construed substantively with ocellos. Nostros is a poetic plural.

46 For a full discussion and analysis of repetition in Ovid, see Hansen (1993).
47 Cf. Her. 6.63-64 for Jason’s tearful departure and Her. 2.51 for Demophon’s tears.
46 *Maestus* is to be taken as an appositive to *uter* which has a plural sense despite being singular, ‘each of us, sad...’

*Non sic adpositis vincitur vitibus ulmus,*

*Ut tua sunt collo braccia nixa meo.*

47-48 This is a romantic and pastoral reminiscence of the departing lovers’ embrace. It should remind the reader of Baucis and Philemon who were eternally bound as trees to each other for their piety and devotion. The irony, of course, is that in the *Met.* the lovers remain intertwined for all of eternity whereas Oenone gets no such reward. The use of a nature metaphor is also reminiscent of Oenone’s pastoral nature in lines 13-20. Pearson (1980) provides an alternate interpretation of the vine-tree simile, suggesting that

Oenone’s image depicts Paris as an integral, though weaker, part of nature, united with her in her own element, yet dependent on her for support. But the vine can destroy the very support from which it has received its initial nourishment. On one level, Paris is taking the first steps which will destroy his love for Oenone (15).

47 *Vincitur* is from *vincio*, not *vinco* although the idea of a lover being defeated by their partners embrace is worth considering through paronomasia. *Adpositis vitibus* should be taken as an abl. of agent.

48 Notice how the synchysis reflects the actual intertwined embrace of the lovers.

49 See Lindheim (2000) for more on pastoral references.

For Ovid’s account of that story see *Met.* 8.626-724.
Querere is 2\textsuperscript{nd}.sg. imperf. subj. in a cum clause (Bennett #288b) which introduces an indirect statement with the infinitive Teneri. Vento is an abl. of means.

Supply ventus. Oenone suggests that Paris did not wish to leave her and would claim that winds were unfavorable for sailing to delay his departure to the amusement of his companions.\textsuperscript{50} Perhaps all voyages require a love sacrifice of some kind as Hypsipyle, Phyllis, Dido, and Oenone learn. Even Hercules will discover this in the Argonautica with the loss of Hylas.

Oscula dimissae quotiens repetita dedisti!

Quam vix sustinuit dicere lingua 'vale'!

Note the anaphora of quotiens from line 50. Ovid tries to emphasize the frequency by repeating the frequentative. Dimissae is dat. sg. fem., 'to the one sent away.' The word is ironic both because he sends her away from the ship to disembark and will eventually send her away to be replaced by Helen as Knox points out ad loc.

Quam here is best translated as 'how' (OLD def 1). See line 32 for the translation of sustinuit.

Aura levis rigido pendentia lintea malo

Suscitat, et remis eruta canet aqua.

The standard trope of the woman watching the ship depart--Ovid means for the reader to feel Oenone’s sadness and fear for Paris’ life while at the same time winking to

\textsuperscript{50} For another example of the wind as a delay tactic, cf. Dido’s request that Aeneas wait for better winds (Her. 7.39 et seq.) and Demophoon’s complaint of the winds at Her 2.96-7. Consider also the story of Iphigenia, who will have to be sacrificed to ensure favorable winds for the Greeks to sail to Troy (Eur. Iphigenia at Aulis).
a reader who knows he will not come back alone. Rittenbaum (1997, 99) notes that “The verbs in 53-58 are all in the present tense, which indicates that the scene is very vivid for Oenone; she is reliving it at she describes it.”

53 Malo here is ‘mast,’ from the noun malus-i,m. and should be taken with pendentia. While malo here is not from the adjective malus-a-um, the connotation of ill omen may still be intentional on Ovid’s part.

54 Canet is from caneo not cano. It would also seem that the ship is in quite a hurry to depart: normally an ancient ship would be propelled either by sail or by oars; here they are using both methods.

Prosequor infelix oculis abeuntia vela,

Qua licet, et lacrimis umet harena meis,

55 Oculis is either an abl. of means or an abl. of separation (Bennett #214) to be taken with abeuntia. The sense works either way, so Ovid may be referring to both senses at the same time, although taking it as separation increases the pathos.

56 Qua licet should be translated ‘as long as I can’ (Knox). Lacrimis meis should be taken as an abl. of means.

Utque celer venias, virides Nereidas oro —

Scilicet ut venias in mea damnca celer!

57 Celer should be taken adverbially in the purpose clause, as often is the case for adjectives (Bennett #239). Nereids are sea goddesses, the most famous of whom, Thetis, is the mother of Achilles. It is worth noting that to some extent, Thetis’ failure to invite Eris/Discordia to her wedding was the cause of Paris’ judgment and his leaving Oenone

51 Cf. Her.2.91-98 for Phyllis’ similar experience and Met. 11.410 et seq., esp. 450 et seq. for Ceyx and Alcyone, another Ovidian example of the tearful departure.
as noted in the Cypria (Evelyn-White). The irony of praying to them would not have been lost on an ancient reader.52

58. The repetition of Ut venias serves to reinforce that Oenone will see him return quickly and safely, just not alone. In mea damna should be translated “to my loss” (Knox). Scilicet is used here with the strongest force of irony possible.

Votis ergo meis alii rediture redisti?

   Ei mihi, pro dira paelice blanda fui!

59 Votis meis is an abl. of means. Alii is a dat. of advantage. Rediture is a fut. act. part. in the voc. sg. The use of two forms of redeo is worth noting as a means by which Ovid has intensified her anger at the results of her prayers; consider it akin to stammering. Additionally, the repetition of the verb with different tenses is noteworthy as a way to emphasize the discrepancy between what Oenone wanted (votis...meis...rediture) and what actually happened (alii...redisti). Notice the word order places meis next to alii for a direct comparison between Oenone and the interloper. The vocative and the verb, however, are placed at the end with alii separating them.

60 Ei mihi is a standard means of lament, ‘woe to me.’ The charge of ‘the other woman’ being a paelex, a mistress, is frequent in the Heroides (6, 9, 12, and 19). Oenone, just like Hypsipyle and Medea, either misunderstands the relationship between her man and his new love, who is a proper wife, or she is trying to belittle Helen who is nonetheless an

52 For a fantastic example of the Nereids preserving sailors and ships, see the Argonautica by Apollonius of Rhodes, 4.992 et seq, where Thetis and the Nymphs assist in safe passage for Jason and the rest of the Argonauts. Consider also the ships of Aeneas turning into Nymphs rather than facing the fires of Turnus (Aen. 9.115 et seq.).
adulteress.\textsuperscript{53} Metrically, \textit{blanda} modifies the unsupplied subject of \textit{fui}, but by placement, it also hints that perhaps the mistress has been flattering.

\begin{quote}
\textit{Adspicit innensum moles nativa profundum} —

\textit{Mons fuit; aequoreis illa resistit aquis.}
\end{quote}

\textbf{61-70} Oenone looks out at the sea waiting, a common topos in the \textit{Heroides} and in Latin poetry generally.\textsuperscript{54} As Paris’ ship returns, the reader finally gets a view of Helen, albeit from Oenone’s perspective. Ovid has the ship slowly come into view as the couplets progress, increasing the tension and drama.

\textit{Nativa}, ‘native’ (OLD def 4) or ‘natural,’ (OLD def 2) as it was not built by man but rather from erosion, goes with \textit{moles}, which here is best translated as ‘promontory.’ \textit{Immensum profundum} is metonymy for the sea.

\textit{Mons fuit} is best translated as ‘it had previously been a mountain.’ \textit{Illa} refers to the \textit{moles} of the previous line. \textit{Resistit} is best translated as ‘opposes.’ Note that Ovid arranged the word order to reflect the circumstance. The promontory is actually surrounded by the sea’s water which has eroded it down to a lookout. This ‘erosion’ could also be a sly way for Ovid to demonstrate the passage of time since Paris’ voyage has been shrunk down to the space between a few lines.

\begin{quote}
\textit{Hinc ego vela tuae cognovi prima carinae,}

\textit{Et mihi per fluctus impetus ire fuit.}
\end{quote}

\textbf{63-68} Note the construction of the couplets: the hexameter contains a description of the approach of the ship as Oenone sees it while the pentameter contains the physical reaction of Oenone (Jacobson 1974, 193).

\textsuperscript{53} For a complete discussion of the trope in the \textit{Heroides} where the former lover laments all that they have done for the benefit of the new lover, see Rosati (1992, 82).

\textsuperscript{54} See \textit{Her.}2.121-6, for Phyllis doing the exact same thing.
Take tuae carinae as gen. with vela. Prima makes the most sense taken adverbially as ‘at first’ (Bennett #239).

Mihi is a dat. of reference (Bennett #188). Impetus is best translated as ‘urge’ (OLD def 5). Ire should be treated as an epexegetical inf.

Dum moror, in summa fulsit mihi purpura prora —

Pertimui; cultus non erat ille tuus.

Purpura should be taken as a substantive. Purple is the color of royalty and purple dye was made by squeezing the color out of sea snails (OCD). Likely hyperbole here, Oenone could not have possibly seen one individual on the boat, but by having her do so Ovid increases her panic as it leads into the next couplet.

Cultus here is used in the sense of ‘style of dress’ (OLD def 5b). For the differences in appearance of Trojans versus others see Aen. 4.215-19. Oenone is reacting in the same way that one smelling another’s perfume on her man’s clothes would react. As a Trojan prince, purple would not have been out of line for Paris, but perhaps Oenone simply realized that it was womanly clothing on the prow. Casali (1992, 87) notes that Oenone is not only ignorant of the fact that Helen is on the ship, but the way in which she comes to uncover it makes the reader smile. Oenone has known only the bucolic Paris. The better informed reader is well aware that Oenone cannot recognize him with his cultus. Thus, whether it is Helen or Paris she sees on the ship’s prow, it is an entity entirely unrecognizable to her.

Fit propior terrasque cita ratis attigit aura;

Femineas vidi corde tremente genas.

Cita goes with aura. Terras is the object of attigit.
68 *Genas* as synecdoche for *facies. Corde tremente*, with an implied *meo*, is best taken as a circumstantial abl. (Bennett #221).

Non satis id fuerat — quid enim furiosa morabar? —

*Haerebat gremio turpis amica tuo!*

69 *Quid* here means ‘why’ (OLD def 16). The antithesis between *furiosa* and *morabar* heightens the conflict of Oenone’s emotions. On one hand she has become enraged and frenzied, yet on the other she can do nothing but stand there watching ship and new wife sail in.

70 *Haereo* takes a dat. with the meaning of ‘cling’ (OLD def 1). For *haerebat gremio*, Knox takes the phrase to mean ‘clinging to your breast,’ but *gremium* is an odd word choice to refer to Paris’ chest as it is most often used to refer to those parts of a woman (OLD def 1). This word choice may perhaps be an attack on Paris’ manliness, a charge presented in II.3, by Helen. Cf. Catullus 3 for the use of *gremium* with sexual connotation.

The choice to use *turpis* is ironic, Helen is certainly not ‘ugly’ or ‘physically disgusting’ (OLD def 1; 2). She is, however, engaging in ‘shameful behavior’ (OLD def 3), but only from the perspective of Oenone, who does not know that they are married now. As the most beautiful woman in the world, the adjective, when applied to Helen, poignantly makes the shamelessness of her behavior stand out. It is also possible that Oenone simply does not grasp the circumstances with her rustic simplicity.\(^5\)

*Tunc vero rupique sinus et pectora planxi,*

*Et secur madidas ungue rigente genas,*

71-74 This grieving process of beating the chest, clawing at the body, and screaming is attested elsewhere (cf., for example, *Her.* 10.15-6 and 10.145-8 for Ariadne doing the

\(^5\) For other appearances of the rival in happy love, see Rosati (1990, 80).
same thing), although usually associated with funerals. It is perhaps as if Paris, the rustic she knew and loved, is now dead for her.

71 By opening the line with *tunc*, Ovid transitions into the sudden mourning process Oenone will go through. *Vero* is an adverb here. *Sinus* here implies both the folds of her dress covering her breasts and her breasts themselves. The alliteration in *pectora planxi* serves to aurally reinforce Oenone beating on herself.

72 Her cheeks are *madidas* from tears, although this is the only instance of the word used this way in the *Her*. The other instances involve wet hair (14.30; 18.104) or wet limbs (19.61). Construe *ungue rigente* as an abl. of means. Notice also that the nails, through the use of chiasmus, actually bisect the wet cheeks. Cf. Il. Bk.18, where Achilles covers himself with dirt and smears his face in grief for Patroclus and Bk. 19, where Briseis “with her hands tore at her breasts and her soft throat and her beautiful forehead (Tr. Lattimore, p. 399). Also, see Eur. The Trojan Women, when Hecuba discovers she will be given to Odysseus, “Ah Hecuba! Smash your shaven head, tear your two cheeks with your nails” (Tr. Hadas, p.181).

*Implevique sacram querulis ululatibus Iden*

*Illuc has lacrimas in mea saxa tuli.*

73 Notice that the chiasmus reflects the action, as Oenone has actually filled the mountain with her tears. *Iden* is a Grk. acc. which may be a subtle way for Ovid to show that the looming presence of the Greeks as foreshadowing for the war. *Ululatus* has a frenzied sense. Cf. Cat. 63.24, where Attis partakes in the rights of Cybele and *Aen.* 4.667 where Dido bemoans her abandonment and also Euryalus’ mother at Aen. 9.477. Also consider *Her.* 10. 37-8 where Ariadne fills the island with the sound of her screams and the beating of her chest. Lastly, consider *Aen.*4.165-8, esp. 168, *conubiiis summoque*
ulularunt vertice Nymphae, where the Nymphs wail as the witnesses to the marriage (?) of Dido and Aeneas.

74 *Illuc* implies that she has run the entire way from shore to mountain crying. *Saxa* is synecdoche for the mountain. Knox points out that as a Nymph, she has a proprietary right to the mountain, but fails to point out that this is the same mountain which was formerly theirs in lines 13-20.

*Sic Helene doleat desertaque coniuge ploret,*

*Quaeque prior nobis intulit, ipsa ferat!*

75 Oenone wishes her own fate on Paris’ new love. *Helene* is actually the nom. modified by *deserta*. *Coniuge* should be taken as an abl. of separation with *deserta* (Bennett #214), although Kennedy prefers an abl. of agent with the prep. omitted. Both subjunctives should be translated in the strongest sense of the jussive possible (Bennett #275), as Oenone is essentially cursing Helen. Jacobson (1974, 186) rightly points out that this is the only time in the poem that Oenone actually uses Helen’s name, perhaps because curses require specificity. The reader of course knows that Oenone’s curse will come true by her own hands when she refuses to heal Paris and leaves him to die.\(^57\) Consider Hypsipyle’s statement (6.151) that she would have been a Medea to Medea, *Medea Medea forem!* Oenone will end up playing a Helen for Helen, permanently taking away her husband. The alliteration produces the effect of stammering which emphasizes Oenone’s anger.

76 *Quae* here is best taken as neut. acc. pl. and refers to the sadness and grief which Oenone now wishes Helen to endure. The second clause should be taken first. For *ferat,*

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\(^{56}\) “The Nymphs wail from the high peak for the marriages.”

\(^{57}\) See Quintus of Smyrna, book 10.
see line 75. Compounds such as infero take a dat. obj. (Bennett #187.3). Nobis is a poetic plural, since Helen has not yet caused Paris any grief.

Nunc tibi conveniunt, quae te per aperta sequantur

Aequora legitimos destituantque viros;

77 Knox rightly points out the fem. plural quae is used in a generalizing sense; thus the subjunctive should be taken as a rel. clause of characteristic (Bennett #283).

78 Legitimos viros refers to lawful husbands, and specifically to Menelaus despite the statement being gnomic. Mentioning him in the middle of her complaint about Helen serves to show the parallels of their situations; it also reminds the reader of the impending onslaught of Greek ships. Furthermore, the use of legitimus-a-um is a means for Oenone to reinforce her own status as a legitimate wife. Much like poor Dido, the question of the legitimacy of Oenone’s marriage to Paris is debatable. What does matter, however, is that she sees herself as Paris’ wife and Helen as Menelaus’ wife.

At cum pauper eras armentaque pastor agebas,

Nulla nisi Oenone pauperis uxor erat.

79-80 These lines are essentially a reprise of lines 9-12. Oenone is attempting to convince Paris of the importance of her status since status is what Paris now wants.58 She must also stress that she is not a gold-digger as she will try to paint Helen (see below).

79 Note that the alliteration between the two descriptions of Paris helps to balance the clauses.

80 Nulla needs to be taken as a substantive subject of erat with uxor as the predicate. For a discussion of Oenone’s marital status, see above.

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58 See introduction to poem 16 for more on status.
Non ego miror opes, nec me tua regia tangit

Nec de tot Priami dicar ut una nurus —

81 Tangit has an emotional sense here (OLD def 8). As Knox rightly points out, these two lines form a tricolon crescens of things that Oenone does not care about since she loved Paris well enough as a shepherd. The resulting idea is that Helen is nothing but a gold digger. Part of the legacy of Troy is that it is filled with luxury and wealth, whereas Sparta is known for its military prowess and simplicity. Helen will admit in her own letter that the fabled wealth of Troy intrigues her. Cf. Her. 16.95 for Paris’ discussion of the wealth of Troy.

82 De tot should be construed with nurus. Priam is said to have as many as fifty children depending on the source.59 Dicar is an optative with ut simply meaning ‘as’ (Bennett #279). Una nurus, which is nom. sg., should be treated as the object of dicar as “so that I may be called a daughter-in-law.” In this final clause which bridges to the next line, Oenone stresses that she was not interested in fame or marrying well since she has her own pedigree mentioned in lines 3 and 10. Oenone can argue that her birthright is comparable to Helen’s, but a river god is not the same as Zeus.

Non tamen ut Priamus nymphae socer esse recuset,

Aut Hecubae fuerim dissimulanda nurus;

83-89 Oenone asserts that she is just as worthy a wife as Helen.

83 Both Palmer and Knox recommend translating non tamen ut as ‘not that’ implying that the subjunctive is best translated with ‘would.’ Nymphae can either be taken as gen. or dat. without the meaning changing. Priam and Hecuba are Paris’ parents.

59 See Palmer.
Palmer translates *Dissimulanda* as ‘to be disowned’ while Knox translates it as ‘ignored.’ The latter is preferable because 1) it sounds better in English, and 2) because the chronology of the story places Oenone as already being known and welcomed by the family before the writing of this epistle. For the periphrastic with a perfect subjunctive, the technical translation is ‘may have deserved to be;’ this is clearly awkward and it makes more sense to translate as ‘would’ as in previous line.

*Dignaque sum fieri rerum matrona potentis;*

*Sunt mihi, quas possint sceptra decere, manus.*

Fieri often takes a nom. obj. as *matrona* here (OLD def 9). *Rerum* is best taken as a partitive gen. after *potentis* (Allen & Greenough #346.4b), which here is used as a substantive, ‘of a man powerful of affairs.’ *Matrona* here is anachronistic because it is a completely Roman concept. Its use, as is often the case with anachronism, allows the modern reader to more accurately understand the sense conveyed. The *matrona* in Roman custom has a strong moral connotation which stands out against Helen’s adultery, but as Lindheim (2000, 98) suggests it is not what the newly elegiac Paris wishes to have. Consider also *Her.* 2.111 and 7.11 where both Phyllis and Dido offer their respective men kingdoms and power where Oenone can only suggest that she is worthy to have such things. Some manuscripts read *digna sum et cupio fieri matrona potentis*, but Diggle (1967, 137) rightly asserts why it should not as it would undermine the point she is making (i.e. that she does not want to be queen).

Mihi is best taken as a dat. of possession (Bennett #190). *Possint* is subjunctive in a rel. clause of the characteristic (Bennett #283). *Decere* which is allowable in the infinitive but is most regularly used as a 3rd. sg. impersonal verb is best translated as ‘to adorn’ (OLD def 1) Based on the word order, her hands are actually surrounding the scepter. See also 16.177 and 17.61 for Paris’ and Helen’s discussions of *sceptra.*
Nec me, faginea quod tecum fronde iacebam,

Despice; purpureo sum magis apta toro.

87 Nec, in this instance, is used to form a type of negative imperative with despice on the next line. With faginea fronde, Oenone has again reminded the reader of the pastoral life they once happily shared. Perhaps the beech fronds came from the same beech trees on which Paris had previously carved his love for Oenone (5.20-32). Knox notes that tecum iacebam is a euphemism for intercourse.

88 Magis should be taken with apta. For purpura, see line 65. Note how the chiastic word order literally places Oenone on the royal bed. If one is to take Knox’s translation of the previous line, then the interpretation of apta is best changed from ‘suitable’ to ‘ready for’ with the sexual overtones carrying into this line as well. By juxtaposing the notions of what a marriage bed could be for Paris and herself, Oenone perhaps finally begins to grasp that their visions of happiness may differ. R.A. Smith (2006) provides one final interpretation for the line, “that she would be even better in a bed” suggesting that “Oenone’s reference to the bed is indicative not only of her claim to royalty, but of her lovemaking generally” (299). While Oenone does not focus on her amatory skills the way that Paris does in poem 16, she may intend the line to remind Paris of exactly what he is giving up.

Denique tutus amor meus est; ibi nulla parantur

Bella, nec ultrices advehit unda rates.

89 Denique is being used to indicate the last item in her list of values which started on line 83.
90 Bella here is the pl. of the noun bellum-i, but should also remind the reader of the cause of the war through paronomasia: the beauty of Helen. Ultrices rates refers to the Greek armies which are coming to get Helen back.

Tyndaris infestis fugitiva reposcitur armis;
     Hac venit in thalamos dote superba tuos.

91 Tyndaris is the patronymic used to refer to Helen or her sister Clytémnestra based on their mortal father, Tyndareus. Palmer and Knox point out that fugitiva is used for runaway slaves, making it pejorative. Rittenbaum (1997, 106) rightly notes that the enclosing word order visually surrounds Helen with the arms that will come to demand her back, just as Troy will be surrounded by those same Greek arms.⁶⁰

92 The dote which Helen brings can be understood as war as Palmer and Knox prefer, or more specifically as the thousands of ships beached on the shores of Troy noted on line 90. Superba is substantive referring to Helen. Note again that Ovid has worked the word order to place the arrogant woman on the bed.

Quae si sit Danais reddenda, vel Hectora fratrem,
     Vel cum Deiphobo Polydamanta roga;

93 Quae refers back to superba from the previous line. While the periphrastic normally takes a dat. of agent, the line would make no sense were Danais to be taken that way. It should instead be treated as an indirect obj. Danais simply means ‘Greeks’. Hectora and Polydamanta are Grk. acc. The suggestion to ask Hector about Helen should remind the reader of the scene where Hector goes to Paris and Helen’s bedroom to rebuke Paris in Il.6. Cf. Her. 6.101 et seq. where Hypsipyle suggests that Jason ask his mother and father about whom to marry for a similar use of family values in the Her.

⁶⁰ Regarding the use of infestis fugitiva, see Rosati (1992, 83) for other attempts by the heroines to lessen the status of their opponents especially as they appear in the Heroides.
Hector, Deiphobus, and Polydamas are brothers of Paris. Ovid’s choice to mention Deiphobus here is strongly comical as he will become Helen’s next husband when Paris dies (Austin 1994, 83). The irony would not have been lost on the ancient reader.

Quid gravis Antenor, Priamus quid suadeat ipse,
Consule, quis aetas longa magistra fuit!

Both instances of quid introduce indirect questions governed by the imperative consule. Ovid has placed the two names together perhaps to remind the reader of their closeness in the council of Trojan elders. In terms of Oenone’s suggestion that Paris should ask them for advice, consider their advice in ll. 3, “Surely there is no blame on the Trojans and strong-greaved Achaians if for long time they suffer hardship for a woman like this one... Still though she be such, let her go away in the ships, lest she be left behind a grief to us and our children” (tr. Lattimore, 104). Oenone does not realize the irony in her lines, but the reader who knows the Iliad does.

Quis is an alternate form of quibuscum (Bennett #89) as a dat. of advantage/reference.

Turpe rudimentum patriae praeponere raptam.
Causa pudenda tua est; iusta vir arma movet.

Supply est. Palmer’s text has an unnecessary comma after rudimentum. It seems preferable instead that the comma be removed and that praeponere be taken as an epexegetical infinitive governed by the first clause, which is how Kennedy translates it despite the comma. Compounds with prae take both an acc. and a dat. where something in the acc. is placed before something in the dat. (Bennett #187.3.2).

Tua has the sense of tibi in the periphrastic. Iusta is a transferred epithet as it makes more sense with vir than arma, particularly since Menelaus, the man in question, will be completely in his rights when he launches an entire fleet of ships against Paris’ Troy.
The choice to use *vir* emphasizes both his virtue (the root of *virtus* is *vir*) and the fact that he is a legitimate ‘husband’ (OLD def 2a).

*Nec tibi, si sapias, fidam promitte Lacaenam,*

*Quae sit in amplexus tam cito versa tuos.*

99-106 Oenone suggests that Helen will be unfaithful to Paris just as she was to Menelaus, a fear that Helen will also address at 17.213-4. Helen has actually been kidnapped once before when she was a young girl by Theseus who returned her to her brothers untouched as noted by Oenone on lines 127-130.⁶¹ The ancient reader knows that none of Oenone’s warnings will come to fruition as Paris will die before Helen is recovered by the Greeks,⁶² which perhaps helps create pity for Oenone as the reader watches her try in vain to make Paris understand what she is going through.

99 *Nec* goes with *promitte* to form a neg. imperative. *Promitte* is best translated as ‘look forward to.’ *Lacaenam,* ‘a Spartan woman,’ should be taken contemptuously. Cf. Laocoon’s advice in *Verg. Aen.* 2.48-49, *aut aliquis latet error; equo ne credite, Teucri.* *quidquid id est, timeo Danaos et dona ferentis*⁶³. Also, note *Hor. Carm.* 1.11.6-8, *…sapias, uina liquest et spatio breui spem longam reseces. Dum loquimur, fugerit inuida aetas: carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero*⁶⁴. Ovid may have had both lines in mind when he crafted his advice not to trust the Greek woman, who is tomorrow’s hope for love.

100 *Quae* introduces a rel. clause of the characteristic (Bennett #283). *Tam cito* reminds the reader how quick the courtship of Helen and Paris was.

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⁶¹ Also see the introduction to poem 16 for more on Helen’s abduction. For the full story, see Michalopoulos’ note on 16.149.

⁶² See Quintus of Smyrna, book 10.

⁶³ “Or some error hides inside; trust not the horse, O Trojans. Whatever it is, I fear Greeks bearing gifts.”

⁶⁴ “If you are wise, strain the wine and cut back long hope for a brief while. While we speak, the envious age flees: seize the day, trusting as little as possible to tomorrow.”
Ut minor Atrides temerati foedera lecti

Clamat et externo laesus amore dolet,

101 *Ut* here means ‘as’ with an indicative verb. The descriptor *minor* designates the younger Menelaus since the patronymic *Atrides* by itself can refer to either of the sons of Atreus, Menelaus, or Agamemnon. *Lecti* refers to the ‘marriage bed’ (OLD def 2) that has been polluted by adultery. *Foedera* comes from the noun meaning ‘pledge,’ but perhaps Ovid also wants the reader to consider the close sounding adjective *foedus-a-um*, which means ‘foul’ or ‘disgusting.’ Furthermore, the mention of pledge should remind the reader about the pledge of the suitors for Helen’s hand,65 the means by which Menelaus will be able to get the entire forces of Greece to fight.

102 Ovid means for Oenone to have great sympathy for Menelaus, as they have both been abandoned through Paris’ and Helen’s new love. *Externo amore* is an abl. of cause (Bennett #219). Note that the injured party is surrounded by the foreign love.

*Tu quoque clamabis. nulla reparabilis arte*

*Laesa pudicitia est; deperit illa semel.*

103 Note the anaphora of *clamo* from the line above. *Nulla arte* is an abl. of means taken with *reparabilis*, which modifies *pudicitia* below.

104 Knox notes that *pudicitia* can be taken to mean ‘virginity,’ which makes sense considering the second half of the line above, but it is difficult to accept Knox’s interpretation since Helen has already been married once and bore a daughter, Hermione, removing any possibility of virginity. Additionally, if lines 5.135-148 stand as Ovid’s, Oenone has nothing to gain and everything to lose in a discussion of virginity since she will admit that she had already given hers to Apollo before she met Paris.

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65 See the Cypria fragments for more on the suitors’ pledge.
Ovid likely meant chastity in the sense of fidelity. Consider how fidelity is like love, which is also reparable by no art (see 5.149 below). Illa refers back to pudicitia; semel should be taken as ‘once and for all’ (OLD def 3). Cf. 17.22 where Helen will ask an quia vim nobis Neptunius attulit heros, rapta semel videor bis quoque digna rapi?

_Ardet amore tui? sic et Menelaon amavit._

_Nunc iacet in viduo credulus ille toro._

105 The subject of _ardet_ is Helen. _Amore_ is an abl. of cause (Bennett #219). _Tui_ is the pronoun, not the adj. _Menelaon_ is a Grk. acc. Where she cannot bear to say Helen’s name without scorn, she has no problem naming Menelaus while using the Grk. acc. to highlight his Greekness.

106 _Viduo toro_ is used in 1.81, 10.14, and 16.317 as well as a regular trope for the woman (or man) suffering alone at night. Note the chiastic word order, the trusting one is literally on the bed. Consider also the context of its use in 16.317 where Paris complains that both he and Helen are on widowed beds.

_Felix Andromache, certo bene nupta marito!_

_Uxor ad exemplum fratris habenda fui;_

107 The voc. _Felix Andromache_ is ironic to the reader, but not to Oenone who only knows Andromache as the wife of a living, faithful, and valiant Hector. Hector’s faith to Andromache is unquestioned, but Andromache will end up a slave to Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, who killed her dear Hector.66 The irony is caused by the difference between what Oenone can know at the time of writing the letter and what we as readers do know having already seen the end of the tale which makes the pathos all the

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66 See Eur. _Andromache_ and Eur. _Trojan Women_ for more on Andromache.
stronger. *Certo* can either be taken adverbially as ‘certainly’ or more likely as an adjective with *marito*.

108 Take *uxor* as an appositive to the 1st person subject of the periphrastic, which despite being indicative should be translated with the subjunctive sense of ‘should have been kept’ rather than the awkward sounding ‘I was to be kept’ (Bennett #115). *Ad exemplum* translates as ‘by the example.’ *Fratris* should be taken with *ad exemplum*.

_Tu levior foliis, tum cum sine pondere suci_

_Mobilibus ventis arida facta volant;

109-112 This simile, comparing Paris to blowing leaves, echoes both Catullus and the epic tradition of simile while also harkening back to Oenone’s own pastoral nature. As Lindheim (2000) notes, “both the leaves and the grain belong to pastoral world and thus are specifically appropriate choices for the heroine” (93). This simile is based on something Oenone knows plenty about as a nymph. Pearson (1980, 125) notes that the leaves are now dry and dead as a representation of the current state of their love. Consider also, as Lindheim hints, that the leaves previously mentioned by Oenone are those which comprised their marriage bed now all but blown away (93).

109 Supply _es. Foliis_ is an abl. of comparison (Bennett #217). _Cum_ means ‘when’ with the indicative (Bennett #288). Take _suci_ as a gen. sg. meaning ‘moisture’ (OLD def 4). Ovid is possibly playing with the reader here by foreshadowing Paris poisoned and returning to Oenone begging for the herbs and potions (OLD def 2) she has to save his life.

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67 For the interactions between Andromache and Hector, see _Il._ 6.
68 Cf. _Her._ 13.65 et seq. for another opinion of Hector and 13.137 for Laodamia’s take on _The Trojan Women_.
69 For the use of the wind in the _Heroïdes_, see also 13.92 where Laodamia prays that her fears be carried off by the winds. Likewise, see Cat.70.4 for the use of wind to symbolize the fickleness of love.
70 See note 17.2 for more on _levior_.

101
(Quintus of Smyrna, bk.10). Cf. Cat. 72.6, *Multo mi tamen es vilior et levior,*\(^{71}\) for the use of *levior* as an emotional state. It often has the sense of ‘fickle’ (OLD def 15).

110 *Mobilitus ventis* is an abl. of means. *Arida* is taken with *facta,* which refers back to the *foliis* on the previous line. Consider this simile against the simile of Chloe as a deer in Hor. *Carm.* 1.23.5-8\(^{72}\) where the young girl is afraid of the moving leaves and breezes.

\[Et minus est in te quam summa pondus arista,\]

\[Quae levis adsiduis solibus usta riget.\]

111 *Minus* goes with *pondus.* *Quam* here is used for comparison. *Summa* is best taken as ‘top of.’ Take *in* with both *te* and *arista.*

112 *Quae* refers back to *arista.* *Riget* is from *riego,* meaning ‘stand up,’ not *rigo* which means ‘moisten.’ *Ardiduis solibus* is a poetic plural implying repeated exposure to the sun. Oenone is still using images from nature because they are what she understands best.

\[Hoc tua — nam recolo — quondam germana canebat,\]

\[Sic mihi diffusis vaticinata comis:\]

113-126 Oenone will recount Cassandra’s prophecies which of course she only understood too late.\(^{73}\) Cassandra is Paris’ precognizant sister, impotent in her knowledge because others neither believe nor understand until it is too late--a curse for spurning the love of Apollo. Compare this with Oenone’s interaction with Apollo on lines 138 et seq. where her gift proves equally tragic despite following through with Apollo’s desires. *Nam recolo* introduces what is called an ‘Alexandrian footnote’ where

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\(^{71}\) “To me, you are cheaper and more fickle by a lot.”

\(^{72}\) “For whether the arrival of spring has trembled with moving leaves or whether green lizards have moved the foliage, it [the deer] trembles with both its heart and knees.”

\(^{73}\) See lines 40-41 for other examples of prophecy.
the author informs the reader that he or she is about to make reference to a previous text. Sadly, we do not have the source text for Cassandra’s famous prophecy.74

113 Hoc is neut. acc. sg. referring to everything that has happened (Bennett #87). The aside nam recolo serves to reinforce the problem with Cassandra’s prophecies: no one believes or understands them until they come to fulfillment. Recolo should also recall the root verb colo, which means to ‘cultivate,’ adding a final touch of farming imagery from the simile just given. Germana refers to Cassandra. Canebat here makes the most sense as ‘foretell’ (OLD def 8).

114 Supply est. Comis diffusis is the standard description of seers and witches.75 The verb vaticinor means to prophecy or rave. It is also related to the noun vates, ‘poet’ or ‘seer’ (OLD def 1; 2), a nice touch as her prophecy is about to come in elegiac couplet.

Quid facis, Oenone? quid harenæ semina mandas?
Non profecturis litora bubus aras.

115-118 Notice that Cassandra uses agricultural terminology in her prophecy which, if nothing else, Oenone should have understood. Unfortunately, the curse on Cassandra makes her premonitions incomprehensible even when spoken at the listener’s level.

115 Oenone is voc sg. Harenæ is a dat. of indirect obj. despite harenæ being inanimate. To scatter one’s seeds on the sand is proverbial for wasting one’s efforts since crops are not able to thrive on sand.

116 Non equals nihil as an answer to a question (Bennett #162.5) and should be regarded as the object of profecturis. The fut. act. part. is best translated here as ‘about to accomplish.’ Bubus is the irregular dat. of bos (Bennett #41), taken with profecturis, here

74 For more on Alexandrian footnotes, see Hinds (1998, 1-5).
75 See Aen 6.48 and Hor. Epodes 5.16 for this description.
in an advantage construction. Cassandra’s rather awkward line suggests that she is plowing sand (a useless task) with oxen that will not gain any profit.

*Graia iuvenca venit, quae te patriamque domumque*

*Perdat! io prohibe! Graia iuvenca venit!*

117-118 The placement of the same phrase at the beginning of the hexameter and the end of the pentameter shows off Ovid’s technical skill as well as highlighting Cassandra’s opinion of Helen through the repetition.

117 The Greek heifer is Helen. Cassandra’s curse limits her speech to metaphor. Consider also the use of cow imagery in the *Agamemnon* by Aeschylus when Cassandra asks “will cow gore bull, the black-horned monarch” (p.81, tr. Vellacott) while she explains to the chorus that Agamemnon will be killed by Clytemnestra. Note the tricolon of objects governed by *perdat*, which matches the frenzy of Cassandra in its rapidity.

118 *Quae* is introducing a rel. clause of purpose (Bennett #282.2). The unsupplied obj. of *prohibe* is the coming of Helen.

*Dum licet, obscenam ponto demergite puppim!*

*Heu! quantum Phrygii sanguinis illa vehit!’*

119 *Dum licet* has the sense of ‘while you still have the chance.’ *Obscenam* can simply be translated as ‘obscene’ (OLD def 4) or ‘ill-omened’ (OLD def 1) but the noun form may hold vulgar connotation in the masculine, possibly meaning ‘sexual pervert’ (OLD def 1). Ovid might be trying to bring the crime of adultery to the reader’s mind. *Ponto* is an abl. of pl. where with *in* omitted. The plural imperative is addressed to Oenone and Cassandra’s family slaves mentioned on line 121. For similar phrasing and vocabulary, see *Aen*. 1.41, …*Pallasne exurere classem/ argivom atque ipsos potuit submurgere ponto/ unius*
This is a very clever allusion considering Ajax will violate Cassandra at the fall of Troy.

120 *Phrygii sanguinis* should be taken as partitive with *quantum* (Bennett #201). *Illa* likely refers to the ship, although it could refer to Helen.

*Dixerat in cursu: famulae rapuere furentem; (vox erat)*

*At mihi flaventes diriguer comae.*

121 Most MSS read *dixerat* which Palmer has restored here although Knox later returned it to *vox erat*, an emendation by Heinsius. Ultimately the sense of the line comes out the same regardless of which one is chosen. The *vox* is Cassandra’s if that route is taken. Palmer takes *in cursu* to mean ‘in her wild career,’ which is passable but it may be preferable to take it as ‘in that direction,’ (OLD def 7) referring to the topic orientation her speech takes. One can easily imagine that the Trojan *famulae* quieted and carried off a woman whom they thought crazy when she began suggesting that the Trojans sink their own ships. *Rapuere* is syncope for *rapuerunt*.

122 *Mihi* is a dat. of reference (Bennett #188). *Diriguere* is another syncopated verb. Just like the English expression ‘her hair stood on end.’ Since Cassandra’s prophecy could not be understood when she gave it, perhaps her terrifying behavior made Oenone’s hair stand on end, or perhaps her suggestion to sink the ship which carried her beloved Paris did so. It may also be that while Ovid suppressed Oenone’s prophetic powers, he left her with at least the ability to sense the foreboding.

*A, nimium miserae vates mihi vera fuisti —
Possidet, en, saltus illa iuvenca meos!*

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76 Was Pallas not able to burn the Argive fleet and to drown them on the sea on account of the crime and madness of Oilean Ajax?
Nimium should be taken with both miserae and vera. For vates see line 114. Note the
synchysis intertwining the fates of both Cassandra and Oenone particularly since both
of them have, according to Ovid, been involved with Apollo, the god of prophecy. The
alliterative sounds may represent indignation as Oenone leads up to the next line.

Saltus should be translated as ‘glades’ or ‘meadows’ (OLD def 2). The chiasmus
literally places the heifer in her meadows. Saltus also has a vulgar meaning. Ovid may
have intended this line to function at both levels.

Sit facie quamvis insignis, adultera certe est;
Deseruit socios hospite capta deos.

Sit here is concessive, best translated as ‘may be,’ from the sense of quamvis (Bennett
#308). Facie is an abl. of respect/specification (Bennett #226) taken with insignis.

Capta is nom. referring to Helen. Construe hospite as an abl. of agent with capta. The
socios deos are synecdoche for one’s homeland. Compare Helen with Aeneas who
abandoned his homeland but brought his gods with him (Aen. 1.1-7).

Illam de patria Theseus — nisi nomine fallor —
Nescio quis Theseus abstulit ante sua.

See note line 5.99 as well as the introductions to poems 16 and 17 for more on
Theseus.

Illam is the object of abstulit below, but its placement at the beginning of the
sentence indicates that she is certain that it is Helen that was kidnapped. Nomine is best
taken as an ablative of means with the passive verb. Oenone suggests that she is only
slightly familiar with the story, hence her being unsure about Theseus’ name.

Drinkwater (2003) suggests that ‘True ignorance of Theseus would illustrate Oenone’s

77 See Adams (1982, 84) for more on the use of agricultural vocabulary for sexual metaphors.
real inexperience in the heroic sphere... Feigned ignorance allows Oenone to slight Helen by implying that she was captured by a person of minor importance, rather than by the great hero of Athens” (122).\footnote{78 For more on the unsureness of speakers about mythological events certain to external readers, see Rosati (2005, 162).}

128 *Nescio quis* is used as an adjective modifying *Theseus*. *Nescioquis* is used frequently in Roman comedy (10 times in Plautus alone). Ovid may be having a joke at Oenone’s expense by reducing her to a comedic character with comical vocabulary. *Ante* is the adverb, not the preposition. *Sua* should modify *patria* above. The hyperbaton created between those two words helps one visualize the great distance which she was carried. Consider the scene in Apollonius of Rhodes’ *Argonautica* (book 3) where Jason tells Medea the story of Theseus and Ariadne (or at least the parts that help his case).

*A iuvene et cupido credatur reddita virgo?*

*Unde hoc conpererim tam bene, quaeris? amo.*

129 Palmer and Knox both note that Theseus was near fifty years old when he kidnapped Helen. Ovid likely knew this, but chose to have Oenone err on the age in a story she admits she is only passingly familiar with to create a much better parallel to Paris’ actions. *Iuvene* here is the adj. creating a hendiadys with *cupido*. *Credatur* is best treated as a potential subjunctive (Bennett #280). *Virgo* is appositional to *reddita*, best translated as ‘returned as a virgin.’ Since virgin status cannot be what Oenone thinks is important,\footnote{79 See note on line 104.} the parallel is perhaps to make a warning to Paris about the less than upright nature of the woman with whom he is involved.

130 *Hoc* refers to Oenone’s belief that Helen was returned to her brothers without her virginity. *Conpererim* is subjunctive in indir. quest. governed by *quaeris*. Oenone’s
answer, *amo*, perhaps reveals something about how Paris courted her when they were young or at the very least refers to the story of her own affair with Apollo.

*Vim licet appelles et culpam nomine veles;*

*Quae totiens rapta est, praebeit ipsa rapi.*

131-132 Oenone, much like a lawyer, preempts the possible argument that Helen did not want abduction and suggests that she came willingly. The legal feeling of the rhetorical strategy may be echoed by the somewhat Ciceronian use of *praebeit* below. Cf. Georgias’ *Encomium of Helen* in which he actually does exculpate her.

131 The sense of *vim* here is that of ‘rape’ (OLD def 2). *Licet* here simply means ‘although’ (OLD def 4). Both subjunctives are potential (Bennett #280). *Nomine* refers to calling it force or rape. Cf. *Aen.* 4.172 where Dido *coniugium uocat, hoc praetexit nomine culpam*80. Then again, perhaps Helen is the type of girl who likes to be taken by force, as she wishes that Paris would do in her own letter (17.185-8).

132 Ovid uses the indicative verbs *est* and *praebuit* here to reinforce the fact that although Helen has been seized often, she is not just the sort of woman who normally is. Both Palmer and Knox take issue with the infinitive object of *praebuit*. It is not frequent in poetry but has precedent in Ovid and it is common in Cicero, which may represent an attempt by Oenone to use further legal speech. It should be taken as an infinitive of purpose (Bennett #326n) with an unsupplied *se* as its subject81.

*At manet Oenone fallenti casta marito —*

*Et poteras falli legibus ipse tuis!*

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80 “She calls it marriage, she covers the fault by this name.”

One or more of the inferior manuscripts (s.) reads fallaci for fallenti and while the sense is close, fallaci seems to be the better choice in that the participle implies that he is currently deceiving Oenone (Bennett #336.2), when at this point in narrative time, there is no doubt about his deceit. Casta should be taken as a predicate nom. which takes marito as a dat. of reference (Bennett #188).

Legibus tuis is rather awkward, but the abl. of means translated by E.C. Kennedy (ad loc.) as ‘according to your own example’ gives the sense. Oenone possibly suggests that she has license to cheat on Paris, but since he has left her, it seems unlikely that he would care. Of greater likelihood is that Paris has now set up an example of infidelity that Helen can follow (and already has followed) which would leave Paris as lonely as Oenone is. Helen addresses the same complaint at 17.213-4. Consider also that Oenone will remain chaste up until Paris’ death and will throw herself onto his pyre after refusing to heal him according to Quintus of Smyrna (book 10).

Me Satyri celeres — silvis ego tecta latebam —

Quaesierunt rapido, turba proterva, pede

Palmer believes these lines to be spurious but did not mark them as such. Knox does not support him in this and retains the lines un-bracketed. E.C. Kennedy omits several of the lines at the end of the poem in a most awkward manner, not necessarily on the grounds of spuriousness, but more to suit the audience of school-age children in the 1940’s. Each of Palmer’s five arguments will be covered as they arise within the lines and why the lines should be retained will be explained.

Silvis is an abl. of place where. Tecta is nom. sg. modifying the 1st person subject of the verb. Oenone points out that she too was sought by others but hid so that she would
not be taken. Satyrs, mythical creatures with the torsos of men and the legs of goats, hearken the arrival of gods.\textsuperscript{82}

\textbf{136} Quaesierunt is syncope for Quaesiverunt. Turba proterva is appositional to satyri celeres. Rapido pede can either be taken as an abl. of description/quality (Bennett #415) or an abl. of means. For the sexual connotations of protervus-a-um, cf. Horace Carm. 1.25.1-2; Parcius iunctas quatiunt fenestras/ iactibus crebris iuvenes protervi\textsuperscript{83}.

Cornigerumque caput pinu praecinctus acuta

Faunus in inmensis, qua tumet Ida, iugis.

\textbf{137} The que links this couplet with the previous one (Bennett #341.2a). Cornigerum is the adj. modifying caput, which is used as a cognate acc. or Greek middle acc. (Bennett #175.2d) with praecinctus, thus “bound at his horn-bearing head.” Pinu acuta is an abl. of means here.

\textbf{138} Qua here simply translates as ‘where’ (OLD def 4). Note that Ovid has again made the word order reflect the geography as Ida is between its immense ridges. Oenone ups the ante on her virtue. Not only had she avoided the satyrs, but also Faunus, the horned woodland god himself. While tumet refers grammatically to Ida, Faunus is also swollen with passion. It is worth noting that Faunus is known for his prophetic powers as well (\textit{Aen} 7.81) which are also of no help to Oenone. Palmer uses the syllable length of Ida, which is apparently not short anywhere else in Ovid as grounds for the line being spurious. This is insufficient cause on two grounds. 1) Knox points out that the same form is used in 16.110, which if one accepts the line from poem 16 as not spurious, shatters the argument. 2) A simple trick of metrical convenience for an otherwise brilliant line should not be grounds for interpolation.

\textsuperscript{82} See Cat. 64.251-3, where the Satyrs serve as a precursor for the arrival of Bacchus.
\textsuperscript{83} “More sparingly do the bold young men shake the joined windows with violent throws.”
Me fide conspicuus Troiae munitor amavit,
Ille meae spolium virginitatis habet.

