Antehomerica

The Mythical Tradition of the Abduction of Helen and Its Late Antique Reception in Colluthus and Dracontius

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Abstract

This is a study of the literary tradition of *antehomerica* (i.e. the events that led to the Trojan War), and in particular the myth of the Abduction of Helen, from the archaic period up to Late Antiquity. The research aims at tracing the stages in the development of the different accounts, tracking innovations, as well as finding explanations for them. I explore chains of influences between different versions of the story's constituent episodes and, where possible, indicate why an author may have chosen to follow or reject a particular tradition. The texts covered span every period and genre from the Epic Cycle through to late antique Christian chronicles (and occasionally beyond), in both Latin and Greek. Within this, I focus especially on two epyllia which are both entitled *The Abduction of Helen* and were both composed around 500 AD: the Ἁρπαγὴ Ἑλένης (*Harpage*) was written by Colluthus of Lycopolis in Egypt in Greek, and the *De Raptu Helenae* (*Romulea* 8) by Dracontius from Carthage, Africa, in Latin. Despite their common title and date, the two poems contrast greatly with each other in their treatment of the myth, as they follow different sources; yet shared models can also be found. On the basis of these works, I am able on the one hand to demonstrate some literary continuity from Homer through to the sixth century AD in both the Western and Eastern Empires; on the other hand, in-depth readings of Colluthus and Dracontius allow me to reflect on the ways in which cultural and societal differences, including a Christian world-view, may have contributed to marked changes in the representations of the legend and to departures from the ways in which the material is handled by classical predecessors.

Niniejsze dzieło dedykuję moim kochanym Rodzicom, którym dziękuję za wieloletnie wsparcie i wyrozumiałość.

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Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends near and far for supporting me, practically and otherwise.

List of Editions and Abbreviations

Unless indicated in the citation itself, all ancient references not listed below are to the relevant online Loeb editions. All translations are my own, unless stated otherwise.

Aesopica	B.E. Perry (2007) *Aesopica: A Series of Texts Relating to Aesop or Ascribed to Him*. Urbana, IL.
Anthologia Latina	F. Bücheler & A. Riese (eds.) (1894-1926) *Anthologia Latina sive poesis Latinae supplementum*. 2 vols. Leipzig.
Aristonicus	L. Friedländer (1853), *Aristonici Alexandrini* περὶ σημείων Ιλιάδος *reliquiae emendatiores*. Göttingen.
Colluthus	See Appendix I.
Dares Phrygius	F. Meister (1873) *Dares Phrygius, De excidio Troiae*. Leipzig.
Dictys Cretensis	W. Eisenhut (1973) *Dictys Cretensis, Ephemeris belli Troiani*. Leipzig.
Epic Cycle	A. Bernabé (1996) *Poetae epici Graeci. Testimonia et fragmenta*. Vol. 1. Berlin.
Dracontius	É. Wolff (1985-1996) *Blossius Aemilius Dracontius: Oeuvres*. 4 vols. Paris.
Hellanicus	R.L. Fowler (2000) *Early Greek Mythography*. Vol. 1. Oxford.
Herodorus	R.L. Fowler (2000) *Early Greek Mythography*. Vol. 1. Oxford.
Photius, *Lexicon*	C. Theodoridis (1982) *Photii patriarchae lexicon*. 3 vols. Berlin.
Photius, *Bibliotheca*	R. Henry (1959-1977) *Photius. Bibliothèque*, 8 vols. Paris.
Ps-Eratosthenes	A. Olivieri (1897) *Pseudo−Eratosthenis Catasterismi*. Leipzig.
Stesichorus	M. Davies & P.J. Finglass (2014) *Stesichorus: The Poems*. Cambridge.

The following Abbreviations are used throughout this work:

FGrH	F. Jacoby (ed.) (1923-1958) *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker.* Leiden.
LIMC	H.C. Ackermann & J.R. Giseler (eds.) (1981-2009) *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*. Zürich.

LS	Ch.T. Lewis & Ch. Short (1879) *A Latin Dictionary*. Oxford.
LSJ	H.G. Liddell & R. Scott, revised by H.S. Jones (2011) *A Greek-English Lexicon*. *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae,* online ed. Irvine, CA.
PCG	R. Kassel & C. Austin (eds.) (1983-) *Poetae Comici Graeci*. 8 vols. Berlin.
PMG	D.L. Page (ed.) (1962) *Poetae Melici Graeci*. Oxford.
PMGF	M. Davies (ed.) (1991) *Poetarum Melicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*. Oxford.
TrGF	B. Snell, S. Radt & R. Kannicht (eds.) (1971-2004) *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*. 5. vols. Göttingen.

Introduction

The son of king Priam sailed from Phrygia to Greece, and met someone by the name of Helen, and then sailed away with her. This is the only statement that is true of all extant ancient sources for the so-called Abduction of Helen. Many questions are left open by the contradictory tradition: first and foremost, why did all this happen and how long did it take? Was this the first such occurrence? What about Helen's pedigree? Who is she? As to her counterpart, is his name Paris, Alexander or even Paris Alexander? How did the name confusion come about? What is his background story? Did he perform an office for the Olympians? How did that come about? Were apples involved? What was the consequence? Where did Paris meet Helen? What was his reason for going to that place? Who sailed with him? What were the weather conditions during the journey? Who hosted Paris? Did he kidnap Helen or did she follow him willingly? What was their first meeting like? What brought them together? Where was her husband at the time? Did they not have children? Did Paris and Helen take anything or anyone else onto the ship? How did the return journey go? Did they stop anywhere? Was it the real Helen who arrived in Troy? What did their families think of the union?

All these are valid deliberations when examining accounts of the Abduction of Helen and related antehomeric episodes. By ‘antehomeric’ and *antehomerica* I mean narratives dealing with the origins of the Trojan War, as opposed to *posthomerica,* which describe the events around the Sack of Troy and beyond. Different writers will yield quite diverse responses to the above questions. My research aims at examining the works of two late-antique poets, Colluthus and Dracontius, in the context of the long and varied tradition that preceded them. To that end, I shall trace the different stages in the development of the myth, mark changes and — where possible — find explanations for them. The texts I cover span every period and genre from archaic poetry through to late-antique chronicles (and occasionally beyond), in both Latin and Greek. Very infrequently I shall also refer to versions that are only extant in artistic representations. However, I resort to this only when the literary evidence is insufficient: a comprehensive treatment of material sources in addition to the literature would not have been possible within the scope of this thesis. In order to understand what Colluthus and Dracontius are reacting to and how, I will first need to lay out in detail the array of foregoing transformations. For the sake of completeness, I also pursue aspects of the legend which feature in previous sources, but which do not have a bearing on the two poets. It will be just as useful to see not only which elements they incorporate or reject, but also which ones they omit.

While there are more than enough monographs dedicated to Helen of Troy, the majority of these either deal only with early sources from Homer to the 5th century

BC or all but ignore the late antique tradition, before moving on to even later material.[1] These books often attempt to capture the 'essence' of Helen and the differences and similarities of various representations of her.[2] My approach, in turn, is episodic: although I shall concentrate on the motifs pertaining to the moment within Helen's biography known as her abduction, this is not a treatise about Helen. Rather, it is about the multiple processes and characters involved in the story surrounding her elopement. The figures of Helen and Paris are, of course, the main junction of that network, but not necessarily the most interesting one.