139-148 The story of Apollo violating Oenone and giving her power to heal is not found elsewhere which has lead to one of the major questions of the authenticity of these lines (Palmer). This is insufficient grounds for eliminating the lines for four reasons. 1) Since the accounts of this story which are extant are rather scanty based on the popularity of the Trojan characters in Greek literature, one would be hard pressed to think that there could not have been other sources which we do not have access to but which contained this version. 2) Ovid, while to some small extent bound to the confines of the story is in no way required to tell it exactly, no more than in 1942 Jean Anouilh was required to mirror Sophocles verbatim in his Antigone. It is the author’s prerogative to fabricate new details and events. 3) Fulkerson (2005, 6-7) raises the important question of whether or not the women in the Heroides (as authors) know something we (as readers) do not. The main character certainly has the right to tell her own story or adapt it as she sees fit. 4) Jacobson suggests one more option worth considering: that Oenone herself has made up the story in order to become more like Helen in an attempt to make herself more attractive to Paris. While the strength of Jacobson’s theory is lacking on the grounds that Oenone seems too rustic and genuine to outright lie, even in her excitement, it does present one more possibility for the retention of the lines as Ovid’s. Whether Oenone has fabricated the story or it did actually happen, the choice of Apollo as a pursuer is worth noting. Oenone would not be the first nymph the god had deemed fit to seek out, but as far as his love affairs with women go, this one ends fairly well for Oenone. She does not end up turning into anything (e.g., a laurel tree like Daphne or a sunflower like Clytie) and she gets a largely uncursed gift (unlike her sister-in-law Cassandra). Apollo is a major player in the Iliad; he is the one who brings plague upon the Greeks for the capture of Chryseis at the very outset of the epic, and he appears several times in the
battle as a fighter. Apollo embodies ‘epic.’ If Oenone was good enough for Apollo, she is certainly good enough for the epic upstart, Paris. Furthermore, Apollo spent a year in service of Admetus as a simple shepherd as penalty for killing the Cyclopes.\textsuperscript{84} If the rural countryside was good enough for Apollo, surely the pastoral world can be good enough for Paris. It is largely possible that Oenone has included the Apollo incident in her letter as one more way to ask Paris to either return to the woods or to bring her to the citadel.

\textit{Munitor Troiae} describes none other than Apollo who built the walls of Troy (\textit{II. Book 7}) and plays the \textit{fides} or lyre. There is certain playfulness in Ovid’s choice to juxtapose \textit{me}, referring to Oenone, with \textit{fide}, which is of course very close sounding to the adjective \textit{fidus-a-um} meaning ‘faithful’ (Jacobson 1974, 139).

While the sense of the line is clear, it is worth noting that to a Roman audience, \textit{spolium} would have brought to mind the arms stripped from a defeated combatant (OLD def 2), which helps set the stage for the very violent scene about to take place. Palmer states that this line is spurious in its contradiction of line 133. There is no reason why Oenone’s previous love affairs before Paris should be in conflict with her use of the adjective \textit{casta}. Oenone has been faithful since their marriage which Knox also points out. Furthermore, as the following lines show, Oenone did not give herself to Apollo willingly as Paris did with Helen. The graphic nature of these lines is ultimately disconcerting. Such sexual violence occurs nowhere else in the \textit{Heroides}. Rape scenes are usually very brief descriptions of the girls being carried off.\textsuperscript{85} Oenone may have an even more important purpose for telling this tale for as Lyons notes (1996) “A heroine who keeps quiet, not complaining when raped by a god, will never become a subject of song for generations to come. Her name will be forgotten, or even worse, multiplied to the

\textsuperscript{84} See note 5.151.
\textsuperscript{85} See the \textit{Homeric Hymn to Demeter}, and the Rape of the Sabines in the \textit{Ars Am.} 1.101 et seq.
point of meaninglessness” (42). Oenone may be telling this story as a last desperate attempt at eternal fame, the very glory which Helen seems so preoccupied with in her letter.

Id quoque luctando; rupi tamen ungue capillos

Oraque sunt digitis aspera facta meis

141-142 Compare the means by which Oenone struggles unsuccessfully with Apollo to how she mourns when seeing Helen on the ship in lines 71-2, Tunc vero rupique sinus et pectora planxi/ secui madidas ungue rigente genas. Oenone mourns the loss of her maidenhood the same way she does the loss of her love.86

141 Id quoque luctando refers to the previous line where in English we would say “not without a fight”. Luctando is an abl. gerund demonstrating means (Bennett #338.4).

142 The plural is poetic, Apollo only has one face. Digitis meis is an abl. of means. Aspera should be taken as a predicate nom. governed by facta.

Nec pretium stupri gemmas aurumque poposci:

Turpiter ingenuum munera corpus emunt.

143-144 Compare the sentiment here with her statement in lines 81-82. Oenone may also be suggesting that Helen, by comparison, is gold-digging for the wealth of Troy.

143 Pretium stupri is appositional to gemmas aurumque. Stuprum has a wide variety of meanings ranging from willing to unwilling intercourse but always has the sense of ‘disgrace’ or ‘shame’87.

86 See also 16.237, for similar vocabulary in Paris’ description of Helen’s struggle with Theseus.
87 See Adams (1982, 199 et seq.) for more on the meanings of stuprum.
The line is a gnomic statement. *Ingenuum* is best taken as ‘free-born’ (OLD def 2) based on the *stuprum* on the previous line.

*Ipse, ratus dignam, medicas mihi tradidit artes]*

   *Admisitque meas ad sua dona manus.*

Supply *me* with *dignam*. Apollo is regularly recognized as a god of healing and medicine as well as sickness and plague as in *Il.1*.

Note that the chiasmus again reflects the situation; the gift is visually in her hands. Compare this with what she says about not wanting gifts or wealth from Paris in lines 81-82. Although in that case she is saying that she merely wants Paris, whereas here, she has been taken by someone she presumably did not want. Moreover, her gift as previously mentioned is inextricably tied to Paris’ death.

*Quaecumque herba potens ad opem radixque medenti  *medendi

   *Utilis in toto nascitur orbe, mea est.*

Palmer contends that the use of *opem* here and *opis* on line 151 without a modifying adjective meaning ‘medicine’ marks the lines as spurious. Since the adjective *medicas* was used one couplet before, there is no reason why the reader would need a modifying adjective to figure out the context of *opem*. Thus, the lines should stand. *Medenti* is an emendation by Heinsius from *medendi* which is held in the manuscripts. Whether the word is a dat. pres. act. part. or is a gen. gerund does not actually change the sense of the line. For the former, consider it a dat. of purpose (Bennett #191); for the latter take, it with *opem* as a standard use of the gen. gerund. Since *utilis* most frequently takes a dat. (New College), *medenti* seems most logical. This healing skill, discussed previously, will
become handy when Paris is poisoned and comes to her for help --help she will refuse to give.\footnote{For a discussion of the Allusions to that scene as described in Parthenius, see Drinkwater (2007, 379).}

\textbf{148.} \textit{Est} is singular by attraction as it agrees with herba radixque.

\textit{Me miseram, quod amor non est medicabilis herbis!}

\textit{Deficior prudens artis ab arte mea.}

\textbf{149} \textit{Me miseram} is an acc. of exclamation (Bennett #183). \textit{Herbis} is an abl. of means.

Medea says the same thing at 12.165-8, \textit{quaerque feros pepuli doctis medicatibus ignes, non valeo flammam effugere ipsa meas. Ipsi me cantus herbaeque artes relinquunt; nil dea, nil Hecates sacra potentis agunt\footnote{“I who could beat back fierce fire with wise drugs, have not the power to escape the flames of my own passion. My very incantations, herbs, and arts abandon me; naught does my goddess aid me, naught the sacrifice I make to potent Hecate.” (Tr. G.P. Goold)}}. Also consider Dido’s ruse in the \textit{Aeneid} that the pyre she is building is part of an elaborate spell to free her of love (\textit{Aen} 4.474 et seq). Most interestingly, however, is that Apollo says the same thing to Daphne at \textit{Met.} 1.521-24,

\textit{inventum medicina meum est, opiferque per orbem/dicor, et herbarum subiecta potentia nobis. ei mihi, quod nullis amor est sanabilis herbis/ nec prosunt domino, quae prosunt omnibus, artes!\footnote{“The art of medicine I gave the world and all men call me ‘healer’; I possess the power of every herb. Alas! That love no herb can cure, that skills which help afford to all mankind fail now to help their lord.” (Tr. A.D. Melville).}}}.

The very same gift that failed Apollo is the gift that he gives to Oenone; additionally the use of \textit{opifer} to describe Apollo without a qualifying adjective assists in defending the retention of these lines.\footnote{For a fuller discussion of healing gifts and their uselessness in love, see Casali (1992) and the introduction to this poem.}

\textbf{150} Take \textit{prudens} as ‘skilled’ with the gen. \textit{artis} as an appositive to the 1st person subject.

While the use of the prep. \textit{ab} with an abl. of means is unnecessary, it is metrically convenient.
Ipse repertor opis vaccas pavisse pheraeas

Fertur et e nostro saucius igne fuit.

151-152 The story of Apollo’s servitude to Admetus is well known. The version described here comes from Callimachus’ *Hymn to Apollo* where Apollo serves as a slave.\(^92\) Palmer and Knox both note these lines as interpolated largely on the grounds that the mention of the story does not make sense in the context of Oenone’s letter. Their argument is not entirely convincing, perhaps the lines should stand since they do make sense in light of the aims of both Oenone and Ovid. The choice to refer to the story here serves the following purposes. 1) The mention of Admetus brings to mind Euripides’ *Alcestis* which, despite its tragic ending, will no doubt remind the reader of a faithful wife even willing even to die in the place of her husband, something Oenone asserts herself. 2) In the other version of the myth, Apollo kills the cyclopes because they made the thunderbolts which killed his son Asclepius who to Romans was a god of medicine possessing the same powers as Oenone herself. Through foreshadowing, Ovid may also be comparing Oenone’s suicide from refusal to use her gifts with Asclepius’ death for using them too often.

151 *Repertor opis* refers again to Apollo.\(^93\) *Pavisse*, meaning ‘to pasture,’ is governed by *fertur*, which in the passive means ‘is said’ or ‘is reported’ (OLD def 34). *Pheraeas* refers to Admetus’ hometown, Pherae.

152 *Igne* refers to the passion of love. Oenone uses the plural possessive adjective either to remind Paris of the love they once shared or to further align herself with Apollo whose powers were no help to him either.

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\(^92\) See note line 19.

\(^93\) For *opis* and the spuriousness of this line, see note on line 147.
Quod nec graminibus tellus fecunda creandis
Nec deus, auxilium tu mihi ferre potes.

153 Quod refers to auxilium below. Graminibus creandis should be taken as an abl. of description (Bennett #224) with fecunda. For more on graminibus see 16.66. The earth refers to both her status as nymph and the herbs and roots previously mentioned which bring about healing cures.

154 Deus refers specifically to Apollo who was most recently mentioned, but also to all of the gods in the sense that even the almighty cannot do what Paris can. Potes refers back to Paris, bringing the letter back from monologue to epistle. Auxilium should be taken here to mean ‘cure’ (OLD def 6). Oenone is suggesting that only Paris can heal the wounds of her heart, an intense irony considering how soon their situations will be reversed. 94

155 Et potes, et merui — dignae miserere puellae!

Non ego cum Danais arma cruenta fero —

155 Potes is repeated from the previous line to emphasize that Paris is the only one who can do it. The choice to put merui in the completed perfect tense stresses that Oenone has already done everything a woman should to earn a husband’s faith which she catalogued in lines 13-20. Miserere is an imperative (Bennett #112) and takes an object in the gen.

156 While at first glance a simple comparison with Helen, who has an army following her, this line would ring exceptionally ironic to an educated ancient reader as a comparison between Aeneas and Paris and by extension Dido and Oenone. Cf. Aen.

94 See Casali (1992, 93) for more on the irony of this couplet. See Her. 16.94 where Paris uses the same sentiment on Helen, multarum votum sola tenere potes.
4.425, non ego cum Danais Troianam excindere gentem/ Aulide iuravi classemve ad Pergama misi. As Barchiesi (1993) notes

Dido did not take the part of the Greeks against Troy, therefore Paris has no dangers to fear from Oenone. But Oenone’s life story does not end with this letter: our sources… tell us that Oenone will give important assistance to the Greek invaders in revenge for being abandoned (339).

Sed tua sum tecumque fui puerilibus annis
   Et tua, quod superest temporis, esse precor.

157-158 Compare these lines with the tendency in Catullus to repeat the same idea in three time sequences as happens in poem 49.1-3. It is worth noting that after bringing up the gory wars about to come; Oenone closes with a completely different emotion returning to the sadness and confusion she had at the beginning of the poem wanting only to belong to Paris again.

157 Tua here refers back to line 4 when Oenone questions whether or not she is still Paris’. Puerilibus annis is an abl. of time when (Bennett #230).

158 Take temporis with quod as “for whatever (of) time remains”. Sc. futura with esse for the future active infinitive rather than the present. Oenone notes that she was and is Paris’ in the first line, and prays that she will be in the second.

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95 “I never conspired with the Greeks at Aulis to uproot the Trojan race, I never sent a fleet to Troy.”
96 “O most worthy of the grandsons of Romulus, how many there are and how many there will be, O Marcus Tullius, and how many there will be in future years...”
INTRODUCTION TO HEROIDES 16

In some respects, any introduction to Paris’ letter must also serve as the introduction to the double epistles and, therefore, also to the intrusion of the male voice into the *Heroides*. The first fifteen letters are given entirely in a female voice as each heroine writes about the sorrows of collapsing love. The double epistles are a complete departure from this: they introduce the male voice as Paris, Leander, and Acontius are all given their chance to speak their piece. Likewise, they take place at the inception of love which allows their female counterparts to say something drastically different from their heartbroken predecessors. However, the double letters are informed a great deal by the first. Whether the double writers have read the first letters or not, they are writing in a space filled with the laments of the worst possible endings and it is here that the men must convince their women that this time will be different, that this myth will not end the same way as the previous fifteen. In essence Leander must convince Hero that he is not an Aeneas who will find better winds and another queen. Paris must convince Helen that she will not become another conquest, perhaps another Oenone. For this reason it is fitting that Paris gets to be the first writer to woo his beloved since the reader has already seen him in action in Oenone’s letter.

In the introduction to Oenone’s letter, the possibility was discussed that she simply does not get the truth of the situation. Likewise, Paris does not understand the truth of his circumstances. His letter to Helen is an assault in a war he has already won. He writes to woo a girl whose heart he already captured. He cannot possibly know he has already won Helen simply by being beautiful, so he must write prolifically making his letter superfluously long and opening it up to the charge by scholars that the bulk of it is interpolated. What results, perhaps very intentionally for Ovid, is a recitation of Ovid’s own advice to men attempting to woo a girl. As Kenney (Love and Legalism; 1970, 390) notes, “What is offered is rather an exercise on lines already suggested in the
Ars Amatoria, the recipe for a model seduction, with the lady merely awaiting her cue to be seduced.”

Through the course of his letter, Paris will attempt to convince Helen that 1) he means for her to be a wife, 2) their love is divinely ordained, 3) he and Troy are worth leaving Menelaus and Sparta for, and 4) she has nothing to worry about once she does leave. These things are necessary and reasonable for the purposes of these letters, but what is written in the midst of that reveals much more to the reader about Paris’ personality, or at least how Ovid wishes the reader to view him. Consider Paris’ life story up to this point: for the majority of it he was a simple shepherd living on Mt. Ida. Then, in a sudden flurry, he becomes royalty, rich and famous, and living in a palace. In some respects Paris is like a modern rock star who just became important and needs a trophy wife to complete the package. As E.J. Kenney (1996, 5) notes in his introduction

There is no great depth to the characterization of Paris: he is driven single-mindedly by lust and the rooted conviction that nothing can avail to stand between him and his promised reward. To all possible objections and obstacles, he is blindly and blithely indifferent.

Likewise, Rimell (2006, 160) notes,

all three [male writers] are impatient control-freaks, disgruntled with the deficiencies of written communication, focused maniacally on an end goal (for Paris and Acontinus, especially, the letter seems intended less as a plea for interaction on a plane which bans of delays physical union than a cool declaration of their objectives, and an instruction to comply, or else).

So too, as Spentzou (2003) notes,
The device of a letter is predominantly a nuisance to Paris...he has resorted to it as the only bridge that can convey his feelings to Helen... But, ultimately, he cannot hide his dissatisfaction with the letter’s deficiencies as well as his preference for other more unmediated ways of communication (129).

Perhaps Paris has read the single *Heroides* and seen how little impact writing has on changing the hearts of men. Dido could not sway Aeneas with her words, nor could Ariadne bring back Theseus. If we consider Fulkerson’s (2005) theory discussed in the introduction to this dissertation and add that Paris is now part of this same community of writers and readers as the heroines, we should not be surprised that Paris is wholly disenchanted with the act of epistolary persuasion. It has not succeeded for the previous 15 writers including his former spouse, Oenone. Why should Paris have faith that his letter will be more successful? Why should he believe that this time will be different?

In some sense Paris is writing not to profess his great love of Helen, but simply because he has no other avenue. He says himself that Helen’s maids will not act as mediators to allow him to make his offer. Unlike Dido or Medea who hope to effect a change in their destinies, Paris’ letter could have been a few lines that boiled down to “I like you. Will you run away with me? I think you like me too.” But perhaps due to his oversized ego, Paris writes the longest of the epistles.

Much like Oenone, Paris is trapped within three different worlds through which he has great difficulty navigating. He was, up until recently, a simple shepherd; now he is the elegiac lover trying to woo the girl and he will be the epic hero of the *Iliad*. As Drinkwater (2003) notes, “Paris’ epic aspirations are consistently undermined by his expression of them in elegiac terms” (139). Part of the length of the epistle is the result of Paris attempting to be the hero which he so desperately wants to be. Paris focuses on his adventures as a boy while qualifying them as epic valor; he discusses the
propitiousness of his birth; he boasts of his divine assistance. Throughout the course of his letter, he attempts to hit on as many of the characteristics of the epic hero as he can. He ultimately has no choice: he must compete with Menelaus of the loud war cry. However, in truth Paris is not very epic. He spent most of his life as a shepherd which is why his repeated suggestions that Helen is the ‘rustic’ are all the more ironic. Paris omits a great deal of his life story going straight from his birth to the fateful day of his judgment. For practicality’s sake he must because there is very little epic flavor in the day-to-day drudgery he omits (Cucchiarelli 1995, 149-150). Ironically, through this omission he scores himself further points on the Lord Raglan scale as “we are told nothing of his childhood” and “on reaching manhood, he returns to his future kingdom.” (Raglan, 2003, 174)

In 1936, Lord Raglan undertook an examination of the traits that make a hero by searching through patterns which repeat in hero myths from Hercules and Oedipus to Robin Hood. While the ancients may not have been conscious of the pattern as a set of required rules for hero-building, the repeated themes mean that for Paris to be a hero, he needs to compare favorably with all of the other heroes of legend. Lord Raglan provides a list of 22 essential heroic traits. A hero’s life does not need to have all them to be a hero, but he needs a high enough number to seem important. By comparison, Theseus earns 20, Oedipus 21, Heracles 17, Perseus 18, King Arthur 19, and Robin Hood 13. It is worth noting that a huge shortcoming of the Raglan scale is the weight it places on the end of the hero’s life. A full five out of the 22 points involve the way in which the hero dies and what happens to his heirs. When those points are taken out of consideration, many of the greatest heroes begin to look like lesser men. Even Hercules starts to look more like Paris. While the Raglan scale weighs heavily on the later parts of a hero’s life (which Paris does not live to see). A quick look at his situation as he presents it to Helen reveals a strong attempt at minimizing the pastoral and maximizing
the heroic-epic. Paris earns 10 points using only what he tells Helen in his epistle as follows using the designated numbers from the Raglan scale (2003, 174-175):

1) The hero’s mother is a royal virgin—he is Hecuba’s son and not the child of one of Priam’s lesser wives or concubines.

2) His father is a king—Priam, king of Troy.

3) The circumstances of his conception are unusual—Hecuba has the firebrand dream.

4) At birth an attempt is made on his life— he is exposed to prevent the omen from coming true.

5) He is spirited away and found by his foster parents.

6) He is reared by foster-parents.

7) We are told nothing of his childhood.

8) On reaching manhood he returns to his future kingdom at which point he is recognized.

9) After a victory over a king/giant/beast/etc — the brigands whom he stopped in order to earn his nickname Alexander and the games in which he is recognized by his appearance.

10) He marries a princess — Oenone the nymph and Helen the princess.

In short, Paris focuses much of his energy on making himself appear as heroic as all of the other heroes, particularly Theseus, who ultimately ends up scoring 20 on the Raglan scale. Paris does not just check things off the list, but rather he lays out the best argument he can for why he is worthy of Helen’s love by emphasizing his heroic positives and minimizing his pastoral negatives.

Further confounding Paris’ desire to both separate himself from his pastoral past and to integrate himself into the world of the epic is the letter itself and the mission it represents. Cucchiarelli (1995, 139-140) suggests that Paris engages in a systematic
escalation of persona both as an elegiac lover of talent and as the son of Priam. Helen is not wooed by grass beds and hunting games like Oenone. The tricks Paris has used on provincial girls will not work here. Likewise, Helen sees through his epic veneer: she has been courted by every king, prince, and hero in Greece and was even Theseus’ prize. Simply ‘being epic’ will not work for Paris here. Thus, he must navigate the middle world to get to his goal: he must be the elegiac lover. As Mazurek (2006) states, “The puzzle of who he really is – shepherd or prince, lover or warrior – remains unsolved as the autobiography continues through the climactic events of his young adulthood” (54).

Status is a conspicuously recurring theme in Paris’ letter--pervasive from his opening salutation with its patronymic formality to his repeated mentions of Helen’s abduction by the great hero Theseus. He analyzes the family trees of himself, Helen, even Menelaus, taking their lineage as far back as it can go. At times one wonders if he is more excited by the idea of marrying Jupiter’s daughter than he is about marrying Helen.

Paris brings up Theseus three different times despite the risk that discussing Helen’s kidnapping might upset her. Paris is so wrapped up with self-importance that he sees himself as a hero just like Theseus, except unlike the Neptunian hero, he thinks that he will not be compelled to return his prize. As Rimell (2006) notes, “his arrogant and self-inflating missive treats her as a prize commodity he has already won” (158). Meagher (2002) suggests that “rape, after all, is not about lust but about power” (91). It may be that in his megalomania Paris cannot help but fixate on the status of Helen as a prize.

This megalomania actually works to Paris’ advantage at times. He seeks to convince Helen that having him is preferable to staying in Sparta, so the more
important he can make himself sound, the better his chances. This provides the reader
the enjoyment of the irony inherent in Paris’ boasts of greatness having already read the
Iliad and having seen his bravery and prowess first hand.

In some respects, as Rimell (2006, 166) notes, Ovid also manipulates Paris’ letter
to use it as a response to Oenone’s letter. In his flirtations to Helen, he will also respond
to the charges that Oenone has placed against him. In much the same way that
Fulkerson (2003) suggests that Her.14 is written for double readers (Lynceus, her
husband and Danaus, her father), throughout the course of his writing Paris
unknowingly responds to the charges of which he has yet to be accused in the timeline
of events. Those specific charges will be discussed as they appear in the commentary.
HEROIDES 16 COMMENTARY

Hanc tibi Priamides mitto, Ledaea, salutem,
quae tribui sola te mihi dante potest.

1-2 Mitto salutem is a standard formula for a letter opening\textsuperscript{97} with the sense of ‘I send this greeting,’ but based on the next line Paris is using it as a double entendre to also mean health against his lovesickness. Perhaps Ovid specifically chose this phrase to add another level of entendre in that it ends up that only Oenone, not Helen, can offer him salutem.\textsuperscript{98}

1 The issue of status is brought up immediately by Paris who proudly uses the patronymic Priamides (as noted by Michalopoulos) which Oenone uses derisively in 5.11.\textsuperscript{99} Paris goes on to reinforce Helen’s status by referring to her as Ledaea, a matronymic in honor of Helens’ mother, Leda, who was taken by Zeus in the form of a swan. Paris may have chosen to use the matronymic instead of the patronymic for Helen to reinforce the idea that Paris wishes to do to Helen what Zeus did to Leda, as noted by Michalopoulos. Consider also that Helen is one of the few characters in Mythology for whom maternity is uncertain. There are versions of Helen’s story in which she is the daughter of Nemesis, the goddess of Retribution.\textsuperscript{100}

2 Quae refers to salutem. Tribui is the pres. pass. inf. and not the perfect form. Sola goes with te dante, forming an abl. of attendant circumstance or active absolute which perhaps has the force of a conditional (Bennett #337b): ‘only if you are willing to give it’. Take mihi as a dat. of advantage. Note that Ovid has managed to juxtapose mihi and te to reinforce Paris’ desire for closeness.

\begin{itemize}
\item[97]See Ov. Tr. 5.13.1, often also expressed with the verb omitted as Cicero does frequently, e.g. Cic. Att. 16.3.6 for more on this formula.
\item[98]See notes 5.75 and 5.154.
\item[99]See Cucchiarelli (1995, 145-146) for more on the patronymic Priamides.
\item[100]See Austin (1994, 46).
\end{itemize}
eloquar, an flammae non est opus indice notae,

et plus quam vellum, iam meus extat amor?

3 Eloquar is used here as a deliberative (Bennett #277). Opus est as an idiom for ‘there is need of…’ (OLD def 12) takes an abl. of thing needed, as indice here. Flamma refers to the flame of love\(^{101}\).

4 The first half of the line is dependent on notae above. Paris argues that the letter he is about to write is unnecessary since Helen already knows that he is in love with her, a little touch of irony since this is the longest of the *Heroides* by over 100 lines.\(^{102}\) Ovid also uses this play on literary length in Canace’s letter where had she written more, she would have had a different ending (Fulkerson 2005, 84).

ille quidem lateat malim, dum tempora dentur

laetitiae mixtos non habitura metus.

5-6 Paris insinuates that he wishes his love were not so obvious, giving the reader the first clue to the time of writing. His fear suggests that he must still be in the halls of Menelaus and therefore unable to constantly express his love openly.

5 Ille refers to the amor of the previous line. Malim is a potential sub. governing lateat (Bennett #280.2b).

6 The fut. act. part. goes with tempora above and takes metus as its object. Misceo, which can take a dative, can also mean to ‘unite sexually’ (OLD def 4c), to which Ovid is likely referring subtly.

sed male dissimulo; quis enim celaverit ignem,

\(^{101}\) Cf. Cat 51.10, 61.174, 62.27 64.92, 100.7; Verg. *Aen.* 4.24, 4.66, for this use.

\(^{102}\) See introduction to poem 16.
lumine qui semper proditur ipse suo?

7-8 Paris goes on to explain through metaphor how he cannot actually hide his love, comparing it to fire which is visible by the light it gives off.

7 *Celaverit* is a perf. sub. in another deliberative (Bennett #277).

8 *Qui* refers back to *ignem*. Paris is referring to the *lumine* of the fire, but based on the frequency of its poetic usage, he may also be suggesting that his eyes give him away as a lover. Note the chiastic word order which actually surrounds *qui ipse* with *suo lumine*. This couplet is also a likely reminder to the reader of the story of the Hecuba’s dream that Paris was a burning torch for the destruction of Troy. Helen must already know that he is in love with her, so the letter is not needed for that purpose. Paris must instead convince Helen that he is worth giving up Sparta and Menelaus.

*si tamen expectas, vocem quoque rebus ut addam:*

*uror: habes animi nuntia verba mei.*

9 *Rebus* refers to the visible signs of love mentioned above. *Ut addam* introduces a type of substantive clause (Bennett #295) within the condition, ‘if you are hoping that I add…’ The irony of *vocem* should not be missed as Paris cannot actually give auditory voice to his love as he is still in Menelaus’ palace. *Vox* can mean not just speech but anything that can be said such as words, speeches, or maxims by metonymy (OLD def 7; 8).

10 *Uror* often refers to burning with love, but based on the preceding couplet, it is doubly appropriate. Additionally, *nuntia* may remind the reader of the idiom *nuntia*...

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103 See note on lines 43 et seq. for that story.
104 Cf. Cat 72.5; Ov. *Her*.7.23, 15.9, 18.167 for the use of *uror* with a metaphorical fire.
remittere, which means ‘to send a notice of divorce,’ (OLD def 2b) a possible response to Oenone or to Menelaus.

parce, precor, fasso, nec vultu cetera duro

perlege, sed formae conveniente tuae.

11 Paris wants Helen to be happy when she reads his letter rather than to take a stern face. Parce takes the dat. (OLD def 3) substantive fasso, which is best translated here as ‘confessor’ from the verb fateor. The abl. vultu duro refers to Helen’s face. Cetera is the obj. of perlege below. The use of alliteration as elsewhere can be used to mimic stuttering; perhaps indicating that this prayer is affecting Paris emotionally.

12 The sed clause should be taken as an alternative to the nec clause above105.

iamdudum gratum est, quod epistula nostra recepta

spem facit, hoc recipi me quoque posse modo.

13 Quod here is has the sense of ‘due to the fact that’ (OLD def 4). Recepta should be taken as an adjective and is metrically short to go with epistula nostra.

14 Spem here introduces indirect discourse with me as the acc. subject. Paris suggests that he wishes Helen will receive him the same way she does the letter. E.J. Kenney notes that recepi also can have the same sense as ‘to receive a lover.’ The interpretation of modo is either 1) simply to be accepted or received by Helen, or perhaps 2) in her lap as other descriptions of women reading letters indicate. Canace, for example, sits with sword and letter in her lap as she writes, Her 11.3-4106.

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105 Cf. Ov. Am. 1.11.15 and Ars. Am. 1.383 et seq and 435 et seq. for the use of letters in accomplishing love.

106 “The right hand holds a pen, the other holds sheathed iron, and a wet paper lies in my lap.”
15-26 Paris defends his actions as ordained by Venus and attempts to show that he loves Helen and wants her for a legitimate wife, not as a spoil of war or a concubine.

15 Quae here is the object of rata sit in a rel. clause of the characteristic (Bennett #283). Promiserit is subjunctive in an optative governed nec and introduced by opto (Bennett #279).

16 Quae refers to the appositive, mater Amoris, which is also the subject of rata sit above. The reference to Venus should remind the reader of the story of Paris’ Judgment in which he chose Venus as the most beautiful and earned Helen as his prize.

namque ego divino monitu — ne nescia pecces —
advehor et coepto non leve numen adest.

17 Divino monitu should be taken as an abl. of means with advehor below. Choosing the passive perhaps reinforces Paris’ perception that he is not doing this of his own free will. The ne introduces a negative purpose clause (Bennett #282) filled with irony. Paris is suggesting that Helen cannot sin because Venus has ordained their affair; thus Paris adduces that the only way Helen can avoid defying Venus is to defy her marriage vows and Juno. Michalopoulos also notes that the line may serve as a warning for Helen not to defy Venus, exactly the same way Aphrodite herself will warn Helen in Hom. Il. 3.413-7.107

18 Coepto is dative with adest (Bennett #187.3): ‘is on hand for my undertaking.’ Non leve is litotes for grave. The use of coepto helps make this line resonate as quasi-epic (Palmer)

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107 See Euripides’ Hippolytus for what happens to those who defy mighty Aphrodite.
where a hero states that he is forced to undergo a task for the will of the gods increasing his piety while attempting adultery.

*praemia magna quidem, sed non indebita posco:*

*pollicita est thalamo te Cytherea meo.*

19 *Non indebita* is another example of litotes, perhaps used to make it seem that Helen is not merely a prize but rather beloved. As Michalopoulos notes, Helen has actually been a prize twice before: first, when Theseus took her which is mentioned in all three of the focus letters, then again when she was given to Menelaus. Now she is one for the third time for Paris.

20 *Thalamo meo* can be taken as dat. of advantage or purpose (Bennett #191). It is worth noting that the *thalmus* is not Venus’ (Cytherea’s) domain and therefore not hers to give, but rather belongs to Juno as the guardian of marriage vows and by extension the marriage bed. This is a mistake that would not have been lost on the reader considering that Paris is still married to Oenone. Paris tries to downplay the idea of Helen as a prize, but the prime position of *praemia* in the line perhaps belies his real feelings. He chose Venus in the contest and wants his reward.

*hac duce Sigeo dubias a litore feci*

*longa Phereclea per freta puppe vias.*

21 *Hac duce* refers to Venus in an abl. of attendant circumstance (Bennett #221). *Sigeo* is synecdoche for Troy. See E.J. Kenney (1996, 85-6) for a list of such geographical synecdoches in the double *Heroides*. The hyperbaton between *dubias* and *vias* serves to visually reinforce the voyage’s distance.

22 Phereclus was the builder of Paris’ ship; thus the epithet given to *puppe*. The synchysis in the line serves to visualize the ship winding through the straits on its
voyage. Phereclus will die in *Il. 5*. Having just placed Venus before Juno in the previous couplet, Paris now places her above Minerva by mentioning a favorite of hers who was destined to die ultimately from Paris’ and Helen’s escapade.

*illa dedit faciles auras ventosque secundos—*

*in mare nimirum ius habet orta mari.*

23 *illa* again refers to Venus. The choice to put her in the initial position in two consecutive couplets subtly intensifies Paris’ argument that love makes him do this. Both *faciles* and *secundus* can have a favorable sense. Consider the very different winds that Juno will arrange for Aeneas in the *Aeneid* and the winds that Athena will arrange for the Greeks on their departure from Troy. 109

24 *Orta* should be taken as a fem. nom. substantive, ‘the one arisen’ with *mari* as an abl. of source/origin (Bennett #215). *In* here has the sense of ‘over’ (OLD def 41). For the *Story of Venus* arising from the sea-foam caused by Uranus’s splashing genitals, see Hesiod’s *Theogony* 195-7 and *Ov. Fasti* 4.1 et seq. Since she is sea-born she has some domain over the waters.

*perstet et ut pelagi, sic pectoris adiuvet aestum,*

*deferat in portus et mea vota suos.*

25 Use *perstet* as a jussive, ‘may she continue to,’ which is qualified by the two clauses in the line (Bennett #275). *Ut pelagi* requires the sense of *adiuvet aestum.*

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108 “Meriones in turn killed Phereklos… who understood how to make with his hand all intricate things, since above all others Pallas Athene had loved him. He it was who has built for Alexandros the balanced ships, the beginning of the evil, fatal to the Trojans.” (Tr. Lattimore, 129-130)

26 Note the chiasmus which visually places Paris’ prayer inside the port. It would be remiss ignore the possibility of a sexual pun on Ovid’s part especially if facilis in line 23 is understood with the sense of ‘compliant’ or ‘yielding’ (OLD def 5; 6).

*attulimus flammas, non hic invenimus, illas.*

*hae mihi tam longae causa fuere viae.*

27 *Attulimus* should be taken to mean ‘brought’ (OLD def 2) but at the same time the reader should understand the secondary meaning of ‘announce,’ (OLD def 14) as a pun on Ovid’s part at which point *non invenimus* becomes a nod to previous elegists as well as the source authors of legend (e.g., Homer). For *flamma*, see note on line 3. Presumably, the verbs are both plural for the sake of metrical convenience. It is however worth considering whether Paris is actually including Helen in the ‘we’ as a means of persuading her that she had a deficit of passion before his arrival. EJ Kenney rightly suggests that Paris has fallen in love with Helen before he ever saw her.

28 *Fuere* is syncope for *fuerunt*. *Hae* refers to the *flammas* above which takes the singular pred. nom. *causa* despite its plurality. *Causa* takes the genitive as it often does in English (Bennett #198). *Via* here refers to a sea voyage. *Via longa* is often a tag for military activity, so here it has an ironic flavor since Paris is not on a military campaign, but an erotic one. Ovid of course believes the two to be one and the same, cf. *Amores 1.9.1-2, Militat omnis amans, et habet sua castra Cupido; Attice, crede mihi, militat omnis amans*110.

*nam neque tristis hiemps neque nos huc appulit error;*  
*Taenaris est classi terra petita meae.*

29-34 Paris lists reasons why he did not come to Greece. Compare this with Oenone’s letter in which she lists reasons why she does not love Paris, *Her. 5.80-90.*

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110 “Every lover is a soldier and Cupid has his own camp; Atticus, believe me, every lover is a soldier.”
29 *Hiemps* is ‘storm’ or ‘bad weather’ here (Palmer & EJ Kenny). Paris is noting that he knew exactly where he was going and what woman he was seeking when he landed in Sparta. Compare this with the disastrous results of other sea voyages (e.g., Aeneas’ shipwreck in Carthage or Odysseus’ landings in Ogygia and Aiaia) where the hero discovers a woman only when he has been placed in a suppliant position. Perhaps Paris is not being fully truthful. Oenone refers to the judgment of the goddesses as a *hiemps* (5.34) which did bring him to Helen’s shore.

30 *Taenaris* is used as an adjectival epithet for *terra*, referring to Sparta. Michalopoulos notes that Taenaris is also a point of entrance into the underworld to foreshadow the impending disaster. Additionally, Taenaris is a place of asylum where goods cannot be seized, which is exactly why Paris has come here (OCD). An abl. of means would have been preferable here, but Ovid has used a dat. of agent to accomplish the same sense. Perhaps, as EJ Kenney points out, the ship is as eager as its master.

*nec me crede fretum merces portante carina*

*findere—quas habeo, di tueantur opes.*

31 *Nec crede* for the negative imperative, *noli credere*, introduces the indirect discourse. *Carina* is an abl. of means taking the participle which takes *merces* as its object. Paris is suggesting that he did not travel all the way to Sparta as a merchant trying to get rich since he is already a prince. The irony of course is that he is coming to carry off goods, thus adding to the irony of the final half of the pentameter. Consider also that *merces* and *meretrix* both have the same root from *mereo, -ere*.

32 *Tueantur* is a jussive (Bennett #275).

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111 For other examples of epithets in the double *Heroides*, see EJ Kenney’s note.
nec venio Graias velutī spectator ad urbes; 
oppida sunt regni divitiā mei.

34 Parīs’ assertion that Troy is wealthier and more beautiful than Greece serves several purposes. 1) It serves Parīs’ desire to convince Helen to come with him to a more beautiful land, not unlike Jason’s argument to Medea that he took her from Colchis to civilized Greece.112 2) It serves to remind the reader of the wealth of Troy, a much more compelling factor than the beauty of the city. 3) It serves as another reminder that they are his kingdoms, pressing his influence and importance on Helen. Also, the notion that Parīs has not come either as a merchant or as a tourist helps emphasize that he has come to Sparta for one thing and one thing only: Helen (see the repeated te below).

te peto, quam pepigī lecto Venūs aureā nostro;
   te prius optavi quam mihi nota fores.

35 Ovid has placed Venūs aurea in the middle of the chiasmus where Helen should have more logically gone, unless Ovid is playing with the notion of Venus as metonymy for what one does on the bed (OLD def 4). It may also be an allusion to ll. 3 where Helen suggests that Aphrodite herself should sleep with Parīs. The use of the adjective ‘golden,’ which Michalopoulos points out is appropriate for Venus, also echoes the role that Parīs played in giving her the apple, thus making her doubly golden.

36 Fores =esses (Bennett #101.2n). Parīs repeats the notion that he loved Helen before he knew her.113 Mihi is a dat. of reference.

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112 “You have a home in Greece, instead of in a barbarian land. You have learned the blessings of Law and Justice, instead of the Caprice of the Strong.” (Eur. Medea Tr. Hadas, 44)

113 See line 27.
ante tuos animo vidi quam lumine vultus;
prima mihi vulnus nuntia fama tulit. (vultus)

37 Ante quam, often written as one word, is best taken here as ‘before’ rather than as ‘no sooner than.’ Animo and lumine should both be taken as abl. of means with vidi, but separately, giving the sense that he saw her in his mind before he landed in Sparta. Vultus is a poetic plural. Lumine frequently means eye114.

38 The entire line is corrupt in the transmission with the provided line a conjecture at best. EJ Kenney switches the positions of tulit and mihi in this line; since the words are the same, the sense of the line is not affected. Prima is best translated adverbially. Take nuntia as an appositive of fama. Paris is noting that the reputation of her beauty, which drew every eligible man in Greece for her hand in marriage,115 was known to him before he saw her and is what brought him the wound of love. The critical apparatus also lists vultus for vulnus, which Palmer does an excellent job of dismissing, although he fails to point out the irony hidden within the paronomasia where Helen’s vultus will be the cause of the deadly vulnus for Paris. Fama is often ill-omened116.

[Nec tamen est mirum, si sicut oportuit arcu, (Michalopoulos oporteat)
Nec tamen est mirum si, sicut oportet ab arcu, (Cucchiarelli)
missilibus telis eminus ictus amo.

39-144 These lines have been hotly debated regarding their authenticity both as Ovidian and as being by the same author as the rest of the poem. For a full discussion of their rightful place within the poem, see EJ Kenney (1979) and Mazurek (2006). Due to the paucity within the manuscript tradition (see introduction), the question cannot be fully resolved, but certain strengths for their retention stand out. Contextually, the lines

114 Cf. Cat 51.2, 64.92, 64.122 for this use.
115 See Cypria fragments for the oath of the suitors.
make sense within the framework of the poem and are to a large extent required to make sense of Helen’s reply as EJ Kenney (1979, 403 et seq.) demonstrates.

39 Cucchiarelli’s punctuation and choice of possible emendation, which requires the least distortion of the text, seems preferable to the other options. The choice to refer to love as a blow from an arrow is unsurprising. See Amores 1.1 and the following for the story of Cupid shooting Ovid with a love arrow to inspire elegy and Met. book 1 for the story of Apollo and Daphne where Cupid strikes Apollo with a love arrow. The irony lies in the fact that Paris himself does not use melee weapons but prefers to fight with arrows like the one used to wound Achilles (Il.22.358). There is also the arrow which will wound him fatally, both of which the author may be calling to mind, as noted by Michalopoulos.117

40 Ictus is the 4th pp of icio agreeing with the 1st pers. subject, not the noun. While it is not possible that tela, ‘web’ or ‘loom,’ be taken instead of telum, ‘spear,’ the sub-textual notion that Paris is suggesting he has been ensnared by love is worth considering. Take missilibus as a noun forming hendiadys with telis.

sic placuit fatis; quae ne convellere temptes,
   accipe cum vera dicta relata fide.

41 Placeo regularly takes a dat. (OLD def 1). Ovid’s choice to use convellere helps intensify the imagery of the line through paronomasia with velum, both as the ship that will carry Helen and Paris back to Troy and as the tapestry of fate that the Parcae weave. As Belfiore (1981, 104) notes, “If anyone’s love is controlled by fate and the will of the gods, it is Paris’, not Helen’s.” While Paris may be trying to convince Helen that their love is fated, it is actually just his love that fate has ordered.

117 See also Housman (1897) and Cucchiarelli (1996) for more on this couplet.
42 Ovid’s use of the chiasmus here serves to visually ensconce his words with the notion of the truth which may be inaccurate.

matris adhuc utero partu remorante tenebar; (Michalopoulos, partum)
    iam gravidus iusto pondere venter erat.

43-50 Paris tells the story of his own birth and the dream of Hecuba.

43 Utero is as an abl. of pl. where. Partu remorante is best understood as an abl. of attendant circumstance (Bennett #221). Michalopoulos accepts partum in place of partu, but since his only argument is a lack of elegance, it is difficult to justify the correction. Consider also that the word order visually has the birth held in the womb.

    Paris may have specifically mentioned the fact that his birth was delayed to increase his own prestige by comparing it with that of other famous heroes or gods. The birth of Hercules was delayed by Hera to prevent him from fulfilling a prophecy of world domination (Il. 19.95-125) and the birth of Apollo and Artemis was delayed because no land would let Leto rest and deliver (Hyginus 140). For an irony that Paris may not appreciate, Michalopoulos notes that children born late were destined to cause destruction.

44 Iusto here is best taken as ‘proper’ (OLD def 6). As Michalopoulos notes, this line presents another example of word order imagery where the weight is inside the stomach.

illa sibi ingentem visa est sub imagine somni (urgentis, Palmer)
    flammiferam pleno reddere ventre facem.

44-45 The alliteration of ‘s’, ‘v’, ‘i’, ‘f’, and ‘p’ sounds lends almost a clicking sound to the line, perhaps reminiscent of an actual fire popping and crackling.
45 *Illa* refers to Hecuba. *Sibi* is best taken as a dat. of reference (Bennett #188). The passive use of * visa est* translates as ‘seemed’ with a complimentary inf. (OLD def 20). Palmer reads *urgentis* in place of *ingentem* which is in the manuscript. *Ingentem* should be maintained following the arguments put forth by Gould (1970), who demonstrates that *ingens* with asyndeton is a common usage in Vergil and in archaic Latin authors. The use of it here may be an allusion or Alexandrian footnote to a version of the dream story that is no longer extant. In addition, the phrasing as it appears in the codices increases the poetry of the couplet (see note below). Consider also the derivation of *ingens* from *in+gens*, ‘innate’. The torch refers to Paris’ birth and therefore his innate character--a nice touch on Ovid’s part.

46 Note how Ovid has used the hyperbaton, *ingentem…flammiferam…facem*, to visually enhance the image of the torch’s size and how it would be brandished about as almost a visual leaping. *Pleno ventre* is an abl. of source/origin (Bennett #215) with the word of birth (e.g. *natus*) understood. Michalopoulos notes the chiasmus on the line, but does not point out that it again represents the action, with the flame spreading out from the womb.

*territa consurgit metuendaque noctis opacae*  
*visa seni Priamo, vatibus ille refert.*

47 *Territa* and *metuenda* refer back to Hecuba. *Metuenda* has the sense of ‘afraid of’. The use of the fut. pass. part. demonstrates the necessity, and perhaps even the justness, of her fears with its subjective genitive (Bennett #199).

48 *Refert* often simply means ‘reports’ (OLD def 5). The word *vates* is never without double meaning in poetry. Certainly Priam took the dream to the seers for interpretation, but at the same time the reader is retold this story by the poet, also a *vates*; the plural may also be a nod to Homer, Vergil, et al. The double meaning is
reinforced by the choice of *canit* on the next line. Michalopoulos suggests that in Priam’s palace the function of omen/interpretation would have fallen on Helenus and Cassandra. Based on Cassandra’s youth and Helenus’ role in the Trojan War, it is difficult to accept that they were old enough to offer interpretation in this cause.\(^{118}\)

\begin{align*}
arsurum Paridis vates canit Ilion igni — (Michalopoulos, *arsuram*) 
\text{pectoris, ut nunc est, fax fuit illa mei.}
\end{align*}

49 *Ilion* is a Grk. acc. modified by *arsurum*\(^ {119}\). The use of the Grk. acc. may serve to lend epic flair to the line. A more subtle irony is that in the word itself, *Ilium* has been infested with Greekness as Troy soon will be. Michalopoulos accepts Heinsius’ emendation to *aursuram*, which Palmer rejects. Since the noun it agrees with, *Ilion*, can be either be neut. or fem.; Emendation is not really necessary. Ovid’s choice to place the verb for ‘burning’ in the initial position and to place the fire at the final position helps to reinforce again the image of everything engulfed in flames including the singing poet/seer placed in the middle.\(^ {120}\)

50 Here Ovid is playing with the double interpretation of the omen through multiple meanings of *pectus*, as the fire being both in his ‘character,’ (OLD def 4) as the type of man who would kidnap a woman, and in his ‘heart’ (OLD def 5) as lover. As Nesholm (2005) notes “This blending of literal and metaphorical [fires] provides a link between the epic and elegiac worlds as well. To Paris’ elegiac mind, the destructive fire of war that belongs to epic is subsumed under the fire of his all consuming passion for Helen” (75).

\(^{118}\) Cf. *Her.* 5.113 et seq and *Aen.* 3.359 et seq. for examples of the prophecies of Cassandra and Helenus respectively.

\(^{119}\) See 17.240 for Helen’s reply to this line through the use of *arsurum*.

\(^{120}\) For the full description of the burning of Troy, see Vergil, *Aen.*2.
forma vigorque animi, quamvis de plebe videbar,
indicium tectae nobilitatis erat.

51 EJ Kenney points out that some lines are missing between the previous couplet and this one which would tell the story of his exposition and upbringing as a shepherd. Michalopoulos supports his notion. The problem with their theory, however, is that it does Paris no good to bring up his upbringing as a shepherd as it represents the exact life with Oenone from which he is attempting to escape\textsuperscript{121}. Plebe is a collective noun. It is not surprising that Paris would choose to place his beauty, forma, before the strength of his character in a letter meant to bring Helen into infidelity with him. Michalopoulos correctly points out that Paris is putting status in purely Roman terms, thus causing an anachronism, which would clearly explain the issues to the letters’ audience.

52 Erat is singular based on its predicate, indicium, rather than its two subjects. Tectae is ‘hidden’ or ‘secret’ (OLD def 2). The paronomasia between indicium and iudicium should be noted as the most famous event in Paris’ life, his judgment from the goddesses, is what leads to his reunification with the Trojan royal family and his opportunity to get Helen.

est locus in mediis nemorosae vallibus Idae
(in mediae nemorosis vallibus idae, EJ Kenney.)
devisus et piceis illicibusque frequens,

53-88 Paris recounts the contest for the golden apple.\textsuperscript{122} Cuchiarelli (1995, 149-150) notes that Paris’ best argument to Helen, the judgment of the goddesses, is always described in pastoral terms by others (e.g., Homer). Paris also uses pastoral terms in this couplet.

\textsuperscript{121} See introduction to poems 5 and 16 for more on this.
\textsuperscript{122} For Oenone’s version, see 5.33-38.
such as the trees and the idyllic view, perhaps as a nod to literature or because he cannot escape his own roots.

53 Kenney deviates from Palmer’s reading of the line but gives no reason for the change. On the grounds that mediis makes more sense with vallibus, Palmer’s reading should stand. Michalopoulos notes parallels in Greek to support this reading as well. The synchysis here serves to visually represent the highs and lows of the valley.

54 The chiasmus here serves to show the closeness of the trees. Could these be the same trees that Paris chopped down to build his boat for the voyage to Greece? Spruce trees are always green and young looking while oak trees grow new limbs when one is removed and are renowned for their hardness. Perhaps the trees are a metaphor for how Paris wishes Helen to think of him.

qui nec ovis placidae nec amantis saxa capellae
   nec patulo tardae carpitur ore bovis;

55 Qui refers to locus above.

56 Carpitur should be taken as both ‘worn down’ (OLD def 7) and ‘grazed’ (OLD def 1b) with ore as the abl. of means, qualified by the three gen. animals. The synchysis here, as well as the one above, helps to reinforce the image of the animals all peacefully grazing on the same land. Michalopoulos and Cuciarelli (1995, 151) rightly point out that Paris fails to mention what he was doing on the hills of Ida since it would weaken all of his arguments about his high status, (ad.loc and 16.57-8).

hinc ego Dardaniae muros excelsaque tecta
   et freta prospiciens arbore nixus eram—

\textsuperscript{123} Cf. Her. 5.13-20, where Oenone paints a slightly different image of Paris’ pastoral experiences.
57 *Dardaniae* = *Troiae*. *Tecta* often stands for ‘homes’ or ‘palaces,’ (OLD def 2). The allusion to epic vocabulary may be a way for Paris to seem more heroic.

58 *Nitor* often takes an abl. object as *arbore*, here (Bennett #218.3). Michalopoulos suggests that *eram* be taken with *prospiciens* and not *nixus*, as EJ Kenney suggests. Ultimately, the sense of the line comes out the same either way. Based on Vergil’s description of the layout of Troy in *Aeneid* book II, the palace, although enclosed by walls, is not far from the sea because Neoptolemus easily casts Priam’s corpse onto the beach (Verg. *Aen.* 2.550-558). The irony of Paris ‘looking forth’ to the palace where he will soon be reclaimed, and to the sea where he will soon set sail for Helen should not be missed as Cuchiarelli (1995, 150) notes.

> ecce, pedum pulsu visa est mihi terra moveri —
> vera loquar veri vix habitura fidem —

59 EJ Kenney correctly points out that the beating of feet and shaking earth sound more like an army than three goddesses; so, 1) either Paris is using hyperbole which shows his penchant for exaggeration and self-elevation, particularly right before an oath that he is telling the whole truth; or 2) the goddesses are of unnatural size and therefore do actually shake the ground as Michalopoulos suggests.

60 The alliteration, noted elsewhere, gives the sense of stuttering perhaps to convey that what he is about to say, while not untrue, does not seem true, as Paris himself asserts.

> constitit ante oculos actus velocibus alis
> *Atlantis magni Pleionesque nepos* —

61 Take *velocibus alis* with the participle and not the main verb.

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124 Cf. Hor. *Carm.* 2.8.19, 2.10.7; Verg. *Aen.* 1.627, 1.632, 1.638, 1.725 for other examples of this usage.
This line can only refer to Mercury who as messenger of the gods makes sense in the function of herald. Again Paris, concerned with names and statuses in this letter, chooses the grandest formula possible. Mercury is the grandson of Atlas and Pleione through their daughter Maia.¹²⁵ Pleinesque is gen. sg.

\[ \text{fas vidisse fuit, fas sit mihi visa referre} – \]

\[ \text{inque dei digitis aurea virga fuit.}\]

EJ Kenney takes this line to imply that Paris was allowed to behold a god, which is generally forbidden. It may be preferable to supply *si* to make the line into a conditional of sorts, with the sense that if Paris was allowed to experience the whole judgment, and then he should be allowed to talk about it, which Michalopoulos agrees to without supplying *si*. This line is again littered with alliteration, as Michalopoulos also notes, which often denotes nervousness through the rhythmic sound. Despite his bravado in telling the story, he actually is afraid that he is breaking divine law by telling the story, hence his stuttering.

EJ Kenney and Palmer correctly take *aurea virga* to mean the caeduceus, or staff, which Mercury regularly carries, particularly in his role as Psychopompus, the leader of souls to the underworld, which nicely adds foreshadowing. The choice to describe it as golden, however, should remind the reader that somewhere nearby is the infamous golden apple. Moreover, the line serves to foreshadow the ultimately fatal results of Paris’ decision by alluding to the golden bough which Aeneas must find with the help of Venus to enter the underworld in Verg. *Aen.* 6.204-211. It is quite surprising given the

¹²⁵ For the use of Mercury as a herald, cf. *Aen.* 4.220 et seq. and for an almost identical description of Mercury, cf. *Met.* 2.742-Ś, … *Cui sic respondit Atlantis/Pleinesque nepos ‘Ego sum, qui iussa per auras/ verba patris porto’ pater est mihi lupiter ipse.”To which the grandson of Atlas and Pleoine responded, ‘I am he, who carries the ordered words of the father through the air’ Jupiter is my father.”
word order to see virga: surely the audience expects that the next word will be ‘apple’ or ‘fruit’ since the reader knows what is coming next, but instead Ovid has used ‘wand’.

tresque simul divae, Venus et cum Pallade Iuno,
graminibus teneros inposuere pedes.

65 Ovid’s choice in assigning Athena (Pallas) attendant to the other two divinities harkens back to Book III of Apollonius of Rhodes’ Argonautica where Athena asks Hera to do all the speaking with Aphrodite since, as a virgin, she does not know how to deal with the idea of sex. Placing Venus and Juno in the same case may also refer to their position of antithesis in the Iliad and the Aeneid which Pallas chooses not to get involved in. It is also possible that Paris simply gives the least consideration to her among the other two goddesses since he, a womanizer, has no use for a goddess who avoids sex and marriage.

66 Inposuere is syncope for inposuerunt. Graminibus is an abl. pl where (Bennett #228). It is noteworthy that the only other use of graminibus in the Her. Is at 5.153, quod nec graminibus tellus fecunda creandis/ nec deus, auxilium tu mihi ferre potes, which also has reference to divinities. Outside these two occurrences, Ovid only uses it in the Medicamina Faciei Femineae (37).

obstipui, gelidusque comas erexerat horror,
cum mihi ‘pone metum!’ nuntius ales ait:

67 Paris’ fear mirrors the false horrors told by Sinon in Aen. 2.120, obstiupere animi gelidusque per ima cucurrit126. By giving Paris’ words similarity to those of one of mythology’s most famous liars, Ovid may be suggesting that Paris was not as fearful as he lets on.

126 “The souls were astounded and a chill ran through their depths.”
68 *Ales* is both a noun meaning ‘bird’ and an adjective meaning ‘winged;’ here it is the adj.

‘arbiter es formae; certamina siste dearum,
vincere quae forma digna sit una duas.’

69 The irony of the second half of the line is biting, as Paris will actually cause the *certamina* between goddesses, particularly in the *Iliad* where in bk. 21, Athena will threaten Aphrodite as she rides off with Ares. Michalopoulos rightly points out that the polyptoton of *formae/forma* helps to highlight the importance of beauty in the contest.

70 *Digna* regularly takes an abl. of specification/respect (Bennett #226) as *forma* here. *Vincere* is an epexigetical inf.

*neve recusarem, verbis lovis imperat et se
protinus aetheria tollit in astra via.*

71 There are three ways to take the first part of the line. Either 1) the previous couplet concludes Mercury’s speaking part and Paris now says that he cannot refuse the orders of Jove; or 2) the quotation actually extends into this line and Mercury is saying that he did not want to be a messenger for this task but must do as Jupiter has ordered it; or 3) the reader can understand it as a prohibition: ‘nor would I refuse (were I you).’ The second may be preferable as its irony helps to foreshadow the regret that everyone involved will have for Paris’ faulty judgment. Perhaps, Mercury knows how all of this will end and regrets that there will be a contest, making him just as trapped by fate as the mortals involved, but at the same time, he must also warn Paris not to refuse since it is his job as Jupiter’s messenger.
mens mea convaluit, subitoque audacia venit
nec timui vultu quamque notare meo.

73 The tricolon in the couplet nicely shows the progress from his previous panic to outright audacity, perhaps revealing something about Paris’ lack of propriety around women.

74 Vultu is best taken as an abl. of means for ‘gaze’ (OLD def 3b). Quamque from quique means ‘each of them’ (OLD def 1).

vincere erant omnes dignae iudexque querebar
non omnes causam vincere posse suam. (tenere)

75 Vincere is ind. disc. governed by the deponent querebar. Vincere depends on dignae: ‘all of them were worthy of victory…’. Iudex is an appositive to the 1st person subject.

76 EJ Kenney has emended vincere to tenere on the assumption that the latter has Ovidian usage and that the former seems to be a transcription error from the line above. His argument seems sound. He further notes that the idiom tenere causam regularly means ‘to win a case.’ Paris is pointing out that the three are equally beautiful and that none of them could be chosen on that merit.

sed tamen ex illis iam tunc magis una placebat,
   hanc esse ut scires, unde movetur amor.

77 Ex illis is best taken with una as an abl. with cardinal numbers (Allen & Greenough #346c).

78 The ut is introducing a purpose clause followed by indirect discourse. Paris notes that he found the love goddess most beautiful. While this is an obvious point to the reader who knows the end of the tale, it more importantly should color the reader’s
perception of Paris. If he already found Venus the victor, what does his need to wait for bribery say about his character?

*tantaque vincendi cura est; ingentibus ardent

*iudicium donis sollicitare meum.*

79 *Vincendi* is a gen. gerund, taken with *cura*.

80 *Sollicitare*, an epexigetical inf., is best taken as ‘arouse’ (OLD def 4) although the reader should not miss the undertone of its meaning of ‘disturb’ (OLD def 1) as foreshadowing. Note that the gifts are so large that Ovid has stretched them across two lines and bound them synthetically with his judgment. Michalopoulos notes that Aphrodite must have worn her girdle of beauty during the contest, citing Eustathius, an assertion which is impossible since he judged the goddesses naked according to Oenone (*Her.* 5.35-36) who presumably heard the story from Paris.

*regna Iovis coniunx, virtutem filia iactat;

*ipse potens dubito fortis an esse velim.*

81 Observe the placement of *regna*, stressing the importance of the offer which Juno, wife of Jove, has made. Minerva is Jove’s daughter who offers *virtutem*, which EJ Kenney correctly identifies as ‘martial prowess.’ The irony of course is that *virtutem* is the thing which Paris throughout the *Iliad* will be shown to lack, both as a warrior and in the Roman sense of ‘manliness,’ especially when compared with Menelaus (OLD def 1).

82 Paris notes that he is torn between the two offers, possibly heightening the suspense for the third offer. The subjunctive is governed by *dubito* as the normal syntax for an indirect question, triggered here by *an* (Bennett #300.4). Drinkwater (2003, 147) notes
that by accepting the third gift, love (elegy), Paris essentially blocked himself out of the epic world he attempts to enter.

*dulce Venus risit; ’nec te, Pari, munera tangant
utraque suspensi plena timoris,’ ait;*

83 *Dulce* is best taken adverbially (Bennett #239). *Pari* is voc. for Paris. *Tangant* is prohibitive (Bennett #276). While laughter-loving is a standard epithet of Aphrodite, as Michalopoulos and EJ Kenney point out, they both fail to mention how this line echoes Verg. *Aen*. 4.128, *adnuit atque dolis risit Cytherea repertis*127. In both instances, Venus laughs as she is about to win against Juno.

84 *Suspensi* is from the adj. *suspensus-a-um*, modifying *timoris*, and not from the verb *suspendo*. The notion that the other two offers should cause Paris fear in light of the disastrous results of his final choice should give the reader an ironic pause. The synchysis helps visualize Venus’ connection between the offers and the fear.

*’nos dabimus, quod ames, et pulchrae filia Ledae
ibit in amplexus pulchrior illa tuos.’*

85 *Nos* is a poetic plural. *Pulchrae*, while it could refer to Leda,128 should also be understood as a transferred epithet, for Helen is certainly as beautiful as her mother. *Ames* is a rel. clause of the characteristic (Bennett #283).

86 *Amplexus*, which certainly could just mean ‘embrace,’ does have the specific undertone of ‘sexual embrace,’ (OLD def 1) over which Venus would have domain which may be emphasized by the intertwining synchysis. *Pulchrior* modifies *filia*.

127 “Cytherea (Venus) nodded and laughed at the devised tricks.”
128 See Michalopoulos.
dixit, et ex aequo donis formaque probata \( (probatis) \)

\[ victorem caelo rettulit illa pedem. \]

87 EJ Kenney has Heinisus’ \textit{probatis} as the last word. Ultimately the sense is understood the same either way. \textit{Probatis} would govern both \textit{donis} and \textit{forma} in an abl. abs.; if \textit{probata} is taken, it can be used the same way, but singular by attraction. Palmer and EJ Kenney both note that \textit{ex aequo} is an adverbial phrase, taken as ‘justly.’

88 \textit{Victorem} is the adj. from \textit{victor, (gen.) victoris} agreeing with \textit{pedem}, as a transferred epithet. \textit{Caelo} is a dat. of direction (Bennett #193).

\begin{align*}
\textit{interea, credo, versis ad prospera fatis} & \quad \textit{(sero)} \\
\quad \textit{regius agnoscor per rata signa puer.} \\
\end{align*}

89 \textit{Credo} does not make sense here: as Paris has experienced his own recognition as a son of Priam, he should have no doubt. EJ Kenney’s emendation to the adv. \textit{sero}, ‘at a late hour,’ (OLD def 5) makes much more sense logistically because Paris is not recognized until full adulthood, thus accepting EJ Kenney’s emendation seems reasonable. \textit{Versis fatis} is an abl. abs and \textit{ad prospera} should be taken with it.

90 \textit{Agnoscor} is present in historical narrative, but should be translated in the past tense (Bennett #259.3). EJ Kenney takes \textit{rata signa} to be the rattle used in comedy for the revelation of a mistaken identity, but it could have been anything, even simply the fact that he looks like his parents and is the right age. The reference to the common topos in ancient comedy of children mistaken at birth may be an opportunity for Ovid to suggest that this Paris is less an epic hero and more a comedic caricature. The fact that the revelations in comedy usually end in a girl being found free-born and allowed to marry the youth in the play only strengthens that theory.\footnote{For mistaken identity, Cf. Plaut. \textit{Cas.} 1013-1015 and Plaut. \textit{Circ.} 655-660.}
laeta domus nato per tempora longa receptor est,
addit et ad festos hunc quoque Troia diem.

91 Nato receptor is an abl. abs, which visually demonstrates the length of time through the separation of the words with tempora longa situated in between. Per is somewhat difficult to understand here. It is best taken as ‘over the period of’ (OLD def 6b) which, while not satisfactory, gives a workable sense. EJ Kenney discusses whether or not the est is correct in the manuscripts, but it is elided into receptor and would be understood by ellipses if it were absent.

92 EJ Kenney suggests that the adding of a festival day is an anachronism, which seems reasonable, but it is hard to believe that the Trojans could not have had holy days considering how often they stop war to hold funeral games (e.g. Patroclus) and how often they sacrifice to their gods. Ancient readers would likely also be reminded of the festival scene where after accepting the horse into the city, the Trojans do have a festival, which ends with the slaughter of Troy, increasing the irony in the line (Aen. 2.238-9; 2.248-9).

utque ego te cupio, sic me cupiere puellae;
multarum votum sola tenere potes.

93 The use of the plural puellae here seems odd, even if it is just a poetic plural. We have no indication of women wanting Paris besides Oenone. Paris may just be inflating his options for brides to make himself look even better in Helen’s eyes.

94 See note Her. 5.154-5 for a similar sentiment from Oenone regarding her options.

nec tantum regum natae petiere ducumque,
   sed nymphis etiam curaque amoreque fui.

95 See Her. 5.81 for a similar sentiment from Oenone. Petiere is syncope for petiverunt.
96 *Cura* and *amor*, as a hendiadys, are both predicate nom. *Nymphis* is best taken as a dat. of reference/advantage (Bennett #188). Again, Paris is exaggerating his role, since he was beloved by only one nymph, and the surviving sources suggest no others. Drinkwater (2003, 150) notes that the use of the perfect tense here (fui) is intended to make it clear that the relationship with Oenone is a completed action.

*quam super Oenonen facies mutarer in orbem*

(*quas super Oenones faciem mirabar in orbe*, Michalopoulos) (obelized in EJ Kenny)

*nec Priamo est a te dignior ulla nurus.*

97 EJ Kenney, Palmer, and Michalopoulos all have difficulty with this line which Kenney even calls “hopelessly corrupt.” Michalopoulos accepts Ehwalds’ emendation for the text but does not explain why or give any grammatical help with the line; although his justification of why Paris should mention Oenone at all is well laid out. None of the solutions offered are particularly helpful, but Michalopoulos’ emendation is the most workable, or at least the easiest to translate. Super goes with *quas*, which refers to *nymphis*. Thus the line means “over and above whom I was captivated by the face of Oenone alone;” “and in all of the world there was no daughter–in–law more worthy of Priam, after you (of course).” Diggle (1967) suggests *quam super Oenonen toto mirarer in orbe?*, which he translates as “whom in the whole world should I admire more than Oenone? Next to you there is none more deserving than her to be Priam’s daughter-in-law.” Diggles suggestion is also plausible and perhaps even preferable to Michalopoulos’ emendation.

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130 Michalopoulos notes that “a) Ovid finds this allusive way of picking up on the well-established literary tradition about Paris’ life in Troy before the *Iudicium*. b) Oenone is too important a character to be left out, since she is the writer of *Heroïdes* 5, addressed to Paris. c) Paris suspects that Helen may be aware of his past – as indeed she is (cf. 17.195-8).” (ad loc.)
Cf. Her. 5.83-84 for Oenone’s belief that she is worth to be Priam’s daughter-in-law. *Priamo* is best taken with *dignior*. The prep. *a* here means ‘after,’ as EJ Kenney notes.\(^{131}\)

*sed mihi cunctarum subeunt fastidia, postquam coniugii spes est, Tyndari, facta tui.*

\(^{99}\) *Mihi* is a dat. of reference (Bennett #188). *Subeunt* here must have the sense of something like ‘increases’ (OLD def 9).

\(^{100}\) *Tyndari* is the patronymic in the voc., ‘Daughter of Tyndareus.’ As noted in the opening lines of the poem, Paris seems fixated on status. An elegiac lover, as Paris is about to become with the following lines of endearment, would have used some diminutive in the vocative, as Catullus uses *ocelle* or *mea vita* (Cat. 31, 50; 45,109), but Paris does not. Reminding Helen of her father is also a poor strategy, although Paris may not know it, as it was Tyndareus who gave her to Menelaus in the first place.\(^{132}\)

*te vigilans oculis, animo te nocte videbam, (animi, Bentley) lumina cum placido victa sopore iacent.*

\(^{101}\) *Vigilo* is a loaded word in elegiac poetry meant to evoke the idea of the paraklausithyron, or the ‘lament besides the mistress’ door.’\(^{133}\) EJ Kenney accepts Bentley’s emendation from *animo* to *animi*, but the emendation is not necessary. If *animo* is maintained, use it as an abl. of means with *oculis* to form a hendiadys. If the emendation is accepted, *animi* is obj. gen with *oculis*. Either way, *nocte* is an abl. of time when/at which (Bennett #230). The implication of the line is that Paris saw her in his imagination before his ship ever reached Sparta. This makes the entire sea into a

\(^{131}\) For the relationship between Priam and Helen, see *Il.* 5 where Helen points out the Greeks to Priam and Antenor.

\(^{132}\) For more on Helen’s double paternity, see the introduction to poem 17.

\(^{133}\) For the use of *vigilo*, cf. Prop. 1.9.28, 1.16.40, 2.3.7, 3.15.2, 3.17.16, 3.20.22; Tib. 1.2.78, 1.8.64; Ov. *Am.* 1.9.7; Ov. *Ars. Am.* 1.735, 2.285, 3.413.
metaphorical door outside of which Paris has been locked. As a secondary interpretation, there is a problem of paraklausithyron which Paris is facing within the timeframe of writing the letter; as a guest at Menelaus’ house he cannot see his girl at night and the *vigilans oculis* needs to be understood by supplying ‘during the day.’

102 *Cum* here is ‘when.’

*quid facies praesens, quae nondum visa placebas? (faceres)*

*ardebam, quamvis hic procul ignis erat.*

103 Heinsius emended *facies* to *faceres*, which EJ Kenney and Michalopoulos accept. Palmer rejects it while still noting that the phrase as it stands is awkward. Ultimately, the difference between an imperfect sub. in ind. question (Bennett #300.2) and a future indicative in a direct question is small enough that the meaning comes out the same either way. The sense of the line is that Paris wonders what Helen will do in person since she has done so much in the dreams mentioned above. The antecedent of *quae* is the 2nd pers. singular subject. *Nondum visa* means ‘not yet seen.’

104 Palmer and Kenney both note that *hic* refers to Sparta. For *ignis*, see the note about *flamma* on line 3. Note that the verb of ‘burning’ opens the line with *hic procul* separating it from *ignis*; thus, visually the fire is far off from the source as it is in Paris’ mind.

*nec potui debere mihi spem longius istam,*

*caerulea peterem quin mea vota via.*

105-118 Paris recounts the process of building the ship and setting sail. Mazurek (2006, 63) rightly points out the similarities between this and *Od.* 5.233-62 in which Odysseus builds his raft to depart from Calypso’s island having just rejected her offer for immortality as Paris is similarly rejecting a life with Oenone.

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134 For further defense of the line as it appears in the manuscript, see Rosati (1990).
EJ Kenney notes that only Cicero uses debere with the sense of ‘to withhold.’ Ovid uses it most frequently to mean ‘to owe,’ which is the standard sense of the word. But since Paris is writing a persuasive letter to Helen, there is no reason why he should not use legal language. Ovid is likely a dat. of reference/advantage (Bennett #188). The sense of the line is that Paris could not wait any longer to fulfill his desires. The use of istam here may be serving two purposes. For Paris, it is simply the demonstrative ‘that (of yours)’ (OLD def 1) For the reader, who knows the end of the story, the sense of istam is ‘that damn’ or ‘that despicable’ (OLD def 5).

Quin is often difficult to render in English; here it means ‘but that’ (OLD def 5). Notice that the chiasmus places the vows visually on the blue sea. For via, see note on line 28.

Troia caeduntur Phrygia pineta securi (Troica, EJ Kenney)

quiaque erat aequoreis utilis arbor aquis;

Both Troia (Palmer’s text) and Troica (EJ Kenney, Michalopoulos) are adjectives which mean ‘Trojan,’ although the former can also be the noun form ‘Troy;’ so emendation is not necessary. Michalopoulos prefers Troica on the grounds that it alliterates nicely with caeduntur. EJ Kenney notes the double enallage (transferred epithets) in the line. By sense, Troia should go with securi and Phrygia with pineta. The encroachment of the Trojan weapon against the forest may perhaps be metaphorical for Helen’s usurpment of Oenone’s position as Phrygiis celeberrima silvis (Her. 5.3). The subtle irony that it is Oenone’s own forests that will give rise to her downfall is poignant. Consider also the irony inherent in caeduntur. The sense here must be ‘to cut down’ (OLD def 5) but the verb also means ‘to kill’ (OLD def 3) which is what will happen to the men of Troy as a result of Paris’ actions.

See lines 171 and 290 for more example of Paris’ use of legal language.
Following the argument of the previous line, imagine that one of the trees, that
Ovid surrounds with water, is one of those trees on the riverbank on which Paris had
carved Oenone’s name (Her 5.21-27).

ardua proceris spoliantur Gargara silvis,
innumerasque mihi longa dat Ida trabes.

Ardua implies both ‘steep’ (OLD def 4) and ‘lofty’ (OLD def 1). Proceris silvis is an
abl. of separation governed by spoliantur (Bennett #214b). Palmer notes that Gargara, a
peak of Ida, is famous for its forests, but EJ Kenney points out that Phalacra, a different
peak, is usually the one where Paris gets the timber. Ovid may be trying to remind the
reader of Verg. Georg. 3.267-9, esp. 269, illas ducit amor trans Gargara transque sonantem
Ascanium, as another means of praising Venus. The synchetic golden line here may
serve to show the intertwining of the trees and hills which Paris’s act of stripping is
unweaving.

Longa here is ‘tall,’ not ‘long.’ Note that the countless trees surround Ida.

fundatura citas flectuntur robora naves
texitur et costis panda carina suis.

Take citas…naves as the direct object of fundatura, which modifies robora and here
expresses purpose (Bennett #337.4): ‘the oak beams are bent in order to create the
foundation for the swift ships;’ however, as EJ Kenney points out, since oaks are not
usually used for ships because they do not bend easily, the term was likely chosen for
the secondary connotation of ‘strength’ (OLD def 5). Michalopoulos rightly notes that
the golden line shows the interweaving of the planks of the ship.

136 “Love leads them over Gargara and over roaring Ascanius.”
112 Compare this line to Verg. *Aen. 2.14-15*, *instar montis equum diuina Palladis arte aedificant, sectaque intexunt abiete costas*\(^{137}\). Ovid may be using the building of the ship to get Helen, which effectively starts the war, to foreshadow the fall of Troy via the building of the Trojan horse through the use of similar vocabulary.

\[
\text{addimus antennas et vela sequentia malo}
\]
\[
\quad \text{accipit et pictos puppis adunca deos;}
\]

113 For *malo*, see note 5.53. The alliterative sounds on this and the next line may serve to mimic the sound of hammers driving nails and other repetitive construction noises\(^{138}\).

114 EJ Kenney correctly suggests comparison with Hor. *Carm. 1.14.11-15*, *Quamvis pontica pinus / silvae filia nobilis, / iactes et genus et nomen inutile: / nil pictis timidus navita puppibus / fidit*\(^{139}\). However, he does not mention the allusion’s irony. The first half of the line could easily refer to Oenone, whose status as a nymph is discussed in 5.2 and 5.10, *inter alia*. The second half is an ironic reference to Helen, in whose beauty Paris has placed all of his faith. Michalopoulos notes that the line mimics the design of a ship with images of gods placed on the front and back.

\[
\text{qua tamen ipse vehor, comitata Cupidine parvo (vehor, EJ Kenney)}
\]
\[
\quad \text{sponsor coniugii stat dea picta tui. (ficta, Palmer and EJ Kenney)}
\]

115 The sense comes out the same whether Palmer’s *vehor* or Kenney’s *vehar* is used. The subjunctive seems most reasonable as a rel. clause of the char. with *puppis* above as the antecedent (Bennett #283). Paris has placed the image of Venus and Cupid on the prow of his ship as his attendant gods, providing a nice detail in the description of the

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\(^{137}\) “They built the horse in the likeness of a mountain by the divine art of Pallas, and they wove its sides with fur planks.”

\(^{138}\) For a summary of the specifics of ancient ship design as represented in other Latin works, see EJ Kenney (ad. loc).

\(^{139}\) “Although you are Pontic pine, daughter of a noble forest, you boast your name and clan uselessly: the timid sailor trusts nothing to painted ships.”
ship. Sc. *cum with Cupidine parvo*. Michalopoulos rightly points out the fact that Juno is regularly the goddess with domain over marriage vows. Paris may be unwittingly foreshadowing that this relationship is doomed since it has become the domain of sex and not marriage.

116 *Sponsor* and *dea* are appositives. Palmer emends the text to read *ficta* for *picta*, which EJ Kenney supports on the grounds that it must be a transcription error based on *pictos* on 114. It does not seem necessary on the grounds that 1) Ovid’s use of paronomasia has already been demonstrated in this poem and 2) it does no good for Paris to suggest that Venus is a false goddess, even in the sense of the icon of her on the ship, after he spends so much energy attempting to convince Helen that Venus has ordained their love. Michalopoulos retains *picta* but only because he does not like the sound of *ficta*. If *ficta* is to be retained, it could have the sense of ‘fashioned’ (OLD def 1).

\[\text{imposita est factae postquam manus ultima classi,} \]

\[\text{protinus Aegaeis ire lubebat aquis. (iubebat, Heinsius ; iubemus, EJ Kenney &} \]

Michalopoulos.)

117 *Manus ultima* is the ‘finishing touch,’ as Palmer notes. *Classi factae*, ‘the fleet having (just) been made.’

118 Several suggestions have been offered for the main verb in this line. Ultimately, *lubebat* makes the most sense because it requires nothing to be supplied and makes clear sense with the infinitive *ire*. EJ Kenney rejects *lubebat* on the grounds that it is imperfect, which does not seem sufficient grounds as precise tense assignment is not requisite for poetry. Furthermore, the verb does make sense as an inceptive imperfect (Bennett #260.3).

\[\text{at pater et genetrix inhibent mea vota rogando} \]
propositumque pia voce morantur iter;

119 Pater et genetrix are Priam and Hecuba, but the word choice, particularly the Lucretian and Vergilian genetrix, gives an epic flavor to the lines. More than half of the time it refers to Venus, followed closely by Cybele, who wants the Trojan boats saved from Turnus’ burning. The irony is pointed in Paris’ use of a word so closely associated 1) with his ‘guiding mother’ rather than his birth mother and 2) with a goddess who has such a deep love for the ships of Trojans on which he is about to sail.

120 The suggestion that word choice is meant to echo Vergil is only strengthened by the use of pia, which is Aeneas’ epithet (pius Aeneas, e.g. Aen. 1.220, 1.305, 1.378). Note that the chiasmus on the line visually delays the journey from its proposal by the placement of pia voce in the center, as Michalopoulos notes.

et soror effusis ut erat Cassandra capillis,

cum vellent nostrae iam dare vela rates,

121-124 Cassandra makes her prophecy about the quest.

121 Oenone describes Cassandra similarly in 5.114, sic mihi diffusis vaticinata comis. Ironically Cassandra appears for Paris at the departure and for Oenone at the arrival. Ut erat means ‘as she was,’ since it is her usual appearance which Helen would not know.

122 Michalopoulos takes vellent to mean ‘to be on the verge of,’ but the common meaning of ‘wish’ seems preferable as Paris has managed to transfer his eagerness to set sail from himself to the ships through personification. Dare vela is the standard idiom

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141 See the note there for more about the physical appearance of prophetesses and witches.
for ‘to set sail’ (cf. Aen. 4.546, 8.708, Her. 6.57) which is intensified by iam. The cum–
clause should be taken as temporal (Bennett #288).

‘quo ruis?’ exclamat, ’referes incendia tecum!
quanta per has nescis flamma petatur aquas!’

123 Note that both here and in 5.115 Cassandra chooses to start with a question perhaps
as part of her incomprehensibility curse.

124 As Michalopoulos hints at, but does not state, the beauty of Cassandra’s curse is
reflected in the direct speech. She speaks a truth that is always misunderstood until it is
too late. Here Paris has confused the fire which will destroy Troy with his passionate
fire for Helen. In both instances, however, Cassandra is right: he 1) does not understand
the danger and 2) does not understand how great the fire for Helen will be as he has not
yet seen her. The synchysis on the line shows the interrelation between the voyage and
the destruction of Troy as cause and effect. Petatur is subj. in ind. quest. governed by
nescis (Bennett #300).

vera fuit vates; dictos invenimus ignes
et ferus in molli pectore flagrat amor.

125 EJ Kenney correctly identifies the irony of the line, but only points out that
Cassandra is not to believed until she is proved right, until Troy is engulfed by flames,
although Helen is the source of the fire. The word order dictos invenimus ignes places
Paris and Helen in the center of the conflagration, as Helen will find herself in book 2 of
the Aeneid along with the rest of the Trojans.
Michalopoulos rightly notes the allusion in this line to the opening of Am. 1.1.21-25 where Cupid strikes Ovid in the heart with an arrow of love. Consider also the results of savage love on Apollo in Met. 1.463 et seq. Again, the chiasmus reflects love actually spreading outward from his wounded heart.

\[
\text{portubus egredior ventisque ferentibus usus}
\]
\[
\text{applicor in terras, Oebali nympha, tuas.}
\]

Portubus is an alternate form for the more regular portibus (Bennett #49.3). Usus is used here as the participle and takes objects in the abl., hence ventisque ferentibus. The –que actually joins egredior and applicor. Oebali is a gen. descriptor for Helen based on her grandfather, Oebalus, as Michalopoulos notes. The chiastic framework of the couplet egredior ventis que ferentibus applicor shows the speed of his travels from departure to arrival.

Michalopoulos rightly translates applicor as ‘to put in at.’ Helen is not a nymph, strictly speaking, but she does have divine blood, the daughter of Zeus, making the epithet nearly appropriate (see 17.53-56 for Helen’s lineage). More interesting is that the statement indicates that for Paris, he is effectively trading one nymph (Oenone) for another (Helen). The choice of referring to Helen by the very rare Oebali, the name of her grandfather, again reinforces Paris’ interest in status (see note lines 16.1-2).

\[
\text{excipit hospitio vir me tuus: hoc quoque factum}
\]
\[
\text{non sine consilio numinibusque deum.}
\]

\[142\] “Such was my complaint—when forthwith he loosed his quiver, and chose from it shafts that were made for my undoing. Against his knee he stoutly bent moonshape the sinuous bow, and ‘Singer’ he said, ‘here, thake that will be matter for thy song!’ Ah wretched me! Sure were the arrows that yon boy had…” (Tr. Gould).

\[143\] “And Venus’ son replied: ‘Your bow, Apollo, may vanquish all, but mine shall vanquish you. As every creature yields to power divine, so likewise shall your glory yield to mine.’…And from his quiver’s laden armoury He drew two arrows of opposing power, one shaft that rouses love and one that routs it… This one he lodged in Daphne’s heart; the first he shot to pierce Apollo to the marrow” (Tr. Melville).
129 *Tuus vir* refers to Menelaus, which Michalopoulos correctly states is a contemptuous phrase for a ‘rival lover.’ He also notes that at no point does Paris mention him by name directly, which Oenone does at 5.105, or even by a patronymic such as *minor Atrides*, which Oenone uses at 5.101. Considering how much emphasis Paris places on names and familial status, his choice to omit all of these references regarding Menelaus is pointed since doing so would not benefit his argument and could quite possibly have the opposite effect of arousing love for and fear of her soon to be ex-husband. *Hospitio* is best taken as an abl. of attendant circumstance (Bennett #221). Sc. *est* with *factum*. The use of the litotes, *non sine*, is common in poetry (see table of Rhetorical and Poetic Devices in the appendix).

130 Paris again fails to appreciate the irony of his own words. He surely means for *deum* to refer to Venus and Cupid, whereas in fact Menelaus is obeying Jupiter as the god of *xenia*, the respect due to hosts and guests. Paris’ violation of the rights of *xenia* will ultimately lead to the fate of Paris and the Trojans being decided in an actual assembly of the gods (Hom. *Il. 1*). *Deum* is syncope for *deorum*.

*ille quidem ostendit, quidquid Lacedaemone tota*  
*ostendi dignum conspicuumque fuit;*

131 *Ille* refers to Menelaus. *Lacedaemone tota* is an abl. of pl. where (Bennett #228), meaning ‘in all of Sparta.’

132 Michalopoulos takes the line to refer to riches such as ivory palaces, but EJ Kenney’s note to consider 17.189-192 leads to a different conclusion. It does Paris no good to argue that Sparta is in any way valuable, since his goal is to get Helen to leave with him. Based on Paris’ choice to use *Lacedaemone* rather than other names for Sparta, which as Michalopoulos notes is often used as a quasi-epithet for Helen and is the only time Paris will use it in the letter, Paris is suggesting that she is the only thing worth
seeing in Sparta—a theme he will continue for the next four lines. The passive inf. *ostendi* is governed by *dignum fuit*.

*sed mihi laudatam cupienti cernere formam*  

*lumina nil aliud quo caperentur erat.*

**133-148** Paris flatters Helens beauty by comparing her to the gods and all of the girls in the world.

**133** *Cernere* is a complimentary inf. with *cupienti* (Bennett #328). The synchysis perhaps suggests that Paris is not just interested in seeing the beauty but in being entwined by it.

**134** *Nil aliud* means ‘nothing else.’ *Quo* here is ‘by which,’ governing the rel. clause of the characteristic (Bennett #283). For *lumina* as ‘eyes,’ see note 16.37.

*ut vidi, obstipui praeordiaque intima sensi*  

*attonitus curis intumuisse novis.*

**135** As other commentators have noted, Paris also uses *obstipui* at the appearance of the goddesses at 16.68, suggesting that her beauty is just as shocking as theirs. For another example of the poetic response to seeing the beautiful girl, cf. Cat. śŗ, where Catullus’ entire body goes numb, his ears ring, and his sight dims.

**136** The inf. *intumuisse* is in ind. disc. governed by *sensi*. The sexual pun inherent in the verb needs no explanation.

*his similes vultus, quantum reminiscor, habebat,*  

*venit in arbitrium cum Cytherea meum.*

**137** It is best to translate the pentameter before the hexameter. *Similes* regularly takes a dat. (Bennett #204.3), in this case *his*, referring to Helen’s face, although the poetic plural. *Reminiscor* introduces an Alexandrian footnote where a character indicates that
they are about to be allusive.\footnote{For more on Alexandrian footnotes, see Hinds (1998, 1-5) and the note on lines 5.113-126.} Compare Paris’ note of remembering, which falls in the middle of an accidental curse (see below), to Oenone’s use of the footnote (5.23-24).

138 Through the word order, Venus has come into his judgment. Michalopoulos rightly notes that Paris’ suggestion that Helen is just as beautiful as Venus is a strong compliment, but he fails to note the humor in the words. The hubris attendant in such a statement is frequently the cause of a character’s ruin in myth.\footnote{Cf. the stories of Andromeda and her mother Cassiopeia (Hyginus 64), or Arachne (Met. 6.1-148), where someone’s claim to be better than the gods ultimately leads to a call for their destruction by Thetis and Athena, respectively.} Paris’ flippant flattery may bring a curse upon him.

\textit{si tu venisses pariter certamen in illud,}
\textit{in dubium Veneris palma futura fuit.} \textit{(in dubio, Michalopoulos; Kenney)}

139 \textit{Si} introduces a past contra-factual condition (Bennett #304).

140 \textit{In dubio} and \textit{in dubium} essentially mean the same thing, but since Michalopoulos mentions \textit{in dubio} to be a “favorite of Ovid”, the emendation seems reasonable. Based on the conditional, \textit{futura fuit} should actually be \textit{futura esset}, but the meter forbids as Michalopoulos notes. The \textit{palma} is an anachronism since the custom of giving palm branches to victors well postdates the Trojan War (cf. Michalopoulos), but the anachronism would be readily understood by the modern Roman reader and is therefore appropriate.

\textit{magna quidem de te rumor praeconia fecit,}
\textit{nullaque de facie nescia terra tua est;}

141 Paris’ suggestion that her fame creates rumor is not unjustified as her beauty brought every suitor in Greece to her father’s doors. \textit{Praeconia} as an adj., however, can
mean ‘belonging to an auctioneer’ (OLD def 2). Ovid may be using Paris’ comment to suggest that Helen is a sellable commodity, turning praise into insult.  

142 *Nescia est* is best taken as ‘is ignorant’ (OLD def 1). The chiasmus visually shows how her face has spread from one end of the earth to the other.

> nec tibi par usquam Phrygia nec solis ab ortu
> \> inter formosas altera nomen habet! 

143 EJ Kenney correctly notes that a couplet is missing between these two which would give the finality of ‘from sunrise to sunset’ as well as complete the sense of the pentameter. *Phrygia* is an abl. of pl. where with the customary preposition omitted (Bennett #228).

144 It is possible that the missing lines had a noun which agreed with *formosas*, but as it stands it must be taken as a substantive.

> credis et hoc nobis?—minor est tua gloria vero
> \> famaque de forma paene maligna tua est.

145 *Credo* regularly takes a dative with the meaning ‘to believe’ (OLD def 4). *Hoc*, as EJ Kenney notes, means ‘in this.’ *Vero* can either be taken adverbially, ‘truly’ or as an abl. of comparison ‘than the truth.’ The presence of both the verb of believing and the adverb “in truth”, perhaps indicates that even Paris knows he is laying the flattery on too thick, which could affect the choice to use *paene* in the next line as a way to dampen the praise a little.

146 *Maligna* translates as ‘scanty’ with the sense of ‘insufficient’ (OLD def 2). Paris suggests that Helen’s reputation actually hurts her because it does not come close to how beautiful she actually is in person.

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146 See 17.207 for Helen’s reply to this line.
plus hic invenio, quam quod promiserat illa,

et tua materia gloria victa sua est.

147 *Illa*, here nominative, refers to Venus who promised Helen to Paris.

148 The synchysis shows the closeness of the reputation to the topic through the intertwining. Michalopoulos rightly references *Am*.1.1.1-2, *Arma gravi numero violentaque bella parabam/ edere, materia conveniente modis*\(^\text{147}\), but does not note that the word *materia* may be a reference to the poem (OLD def 7). Essentially, Ovid uses Paris to suggest that Helen’s reputation does not quite surpass the quality of the poem.

*ergo arsit merito, qui noverat omnia, Theseus,*

*et visa es tanto digna rapina viro,*

149-156 Paris discusses Helen’s abduction by Theseus.

149 *Merito* is the adv. here. For the story of Theseus’ abduction of Helen, see Michalopoulos ad.loc. Unlike Menelaus who goes unnamed, Paris mentions Theseus with no reservations, possibly because 1) he is no longer a rival, and 2) his high status is important to Paris. Paris not only gets a beautiful woman; she is so beautiful that the famous Greek hero wanted her before she had even matured. One can examine Paris’ choice to mention this tale in two ways: either Paris believes that she was returned pure and simply attempts to compare himself to the great hero, or Paris thinks she has been intimate with Theseus and suggests, as Oenone does (5.131-132), that one is who has been kidnapped (or perhaps allowed herself to be) before will do it again. The way in which *omnia* is taken essentially decides the interpretation as either ‘charms’ or ‘all of you’ (i.e., intimately). With Paris’ character in the rest of the poem as a guide, it seems reasonable to take it as ‘all of you.’

\(^{147}\) “I was preparing to bring forth arms and violent wars with a serious meter, with the matter suitable for the meter.”
The synchysis here, with the hero and the prize intertwined, perhaps suggests that between the previous lines two arguments, Paris takes the former. Paris’ words reveal more about his thoughts concerning Helen than he intends: Helen is not necessarily a beloved, but more aptly his ‘prey.’

more tuae gentis nitida dum nuda palaestra

ludis et es nudis femina mixta viris.

More is best taken as an abl. of cause (Bennett #219). Nuda agrees with the 2nd. pers. sg. subject of ludis. The palaestra is nitida because of the oil used on athletes. EJ Kenney considers the presence of undressed women in the gymnasium to be anachronistic, but if that is the case, Euripides is guilty of the same charge as Ovid. Spartan women did exercise and train as they were ultimately the second line of defense for Sparta while their husbands were out fighting. At face value, Paris simply notes that Theseus may have been captivated by her naked form and explains how Theseus came to see it; but if Paris’ line is considered alongside the quote from Eur., then Paris also hints that Helen has been intimate with Theseus as an example of Ovid using Paris’ words to mean two things at once.

Notice the chiasmus actually surrounds Helen with the naked men, as Michalopoulos notes. Michalopoulos asserts that ludis which refers to wrestling, also has strong erotic undertones.

quod rapuit, laudo; miror quod reddidit umquam.

tam bona constanter praeda tenenda fuit.

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148 Cf. Eur. Andr. where Peleus says “Spartan girls could not be chaste even if they wanted to. They leave home, and with naked thighs and their dresses loosened, they share running tracks and gymnasiums with the young men.” (Tr. Hadas, 115)

149 On this theme, see Cat. 50, where Catullus’ and Licinius’ writing of poetry together (lusimus in meis tabellis...ludebat numero) can be seen as a parallel to love and lovesickness.
153 Quod, in both instances, is best translated as ‘the fact that’ (OLD def 4). Sc. te with rapuit and reddidit.

154 Paris again (cf. 16.150) reveals his true feelings about Helen, that she is more prey and less beloved. Paris’ remarks are not overly flattering, but consider Helen’s opinion of the event at 17.24: “What was my choice but to say I did not want it”. Regardless of what happened, the reminder that she is valuable enough to be sought by the great hero strokes Helen’s ego.

ante recessisset caput hoc cervice cruenta,
        quam tu de thalamis abstraherere meis.

155 Cervice cruenta, as EJ Kenney notes, is an abl. of separation (Bennett #214). Michalopoulos rightly references a version of Paris’ story where the wish will be fulfilled and his head severed by Ajax; again Paris does not realize the irony of his words which the reader gets to enjoy. Recessisset is subjunctive in a past contra-factual conditional, with the imp. pass. Abstraherere (Bennett #106 & 304). Compare this to his promise to Oenone (5.29-30) Cum Paris Oenone poterit spirare relicta/ Ad fontem Xanthi versa recurret aqua. In both instances, Paris rightly prophesies the future, albeit unintentionally, while professing his love to a woman. Perhaps Cassandra has rubbed off on her brother.