With regard to structure, we are going to follow the chronology of the story as closely as possible. When in doubt, I generally organise my argument on the basis of the *fabula*, i.e. the actual order of events, rather than *sjužet*, i.e. the narrated order, to ensure clarity. Accordingly, the discussion is made up of three parts, rounded off with individual conclusions: 'Antecedents', 'Abduction' and 'Aftermath', a.k.a. 'beginning', 'middle' and 'end'. The parts vary in length and comprise a varying number of chapters, which themselves vary in scope. Each chapter will provide some new observations in its own right, but they should also be considered together as a whole; this will be aided by ample cross-referencing.

It will be worthwhile to introduce briefly the most prominent material I will draw upon for the discussion and to point out some connections.

Early Epic

Homer himself provides us with some insights concerning events that happened before the *Iliad* by means of analepsis. For our discussion *Il.* 3 and *Od.* 4, focussing on Helen, are of special interest, as they offer glimpses of the past and how it is remembered by the characters. The **Hesiodic** corpus, and especially the *Catalogue of Women,* offers interesting perspectives, despite its lacunose state. The first full account of Helen's abduction known to us was in the epic ***Cypria***, which was part of the Epic Cycle of poems concerned with the Trojan War. It has been variously attributed to Homer or one Stasinus, although on the basis of linguistic features it must be noticeably later than Homer. It has been dated variously to sometime between the end of the 7th and the end of the 6th centuries BC, i.e. in the time of the early lyric poets or possibly even

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[1] Ghali-Kahil (1955), who purports to examine the abduction and return of Helen in literature and visual material, deals with both Latin and late antique sources on just six pages. Pollard (1965: 173) mentions Dictys and Dares in an afterthought under the heading 'Helen in Modern Literature', omitting other late-antique authors altogether. Similarly, Suzuki (1989), investigating the epic treatment of Helen, after lengthy chapters on the *Iliad,* the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid* jumps straight to *The Faerie Queene* and *Troilus and Cressida*.

[2] One example, out of many, is Meagher (2002).

Aeschylus.[3] The original poem is lost to us, and we rely on some fragments and most importantly a plot summary by **Proclus** (in turn featured in Photius' *Bibliotheca*) for our information about its content. This Proclus, West argues, probably wrote in the second century AD and was himself not necessarily in possession of the *Cypria,* but could have used an earlier synopsis (which may have been a shared source with Apollodorus' *Epitome*).[4] The full original poem, he states, must have been lost completely around Proclus' time, since later readers became more interested in its essential mythological plot than its literary value.[5] Our latest *verbatim* quotation comes from Athenaeus, who was active around 200 AD.

The matter treated by the *Cypria* stands at the beginning of the series of cyclical poems, telling of the origins of the war and overtly acts as a prequel to the *Iliad* and aims at filling the gaps left by Homer. According to Proclus' digest, it begins with Zeus' plans to start the Trojan War, treats the Judgement of Paris, the abduction and the return to Troy; we also hear of the deification of the Dioscuri. The latter part of the epic deals with the Greek expedition and the obstacles they encounter on the way: it tells of Odysseus' feigned madness and its discovery; the Achaeans first mistake Mysia for Ilium and sack it; then they get scattered in a sea storm and Achilles marries Deidameia at Scyros and heals Telephus — whom he had earlier wounded — and takes him to Troy as a guide. At the second gathering at Aulis, the sacrifice of Iphigenia takes place (though she is replaced with a stag by Artemis and made immortal); next they sail to Tenedos and leave behind Philoctetes with his smelly snake-bite; they go to Troy where they fight a little and then send an envoy to demand Helen back; the Trojans refuse; Achilles meets Helen and then restrains the Greeks from going home and drives off Aeneas' cattle and sacks neighbouring cities. Achilles receives Briseis, and Agamemnon Chryseis; Zeus plans to relieve the Trojans by taking Achilles out of the fighting; then follows a catalogue of Trojan allies.

Lyric

Among the lyric poets, **Stesichorus**, in the 7th-6th century BC, is famously alleged to have become blind after speaking ill of Helen in one of his works. He then composed a

[3] Following Wackernagel (1916: 181), who places the *Cypria* as late as just before 500 BC, Davies is 'very reluctant to date most of [the cyclic poems] before the second half of the sixth century' (2003: 3), also noting that the *Cypria* is likely to have been the latest poem in the Cycle. West (2013: 25) gives a less radical, but still very precise, timespan for its creation as 620–560.

[4] West (2013: 8-10 and 56); he also rules out on good grounds the authorship of the 5th-century neoplatonist of the same name.

[5] This sentiment is very apparent in an epigram, preserved at the very end of cod. 186 of Photius' *Bibliotheca*, in which Apollodorus' *Bibliotheca* advertises itself: it explicitly tells the reader to by-pass Homer, tragedy, lyric and the Epic Cycle, because the they will find in the speaking book itself 'all that the world contains'.

palinode which said that Helen never went to Troy, but only a likeness (εἴδωλον) of her, and regained his eyesight (fr. 91a-b). His contemporaries, the Lesbians **Sappho** (frr. 16 and 23) and **Alcaeus** (frr. 42 and 283), use Helen as an exemplum: Sappho explains the power of love and beauty through Helen and is sympathetic to her, whereas Alcaeus on the contrary blames Helen and Paris for causing so many deaths and compares their adultery with the chaste union of Peleus and Thetis. Moreover, many *Odes* of **Pindar** (6th-5th c. BC) provide us with rich and varied material.

Historiography

On the history-side, the very 'Father of History', Herodotus (5th c. BC), will enrich the analysis with some unique accounts. Most importantly, in the second Book of his *Histories* he provides an alternative abduction-story which is akin to Stesichorus', but does away with the detail of the phantom. However, Herodotus does present us with a supernatural Helen in Books 6 and 9.

Drama

Further key texts for information on the events related to the abduction of Helen are a number of 6th-5th-century plays. Of **Aeschylus'** repertoire I often refer to the *Agamemnon* and sometimes to the pseudo-Aeschylean *Prometheus Bound*. **Sophocles** wrote a number of tragedies on Trojan subject matter, but much is now lost. It is a pity that we do not have more of his *Alexander* or his *Hermione*. We also know of satyr plays entitled *The Judgment* (perhaps identical with *Eris*) and *The Abduction of Helen* (perhaps identical with *The Wedding of Helen*), but unfortunately very little survives of these. Some helpful references come from *Ajax* and *Electra*.

The most important extant plays, however, are those of **Euripides**, especially *Helen* and *The Trojan Women,* in both of which Helen has speaking roles.[6] The former employs and revises Stesichorus' version of the myth of a phantom replacing Helen at Troy. The *Orestes* shows us the Spartan household after the Trojan War. We also find much material in Euripides' *Andromache,* where Helen's now adult daughter Hermione is constantly compared to her mother, and the multiple surviving fragments of the *Alexander* which tells of Paris' youth.

From a comprehensive hypothesis (P. Oxy. 663), some information is available about **Cratinus'** *Dionysalexandros*, a comedy in which Dionysus pretends to be Paris and judges the goddesses and abducts Helen. At the end the real Paris marries her out of pity.

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[6] We must, however, be very careful not to conflate characters that reappear in the Euripidean corpus. Most notably, the Helen of the eponymous play is a completely different person to Helen in the *Trojan Women*.

Oratory

The tale of Helen and her culpability for the War was also a popular theme for rhetorical exercises. Most famously, **Gorgias** and his pupil **Isocrates** (5th-4th c. BC) each wrote and encomium of her, in which they endeavour to expiate her. In order to do this, they employ solid mythical knowledge paired with bold interpretations.