156 Considering the rape terminology of the previous lines, Paris’ choice to use thalamis, ‘the marriage bed’ (OLD def 2) denotes his desire for Helen to understand him differently from Theseus, in that he wants her for a proper wife.

tene manus umquam nostrae dimittere vellent?

        tene meo paterer vivus abire sinu?
As Michalopoulos notes, the use of the enclitic –ne with the subjunctive verbs indicates that the questions are rhetorical. Notice that Paris poetically shifts any blame, even in his hypothetical situation, from himself to his hands, since Paris does not want Helen to consider the possibility of him abandoning her. The line also harks back to his treatment of Oenone on his departure (5.48,51). Notice that Paris uses the same verb in his statement of impossibility which Oenone uses in the actual departure, as well as the image of arms surrounding her (see next line). It is also noteworthy that the verb *dimittere* can mean ‘to divorce,’ (OLD def 3a) as well as ‘send away’ (OLD def 1) Paris, either intentionally or unintentionally, is promising Helen that he will not do to her exactly what he has done to Oenone.

Paris’ question here also echoes his adynaton to Oenone on lines 29-30. Perhaps as accidental foreshadowing of his eventual death, the word order, which has a separation between *meo* and *sinu* has *tene* in reference to Helen actually outside his lap. Consider also that there is a version of the story in which Paris is deprived of Helen and lives to tell the tale. In Herodotus’ telling of the story based on what he heard from Egyptian priests, Paris and Helen shipwreck in Egypt and Paris is forced to return to Troy without her.

*si reddenda fores, alicquid tamen ante tulissem*

*nec Venus ex toto nostra fuisset iners.*

See Bennett (#304.3.b) on translating the subjunctive periphrastic in a conditional, but it is preferable to use the loose translation of “If I’d had to give you back” which makes colloquial sense. Paris is suggesting that unlike Theseus, he would not have returned Helen a virgin. This will be true in that he will not return Helen to Menelaus.

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150 ‘*Ut sunt collo brachia nexe meo... Oscula dimissae quotiens repetita dedisti!*’
151 See note on 16.155
152 See Austin (1994, 120).
untouched. Compare this with Briseis, whom Agamemnon swears he has not touched when returning her to Achilles.\(^{153}\) Paris’ line here is troubling, since it suggests that his interests are purely sexual, which is not conducive to his suggestions of marriage. The only possible way the line makes sense, and weakly at that, is if the pentameter is meant to make it seem like he is a more skilled lover than Theseus so as to excite Helen’s passion.

160 Michalopoulos notes that \textit{iners} has a standard meaning of ‘impotent’ and \textit{Venus} perhaps refers to Paris’ genitals. \textit{Ex toto} translates as ‘totally.’ Mythology gives no support to Paris’ assertion that Theseus is impotent, he is listed as the father of both Hippolytus and Demophoon among others, but the statement gives Paris the status of an even more capable lover if Theseus is impotent by comparison.

\begin{quote}
\textit{vel mihi virginitas esset libata vel illud}
\textit{quod poterat salva virginitate rapi.}
\end{quote}

161 \textit{Libata esset} is best translated as ‘had been tasted’ (OLD def 3). \textit{Illud} should be understood with \textit{libatum esset} which is omitted. \textit{Mihi} is perhaps best taken as a dat. of agent (Bennett #189).

162 The relative clause explains the \textit{illud} in the hexameter. Paris’ statement is purposefully vague. Michalopoulos notes that it could refer to 1) kisses, or 2) something else such as inter-crurial intercourse. He references Seneca the Elder (Contr. 1.2.22)\(^{154}\). If Michalopoulos is correct in the latter, which he seems to lean towards, the line speaks volumes of Paris’ true feelings about Helen as a sexual object. Ideally, the vague statement should work both ways (i.e., that Paris wishes Helen to understand this to mean ‘kisses’ while he is really hoping for at least the other option).

\(^{153}\) See also note on 16.149 and Oenone’s opinion at 5.129-30.

\(^{154}\) “We know, he says, that abstinence of husbands, who even if they have lost the first night to timid virgins, nevertheless, they play in neighboring places.”
da modo te, quae sit Paridis constantia nosces:
flamma rogi flammas finiet una meas.

163 An imperative can be used in place of a standard *si* clause as the protasis of a conditional statement (Bennett #305.2). Paris’ decision to assert himself as steadfast to Helen, while useful in his argument, is laughable as he has already left one wife. There may also be a joke here about Paris’ sexual prowess. *Constantia* can refer to one’s ability to hold an erection (OLD def 1c).

164 The polyptoton brings focus to the fire, which EJ Kenney rightly asserts is a reference to the burning of Troy which Paris will cause. Paris is again giving prophecy unknowingly as the one fire of his love will lead to the many fires of burning Troy which is intensified by his use of *rogi*.

praeposui regnis ego te, quae maxima quondam
pollicita est nobis nupta sororque lovis,

165 *Praeposui* places the object of most importance in the accusative and the thing it is placed before in the dative (Bennett #187.3).\(^{155}\)

166 Jupiter’s sister/wife is Juno. *Nobis* is best taken as a dat. of advantage (Bennett #188).

dumque tuo possem circumdare bracchia collo,
contempta est virtus Pallade dante mihi.

167 *Dum* with the subjunctive introduces a proviso clause (Bennett #310).
Michalopoulos rightly harkens back to Oenone’s description of her embrace at Paris’ departing (5.48), *ut tua sunt collo brachia nesa meo*.

\(^{155}\) See lines 16.79-82 for Paris’ recounting of the bribery.
for the sense of *virtus* and the inherent irony in the line, see note on line 81. *Pallade dante* is best taken as an abl. abs. (Bennett #207.2). taking *mihi* as an ind. obj.

nec piget aut umquam stulte legisse videbor;

permanet in voto mens mea firma suo.

*Piget* needs an understood *me* and *legisse* is complementary with *videbor*: ‘It neither disgusts me nor do I seem at all to have chosen foolishly.’ *Video* in the passive often means ‘seem’ and takes a nom. object (OLD def 20). While his choice may never ‘disgust him,’ Paris will certainly pain from his choice to take Helen when he finds himself shot by Philoctetes’ arrow (Quintus of Smyrna, book 10). Consider what Medea says to Jason at *Her.*12.210: *quo feret ira, sequar! Facti fortasse pigebit—et piget infido consuluisse viro*156.

Michalopoulos rightly points to the chiastic word order which visually places his mind in the middle of his vow.

*spem modo ne nostram fieri patiare caducam,*

*deprecor, o tanto digna labore peti!*

*Patiare* is syncope for *patiaris*, which is governed by the neg. command. The line, which is somewhat awkward, translates as “I only pray that you do not allow our hope to become <caducam>.” The correct translation for *caducam* requires some discussion. At the simplest level, it can mean ‘futile’ or ‘doomed,’ but it can also be used to define an object as ‘property that an heir cannot take/that will be returned to the state’ and finally, as ‘tottering’ or ‘unsteady.’ While Paris is thinking of the first definition, Ovid wants the reader to also consider the more legal definition, as after the war Helen will certainly be

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156 “Where my anger shall bear me, I shall follow it! Perhaps the deed shall pain me—and it pains me to have looked after a faithless man.”
returned to the state as property which an heir, in this case Paris’ brother Deiphobus, cannot keep.

172 Deprecor, as noted by EJ Kenney, means to pray that something does not happen. The O goes with the voc. digna which takes the pass. inf. peti as an epexigetical inf. (see Table of Rhetorical and Poetic Devices in appendix). The combination of tantus and labor echoes Vergil’s Aeneid in two places of note. 1) Sinon’s treacherous speech (2.143-4)\(^{157}\), perhaps one of the best examples of treacherous speech in Latin literature, where Sinon convinces the Trojans to let the horse (and himself) into the city, an action which will ultimately lead to Troy’s destruction. The parallel between Paris and Sinon is worth examining, as both are traitors to their respective hosts who are given hospitality under false pretenses and whose speech ultimately leads to death for others. 2) Helenus’ prophecy to Aeneas (3.368)\(^{158}\), where he tells of the dangers and trials which Aeneas must suffer. Perhaps Ovid is again forcing Paris to prophesy unknowingly since he truly does not understand how great a labor (i.e., the war) Helen is truly worthy of.

\[
\text{non ego coniugium generosae degener opto,}
\]
\[
\text{nec mea, crede mihi, turpiter uxor eris.}
\]

173 Degener here is appositional to the 1st pers. sg. subject. Michalopoulos notes that degener is uncommon in poetry, but should rightly bring Verg. Aen. 2.548-9, “...illi mea tristia facta degeneremque Neoptolemum narrare memento,\(^{159}\) to mind where Neoptolemus uses the adj. to refer to himself. While Paris certainly does not have Neoptolemus’ military abilities, there is common ground between the two. Vergil’s Neoptolmus is cold, calculating, and does not consider consequences, Ovid’s Paris seems to act likewise. Furthermore, it is Neoptolemus who kills old Priam at the sack of Troy...
Troy so referencing him here can only remind the reader of the tragedy to come. 

*Generosae* is an objective gen. (Bennett #200).

174 Paris will be found a liar, as Helen herself will admit her embarrassment at him to Aphrodite in the *Iliad*.

*Pliada, si quaeres, in nostra gente lovenque invenies, medios ut taceamus avos.*

175 *Pliada* is a Greek acc. sg. The parents of Dardanus (the founder of Troy) were Electra (one of the Pliades) and Zeus (OCD). EJ Kenney notes the chiasmus which places *nostra gente* in the middle, which Paris then refers to as *medios avos* in the next line.

176 EJ Kenney notes that *ut taceamus* translates as ‘to say nothing of.’ Paris again returns to the issue of his wellborn status in order to show Helen that she is not marrying beneath herself.

*sceptrata parens Asiae, qua nulla beatior ora est, (regna, EJ Kenney)*

*finibus inmensis vix obeunda, tenet.*

177-198 Paris discusses the great wealth of Troy and the paucity of Greece.

177 Palmer and Michalopoulos read *sceptrata*, while EJ Kenney accepts Bentley’s and Houseman’s emendation to *regna*. Oenone herself uses *sceptrata* (5.86) to refer to the power to rule, and claims that her hands would befit scepters (i.e., ruling power). Therefore, emendation is not only unnecessary but it actually lessens the impact of the line by removing an inter-textual link between the two poems. The *parens* is Priam. Michalopoulos is correct that *beatus* is best taken as ‘rich’ although its usual meaning of
'fortunate' (OLD def 1) adds another level of foreshadowing as the fate of Troy is anything but fortunate.\textsuperscript{160}

178 \textit{Obeunda} should be understood with \textit{sceptra} and, perhaps to increase the irony of the foreshadowing above, it should be translated with \textit{vix} as ‘which will scarcely ever perish.’ EJ Kenney rightly suggests taking \textit{finibus immensis} as an abl. of cause (Bennett #219).

\begin{quote}
\textit{innumerases urbes atque aurea tecta videbis}
\textit{quaeque suos dicas templa decere deos.}
\end{quote}

179-188 Paris stresses the wealth, size, and glory of Troy as a means to increase Helen’s desire to see it. For the great wealth of Troy, see Michalopoulos ad loc. Paris is perhaps transferring his own interest in cities and wealth onto Helen, who would actually be taking a step down (from queen to princess) by marrying Paris. Having grown up as a poor shepherd, Paris himself may still be awestruck at the glory of the kingdoms that he now enjoys. With the numerous sons of Priam, the odds of Paris actually ever becoming king would be extremely small. Paris must be hoping that Helen will not consider this and will simply be blinded by all of the gold.

179 Paris again stresses the wealth of Troy with his reference to its \textit{aurea tecta}.

180 EJ Kenney calls \textit{dicas} a concessive-generic subjunctive, translated as ‘such as you might say.’ The synchysis in the line nicely places Helen in the midst of Troy’s temples and gods.

\begin{quote}
\textit{Ilion adspicies firmataque turribus altis}
\textit{moenia, Phoebeae structa canore lyrae.}
\end{quote}

181 \textit{Ilion} is a Grk. acc. See note on 16.49 for more on this particular use.

\textsuperscript{160} For a discussion on the acceptance of the genitive \textit{Asiae}, see Merchant (1967).
Canore is an abl. of means qualifying the moenia structa. Palmer, EJ Kenney, and Michalopoulous all note that the idea of Apollo using his lyre to build the walls is an Ovidian invention meant to imitate the story of Amphion building the walls of Thebes. EJ Kenney rightly notes that the allusion to the story of Laomedon’s deception of Apollo and Poseidon is ominous. Paris unwittingly reminds the reader of how far back into the Trojan bloodline the practice of lying and deceit goes.

*quid tibi de turba narrem numeroque virorum?*

*Vix populum tellus sustinet illa suum.*

183 EJ Kenney rightly notes the hendiadys of *turba* and *numeroque*.

*Occurrent denso tibi Troades agmine matres*

*nec capient Phrygias atria nostra nurus.*

185 Paris is perhaps foreshadowing again: the Trojan mothers will approach Helen in a ‘dense battle line’ just like the chorus, with Hecuba leading them, in Euripides’ *Trojan Women*, not greeting her, but essentially sending her off, praying for her to die on her voyage back to Greece. The Term *Troades* is unusual. At *Met.* 13.421, 13.481, and 13.534, Ovid uses *Troades* in his telling of the fates of the Trojan women at the end of the war. He uses that form of the word nowhere else in his corpus beyond the three times in that episode. The irony of Paris accidentally referencing the miserable fates of his family in his supposition of a warm welcome for Helen should not be missed. The synchysis visually shows how closely compacted the line of mothers will be.

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161 For the story of Apollo and Poseidon building the walls of Troy and not getting paid, see Michalopoulous ad loc.

162 “When the ship of Menelaus is half way over the sea, may a blazing Aegean thunderbolt… come crashing down into the midst of his fleet… may he never reach the Laconian land and the hearth and home of his fathers; may he never see the city f pitana or the temple of the Bronze gates for he has taken his evil wife who brought shame on Hellas and sorrow and suffering to the streams of Simois.” (Tr. Hadas, 199)
Note that to visually enforce his point; he asserts that the daughters that do not fit in the palace are actually placed outside of it. *Capient* here has the sense of ‘contain’ (OLD def 24).

> o quotiens dices: ‘quam pauper Achaia nostra est!’
>    
>    *una domus quaevis urbis habebit opes.*

187 *Quam,* here, is ‘how’ (OLD def 2).

188 The line makes the most sense if *Troiana* is supplied with *domus* and *Graecae* with *urbis*.

> nec mihi fas fuerit Sparten contemnere vestram:
>    
>    *in qua tu nata es, terra beata mihi est.*

189 Paris realizes that perhaps his last statement was too strong and may be seen as an insult to Helen’s homeland. In order to save face, he uses the next two couplets to explain how he loves Sparta (albeit in a slightly demeaning way) because Helen is Spartan. It is highly ironic that Paris should mention doing what is *nfas* as he is in the midst of breaking the rules of xenia set down by Zeus. *Sparten* is another Grk. acc.

> *parca sed est Sparte, tu cultu divite digna;*
>    
>    ad talem formam non facit iste locus.*

191 Paris is clearly using the adj. *parca* meaning ‘poor’ to state the contrast with Troy and its famed wealth as a means to convince Helen to run away with him, but the reader should also consider the paronomasia with the noun *Parca,* meaning ‘one of the Fates.’ Paris may unknowingly be prophesying the truth again, despite his attempts; the Fates will side with Sparta. Supply *es* with *digna,* which takes an abl. (Bennett #226.2). *Cultu* here works on several levels. As Michalopoulos notes, it can refer to

163 cf. *Ex. Ponto* 4.15.36 for the appearance of *Parca* in the singular.
appearance and dress (as Oenone uses it on 5.66) or to religious worship (i.e., that Helen should be revered as a goddess, which Menelaus is not doing). 164

192 The iste locus is Sparta. As Michalopoulos notes, iste should be taken pejoratively, perhaps as ‘that damn.’ Non facit has the sense of ‘is not appropriate.’ EJ Kenney notes that this use of facio is an Ovidian invention.

\( \text{hanc faciem largis sine fine paratibus uti} \)
\( \text{deliciisque decet luxuriare novis.} \)

193 Uti and luxuriare both depend on decet. Palmer notes that paratibus refers to costly outfits, further intensified by the adj. largis. Sine fine is best translated adjectivally as ‘countless’ and taken with largis paratibus which frames it.

194 The word deliciis belongs squarely in love poetry. Catullus uses it to refer to Lesbia’s sparrow (Cat. 2; 3) in the sense of ‘plaything’ or ‘toy’. Michalopoulos notes that it can also refer to sexual encounters, especially extra-marital, such as those which Paris is offering. This of course contrasts with Paris’ overtures to monogamous marriage since it presents Helen as the puella who must evade her husband to be with the poet. Lastly, deliciae can refer to ‘erotic verse’ or ‘poetry’, which may be a final layer of interpretation which Ovid is adding on. Helen, a character belonging to epic and tragedy, deserves to be in erotic (or perhaps elegiac) poetry, which is exactly where she is in the Heroides. 165

The infinitive luxuriare is used only one other time in Ovid’s confirmed works at Met. 9.267 where it is used to describe a serpent which has just shed its skin. The only other use of the verb in the Heroides provides pointed irony. Penelope (1.54) will note that ‘the fat earth luxuriates with Trojan blood.’ 166

164 For more on the actual cult worship of Helen See Meagher (2002).
165 See introduction to poem 17 for more on this.
166 Luxuriat phrygio sanguine pinguis humus.
cum videas cultus nostra de gente virorum,

qualem Dardanias credis habere nurus?

195 For the negative Roman perception of men who take extreme care in their appearance, see Michalopoulos ad loc. *Virorum* makes the most sense as the obj. of *cultus* despite the separation.

196 *Nurus* is acc. pl. with *Dardanias*. *Qualem* refers back to *cultus* above, asking Helen to consider what types of clothing the women get to wear if the men dress so well. While Paris may be playing up his beauty, and is proud of the care Trojan men give to their appearance, the charge of effeminacy and weakness is often hurled against the Trojans by their enemies.¹⁶⁷ Paris is unwittingly calling himself less than a man, especially from the Roman perspective. See Michalopoulos’ discussion on the previous line for more on the topic of Asiatic effeminacy.

da modo te facilem nec dedignare maritum,
rure Therapnaeo nata puella, Phrygem.

197 *Da* here has the sense of ‘make it that’ (OLD def 25) with an unsupplied *esse*. *Dedignare* is a deponent imperative (Bennett #113).

198 *Puella nata* is voc. going with the imperatives above. As Drinkwater (2003, 172) notes, the decision to refer to her as *puella*, serves to free her from her actual circumstances as *conjunx*. She is not the free young girl that the elegist typically pursues. Helen is a married woman. According to Michalopoulos, Therapnae is a rural spot in Laconia, where Helen was born. He also rightly notes that the word order in the line serves to reinforce Paris’ point: The chiasmus (*maritum…nata puella Phrygem*) suggests that Paris’ world is much broader than Helen’s small rural upbringing. Note

that Paris is somewhat deluded or confused about to his own upbringing as a shepherd on Mt. Ida living under a thatch roof, if Oenone is to be believed. It would of course do Paris no good to remind Helen of his own rural upbringing, and therefore he focuses on Helen’s. Paris may also be a victim of psychological transference, where one focuses all of one’s energy on the fault in others as a means of concealment and ego protection. The word order of the pentameter, with reference to Sparta (Therapnaeo) and Troy (Phrygem) on either side of Helen, presents a scale on which Helen can weigh the two options for her destiny. Paris has wisely placed Troy at the end so that it will be the final conclusion she reaches.

Phryx erat et nostro genitus de sanguine, qui nunc

cum dis potando nectare miscet aquas.

199-204 Paris chooses three examples of famous Trojans who were seduced by gods or goddesses in order to increase Helen’s desire to be with a Trojan. Paris’ reasoning is that if Trojans (particularly those of his bloodline) are attractive enough for the gods, then he must be as well. What he can not realize, but the reader does, is that all three examples end in inappropriate love or in destruction for one of the lovers.

199 Phryx simply means ‘a Trojan.’ This couplet refers to Ganymede, who was snatched up by an eagle and became Zeus’ cupbearer. Paris cannot appreciate that the famous ancestor he boasts of is one of the reasons Juno will hound Aeneas for the entirety of the Aeneid along with his own failure to choose Juno as the most beautiful (Aen. 1.26-28168).

200 Misceo often takes two objects, one acc. and one abl. (Bennett #222a). The gerund potando denotes purpose (Bennett #191).

Phryx erat Aurorae coniunx, tamen abstulit illum

168 “The judgment of Paris and the spurned injury of beauty, and the hated clan, and the honors of stolen Ganymede remain placed in her deep mind.”

180
extremum noctis quae dea finit iter.

201 For Phryx, see line 199. The reference is to Tithonus, the son of Laomedon, who will be given immortality but not eternal youth and will eventually turn into a grasshopper or cicada when Aurora can no longer stand the suffering of his senile babbling (Hesiod, Theogony). Paris again prophesies the bleak future his actions will create as the reader should be compelled to think about Memnon, the son of Aurora and Tithonus, the king of Ethiopia, who will die fighting in the Trojan War by Achilles’ hand (Quintus of Smyrna, book 2).

202 Notice that the chiasmus places the goddess in between the boundaries of her nightly journey which helps to visually demonstrate the distance Dawn must travel each day. Cf. Am.1.13 which is a complaint against Aurora because it is the dawn which causes girls and mistresses to leave their lovers’ beds lest they be caught.

Phryx etiam Anchises, volucrum cui mater Amorum
gaudet in Idaeis concubuisse iugis.

203 For Phryx, see line 199. Anchises is the father of Aeneas, who will be forced to undergo severe labors in order to found a new civilization after Paris’ kidnapping leaves Troy in ruins. In some versions Anchises’ inability to conceal his love affair with Venus results in her leaving him crippled, leading to an ill-omened choice of example (OCD). Cupid, or Amor, is most frequently described as winged, hence volucrum.

204 Paris’ choice to mention that the love of Venus and Anchises took place on Mt. Ida should not escape notice as it is the same place where Paris himself enjoyed the love of Oenone. Note that Ovid places the verb for ‘laying together’ in between the noun and adjective which qualify where the laying takes place. Michalopoulos notes that Venus either rejoices from the pleasure of the sex or from the knowledge that Aeneas will
found the Roman race from this union. However, one should also consider that in the
Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite, she is only laughter-loving before copulating with Anchises:
afterwards she complains that she will forever be scorned by the gods.

\[ \textit{nec, puto, conlatis forma Menelaus et annis} \quad (\textit{armis, EJ Kenney}) \]

\[ \textit{iudice te nobis anteferendus erit}: \]

205 Nec should be taken with anteferendus erit, below. Conlatis goes with forma et annis,
creating an abl. of attendant circumstance, as is iudice te below (Bennett #221). There is
discrepancy in the manuscripts between annis and armis. Michalopoulos gives a sound
defense of annis noting the frequent manuscript confusion between the two words. It is
worth considering, however, the inherent irony in the paronomasia. Paris’ beauty
clearly outstrips Menelaus’ by far, placing him as the victor in that contest, but if the
reader should consider armis, perhaps by a quick reading, they would chuckle at the
reminder of the famous duel between the two men in the Iliad, where Paris is clearly
outmatched by Menelaus’ armis.

206 The passive periphrastic with a future form of sum is best translated as ‘nor will
Menelaus deserve to be preferred to us’ (Bennett #115). Nobis is a dat. with the
compound verb (Bennett #187.3). As Michalopoulos notes, Paris’ decision to create a
hypothetical situation in which Helen has become the judge of a beauty contest between
Menelaus and Paris is somewhat comical since Paris has just judged his own. Paris has
enough bravado and is by Helen’s confession clearly attractive enough that he feels
confident in his win. Helen’s concern with beauty is also clearly being pandered to here.

\[ \textit{non dabimus certe socerum tibi clara fugantem lumina, qui trepidos a dape vertat equos}, \]
207-212 Having just given three couplets to famous examples of glorious Trojans, Paris now strengthens his argument by demonstrating the atrocities of Menelaus’ bloodline in order to reduce Menelaus’ glory in Helen’s eyes.

207 *Dabimus* is either a poetic plural or a reference to all of the Trojans. *Fugo-are,* ‘to drive away,’ should not be confused with *fugio-ere,* ‘to flee.’ Helen’s father-in-law is Atreus, whose murder of his brother’s sons and subsequent feeding of those children to their father, Thyestes, caused the sun to actually turn its course and create darkness during the day. For an excellent telling of this story, see Seneca’s *Thyestes* among other sources. *Clara lumina* is the object of *fugantem,* and refers to the sun.

208 The Sun’s horses are likely *trepidos* because their normal routine has been reversed. The antecedent of *qui* is *clara lumina,* despite the grammatical disagreement because it refers to the masculine *sol.* *Dape* refers to Thyestes feasting on his own children.

*nec Priamo pater est soceri de caede cruentus*

*et qui Myrtoas crimine signat aquas,*

209 The couplet refers to Pelops, Menelaus’ grandfather, who won his wife Hippodamia in a rigged chariot race against Hippodamia’s father, King Oenomaus. He bribed Oenomaus’s charioteer, Myrtilus, to throw the race leading to Oenomaus’ death. Pelops then went back on his promise and threw Myrtilus into the sea which bears his name (Hyginus 84). Paris will use Pelops (who is actually a Trojan) as an example again in 16.266. *Priamo* is a dat. of reference, translated as a gen. (Bennett #188), creating a comparison between Laomedon (Priam’s father) and Pelops. Michalopoulos rightly notes that Paris is not being completely forthright in his comparison. Laomedon is also a cheat, as he defaulted on his promise to pay Apollo and Poseidon for building the walls of Troy (Hygenus 89), although he is not a murderer.
211 Proavo is a dat. of agent, as Palmer and EJ Kenney note. The reference is to Tantalus, Menelaus’ great-grandfather, who is punished in the underworld with insatiable hunger and thirst, worsened by fruit and water that recede from his grasp. He is punished for murdering and cooking up his son, Pelops (see previous couplet), and serving him to the gods in order to test their omniscience. Demeter accidentally ate the flesh and replaced his eaten shoulder with one of ivory when they brought him back to life (OCD).

212 Notice that the word order places the fruit and water an entire line away from Tantalus, the proavo, and that the moisture is actually placed in the middle of the water as it would be in real life.

quid tamen hoc refert, si te tenet ortus ab illis? (couplet bracketed EJ Kenney and Michalopoulos.)

cogitur huic domui Iuppiter esse socer.

213-214 EJ Kenney and Michalopoulos both mark this couplet as spurious citing Reeve (1973), whose brief argument for their elimination rests on two points, both fairly weak: 1) the repetition of te tenet found in the next couplet and 2) the idea that mentioning the villainy of Menelaus’ ancestors does not profit Paris. Reeve misses two important points. 1) The use of the same phrase in two consecutive couplets is part of Ovid’s playfulness and not a weakness of the line, just as the innumerable other instances of anaphora throughout the work help to increase the beauty of the poetry. The repetition here helps to show Paris’ indignation, a common use of anaphora, as Cicero does in
Cat.1.2 (...Consul videt; hic tamen vivit. Vivit? immo vero etiam in senatum venit...)169, especially when paired with alliteration as it is in this couplet and in the Ciceronian example. 2) Anything that might make Helen love Menelaus less is a boon to his cause; therefore, mentioning the ill pedigree of Menelaus followed by the reference to Helen’s own divine birth seems to be a perfectly reasonable tactic. It also sits nicely with the constant motif of status consciousness mentioned previously in this commentary. A further possibility is to understand a tibi rather than a mihi in the line “What does it benefit you that one arisen from those types holds you” through which Paris suggests that Helen can upgrade.

213 Quid refert means ‘why does it matter’ or ‘what does it benefit’ (OLD def 1) Hoc explains the si clause. Illis refers to the criminals of the previous couplets (Atreus, Pelops, and Tantalus).

214 Huic domui is dat. of reference with soccer (Bennett #188). Cogitur means ‘is forced,’ (OLD def 14) which would have likely given the ancient reader a laugh, as Jupiter, king of gods and men, decides fate rather than suffers it. The point, therefore, seems to be that Jupiter should not be associated with such a line of criminals; therefore, he must have been compelled to do so somehow or other.

heu facinus! totis indignus noctibus ille

te tenet amplexu perfruiturque tuo.

215 As Michalopoulos notes, the exclamatory phrase helps to intensify the indignation discussed in the previous couplet.

216 Fruor and its compounds take an abl. object (Bennett #218.1). Perfruitur has a sexual connotation (Adams 1982, 198), especially with tenet and amplexu.

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169 “The consul sees this; nevertheless this man lives.. He lives? On the contrary, he truly comes into the senate...”
at mihi conspiceris posita vix denique mensa,
multaque, quae laedant, hoc quoque tempus habet.

217-258 Paris recounts a dinner in which he can barely hide his love for Helen. As Michalopoulos notes, the scene is anachronistic as women would not be present at an ancient Greek dinner party but would be at a Roman one. The use of the anachronism, however, gives the Roman reader better understanding by placing the situation in their familiar cultural context. One must understand the use of anachronism for the entirety of Paris’ recounting of the dinner scene. Note also that in the Odyssey Menelaus greets Telemachus as does Helen who recognizes him as Odysseus’ son (Od. Bk.4). So Helen may have enjoyed more freedom than a woman in 5th century Athens. Spartan women in general also had more freedom than their Athenian counterparts. Consider also that this scene comes after Paris has just finished discussing Thyestes’ awful feast. Paris may not be able to see the irony that the reader should. This feast leads to something far bloodier than Thyestes’ crimes. Rimell (2006, 168-170) compares the dinner scene with Thyestes’ scene in great depth, starting with line 228.¹⁷⁰

217 Posita mensa, an abl. abs., idiomatically translates to ‘when dinner is served.’

218 Michalopoulos suggests that quae introduces a relative purpose clause, but the line makes more sense if one takes it as a rel. clause of characteristic (Bennett #283) with causal force.

¹⁷⁰ in which the heavy food seemed to ‘grow’ in Paris’ ‘unwilling mouth’ (228), hints for a second at the moment Thyestes realizes what he has eaten and begins to gag on the mouthful he is now unable to swallow. It is as if Atreus (or now, his son) had just revealed Thyestes’ self-inflicted nefas. Paris groans (saepe dedi gemitus 229), and attempts, Oedipus-like, to look away (233)... and we have a rival scene of Ovidian voyeurism in which our ‘victim’ (and his giggling accomplice and tease, Helen) revels in his own pain, or in this case pleasure-pain... Through the lens of Thyestes’ feast, the roles of Paris and Menelaus (winner and loser, conquering hero and doomed, feminized cuckold) start to blur into one another.
hostibus eveniant convivia talia nostris,

experior posito qualia saepe mero.

219 The subjunctive, as Michalopoulos and EJ Kenney note, introduces a curse or at least a strong desire. One should not miss the paronomasia between hostis and hospes. Paris wishes his pain on his enemy, who in this particular instance is also his host and cause of grief, Menelaus. Remember that very soon Menelaus will feel a very similar grief from a guest (also the Latin word hospes) when Paris takes Helen from him. Compare this with Oenone’s wish that Helen should suffer the same fate as she has at 5.75.171

220 Merum for vinum (OLD def 1). For the abl. abs., see previous couplet.

paenit et hospitii, cum me spectante lacertos

imponit collo rusticus iste tuo.

221 Paenitet, an impersonal verb, takes a gen. (Bennett #209); thus “This hospitality pains (me)” or more loosely, “being a guest pains me.” Me spectante is a circumstantial abl. (Bennett #221).

222 The irony of Paris calling Menelaus a rustic should not be missed, as it was Paris himself who was raised on the side of a mountain herding sheep,172 while Menelaus was actually raised in his royal house. Likewise, Paris will accuse Helen of being rustic on line 288. It seems that Paris frequently projects his own shortcomings onto other people. Compare this line with Hor. Carm. 1.13, Cum tu, Lydia, Telephi/ ceruicem roseam, cerea Telephi/ laudas bracchia, uae, meum/ ferus difficile bile tumet iecur.173 and Cat. 51 (and the Sappho poem it was based on), …qui sedens aduersus identidem te/ spectat et audit/ dulce

171 For the use of correlatives such as talis…qualis, see Allen & Greenough (2001, 151-152).
172 See introduction to poem 16.
173 “When you, Lydia, praise the rosy neck of Telephus, the smooth arms of Telephus, Alas! My liver swells with difficult bile.”
ridentem, misero quod omnis/ eripit sensus mihi: nam simul te,/ Lesbia, aspexi, nihil est super mi/lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus/flamma demanat, sonitu suopte/tintinant aures gemina, teguntur/ lumina nocte. In all three instances, a lover suffers while watching a rival enjoy the presence and/or touch of the girl. Notice also that the word order reflects the event: Paris (me) is placed in a circumstantial abl. (Bennett #221) offset from the sentence, with Menelaus’ (rusticus) arms surrounding Helen in a chiasmus. Iste, as is frequently so in the Her., should be taken in the most pejorative sense possible, perhaps ‘that damn.’

rumpor et invideo—quidni tamen omnia narrem? (quianam non omnia narro, Kenney) membra superiecta cum tua veste foveī.

223-236 This line is corrupt in the manuscript and like other places noted, there is no good choice of emendation. As Diggle (1967) points out, quidni is not an Ovidian usage. His suggestion of replacing …ni tamen with quidnam vetat deserves consideration. Either way, Paris recounts his horror and pain at watching Helen and Menelaus embrace. He asks rhetorically on line 223 why he should even discuss this pain at all. To answer the question, Paris pointedly shows his pain to make himself look more like a jealous lover to Helen. Paris is in the process of turning into an elegiac lover and these lines are a prime example of elegiac behavior, with a man pining over a girl he can see but cannot have. It is clearly not epic behavior, which the audience knows is Menelaus’ domain. Therefore, Paris must therefore try a different tactic to gain his girl.

223 EJ Kenney and Michalopoulos suggest ab invidia, which works but loses the force of the hendiadys which shows the relationship between his jealousy and being broken by

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174 “…Who sitting opposite you, again and again, sees and hears you laughing sweetly, which snatches all senses from miserable me: for as soon as I beheld you, O Lesbia, nothing is left of me but the tongue lies numb, a thin flame runs under the limbs, ears ring with their own sound, the twin eyes are covered by darkness.”

175 See note line 205.
placing them in the same verbal form. EJ Kenney’s emendation of the second half of the line should be rejected, since as Michalopoulos notes, the subjunctive better demonstrates the internal struggle Paris pretends to have about whether or not to tell Helen more about his feelings as he could have simply not put down the lines or erased them. Cf. two poems of Catullus, 85, Odi et amo. Quare id faciam, fortasse requires/Nescio, sed fieri sentio et excrucior\textsuperscript{176} and 11.17 et seq., cum suis vivat valeat moechis/quos simul complexa tenet trecentos/ nullum amans vere, sed identidem omnium/ ilia rumpens\textsuperscript{177}. One should not ignore the sexual sense of rumpor.

\textbf{224} Visually, a chiasmus would make more sense (placing her in the midst of her robe), but as Michalopoulos points out, Paris is too enraged to fully compose his thoughts, hence the synchysis which has Helen’s body and the robe all jumbled up. The \textit{membra} are Helen’s, but the \textit{veste} is Menelaus: “when he warms your limbs with his mantle thrown over the top (of them).”

\textit{oscula cum vero coram non dura dareis,}
\textit{ante oculos posui pocula sumpta meos;}

\textbf{225} The alliteration and assonance (‘r’ and ‘o’ sounds) help show Paris’ anger and difficulties in getting out the words describing seeing them kiss. \textit{Non dura} is litotes for \textit{mollia}. The use of the second-person verb, as Michalopoulos points out, serves to show that Helen is now an active participant, perhaps to make Paris jealous. One should take \textit{Coram} to mean ‘right in front of me’ (OLD def 2). The unanswered question is why Menelaus and Helen are behaving this way in front of a guest. Either Menelaus is so egotistical that he feels the need to share with everyone how wonderful his wife is or

\textsuperscript{176} “I love you and I hate you. Why do I do it, perhaps you ask? I do not know but I feel it happen and I am tortured”.

\textsuperscript{177} “…May she live and be well with her lovers whom three-hundred at a time she holds having embraced them, loving none of them truly but again and again smashing the loins of all.”
perhaps Paris is so wrapped up in his story that he has made a simple greeting between spouses into something much larger.

226 The use of *pocula* reminds the reader that we are discussing events which happen to Paris at meals, which would be the legitimate excuse for Paris to see Helen.

*lumina demitto cum te tenet artius ille,

crescit et invito lentus in ore cibus.*

227 *Artius* is the comp. adv. ‘more tightly.’ Paris has moved from placing the cups in front of his eyes to looking down altogether. Paris is so jealous that he must avert his eyes, perhaps like the sun previously mentioned which averted its course to avoid seeing Thyestes’ dreadful banquet. Consider that the next time that readers will see Menelaus and Helen dine together will be at the wedding feast for Neoptolemus and Hermione in the Telemachia of the *Odyssey.* It seems that none of their banquets are well fated. Furthermore, consider Helen’s reputation for magic such as when she adds medicine to the wine that reduces Telemachus’ pain in the *Odyssey* (bk. 4). Is Ovid referring to her famous abilities? Is she using magic on Paris? Or is Helen simply that bewitching on her own?178

228 *Lentus*, here used adverbially, means ‘clinging’ or ‘viscous’ (OLD def 2) rather than ‘slowly.’ Paris can no longer eat his dinner due to how upset he is over seeing the kissing.

*saepe dedi gemitus et te, lasciva, notavi

in gemitu risum non tenuisse meo;*

229 Paris concretely makes his accusation that Helen has been flirting with her husband specifically to make Paris jealous. Helen, despite her high epic grandeur, is quite nicely

178 See Austin (1994, 76) for more on Helen as the healer.
playing the part of the elegiac *puella*, increasing the love of the *amator* through jealousy and torture.\(^{179}\) As in all relationships, there are two sides to this story and that both of them are true. Helen does enjoy making Paris jealous and Paris makes himself an easy target by acting as an elegiac lover.

230 The line, along with *te* above, is in indirect discourse governed by *notavi*.

\[\textit{saepe mero volui flammam compescere, at illa crevit, et ebrietas ignis in igne fuit.}\]

231 For a discussion of wine increasing and decreasing love, see Michalopoulos ad loc. *Mero* is an abl. of means, again referring to *mero vino*.

232 Paris’ jealousy increases his love, which is of course Helen’s intent. The use of fire imagery to represent love is not uncommon but for Paris is especially ironic. He is, after all, the firebrand that will destroy Troy, so it is not surprising that he cannot extinguish his flames.

\[\textit{multaque ne videam, versa cervice recumbo; sed revocas oculos protinus ipsa meos.}\]

233 *Ne Videam*, a negative purpose clause (Bennett #282), should be translated as ‘so that I do not see;’ *versa cervice* is a circumstantial abl. qualifying *recumbo* (Bennett #221). The Romans dined on couches leaning on one side so that if they turned away they did so while reclining.

234 Paris tries to look away from the horror of the lovers’ embraces, but Helen recalls him. Compare this scene with the story of Thyestes which Paris tells in lines 203-4. The use of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} pers. *revocas* helps to remind the reader that this is a letter, a fact which it is often possible to forget in the *Heroides*. It is difficult to tell how much of this is Helen’s

\(^{179}\) See *Her*. 17.77 et seq. for Helen’s version of the events.
actual behavior and how much of it is Paris recalling the events in an attempt to shift the blame onto Helen.

*quid faciam, dubito: dolor est meas illa videre,*

*sed dolor a facie maior abesse tua.*

235 *Videre* is epexigetical infinitive following *dolor est.*

236 Sc. *est* with *dolor* on this line which uses the same syntax as the line above. The anaphora serves to intensify and highlight the emotion Paris wishes to stress. Paris nicely transitions from his grief during the dinner to his grief while writing. Compare this couplet with Catullus’ two line epigram (84), *Odi et amo. quare id faciam, fortasse requiris. nescio, sed fieri sentio et excrucior.* In both instances, both the presence and absence of the lover tortures the man.

*qua licet et possum, luctor celare furorem,*

*sed tamen apparat dissimulatus amor.*

237 *Qua licet* is translated as ‘where it is permitted’ (OLD def 1). Madness, here for love, is listed as one of Love’s attendants in the *Ars Amatoria* (1.2.35). Consider that *luctando* is the word that Oenone uses (5.141) to describe how Apollo gained her love.

238 The juxtaposition of *apparet* and *dissimulatus* helps to show the difficulty Paris has in hiding his feelings. Reading across the line creates a type of hysteron-proteron where the love appears before Paris can hide it.

*nec tibi verba damus: sentis mea vulnera, sentis;*

*atque utinam soli sint ea nota tibi!*

180 “I hate and I love. Why do I do it, perhaps you ask? I do not know but I feel it happen and I am tortured.” See note on 16.223

181 See 17.161 for Helen’s reply to this statement.
The first half of the line represents a subtle use of irony on Ovid’s part; Paris is of course giving words as he has written 376 lines worth of them to Helen in this epistle. The idiom *verba dare* means ‘to play a trick’ or ‘to deceive’ (OLD def 6). The fact that Paris thinks he needs to convince Helen that he is not lying should perhaps worry Helen more than anything else. The anaphora on the line helps to stress Paris’ point that Helen knows exactly what she is doing to him and enjoys it. The wounds are those of love resulting from Cupid’s arrows.

*Soli is dat. sg. fem., agreeing with tibi. Utinam regularly introduces an optative subj.
See note on 17.185 for more on utinam. Michalopoulos takes the line to mean that Paris fears that Menelaus also knows about his love, which would be a reasonable interpretation except for the fact that it infers Menelaus left his wife alone with a man he knows wants to steal her. However, it is possible to some extent see a wish on Paris’ part that Paris himself did not know of the love and therefore did not feel the wounds of love which he has just mentioned.

*A! quotiens lacrimis venientibus ora reflexi,
ne causam fletus quaereret ille mei;*

*Ille refers to Menelaus whose name is still distasteful to Paris. Ne introduces a neg. purpose clause (Bennett #282). Notice that the tears surround Menelaus as if he were actually the source. Consider also the famous scene in the *Odyssey* (bk.8) where Odysseus cries at Demodicus’ telling of the story of the fall of Troy, but is hesitant to reveal his true reasons.*
A! quotiens aliquem narravi potus amorem,
   ad vultus referens singula verba tuos,

243 Protus qualifies the first pers. subject. Perhaps Paris only has the strength to talk about other loves in front of Helen when drunk. The next couplet, however, suggests that he is not talking about his former loves, but of the love of other people who represent him.

244 Singula verba either means ‘words one at a time’ (OLD def 2) or ‘every word’ (OLD def 1). The former seems preferable in that drunken Paris can barely get out the story; hence the words coming one by one. Paris is also speaking directly to Helen which would be completely inappropriate in Greek society as Michalopoulos points out. Helen’s mere presence would be completely inappropriate at a symposium; therefore, this scene can be added to the other anachronisms of the epistle. While being anachronistic may not gain Ovid any points for realism, it allows him to present the information so that his Roman audience can understand the emotions and situation. Diggle (1967, 140) suggests replacing the line with ad vulnus referens singular verba meum. While emendation does not seem necessary, the paronomasia between vultus and vulnus is worth considering as Helen’s face is the cause of Paris’ pain.

indiciumque mei ficto sub nomine feci!
   ille ego, si nescis, verus amator eram.

245 EJ Kenney translates the line as “I gave myself away,” but Paris does it using other people’s names. He also notes that mei is an objective gen. (Bennett #200).

246 Si nescis as Michalopoulos notes is idiomatic for ‘so you can be sure.’ Paris is confessing that despite his use of other people’s names, it is he that was the lover in his tales. Telling stories of love to pass the time seems a reasonable dinnertime conversation.
while everyone is drunk. Paris’ benefit for having told them under an assumed name is that he could inspire jealousy in Helen knowing that he would reveal himself as the perpetrator in this letter without alerting Menelaus.

*quin etiam ut possem verbis petulantius uti,
non semel ebrietas est simulata mihi.*

247 *Utor* takes an abl. object as *verbis* here (Bennett #218). The adverb *petulantius* has the sense of ‘more wantonly’ (OLD def 1c).

248 *Non semel* is litotes for *saepe*. Paris suggests that he was not actually drunk when he told the stories and flirted with Helen, but rather that he merely pretended to be drunk. As EJ Kenney notes, Paris is following Ovid’s advice in *Ars. Am.* 1.597-600, that a lover should pretend drunkenness to blame any wrongdoing on the wine.

*Prodita sunt, memini, tunica tua pectora laxa
atque oculis aditum nuda dedere meis,*

249 Notice that the word order reflects the situation as the abl. abs., *tunica laxa*, actually surrounds Helen’s now exposed breasts.

250 *Nuda*, as the pl. nom. substantive, refers back to Helen’s breasts.

*pectora vel puris nivibus vel lacte tuamque (tuamve, Michalopoulos)
complexo matrem candidiora Iove;*

251 The couplet qualifies the one before it. Michalopoulos rightly notes that the repetition of *pectora* emphasizes Paris’ interest in them. Snow and milk are fairly common descriptors of whiteness, even into modernity, hence Snow White who was so named for her pale skin. Michalopoulos reads *tuamve* in place of *tuamque*. The emendation does not seem necessary and he gives no reason for it.
The word order, as Michalopoulos notes, visually reinforces the reality of the situation, as Jupiter and the modifying participle are actually surrounding Leda. While the maiden is typically the milky-white one in these stories, Jupiter has taken the form of a white swan.

*dum stupeo visis — nam pocula forte tenebam, —
*tortilis a digitis excidit ansa meis.*

252 *Visis* is an ablative of means, ‘by the sights,’ referring to Helen’s exposed breasts. The aside reminds the reader again that Paris is recounting actual happenings and shifts the reader back to the knowledge that this is a letter.

253 Paris drops his cup from his distraction. Helen was there for the event, but Paris is not telling the story to inform her of what happened, but to inform her that her beauty caused it. The entire anecdote is Paris’ flattering confession of how much Helen arouses him. As EJ Kenney notes, the scene foreshadows the scene in previous literature (Ar. *Lys.* 155-6, and Eur. *Andr.* 627-31) where Menelaus is about to kill Helen but drops his sword when he sees her naked breasts. Consider also that Helen may have anticipated the reaction and let her tunic slip on purpose. Meagher (2002, 49) notes that there are several ancient vases that contain images of men dropping their swords at the sight of Helen’s nakedness.

*oscula si natae dederas, ego protinus illa
Hermiones tenero laetus ab ore tuli.*

254 This scene echoes the response of Dido to Cupid in *Aen.* 1.710 et seq. where she takes young Cupid disguised as Ascanius by Venus’ order and kisses him on her lap while he secretly pierces her heart with a love arrow. If this couplet is examined in light of the scene in the *Aeneid*, then Paris’ response should mimic Dido’s; thus he causes
himself to fall even more in love with Helen. A secondary interpretation is that Paris was simply unable to control his drunken flirtation with Hermione and must now come up with an excuse for himself. Being Helen’s daughter, one must infer that Hermione is also extremely beautiful.