The Alexandrian School

Hellenistic poets, quite in the spirit of Callimachus' fr. 1, seem not to care very much about the traditional Trojan heroic myths. But if they do recycle them, they tell the 'mainstream' stories from fresh perspectives. The *Alexandra,* attributed to **Lycophron** (4th-3rd c. BC) chooses an original way of presentation. It is set at the time of Paris' departure to Europe. Cassandra (here called Alexandra) has been deemed mad and imprisoned by Priam for voicing her dreadful visions. The poem starts as a dialogue between Priam and Cassandra's guard, but is mostly occupied by the guard's *verbatim* retelling of the prophecy he has heard the woman utter about the future of the city. The speech weaves together a multitude of different tales, Trojan and other, and uses riddling language and many abstruse mythological references.[7] Fortunately, we possess abundant scholia to help us decipher his text. It is most likely to be based directly on a multitude of works, which makes Lycophron an important source of (hints at) otherwise lost material. This would fit especially well, if the Lycophron that was the author of the *Alexandra* was indeed the same Lycophron as the scholar active in the Library of Alexandria, but serious doubt has been cast on this identification.[8] *Idyll* 18 of **Theocritus** (floruit 3rd c. BC) is an epithalamium for Helen and Menelaus which presents both partners in the most favourable light and — either subversively or seriously in order to clear Helen's name — at no point explicitly mentions the marital crisis to come. **Parthenius of Nicea** (floruit 1st c. BC in Rome) in his series of *Erotica Pathemata* draws attention to the less conspicuous characters of Oenone and Corythus and at the same time brings up the ugliest details from Paris' life.

Mythography

Naturally, the standard mythographic works, **Hyginus'** *Fabulae* (1st c. BC) and **Apollodorus'** *Library and Epitome* (1st or 2nd c. AD),[9] are invaluable resources for

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[7] Cf. Statius, *Silvae* 5.3.157 who describes his poetry as 'the recesses of obscure Lycophron' (*latebrasque Lycophronis atri*).

[8] See most recently Hornblower (2015: 39-43) and McNelis & Sens (2016: 10-11).

[9] See Fowler's (2013: 383-4) convincing plea to stop calling the author 'Pseudo-Apollodorus'.

compendiary information, since they often draw on and compile much earlier sources that have since been lost to us. Their weakness, however, lies in the fact that non-essential details are omitted and we often lack an insight into the motivations and emotions of characters. While **Plutarch's** *Lives* (1st-2nd c. AD) mostly give biographies of historical figures, we find among them also the life story of Theseus, which proves very useful for our purposes. The 2nd-century geographer **Pausanias** quotes very ancient writers and provides some most curious accounts, in conjunction with the aetiology of local cults or ekphrases of artefacts.

Ovid

The material in question is delivered in the most interesting form by **Ovid** (43 BC-17 AD). His *Heroides* collection contains a pair of poems (*Her.* 16 and 17) imagined as two letters, one from Paris addressed to Helen and the other Helen's response to him. There is no introduction or other narrative frame, but everything is respectively focalized through the 'writing' characters. We learn that Paris is in Sparta and has been entertained by Menelaus for some time, during which he has fallen in love with Helen. Now Menelaus has left home and it is at this crucial moment that the exchange of messages takes place. Paris passionately tries to persuade Helen to abandon her husband for him, while her answer is more indecisive, apparently hiding her feelings and appealing to reason and decency. The couple shares personal memories and perceptions of the past as well as fears and hopes for the future, a future that is already known to the reader. Furthermore, *Her.* 5 (Oenone to Paris) and *Her.* 8 (Hermione to Orestes) will be crucial in the appropriate sections.

Pseudepigraphy, Satire and Chronography

Ptolemy Chennus or 'the Quail' (probably 1st-2nd c. AD and probably identical with Ptolemy Hephaestion) wrote a *New History* preserved for us only by a Photian summary. It is full of odd stories and curiosities, not found elsewhere, which are mostly thought to be fakes invented by the author himself, along with their sources.[10] But nevertheless, as will become apparent, often Chennus' stories are actually less bizarre than one might think at first glance. They often turn out to be somehow rooted in established myth. Thus, ultimately, he does the same as any other writer in that he receives stories from elsewhere and gives them his own twist — although he does this much more creatively than others. As such, I shall treat his work in (almost) the same way as any ancient reference. It can in fact be considered beneficial that we can at least

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[10] Bowersock (1994: 24-7). His sources have been, however, defended by Tomberg (1968). See Cameron (2004a:134-59) for an exploration of Ptolemy's shamming technique of interweaving known, creditable sources and details with fabricated ones.

be reasonably sure that Ptolemy's material is made up by him and original, rather than copied from elsewhere. He has something to add in many places, both in terms of sophisticated engagement with other works and general hilarity.

Lucian of Samosata (2nd c. AD), too, must be enjoyed with caution. The characters of the Trojan saga make repeated appearances in his many works, some of which are more derisive than others. Sometimes they even contradict each other. For example, his *Cock* is a parody in which a cockerel, who is an incarnation of Pythagoras and who before that used to be a soldier in the Trojan War, presents his own truths which revise the Homeric narratives. The *Dearum Iudicium,* too, makes fun of the *personae* involved, but more directly, rather than through reported speech. Homeric characters also feature in the *Verae Historiae* in an all-new setting. **Philostratus**' *Heroicus* (2nd-3rd c. AD) resembles Lucian's *Cock* in that it is a dialogue which criticises Homer's depictions of heroes. A vine-dresser educates a Phoenician on these matters, claiming that he heard it from the very ghost of Protesilaus.

The next relevant work is the *Ephemeris belli Troiani,* a prose account in diary/novel/chronicle form, the supposed author of which is said to be a **Dictys Cretensis**, an eyewitness of the Trojan War. At the beginning a letter from Lucius Septimus informs us that the Latin text we have has been translated by him from a previous Greek version. This turned out to be true when a papyrus fragment (dated 206 AD) was discovered and identified as belonging to the Greek original.[11] The Latin translation was probably composed in the fourth century.[12] The Greek text has been variously dated to as late as the second century[13] or as early as the reign of Nero.[14] It is probably safe to assume sometime in-between. Dictys shares unique variants with Ptolemy Chennus, but we cannot be sure who was copying whom.[15] A most certainly fictitious preface to the narrative tells of the amazing purported transmission of the text: Dictys, a soldier who came to Troy with Idomeneus and Meriones, was chosen to write an account of the War. Then in the thirteenth year of Nero's reign (i.e. 67-68 AD) an earthquake at Knossos exposed Dictys' tomb in which there was a little box containing the text. Some shepherds passed by, thought it was a treasure and stole it; but when they only found writing tablets within, they gave them to their master Eupraxes. He in turn recognised the Phoenecian alphabet, and showed them to the governor Rutilius Rufus, who regarded them as important enough to be brought to Nero. The emperor ordered philologists to decipher the tablets and translate them into Greek, and thus the account was made known. This valuable resource tells the story of Troy from the abduction to the returns of the Greeks, claiming to be more accurate than Homer because it pretends

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[11] Griffin (1908: 329).

[12] The fourth century is given preference over an earlier date by Merkle (1994: 192).

[13] Griffin (1908: 335).

[14] Bowersock (1994: 23) describes it as ‘entirely a fabrication of the Neronian period.’

[15] Cameron (2004a: 149), Dowden (2009: 158-61), Gainsford (2012: 60).

to predate him. Its most prominent features are the matter-of-fact, sober style and the elimination of the gods as agents.[16] It has been found that the Latin translation somewhat expands the Greek original.