256 Hermione is a Grk. gen. (Bennett #22). Hermione is the child of Menelaus and Helen whom Helen abandoned when she ran off with Paris. Hermione’s own love life is also unfortunate because she will be betrothed her cousin Orestes (Agamemnon’s son), but the betrothal will be severed in favor of Achilles’ son Neoptolemus.182

et modo cantabam veteres resupinus amores (veterum, Michalopoulos.)

et modo per nutum signa tegenda dabam;

257 As EJ Kenney notes, this scene recalls Hom. Il. 3.53-5 where Hector suggests that Paris’ musical and amorous skills will be of no use to him were he to face Menelaus. It is ironic that they are more than adequate in the battle of love.183 Michalopoulos cites Hall’s suggestion of emendation from veteres to veterum. Whether to emend or not depends on the interpretation of which action makes the most sense for Paris. If he is simply telling stories of old lovers (as Ovid does in his 21 epistles) to pass the time, then veterum makes perfect sense. If, however, Paris is telling stories of his former loves (real or imagined) to make Helen jealous as her flirtation with Menelaus has done to Paris, then veteres should stand. Considering Paris’ ego throughout the poem, veteres seems preferable. Paris is resupinus because he is at a dining table. The Romans ate leaning on their sides.

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183 See note on lines 205-6.
258 See Spentzou (2003, 152) for an excellent discussion of the signs which lovers can give each other without speaking, as Michalopoulos also notes. The signs need to be hidden so that Menelaus does not catch on to their flirtation.

et comitum primas, Clymenen Aethramque, tuarum (at, Kenney; Michalopoulos)

ausus sum blandis nuper adire sonis,

259 In the Iliad, Clymene and Aethra are Helen’s attendants. Aethra is Theseus’ mother captured during Helen’s recovery from him. Ovid’s choice to mention her specifically reminds the reader of the discussion Paris already had about Helen’s capture by Theseus. The mention of the two women together also reminds readers of the scene at the wall where Helen points out the Greek warriors to Priam during Paris’ and Menelaus’ famous duel (Il. bk. 3). Kenney and Michalopoulos read at in place of et. The difference between the two is minor, but ‘yet’ does seem to make more sense following the previous clause than another ‘and’.

260 As Michalopoulos and EJ Kenney both note, the use of maids as a means to approach a woman is a common topos in literature. For the treachery of such maids, consider the handmaidens in the Odyssey who are in league with the Suitors.

quae mihi non aliud, quam formidare, locutae (quae se…Michalopoulos.)

orantis medias deseruere preces.

261 Non aliud is the object of locutae (i.e., “who said to me nothing other than that they were afraid…”). Michalopoulos suggests replacing mihi with se, which is already understood through the ellipses. Mihi however reinforces Paris’ self-importance.

184 See Ov. Am. 1.11 for another example of this trope.
262 Deseruere is syncopated 3rd. pl. perf. and is perhaps best translated as ‘ceased to be concerned with’ (OLD def 3). As Michalopoulos notes, the placement of deseruere in the middle of medias preces visually reinforces the disruption of his entreaties.

\[ \textit{di facerent, pretium magni certaminis esses,} \]
\[ \textit{teque suo posset victor habere toro:} \]

263-268 Paris states that he would be willing to fight for Helen like a mythological hero such as Hippomenes or Hercules.\(^{185}\)

263 Sc. \textit{ut} after facerent. The use of the imperfect subjunctive demonstrates a wish that cannot be fulfilled, similar to a contra-factual present condition (Bennett #304 & 279.2). Paris wishes that he could win her in some sort of contest like the other heroes. As Michalopoulos and EJ Kenney both note, the line is purposefully ironic on several levels: 1) Helen was the prize in a contest in which Paris judged rather than participated; 2) Helen is the prize in the unfulfilled contest between Menelaus and Paris in the \textit{Iliad}; 3) Menelaus’ ancestor Pelops won his wife Hippodamia in a chariot race in which he cheated\(^{186}\). 4) Penelope, who is always portrayed as the moral opposite of Helen, used a contest to reclaim her own husband by ordering the bow to be strung (\textit{Od.} Bk.19-21).

264 This line perhaps doubles the irony of the previous since after Paris is rescued from the duel with Menelaus in the \textit{Iliad}, Hector finds him lying in his bed with Helen as if he were a victor claiming his spoils (\textit{Il. 6}). The word order on the line highlights the irony with \textit{te} (Helen) outside of the bed and \textit{victor} (Paris) inside of it.

\[ \textit{ut tulit Hippomenes Schoeneida praemia cursus,} \]
\[ \textit{venit ut in Phrygios Hippodamia sinus,} \]

\(^{185}\)See lines 203 et seq. for more on Paris’ opinions on Menelaus’ family tree.

\(^{186}\)For the heroic trope of Heroes fighting monsters, see Raglan (2003) and the introduction to poem 16.
265 Atalanta is the *Schoeneida praemia* based on the patronymic from her father, Schoeneus as Michalopoulos notes. Both of these races were won by cheating. Hippomenes had the golden apples and Pelops bribed Myrtilus, the charioteer of Oenomaus. The praise of dishonor without realizing it is in line with Paris’ character in the rest of the poem. As Michalopoulos points out, both Hippomenes and Hippodamia below have names that reference horses, which foreshadow the fall of Troy, known as the land of fast horses.

266 While *Phrygios* refers to Pelops, the irony is that the most notable Phrygian in this work is Paris. His carefully chosen words allow Helen to visualize him as a daring chariot racer—possibly more foreshadowing. It is impossible to consider chariots and the *Iliad* without remembering the fate of Hector, the last good son of Priam, having been drug around the walls of Troy on Achilles’ chariot (ll. 23).

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267 *Alcides* is a patronymic for Hercules based on his mortal step-father, Amphitruo’s lineage (Hyginus 29). Hercules defeated Acheulous to gain Deianira’s hand in marriage. Acheulous was a shapeshifter who was eventually defeated when he turned into a bull and Hercules broke his horn off (Hyginus 31). While both EJ Kenney and Michalopoulos note the story, neither looks at the significance of the reference in terms of irony and foreshadowing. Deianira is the cause of Hercules’ death when she applies poison to his cloak (*Her.* 9). Paris will get his wish: Helen will be his Deianira.

268 Notice again the word order has Deianira within the embraces. *Deianira* here is a vocative.

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*ut ferus Alcides Acheoia cornua fregit,*

dum petit amplexus, Deianira, tuos:

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268 Notice again the word order has Deianira within the embraces. *Deianira* here is a vocative.

*nostra per has leges audacia fortiter isset,*
teque mei scires esse laboris opus.

269 *Leges* here refers to the ordeals of the previous couplets as Palmer suggests but consider that it may also refer to the laws of xenia that Paris violates. *Nostra* is a poetic plural.

270 The use of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} person here is awkward but the sense is clear. Paris suggests that if Helen were the prize (which she is) that he would have gladly undergone the trouble Hercules went through to get Deianira.

\begin{quote}
\textit{nunc mihi nil superest, nisi te, formosa, precari
amplectique tuos, si patiare, pedes.}
\end{quote}

271 The couplet shows a standard entreaty where the supplicant grabs the knees or feet of the one being begged.\textsuperscript{187} Paris realizes that hypothetical and mythological references lack force and so returns to his strong suit, elegiac flattery.

272 The infinitives are predicate nominatives in conjunction with the \textit{–est} in \textit{superest}. \textit{Patiare} is the alternate 2\textsuperscript{nd} pers. sg. pres subjunctive. The clause should be taken as part of Paris’ entreaty “if you’ll even allow me that.”

\begin{quote}
\textit{o decus, o praesens geminorum gloria fratrum,}
\textit{o love digna viro, ni love nata fores,}
\end{quote}

273 To flatter her, Paris will praise Helen’s divine relatives: The Disocuri (her brothers), and Zeus (her father). In Eur. *Helen*, Helen will find that her brothers have killed themselves out of shame regarding their sister. Paris’ cannot know this, but the irony is wonderful.

\textsuperscript{187} See Thetis and Zeus in book 1 of the *Iliad* for another example of this.
274 *love viro* is an abl. of specification governed by *digna* (Bennett #226.2). Paris stops himself short in the couplet when he realizes he has suggested that Helen is worthy to sleep with or marry her own father. *Fores* is an alternative form for *esses* (Bennett #100).

*aue ego Sigeos repetam te coniuge portus
  aue hic Taenaria contegar exul humo!*

275 For the adj. *Sigeus-a-um* see note line 21. *Te coniuge* is an abl. absolute (Bennett #227.2). Paris gives the ultimatum that there are only two possible outcomes of his mission: either he will return with Helen or die in Sparta. Consider the famous advice given by Spartan women to their husbands and sons: “Return either with your shield or on it” (Plutarch, *Moralia*, 241).

276 *Taenarius-a-um* is an elevated poetic form for Spartan.188 *Humo*, which is fem., is an abl. of place where (Wheelock, 262). As Michalopoulos notes, the word order in both lines helps to reinforce the imagery. Paris, the exile, is visually placed inside of the Taenarian earth where he would be buried. Above, Helen is placed inside the Trojan ports.

*non mea sunt summa leviter destricta sagitta
  pectora; descendit vulnus ad ossa meum.*

277 Through the enjambment, the *summa sagitta* is placed inside of Paris’ *pectora*.189 The alliteration of ‘s’ sounds helps to mimic the sound of shooting arrows.

278 Paris’ wounds are completely fabricated as a means of flattery, since he has not been struck by Cupid as Medea (*Argonautika* bk. 3), Dido (*Aen.* 1.720 et seq.), and Apollo (*Met.* 1.461 et seq.) were. Paris is prophesying his own fate: the wound from the poison

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188 See note on line 16.30 for more on Taenaris.
189 For a full discussion of the wounds of love in poetry, see Michalopoulos ad loc.
arrow which kills him will go deep into his bones (Quintus of Smyrna, book 10). The mention of Cassandra in the next couplet helps to highlight the irony.

*hoc mihi, nam repeto, fore ut a caeleste sagitta*  
*figar, erat verax vaticinata soror.*

279 *Hoc* is best taken as the direct object of *vaticinata erat* below. *Repeto* is best translated as ‘I recall’ (OLD def 6) which may introduce an Alexandrian footnote to a source we no longer have.

280 For Cassandra’s full prophecy to her brother (or at least to Oenone) see 5.113 et seq. As Michalopoulos notes, Paris has misunderstood Cassandra’s prophecy which is unsurprising since they are cursed with being unintelligible.

*Parce datum fatis, Helene, contennere amorem!*  
*Si Habeas faciles in tua vota deos!*

281 *Parce* here is used to introduce a negative command with an infinitive, translated it as if it were *noli*.  
Paris reminds Helen that this love was ordained by fate, which in the *Iliad*, her own father, Zeus, controls. Paris may not have been so accidental in referencing him on 274. For the paronomasia with *parca*, see note on line 16.191. Consider the similar sentiment from Phaedra to Hippolytus that “whatever Love ordered, it is not safe to spurn; that one rules gods and has rights against lords.”  
*Faciles* is ‘favorable’ (OLD def 9) but the irony of the sense of ‘easy’ should not be lost considering how all of the gods’ actions in this poem involve seduction.

*multa quidem subeunt, sed coram ut plura loquamur,*

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190 See Michalopoulos ad loc. for the use of *parce.*  
191 *Her* 4.11-12, *Quidquid Amor iussit, non est contennere tutum;/ regnat et in dominos ius habet ille deos.*
excipe me lecto nocte silente tuo!

283 Paris suggests that he wishes to speak to Helen, but the pentameter reveals his more base desires. *Ut* introduces a purpose clause, which is subordinate to the pentameter (Bennett #282).

284 Notice the word order: Paris (*me*) is currently outside of the bed. With Menelaus away, the only thing on Helen’s bed is the silent night. As Paris is the first male to give voice to his complaints in the *Heroides*, his complaint about the silent night should amuse the reader who has heard heroine after heroine complain about it (cf. *Her.* 1.7-10, 6.96, 15.156).

*a pudet et metuis Venerem temerare maritam*

*castaque legitemi fallere iura tori?*

285 While *temerare* simply means ‘to pollute,’ it also has as a secondary definition ‘to pollute sexually’ (OLD def 2). Paris, using excellent rhetorical strategy, preemptively strikes at reasons Helen might give for why she could not be with him. Michalopoulos rightly notes that *an* expects a negative answer.

286 *Tori* is specifically used of the marriage bed here (OLD def 5).

*a, nimium simplex Helene, ne rustica dicam,*

*hanc faciem culpa posse carere putas?*

287-290 Paris argues that Helen is too beautiful to remain faithful.

287 *Rustica* is either voc. in agreement with *Helene* or nom. in agreement with the unsupplied subject of *putas*. Paris must tread carefully in this charge. Despite his current circumstances, he is quite the rustic having been a mere shepherd until the fateful day
of his judgment. Michalopoulos also notes that Oenone, whom Paris abandoned for Helen, was also a rustic nymph.  

288 Hanc refers to Helen’s face or, by metonymy, to her beauty in general. Culpa is abl. with carere which takes an abl. of separation (Bennett #214.1).

aut faciem mutes aut sis non dura, necesse est:
   lis est cum forma magna pudicitiae.

289 Mutes and sis are subjunctives in a noun–clause triggered by necesse est, which often, as here, sees ut omitted (Bennett #295.8). Helen cannot change her beauty. Non dura is litotes for mollis or facilis.

290 Lis is generally used as a legal term, but here should simply mean ‘quarrel’ (OLD def 2). Note that since Paris basically lays out a case for why Helen should be with him, the use of legal terminology is not totally inappropriate. Forma is perhaps best translated as appearance with the gen. pudicitiae as its qualifier.

Iuppiter his gaudet, gaudet Venus aurea furtis:
   haec tibi nempe patrem furta dedere Iovem.

291 To enhance his argument further, Paris will remind Helen that the gods partake in adultery and that it must therefore be proper. The anaphora helps to punctuate his point. Cf. Ov. Met. 9.497 et seq., where Byblis uses the same argument to justify incest with her brother. However, the argument here has slightly more authority as Paris is mentioning Helen’s own kin.

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192 For more on Paris up-selling his status as urbane against Helen’s rusticity, see Cuchiarelli (1995, 139-149).
193 For further explication of legal language in the double Heroides, see EJ Kenney, Love and Legalism (1970).
Adding to his argument, Paris also notes that Leda, Helen’s mother, was taken in the same way, making Jupiter her father. Io vem and patrem are in apposition. The difference is that Leda was given back, whereas Paris intends to keep Helen permanently.\textsuperscript{194}

\textit{vix fieri, si sunt vires in semine morum,}
\textit{et Iovem et Ledae filia, casta potes.}

Paris argues that Helen is predetermined to infidelity because of her lineage. \textit{Vix fieri} should be taken with \textit{casta potes} below. EJ Kenney and Michalopoulos spend a lot of time on the interpretation of this line. It seems preferable to take \textit{morum} with \textit{vires}, ‘if the strength of character has power…’ One should not overlook the sound play between \textit{morum} and \textit{amorum}.

Consider Helen’s reply at 17.45 and her comments about how she worries that Paris will constantly question her faithfulness should she leave with him, 17.214 et seq.

\textit{casta tamen tum sis, cum te mea Troia tenebit,}
\textit{et tua sim, quaeso, crimina solus ego.}

Paris also realizes the danger of his previous couplet and attempts to clarify. Helen should be unfaithful to her current husband, not to him. The knowing audience may also chuckle remembering that once Paris dies, Helen will be given to his brother Deiphobus (\textit{Little Iliad}, 1).

The subjunctives indicate less vividness to the future even though this is not technically a conditional. Paris is speaking about potentiality in an event that has yet to happen. \textit{Quaeso} serves as an aside, as in the English ‘please or ‘I beg of you’ (OLD def 3). For more on \textit{crimen}, see note 5.6.

\textsuperscript{194} Cf. Helen’s reply at 17.45.
nunc ea peccemus quae corriget hora iugalis,
si modo promisit non mihi vana Venus!

297 The use of the subjunctive here indicates a plea or hortatory statement (Bennett #274). He is suggesting that they should commit the acts which will be fine once they are married.

298 Any confusion about what he is requesting is cleared up though the use of Venus. While the entire letter is a request for marriage, Paris’ wording belies the fact that the benefits are what he actually seeks. Also note that alliteration in the line appropriately heightens the intensity and creates a punctuated rhythm.

sed tibi et hoc suadet rebus, non voce maritus, (re nec non voce maritus, Michalopoulos.)
neve sui furtis hospitis obstet, abest.

299-316 Paris suggests that Menelaus is either a fool or implicit in his union with Helen.

299 Palmer notes that this line is corrupt; EJ Kenny provides a very nice explication of the manuscript, finally settling on non voce as the best option. Michalopoulos disagrees and presents re nec non voce maritus. Michalopoulos’ reading however seems unnecessarily wordy. Et is adverbial: “even your husband persuades you to do this, by his actions, if not his words, and lest…” Rebus means ‘by his deeds.’ Tibi is a dat. of reference (Bennett #188). Paris is suggesting that Menelaus’ deed (i.e., leaving Helen and Paris alone) and not his words are that by which Helen should judge her actions.

300 Paris continues pointing out that nothing stands in the way of their crime.
non habuit tempus, quo Cresia regna videret,
aptius: o mira calliditate virum!

301 There are various reasons purported from ancient sources for Menelaus’ absence. None are better attested than others nor does the actual reason matter--only that he is absent.\textsuperscript{195} \textit{Cresius-a-um} is an adjective form for Cretan.

302 The use of \textit{aptius} is worth noting. It is suitable for Paris, not for Menelaus, to whom it is attributed. \textit{Virum} is an accusative of exclamation (Bennett #183) attended by an abl. of quality (Bennett #224). Paris’ statement that Menelaus is excessively cunning is ironic.

\textit{Risit et ‘Idaei mando tibi,’ dixit iturus} \textit{(Is…et)} Palmer, horribly corrupt)

‘\textit{curam pro nobis hospitis, uxor, agas.’}

303 This line is also hopelessly corrupt, but Michalopoulos’ emendation makes sense. In terms of interpretation, Menelaus could be smiling because 1) he is simple witted, which Paris has just suggested or 2) he is under the influence of Venus (who always smiles) since he is blindly in love with Helen. The irony of the direct speech cannot be missed; Menelaus is actually unwittingly handing over the one from Mt. Ida to his wife, or vice versa. That is of course how Paris presents it. Helen has a different recollection in her letter (17.153-178). Heyworth (1984) suggests \textit{ipse} in place of \textit{risit}. While Heyworth’s emendation makes sense, it loses one of the central points of irony (i.e., the influence of Venus). Kershaw (1998) suggests \textit{me teste idaei…} (with me as witness…) which is worth considering as it adds a new level of irony, the idea that Paris was present when Menelaus ordered Helen to make the guest a care for herself.

\textit{neglegis absentis, testor, mandata mariti:}

\textsuperscript{195} See Michalopoulos and EJ Kenney for ancient sources on why he is in Crete. Cf. \textit{Ars Am.} 2.359-62 and 2.365-72 for Ovid’s treatment of this exact same scene in the \textit{Ars} which is framed to indicate the foolishness of Menelaus.
cura tibi non est hospitis ualla tui.

305 The word order here places Paris, the testor, in the middle of Helen (the unspecified subject of neglegis) and Menelaus, the maritus, which is exactly where he is trying to be.

306 Non ualla is litotes for nulla.

huncine tu speras hominem sine pectore dotes
posse satis formae, Tyndari, nosse tuae?

307 The enclitic –ine is used to indicate emphasis (Bennett #87). Sine pectore is used as a descriptor for Menelaus, which Michalopoulos takes as ‘brainless.’ The reader can appreciate the irony that it would also have the sense of ‘without courage,’ which is appropriate for Paris, not Menelaus. Nosse is syncope for novisse (OLD def 1), which here should be translated as present tense ‘to know.’ Paris suggests that Menelaus’ gifts are insufficient for the likes of Helen’s beauty.

308 Tyndari is a voc. patronymic for Helen, based on her mortal father, Tyndarius, who had required all of Helen’s suitors to provide gifts which would determine to whom she was given.196

falleris: ignorat, nec, si bona magna putaret,
quae tenet, externo crederet illa viro.

309 Paris continues to berate Menelaus, arguing that he does not know what he has. Si introduces a present contra-factual condition (Bennett #304). Falleris, present passive, is tinged with irony. Helen will be deceived when she realizes which husband is more

\[^{196}\text{See note 16.1 for more on patronymics.}\]
courageous. Consider 5.101-2, where Oenone notes that Menelaus now grieves from *externo amore*, in contrast to his current trust of an *externo viro*.

**310** Notice that Helen, or her great goods, is encircled by the *externo viro* as Paris wishes to be.

\[ ut \text{ te nec mea vox nec te meus incitet ardor,} \]
\[ \text{cogimur ipsius commoditate frui;} \]

**311** EJ Kenney rightly notes that *ut* here has the sense of ‘even though.’

**312** *Fruor*, just as of other verbs of use/enjoyment, takes an abl. object (Bennett #218). *Commoditate* is perhaps best translated as ‘complaisance’ (OLD def 4) with *ipsius* referring back to Menelaus.

\[ aut erimus stulti, sic ut superemus et ipsum, \]
\[ si tam securum tempus abibit iners. \]

**313** *Superemus* could be a poetic plural, with Paris referring to himself or, more likely, he is including Helen whom he has yet to actually convince. *Aut* introduces the apodosis of the condition which is placed before the protasis on the next line. The use of the fut. ind. presents a future more-vivid construction (Allen & Greenough #516).

**314** *Iners* is here perhaps best understood as ‘unused’ (OLD def 2c) rather than ‘lazy’ (OLD def 2). Paris’ point is accurate: if they are going to make a move, they need to do so now. For the connotation of *inera* as sexually impotent see the note at 16.160 as well as Amores 3.7.15.

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197 See the duel between Menelaus and Paris (Il.3) and Helen’s speech to Aphrodite (Il. 3).
198 See 17.176 for Helen’s reply to this line.
paene suis ad te manibus deducit amantem;

utere mandantis simplicitate viri!

315 Paris’ suggestion that Menelaus has essentially given him Helen is not entirely wrong. Menelaus, as Michalopoulos notes, is often considered to be in the wrong as he failed to look after his wife.

316 Utere from the deponent utor, is a present imperative, not an infinitive and takes an abl. object (Bennett #113; 218).

sola iaces viduo tam longa nocte cubili,

in viduo iaceo solus et ipse toro:

317 Ovid here is playing with the theme of the single Heroides now that he is able to utilize a male voice. The common complaint of the women is that they must spend the night on empty beds. Helen would certainly have qualified as her own husband is absent, hence the bed being viduo. Longa nocte, an abl. of time within which (Bennett #231), has been placed between viduo and cubili to stress that the long night is the only thing on the bed. Cf. 5.106 for more on the viduo lecto motif.

318 Likewise, Paris places only solus and ipse on his bed.

te mihi meque tibi communia gaudia iungant!

candidior medio nox erit illa die.

319 Michalopoulos notes the word order as representing the desired action, that is Paris and Helen being intertwined, but he fails to grasp the full effect of the line. The chiasmus (based on me and te) has Paris surrounded by Helen while the synchysis (based on cases) has Paris and Helen intertwined. The use of two poetic devices in one shot forces the reader to see the image no matter how they read it.
The synchysis in this line helps to reinforce the image above. *Medio die* is an abl. of comparison governed by the comparative *candidior* (Bennett #217).

*tunc ego iurabo quaevis tibi numina neque*

*adstringam verbis in sacra vestra meis;*

Paris returns from his visual intertwining to remind Helen again that his intent is also on a different kind of binding, marriage. Perhaps *quaevis*, ‘whatever you wish,’ is used because Helen as a Greek would have separate gods. It is also possible that Paris, who has already broken one marriage oath, is willing to swear to anything.\(^{199}\) *Numina* is an acc. of thing sworn by as EJ Kenney rightly notes.

Notice the chiasmus which has her rites surrounded by Paris’ words.

*tunc ego, si non est fallax fiducia nostra, (nostri, Michalopoulos. et EJ Kenney) efficiam praesens, ut mea regna petas.*

Paris’ *fiducia* refers to his love making ability and his own general self-confidence. Michalopoulos and EJ Kenney vary from Palmer by reading *nostri* which as an objective gen. (Bennett #200) has the exact same force as the personal adjective.

The subordinate clause should be taken with the force of a result despite the lack of an introductory adverb (Bennett #297). *Efficiam* is future indicative. Considering Paris’ bravado, the concrete and factual future indicative makes the most sense.

*si pudet et metuis ne me videare secuta,*

*ipse reus sine te criminis huius ero.*

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\(^{199}\) Cf. Cat. 70 for the worth of what a lover says: “my woman says that she prefers to marry no one but me, not even if Jupiter himself should seek her. she says this: but what a woman says to a desirous lover, it is proper to write on the wind and rapid water.”
325 Sc. esse with secuta. Videare is syncope for videaris (Bennett #104) which has the meaning of ‘seem’ in the passive (OLD def 23). In this verb filled clause, which may be Paris’ way of suggesting action rather than deliberation from Helen, his essential point is that he will take on all of the blame for whatever comes. Michalopoulos does a wonderful job of showing how the blame is actually divided up in various texts between Paris, Helen, Menelaus, and the Gods.

326 Both the senses of ‘plaintiff’ (OLD def 1) and ‘culprit’ (OLD def 4) work in differing ways here.

*nam sequar Aegidae factum fratrumque tuorum;*

*exemplo tangi non propriore potes:*

327 Aegidae is a patronymic for Theseus, the son of Aegeus, who as previously discussed, kidnapped Helen by force. Helen’s brothers (Castor and Pollux) are known for their abduction of the Leucipids (see note below). The use of the subjunctive here expresses a rhetorical question of sorts ‘For should I …?’ where expected answer is ‘no’ since Helen should willingly go with him.

328 Paris repeatedly uses the ‘Theseus argument’ starting at line 149. Perhaps by trying to align himself with a hero, Paris is attempting to make himself look more heroic in Helen’s eyes.200

*te rapuit Theseus, geminas Leucippidas illi;*

*quartus in exemplis adnumerabor ego.*

329 The Lecippidae are the daughters of Apollo who were carried off by Castor and Polux (Pausanius, *Descriptions of Greece*, 3.16.1).

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200 See introduction to poem 16 for more on Paris’ attempts at heroicism.
Quartus is an appositive. Paris’ use of the future indicative shows his presumptuousness (or perhaps confidence). He will be counted as a fourth.

Troia classis adest armis instructa virisque:
iam facient celeres remus et aura vias.

Paris suggests both that the ships are ready to take her home and that the Trojans are ready for war if the need should arise. The reader is reminded of the Greek fleet described in book two of the Iliad. Furthermore, the reader may be reminded of the opening of the Aeneid 1.1, Arma virumque cano, which is the ultimate result of Paris and Helen completing their voyage. The irony is that the Iliad never once mentions the Trojan fleet. It is the Greek fleet that matters. Note likewise that in book 2 of the Aeneid, both instances of the word instructus-a-um are disastrous references to the Trojan horse. At 2.153-4, it refers to Sinon, full with tricks, who convinces the Trojans to take the horse into the city. At 2.254 et seq. it refers to the Greek fleet hiding in Tenedos waiting to ambush the Trojans.

ibis Dardanias ingens regina per urbes,
teque novam credet vulgus adesse deam,

Paris suggests that Helen will be treated not just as a queen, but as a goddess back in Troy.

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201 “I sing of arms and a man.”
202 …Ille dolis instructus et arte Pelasga/ sustulit exutas vinclis ad sidera palmas; “That one equipped with tricks and Pelasgian arte bore his palms freed from chains to the stars.”
203 Et iam Argiva phalanx instructis navibus ibat/ a Tendedo…; “And now the Argive fleet with its equipped ships was going from Tenedos...”
Dardanius-a-um is an adjective meaning Trojan based on Troy’s founder, Dardanus. Ingens here means ‘important’ or ‘proud’ rather than ‘huge’ Naylor (1911, 43). Note that the chiasmus visually has Helen travelling through the cities.

Paris’ praise of Helen here crosses into hubris which he has done before in comparing her to Venus. Que combines the hexameter and pentameter (Bennett #341.2a). Te and deam should be taken as appositives (Bennett #169).

\[ quaque feres gressus, adolebunt cinnama flammae, \]
\[ caesaque sanguineam victima planget humum. \]

Michalopoulos provides an excellent discussion on the various uses of spices in antiquity. He rightly notes that the use of cinnamon plays on Troy’s location as the gateway to the east. The idea of offering a burning scent as incense does play nicely to Paris’ previous statement that Helen will be recognized as divine. Paris’s use of the smell of fire here cannot be missed. Troy will be destroyed in fire where Helen has set her feet, but there will not be the smell of spice. He is however correct about the bloody earth below.

Paris’ is referring to sacrifices to the gods, but the reader can truly appreciate the irony: the sacrifice will be all of the dead Trojan heroes burned in pyres.

\[ dona pater fratresque et cum genetrice sorores \]
\[ Iliadesque omnes totaque Troia dabit. \]

Although it clearly refers to Hecuba, the use of genetrix should remind the reader of Venus, repeatedly given that title in the Aeneid, from whom Helen is actually the gift rather than a recipient of gifts204.

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204 See 16.119 for more on genetrix.
Michalopoulos rightly notes that the polysyndeton and listing of people helps to intensify the volume of gifts. *Iliades* and *Troia* create a hendiadys, using both the people and the place.

\[\textit{ei mihi! pars a me vix dicitur nulla futuri:}
\]
\[\textit{plura feres, quam quae littera nostra refert.}\]

Paris is channeling his sister again, predicting the future in a way that he and Helen cannot possibly appreciate, but which the reader knows all too well.

EJ Kenney correctly notes the double entendre in *plura feres*: she will receive more gifts and will endure more through the war.

\[\textit{nec tu rapta time, ne nos fera bella sequantur,}
\]
\[\textit{concitet et vires Graecia magna suas.}\]

Paris tells Helen that she need not worry about Greeks coming after her.

Fear clauses such as this one take *ne* as a positive and *ut* as a negative (Bennett #296.2). Ovid has of course revealed the truth in the order of the words: *fera bella* follows right after *nos*.

Paris’ acknowledgement of the problem should be taken as derisively or dismissively as possible. Paris cannot imagine all of Greece actually fulfilling the pledge of suitors for Helen and joining forces, which is, of course, exactly what will happen. The chiasmus on the line helps show all of Greece amassed together. As Cuchiarelli (1995, 137) notes, it is impossible not to smile at Paris’ false presumption when he tells Helen that their flight will not produce war.

\[\textit{tot prius abductis ecqua est repetita per arma?}
\]
\[\textit{crede mihi, vanos res habet ista metus.}\]
Paris will expand further into mythology to show that abduction is a common practice. He misses several important points though which will be dealt with as they come up. The most important distinction is that none of the following examples have husbands.  

*Ista res* refers to the act of abduction. The reader knows that Helen’s fears are perfectly justified. The chiasmus places the fears outside of the true matter, which is exactly where Paris wants them to be.

nomine ceperunt Aquilonis Erechthida Thraces
et tuta a bello Bistonis ora fuit;

For the full version of Boreas’ abduction of Orithyia and the subsequent blame placed on the Thracians, see Michalopoulos ad loc. Paris has strength in this argument as one of his own ancestors, Ganymede, was hauled off into the sky (*Met.* 10.155 et seq). Erechthida is a Grk. acc. sg. patronymic for Orithyia, the daughter of Erectheus, who was the first king of Athens. Orithyia was also carried off, by Boreas, the wind (Appolonius Rhodes, 1.22).

Biston built the town of Bistonia in Thrace. The reader will remember that Ares is the father of Biston (Michalopoulos), and will see the subtle foreshadowing of war. Bistonia is also where the man-eating mares of Diomedes, which Hercules defeated for his labors, were housed (Hyginus 250). *A bello* is an abl. of separation with *tuta* (Bennett #214). The word order is perhaps also revealing, in that war is next to Biston. Paris perhaps reveals more in his word order than he does in his words.

*Phasida puppe nova vexit Pagasaeus Iason,*

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205 Cf. Herodotus 1 (at the very beginning) for examples of the kidnappings of Medea, Io, Europa and Helen, all of which cause wars.

206 For Paris’ use of patronyms, see note 16.1.
As Michalopoulos points out, the story of Jason and Medea is one of the most recounted in ancient literature. Ovid references it several times and even wrote a play about it which is no longer extant. *Phasida* is a poetic form (acc.) based on the river Phasis in Colchis. The abl. of means *puppe nova* refers to the fact that the Argo, which brought Jason to Colchis, was considered the first ship ever built. The adj. *Pagasaeus* simply means Thessalian, which is where Jason is from. Paris’ choice to use this as an example of why Helen should leave with him is perhaps the most ironic: 1) Medea will end up in exile and miserable; 2) Jason will end up broken and alone; 3) this story is the first contact between East and West, which ended in disaster for both Colchis and Greece, just as Paris’ abduction will lead to diasater for Greece and Troy.

Paris’ assertion that no wrong was brought to Thessaly requires the reader to ignore the death of Pelias, Jason’s uncle, as well as Medea’s other crimes in Corinth. Note that *laesa* might be soundplay with *laeta* which was also not borne by the Colchian hand. *Manu* is feminine, unlike most 4th declension nouns.

*te quoque qui rapuit, rapuit Minoida Theseus;*

*nulla tamen Minos Cretas ad arma vocat.*

Paris’ obsession with Theseus is worth noting: it could be that he is an example of the exiled son turned royalty (as Paris is), or because he had Helen at one point (which Paris yearns to do). Theseus’ abduction of Ariadne (the Minoan girl) is also used in book 3 of Apollonius Rhodes’ *Argonautica* by Jason to convince Medea to help him and ultimately leave her homeland. This example also is a poor choice since Ariadne ends

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208 See introduction to poem 16.
up abandoned but given to one more able, namely Dionysus. Minoida refers to Ariadne, the daughter of Minos.

350 Minos did not have to call up troops since Theseus had come initially as a sacrifice to pay penalty for the death of Androgeus (Cat 64.76-79). With the Minotaur dead, Ariadne becomes a secondary issue. Note also that Theseus later marries Ariadne’s sister, Phaedra, just as Helen marries Paris’ brother Deiphobus.

_terror in his ipso maior solet esse periculo;
quaeque timere libet, pertimuisse pudet._

351 This line represents a sort of gnomic or generalized statement. Paris suggests that her imagined fear and the fear in the previously cited mythological examples outweigh the ‘real danger’ that he and Helen would face. His refers to the examples of kidnapping covered in the previous couplets.

352 The use of two impersonal verbs helps minimize Helen’s ability to consider herself in the problem because using them allows him to shift the worry to something that happens to other people.

_finge tamen, si vis, ingens consurgere bellum:
et mihi sunt vires, et mea tela nocent._

353 Paris, despite having just said “there will be no war,” asks Helen to imagine that there is a huge war. The use of _vis_, ‘if you wish,’ is almost patronizing as it dismisses any feelings Helen might actually have. The irony is that _vis_ as a noun also means ‘strength’ or ‘force,’ (OLD def 1) of which the Greeks will provide plenty. Consider the paronomasia with _viris_ below.

354 Paris’ weapons do harm, as Achilles will find out, but the reader should nevertheless chuckle at another reference to the famous duel between Paris and
Menelaus (ll. 3). Likewise, as Michalopoulos notes, *tela* is frequently used as a sexual term for male equipment. Paris cannot appreciate how much harm his *tela* will cause.

*nec minor est Asiae quam vestae copia terrae:*

*illa viris dives, dives abundat equis.*

355 When comparison is made using *quam*, the second item takes the same case as the first, thus a second *copia* must be supplied with *vestae terrae* (Wheelock, 173).

356 *Illa* refers to Troy, which is referred to as the land of fast horses. The horses were given to Ganymede’s father by Zeus in exchange for the boy in another tale of rape (ll.5.265; *Little Iliad*, fragment 7).

*nec plus Atrides animi Menelaus habebit quan* Paris aut armis anteverendus erit.

357 Paris spends a lot of energy filling this line with epic grandeur through the use of the patronymic (see 16.1), *Atrides*, and through the use of his own name in the third person, as Michalopoulos notes. The irony of course is that Paris’ only claim to epic grandeur is that he stopped some sheep from being stolen, a purely pastoral pastiche. In trying to present himself as more epic, he merely highlights his own humble beginnings, which he details below.  

358

*paene puer caesis abducta armenta recepi*

*hostibus et causam nominis inde tuli;*

359-370 Paris says that should the Greeks come, he is strong enough to defeat them.

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209 See introduction to this poem for more on Paris’ attempted epic grandeur.
359 *Paene* needs to be taken with *puer*, as ‘when I was nearly a boy.’ Note that Theseus, whom Paris wishes badly to emulate, also stopped an array of brigands in his boyhood (Plutarch, *Life of Theseus*, sect. 8 et seq). Notice the intertwining word order: the flocks are next to their descriptor, which is surrounded by the dead enemies, which are surrounded by *puer* and the verb *recepti*. This word order also highlights what Paris thinks is most important in this story: himself.

360 Paris earned his other name, Alexander, for this deed, which means ‘protector of men.’ Drinkwater (2003, 181) rightly points out that this title is a bit of a stretch for the deeds he accomplished to earn it.

*paene puer iuvenes vario certamine vici,*

*in quibus Ilioneus Deiphobusque fuit.*

361 See note on 16.359 for more on *paene*. The contest was actually the funeral games for Paris himself, which Priam held on the anniversary of his being exposed.210 Winning funeral games is certainly an epic feat, although Paris fails to mention that he did it to win back one of his own flock.

362 The verb *fuit* is singular by attraction.

*neve putes, non me nisi comminus esse timendum,*

*figitur in iusso nostra sagitta loco.*

363 The use of the double negative is a little awkward, but *neve* introduces the negative jussive with *putes* (OLD def 1). As discussed previously, Paris is not very good in hand to hand combat, as Menelaus will show in the *Iliad*, (book 3).

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210 For the full explanation, see Michalopoulos ad loc.
He is however excellent with arrows. Paris refers to his archery skill, but he could also be talking about the arrow of love with which he hopes his letter has struck Helen. Furthermore, as EJ Kenney reminds us, Paris will also die by arrow.

num potes haec illi primae dare facta iuventae,
       instruere Atriden num potes arte mea?

Dare here has the sense of ‘to attribute’ or ‘to ascribe’ as EJ Kenney notes.

Paris boasts about his military skill, but the more impressive subtext is the question to Helen of whether or not she could instruct Menelaus in Paris’ most impressive art, love. Atriden is a Grk. acc. Atreus is Menelaus‘ father, leading to the patronymic. The refusal to say his name may be a sign of scorn, but to use another patronymic means that Paris accepts his lineage. Compare this with Oenone’s use of Paris’ patronymic, Priamides at 5.11.

omnia si dederis, numquid dabis Hectora fratrem?
       unus is innumeris militis instar erit.

Hectora is a Grk. acc in apposition to fratrem.

The translation here is a little awkward: “Even if you could ascribe all these things (to Menelaus), could you give him Hector as a brother.” Paris’ decision to add Hector to the list of great things about Troy seems odd, but Paris needs to continue reassuring Helen that she will be safe in Troy and Hector represents the military might of Troy. The reader will also recall the interactions between Helen and Hector in ll.6 where she says “I wish I had been the wife of a better man than this.”

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211 For a full catalogue of the places where Hector is praised as the best of the Trojan warriors, see Michalopoulos ad loc.
quid valeam nescis, et te mea robora fallunt;
ignoras, cui sis nupta futura viro.

369 *Quid valeam* is best taken as ‘in what way I am strong.’ Paris is saying that she does not know his strengths and weaknesses yet. Michalopoulos is most likely correct that there is a sexual innuendo in this line. Paris is not quite right, however. Helen has a full understanding of his strengths at 17.254, *bella gerant fortes, tu, Pari, semper ama!*

370 *Sis* is in a relative clause of the characteristic (Bennett #283). *Nupta* (*nubere*) regularly takes a dative object ‘wed to…’ (OLD def 1). Notice that Helen is surrounded on both sides by the man she does not know.

*aut igitur nullo belli repetere tumultu,*

*aut cedent Marti Dorica castra meo.*

371 *Repetere* is syncope for the 2nd person sing. fut. pass.

372 *Martí* is metonymy for martial skill since Mars is the god of war. Notice that the Greeks are actually surrounded through the use of chiasmus. *Dorica* is used to simply refer to all of the Greeks. Paris is of course wrong on both possibilities: Helen will be sought and the Trojans will be the ones surrounded, not the Greeks. Consider the paronomasia with *maritus*, husband, and specifically Helen’s husband who will be second in command of the Greek forces.

*nec tamen indigner pro tanta sumere ferrum coniuge; certamen praemia magna movent.*

373 *Indigner* is subjunctive with the force of a future which Paris does not actually believe will happen, but which the audience knows will.

374 For more on *coniuge* see note on 5.1.
tu quoque, si de te totus contenderit orbis,
    nomen ab aeterna posteritate feres.

375 Paris, much like his sister Cassandra, predicts the future while stating events from the past.²¹² Technically, the entire world has contended for Helen already, which resulted in the pledge of Helen’s suitors to defend her husband’s honor. Furthermore, the Trojan War which will effectively involve the entire known world.

376 As EJ Kenney notes, *nomen* has the sense of ‘reputation.’ Paris is correct here: she is still the face that launched a thousand ships. This final argument is perhaps Paris’ strongest. Helen’s vanity and the chance to be the center of attention may be her greatest weaknesses.

*spe modo non timida dis hinc egressa secundis*  
*exige cum plena munera pacta fide.*

377 As Michalopoulos notes, Paris only has one goddess on his side, Venus, but that does not stop him from using the plural to help his case in the circumstantial abl. (Bennett #221). *Egressa* modifies the unsupplied subject of *exige*, Helen. *Non timida* is litotes for something like *fortis* and agrees with *spe*.

378 The use of *pacta* at the end of the letter should remind the readers of the pledge of the suitors of Helen to bring about her return, indicating that Paris, even at the end of his letter, still does not get the seriousness of his actions.

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²¹² See Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon* for this type of Cassandran prophecy.
INTRODUCTION TO HEROIDES 17

If the *Heroides* are read from cover to cover, what the reader essentially gets are 15 outraged women, punctuated by one outrageous man, followed by another outraged woman. The fact that Helen, who has undergone none of the insults and degradations the previous 15 women have encountered, begins with the same fury is a fantastic bridge between the ended loves of the single Heroides and the newly budding loves of the double *Heroides*.

Each of the previous 14 mythological heroines (and the 1 historical heroine) has been a prisoner of her own story and to some extent prisoner of the behavior of her past literary lives. Medea, no matter what she may say, cannot escape her fate as the offspring murdering monster of Euripides. Penelope can do nothing but patiently wait for Odysseus return. Oenone is a prisoner of fate, she must always be bitter enough about her abandonment to refuse to heal Paris in later texts. Even Paris must forever be the effeminate lover cast by Homer. All of them are bound by the personae of their past literary lives. Everyone except Helen, that is. The double fathered child of Zeus has a luxury not afforded to anyone else in the epistles. She has two destinies and therefore two faces. When we meet Ovid’s Helen, perhaps she is the Helen of Homer, the shameless dog, who sent two countries to war and ruin so she could share a beautiful man’s bed. That is the Helen that first comes to mind for most. It is certainly the one Oenone has portrayed without even having seen more than the purple glimmer of her robes.

Then again, maybe she is not that Helen. Maybe she is the honorable and virtuous Helen who will spend 17 years in the care of the Egyptian king Proteus. Could she be the faithful Helen who waits and prays for her husband’s return while a shameless phantom stands in the towers of Ilium watching the war? This doubleness
has caused a great deal of indecisiveness for readers of the 17th epistle. White (2009) notes that

Myth and literature have clothed Helen in many different guises: she has been by turns wicked, naïve, and morally ambivalent; she has even been the blameless victim…Helen’s nature is ever-shifting, ontologically unstable, always elsewhere. She is already something of a ghostly presence in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. This elusiveness, the essential doubleness of the Helen figure, is what comes through when she is allowed to write *in propria persona* in Ovid’s *Heroides* (128).

Helen is perhaps the only writer in the *Heroides* with a choice about her destiny or, more aptly, she is the only character for whom Ovid has the choice of destiny and of archetype. The choice of which Helen to use gives Ovid a good deal of literary liberty, allowing him to portray Helen as both the ‘shameless bitch’ of Homer and as the chaste maiden of Euripides. The contradiction, as Belfiore (1981) notes, “arose because a woman’s *arête*, excellence was felt to include both physical beauty, the power to attract men sexually, and chastity, the power to resist men” (136).

In addition to her double destiny, Helen has a benefit that none of the other Heroines seem to have. Helen not only survives her story (unlike Dido, Canace, or Phyllis) but thrives after it (unlike Medea or Hypsipyle). The closest example of this is Penelope, the faithful wife of *Heroides* 1 who sits and waits for 20 years. It may be no random choice that Helen and Penelope share the place of first woman for each part of the collection. Perhaps Ovid wants the reader to consider these two women closely as Helen could be the 2nd Penelope which Austin (1994, 140) suggests or perhaps as Belfiore (1981, 139) says, “She is the heroine of elegy rather than of epic”, making her an entirely new Helen. Meagher (2002, 23) notes that “Helen is goddess, queen, trickster, witch, seeress, scapegoat, prize, curse, devoted wife, whore, weaver of tapestries, and of
fates, phantom, seductress, victim, the promise of bliss, and the assurance of doom”, which is the essential problem in pinning down Ovid’s Helen: one cannot pigeonhole her. She is not like *infelix Dido*, who must repeatedly die on the pyre of love for Aeneas, eternally wretched. Helen can be anything she wants to be, anything Ovid wants her to be as her legend and its infinite variations allow. As Lyons (1996, 41) notes:

> It is true, as Helen herself knows (*Iliad* 6.357-8), that having a story, which means suffering, also means having a name and having *kleos* for all time. She is undoubtedly the only heroine to exhibit a conscious relation to *kleos*. Without being allowed to exercise choice in anything, she does manage to have *nostos* as well as *kleos* (although the domestic scene presented in *Odyssey* 4 suggests that both *nostos* and *kleos* are somewhat compromised). But Helen’s myth is unusual in a number of ways, and the ability to survive having a story may be only one more proof of her divinity.

Regardless of Helen’s virtue or lack thereof, Ovid’s Helen is a master manipulator, “schooled in the Arts of Love, she is willing to use every rhetorical ploy to her advantage” (White 2009, 128). For all of the discussion Helen will have about being *rustica* and simple, she simply tries to “dissimulate, to achieve an artless effect” (Nesholm 2005, 163). It is not just for her beauty that Helen is sometimes said to be Aphrodite’s daughter (Meagher 2002, 24), but also for her ability to charm--a skill which Ovid portrays perfectly.

That very charm and simplicity presents a difficulty in building a commentary around epistle 16. Helen is simply less verbose than Paris. She does not have to make herself sound important; she does not have to do all of the things that the *Ars Amatoria* suggests men do to catch a girl--she is the one being pursued. Her vocabulary is simpler and she is substantially less allusive than Paris and Oenone. Furthermore, a good
portion of her letter, as discussed below, is a series of counter arguments to issues raised in Paris’ letter so that there is less to say about Helen’s epistle without being redundant.

Just as Oenone and Paris must navigate through their genres, so too must Helen. She begins her letter citing her own rusticity, which she implies includes a desire to be a chaste and faithful wife. But Helen’s letter is not so much an attempt to hide her genre or change it purposefully so much as it is the process of a woman shaking off her genre, breaking the bonds of the chaste matron as she works herself through the process of accepting her fate as the elegiac mistress. Moreover, her insistence on being rustic is actually a boon to Paris as he only has experience seducing rustic girls. Thus, Helen has given Paris proof that he used the right angle of attack even at the outset of her reply. Helen’s fall, as Cucchiarelli (1995, 144) notes, can be seen as a victory of elegy over the pastoral, as all three writers attempt to lose their rusticity to achieve their aims.