Another Latin text, the *Historia de excidio Troiae*, was written following the example of Dictys, probably in the fifth century. In a very similar way to its predecessor, the author passes himself off as Cornelius Nepos and states that, whilst studying in Athens, he received a Greek text by one Dares Phrygius, whom we know as a Trojan priest of Hephaestus from *Il.* 5.9-26, and translated it into Latin. Since no Greek version has been found to date, we cannot be sure whether there ever really was one. The story of the text's recovery is much less elaborate, and the piece itself much shorter than Dictys', but it is nevertheless apparent that it is intended as its counterpart. The angle of the narration is also interestingly changed from the Greek side to the Trojan one. The result is a highly innovative account which seeks to show the Phrygians in a good light and to blame the Achaeans. It begins with the Argonauts and the less well known previous sack of Troy by Hercules, which consequently changes the circumstances of Helen's abduction, and ends with the departures from Troy.

Later Greek chronicle writers have used Dictys' original text too (possibly more faithfully), and thus it has been indirectly preserved.[17] Of those authors, I include in my survey **John Malalas** (6th century), who wrote the *Chronographia*, a Christian chronicle placing Priam in the time of David (Malalas 5.1) and whose indebtedness to Dictys is quite evident. He takes over much of the content, but also adds details himself. He especially delights in making mythology into history by putting numbers on it, such as specific dates of events as well as the ages of characters at the time. Despite his much later activity in the twelfth century, I occasionally also risk a glimpse towards **John Tzetzes'** brief epic renderings of the *Antehomerica, Homerica* and *Posthomerica* that also have much in common with Malalas' *Chronographia*. In addition, his scholia on Lycophron's *Alexandra* (compiled in collaboration with his brother Isaac) prove very helpful.

An anonymous Latin chronicle, the ***Excidium Troiae***, tells of the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, the Judgement of Paris and his meeting and elopement with Helen, then narrates the Sack of Troy and Aeneas' wanderings, repeatedly referencing Vergil. The author goes as far as the foundation of Rome by Romulus, but at the very end mentions the empire and the birth and death of Christ. The text is presented in a sober question-and-answer manner with brief direct speeches and contains some previously unattested details for pre-Iliadic events. The work has been dated to the 4th-6th centuries AD on stylistic grounds and appears to have drawn on Greek sources for its antehomeric material and to be independent of Dictys and Dares.[18]

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[16] The dry mode of narration has in the past been an argument to dismiss the work as ‘bad literature’, but I agree with Merkle (1994: 184-6) that this was a technique adopted deliberately to make it seem like a real to-the-point report of the war.

[17] Griffin (1908: 329-30, 332).

[18] See Atwood & Whitaker (1944: xi-xvii).

Late-Antique Epyllion

Finally, the works I will focus on in particular are two epyllia, both composed roughly around 500 AD, both entitled the *Abduction of Helen*. Despite the common title and date, however, the two pieces could hardly be more different. The Greek Ἁρπαγὴ Ἑλένης was written in 392 hexameters by **Colluthus of Lycopolis**, in the Egyptian Thebiad, who flourished under Anastasius I (491-518), as we learn from the *Suda*. The lexicon also mentions other works by the author, a *Persica* and a *Calydoniaca*, as well as encomia, none of which survive. Colluthus' poem treats the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, the Judgement of Paris, his journey to Sparta, his encounter with Helen and their escape. Up to this point the plot is rather conservative, but towards the end there is an unexpected twist: Colluthus dedicates a significant part of his work to the lament of Helen's daughter Hermione after she has discovered her mother's absence. It is this passage that stands out as Colluthus' greatest feat. Up until the Hermione-scene, the narrative sequence may have been modelled on that of the *Cypria*. As we have already established, the complete text of the *Cypria* was no longer available to Colluthus.[19] De Lorenzi speculates that Colluthus wanted to write a work to replace it, an *Antehomerica* as counterpart to Quintus Smyrnaeus' *Posthomerica*, and that the extant text is precisely Book 2 of the extended work.[20] While it seems very unlikely that the *Harpage* should be just a portion of a greater whole — it is certainly more analogous with Triphiodorus' epyllion on the *Sack of Troy* than Quintus' *Posthomerica*[21] — I do believe that Colluthus would have purposefully identified himself with the Epic Cycle. Within this, the aim of writing a prequel to the *Iliad* is particularly prominent.

The second epyllion, *De Raptu Helenae*, also called *Romulea* 8, is the eighth in a series of ten *Carmina Profana* (or *Carmina Minora*) by **Blossius Aemilius Dracontius**. The author's life is most fascinating and can be traced on the basis of autobiographical information in the poems as well as their paratext:[22] he came from a senatorial family and lived in Carthage at the time when North Africa was under the rule of the Vandals (430s to 534). During the reign of Gunthamund (484-496) Dracontius composed a (now lost) panegyric of a foreign ruler, which angered the Vandal king and subsequently he was incarcerated for many years along with his family. He only

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[19] See also Jouan (1996: 31).

[20] De Lorenzi (1929: 40). Cf. the ambition of the 3rd-century-AD poet Peisander of Laranda whose epic *Heroicai Theogamiai* of sixty books (now lost) was supposed to be a complete collection of histories.

[21] In fact, Triphiodorus (sometimes misspelt 'Tryphiodorus') and Colluthus are regularly paired up by editors and the latter's style has been influenced by the former. They were once both thought to have belonged to the 'School of Nonnus', but the discovery of a papyrus fragment has revealed that Triphiodorus was in fact active *before* Nonnus; see Miguélez-Cavero (2013: 4-6). Karavas (2018) connects Triphiodorus' and Colluthus' works in terms of their respective relationships with the *Iliad*.

[22] Selent (2011: 3).

regained his freedom under Thrasamund (496-523).[23] We have a relatively large amount of the poet's work, some of which demonstrate strong Christian beliefs, such as *De Laudibus Dei* and the *Satisfactio*, a poem in which he appeals to Gunthamund to grant him his liberty. The *Romulea* are generally secular, although arguably a Christian worldview can also be detected at times. The Helen-piece has been attributed, with some reservations, to the time after Dracontius' imprisonment.[24] It begins with a swiftly narrated judgement of goddesses, but this does not directly correlate with the abduction of Helen. Instead, the plot is driven by Paris' self-image: he was abandoned as a baby and brought up as a humble shepherd, but the role of judge emboldens him to return to his family. He now wants to prove himself by reclaiming his aunt Hesione, who had been taken as a prisoner of war by Telamon (this follows the mythological tradition of Dares to an extent).[25] During this mission he meets Helen by chance. After a courtship scene, the eloping couple are chased by Menelaus ahead of a Spartan mob, but manage to escape. The poem ends with their union in marriage at Troy. The *De Raptu* is interspersed with nihilistic remarks and at times shows itself demonstrably anti-Vergilian, which suggest that this is more than just a gripping story about mythical lovers.

The term 'epyllion' is not unproblematic and I should make clear my viewpoint and usage of it at this initial stage. Given that much ink has been spilled on the issue,[26] I do not wish to add anything significant to the topic. It will suffice to say that I apply the word in a sense true to its etymology to signify a diminutive epic, and thus simply any short narrative hexameter poem. By a 'short' work I mean one that may conceivably be read or recited in one sitting without interruption, of a scope of about one to three books of a large-scale epic (given that these, too, vary in length). I would estimate the maximum figure within this parameter to be about 2000 lines.[27] While a number of scholars have identified content-related and stylistic criteria for identifying epyllia, or

[23] Bright (1987: 17-18).