For what purpose does Helen write her missive? What does she hope to accomplish? In the introduction to Paris’ epistle, we discussed why his letter is largely unnecessary. Likewise, Helen could have skipped her reply altogether and simply approached Paris with her intention to leave. His letter is necessary because he had no other avenue of approach. Her response is unnecessary in the same way. Her purpose is not to notify Paris of her intention to leave which could have been done face to face, but rather to set the stage for their future relationship.

Helen wants Paris to know how it is going to be and put the ball back into his court. She will accept no further violation (1-10). She needs him to know that she is not the type to be so easily ensnared despite evidence to the contrary (e.g., Theseus) and that she is surrendering her reputation for love (21-50; 91-102). Just as Paris has tried to

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convince Helen in his letter that he has status, Helen will convince him that it is love that has won and that she is not some simple gold-digger (51-74). She wants to warn him about coming jealousy (213-220) and coming wars (241-246). She wants to make sure that he understands exactly what they are getting themselves into. This means that Helen has a much surer understanding of the world than Paris does.

In a highly ironic way, at times Helen seems to be the one who is prescient. Perhaps it is only in comparison with Paris’ blatant disregard for omen and signs, but even when compared with Oenone, she seems to have a better ability to see the future. Perhaps Ovid has given her the gift of prophecy denied to Oenone, along with everything else that was once hers (e.g., Paris).

Helen attempts to be much slower, much more contemplative. She wants the reader to understand that she has not made this decision lightly and that truthfully she has not yet made a final one. Paris still has more wooing to do, either in follow up letters or in person. It is highly likely that this is just the first letter and that we readers have not been privileged with the resultant correspondence, just as we have not seen the previous letters that Penelope has written which she mentions in her epistle (Her. 1.61-2). Helen closes her letter, after all, by requesting delay and noting that she will arrange further correspondence between them through her maids (Her. 17.263-268).

Consider also the emotional toll that Paris’ letter has placed on Helen. She has essentially been given a time-sensitive choice that will forever alter her destiny. Perhaps she flip-flops and changes her positions so much not because she is trying to be manipulative but rather because she is a real woman, who just like Oenone, has been placed in an extraordinary circumstance. She must decide before Menelaus returns and the chance slips away not only whether she wishes to physically involve herself with Paris, but whether or not she is willing to take the full plunge and run away with him to
Troy, abandoning her homeland like Medea and Ariadne. While the reader knows she is a prisoner of destiny, Helen is oblivious to that fact. In her mind, she could still resist, she could be Penelope or Laodamia, patiently waiting for her husband to return from his voyage, still virtuous and intact. In short, perhaps the lack of rhetorical flourish that this letter contains when compared with the previous two poems, is a result of how well Ovid understands the human condition, particularly when time is running out and an impossible choice must be made.

It is also possible that she does not intend Paris to be the only recipient. Fulkerson (2003) suggests that Hypermnestra writes not only for her husband, but also for her father. Likewise, Phaedra writes as much to Hippolytus as she does to Theseus. Could Helen’s letter then have been written not only for Paris to know what he faces, but also for Menelaus? Several portions of the letter speak about the difficulty of the decision and how Menelaus himself has almost given Helen to Paris by his absence. Could this letter be meant to explain her actions in the event of interception by a less trusted member of the household? A letter, after all, always arrives at its destination, which is not always the one the writer hopes it to be. Perhaps Helen is preparing for the event that Menelaus should find the letter after she and Paris have already left? She is careful not to outright insult him, but to carefully frame him as partly responsible for her and Paris’ budding love. She mentions Menelaus’ bravery and long reach. She discusses the judgment of beauty and how she is a prize, which Paris (and anyone who has read Her.16) already knows, but which Menelaus does not. It may be her way of suggesting that this is her destiny and that she has no choice but to go with Paris.

Perhaps she knows how all of this will turn out and wishes to keep her options open; or perhaps even if she is not sure of how all of this will end, she recognizes that all of Greece has pledged to get her back and that the thought of carrying off the spoils of Troy will help the cause of raising an army.
At the start of this introduction, the doubleness of Helen and the phantom that may or may not have been at Troy in her stead was discussed. Various sources provide different times for the swap (Austin, 1994) which leads to another very important question: who actually wrote this epistle? Is it the real Helen or the phantom? And if it is the phantom, at what point did she replace the real Helen? Could both of them have authored parts of this very letter? Could the explosive anger of the opening have been written by a chaste Helen, with every intention of rebuffing Paris and sending him back to Troy alone? Perhaps the gods, watching her pen, realized the hopelessness of the situation and simply picked her up mid sentence and left the doppelganger to complete the task, perhaps around line 65, when she finally ends her rebuff of Paris and shifts into acceptance of his beauty and charms. While it is impossible to prove concretely which Helen writes, the question of author in the back of the mind perhaps adds a much greater depth to the reading and justly leaves more questions than answers about Helen’s nature, which is the essential trait of her character – to always be shrouded in mystery.
Nunc oculos tua cum violarit epistula nostros,

non rescribendi gloria visa levis.

1-10 Helen opens her letter with rage. She accuses Paris’ letter of having violated her eyes the same way Paris has violated xenia (the laws of the guest/host relationship). With the possible exception of Ariadne’s letter (10.1-2), which compares Theseus to wild beasts, none of the initial couplets open with such vitriol against the hero. Several of them use some variation of ‘complaint,’ such as Phyllis’ ultra promissum tempus abesse queror (2.2) or Deianara’s victorem victae succubuisse queror (9.2)²¹⁴, but none come close to the force of this salutation. Rosati (2005, 168) notes that accepting and reading an unwanted letter is already a breakdown, a surrender to the power of the sender.

1 Michalopoulos rightly notes that the chiasmus visually places the letter between Helen’s eyes, where it actually is. Violarit is syncope for the 3rd sg. perf. Subjunctive, in a causal cum clause (Bennett #286.2).

2 Non levis is litotes for ‘serious’ or perhaps ‘lofty’ considering how much time Paris had spent calling her rustic. Consider also the sense of the related noun, levitas, ‘fickleness,’ which is one of both Paris’ and Helen’s personality traits. Supply a form of sum to complete visa. Oenone uses levis to describe Paris at 5.109 which Ovid may be referencing.

²¹⁴ “I complain that you have been absent past the promised time”; “I complain that a victor has succumb to the conquered maiden”.

232
ausus es hospitii temeratis advena sacris

legitimam nuptae sollicitare fidelam!

3 *Temero* means ‘violate’ (OLD def 1) but can specifically refer to sexual violation (OLD def 2) as EJ Kenney notes.

4 Helen’s indignation is just, but just like the Heroines of the first 15 poems, many of whom open with anger, she will run the entire gamut of feelings as the epistle progresses. Notice that Helen’s word order reveals more than her anger through the framing of *legitimam fidelam*. Visually, ‘the disturbing’ has already made its way into the center, just as one of Cupid’s arrows.

*scilicet idcirco ventosa per aequora vectum*

*except portu Taenaris ora suo*

5 Helen is employing her own legal terminology, as Paris tried to do. This is either in mimicry of him, or in an attempt to prove that she is not rustic. The word order in the couplet follows the actual sequence of events, with the water before the shore. Ferguson (1960, 348) points out that the wording in this line is reminiscent of the opening of Cat. 64.12, but fails to mention that the wedding of Peleus and Thetis celebrated in that poem causes Paris’ current voyage.

6 *Taenaris* means ‘of Sparta’ based on Cape Taenaris in the region. The OCD notes that this cape was a holy spot and a place of asylum where goods could not be seized. Helen’s choice of reference for Sparta adds a level of irony as Paris is trying to do exactly that.

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215 *Quae simul ac rostro ventosum proscidit aequor.*
216 See note on line 16.30 for more on *Taenaris.*
nec tibi, diversa quamvis e gente venires,
  oppositas habuit regia nostra fores,

7 Diversa here from diverto simply means ‘different’ or ‘opposite,’ (OLD def 5) but it can also have the meaning of ‘to divorce.’ (OLD def 1, archaic) Helen’s subtext may mean more than her words here. It is difficult to tell whether or not her sub-textual entries are intentional or merely Ovid’s way of playing with the reader. The use of the imperfect subjunctive is concessive with quamvis (Bennett #309).

8 Notice that the doors actually surround the palace through the chiasmus.

esset ut officii merces iniuria tanta?
  qui sic intrabas, hospes an hostis eras?

9 Merces here must have the sense of ‘payback’ or ‘recompense’ (OLD def 4) rather than ‘pay.’ The use of the subjunctive helps heighten the sense that the question is rhetorical. Palmer has emended the text from tanti which would modify officii to tanta. Michalopoulos supports the change since the injury is what would be most notable. Fortunately, the sense works regardless of how it is taken.

10 Michalopoulos rightly notes that it is appropriate to read the sexual innuendo here: intrare can mean ‘to enter sexually.’ The use of ‘h’ and ‘i’ sounds throughout the couplet contribute to a sense of hissing on Helen’s behalf, from her pseudo-righteous indignation at the prospect of being a mere commodity. The trouble is that Helen cannot justly be angry since she has been kidnapped and taken more than once at this point.
nec dubito, quin haec, cum sit tam iusta, vocetur

rustica iudicio nostra querela tuo.

11 The complexity of the word order perhaps reflects Helen’s confusion at her emotions. *Haec nostra querela* is the subject of *sit iusta* as well as being the subject of *vocetur* which takes a nominative object *rustica* (Bennett #168.2). Helen does not dispute Paris’ claim that she is rustic but her vocabulary and word choice suggest otherwise. Is Helen playing dumb to catch Paris off guard?

12 The synchysis reveals exactly how wrapped up Helen is with Paris. She has placed herself directly in the middle of the line surrounded by his judgment. The pun here is that she refers both to his decision to choose her as well as his more famous judgment.

*rustica sim sane, dum non oblita pudoris*

dumque tenor vitae sit sine labe meae.

13-34 Helen defends her moral character as being above reproach and complains that Paris assails an unwilling *matrona*.

13 Sc. *sim* with *oblita*, which takes a gen. object (‘forgetful of…’; Bennett #206.2). *Pudor* means both ‘a cause of shame’ and ‘a sense of shame’ (OLD def 1 & 4). Ironically, Helen has *pudor* no matter what.

14 *Tenor* simply means ‘course’ (OLD def 1), but through paronomasia, the reader should note that she is also *teneor*, ‘held,’ by Paris.

*si non est ficto tristis mihi vultus in ore*

*nec sedeo duris torva supercilliis, (torvis dura)*

15 Note that the chiasmus visually locates her expression in the middle of her face.
16 Bentley suggests *torvis dura* in place of *duris torva*. The sense amounts to the same thing but Bentley’s emendation is reasonable in that *dura* makes more sense referring to Helen as a whole rather than just her eyebrows or expression.²¹⁷

*fama tamen clara est, et adhuc sine crimine vixi*

*et laudem de me nullus adulter habet.*

17 Helen asserts that she has lived honorably, which is debatable depending on how one interprets her experiences with Theseus. The use of *adhuc* here is telling: she was good up until now but only 17 lines into the letter, her resolve has already begun to fade. Some versions have *lusi* in place of *vixi* which, as Reeve (1973, 329) notes, is counterproductive to Helen’s arguments of virtuous living.

18 Helen is technically correct that no adulterer has had her, but she has been seized before as she herself will admit at 17.21.

*quo magis admiror, quae sit fiducia coepti,*

*spemque tori dederit quae tibi causa mei.*

19 *Fiducia* is often used with a gen. descriptor.²¹⁸ *Magis* should be taken with *fiducia*. *Quo* goes closely with *magis* with *quo* being technically an ablative of degree of difference (Bennett #223): “by which the more I am amazed at this confidence in your undertaking…”

20 Helen’s question is rhetorical, as Paris (16.20) has told her in his letter that Venus gave him not only hope, but specifically gave him Helen for his bed.

*an quia vim nobis Neptunius attulit heros,*

*rapta semel videor bis quoque digna rapi?*

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²¹⁷ For *supercilii* see note 17.82.
²¹⁸ See Michalopoulos ad loc. for examples.
21 *An quia,* ‘was it because…,’ expects a negative answer (Bennett #162.4a). The Neptunian hero is Theseus, mentioned so often in Paris’ letter (see introduction to poem 16) as well as by Oenone (5.127 et seq.). *Nobis* is a poetic plural for *mihi*, a dat. of reference (Bennett #188). Considering Paris’ affinity for titles and family lines in his letter, throwing her previous lover’s lineage around casually is a nice retort to Paris. For *vim* see note line 25.

22 With the two words for ‘capture’ framing the ends of the line, Helen has marked that as the most important concept, that it was force and not willingness that left her with Theseus. The passive *videor* takes a nominative object (Bennett #168.2). Consider *Ars. Am.* 1.673-4, *vim licet appelles: grata est ipsa puellis/quod iuvat, invitae saepe dedisse volunt*219. Also consider Oenone’s remark at ś.ŗřŘ that a woman who is taken so often, must seek to be taken.

*crimen erat nostrum, si delenita fuissem;*

*cum sim rapta, meum quid nisi nolle fuit?*

23 For *crimen* see note on 5.6. *Nostrum* is a poetic plural for *meum*. *Si* introduces a past contra-factual conditional, “I would have been…if I had…”, (Bennett #304). The first half of the line is the apodosis; the second half is the protasis. The indicative is often used in the apodosis of a condition contrary to fact, which is especially true with *sum* and *possum*.

24 The *cum* clause is concessive here as well (Bennett #309). The sentence requires some noun to be supplied with *meum*. EJ Kenney suggests ‘resource’ which makes good sense but something like ‘choice’ might be preferable. The entire sentence is very elliptical, which may be Helen’s way of trying to avoid having to rehash a story which 1) the reader has already heard twice now from Paris and Oenone and 2) may not show her in

219 “You may use force; women like you to use it; they often wish to give unwillingly what they like to give” (Tr. Goold).
a very positive light. *Fuit* introduces a quasi indirect statement: “What was my choice but to say I did not want it?”

*non tamen e facto fructum tulit ille petitum;*

*excepto redii passa timore nihil.*

25 Helen counters both Paris’ and Oenone’s assertions that she had engaged in sex with Theseus. The use of *fructum* to refer to the sexual act is appropriate as a piece of golden fruit started Paris’ entire mission. The alliteration on the line, with strong ‘t’ and ‘f’ sounds, resonates the mock anger in Helen’s words. There is however a less common version of the myth which is worth discussing, as noted by Lyons (1996, 111), where Helen does have relations with Theseus resulting in the birth of a girl who is given to her sister Clytemnestra to raise. The child, Iphigenia (meaning ‘born from force’), will be sacrificed as a condition of creating the very winds that the Greeks will use to sail to Troy to re-capture Helen. If Ovid was considering this version (and having Helen simply lie), the irony in Helen’s protestations is delightful. If Ovid is considering this version, and Iphigenia’s derivation, then the irony of *vim* on line 21 becomes all the more delicious.

26 *Nihil* is the object of the deponent participle *passa* which stands in apposition to the subject of *redii*. Rosati (2005, 166) notes that the divergent stories, where the heroines in the single letters disagree with traditional myth, are also present in the double *Heroides* where the heroine refutes events that are generally accepted in myth by presenting an alternate version of the myth from the one the hero mentioned in their letter. Essentially, there is nothing stopping Helen from lying in the name of self-presentation but it is also possible that Helen knows something we don’t know. After all, she was the one who was there.

220 See Eur. Iphigenia at Aulis for the sacrifice of Iphigenia.
oscula luctanti tantummodo pauca protervus
abstulit: uterius nil habet ille mei.

27. *Luctanti* is a dat. of separation (Bennett #188d) with an understood *mihi*. Oenone uses the same participle to describe Apollo’s attack at 5.141. Interestingly though, the word order suggests otherwise. Helen has placed the kisses at the beginning and end of the struggle.²²¹

*quae tua nequitia est, non his contenta fuisset.*

*di melius! similis non fuit ille tui.* (tibi, EJ Kenney)

29 *Fuisset* here needs to be translated with the sense of ‘would’ even though it is pluperfect to make it flow in English. Helen rightly points out that Paris will not be happy with just the kisses that Theseus had stolen.

30 EJ Kenney accepts *tibi* instead of *tui*. Like many of the emendations of this type, the sense comes out the same and the argument boils down to what sounds ‘more Ovidian,’ which is ironic since the authenticity of the lines is in question to begin with. *Tibi* seems most reasonable simply because *similis* more regularly takes a dat. object (Bennett #204.3). After the amount of time Paris has spent comparing himself to Theseus, Helen dismisses it all with a simple line of pentameter, perhaps as a shot back at Paris and his fixation on being heroic (see introduction to poem 16).

*reddidit intactam, minuitque modestia crimen,*

*et iuvenem facti paenituisse patet.*

31 Sc. *me* to modify *intactam*. Helen again stresses that she was returned a virgin (see 17.25), contrary to the suppositions of Paris and Oenone.

²²¹ Cf. Ov. *Ars Am.* 1.663 et seq. on how women truly feel about the use of force.
Sources usually place Theseus at 50 years of age when the abduction happened, as Michalopoulos notes, but for the sake of strengthening her argument, either Ovid or Helen herself has ignored that detail. Paenitet takes an acc. subject and a gen. of the thing sorry for (Bennett #209). Patet needs to be translated as ‘it is evident’ (OLD def 6) which introduces the indirect statement. The irony of introducing incorrect information with patet should not escape the reader.

*Thesea paenituit, Paris ut succederet illi,*

*ne quoando nomen non sit in ore meum?*

As above, the acc. *Thesea* is the acc. subject of *paenituit*. *Ut* introduces a purpose clause. *Succederet* takes a dat. direct object (Bennett #187.2)

*Ne* and *non*, as a form of litotes, should be taken together as *ut*, as both Palmer and Michalopoulos suggest, introducing a second purpose clause. Helen is seemingly concerned about her reputation and not being a topic of conversation for her infidelity but, ultimately, her reputation will become second to Paris in importance.

*nec tamen irascor—quis enim succenset amanti?—*

*si modo, quem praefers, non simulatur amor.*

Helen suddenly changes her position from ‘honorable matron’ and begins to question whether her honor and chastity are so important.

*Succenset* takes a dat. direct object (Bennett #187.2). Notice the sudden change: Paris is now a lover, where before he was a kidnapper like Theseus.

Michalopoulos takes this line to refer to Paris’ need to hide his love in the presence of Menelaus. It could also refer to a wish on Helen’s part that his love be true rather than just a pretense for simple adultery.
hoc quoque enim dubito, non quod fiducia desit, (quo, Michalopoulos and EJ Kenney)

aut mea sit facies non bene nota mihi,

Michalopoulos and EJ Kenney emend quod to quo. Acceptance of the emendation should depend on the characterization of Helen. Despite her claims that she is rustica, she does not generally use rare speech making quod a more reasonable choice.

Note the use of litotes in non bene as well as the placement of the personal adj. and personal pron. at the beginning and ending of the line to highlight Helen. Helen may be a match for Paris in terms of egotism (see introduction to poem 16), although her beauty has caused her enough trouble that modesty is unnecessary.

sed quia credulitas damno solet esse puellis

verbaque dicuntur vestra carere fide.

Solet is taking a double dat. construction (Bennett #191): damno is a dat. of purpose and puellis is a dat. of disadvantage. Michalopoulos explains how the use of puellis can be applied to matronae such as Helen, but misses that the entire couplet is gnomic and that Helen speaks not only about herself, but all women. She states her doubt in the veracity of Paris’ love, not because of Paris but because trusting harms women. If we consider this in light of Fulkerson’s (2005) shared readership model, those girls are likely the other heroines such as Phyllis, Medea, and Dido who trusted foreign men to their own destruction. The difference is that Helen has not run through her story yet, whereas all of the other Heroines have. So she may still hold out hope that her story will end differently.

Vestra here refers to men, not specifically Paris, who has not done anything to break faith with Helen at this point, although he has certainly already wronged Oenone and
Menelaus. She may also be commenting on the general stereotype of Trojans as deceptive.\textsuperscript{222} Carere takes an abl. object (Bennett #214.1).

\textit{at peccant aliae, matronaque rara pudica est.}
\textit{quis prohibet raris nomen inesse meum?}

41 As Michalopoulos hints, the use of \textit{matrona} is an anachronism, but its use allows Ovid to clearly state his point to the Roman reader who might have difficulty understanding the complex role of the archaic Greek woman.

42 \textit{Inesse} as a compound takes a dat. object, as \textit{raris} here (Bennett #187.3.1). Supply \textit{puellis} to modify \textit{raris}. The irony is that Helen will preclude herself from being included. The reader should recall her treatment by the women of Troy in Euripides’ \textit{Trojan Women} where the Greeks must stop the women from trying to kill her.

\textit{nam mea quod visa est tibi mater idonea, cuius}
\textit{exemplo flecti me quoque posse puerus,}

43 Helen will refute all of Paris’ points over the course of her letter. Here she refutes his argument that she should run off with him because it is in her family’s nature (16.291-4). Leda was taken by Zeus in the form of a swan (Met 6.109; Hyginus 77). Video in the passive means ‘seem’ and takes a predicate nominative (OLD def 20). Although Paris cannot know it, it is Helen’s decision to run off with Paris that leads to Leda’s death. She hangs herself in shame (Eur. \textit{Helen}). The only other occurrence of \textit{idoneus-a-um} in the \textit{Heroides} is at 7.105, \textit{da veniam culpae! Decepit idoneus auctor;}\textsuperscript{223} perhaps Helen who is about to have fault, echoes the sentiment of Dido who has already fallen by the time of this letter’s writing.

\textsuperscript{222} See Jarbas’ speech in Aen. 4.215-9 for a similar sentiment.
\textsuperscript{223} “Give pardon to fault! A suitable author deceived me”
44 Exemplo is an abl. of means. The use of quoque here is almost indignant.

*matris in admisso falsa sub imagine lusae*

*error inest; pluma tectus adulter erat.*

45 Helen’s point is valid: Leda did not know that she was committing adultery when she let the swan sit on her lap. Helen would be actively committing adultery should she leave with Paris. *Admisso* here is the noun meaning ‘offense’ (OLD def 1), not the participle. Michalopoulos notes that the word also refers to intercourse between animals, which makes it doubly appropriate.

*nig ego, si peccem, possum nescisse; nec ullus*

*error, qui facti crimen obumbret, erit.*

47 *Nil* is an adverbial acc. of respect (Bennett #176.3), ‘not at all.’ Helen reiterates her point from above: if she were to give in to Paris, she could in no way shift the blame. *Peccem* is subjunctive in a future less vivid condition (Bennett #303). The use of the litotes, *nec ullus*, is emphatic.

48 Helen is correct, although there is a version of the story in which Helen was replaced with a simulacrum by Aphrodite, and thus it was the false Helen who committed adultery (see introduction to this poem) leaving Helen blameless. For *crimen*, see note on 5.6.

*illa bene erravit vitiumque auctore redemit:*

* logits in culpa quo Iove dicar ego?*

49 *Auctore* refers to Jupiter, who is the creator of man in some stories. Leda’s fault can also be forgiven because she could not resist the commands of a god, and not just any god, but Jupiter, the *auctor*, himself.
Paris, however, is not a god. *Dicar* takes a predicate nom (Bennett #168.2b).

*et genus et proavos et regia nomina iactas;*  
*clara satis domus haec nobilitate sua est.*

51-60 Helen rebukes Paris’ statements about his great status with her own family tree and Menelaus’ family tree.

51 Helen excellently refutes Paris’ arguments of his own royal house. Helen is noble as is Menelaus. If Ovid is echoing Horace here, he does so quite appropriately. All of Paris’ boasts will come to nothing; he will ultimately prove to be well adorned but less than useful. Consider also the propensity for Hermione, Helen’s daughter, to use honorifics in her letter. Cf. 8.1, 8.5, 8.12, etc.

52 *Nobilitate* is an abl. of respect.

*Iuppiter ut socier proavus taceatur et omne*  
*Tantalidae Pelopis Tyndareique genus,*

53 Helen has her own lofty lineage and since Menelaus does as well, she quickly makes moot Paris’ argument that leaving with him would increase her prestige. *Ut taceatur,* ‘let there be silence,’ introduces a praeteritio, or passing by. Used frequently in Cicero, it is a means of saying something by pretending to gloss over it. The device is perfectly appropriate here since Paris already knows of everyone’s lineage and since it helps to minimize the importance Paris places on lineage.

54 Pelops is the grandfather of Menelaus, the epithet *Tantalid* reflects his descent from his father Tantalus. Tyndareus is the mortal father of Helen. Despite all of his crimes,

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224 For an interesting take on this, see Hor. *Carm.* 1.14.13-16, *iactes et genus et nomen inutile:/ nil pictis timidus navita puppibus/ fidit. Tu, nisi ventis/ debes ludibrium, cave.* “You boast both clan and name uselessly: the timid sailor puts no faith in painted ships. Unless you owe sport to the winds, beware.”

225 See notes on 16.1 et seq.
Tantalus was also of great nobility which increases the fame of Helen’s lineage on all sides. See 16.211 et seq. for more on Tantalus.

*dat mihi Leda Iovem cygno decepta parentem,*

*quae falsam gremio credula fovit avem.*

55 *Parentem* is in apposition to *Iovem,* ‘as a parent.’ Helen’s wording is very polite for what amounts to rape. The story of Jupiter as a swan has been mentioned before. Consider also the suggestion in the Cypria, as noted by Meagher (2002, 24), that Nemesis, the goddess of vengeance, is listed as a possible mother of Helen, also taken by Zeus in the form of a swan. In the Heroides, swans have already been established with destruction though the opening of Dido’s letter (7.1-2), *Sic ubi fata vocant, udis abiectus in herbis/ad vada Maeandri concinit albus olor*226. Perhaps Ovid mentions this and Helen’s possible lineage to Nemesis to foreshadow the fatality of this relationship.

56 *Quae credula* modifies Leda. Notice that the synchysis reflects the intertwining of Leda and the swan with her lap in the middle.

*i nunc et Phrygiae late primordia gentis*

*cumque suo Priamum Laumedonte refer!*

57 As Michalopoulos notes, *I* plus an imperative is a comedic construction used to demonstrate sarcasm. It could be loosely translated as ‘Go ahead and report’. *Late* must have the sense of ‘far and wide.’

58 Priam and Laomedon are famous Trojan kings, thus part of the *primordia gentis.*

*quos ego suspicio; sed qui tibi gloria magna est*

*quintus, is a nostro nomine primus erit.*

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226 “Thus the fates call, the white swan sings having been thrown down on the moist grass by the shoals of Maeander.”
59 Quos refers to the ancestors in the previous couplet. Helen is counting back descent from Jupiter. EJ Kenney also notes that the number is not five, but the use of the number which fits metrically to simply refer to more than one is acceptable since the actual number of generations is less important than the line. Think about Caesar and Augustus who descended from Venus by a very long and arduous trail of ancestry.

sceptra tuae quanvis rear esse potentia terrae,
non tamen haec illis esse minora puto.

61-74 Helen suddenly begins to consider the wealth of Troy compared to Sparta as well as the gifts which Paris promises her.

61 Sceptra as metonymy for the ‘right of rulership’ or the ‘royal family.’ Consider also Oenone’s statement at ś.Śś, Dignaque sum fieri rerum matrona potentis; Sunt mihi, quas possint sceptra decere, manus. Where Oenone thinks she is worthy to simply have them, Helen must weigh which scepters are heavier and more appropriate for her.

62 Haec for Greek or Spartan sceptra, illis for Trojan sceptra.

si iam divitiis locus hic numeroque virorum
vincitur, at certe barbara terra tua est.

63 EJ Kenney is correct that si iam should be taken as “say, for the sake of argument.” Vincitur here has the sense of ‘is surpassed’ (OLD def 9) rather than ‘conquered’ (OLD def 1). Although the reader who knows that it is Troy that will ultimately be vincitur should still be amused.

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See EJ Kenney ad loc. for the list of intermediaries between Paris and Jupiter.
Barbara has not just the sense of foreign, but also of being uncivilized and ignorant (OLD def 2).\footnote{For another example of Greek xenophobia, see Eur. Medea, where Jason claims that he has taken Medea out of the filth and superstition of Asia by bringing her to Greece. See Her. 6.81 for Hypsiplyye’s use of Barbara against Medea.}

munera tanta quidem promittit epistula dives
   ut possint ipsas illa movere deas.

Epistula refers to Her. 16. Dives is a transferred epithet; it agrees with the epistula but makes sense with munera.

Paris has moved the goddesses not with his gifts, but rather with the apple. The goddesses actually moved him with gifts, an irony that should not be lost on the reader. Ut introduces a result clause (Bennett #284).

sed si iam vellem fines transire pudoris,
   tu melior culpae causa futurus eras.

For si iam, see note 61. Vellem is in a present contra-factual conditional although the apodosis futurus eras is indicative (Bennett #304.3).

Helen has finally reached the point where her argument falters. She can refute the riches of Troy and the power of Priam; she can call him foreign and barbarian, but he is still a good enough reason on his own to pass the boundaries of shame.

aut ego perpetuo famam sine labe tenebo
   aut ego te potius quam tua dona sequar.

Labe is from labes-is, ‘disaster’ (OLD def 2), ‘dishonor’ (OLD def 5), but the reader should not miss the paronomasia with labium, -i, ‘lip’, which is often used in poetry for
kisses, which Helen would also not get were she to stay in Sparta. Consider also Achilles’ choice as he presents it to the assembly in II.9.²²⁹ Perhaps Helen has the same choice and she knows it: she could stay in Sparta and simply become a footnote in history, or she can flee with Paris and become immortal in her fame.

*utque ea non sperno, sic acceptissima semper*

*munera sunt, auctor quae pretiosa facit.*

71 Helen is at least honest about the importance of gifts, but claims that what makes them special is that Paris gives them. Considering that the *auctor* is only mentioned once, while the gifts have four instances in the couplet, *ea, acceptissima, munera, pretiosa,* one could reasonably conclude that Helen is more interested in the gifts.

*plus multo est, quod amas, quod sum tibi causa laboris,*

*quod per tam longas spes tua venit aquas.*

73 *Multo* is an abl. of degree of difference (Bennett #223). Helen lists three reasons why Paris’ gifts are not the most important things. Helen’s vanity is reflected again: she loves that Paris is laboring for her. Consider that Theseus had to kidnap her and that Menelaus had to beat out the other suitors. She enjoys that men go through long challenges for her.

74 The chiasmus puts the hope in the middle of the sea which is fitting since Paris has a return trip to make as well.

*illa quoque, adposita quae nunc facis, improbe, mensa,*

*quamvis experiar dissimulare, noto:*

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²²⁹ “I carry two sorts of destiny toward the day of my death. Either, if I stay here and fight beside the city of the Trojans, my return home is gone, but my glory shall be everlasting; but if I return home to the beloved land of my fathers, the excellence of my glory is gone, but there will be a long life left for me, and my end in death will not come to me quickly” (Tr. Lattimore, 209).
75-90 Helen gives her own version of the happenings at the dinner table, which Paris covered in his letter, 16.217 et seq.

75 Improbe means ‘wicked,’ particularly in a sexual way (OLD def 7). Helen may somewhat playfully be insulting him. Mensa adposita refers to the tables that are brought in and placed before the couches during a banquet. The whole scene is somewhat anachronistic, but allows Ovid’s Roman readers to better understand. Illa as a substantive for ‘those things’ refers to the behavior and actions at the dinner. Noto is from the verb noto-are not the noun, and it suggests paying attention rather than just noting. It also frequently has a sense of noting something as ‘shameful’ or ‘wicked’ (OLD def 1).

cum modo me spectas oculis, lascive, protervis,
   quos vix instantes lumina nostra ferunt,

77 Cum with an indicative is translated as ‘when’ (Bennett #288.2). Modo, here and following, make the most sense as ‘just now’ (OLD def 5) since she is mimicking the memory of the dinner that Paris provided in his letter. Cum modo me spectas used like this is very close to our idiom, ‘whenever you look at me [I fall to pieces].’ For both letters, the events of dinner are past but had been continuing up until Menelaus left. Paris referred to Helen as lasciva at 16.229 and she may be mimicking his vocabulary here in her reply. Protervus is the same adjective that Oenone uses at 5.135 to describe the Satyrs which she had to hide from to protect her chastity. Lascive is also the word Apollo uses to describe Cupid, right before Cupid strikes him with a love arrow (Met. 1.456). Perhaps Paris, also an archer, has already struck Helen?

78 As Michalopoulos rightly notes, Helen does not state why she cannot take Paris’ ocular attack, be it from shame or from passion. Notice that in the word order, instantes is actually pressing against lumina.
et modo suspiras, modo pocula proxima nobis
sumis, quaque bibi, tu quoque parte bibis.

79 The alliteration and anaphora on the line may actually reflect the sound of drinking.

80 Helen has noticed that Paris drinks from the same side of the cup that she does so that he may touch where her lips have been. Helen visually renders the line with a synchysis to show the intertwining of lips and cup, *qua bibi parte bibis*. Helen does not seem to mind as she has placed herself, the subject of *bibi*, next to *tu*.

*a, quotiens digitis, quotiens ego tecta notavi*

*signa supercilio paene loquente dari!*

81 *Tecta* has the sense of ‘masked’ or ‘hidden’ (OLD def 2) rather than just covered, allowing it to make sense with both *digitis* and *supercilio*. *Supercilio* may also through metonymy include signals he makes with his eyes. The repeated frequentive, *quotiens*, shows how much effort Paris was putting into his attempts.

82 *Dari* is in indirect statement governed by *notavi*. In the *Ars. Amatoria* (1.1.500) Ovid notes that *Multa supercilio, multa loquare notis*. Helen understands the signs that lovers use.

*et saepe extimui, ne vir meus illa videret,*

*non satis occultis erubuique notis.*

83 Michalopoulos rightly points out the two interpretations for Helen’s use of *meus vir*: either 1) just like Paris, she is contemptuous of him or loath to mention Menelaus’ name, or 2) the use of *vir* reminds Paris that she does have a husband already.

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230 “You say much with the eye, much with nods.”
Considering Helen’s propensity for rousing up jealousy, the second option makes the most sense. The *ne* introduces a clause of fearing triggered by *extimui* (Bennett #296.2).

84 *Occultis notis* makes the most sense here as an abl. of cause (Bennett #219).

\[
\text{saepe vel exiguo vel nullo murmure dixi:}
\]

\[\text{‘nil pudet hunc!’ nec vox haec mea falsa fuit.}\]

85 Helen would have to mumble or whisper so that Menelaus would not hear her and be clued in to Paris’ antics. If Helen were at all virtuous, she would have let Menelaus know about Paris’ flirtation and would not have been returning signs in kind.

86 *Pudet* takes an acc. of person and a gen. of thing ashamed of (Bennett #209). *Nil* which does not decline, serves the function of the gen.

\[
\text{orbe quoque in mensae legi sub nomine nostro,}
\]

\[\text{quod deducta mero littera fecit, ‘amo.’}\]

87 Michalopoulos notes that in Ovid’s day there was a fashion of using round tables cut from large trees, making the image anachronistic. What is more interesting is the parallel between Paris’ use of writing for Oenone (5.21 et seq.) and what Helen is now showing. In the first he carved it into a tree whose rings would grow making for a very pastoral scene. Here, less permanent than carving, he is drawing it on a part of a tree that has been turned into something urbane. Likewise, compare with *Her* 1.31 et. seq. Where Penelope discusses the generals returned from the Trojan War drawing battle maps of the war Paris and Helen are about to cause on the tables using wine.
credere me tamen hoc oculo renuente negavi:

    ei mihi! iam didici sic ego posse loqui!

89 *Oculo renuente* is an abl. abs. with *oculo* standing in for the larger part of her face. *Negavi* introduces the indirect statement.

90 Helen is in disbelief, most likely mock disbelief over the idea that Paris truly is in love with her, despite the fact that he has written *amo* on the table. For the dangers of saying written things out loud, see the letters between Cydippe and Acontius (*Her.* 20 and 21) where Cydippe is forced into love by accidentally reading aloud a note containing an oath to the gods to marry Acontius.

    his ego blanditiis, si peccatura fuissem,
    flecterer, his poterant pectora nostra capi.

91-108 Helen explains to Paris how beauty is a burden for the both of them.

91 Helen uses the subjunctive in a past contra-factual condition (Bennett #304.3).

92 The chiasmus shows that Helen’s heart is surrounded with the alliteration of ‘p’ sounds serving to mimic a heartbeat.

    est quoque, confiteor, facies tibi rara potestque
    velle sub amplexus ire puella tuos.

93 Helen confesses that while she is unsure about the effectiveness of his flattery, his beauty is undeniable.

94 As Michalopoulos notes, the enclosing word order places the girl within the embraces. See also 5.99-100, *Nec tibi, si sapias, fidam promitte Laecaenam/ quae sit in amplexus tam cito versa tuos*, for similar word order in Oenone’s caution to Paris.
altera sed potius felix sine crimine fiat,
quam cadat externo noster amore pudor.

95 *Fiat* introduces a jussive (Bennett #275). *Altera* is nom. fem. sg. substantive referring to one of the girls from the line above.

96 *Noster* must be a poetic plural since Paris’ shame does not seem to matter to him and certainly need not be a concern to Helen. *Pudor* is also most regularly a characteristic of women who need to guard their virtue and may almost be plural by attraction. ‘Regard for the decencies in sexual behavior, dress, language, demeanor, etc., modesty; (spec.) chastity’ (OLD def 2b) is what Helen means by *pudor*.

*discē modo exemplo formosis posse carere;*
*est virtus placitis abstinuisse bonis.*

97 Helen, while refusing Paris’ advances, takes up the role of advice-dispensing sage. Perhaps she tries to hold her resolve together by expounding high Stoic morals. *Exemplo,* the abl. object of *carere* (Bennett #214c), probably refers to herself.

98 *Bonis placitis,* a substantive, is ablative of separation with *abstinuisse* (Bennett #214): “it is a virtue to abstain from pleasing delights.”

*quam multos credis iuvenes optare, quod optas?*
*qui sapiant, oculos an Paris unus habes?*

99 Helen points out that Paris is not the first youth to desire her. *Quam* should be taken with *multos,* “how many youths.” This begs the question of why Helen is writing this letter at all. She has been sought before and will be sought again. Is Paris special? Is he
the first to have written to her or is he simply the first to write to her while Menelaus is away? 231

100 Unus here means ‘alone’ (OLD def 7). Qui refers to oculos on this line. Sapiant here is a relative clause of the characteristic (Bennett #283). However, the entire line should be understood with credis above.

non tu plus cernis, sed plus temerarius audes;
   nec tibi plus cordis sed minus oris adest. (nimis, Michalopoulos)

101 The adjective temerarius is used in place of the adverb form for metrical reasons (Bennett #239).

102 Michalopoulos and EJ Kenney support an emendation from minus to nimis, which makes far better sense. Here os needs to be translated as ‘shame’ or ‘impudence’ (OLD def 8b) rather than the usual ‘face’ or ‘appearance.’ The use of irony sharpens Helen’s complaint since Paris has plenty of ‘beauty’ (OLD def 6d) which is a common use of os in elegy.

tunc ego te vellem celeri venisse carina,
   cum mea virginitas mille petita procis:

103 Helen uses the imperfect subjunctive in contrary to fact past conditional (Bennett #304). Tunc refers to the time covered by the cum clause on line 104.

104 Helen again subtly refutes the claims that she and Theseus had been intimate. Her virginity, not her hand in marriage, was sought. Sc. est with petita. As Michalopoulos notes, the actual number of suitors is 99 at most. Helen stresses her worth by claiming such an impossibly large number.

231 See introduction to this poem for more on why Helen writes.
si te vidissem, primus de mille fuisses!

iudicio veniam vir dabit ipse meo.

106 Helen suggests that even Menelaus would have to agree that Paris is the fairest. It is doubtful, however, that he would have seen that as a sufficient reason to choose Paris over himself. In truth, Helen holds considerable sway on Menelaus’ judgment. It is fitting that her judgment frames the line with Menelaus squarely inside of it. Notice again the ambiguous use of *vir*, which replicates the scenario in elegy, where the blocking rival character is called a *vir*.

\[\text{ad possessa venis praeceptaque gaudia serus:}\]
\[\text{spes tua lenta fuit; quod petis, alter habet.}\]

107 Helen continues her discussion of what might have been by pointing out that Paris arrived in her life too late. The nom. adj. *serus* is used in place of the adverb (Bennett #239). This helps stress that it is Paris who has come too late. Both *possessa* and *praecptae* are legal terms used in reference to property, in this case *gaudia*.

108 The use of *lenta* here is worth noting. It is clearly translated as ‘slow’ (OLD def 4) based on the hexameter. Still, Helen may also be using the sense of ‘easy’ or ‘pliant’ (OLD def 1) at the same time, in that Paris came to Sparta without a concrete plan, but only the hope that taking Helen would not be too difficult.

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232 See the *Trojan Women* by Eur. where she persuades him to let her live after the war is over. See also Books 4 and 5 of the *Odyssey* for the interactions between Helen and Menelaus.

233 For further discussion of the shortcomings of Menelaus, particularly the fact that he did not actually vie for Helen’s hand but sent Agamemnon to do it, see Austin (1994, 58 et seq.).
ut tamen optarem fieri tua Troica coniunx, (optarim)

invitam sic me nec Menelaus habet.

109 Palmer reads *optarem*, the imperfect subjunctive which Bentley emended to *optarim*, the syncopated perfect subjunctive. EJ Kenney agrees with Bentley while Michalopoulos agrees with Palmer. Neither gives reasons for their decision but it seems to be a concessive clause (Bennett #308): “suppose nevertheless that I wanted to become…” in such clauses, the perfect subjunctive is often used to indicate past time, although the imperfect is permissible (hence the discrepancy noted above). See 5.2 for more on *conjunx*.

110 The use of Menelaus at this juncture helps to punctuate the point from the hexameter. She uses her husband’s name to reinforce the marriage aspect. The use of *nec* with *invitam* creates litotes for emphasis. She chose Menelaus or, depending on the version, at least did not complain about the union.

*desine molle, precor, verbis convellere pectus*

*neve mihi, quam te dicis amare, noce,*

111 *Desine* with an infinitive forms a negative imperative (OLD def 2). Notice that Paris’ words have managed to work themselves right into the middle of Helen’s soft heart. The only other use of *convellere* in the *Heroides* is at 16.41. Helen may be trying to mock Paris by mimicking him.

112 *Noceo* takes a dat. object (Bennett #187.2). The couplet is filled with strong consonants which helps give the appearance that Helen is actually chastising Paris.
sed sine, quam tribuit sortem fortuna, tueri
nec spolium nostri turpe pudoris ave. (habe?)

113 The imperative *sine* as *desine* above is used when entreating someone. Helen considers herself part of Paris’ fate. She asks him to leave her be but at the same time acknowledges that fate has determined that she belongs to him.

114 Palmer and EJ Kenney suggest emending from *habe* to *ave*. Michalopoulos maintains *habe* but wants to emend *nec* to *et*. Emendation does not seem necessary as the line can stand as it is with *nec* being used to negate the imperative. Reeve (1973, 330) likewise supports *habe*.

*at Venus hoc pacta est, et in altae vallibus Idae
 tres tibi se nudas exhibuere deae,*

115-135 Helen gives her own version of the judgment, but pridefully focuses more on being the winning prize than the contest itself. One can see Helen allowing the excuse of ‘divine fate’ becoming a rationalization.234

115 The deponent *paciscor* takes an acc. object. *Hoc* refers to her *spolium* above.

116 The goddesses showed themselves nude to Paris during the beauty contest so that he could better judge them. Paris never actually mentions this detail in his letter. As Michalopoulos notes, that omission has been used as grounds to question the authenticity of parts of *Her.* 16. What seems more plausible, however, is that Helen, regardless of how she found out, adds that detail to show that she knows more than Paris thinks. Paris has portrayed Helen as a rustic throughout his letter. This may be Helen’s way of showing that she is shrewd enough to research and learn about the man

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234 For Oenone’s account, see 5.35-36 and 16.61-88 for Paris’.
courting her. Perhaps, just as Oenone knows about Theseus, Helen knows this because she is in love (Her 5.130).

_unaque cum regnum, belli daret altera laudem,
‘Tyndaridis coniunx,’ tertia dixit, ‘eris!’_

117 In one very elliptical couplet, Helen lists the three possible prizes. _Daret_ needs to be understood with both _regnum_ and _laudem belli_.

118 Helen here uses her own patronymic to describe herself. Perhaps she does this to mock the importance Paris places on status or to help minimize the fact that she is little more than a bargaining chip in this story which is reinforced by the fact that she has already referred to herself (or at least or her sexuality) as _sortem_ and _spolium_ (113-114).

__credere vix equidem caelestia corpora possum__

_ arbitrio formam supposisse tuo._

119 Helen acknowledges that the story is hard to believe, but Paris did the exact same when he told the story (16.60). This refrain of Paris’ own sentiments may be Helen’s way of hinting that she and Paris are more alike than either wants to admit.

120 The verb _suppono_ takes an acc. of thing placed and a dat. of person placed before (Bennett #187.3). The framing on the line puts their beauty in the middle of his judgment.

__utque sit hoc verum, certe pars altera ficta est__,

_iudicii pretium qua data dicor ego:_

121 Helen’s use of both _sit_ and _est_ in this line creates a wonderful balance. The _sit_ is used here in yet another concessive clause (Bennett #278), while the _est_ makes a
declarative statement: “suppose that this is true, still surely the second part [of your story] is fake, according to which...”

122 *Qua* here has the sense of ‘where’ or ‘in which’ (OLD def 4). *Pretium* is a predicate nominative, ‘given as a reward.’

*non est tanta mihi fiducia corporis, ut me maxima teste dea dona fuisse putem.*

123 Despite her vanity, Helen downplays her worth at this point. It is possible that she is fishing for a compliment and forcing Paris to defend her beauty all the more. *Ut* introduces a result clause based on *tanta* (Bennett #284). *Fiducia* here needs to mean ‘confidence’ with the sense of ‘value’ (OLD def 2).

124 It is ironic that Helen names Venus as the witness when it was actually Paris. One of Helen’s purposes in this and the following couplet is to avoid the crime of hubris and the downfall that accompanies it. While Helen will have plenty of misery, in most versions, her story still ends without any true penalty. She ends up where she began as queen of Sparta and married to Menelaus (*Od.5; 6*).

*contenta est oculis hominum mea forma probari:*

*laudatrix Venus est invidiosa mihi.*

126 *Laudatrix,* ‘the giver of praise’ needs to be understood as an appositive to *Venus.* Helen cannot appreciate how true her words are. Certainly her beauty has caused her sufficient problems, but consider Helen’s discussion with Aphrodite in *Il.* Bk. 3 for an understanding of how spiteful Venus can be when angered.  

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235 “[Venus to Helen:] Wretched girl, do not tease me lest in anger I forsake you and grow to hate you... lest I encompass you in hard hate, caught between both sides, Danaans and Trojans alike, and you wretchedly perish” (Tr. Lattimore, 110).
sed nihil infirmo: faveo quoque laudibus istis:

nam mea vox quare, quod cupit esse, neget?