[24] Díaz de Bustamente (1978: 121-30), Bright (1999: 200-201), Kaufmann (2006: 15). Earlier scholars, such as Audollent (1901: 756), thought the *Romulea* to have been produced in Dracontius' youth.

[25] The interdependence of the two has been the subject of some debate. Schissel von Fleischenberg (1908: 134-157) claimed that the latin translation of Dares was dependent on Dracontius and he was followed in this by Morelli (1912: 105 and) Frazer (1966: 12); independently Agudo Cubas 1978: 304 n.1. Schetter (1987) argues strongly and persuasively for Dares' text coming before Dracontius', and thus that Dracontius in fact used Dares. This is echoed by Merkle (1990: 508 n.42), as well as Beschorner (1992: 92 n.98 and 254-5). A third option, suggested by Gärtner (1999: 404-8) is that there is no reason to presume a relationship between the two at all. More recently, Simons (2005: 255-262) preferred rather to suppose a common source.

[26] See, for example, the volume by Baumbach & Bär (2012).

[27] Hollis (2006: 142) gives an upper figure for the length of epyllia of just 600 lines, which would narrowly exclude Dracontius' *De Raptu*.

have — quite rightly — observed some common traits in works they would call by that name, there always seem to be exceptions to these 'rules'.[28] Therefore, I prefer to use the word more freely, as a synonym for 'small-scale epic', without implying any other judgements or preconceptions.

We have a fair number of editions and/or translations of Colluthus' short work. For my purposes, I have collated the editions by Weinberger (Teubner, 1896a), Mair (Loeb, 1928, with English tr.), Livrea (1968, with Italian tr.), Orsini (1972, with French tr.) and Schönberger (1993, with German tr.) and chosen the variants most plausible to me.[29] The result, accompanied by a translation, can be found in Appendix I. Colluthus shares the fate of many other minor and late authors: his work was for a long time under-studied and underrated — or even outrightly insulted.[30] Only more recently a few scholars have made it their task to re-evaluate it from a more benevolent angle. This modern practice of interpreting Colluthus was spearheaded by Giangrande (1975) and Rocca (1995 & 1997) and was revived by the contributions of Paschalis, Magnelli and Prauscello to *Ramus* 37 (2008). In 1990 Kotseleni completed a lukewarm anglophone commentary on Colluthus' style. In 2015, a more illuminating commentary in Greek was published by Karavas and Cadau gave us the first English monograph exclusively dedicated to Colluthus.[31]

Unlike Colluthus' *Harpage*, Dracontius' *De Raptu* has not been widely edited nor translated. I base my discussion on the Budé edition of Etienne Wolff (1996), which is accompanied by a French translation. A rendition into the English language has not yet been published, but I include one of my own as Appendix II for the benefit of my future readers. We have many extant poems by Dracontius and thus the secondary literature is vast, too. The difficulty in only studying one of his pieces in detail lies in the fact that many existing studies take a holistic approach to his *oeuvre*. Even where scholars concentrate only on the so-called *carmina profana* or *Romulea*, the distribution of attention between the constituent poems can be strikingly uneven and interpretations of the *De Raptu* scarce and disjointed.[32] The publications most useful for my specific interests are chapters V and VII of Simons (2005) and the derivative article by Bretzigheimer (2010).

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[28] Examples include the foregrounding of female characters (Crump (1931: 22-3)), Merriam (2001: 21)) and, as a result, the presence of love stories (Koster (2002: 40)), as well as subversive or ironic intentions towards 'proper' epic (Gutzwiller (1981: 6), Wasyl (2011: 19)).

[29] There is also a Spanish translation with notes by Galiano & Galiano (1987) and a text and Catalan translation with commentary by Cuartero i Iborra (1992). Renditions into Portuguese and Latin (Possebon (2005)) and into modern Greek (Karavas (2015)) appeared more recently.

[30] He is most famously and vehemently attacked by West (1970), and shortly after by Alsina Clota (1972: 163).

[31] For my assessment of the latter, see Gilka (2015).

[32] An extreme case is Kuijper (1958) whose thesis on *Varia Dracontiana* contains a 'section' about *Rom*. 8 spanning *one* whole page and never refers to it otherwise.

Part I

Antecedents

Chapter 1

Antehomerica and the Trojan War

1. Causality

The antehomeric myths are full of causality. They form a chain of stories and events that build upon one another: the wedding of Peleus and Thetis causes the Judgement of Paris; this in turn leads to the abduction of Helen; finally, that is the reason for the Trojan War. Our sources construe versions and combinations of these at varying lengths and with varying degrees of detail in our sources. However, only two extant Greek texts give us a full coherent outline of this concatenation, and, interestingly, they are situated at opposite ends of the time frame under consideration, separated by about a millennium.[33] The *Cypria,* the earliest known text devoted to *antehomerica*, and Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen,* one of the latest works on that topic, stand out as the only narratives in which Paris' and Helen's elopement is told in conjunction with the wedding of Peleus and Thetis and the resulting Judgement of Paris. Accordingly, Colluthus' proem consists of a string of questions about causes and origins, which he shall answer in the course of his composition (Coll. 4-13). However, some traditions also mention an underlying divine reasoning behind all this. In the preface to the *Iliad,* its events are summed up with the words Διὸς δ᾽ ἐτελείετο βουλή (*Il*. 1.5; ‘and the will of Zeus was accomplished’). While we do not learn from Homer what this plan may be, there are indications elsewhere. Hesiod says that the gods were quarrelling and Zeus decided to instigate a war, as he desired to annihilate the majority of humans; the fragment also seems to suggest that he wanted to destroy the demigods in order to separate the races of mortals and immortals (Hes. *Cat*. fr. 155.95-119 Most). The *Cypria* links the Homeric line to the Epic Cycle with a direct echo:[34]

> ἄλλοι δὲ ἀπὸ ἱστορίας τινὸς εἶπον εἰρηκέναι τὸν Ὅμηρον· φασὶ γὰρ τὴν Γῆν βαρουμένην ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων πολυπληθίας, μηδεμιᾶς ἀνθρώπων οὔσης εὐσεβείας, αἰτῆσαι τὸν Δία κουφισθῆναι τοῦ ἄχθους· τὸν δὲ Δία πρῶτον μὲν εὐθὺς ποιῆσαι τὸν Θηβαϊκὸν πόλεμον, δι᾽ οὗ πολλοὺς πάνυ ἀπώλεσεν. ὕστερον δὲ πάλιν – συμβούλωι τῶι Μώμωι χρησάμενος, ἣν Διὸς βουλὴν Ὅμηρός φησιν – ἐπειδὴ οἷός τε ἦν κεραυνοῖς ἢ κατακλυσμοῖς πάντας διαφθείρειν, ὅπερ τοῦ Μώμου κωλύσαντος, ὑποθεμένου δὲ αὐτῶι γνώμας δύο, τὴν Θέτιδος

[33] The *Excidium Troiae* offers a continuous Latin account.

[34] On the relationship between the two, see Burgess (2001: 149-50).

θνητογαμίαν καὶ θυγατρὸς καλὴν γένναν, ἐξ ὧν ἀμφοτέρων πόλεμος Ἕλλησί τε καὶ βαρβάροις ἐγένετο, ἀφ᾽ οὗ συνέβη κουφισθῆναι τὴν Γῆν, πολλῶν ἀναιρεθέντων. ἡ δὲ ἱστορία παρὰ Στασίνωι τῶι τὰ Κύπρια πεποιηκότι εἰπόντι οὕτως·
ἦν ὅτε μυρία φῦλα κατὰ χθόνα πλαζόμεν᾽ αἰεὶ
⟨ἀνθρώπων ἐπίεζε ⟩ βαθυστέρνου πλάτος αἴης.
Ζεὺς δὲ ἰδὼν ἐλέησε καὶ ἐν πυκιναῖς πραπίδεσσι
κουφίσαι ἀνθρώπων παμβώτορα σύνθετο γαῖαν,
ῥιπίσσας πολέμου μεγάλην ἔριν Ἰλιακοῖο,
ὄφρα κενώσειεν θανάτωι βάρος· οἱ δ᾽ ἐνὶ Τροίηι
ἥρωες κτείνοντο, Διὸς δ᾽ ἐτελείετο βουλή.

But others have said that Homer was speaking of a certain story. For they say that Earth, being weighed down by the multitude of people and there being no piety among the humans, asked Zeus to be relieved of her burden; and that first Zeus brought about the Theban War without delay, through which he killed very many. And afterwards in turn – after consulting with Momus as his adviser about what Homer calls the plan of Zeus – since he could have destroying everyone with thunderbolts or floods, Momus prevented this, and instead suggested to him two ideas: the marriage of Thetis to a mortal and the beautiful birth of a daughter; from both of these a war ensued between Greeks and barbarians, from which followed a relief of the Earth, as many were killed. The story is in Stasinus, the one who composed the *Cypria,* who says the following:
'There was a time when countless races were always roaming through the land and the surface of deep-bosomed Earth ⟨was weighed down by men⟩.
But Zeus saw it and had pity and in his wise heart
he devised to relieve all-nourishing earth of humans,
by inciting the great strife of the Trojan war,
that the weight might be unloaded by death; and the heroes at Troy
were slain, and the will of Zeus was accomplished.'

(schol. *Il*. 1.5 = *Cypria* fr. 1)

In the fashion of an Old Testament God (cf. Genesis 6:11-22), Zeus is minded to decimate humans owing to overpopulation and irreverence on their part, but also as a

favour to Earth who complains about the weight.[35] This is accomplished to an extent through the Theban War, and the Trojan War continues and finalizes the project, thus establishing a connection with another cyclical poem, the *Thebaid*. The scholiast hastens to mention that Zeus could have of course easily solved the situation through a natural disaster, such as a biblical-scale flood (no doubt quoting the precedent of the Deucalion myth) or his specialty, the thunderbolt. However, Momus (Reproach) dissuades him, though a reason for this is not given;[36] perhaps a flood would destroy more than just the humans or the water would weigh even heavier upon Earth; or perhaps making people fight one another would be less work and/or more entertaining for the Olympian. In any case, the existence of Helen and the marriage between Peleus and Thetis are here fundamentally linked together. They not only form two components for the events leading up to the war, but also lay the groundwork for what happens during the conflict itself: Thetis' marriage is important for starting the chain reaction on the one hand, but it is also significant that it is a θνητογαμία, because the mortality of her son Achilles is indispensable and central to the plot of the *Iliad*. As will become apparent, perceptions of the Trojan War heavily foreground Helen and Achilles as its central characters.

Tellingly, Helen and Thetis' family are the subject of a poem by Alcaeus:

ὠς λόγος, κάκων ἄ[χος ἔννεκ᾿ ἔργων
Περράμῳ καὶ παῖσ[ί ποτ᾿, Ὦλεν᾿, ἦλθεν
ἐκ σέθεν πίκρον, π[ύρι δ᾿ ὤλεσε Ζεῦς Ἴλιον ἴραν. 4

οὐ τεαύταν Αἰακίδαι̣[ς ἄγαυος
πάντας ἐς γάμον μάκ̣[αρας καλέσαις
ἄγετ᾿ ἐκ Νή[ρ]ηος ἔλων [μελάθρων
πάρθενον ἄβραν 8

ἐς δόμον Χέρρωνος· ἔλ[υσε δ᾿ ἄγνας
ζῶμα παρθένω· φιλό[τας δ᾿ ἔθαλε
Πήλεος καὶ Νηρεΐδων ἀρίστ[ας,
ἐς δ᾿ ἐνίαυτον 12

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[35] Note the similarity to the Earth's suffering when Ouranos imprisons the Titans inside her, leading in turn to a scheme on her part to depose him and make their son Chronos the supreme ruler (Hes. *Theog*. 154-87). Earth later prophesied that Chronos would himself be overthrown by his son, played a vital part in saving baby-Zeus from being devoured by his father, kept his thunderbolt safe until he was ready (Hes. *Theog*. 463-506) and acted as a good advisor in forging an alliance with the Hecatoncheires against the Titans (Hes. *Theog*. 624-8), so it makes sense for Zeus to feel indebted to her.

[36] Proclus' summary of the *Cypria* does not mention Momus, but says instead that Zeus discusses his plan with Themis, although the two are not mutually exclusive. P. Oxy. 3829 ii 9 (second century), too, mentions Themis and gives impiety only as a reason for the extermination.

παῖδα γέννατ᾽ αἰμιθέων [φέριστον
ὄλβιον ξάνθαν ἐλάτη[ρα πώλων·
οἰ δ᾽ ἀπώλοντ᾽ ἀμφ᾽ ᾽Ε[λένᾳ Φρύγες τε
καὶ πόλις αὔτων. 16

As the story goes, because of evil deeds bitter grief came once to Priam and his sons from you, Helen, and Zeus destroyed holy Ilium with fire. Not such was the delicate maiden whom the noble son of Aeacus, inviting all the blessed gods to the wedding, married, taking her from the halls of Nereus to the home of Chiron; he loosened the pure maiden's girdle, and the love of Peleus and the best of Nereus' daughters flourished; and within the year she bore a son, the finest of demigods, blessed driver of chestnut horses. But they perished for Helen's sake—the Phrygians and their city.

(Alc. fr. 42)[37]

The poet first addresses Helen directly as the origin of the Trojans' destruction. He then contrasts her with the chaste Thetis, implicitly judging Helen as an adulteress. The marriage of Peleus and Thetis is idealised for the purpose of the antithesis: notably, the common tradition of the Nereid's resistance and her shape-shifting into wild beasts when the groom tries to lay hold of her (see chapter 4.1) is omitted.[38] The union's success is reflected in the speedy production of offspring, within a year of the wedding (fr. 42.12). Finally, Alcaeus comes back to Helen and the deaths in Troy in a ring composition. He keeps silent altogether about Paris and the judgement, the element which connects the two stories causally and which the readers can be expected to supply for themselves. Burnett suggests that the poem tries to exonerate Helen by reminding that the Trojan War was not started through her adultery in the first place, but really originated at an orderly wedding;[39] However, one can also argue that, on the contrary, the great divergence between Thetis' apparently perfect family life and the image of Helen surrounded by corpses magnifies Helen's fault, through which many innocent people have suffered unjustly. At any rate, Alcaeus clearly echoes the twofold measures taken by Zeus to start the war in the *Cypria*. The two themes, however, are not only linked in cause, but also in effect: Achilles, the product of the honourable marriage, participates in the war which is the product of the dishonourable marriage. He may earn

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[37] Tr. Campbell (1982).

[38] Davies (1986) argues that Alcaeus purposefully keeps silent about it, because this less ideal aspect of the union is not to be included in the comparison. However, in fact, the detail would rather add to the representation of Thetis as a virtuous unwilling bride (as she is supposed and expected to be), in comparison to Helen's readiness to sail away with Paris that is a sign of lasciviousness.

[39] Burnett (1983: 197-8).