127 Faveo, with the sense of ‘to be propitious to’ or ‘to be favorable towards’ takes a dat. object (Bennett #187.2).

128 This line has given commentators a good deal of trouble. Four or so various emendation alternatives have been offered. The current form is the one Palmer and Michalopoulos accept. EJ Kenney’s bold suggestion that the couplet could simply be excised seems too drastic. It is important that Helen give a reason for entering into hubris after just making an attempt to avoid it. The pentameter gives the reason. Helen acknowledges that there is no sin in saying what you feel since the feeling is already a crime.

nec tu succense, nimium mihi creditus aegre:

tarda solet magnis rebus inesse fides.

129 Succense has the sense of ‘be angry’ (OLD def 3) but one should remember the importance of fire imagery as Troy will find itself consumed with flames (OLD def 1) after not believing Paris’ sister, Cassandra.

130 Inesse as a compound takes a dat. object (Bennett #187.3).

prima mea est igitur Veneri placuisse voluptas,

proxima, me visam praemia summa tibi,

131 Placeo takes a dat. object (Bennett #187.2). Helen has changed her line of reasoning again from not believing the story of the judgment to desiring to follow it through. Voluptas est introduces indirect discourse with both placuisse and visam (esse), which in the passive has the sense of ‘seem’ (OLD def 20). The word order here has Venus surrounded by desire, which is appropriate based on her divine function.
The alliteration of ‘p’ and ‘v’ sounds in the couplet perhaps helps to mirror her astonishment at her value.

*nec te Palladios nec te Iunonis honores auditis Helenae praeposuisse bonis.*

133 *Palladios* is a possessive adjective, but to balance the line it should be translated as ‘of Pallas.’ *Honores* here has both the traditional sense of ‘honor’ (OLD def 1) and ‘reward’ (OLD def 2).

134 *Praeposuisse* requires an acc. and a dat., to have placed (acc.) before (dat.) (Bennett #187.3). *Helenae* is gen. qualifying the neuter substantive *bonis.* Paris uses the same word (16.165) to state that he preferred Helen to the other prizes. She may be mimicking his vocabulary to show that she is a close reader.

*ergo ego sum virtus, ego sum tibi nobile regnum! ferrea sim, si non hoc ego pectus amem.*

135 Helen’s argument is sound. She is worth more than excellence, a loose interpretation of Athena’s gift and Juno’s gift of rule. The anaphora of *ego sum* allows Helen to stress her own importance.

136 The future less vivid requires the protasis to be translated ‘would’ and the apodosis to be translated ‘should’ (Bennett #303). Helen cautiously avoids directly saying she loves Paris, but rather states that she loves his heart. To admit her love outright would be tantamount to admitting defeat whereas one could take her statement to mean that she loves the fact that Paris wanted her more than *virtus* and *regnum,* even though he had yet to see her.
ferrea, crede mihi, non sum, sed amare repugno

illum, quem fieri vix puto posse meum.

137 As her resolve fails, Helen must continue to give reasons why she will not go with Paris. Now she will argue that he will not really be hers. The anaphora of ferrea from above, both in the prime position of the line, show Helen perhaps trying to convince herself through repetition.

138 Notice that Paris, quem meum, surrounds Helen’s thinking, as if this were a siege war.

quid bibulum curvo proscindere litus aratro

spemque sequi coner quam locus ipse negat?

139 Proscindere and sequi are both complimentary infinitives with coner. The shore is ‘thirsty’ perhaps because it is next to the sea and soaks up the water, or possibly because it will soak up all of the blood that the Trojan War will spill. Cassandra also used an agricultural metaphor in her prophecy in Oenone’s letter, referring to Helen as a heifer that will destroy everything. She also asked Oenone why she was scattering her seed on sand (5.113-120).

140 The hope refers to a productive harvest, which the sandy seashore is not suitable for, but for Helen, it refers to happy and productive love.

sum rudis ad Veneris furtum, nullaque fidelem —

di mihi sunt testes! —lusimus arte virum;

141 Helen claims that she has no experience with deception of love and that she has been faithful to her husband. The hyperbaton here between fidelem and virum
(Menelaus) and between *nulla* and *arte* allows her to demonstrate that the separation is already there. Note that the gods, currently Venus, have come between them at times.

142 Helen may also be playing with the use of *ludos* meaning of ‘to write erotic poetry,’ in which she is also inexperienced.²³⁶

\[\text{nunc quoque, quod tacito mando mea verba libello,}
\]
\[\quad \text{fungitur officio littera nostra novo.}\]

143 The *libello* refers to this letter which allows her to say the things she cannot say out loud. Consider the choice of *libello* which through paronomasia should remind the reader of *labella*, ‘lips.’

144 *Fungor* takes an abl. object (Bennett #218). The chiasmus on this line and the line above allow Helen to reinforce that she is surrounded on all sides.

\[\text{felices, quibus usus adest! ego nescia rerum}
\]
\[\quad \text{difficilem culpae suspicor esse viam.}\]

145 Michalopoulos rightly notes that *usus* has the sense of experience here. Helen wishes she knew what one is supposed to do when writing love letters and carrying on affairs. *Nescius-a-um* takes a gen. object (Bennett #204). Consider that the experienced writers of these types of letters are the women of the single *Heroides*. Helen may not realize it, but she is essentially wishing for an unhappy ending.

146 Consider the Sybil’s advice in *Aen.* 6.128 et seq., *facilis descensus Averno: … sed revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras/ hoc opus, hic labor est*²³⁷. Helen’s statement

²³⁶ For another example of the literary play between writing and making love, see Cat. 50.1-3 et seq.; *Hesterno, Licini, die otiosi/ multum lusimus in meis tabellis,/ut convenerat esse delicatos. “O Licinius, yesterday, we at leisure played much on my tablets, as we had agreed to be pleasures."
²³⁷ “The descent to Avernus is easy…but to recall the steps and to escape to the breezes above, this is the work, this is the labor.”
here does not fit conventional wisdom where the path to virtue is the difficult one, perhaps because ultimately her easy path will make life difficult for everyone else, including Aeneas who will have to circle the world in suffering as a direct result of Helen’s love.

ipse malo metus est: iam nunc confundor et omnes

    in nostris oculos vultibus esse reor.

147 Malo is a dat. of purpose (Bennett #191). Confundor has the sense of ‘ruined’ (OLD def 6) or ‘dismayed’ (OLD def 10).

148 Helen now turns her attentions to the fact that she believes people have noticed her behavior. Michalopoulos notes that this is an anachronistic attack on the affairs of the imperial family during Ovid’s day. Helen would not have cared what the common people think.

nec reor hoc falso: sensi mala murmura vulgi,

    et quasdam voces rettulit Aethra mihi.

149 Through litotes nec…falso, Helen contradictorily acknowledges that she does not just believe it, but that it is true. From a psychological perspective though, Helen’s admission has another function. If she is already being accused of the crime before she has committed it, what is to stop her from committing it? She uses destiny in the words of others as an excuse for her behavior.

150 In his own letter, Paris acknowledges that he approached Aethra, Theseus’ mother and Helen’s handmaid, for help but that she refused (16.259-262).
Michalopoulos rightly notes that the chiasmus of *dissimula desistere desistas* *dissimulare* and the alliteration of ‘s’ sounds helps to highlight Helen’s confusion.

Helen’s arguments again grow weaker along with her resolve. She now simply states that Paris is concealing his true intentions and should stop, but that he does not have to stop because he can hide his feelings. Her circular logic demonstrates that she is running out of reasons to say no. In this regard *nisi si* is wonderful and very effective, since she does not really want Paris to stop the flirting: ‘But you must hide your feelings, unless, that is, you may wish to stop altogether.’

*lude, sed occulte: maior, non maxima, nobis*

*est data libertas, quod Menelaus abest.*

Helen explains Menelaus’ departure and, having already given up the bulk of her resolve, agrees with Paris’ assertion that it is a prime opportunity.

153 Helen advises Paris that he can ‘play,’ which has clear sexual undertones (see note on 142), but that they only have a limited time since Menelaus will eventually return. That argument will become immaterial when Helen finally resolves to leave with him.

*ille quidem procul est, ita re cogente, profectus:*

*magna fuit subitae iustaque causa viae.*

155 *Ille* refers back to Menelaus. *Re cogente*, an abl. absolute, ‘with the matter compelling’ (Bennett #227.2) Helen does not need to explain to Paris why Menelaus is gone, Paris would have been told when he left and gave his apologies. Ovid deftly
avoids being boxed into any singular reason to allow him to draw from more varied sources for this letter.

156 Helen does defend that his reason for leaving suddenly was necessary or just, but in the next couplet admits that she helped prod him into it.

\[ au mihi sic visum est: ego, cum dubitaret, an iret, \]

\[ 'quam primum,' dixi, 'fac rediturus eas!' \]

157 *Dubitaret* is subjunctive in a *cum* clause (Bennett #288) while *iret* is in indirect question governed by *an* (Bennett #300.3).

158 *Fac* is the irregular imperative of *facio* (Bennett #116.3) which can be used to introduce a command, ‘make it that…’

\[ omne laetatus dedit oscula, 'resque domusque \]
\[ et tibi sit curae Troicus hospes,' ait. \]

159 *Omine* refers to Helen’s permission although it could also refer to the omens one makes before setting out on a journey.

160 *Resque domusque* is a hendiadys for the ‘household affairs.’ The hyperbaton between the first two subjects and Paris helps to show that he was almost an afterthought. This gives credence to the notion that Menelaus really is trusting of his wife. The irony inherent in Menelaus’ suggestion that Helen ‘take care of’ Paris should not escape the reader.\(^{238}\)

\(^{238}\) See 16.299-304 for Paris’ version of the events.
vix tenui risum, quem dum conpescere luctor,
nil illi potui dicere praeter 'erit.'

161 Helen appreciates the irony of Menelaus’ words, although at the point he gave them, she was committed to being a virtuous wife, or at least that is what she has claimed. Considering her past kidnapping, it is hard to believe that Menelaus so blindly trusts her with a foreign prince. On the other hand, considering how skillfully Helen manipulates him to save her own life in Eur. Trojan Women, Helen may simply be leaving out the parts of the conversation where she led him to this decision so she would have her chance with Paris. Note that the only other use of luctor in the Heroides is in Paris’ description of his difficulties watching her at dinner (16.237). Perhaps Helen is mocking him by comparing his pain with her sarcastic struggle holding back her laughter.

uela quidem Creten ventis dedit ille secundis;
   sed tu non adeo cuncta licere puta!

163 Creten is an acc. of place to which²³⁹ (Bennett #182). Michalopoulos rightly notes the irony in Menelaus’ voyage to the Cretans who are known for their lying and deception. It should also be observed that Theseus’ most famous voyage was to Crete to slay the Minotaur (Cat 64 and Her. 10). Menelaus is therefore heading to a place where the last man to steal his wife has been while another man steals his wife.

sic meus hinc vir abest, ut me custodiat absens.
   an nescis longas regibus esse manus?

165 Helen admits that she has no one guarding her, as if she were an elegiac puella who needed to slip past her ianitor. Although he reminds her that he is there in spirit.

²³⁹ Also know as an accusative of limit of motion.
Helen again makes a weak attempt at deterring Paris by reminding him of Menelaus’ power even in his absence. Notice that word order has the long hands on either side of the king.

forma quoque est oneri: nam quo constantius ore
   laudamur vestro, iustius ille timet.

167 Oneri is a dat. of purpose (Bennett #191). Helen points out that Menelaus has every right to fear that Helen will be taken or will be unfaithful, but Menelaus’ behavior as quoted both by Helen above and by Paris reveals none of this. They both portray him as a trusting simpleton or a cuckolded husband. See note line 161 for more on trusting Menelaus.

quae iuvat, ut nunc est, eadem mihi gloria damno est,
   et melius famae verba dedisse fuit.

169 Helen continues bemoaning the misfortune of her beauty and constant praise.

170 Verbum dare is an idiom for ‘to make a mockery of’ (OLD def 27).

nec quod abest hic me tecum mirare relictam:
   moribus et vitae credidit ille meae.

171 Mirare is second person imperative (Bennett #113) and its subject is Paris: ‘and do not be surprised that I have been left here with you because he has gone away’ (Reeve 1973, 333). Relictam is an interesting choice. Helen has not been abandoned in the strictest sense, where the other heroines use it much more dramatically (1.8; 3.66; 5.29; 6.95; 10.80; 10.129) for a true state of abandonment. Consider especially Paris’ adynaton-oath to Oenone that she will not be relictam at 5.29.
Moribus means ‘customs’ (OLD def 1) or ‘morals’ (OLD def 4), but one should not overlook the paronomasia with mors-tis especially when compounded with vitae.

de facie metuit, vitae confidit, et illum
securum probitas, forma timere facit.

Helen continues listing the things that Menelaus should both esteem and fear while citing her own virtue as the reason why Menelaus does not worry while gone. Since Menelaus will not read this letter, it makes sense that Helen is actually speaking to Paris and giving him fair warning about the problems that he will encounter if she leaves with him. Then again, see the introduction to this poem for the possibility that Menelaus might read this letter.

tempora ne pereant ultro data, praecipis, utque
simplicis utamur commoditate viri.

ultro here has the sense of ‘any further.’. Helen throws back Paris’ own suggestion that they enjoy what little time is given from Menelaus’ absence (16.299 et seq.) lest any more time be lost. Pereant is a purpose clause which has been placed before the main clause (Bennett #282). Pereo’s most base definition means ‘be wasted,’ but it has the specific elegiac sense of ‘to die from emotion’ (e.g., lovesickness) or ‘to be madly in love’ (OLD def 3; 4).

The command praecipis above governs the subjunctive utamur. Note that the word order with simple Menelaus at the beginning and the ending of the line demonstrates the visual space they have in which to enjoy his absence. The only other appearance of commoditate in the Her. is at 16.312, cogimur ipsius commoditate frui, which Helen is replying to.
et libet et timeo, nec adhuc exacta voluntas
   est satis: in dubio pectora nostra labant.

177 Helen weighs both her desire and her fear in a succinct couplet. The use of the
anaphora in the first half of the line shows her nervousness (as if she were stuttering)
and the necessary person change from the impersonal *libet* to the 1st person *timeo* shows
how her fear is internal and her joy is external (Paris).

178 *Labo* has both the sense of ‘totter,’ as Helen is using it, and ‘err’ which is also
appropriate. *Pectora* is a poetic plural but may also be Helen’s assertion that Paris’ heart
is also aflutter.

*et vir abest nobis, et tu sine coniuge dormis,*
   *inque vicem tua me, te mea forma capit;*

179 Any reservations Helen may have had are giving way as she lists reasons to
convince herself to succumb to Paris. Notice that her reasons show a balance and
equality between Paris and herself as if they were truly in the same position: both
beautiful and without spouses.

180 The line is both chiastic and synchetic depending on whether it is examined by
word or by part of speech. Helen manages to intertwine the two would-be lovers while
also surrounding them in embrace.

*et longae noctes, et iam sermone coimus,*
   *et tu, me miseram! blandus, et una domus:*

181 Sc. *sunt.* Through the ellipses in the couplet, the reader can see Helen becomes more
frantic in her rationalization. She tosses out excuses so quickly that the verbs are lost
except for *coimus* which can just mean ‘meet’ but also has a pure sexual sense as coitus
does in English (OLD def 2). Helen has written only the verb that matters to her at this moment.

182 Sc. es and est. Una has the sense of eadem. Hinds (1998, 30 et seq.) discusses the literary pedigree of the phrase me miseram, which Ovid uses 45 times, possibly most famously at Am. 1. 1.25-6, me miserum! Certas habuit puer ille sagittas./ uror, et in vacuo pectore regnat Amor. Helen, now frantic, has become the true elegiac lover.

et peream, si non invitant omnia culpam;

nescio quo tardor sed tamen ipsa metu.

183-194 Helen’s letter begins to ramble slightly at this point, ranging from the wish that Paris would just seize her to the statement that they can still fight this love.

183 Peream is subjunctive as the apodosis of the mixed condition. Michalopoulos rightly points out the irony of Helen’s wish to die as she will later be immortal.

184 Helen uses the passive tardor to enhance the helplessness she is trying to convey as if she were in no way responsible for the infidelity about to happen.

quod male persuades, utinam bene cogere posses!

vi mea rusticitas excutienda fuit.

185 Helen’s wish that Paris had simply taken her by force rather than making her succumb (which would have left her faultless) shatters previous attempts to defend her morals. The use of utinam in this couplet is noteworthy. Most often in the Heroides it is used to introduce a wish that some circumstance had happened which would make their letter unnecessary. Here Helen wishes Paris had gotten to the business sooner. A

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240 “Miserable Me! That boy has sure arrows. I burn and Love rules in an empty heart.”

241 Cf. Her. 1.5, utinam tum, cum Lacedaemona classe petebat/ obrutus insanis esset adulter aquis! (which has the added bonus of being about Helen) “O would that then, when He was seeking Sparta on ship, the insane
Roman reader might be reminded of the story of Lucretia who, when taken by force, chose to kill herself rather than live with the shame. Helen has no such compunctions.

186 The use of *vi* at the prominent opening position shows its importance.

\[ utilis \text{ interdum est ipsis iniuria passis. } \]
\[ sic certe felix esse coacta forem. \]

187 Helen here makes use of another gnomic statement: that injury helps the injured. Note the use of the synchysis which intertwines the injury and the injured as Helen and Paris will soon be.

188 *Forem* is an alternate form for *esse* (Bennett #100) which is subjunctive to denote the contra-factual nature of the statement since she was not forced. Consider Oenone’s statement at 5.131-2 that one who is so often captured must seek to be captured. Belfiore (1981) notes that “Her hints that she wants to be ‘raped’ show that she freely consents. It is no real rape which the intended victim says will be a ‘useful injury,’ making her felix rather than outraged and unfortunate” (142).

\[ dum novus est, potius coepto pugnemus amori: \]
\[ flamma recens parva sparsa resedit aqua. \]

189 Helen suggests that their passion is new enough to be extinguished and that they should fight it. Compare this with Paris’ use of *coepto* (16.18) where he notes that God’s will is present for their beginning.

adulter had been drowned on the water”; and *Her. 11.21 O utinam, Macareu, quae nos commisit in unum,/ venisset leto serior hora meo!* “O would that, O Macareus, that which sent us into one had come to my bed at a later hour!” and *Her 12.121 Compressos utinam Symplegades elisissent/ nostraque adhaerent ossibus ossa tuis.”* “O would that they had chosen the pressed Symplagedes and our bones had stuck to you bones.”
Helen’s use of fire imagery is quite appropriate; the small flame is easily put out compared to the conflagration of Troy their love will bring.\footnote{See note 16.43-48.}

\textit{certus in hospitibus non est amor; errat, ut ipsi,}
\textit{cumque nihil speres firmius esse, fuit.}

\textbf{191} \textit{Hospes} here has the sense of all of its definitions; Paris is at once the guest, the foreigner, the entertainer (of love), and the future host of Helen (OLD def 2a; 3).

\textit{Hypsipyle testis, testis Minoia virgo est;}
\textit{in non exhibitis utraque lusa toris. (questa)}

\textbf{193} Helen will strengthen her supposition on the dangers of loving a stranger by citing two other heroines: Hypsipyle and Ariadne (the Minoan girl). Consider that through metonymy, the letters of the women, and ergo the entire \textit{Epistulae Heroidum}, stand as witness to the wrongs committed by strangers. Helen could have also included Medea, Dido, and Phyllis in her catalogue.

\textbf{194} Several emendations have been suggested for the line. Palmer maintains \textit{lusa}. EJ Kenney and Michalopoulos employ \textit{questa}. Each has merit and both appropriately describe the situation. The fact that Helen is generating her entire list from previous Heroines in the \textit{Heroides} lends strength to \textit{questa} since ultimately the letters are complaints against men who have wronged them. Using \textit{questa} enhances the meta-literary recognition of the single letters which Michalopoulos mentions ad loc.\footnote{For more on the heroines being familiar with each other’s letters, see Fulkerson (2005).}
tu quoque dilectam multos, infide, per annos
diceris Oenonen destituisse tuam.

195-220 Helen now turns her fears to Paris’ character. She briefly questions whether he will be the man he purports to be once they are together.

195 For further evidence of Helen’s knowledge of the single letters, she refers to Paris as infide, which the Heroines use in their complaints (2.141; 7.30; 12.72; 12.210). Paris has not wronged Helen and the legitimacy of his marriage to Oenone is a topic of debate.

196 Despite Helen’s claim about Oenone, the opening and closing of the couplet and of the line, tu, tuam, and the 2nd person diceris demonstrate that all she is really able to think about is Paris.

nec tamen ipse negas, et nobis omnia de te
quaerere, si nescis, maxima cura fuit.

197 Helen explains how she knows so much about Paris. Where Oenone states that ‘love has taught her to know’ (5.130); Helen says that she did her research. How she actually conducted her research is immaterial since the fact that she went to the effort of learning all about Paris implies how interested she is. The use of si nescis, which Michalopoulos rightly calls ‘aggressive,’ stands in stark contrast to the portrayal of Helen as rustic, which is necessary to stand against her strongest competitor, the rustic nymph.

198 Quaerere is an epexegetical infinitive governed by cura fuit.

adde quod, ut cupias constans in amore manere,
non potes. expediunt iam tua vela Phryges.

199 Adde quod simply has the sense of ‘furthermore.’ Constans is best taken adverbially (Bennett #239).
200 *Expediunt vela* is metonymy for readying a ship (OLD def 5). Michalopoulos rightly compares this scene with Aeneas’ departure from Dido because both will end disastrously (*Aen.* 4.296-9, 416-18).

*dum loqueris mecum, dum nox sperata paratur,*

*qui ferat in patriam, iam tibi ventus erit.*

201 Notice that Helen refrains from saying which of them is hoping for the night. This couplet again demonstrates the difference between the single and double *Heroides.* Helen can hope for the night when it is even harder for women like Dido and Penelope with their widowed beds.

*cursebus in mediis novitatis plena relinquis*

*gaudia; cum ventis noster abibit amor.*

203 Michalopoulos rightly notes that the chaotic word order represents the disruption the winds will bring to Helen’s goal (marriage).

204 Readers should consider how often this trope shows up in the *Heroides.* Oenone recounts Paris’ departure (5.41et seq.); Phyllis recounts Demophoon’s (2.91 et seq.), Laodamia recounts Philoctetes’ (13.4 et seq.); etc. However, Helen is recounting a departure that has yet to happen as if she had learned from the previous 15 women that this is something that needs to be done in a letter, or perhaps she learned it from her own experience with Theseus.

*an sequar, ut suades, laudataque Pergama visam*

*pronurus et magni Laumedontis ero?*

205 *An* introduces a question (Bennett #163.4).
206 Pronurus should be taken as ‘daughter-in-law’ where Laomedon by metonymy refers to the Trojan royal house. Consider that Oenone argued how worthy she was to be a daughter-in-law of Priam (5.82)

\[\textit{non ita contemno volucris praeconia famae,} \]
\[\quad \textit{ut probris terras impleat illa meis.}\]

207 Helen’s claim that she is concerned about her reputation has already been covered; she mentioned her unhappiness with the talk of the common people.\(^{244}\) The only other appearance of \textit{praeconia} in the \textit{Her.} is at 16.141, which Helen is replying to.

208 notice that the word order shows the span of her wickedness from one end of the line to the other, just as Fama with her wings outstretched.

\[\textit{quid de me poterit Sparte, quid Achaia tota,} \]
\[\quad \textit{quid gentes Asiae, quid tua Troia loqui?}\]

209 Michalopoulos rightly notes that the anaphora stresses how much Helen is truly concerned with reputation. Notice also the order perfectly matches the voyage she is about to make, city–region–region–city.

\[\textit{quid Priamus de me, Priami quid sentiet uxor} \]
\[\quad \textit{totque tui fratres Dardanidesque nurus?}\]

211 Hecuba is Priam’s wife.

212 Totque refers to the extremely high number of children of Priam (usually counted at 50, \textit{Il.}24.495). The adj. \textit{Dardanides} simply means ‘Trojan’ based on their descent from

\(^{244}\) Consider the disasters that rumor brings to Dido in the \textit{Aeneid} at 4.173 et seq. See those same lines for a full description of Fama who is winged and grows stronger as she flies.
Dardanus.245 With the exception of Helenus, who appears in book 3 of the Aeneid, none of Paris’ brothers will survive the war. Helen cannot appreciate the irony of her words, but the reader can certainly enjoy Helen’s questions in light of the outcome.

tu quoque qui poteris fore me sperare fidelem
et non exemplis anxius esse tuis?

213 Fore is an alternate form of futurus esse (Bennett #100). Notice that Helen again frames the couplet with forms of tu, demonstrating that Paris is the most important thing on her mind.

214 Helen’s question is valid as both she and Paris demand faithfulness in a relationship created by abandoning their current spouses. As Paris points out in his letter, it is Helen’s destiny to be unfaithful as her mother was taken by Zeus, her brothers kidnapped the Leucippids, and Theseus had previously taken her.

quicumque Iliacos intraverit advena portus,
is tibi solliciti causa timoris erit.

215 Helen reminds Paris that he has to worry about both her faithfulness and about anyone who might wish to take her away. Paris does not have an oath from every suitor as Menelaus did (Catalogue of Women, Fragment 68).

216 Causa typically takes a preceding genitive (Bennett #198), but here the timoris and solliciti have been placed on either side to enhance the image of fear on all sides.

245 For the opinions of the Trojan Women (which are unanimously harsh towards Helen), see the play by Euripides of the same name.
ipse mihi quotiens iratus ‘adultera!’ dices,
oblitus nostro crimen inesse tuum!

217 *Ipse* modifies the 2nd person subject of *dices*.

218 *Insum* takes a dat. object, ‘to be involved in…’ (Bennett #187.3). For *crimen*, see note on line 5.6.

delicti fies idem reprehensor et auctor.

*terra, precor, vultus obruat ante meos!*

220 Michalopoulos correctly compares Helen’s wish that the earth should hide her face (the source of her fame) to the common tombstone inscription, “may the earth be light for her.” By paronomasia, it is the *vulgus*, the women of fallen Troy, who will rush upon her as they do in Eur. *Trojan Women* rather than her face being covered.

*at fruar Iliacis opibus cultuque beato*

donaque promissis uberiora feram:

221-224 Helen’s greed gets the better of her as she lists the things which Paris and Troy have to offer her.

221 *Fruor* takes and abl. object (Bennett #218.1). *Cultu* refers to the style of dress. The Trojans were known for their peculiar Asiatic clothing. Helen has quickly moved from worrying about what will happen to her and Paris to thinking about all the things she will gain from leaving with him. She uses her own vanity and greed to literally cover over all of the problems she has considered in the previous couplets.

222 *Promissis* is an abl. of comparison governed by the comparative *uberiora*, ‘more fertile than the ones promised’ (Bennett #217). Consider that in her letter, Oenone

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246 See notes at 5.65 and 16.195 for more on Trojan garb.
realizes her own troubles when she sees Helen’s purple dress on the ship from the distance. Furthermore, consider the story of Pandora from Hesiod’s *Theogony*. Pandora’s fateful jar and gifts from the gods brought ruin to all of mankind as Helen’s rewards for leaving Sparta will also do.\textsuperscript{247}

\textit{purpura nempe mihi pretiosaque texta dabuntur,}
\textit{congestoque auri pondere dives ero!}

223 Crimson or purple dye was extremely expensive because it came from the highly labor intensive process of harvesting small sea mollusks (OCD). Perhaps the purple she dreams about is the same purple that Oenone sees on the prow of the ship at 5.65.

224 \textit{Auri} is a material gen. governed by \textit{pondere} (Bennett #197).

\textit{da veniam fassae! non sunt tua munera tanti;}
\textit{nescio quo tellus me tenet ipsa modo.}

225 Helen now realizes that she has gotten carried away in her declarations of greed and doubles back by minimizing the value of the treasures.

226 \textit{Nescio quo}, “I know not why.” Helen is running out of reasons not to leave and questions what it would mean to leave her own people and land.

\textit{quis mihi, si laedar, Phrygiis succurret in oris?}
\textit{unde petam fratres, unde parentis opem?}

227 \textit{Succurro} takes a dat. with compound verbs (Bennett #187.3) Helen begins to ponder the potential consequences of her actions. Again, she has an advantage over her Heroidean predecessors--she has not ended her story, where all of the single Heroines have already run the course of their actions and are now left to ask “what will become

\textsuperscript{247} For further discussion on the Pandora-Helen connection, see Meagher (2002, 67).
of me now?" 248 The mention of the Dioscuri, Castor, and Pollux is ironic. Helen laments in the *Iliad* (bk. 5) that they have not come to help recover her. In Eur. *Helen*, it is said that they killed themselves out of shame for Helen’s actions.

228 As Michalopoulos rightly points out, Helen can seek neither her father nor her brothers because she has shamed her family. Consider Ariadne (*Her. 10*), who allowed Theseus to murder her brother (the Minotaur) and then fled her father, Minos; or Medea (*Her. 12*) who helped Jason to murder her brother, Absyrtus, and evade her father, Aeetes.

*omnia Medae promisit Iason:*

*pulsa est Aeson minus illa domo?*

230 *Aeson* is a patronymic adjective from Jason’s father, Aeson. It can be translated simply as ‘Jason’s.’ The actual house in question is the one in Corinth, not the one in Thessaly. Helen is technically right, but she omits all of the crimes that Medea committed such murdering king Pelias and her brother and betrayal of her father. Helen, while betraying a husband and causing a scandal, does not technically kill anyone. See below for further discussion.

*non erat Aeetes, ad quem despecta rediret,*

*non Idyia parens Chalciopeve soror.*

232 *Idyia* (also spelled Eidya) is Medea’s mother (Argonautika 3.268). Helen’s comparison to mythology here is strikingly appropriate. For Medea, an Asiatic woman, gave up everything and left with a Greek man. For Helen, the Greek woman is giving up everything for an Asiatic man. These two stories represent the inherent dangers of

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248 For a discussion of the places where this happens, see Michalopoulos ad. loc.
cultural exchange. While Helen cannot appreciate it now, both stories ultimately end in the deaths of everyone around them.

*tale nihil timeo, sed nec Medea timebat;
fallitur augurio spes bona saepe suo.*

233 Helen states flatly that she does not fear any such thing, but she does not specify what she does not fear which Ovid may have purposefully left vague. Menelaus will give chase with a fleet just as Aeetes did and Helen and Paris will end their love affair surrounded by death just as Medea and Jason did. Helen may be using fearless words, but the alliteration in this couplet (‘t’ on this line and ‘s’ on the next) belie her fear through the sound of stuttering. Jason and Medea are forced to consummate their marriage in a cave using the Golden Fleece as a bed so that they can say they are legally married (Appolonius Rhodes, Argonautika bk., 4). Paris and Helen are never required to prove this, but then again, Medea was a 14 year old girl and Helen is a grown woman.

234 This is another of Helen’s gnomic statements. Helen suggests that hope is intensified by love to the point of making foolish mistakes.

*omnibus invenies, quae nunc iactantur in alto,
navibus a portu lene fuisse fretum.*

235 *Omnibus navibus* is a dat. of advantage (Bennett #188). Helen notes that the start of a voyage always seems easy since harbors are built to protect ships, but that the middle of the voyage is the problem. *Alto*, as often the case in poetry, is a substantive for the sea (OLD def 1).

236 Readers should consider the travelogue epic (such as the *Odyssey* and *Aeneid*) which begins in medias res for the very reason that beginnings and endings are easy.
Helen refers to the vision Hecuba had about Paris, that he was a firebrand that would burn Troy to the ground (16.43-48). The vision is what led Priam to leave him on the side of a mountain as a baby. Paris used fire imagery (flames of passion) extensively throughout his letter, but failed to see the significance. Helen does not seem to appreciate the irony either. Peperisse is governed by the indirect discourse introduced by visa est.

Partus is gen. sg.

Pelasgus-a-um means ‘Greek.’ Unlike Hecuba, Cassandra saw the city burning with Greek fire. Quos refers to the seers.

Ferunt in this context means ‘they say’ (OLD def 34). Notice how the confusion of tenses in this couplet reflects the problems with prophecy by using a present verb, a perfect infinitive, and a future participle. Also remarkable is the distancing effect of the lines: an indirect statement inside an indirect statement triggered not by what the vates said but rather by what others say that the vates said; there is a kind of ‘vatic obscurity’ to it all. The only other appearance of Ilion arsurum is at Her. 16.49 which Helen must be replying to.

Paris noted in his own letter that Venus (Cytherea) is on his side.
Michalopoulos notes that the victory is double because she beat two goddesses; it is also double because she earned both the apple and the title of most beautiful inscribed on it. *Tropaeum* is an odd choice here—a more elegiac word like *palma* would be expected. *Tropaeum* is a very loaded military term usually referring to the spoils of a conquered enemy as would be placed on display or as a monument (OLD, def 1). Perhaps Helen is again foreshadowing all of the arms that will be taken up in the war Paris’ judgment will cause.

*sic illas vereor, quae, si tua gloria vera est,*

*iudice te causam non tenuere duae.*

243 *Gloria* refers to the story he told in his letter of the honor of serving a judge (16.61 et seq.).

244 *Tenuere* is syncope for *tenuerunt*. *Tenere causam* has the sense of ‘win a case.’ The word order places the attendant judge on one side of the cause and the two goddesses on the other. Helen’s fear regarding the enmity of the two losing goddesses is quite well founded. Athena and Hera will fight on the side of the Greeks in the Trojan War and Hera’s (Juno’s) enmity will carry into the “eneid ǻ*Aen.* 1.8 et seq.).

*nec dubito, quin, te si prosequar, arma parentur.*

*ibit per gladios, ei mihi! noster amor.*

245 Paris had referenced in his letter that he did not think any consequence would come from Helen’s departure (16.351-2). The reader of course knows that Helen’s abduction will launch a thousand black ships from Greece. The two subjunctives in the present form a future-less vivid, indicating an unsure potentiality, but then *ibit* on the next line is indicative. Perhaps Helen has become more certain as the couplet has progressed.

246 *Gladios* is metonymy for battles. *Ei mihi* is a common cry of despair, ‘woe to me.’
an fera Centauris indicere bella coegit
Atracis Haemonios Hippodamia viros:

247 _An_ introduces the question in this and the next couplet. _An_ here has the meaning ‘is not it the case that,’ with the following couplet supplying the thought ‘and so why should things be different in my case.’ The couplet refers to the wedding of Pirithous and Hippodamia at which the Centaurs who had been invited as guests tried to steal the bride (Met. 12.210 et seq.). A war ensued. The reference to kidnapping does not end there though. The reader should consider that Pirithous also tried to kidnap Persephone from the underworld and was punished by having to remain in the underworld forever (Hyginus 79). Helen is of course reminding Paris that kidnappings do not work out well in mythology and that love affairs cause wars.

_tu fore tam iusta lentum Menelaon in ira_

_et geminos fratres Tyndareumque putas?

249 _Fore_ for _futurum esse_ (Bennett #100n8). _Menelaon_ is a Greek acc. The anger is _iusta_ because their rights have been violated.

250 The twins are Castor and Pollux who have been mentioned previously. They will actually take no part in Helen’s return although they compelled Theseus to return her.

_quod bene te iactes et fortia facta loquaris,

_a verbis facies dissidet ista suis._

251 See note 16.51 for the allusion to Horace. Notice the assonance and alliteration in the line, which helps aurally represent Helen’s concern.
A is not required for an abl. of separation (Bennett #214), but its use is metrically convenient. Through the chiasmus, Paris’ words are actually hiding his face, or perhaps the worry on his face.

apat a magis Veneri quam sunt tua corpora Marti.

bella gerant fortes, tu, Pari, semper ama!

Consider the scene in the Iliad where Hector retrieves Paris from his bedroom after Venus has rescued him from certain death during his duel with Menelaus (Il.5). Corpora is a poetic plural. Comparison using quam requires both Venus and Mars to be in the same case which is governed by apta (Bennett #217).

The use of bella, ‘wars,’ here perhaps has a special double meaning since bella also means ‘beautiful,’ which is Paris’ strength.

Hectora, quem laudas, pro te pugnare iubeto;

militia est operis altera digna tuis.

Hectora is a Grk. acc. iubeto is a fut. imperative (Allen & Greenough #448) and has the sense of ‘get ready to order.’ Compare this with Oenone’s mention of Hector at 5.93. Oenone wants Paris to ask Hector for advice, where Helen wants him to protect Paris from harm.

Michalopoulos rightly notes that Paris is a miles amoris whereas Hector is a true miles. As Ovid points out in his Amores, the two are often confused. Militat omnis amans, et habet sua castra Cupido; Attice, crede mihi, militat omnis amans (1.9.1-2)249. The confusion is nicely represented by the synchysis on the line. The idea of all of the great heroes of Troy and Greece fighting for her certainly plays to Helen’s vanity, especially the big names like Hector. The mention of Hector fighting should instantly bring Achilles and

249 “Every lover is a soldier and Cupid has his own camp; Atticus, believe me, every lover is a soldier.”
their famous duel to mind. Achilles is said to be Helen’s fifth husband, whom she
marries in the Isles of the Blessed after their mortal lives are over (Meagher 2002, 30).

his ego, si saperem pauloque audacior essem,
    uteret; utetur, siqua puella sapit.

257 The use of the imperfect subjunctives creates a present contra-factual,
“were…would…” (Bennett #304). His is the object of uteret which takes an abl. (Bennett
#218). The things she is referring to encompass everything she would gain by leaving
with Paris, but perhaps especially the sexual relations she will get to enjoy.

258 Utetur, which is future, should be understood in place of the subjunctive. Helen
implies that any girl who is wise would enjoy the chance. The alliteration and
polyptoton in the couplet, which again represents stuttering, demonstrates her fear. The
future utetur refers to the future benefits some other girl will have with Paris; The
couplet should read as follows: “If I were smart and a little bit bolder, I would be
enjoying these things [i.e., Paris’ sexual prowess, the operae (exertions) worthy of militia
amoris from the previous couplet]; some smart girl or other will enjoy them.”

aut ego deposito sapiam fortasse pudore (timore)
    et dabo cunctatas tempore victa manus.

259 Michalopoulos suggests timore rather than pudore. His reasoning that her fear is the
only thing still keeping her in Sparta, and therefore should be the thing she lets go of, is
well reasoned.

260 Manus dare has the military sense of ‘to surrender’ (OLD def 9). Her hands are slow
because she has been hesitating for the length of the letter, but as long as she makes her
decision before Menelaus’ return, time may be conquered. Consider the paronomasia
between *victa* and *vincta*. She would also be bound at the temples with her crown and victory.

*quod petis, ut furtim prae*sentes *ista loquamur,*  
*scimus, quid captis conloquiumque voces;*

261 The *ut* clause qualifies the relative *quod*. *Praesentes* has the sense of ‘face to face’ (OLD def 1).

262 Michalopoulos rightly notes that *conloquium* is a euphemism for sex.

*sed nimium properas, et adhuc tua messis in herba est:*  
*haec mora sit voto forsan amica tuo.*

263 Consider Cassandra’s prophecy to Oenone that she cultivates her crops on sand (5.113 et seq.). Helen cannot appreciate that she is the ruin of Troy’s bounty. Notice that the synchysis represents the embraces which will occur after the delay.

264 *Amicus-a-um* takes a dat. of advantage (Bennett #192).

*hactenus; arcanum furtivae conscia mentis  
   littera iam lasso pollice sistat opus.*

265 Helen is effectively wrapping up her letter through *hactenus*, which could almost be translated as ‘no more!’ (OLD def 3).

266 Helen’s excuse for the cessation of her writing is that her hands are tired through metonymy from her thumb.
Consider that Clymene and Aethra had previously refused to help Paris (16.259), but will now have to serve as their mistress’ go-betweens. More importantly, Helen has referred to them as socias which has a strong military context (i.e., allies in war, OLD def 3) and legal context (i.e., partner in a business enterprise, OLD def 4). Clymene and Aethra are her handmaids, but also her accomplices and the choice of a military term may be Helen’s final premonition of the coming war. The maids assisting the mistress is a standard elegiac trope as Cuchiarelli (1995, 141) notes.

Comes refers to something or someone who accompanies another (OLD, def 1). Perhaps Helen is saying that she has made her decision, and that Clymene and Aethra will be accompanying them to Troy.
CONCLUSION

Due to my own experiences and struggles teaching advanced Latin authors to high school students, I wanted to develop a better way to bring them to authentic Latin and to bring authentic Latin to them. As I progressed though creating a more comprehensive commentary, I realized that the goal of teaching Latin is not just for students to read texts, but rather for them to reach an aesthetic level of appreciation for the text. In our own native languages, most anyone can come to a literal understanding of the words in a given poem or story, but so much more is conveyed to a reader who can comprehend and articulate the complexities of a text. To develop a commentary that helps a novice learn those skills, I had to go back to my educational psychology roots and reexamine how students learn, both in general and languages in particular.

I examined a broad array of pedagogical research on student learning factors that contribute to student engagement and success such as Vygotskian scaffolding, Bandura’s theories of social learning and self-efficacy, and Lave & Wenger’s legitimate peripheral participation. I had to balance that research against the practical considerations of the Latin classroom (such as the expert blind spot, the skills required for students to take Advanced Placement courses, the emotional development of students, and the skill levels of instructors themselves) to create a solution that met the needs of teachers and students at all possible skill levels.

The solution is a new commentary design which scaffolds the student as they become increasingly more capable readers of Latin. This process of teaching is a departure from the traditional process of teaching Latin, but it is not, however, so radical that teachers cannot accept the methodology. The selection of the Heroides, as well as of the specific poems was based on the developmental needs of students both in the difficulty of the text and in the need for a text that students could relate to. As a
teacher, I noted the challenges which students faced in grammar, vocabulary, manuscripts and critical apparatus, word order, literary analysis, and the subject matter of the texts themselves. Once all of those factors were considered, the commentary itself was written and redrafted several times to increasingly focus on the areas in which students need scaffolding. For example, grammatical help was enhanced to cover the needs of all students, background cultural knowledge for students who had not read the Iliad and the Odyssey were expanded to help students keep track of the details, the for the strongest students, those who do not need grammatical assistance, I added deeper questions, many of which were rhetorical, for example, “What does Oenone’s word choice say about her as a person?” I made sure that I didn’t just reach out to the most basic students, but to all students on all points of the learning continuum.

I therefore framed the notes in the commentary to assist students in all of these areas so that they could use the commentary as means of support and as another teacher against which they can assert their theories about how the text works. The model is not just designed for the Heroides, but can be applied to any Latin text to assist students as they become more adept readers and true Latinists. For example, I envision a commentary such as this written for the Aeneid to allow students to truly appreciate that work at the highest level and to make the road through the Advanced Placement course less arduous.

It should be noted that this commentary has not been tested extensively within the classroom environment. I did not have the access to get a large sample of students and teachers to test the text out due to time constraints both on my end and on the side of the instructors who had already developed their lesson plans for the year. One teacher, Dr. Susan McDonald of Lakewood Ranch High School in Bradenton, FL was able to fit the commentary for poem 5 into her school year for her Latin 3 class of 6 students. She reported that the students enjoyed the poem and were successful in their
reading, but even more importantly, she supplied qualitative data in the form of the
copies of the text where the students had marked their specific thoughts about the
commentary as they went through it. They circled and noted things they found useful
and things they did not find helpful or did not understand. Those comments indicate
that that some students (presumably the weaker ones) did not find the longer
explanations helpful but found the succinct grammatical notes quite useful. Other
students (presumably the stronger ones) found the longer descriptions interesting and
even helpful. Some of those stronger students found some of the succinct grammar
notes unnecessary. Consider, for example, the comments of all students for the notes on
line 31 regarding Paris’ pledge to Oenone that the Xanthus should run backwards: ‘too
much’; ‘great job of explaining’; ‘confused’ and two students who noted nothing. The
variance between students level is reflected in whether they did not need the note at all,
were not able to grasp it at their current level, or found the notes to be just right.
Interestingly, all of the students seemed to find the notes about poetic sounds such as
assonance interesting as marked by smiley faces and notes such as ‘neat’. It seems,
therefore, that the commentary does exactly what it should on a first reading; it allows
the students to be helped where they are. If the weaker students were to revisit the
same commentary and text, they should find more value out of parts of the commentary
which they were not ready for developmentally.

Future research would require a much larger sample of students and classes,
both public and private, high performing and low performing, with both new and
experienced teachers. The classes would read these poems using either the new
commentary model or using the more common commentaries of Palmer or Knox and
Kenney (i.e the old commentary model) and performance (including test scores) would
be compared between the sample groups to determine the effectiveness of the new
commentary.
A second experimental design to test efficacy of the new commentary model would be to gather a sample of classes which experience the commentary in its entirety as the first authentic Latin experience. A comparative analysis could determine whether the process of using the commentary increases the success in subsequent Latin authors between those classes and classes which did not use this commentary as a bridge. Doing so would test my initial hypothesis that the new commentary model, especially utilized for initial authentic instruction, increases student success in becoming readers of Latin. Ideally those experiments would replicate the anecdotal findings from Dr. Mcdonald’s students, confirming that a student-centered commentary built with proper scaffolding assists students as they transition from novices into legitimate Latinists.

An additional area of improvement for this dissertation exists regarding its very format. While printed text is still the dominant method of information distribution in education, education is evolving into digital and interactive mediums and there is enormous potential to adapt this commentary design into digital medium and increase its effectiveness even further. One of the major benefits of electronic education is prescriptive learning, wherein students take pre-assessments and, based on their performance on those assessments, are either exempted from entire sections of material based on mastery or are presented with review materials to bolster their knowledge until they gain mastery. While this technology is still in its infancy, it is quickly becoming a way to tailor a curriculum for individual students.

Imagine if a commentary such as this were prescriptive. A program could examine how well they do on a pretest or review their previous grades in Latin and determine how much and which parts of the curriculum to present to the student. For example, a student who scores poorly on the pretest would be given a version of the commentary with the grammatical notes and a minimal amount of higher order questions. A student who excels on the pretest would be given a version of the
commentary that skips the grammatical assistance and stresses thematic and philosophical parts of the commentary. There would always be a button the student could press to request more help, through which the computer would present the student with more grammatical assistance. Furthermore, the computer could provide details to the instructor regarding what level of commentary each student is using to help guide how classroom time gets utilized. As students progress through the course, the computer could adaptively increase or decrease the commentary guidance based on the students' performance, the same way the GRE now asks more or less complicated questions depending on whether or not a student answers correctly. Furthermore, the commentary could be hyperlinked to the previous learning. So that when the commentary tells a student that a noun is a genitive of price, they could click a link that will take them to a review lesson on the genitive. When the commentary references another text, the student could click a link that would open that text at the relevant place in another window or allow an interested student create a bookmark list. Using that same bookmark list, students could flag sections that they frequently reference so that they are easily accessible. The learning flow would not have to be broken by pulling out the Bennett grammar guide and flipping to the page.

An electronic version of this commentary might be equipped with audio components as hyperlinks so that when the commentary mentions a sound device such as hissing assonance, the student could click on a link and hear it read out loud. Audio and visual technologies could also bolster the presentation of poetic meter; students could hear lines read metrically or they could mark the dactyls and spondees and the computer would read the line to the student and ask the student if it sounds correct. The system could also work in reverse, allowing a student to read a line out loud for the computer to grade the meter. Likewise, the commentary could use colors and moving
text to help students flag and consider word order devices such as chiasmus to assist visual learners.