κλέος, but he also loses a dear companion and is finally killed himself, all because of Helen.[40]

Euripides also gives us a number of glimpses of the divine plan behind the Trojan saga. In *Orest*. 1635-42 Apollo *ex machina* reveals in his concluding speech that Helen will dwell in heaven now that her mission on earth is completed; her beauty was an instrument to wipe out from the earth 'ὕβρισμα θνητῶν ἀφθόνου πληρώματος' ('the insolence of the abundant mass of mortals').[41] It appears that the mortals' offence to Zeus is precisely their great number, thus joining the two sins of outrage and multitude into one. Euripides' Helen paraphrases the *Cypria* passage above fairly closely:

> τὰ δ' αὖ Διὸς
> βουλεύματ' ἄλλα τοῖσδε συμβαίνει κακοῖς·
> πόλεμον γὰρ εἰσήνεγκεν Ἑλλήνων χθονὶ
> καὶ Φρυξὶ δυστήνοισιν, ὡς ὄχλου βροτῶν
> πλήθους τε κουφίσειε μητέρα χθόνα
> γνωτόν τε θείη τὸν κράτιστον Ἑλλάδος.
>
> But in turn Zeus'
> plan added to these troubles other ones:
> for it brought war upon the land of the Greeks
> and on the wretched Phrygians, so that he may lighten
> mother earth of the crowd and mass of mortals
> and that he may make the strongest man of Greece renowned.
>
> (Eur. *Hel*. 36-41)

Here the tragedian omits the detail of human impiety, but instead adds another layer of argument as to the usefulness of the war: it is designed to give fame to the best Greek warrior, Achilles.

Elsewhere, it is the illustriousness of Helen that is given as the objective of the strife. Isocrates, in his *laudatio* of Helen (16), argues that next to the semidivine sons of Zeus Helen was his only acknowledged daughter and compares her with Heracles:[42]

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[40] Cf. also Achilles' words at *Il*. 19.325: εἵνεκα ῥιγεδανῆς Ἑλένης Τρωσὶν πολεμίζω.

[41] In the *Electra*, too, Zeus is said to have sent an image of Helen to Troy to cause strife and the slaying of mortals (*El*. 1282-3). For Helen's εἴδωλον, see chapter 9.2.

[42] Heracles can be associated with Achilles, since both men are famously exceptionally strong. In *Il*. 18.116-129 Achilles even compares himself to the paradigm of Heracles. Furthermore, both warriors sack Troy in turn. On Heracles' first sack of Troy, see section 3 below.

εἰδὼς δὲ τὰς ἐπιφανείας καὶ τὰς λαμπρότητας οὐκ ἐκ τῆς ἡσυχίας, ἀλλ᾽ ἐκ τῶν πολέμων καὶ τῶν ἀγώνων γιγνομένας, βουλόμενος αὐτῶν μὴ μόνον τὰ σώματ᾽ εἰς θεοὺς ἀναγαγεῖν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς δόξας ἀειμνήστους καταλιπεῖν, τοῦ μὲν ἐπίπονον καὶ φιλοκίνδυνον τὸν βίον κατέστησε, τῆς δὲ περίβλεπτον καὶ περιμάχητον τὴν φύσιν ἐποίησεν.

But since Zeus knew that distinction and splendour come not from quiet leisure, but from wars and combats, and wishing not only to lift up their bodies to the gods, but also to leave them everlasting glory, he arranged for the son's life to be full of labours and eager for danger, but he made the daughter's beauty admired by all and fought over by all.

(Isoc. *Hel.* 17)

A similar idea is voiced by Paris wooing Helen in Ov. *Her.* 16.374-6: '*tu quoque, si de te totus contenderit orbis, | nomen ab aeterna posteritate feres*' ('You, too, if the whole world should contend for you, shall attain repute among posterity forever').

The Trojan War as a double claim to fame is mentioned by Apollodorus:

αὖθις δὲ Ἑλένην Ἀλέξανδρος ἁρπάζει, ὥς τινες λέγουσι κατὰ βούλησιν Διός, ἵνα Εὐρώπης καὶ Ἀσίας εἰς πόλεμον ἐλθούσης ἡ θυγάτηρ αὐτοῦ ἔνδοξος γένηται, ἢ καθάπερ εἶπον ἄλλοι ὅπως τὸ τῶν ἡμιθέων γένος ἀρθῇ.

But in turn Alexander abducted Helen, as some say, in accordance with the will of Zeus, in order that, as Europe and Asia would go to war, his daughter might become esteemed; or, as others have said, that the race of the demigods might be exalted.

(Apollod. *Epit.* 3.1)

Here both the fame of Helen as the precious war prize and that of the battle actors are noted in one place as the will of Zeus, though they are each said to come from different sources. While most of the men in both the Greek and the Trojan camps pride themselves on some kind of divine lineage, there are few who are literally 'half-gods'. On the Trojan side, Aeneas, Sarpedon and Memnon spring to mind, but on the Greek side Achilles is the one we think of straightaway. Though no specific demigod is mentioned by Apollodorus, Achilles' conspicuous role with regard to the 'exaltation' of demigods in the Trojan War should be highlighted.

Finally, the two accounts are firmly united in Philostratus' *Heroicus*. Protesilaus is reported to have said that a certain Hiera, wife of Telephus, who led a Mysian army of women against the Greeks, was more beautiful than Helen, but was not mentioned by Homer, because he favoured Helen (*Her.* 23.26-29). He continues:

ΦΟΙΝ. Τί οὖν, ἀμπελουργέ, φῶμεν ἑκόντα τὸν Ὅμηρον ἢ ἄκοντα παραλιπεῖν ταῦτα οὕτως ἡδέα καὶ ποιητικὰ ὄντα;

ἈΜΠ. Ἑκόντα ἴσως, ξένε· βουληθεὶς γὰρ τὴν Ἑλένην ὡς ἀρίστην γυναικῶν ὑμνῆσαι ἐπὶ τῷ κάλλει καὶ τὰς Τρωικὰς μάχας ὡς μεγίστας τῶν ἀλλαχοῦ διαπολεμηθεισῶν ἐπαινέσαι, Παλαμήδην τε τὸν θεῖον ἐξαιρῶν ἅπαντος λόγου δι' Ὀδυσσέα, Ἀχιλλεῖ τε μόνῳ τὰ μαχιμώτατα τῶν ἔργων οὕτως ἀνατιθεὶς ὡς ἐκλανθάνεσθαι τῶν ἄλλων Ἀχαιῶν ὅτε Ἀχιλλεὺς μάχοιτο, οὔτε Μύσια ἐποίησεν ἔπη, οὔτε ἐς μνήμην κατέστη τοῦ ἔργου τούτου ἐν ᾧ καὶ γυνὴ καλλίων Ἑλένης εὕρητο ἂν καὶ ἄνδρες οὐ παρὰ πολὺ Ἀχιλλέως τὴν ἀνδρείαν καὶ ἀγὼν εὐδοκιμώτατος·

Phoenecian: What then vine-dresser, should we say that Homer left out intentionally or accidentally these things which are so enjoyable and fit for poetry?

Vine-dresser: Probably intentionally, my friend: for he wanted to celebrate Helen as the best of women in beauty and to praise the Trojan battles as the greatest that have been fought anywhere; he both took Palamedes out of the account altogether because of Odysseus and attributed the most warlike of the deeds to Achilles alone, so much so that he forgot the other Achaeans whenever Achilles would fight; neither did he compose a Mysian epic nor make a record of this event in which a woman more beautiful than Helen would have been found and men not far from the bravery of Achilles and a most excellent struggle.