Students would be able to get “on demand” instruction when they reach a concept that troubles them. A digital format also makes it possible to tie an assessment to the process of translating. Imagine the benefits if, at the end of each section, the computer asked the students questions and then generated a report for the teacher so that they know which concepts to focus on during class time based on student responses. The computer could also ask students discussion questions as they are reading and then later present those answers to other students when they reach the same passage and allow students to have asynchronous discussions about the text to help prepare them for the in class discussion the next day. The teacher would have access to the students’ responses allowing students and instructors to work collaboratively with the material as they reach it.

Finally, electronic media allows for adaptation for students with disabilities. All text can be made bigger, or presented in an audio format. For students with processing disorders, the text can be adapted to strip out extraneous stimuli or to only present small sections of the commentary at a time. The possibilities for scaffolding the student using adaptive technologies are endless but the awareness of that technology and the ability for curriculum designers to work with programmers and engineers must catch up.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achaea</td>
<td>General Term for Greece.</td>
<td>16.187; 17.209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aethra</td>
<td>Handmaiden of Helen. Mother of Theseus.</td>
<td>16.259; 17.150; 16.267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anchises</td>
<td>Father of Aeneas by Venus. A Trojan Hero of the previous generation.</td>
<td>16.203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andromache</td>
<td>Wife of Hector; Known for her faithfulness and devotion to her family.</td>
<td>5.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antenor</td>
<td>Trojan Advisor to Priam. He is known for his wise counsel.</td>
<td>5.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apollo</td>
<td>Sun God; God of Healing; Had affairs with both Cassandra and Oenone; Built the walls of Troy.</td>
<td>5.139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atreus</td>
<td>Father of Agamemnon and Menelaus. Known for murdering his nephews and serving them to his brother, Thyestes as a meal.</td>
<td>5.101; 16.357; 16.366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassandra</td>
<td>Sister of Paris. Able to see the future but cursed that she will never be believed due to a love affair with Apollo.</td>
<td>5.113; 16.121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Appears at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clymene</td>
<td>Handmaiden of Helen.</td>
<td>16.259; 16.267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cytheria</td>
<td>Another name for Venus.</td>
<td>16.20; 16.138; 17.241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danains</td>
<td>Another name for the Greek forces.</td>
<td>5.93; 5.156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dardanus</td>
<td>Founding king of Troy.</td>
<td>16.57; 16.196; 16.333; 17.212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deiphobus</td>
<td>Brother of Paris. He marries Helen after Paris dies.</td>
<td>5.94; 16.361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doric</td>
<td>Another term for Greeks.</td>
<td>16.372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faunus</td>
<td>God of Forests and woods, known for his lascivious behavior.</td>
<td>5.137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gargara</td>
<td>Peak of Mount Ida.</td>
<td>16.109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hecuba</td>
<td>Wife of Priam; Mother of Hector, Paris, etc.</td>
<td>5.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ida, Mount</td>
<td>The mountain outside of Troy which was home to Oenone and Paris</td>
<td>5.73; 16.53; 16.110; 16.204; 17.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilioneus</td>
<td>Brother of Paris.</td>
<td>16.362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilium</td>
<td>Another name for Troy.</td>
<td>16.181; 16.338; 17.215; 17.221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Appears at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacedaemonia</td>
<td>Another name for Sparta.</td>
<td>5.99; 16.131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laomedon</td>
<td>Famous Trojan King.</td>
<td>17.58; 17.206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leda</td>
<td>Mother of Helen, taken by Zeus in the form of a swan.</td>
<td>16.01; 16.293; 17.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menelaus</td>
<td>Husband of Helen. King of Sparta.</td>
<td>5.105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mycenae</td>
<td>Metonymy for Greece. Mycenae is the home of Agamemnon.</td>
<td>5.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myrtilus</td>
<td>Famous charioteer, who helped Pelops cheat and win his wife.</td>
<td>16.210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pergamum</td>
<td>Another Name for Troy.</td>
<td>17.205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phereclus</td>
<td>Builder of the ship that took Paris to Sparta.</td>
<td>16.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoebus</td>
<td>See Apollo.</td>
<td>16.182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrygia</td>
<td>The lands around Troy. Metonymy for Troy.</td>
<td>5.03; 5.120; 16.107; 16.143; 16.185; 17.57; 17.200; 17.227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phryx</td>
<td>A general Term for a Trojan.</td>
<td>16.199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polydamas</td>
<td>Brother of Paris.</td>
<td>5.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Appears at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priam</td>
<td>King of Troy. Father of Hector, Paris, etc.</td>
<td>5.11; 5.82; 5.83; 16.01; 16.48; 16.98; 16.209; 17.58; 17.211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sigeus</td>
<td>Metonymy for Troy.</td>
<td>16.21; 16.275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taenaris</td>
<td>Another name for Sparta.</td>
<td>16.30; 17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theseus</td>
<td>Famous Greek Hero. Captured Helen when she was a young girl but was compelled to give her back.</td>
<td>5.127; 5.128; 16.49; 16.329; 17.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyndaris</td>
<td>Mortal Father of Helen.</td>
<td>5.91; 16.30; 16.100; 16.276; 16.308; 17.6; 17.53; 17.118; 17.250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xanthus</td>
<td>A river in Troy also known as the Scamander, which Achilles will fight against in the <em>Iliad</em>.</td>
<td>5.30; 5.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adynaton</td>
<td>A statement that an impossible event will happen before something else happens such as ‘when pigs fly’ or ‘when the underworld freezes over.’</td>
<td>5.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliteration</td>
<td>The repetition of initial sounds of words.</td>
<td>5.15; 16.11; 17.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandrian Footnote</td>
<td>An allusion to a previous text introduced by a phrase such as ‘I remember’.</td>
<td>5.113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anachronism</td>
<td>The interjection of a modern concept into a description of the past.</td>
<td>5.85; 16.92; 17.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaphora</td>
<td>The repetition of a word in successive phrases or clauses</td>
<td>5.51; 17.177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assonance</td>
<td>The repetition of internal sounds in successive words.</td>
<td>5.04; 17.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiasmus</td>
<td>The arrangement of words into an ABBA pattern either by case or by part of speech.</td>
<td>5.16; 16.8; 17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enallage (Transferred Epithet)</td>
<td>The agreement of an adjective with a noun by case which agrees in sense with another noun in the sentence.</td>
<td>16.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exegetical Infinitive</td>
<td>An infinitive which explains or clarifies the main verb, such as ‘There was an urge to go.’</td>
<td>5.64; 16.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gnomic Statement</td>
<td>An axiom or adage in the 3rd person such as ‘He stumbles who runs fast.’</td>
<td>5.7; 16.351; 17.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hendiadys</td>
<td>The expression of an idea using two nouns instead of a noun and an adjective as in ‘she filled the room with joy and prayer’ instead of ‘joyful prayer.’</td>
<td>16.101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyperbaton</td>
<td>The drastic separation of words which modify each other.</td>
<td>5.128; 16.21; 17.141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litotes</td>
<td>The use of a double negative, such as ‘not without.’</td>
<td>16.19; 17.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2 - continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metaphor</strong></td>
<td>Comparison between two things which does not use ‘like’ or ‘as’ such as ‘love is a battlefield.’</td>
<td>16.7; 17.139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metonymy</strong></td>
<td>The replacement of one noun for another which is conceptually close to it, such as ‘the pen is mightier than the sword.’</td>
<td>5.37; 16.9; 17.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paronomasia</strong></td>
<td>The use of similar sounding words.</td>
<td>5.07; 16.38; 17.143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Patronymic</strong></td>
<td>The description of a person by the name of their parent, such as Saturnia for Juno.</td>
<td>5.3; 16.1; 17.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Polyptoton</strong></td>
<td>The use of the same word in different cases.</td>
<td>16.164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Polysyndeton</strong></td>
<td>The excessive use of conjunctions.</td>
<td>16.338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Praeteritio</strong></td>
<td>The presentation of an idea by saying that one will pass over it, such as ‘I feel it inappropriate to discuss my opponents failings.’</td>
<td>17.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Simile</strong></td>
<td>The comparison of two things using ‘like’ or ‘as.’</td>
<td>5.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Synchysis</strong></td>
<td>The arrangement of words into an ABAB pattern either by case or by part of speech.</td>
<td>5.02; 16.22; 17.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Syncope</strong></td>
<td>The poetic shortening of a word, such as ‘o’er the briny sea.’</td>
<td>5.37; 16.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Synecdoche</strong></td>
<td>The part used to describe the whole, such as ‘the sails moved along the sea’ instead of ‘the ship moved along the sea.’</td>
<td>5.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tricolon</strong></td>
<td>The listing of three things in successive clauses in order of importance.</td>
<td>5.41; 16.73; 17.117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B. These examples are not comprehensive. Only one example from each poem has been selected. Other occurrences are discussed ad loc. All definitions are those of the author.
APPENDIX B

TRANSLATION OF POEM 5\textsuperscript{250}

Do you read through? Or does your new wife forbid? Read on: this damn letter was

Not made by Greek hand!

I, Oenone, born from the bloodline of the Pegasus, most celebrated in the Trojan

Woods, I myself injured, complain about you who was mine, if you allow it.

Which God placed his will against our prayers? 5

That I do not remain yours, what crime stops me?

It must be suffered lightly, whatever you suffer deservedly.

The punishment which comes to the undeserving, comes needing to be grieved

Over.

You were not yet so great, when I, a nymph born from a great river, was content

With you as a husband. 10

You who are now a son of Priam, let reverence not be absent from the truth!

You were a slave; I, a nymph, suffered to marry a slave!

Often, we rested among the flocks shaded by a tree,

Grass mixed with leaves offered a bed.

\textsuperscript{250} N.B. These translations are meant to be as literal as possible while still conforming to the rules of English grammar. They are not meant to be poetry as their function is to allow a student who is lost in the Latin to find their way back. The couplet format is designed to mirror the elegiac couplets of the Latin for ease of use.
Often, for us laying on the deep hay above the straw, 15

The hoary frost was kept off from the humble home.

Who showed you the glades suitable for hunting?

And on which rock a wild animal covers her pups?

Often I, a companion, stretched the nets punctuated with meshes;

Often I drove the swift dogs through the long ridges. 20

Beech trees carved by you preserve my name.

And I, Oenone am read, having been carved by your scythe.

It is a poplar tree, I remember, placed by a flowing river.

That is where the letter, mindful of us, is written:

As much as the trunk grows; so much my name grows, 25

Grow and rise straight up into my honor.

O Poplar, which was placed by the bank of the shore, live, I pray,

You have this inscription on your wrinkled bark:

When Paris will be able to live with Oenone having been abandoned,

The water of the Xanthus, turned backwards, will run back to its source. 30

O Xanthus, hurry back, and O turned waters, run back!

Paris endures to have deserted Oenone.

That day told my fate to miserable me;
From that worst day, the storm of changed love began.

35 The day in which Venus and Juno and nude Minerva, more proper in arms,

Came into your judgment.

My frightened bosoms shook; both frost and a tremor ran through my hard bones

As you told me.

I consulted the old women and the old men, for I was extremely terrified. It is

Agreed that it was a crime against the gods. 40

A tree was felled, the beams were cut, and a ship prepared.

Blue water accepted the waxen ships.

You, departing, wept. – Do not, at least, deny this!

This damn love must be shamed more than the one before.

And you wept and you saw my crying eyes 45

We, both sad, mixed our own tears.

Not unlike an elm tree that is bound by opposing vines,

That your arms were bound to my neck.

Alas, how often, when you complained that you were held back by the wind,

Your companions laughed, that wind was favorable! 50

How often you gave the sought kisses to the one sent away.

How scarcely the tongue endured to say “goodbye!”
A light breeze nourishes the sails hanging from the mast

And the shot up water turns white with oars.

I unhappy follow the leaving sails with my eyes 55

As long as I can and the sand is moist from my tears.

And so that you may come quickly, I beg the green Nereids.

Of course, it was so that you would come quickly for my loss.

Therefore did you, about to return, return for another by my prayers?

Woe to me, I was flattering on behalf of a dire adulteress. 60

A natural promontory looks out at the immense sea.

It had previously been a mountain, this remained from the waters

There I recognized the first sails of your ship

And there was an urge for me to go through the waves.

While I hesitate, a purple gleamed for me on the top of the prow. 65

I was terrified, that was not your style of dress.

It becomes closer and the ship touches the land with a swift breeze.

I saw a woman’s face with my heart trembling.

Then truly, I ripped my dress folds and beat my breasts

And I cut my wet cheeks with stiff fingernails.

And I filled holy Ida with mournful wails
And I bore these tears against my rocks there.

Thus let Helen grieve and, lacking a husband, let her weep 75

That which she earlier brought upon us, let her suffer it.

Now they are suitable for you, the women who would follow you through open seas

And would abandon legitimate husbands.

But when you were a pauper and were driving the flocks as a shepherd,

No one except Oenone was the wife of a pauper. 80

I do not wonder at riches, nor do your palaces touch me,

Nor so that I may be called a daughter-in-law of Priam, out of so many.

Not that Priam would find fault to be the father-in-law of a nymph

Or that I would need to be ignored as a daughter-in-law of Hecuba.

I am worthy to become the matron of a man, powerful of affairs. 85

I have hands which are able to adorn scepters.

Do not despise me because I used to lay with you on beech fronds.

I am more suitable for a purple marriage bed.

And finally, my love is safe. There, no wars are readied

Nor does a wave carry avenging ships. 90

The fugitive daughter of Tyndareus is sought by wicked arms

The arrogant woman comes into your marriage bed with this dowry.
Ask your brother Hector, or Polydamas and Deiphobus whether she should be
returned to the Greeks.

Consult what grave Antenor, what Priam himself would persuade, 95

For whom long life was a teacher!

It is a filthy first lesson to put a seized woman before the county.

Your cause must be shamed, her husband moves just arms.

Don’t look forward to Spartan faith, if you are wise,

Which was turned so quickly into your embraces. 100

As the lesser son of Atreus shouts at the pledges of a violated bed and he grieves

Wounded by foreign love.

You also will shout. Wounded chastity is repairable by no art,

Once it has perished.

Does Helen burn with love of you? She once loved Menelaus thus. 105

Now that trusting one lies on an empty bed.

O lucky Andromache, married well to a sure husband.

I should have been kept as a wife by the example of your brother.

You are lighter than the leaves when without the weight of moisture

The leaves made dry fly around on moving winds. 100

And your weight is less than in the top of a wheat stalk
Which is light and stands having been burned by continuous sun.

Now I remember, your sister once foretold this.

Thus she prophesized to me with her hair disheveled.

What are you doing Oenone? Why do you entrust your seeds to the sand? 115

You plow shores with oxen about to accomplish nothing.

The Greek cow comes which will destroy you and country and home.

Lo! Stop it! The Greek cow comes.

While you still have the chance, drown the obscene ship on the sea!

Alas! How much Trojan blood she carries! 120

She had been speaking in that direction: Slaves seized the raging one:

But my yellow hair stood on end.

Alas, you were an excessively true prophet for miserable me.

Lo, that cow has possession of my glades.

Although she may be distinguished in face, she is certainly an adulterer; 125

She, captured by her guest, abandoned her allied gods.

Some Theseus, stole her from her homeland previously, unless I am deceived about the name.

Should you believe that she was returned a virgin by one desirous and young?

You ask from where have I understood this so well? I love. 130
Although you call it rape and hide the fault with that name;

She who so often was seized, offered herself to be seized.

But Oenone remains chaste for a deceitful husband

And you yourself were able to be deceived by your own example.

Swift satyrs, a wild band, sought me with swift feet, 135

While I was hiding covered in the woods.

And Faunus, bound at his horned head with sharp pine,

Sought me in the huge ridges where Ida swells.

The builder of Troy, known by his lyre, loved me.

That one has the spoils of my virginity.

And that too he took with a fight; although I ripped his hair with my nails and his

face was made rough by my fingers.

Nor did I demand gems and gold, the reward of shame.

Shamefully gifts buy a free-born body.

He, having thought me worthy, handed down the medicinal arts to me

And he let my hands go to his gifts.

Whatever herb and root are powerful for the power of healing,

Whatever useful is born in the whole world is mine.

Oh miserable me, because love is not treatable by herbs!
I, wise of skill, am failed by my skill.

The creator of this skill himself is said to have pastured Admetus’ cows and was

more wounded by our passion.

You alone are able to bear for me the aid which neither the earth fertile with

growing seeds, nor god can.

You can and I earned it--pity a worthy girl! 155

I do not bear gory arms with Greeks.

But I was yours and with you in your younger years

And I pray that I am yours and will be for whatever time remains.
APPENDIX C

TRANSLATION OF POEM 16

I, the son of Priam, send this greeting to you, O Daughter of Leda,

Which is able to be granted to me with you alone giving it.

Should I speak, or is there no need of proof of a known flame,

And more than I might wish, is my love now visible?

Indeed I may prefer that it be hidden, while at times  5

Needing to contain fears not mixed with happiness may be given.

But I hide it badly; who indeed could conceal the fire,

Which is betrayed by its own light?

Nevertheless if you are hoping that I add voice too to matters:

I burn: you have the words as messages of my soul.  10

Spare a confessor, I beg; do not read the rest with a hard countenance,

But with one suitable for your beauty.

It is already pleasing, because our letter having been received makes hope

That I am also able to be received in this way.

The type of things which she considered, I desire, nor did she promise in vain, 15

The mother of love who persuaded this journey for me.

For I set out with a divine warning – lest you should sin unknowing –
And serious divinity is present in my undertaking.

I demand great rewards, but not un-owed:

   Venus promised you for my bed. 20

With her leading, I made the dubious paths from the Trojan shore

   Through the long straits on Pherercles’ ship.

She gave easy breezes and favorable winds –

   She arisen from the sea has excessive rights over the sea.

May she continue to help the waves of my heart, as she helps the waves of the sea, 25

   May she bear my prayers into her port.

We brought those flames, we did not find them.

   These were the cause of my long voyage.

For neither sad storm nor error brought us here;

   The Taenarian land was sought by my ship. 30

Nor should you think that I split the straights on a ship carrying goods

   Which I have—if the gods may watch over them.

Nor do I come as a spectator to the Greek cities;

   My kingdoms are richer towns.

I seek you, whom golden Venus chose for our bed; 35

   I desired you before you were known to me.
Before I saw your face with mind and eye;

Rumor, the messenger, bore your wounds to me.

Nor is it a wonder if, just as is proper from a bow,

I love having been struck by weapons fired from afar. 40

Thus it pleased the fates whom you should not try to unravel;

Accept the words borne with true faith.

I was held in the womb of my mother with the birth delaying;

Just then her stomach was heavy with a proper weight.

She saw for herself under the image of sleep 45

A huge flame-bearing torch borne from the full stomach.

Terrified and afraid of the dark night she arose and

Was seen by old Priam; he sent her to the seers.

The seer sang of Troy about to burn with the fire of Paris –

As it is now, that was the torch of my heart. 50

Although I seemed from the commoners, the beauty and strength of my soul,

Was the judgment of a secret nobility.

There is a place in the middle of the valleys of grove-filled Ida,

Pathless and crowded with oaks and spruces,

Which is grazed by the open mouth of the rock-loving sheep nor the placid goats 55
Nor the slow cow;

From here I, climbing a tree, was looking forth on the walls and lofty homes of Dardanus

And the seas --

Behold, the earth seemed to me to be moved with the beating of feet –

I will speak truths scarcely needing to have the faith of truth – 60

The grandson of great Atlas and of Pleione

Stood before my eyes propelled on swift wings--

If it was right to have seen it, let it be right for me to report what was seen --

And in the fingers of the gods was a golden staff.

At the same time the three goddesses, Venus and Juno with Pallas, 65

Placed their tender feet on the grasses.

I stood in awe, and icy horror made my hair stand,

When the winged messenger said to me ‘put aside fear:

You are the judge of beauty; stop the fights of the goddesses,

Let there be one who is worthy to conquer the other two in beauty. 70

Nor would I refuse.’ He orders with the words of Jove and

Immediately bore himself to the stars on an ethereal path.

My mind strengthened, and suddenly boldness came
Nor did I fear to examine each of them with my face.

75 They were each worthy to conquer for beauty and I as judge was complaining

That each was able to win their own case.

But nevertheless there was one of them that was more pleasing than the others.

So that you may know it was this one, from whom love is moved.

And there was such care of winning; they burn

To arouse my judgment with huge gifts. 80

The wife of Jove offers kingdoms; the daughter, martial prowess;

I myself hesitate whether I would prefer to be powerful or brave.

Sweet Venus laughed: ‘Nor do either of these gifts

Full of uncertain fear touch you, Paris’ she says;

‘We will give you what you would love and the daughter of beautiful Leda 85

Will go more beautiful into your embraces.’

She said this, and having been tested by beauty and gifts

She bore her victorious feet to the sky.

Meanwhile, although late, with the fates having been turned to prosperity

I was recognized as a regal boy through recognized signs. 90

The house was happy with the son having been received after a long time,

And Troy also added this day to the holy days.
And as I desire you, thus girls desired me;

You alone are able to have the prayer of many.

Not only did the daughters of kings and generals seek me, 95

But I was also a care and love for nymphs.

Whom in all the world, I was wondering at the beauty of, even beyond Oenone,

Nor is there any daughter-in-law more worthy for Priam than you.

But for me, the dislike of all of them increases, after

Hope of your marriage was made, O Daughter of Tyndareus. 100

Seeing you with my eyes, I was seeing you at night in my mind,

When the eyes lie conquered with placid sleep.

What will you do face-to-face, you who were so pleasing when not yet seen?

I was burning, although the fire was far off here.

Nor was I able to withhold that hope for myself any longer, 105

But that I might seek my prayers on the blue sea.

Phrygian pines are cut with Trojan axes

And each was a tree useful for watery seas;

And lofty Gargara is stripped of its crowded forests,

Long Ida gives innumerable timbers to me. 110

Oaks are bent about to found the swift ships
And the open keel is covered with her sides.

We add posts and sails following the mast

And the curved ship accepts the painted gods.

On the ship by which I am conveyed, the painted goddess stands 115

As a guarantor of your marriage accompanied by a small Cupid.

The finishing touches were placed on the fleet having just been made,

Immediately it was ordered to go on the Aegean waters.

But the father and mother slowed my prayers by asking

That the proposed journey be delayed in a pious voice; 120

And my sister Cassandra with her scattered hair,

When the ships now wished to give sail,

‘Where do you rush?’, she shouted, ‘you will bring back flames with you!

You do not know how great the flames are which are sought through these waters!’

She was a true seer; we found the mentioned flames 125

And wild love flames in a soft heart.

We depart from the ports enjoying the wild winds

And I land in your land, O Oebalian nymph.

Your husband receives me with hospitality: this also was done
Not without the council and will of the gods, 130

Indeed that one showed, whatever sight there was that was worthy to be shown

In all of Lacedaemon;

But for me desiring to see the praised beauty

There was nothing else by which my eyes were seized.

As I saw you, I stood thunderstruck and I felt my innermost heart to 135

Swell with new cares.

She had a face similar to these, as best as I can remember,

When Venus came into my judgment.

If you had come equally into that contest,

The victory of Venus would have been in doubt. 140

Indeed the rumor of you made great praise,

There is no land ignorant of your face;

Nor for you does another name have any equal in Phrygia nor in the East

Among the beautiful girls!

Do you believe us in this respect? Your glory is truly less 145

And the rumor of your beauty is nearly insufficient.

I find more here, than that which she promised,

And that your glory was conquered by the source.
Therefore Theseus burned deservedly, who knew all of you,

    And you seemed worthy booty for such a man, 150

By the custom of your people when you, nude, play in the oiled gym

    And you a woman mixed with naked men.

I praise the fact that he took you, but I wonder at the fact that he ever returned you.

    Such good booty must be guarded constantly.

This head would be cut back from the bloody neck, 155

    Sooner than you would be drawn from my bed.

Will our hands ever wish to send you away?

    Will I living suffer you to depart from my lap?

If you had to be returned, nevertheless I would have taken something first

    Nor would our Venus have been impotent totally. 160

Either your maidenhood would have been tasted by me or

    That thing would have been seized with your virginity safe.

If you grant only yourself, that you may know the steadfastness of Paris:

    One flame will border the flames of my pyre.

I placed you before kingdoms, which once the greatest wife 165

    And sister of Jove promised us,

And provided that I am able to give my arms around your neck,
Virtue was spurned by me with Pallas offering it.

Nor does it shame nor will I seem to have ever chosen foolishly;

My mind remains firm in my desire. 170

I only pray that you do not allow our hope to become doomed,

Oh you worthy to be sought by such labor!

I, ignoble, do not desire a marriage to the noble born,

Nor believe me, will you be my wife shamefully.

If you should look, you would find the Pleiades and Jove in our clan, 175

To say nothing of the ancestors in-between.

My parent holds the scepters of Asia, in which there is no more beautiful shore,

Which will scarcely ever perish from its huge borders.

You will see innumerable cities and golden houses

Such as you might say are temples that befit the gods themselves. 180

You will see Ilion and the walls built with high turrets,

Built with the song of Apollo’s lyre.

What should I tell you about the crowd and number of men?

Scarcely does this land sustain its own people.

The Trojan mothers will meet you in a dense line 185

Nor will our atria contain the Phrygian daughters.
O how often you will say ‘how poor our Greece is!’

One house will have the wealth of whatever city you wish.

Nor will it have been right for me to spurn your Sparta:

The land is beautiful to me, in which you were born. 190

But it is poor in Sparta, you are worthy for rich culture;

This place is not appropriate for such beauty.

It is proper that this beauty enjoy costly outfits without end

And luxuriate in new delights.

When you see the clothes of the men of our clan, 195

Will you believe what the Dardanian daughters have?

Make it that you are easy and do not spurn a Phrygian husband,

O girl born in the Therapnian countryside.

A Trojan was born from our blood, who now

Mixes water with nectar for drinking by the gods. 200

A Trojan was the husband of Aurora, although she hid him

In the farthest place where the goddess marks her journey.

Anchises was also a Trojan, for whom the mother of winged love

Rejoices to have lain in the ridges of Ida.
Nor, I think, would Menelaus deserve to be preferred to us, with age and beauty compared 205

With you as judge:

Surely, we will not give a father-in-law driving away the clear lights,

Who would turn the fearful horses from the feast,

Nor for Priam is there a father-in-law gory from slaughter

And who marks the Myrtoan waters with his crime, 210

Nor is fruit grasped at in the Stygian waves by our ancestor,

Nor is water sought in the midst of water.

Why does this matter, if a man born from these holds you?

Jupiter is forced to be the father-in-law to this house.

Oh wicked deed! That unworthy man holds you through all the nights 215

And thoroughly enjoys your embrace.

But when dinner is served, you behold me finally,

This time too has many things which hurt.

Let such dinners happen for our enemies,

I often experience the same with the wine put down. 220

This hospitality pains me, when that rustic places his arms on your neck

With me watching.
I am broken and I am jealous – Why should I say all of this?

When he warms your limbs with his mantle thrown over the top.

When you gave soft kisses in my presence, 225

I placed the cups having been taken up before my eyes;

I put down my eyes when he holds you more tightly,

The food grows slowly in an unwilling mouth.

Often I gave groans and I noted, wicked girl, that you

Did not hold back a smile in my groans; 230

Often I wished the wine to extinguish the flame,

But it grew, drunkenness was a fire in the fire.

Lest I should see more, I reclined with my neck turned;

But suddenly you called back my eyes.

What should I do, I hesitate: It is my grief to see those things, 235

But it is a greater grief to be away from your beauty.

Where it is permitted and I am able, I struggle to conceal the fury,

But nevertheless a hidden love appears.

Nor do we give words to you; you feel my wounds, you feel them;

And would that they were known to you alone! 240

Alas, how often I bent my face with tears coming,
Lest he should seek the cause of my weeping;

Alas, how often I, drunk, told of some love,

Bearing the words one by one to your face,

And I gave myself away under a false name! 245

If you must know, I was the true lover.

But that also I might be able to use words more wantonly,

Often was drunkenness feigned by me.

I remember, your nude breasts were revealed with your tunic loosened

And you gave approach to my eyes, 250

Your breasts either more shining than pure snow, or milk

Or Jove having embraced your mother;

While I stood amazed at the sights—for I was by chance holding a cup, --

The braided handle fell from my fingers.

If you gave kisses to your daughter, I happy suddenly 255

Snatched them from the tender mouth of Hermione.

And laying back I was just then singing old loves

And was then giving signs needing to be covered with a nod;

Yet I dared to approach Clymene and Aethra, first of your companions,

With flattering sounds, 260
Who said nothing to me, other than that they were afraid,

They ceased to be concerned in the middle of the prayers of the one begging.

Let the Gods make it so, that you be a prize of a great struggle,

And that the victor may have you for his bed;

As Hippomenes bore the Scheonedian prize in a race, 265

As Hippodamia came into the Phrygian arms,

As wild Hercules broke Acheolous’ horns,

While he sought your embraces, Deinara:

Our boldness bravely would have gone through these customs,

And you may know that you were the need of my labor. 270

Now nothing is left for me, except to beg you, beautiful one, and to

Embrace your feet, if you allow.

O Glory, O present glory of the twin brothers,

O you would be worthy for Jove as a husband, if you weren’t the daughter of Jove,

I will seek the Sigean ports with you as wife 275

Or I, as an Exile, will be covered by Taenarian earth!

Now my breasts were not grazed by the arrow’s tip lightly;

My wound descends into my bones.
As I recall, my sister prophesied this truth to me, that I would be pierced by a celestial arrow. 280

Don’t spurn the love given by the fates, Helen!

Thus you may have favorable gods in your prayers!

Indeed many things happen, but we should speak more face to face,

Receive me on your bed in the silent night!

Or does it shame and do you fear to pollute marital love 285

To deceive the chaste oaths of a legitimate bed?

Ah excessively simple Helen, lest I should call you rustic,

Do you think this beauty is able to lack fault?

Either change your face or be not hard--it is necessary:

There is a quarrel of chastity with great beauty. 290

Jupiter rejoices in these thefts; Venus rejoices in them:

Of course these thefts gave Jove as a father to you.

Scarcely are you able to be chaste, if the strength of character has power in your seed,

You the daughter of Jove and Leda.

Although you are now chase, when my Troy will hold you, 295

And I beg of you, let me be your only crime.

Now let us commit these sins which the legal hour will correct,
Unless Venus promised me false things!

But even your husband persuades you to these things, by deeds, if not by words,

He is absent and does not block the thefts of his guest. 300

He did not have a more suitable time, in which he might see the Cretan kingdoms:

O excessively cunning man!

He smiled and about to leave said ‘I entrust the Idaean one to you,

Oh wife, make a care of the guest for us.’

I stand witness, do you deny the mandates of an absent husband: 305

Is there not care for you of your guest.

O Helen, do you hope that this brainless man knew

To have dowry enough for your beauty?

You are deceived: he doesn’t know, nor, if he considered the great goods

Which he holds, he wouldn’t have trusted them to a foreign man. 310

Even if neither my voice nor my passion incite you,

We would be compelled to enjoy his complaisance;

Or we would be fools, so that we may conquer him thus,

If such a safe time should pass by unused.

He nearly leads a lover to you with his own hands; 315

To enjoy the foolishness of a trusting husband!
You may lie alone for the long night on a widowed bed,

        And I myself will lie alone in a widowed bed:

Let communal joys join me to you and you to me!

        That night will be brighter than the middle of the day. 320

Then I will swear for you to whatever gods you wish and

        I will join my words to your oaths;

Then I, if our faith is not false,

        I shall bring it about straightaway, that you will seek my kingdoms.

If it shames you and you fear that you would seem to follow me, 325

        I myself will be the criminal of this crime without you.

Or should I follow the deeds of Theseus and of your brothers;

        You are not able to be touched by a closer example:

Theseus seized you; they seized the twin Leucipids;

        I will number a fourth in the examples. 330

The Trojan fleet is present and replete with men and arms:

        Now the oar and breeze will make swift paths.

You proud will go through the Dardanian cities,

        And the crowd will believe you to be a new goddess,

And wherever you will bear steps, flames will smell with cinnamon, 335
Slaughtered victims will strike the bloody ground.

My father and brothers and sisters with my mother

And all of Ilium and all of Troy will give gifts.

Woe to me, some part of me was about to say:

You will receive more than the things which our letter bears. 340

Nor should you, having been taken, fear that wild wars will follow us,

Great Greece can rouse up all her strength.

Were previously any from the abducted at all sought through arms?

Believe me, this thing has idle fears.

Thracians seized Orithyia in the name of Boras 345

And the shore of Biston was safe from war;

Thessalian Jason vexed Colchis with his new ship,

Nor was the Thracian land injured by Colchian hand.

Also Theseus, who seized you, took Ariadne as well;

Nevertheless Minos called no Cretans to arms. 350

In these things, terror is accustomed to be greater than the danger;

It is proper to fear the things which it shames to have feared.

Imagine nevertheless, if you wish, that a huge war rises up:

There is strength in me and my spears do harm.
Nor is there a lesser supply of troops in Asia than in your land: 355

She is rich with men, she is abundant with horses.

Nor will Menelaus, son of Atreus, have more courage

Than Paris will bear before his weapons.

When I was nearly a boy, I recaptured the stolen flocks with the

Enemies slaughtered from which I bore the cause of my name. 360

When I was nearly a boy, I conquered youths in various contests,

In which Ilioneus and Deiphobus were participants.

Nor should you think, that unless I must be feared hand to hand,

Our arrow is placed in a just place.

You couldn’t ascribe these deeds to the early youth of that one, could you? 365

You couldn’t instruct Menelaus in my arts, could you?

Even if you could ascribe all of these things to him, could you give him Hector as a

Brother?

One of him will be in the likeness of countless soldiers.

Why should you know how strong I am, and my strengths deceive you;

You don’t know to what man you are about to be a wife. 370

Therefore you will be sought in no tumult of war,

Or the Doric camps will fall to my Mars.
Nor should I seem unworthy to bear iron for such a wife

Great rewards move strife.

You also, if the whole world will fight for you, 375

You will bear a name from eternal fame.

Only you departing from here with favorable gods and with brave hope

Fulfill the gifts pledged with full faith.
Now since your letter has violated our eyes,

The glory of replying seemed serious.

You, a foreigner, with the sacred rights of a guest having been polluted

Dared to promise the legitimate faith of marriage!

Of course on that account the windy seas, the shore of Taenaris 5

Received you having sailed in her port.

Nor for you, although you came from a different clan,

Did our palace have opposing doors,

Was the recompense of duty such great injury?

You who thus were entering, were you guest or enemy? 10

Nor do I doubt but that this complaint of ours, while it may be just,

Is called rustic by your judgment.

Let me be rustic, while I am not forgetful of shame

And while the tenor of my life may be without blemish.

If my appearance is not sad in feigned mouth 15

Nor do I sit stern with twisted eyes,

Nevertheless my fame is clear, and up to now I lived without crime
And no adulterer has praise of me.

By which the more, I am amazed at this confidence in your undertaking,

And what cause gave hope of my bed to you. 20

Was it because the Neptunian hero bore force against us,

Once taken will I seem worthy to be taken again?

If I had been enticed, that would have been the crime;

Since I was taken, what was my choice except to say I didn’t want it?

Nevertheless he didn’t bear the prize, the fruit from the deed; 25

I was returned having suffered nothing except fear.

The young man stole only few kisses by struggling:

He has nothing further of me.

This is your wickedness, which would not be content with these.

Great gods! He was not like you. 30

He returned me intact, and modesty lessened the crime,

It is well known that the youth repented of the deed.

Did Theseus repent so that Paris could succeed him,

So that my name may be the one in every mouth?

Nevertheless I am not angry—who indeed will rage at a lover? 35

If only, the love which you profess is not feigned.
Indeed I doubt this too, not because faith lacks,

    Or because my beauty is not known well to me,

But because credulity is accustomed to be a loss for girls

    And your words are said to lack faith. 40

But let other girls sin; the rare matron is chaste.

    Who forbids my name to be among the rare?

For my mother seemed suitable to you,

    By whose example you think me to be able to be bent too.

The error of my mother was to be involved in an offense 45

    Having been tricked under a false image; the adulterer was covered with Feathers.

If I should sin, am I able to be ignorant; nor will there be any error at all,

    Who concealed the crime of the deed.

She erred well and atoned for the crime with the creator:

    By which Jove shall I be called happy in crime? 50

You boast your clan and ancestors and royal names;

    This house is famous enough in her nobility.

Let there be silence about that Jupiter and every ancestor of my father-in-law,

    The Tantalids of Pelops and the Tyndarian clan,
Leda deceived by a swan gave Jove to me as a parent, 55

Who trusting loved the false bird in her lap.

Go ahead and report the origins of the Phrygian clan far and wide

Report Priam with his own Laomedon!

Whom I suspect, but for whom as a fifth the glory is great for you,

He will be first in our line. 60

I reckon that your scepters are powerful of land;

I do not think these to be less than those.

If now this place is surpassed by the riches and number of your men

But certainly your land is foreign.

Indeed your rich letter promises such gifts 65

That they are able to move the goddesses themselves.

But if now I should wish to cross the boundaries of shame,

You would be a better cause of fault.

Either I will hold reputation without perpetual fault

Or I will follow you more than your gifts. 70

And I don’t spurn them, thus gifts are always most welcome,

Which the giver makes precious.

It is more by a lot, because you love me, because I am the cause of your labor,
Because your hope came through long seas.

I notice also on that table, wicked boy, 75

What you do when it has been put down, although I am trained to ignore it:

When just now you see me with eager eyes, naughty boy,

Which scarcely bear threatening our eyes,

And now you sigh, now you take up cups next to us,

From the part which I drank, you drink too. 80

Ah how often with your fingers, how often with your eyes, I noticed hidden

Signs given with you nearly speaking!

And often I feared, that my husband might see,

And I blushed insufficiently from the hidden signs.

Often I spoke either with scanty or with no sound: 85

‘Nothing shames him!’ Nor was my voice false.

Also on the whole circle of the table under my name,

Which the drawn letters made, I read ‘I love.’

With my eye nodding, I nevertheless denied that I believe this:

Woe to me! Now I know that I am able to say it! 90

If I were about to sin, if I were about to be bent by these flatteries,

Our heart would be able to be seized by them.
Also, I confess, your beauty is rare—

A girl is able to wish to go under your embraces.

But let another girl become happier without crime, 95

Before our shame may topple from foreign love.

Learn only from this example to be able to lack beauty;

It is a virtue to abstain from pleasing delights.

How many youths do you think desire what you desire?

Or does Paris alone have eyes which are wise? 100

Nor do you see more, but you more boldly dare;

Nor is there more of heart for you but the excessive beauty is present for you.

Then I would wish that you had come on your swift ship,

When my virginity was sought by a thousand suitors:

If I had seen you, you would have been first out of a thousand! 105

My husband himself would give pardon to my judgment.

But you come late for possessing joys and orders:

Your hope was slow; what you seek, another has.

Suppose nevertheless that I wanted to become your Trojan wife,

And that Menelaus has me willing. 110

Please, cease to unravel my soft heart with words
Don’t harm me, whom you say you love,
But cease to guard the lot, which fortune assigned,
But don’t desire the filthy spoil of our shame.

But Venus pledged this, and in the valleys of high Ida

The three goddesses exhibited themselves nude to you:
One would give you kingdom, another the praise of war,
And the third said ‘you will be the husband of Helen!’

Scarcely indeed am I able to believe that the heavenly bodies
Placed their beauty for your judgment.

Suppose that it is true, certainly the other part was feigned,
Where I was called a reward of judgment:
The value of my body is not so great,

That I think myself the greatest gift with the goddess as witness.

My beauty was content to be approved by the eyes of men: 125

Praise-giving Venus is hateful to me.

But I am not weak: I too am favorable towards these praises:
For why should my voice deny what it desires to be?

Don’t be angry, you are believed excessively by me painfully:

Slow faith is accustomed to be present in great things. 130
My first desire therefore is to be pleasing to Venus,

Next, that I might seem the greatest reward for you,

Neither did you place the honors of Pallas nor the honors of Juno

Before the good things you heard of Helen.

Therefore I am virtue, I am a noble kingdom to you! 135

I would be iron-hearted if I did not love this heart.

Believe me, I am not iron-hearted, but I fight loving this man

Whom scarcely I think is able to be mine.

Why should I try to split the thirsty shore with a curved plow and

Why should I try to follow the hope which this place denies? 140

I am inexperienced at the secrets of love,—the gods are my witnesses!—

We deceive a husband faithful with no arte;

Now too, because I entrust my words to a silent little book,

Our letter enjoys a new duty.

Oh blessed are those to whom experience is present! 145

I, ignorant of things, suspect that the path of fault is difficult.

My fear for evil is this: now already I am ruined and

I think that all eyes are against our faces.

Nor do I think this falsely: I felt the wicked murmurs of the crowd,
And Aethra returned certain words to me. 150

But you must hide your feelings, unless, that is, you may wish to stop altogether

But why stop? You are able to hide them.

Play, but do it secretly: greater, but not the greatest liberty was given to us,

Because Menelaus is absent.

That man indeed is far away, having set out, thus with the matter compelling: 155

Great and just was the cause of the sudden journey

Or that’s how it seemed to me, whether he should wait, or whether he should go,

When I said, ‘make it that you return as soon as possible!’

Happy from the omen he gave kisses, ‘let the household affair and the Trojan

Guest be a care for you,’ he said. 160

Scarcely I held back a laugh, while I struggled to contain it;

I was able to say nothing to him beyond ‘it will be.’

Indeed that one gave sails to Crete with favorable winds;

But you don’t think thus far that all is proper!

Thus my husband is absent from here, so that he being absent guards me. 165

But do you not know that hands are long for kings?

Beauty is also a burden: for we are praised more persistently by your beauty

That one fears more justly.
The same glory which helps me, as it is now, is a loss for me

And it is better to have made a mockery of my fame. 170

Nor be amazed that I have been left here with you because he is gone:

He trusts the customs of my life.

He feared about my beauty, he is confident of my life,

And that probity is secure, beauty makes him fear.

You order that the times having been given do not perish any further 175

So that we use the convenience of a simple husband.

It is proper that I am afraid, nor up till now was enough desire drawn out:

Our heart totters in doubt.

And the man is absent for us, and you sleep without a wife,

My beauty seizes you and in turn, your beauty seizes me; 180

And now the nights are long, and we meet them with speech,

Oh miserable me! And you are a flatterer and in the same house:

And let me perish if everything doesn’t invite blame;

Although I don’t know by what fear I am held back.

What you persuade badly, would that you could compel well! 185

My rusticity would be shaken off by force.

Meanwhile the injury is useful to the ones having suffered it.
Thus surely I would be happy having been compelled.

While it is new, let us fight against begun love:

A new flame falls back having been sprinkled with little water. 190

Love is not certain in guests; it wanders, as they themselves wander,

When you hope nothing to be more firm.

Hypsipyle is a witness; the Minoan virgin is a witness;

Each was not sought on offered beds.

You also are said to have to have abandoned your Oenone 195

Having been esteemed for many years, O faithless one.

Although you don’t deny it, if you don’t know, it was the greatest concern

For us to seek everything about you.

Furthermore, add the fact that you desire to remain constant in love,

You are unable. Trojans already loosen your sails. 200

While you speak with me, while the hoped-for night is prepared,

Which will bear you home, now there will be wind for you.

You abandon joys full in the middle of their newness;

When our love will depart with the winds.

Or should I follow to see praised Troy, as you suggest, will I be 205

The daughter-in-law of great Laodemon?
I don’t spurn the announcements of winged fame,

That they fill the lands with my crimes.

What will Sparta, what will all of Greece,

What will the people of Asia, what will all of Troy be able to say of me? 210

What will Priam, what will the wife of Priam,

What will so many of your brothers and Trojan daughters-in-law think of me?

And you who are able to hope that I will be faithful,

Will you not be anxious by your own examples?

Whichever foreigner will enter the Trojan ports, 215

He will be a cause of customary fear for you.

How often you, angry, will say to me ‘adulterer,’

Forgetting that your crime is in us.

You will become the critic and likewise the author of the crime.

I beg, let the earth open up before my face! 220

But I will enjoy the Trojan wealth and beautiful culture

And I shall bear gifts more fertile than those promised:

Of course purple and valuable clothes will be given to me,

I shall be rich with the weight of gold being worn!

Give pardon to the confessor! Your gifts are not of such worth; 225
I know not why my own land holds me now.

Who will aid me in the Trojan shores, if I should be harmed?

Where will I seek brothers? Where the aid of a parent?

Deceitful Jason promised everything to Medea:

Was she any less thrown from Jason’s home? 230

There was no Aeetes to whom she could return having been spurned,

There was no mother, Idyia or sister Chalciope.

I fear nothing of the sort, but Medea wasn’t afraid either;

Good hope is often deceived by its own augury.

You will find for all, who now are thrown into the sea, 235

That the sea was gentle for the ships from the port.

The torch too scares me, which your parent seemed to have given birth to

Bloody before the day of your birth,

And I fear the warnings of the seers, whom they say warned that

Troy would burn with Greek fire. 240

And so Venus favors you because she won, and she has

Gained double victories through your judgment,

Thus I fear them who, if your story is true,

Didn’t win the case with you as judge.
I don’t doubt but that if I should follow you, arms will be prepared. 245

   Our love will go through swords, woe to me!

Isn’t it the case that Hippodamia compelled the Haemonian men

   To rouse the wild wars of the black Centaurs:

Do you think that Menelaus and the twin brothers of Tyndaræus

   Will be so pliant in just anger? 250

But you boast and speak of brave deeds.

   That face will be at odds from those words.

Your body is more suitable for Venus than for Mars.

   Brave men wage wars, O Paris, you always love!

Order Hector, whom you praise to fight for you; 255

   Another soldier is worthy for your works.

If I were to enjoy these things, I would be wise and bolder by a little,

   She would enjoy them; if any girl is wise.

Or I perhaps will be wise with fear put aside

   And I will give delayed hands with time conquered. 260

We know what you seek, that secretly we may speak these things face-to-face,

   We know, what speech and voices you desire;

But you hurry too much, and still crop is in your grass:
Perhaps this delay may be friendly for your wish.

No more, the letter, a secret work of my furtive mind now stands 265

With my thumb having been wearied.

We will speak more through my allies, Clymene and Aethra,

Who are two companions and council for me.
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Craig Bebergal was raised in Boca Raton, FL and graduated from Olympic Heights Community High School in 1999. From there, he attended the Florida State University and earned his Bachelor of Arts, Cum Laude, in Latin (2002). He immediately began teaching Latin and Mythology at the North Broward Preparatory School in Coconut Creek, FL while completing his Master of Education in Educational Psychology at Florida Atlantic University (2004). Upon receipt of his degree, he was hired as an adjunct professor for the College of Education while still maintaining his secondary school position. In 2006, Craig accepted a position at the Florida State University School teaching Latin to middle and high school students and entered the doctoral program in Humanities. Craig teaches at the Florida Virtual School at the time of this publication.

Craig has presented at the Florida Foreign Language Association annual conference multiple times (2006; 2010; 2011; 2012). He has served the Classical Association of Florida as a committee chair (2006-2009), webmaster (2010-2013), and treasurer (2012-13). He received publication credit as the beta-testing instructor for Bolchazy-Carducci’s *Latin for the New Millennium II* textbook (2008-2009). He also served on the committee to re-write the Florida Teacher’s Certification exam for Latin K-12 (2006) and the committee to write the Latin End of Course Exams (2012-13).