(Philostr. *Her.* 24.1-2)

While in the previous excerpts we were dealing with the mythical, fictional 'will of Zeus', in this case it is the auctorial intention of Homer as a selective extradiegetic narrator that is emphasized. For the present purpose, however, the specific text and the wider tradition can be roughly equated, inasmuch as they are in a chicken-and-egg relationship and ultimately produce the same result: the epicist writes down the fatalistic fulfilment of Zeus' plan, but Zeus' plan is itself rooted in the epicist's mind. Despite the negative judgement of Homer's work contained in this passage, it is most enlightening that Philostratus defines the poet's agenda precisely as the glorification of both Helen and Achilles at the same time. In fact, it corroborates the argument that the entire point of the war and/or the *Iliad* is to showcase the two characters, if Homer had to bend the truth in order to achieve what he wanted with his story. The general *fabula* level of the Trojan War and the concrete literary example of the *Iliad* are thus remarkably congruent with regard to the prominence and promotion of Helen and Achilles.

2. Chronology

It has been shown that in the *Cypria* the very begetting of Helen and the marriage of Peleus and Thetis are linked from the very start, as both together are the instruments through which Zeus makes the Trojan War happen. However, if examined more closely, this brings about problems in the mythical chronology.[43] We have quotations from the *Cypria* which give more detail about both the wedding between Thetis and Peleus (frr. 2-3) and Zeus' engendering of Helen by raping Nemesis (frr. 9-10), although the latter is not included in Proclus' summary. Both events must be subsumed within the first sentence of the synopsis: Ζεὺς βουλεύεται μετὰ τῆς Θέμιδος περὶ τοῦ Τρωϊκοῦ πολέμου ('Zeus confers with Themis about the Trojan War'). The chronology of the events in unclear, but judging from the fact that Proclus' digest continues with the wedding banquet and also that the rape of Nemesis could have been carried out by Zeus more immediately than the betrothal and wedding of Thetis, it is almost certain that in the *Cypria* Helen is begotten before Peleus and Thetis get married. It is, however, impossible to say how much earlier.

If the birth of Helen is roughly contemporaneous with the divine wedding, Helen should be very close in age to Peleus' and Thetis' offspring Achilles. Helen and Achilles are elsewhere joined in a different way: Pausanias records a tradition, according to which the two are married in the afterlife on the island Leuke (3.19.11-13).[44] According to Ptolemy Chennus, a winged son Euphrion is born to the couple (Photius *Bibl*. cod 190.149a).[45] This is echoed also in Lycophron who insists that Helen has five different husbands (Lycoph. *Alex*. 143, 146). Intriguingly, towards the end of the series of events in the *Cypria,* Proclus informs us that after the Trojans have refused to return Helen, she has an encounter with Achilles which is most probably secret, as it is arranged by their patron goddesses: καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα Ἀχιλλεὺς Ἑλένην ἐπιθυμεῖ θεάσασθαι, καὶ συνήγαγεν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ Ἀφροδίτη καὶ Θέτις (After this Achilles desired to behold Helen, and Aphrodite and Thetis brought the two of them together in one place). Unfortunately, we do not hear of the purpose of the meeting, but it is conceivable that the *Cypria*-poet was familiar with the myth of Helen's union with Achilles and hints at it before the Trojan War has even begun. The passage tellingly echoes Proclus' statement above where Aphrodite brings together (συνάγει) Helen and Alexander.

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[43] This has been noticed by Kerényi (1959: 319-20), but without going into much detail.

[44] Cf. Philostr. *Her.* 54.2–55.6 for a more elaborate account of their blissful existence.

[45] Ptolemy also seems to have compounded Helen with Achilles' beloved Amazon Penthesilea: he says that one of the many Helens, a daughter of the Aetolian Tityrus, provoked Achilles to single combat and gave him a head-wound, but eventually died from his blows (Photius *Bibl*. cod. 190.149b). Compare also Chennus' account a little before that Thetis, in the likeness of a seal, carried Helen off during the Greeks' journey home. Could her motivation have been to avenge Achilles' death — or even to bring Helen to him as a bride?

Earlier in the poem, when Achilles joins the expedition to Troy, he stops at Scyros where he marries Deidameia. One fragment also mentions their son and explains his name *neo-ptolemos* with the tender age of his father:

> τὰ δὲ Κύπρια ἔπη φησὶν ὑπὸ Λυκομήδους μὲν Πύρρον, Νεοπτόλεμον δὲ ὄνομα ὑπὸ Φοίνικος αὐτῶι τεθῆναι, ὅτι Ἀχιλλεὺς ἡλικίαι ἔτι <u>νέος πολεμεῖν</u> ἤρξατο.
>
> The epic *Cypria* says that he was called Pyrrhus by Lycomedes, but was given the name Neoptolemus by Phoenix, because Achilles was still of young age when he began to make war.
>
> (Paus. 10.26.4 = *Cypria* fr. 21)

Apollod. *Epit*. 3.16 also says that Achilles was in command of a fleet, being fifteen years old. This is further complicated by another detail from Apollodorus, namely that Helen's daughter Hermione was nine years old at the time of her mother's elopement (*Epit*. 3.3). Proclus makes no mention of the child, although this could be due to her existence being common knowledge from Homer, and thus not worth mentioning. While West argues for the same source for both Proclus' and Apollodorus' versions of antehomeric stories and even supplies his edition of Proclus' summary with details found in Apollodorus,[46] it is debatable whether the original *Cypria*, an epic much in the Homeric style, would have actually specified the ages of its characters. The Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, that circulated around the time at which the *Cypria* was composed, states:

> Χεί̣ρ̣ων δ’ ἐν Πηλίωι ὑλήεντι
> Πηλείδην ἐκ̣ό̣μιζε πόδας ταχύν, ἔξοχον ἀνδρῶν,
> παῖδ’ ἔτ’ ἐόν[τ’·] οὐ γάρ μιν ἀρηΐφιλος Μενέλαος
> νίκησ’ οὐδέ τις ἄλλος ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων
> μνηστεύων Ἑλένην, εἴ μιν κίχε παρθένον οὖσαν
> οἴκαδε νοστήσας ἐκ Πηλίου ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς.
> ἀλλ’ ἄρα τὴν πρίν γ’ ἔσχεν ἀρηΐφιλος Μενέλαος·
>
> Chiron on wooded Pelion was taking care of Peleus’ swift-footed son,
> greatest of men, who was still a boy; for neither warlike Menelaus
> nor any other human on the earth would have defeated him in wooing
> Helen, if swift Achilles had found her still a virgin when he came back
> home from Pelion. But warlike Menelaus obtained her first.

[46] See West (2003) and (2013: 9).

(Hes. *Catalogue of Women, fr.* 155.87-93)[47]

The need for this quite convincing rationalization indicates that Achilles' courtship of Helen was a matter of dispute very early on. This is understandable, since it would only seem natural that the best of women should be with the best of men, or else there must be a good reason why not.

Euripides also engages in the debate, probably deliberately subverting Hesiod's version in favour of a fine literary game:[48]

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ τὸν Πηλέως τιν᾽ οἶσθ᾽ Ἀχιλλέα γόνον;
ΕΛΕΝΗ ναί·
μνηστήρ ποθ᾽ Ἑλένης ἦλθεν, ὡς ἀκούομεν.

Teucer: Do you know of Peleus' son, a certain Achilles?
Helen: Yes: He once came as Helen's suitor, as I hear.

(Eur. *Hel*. 98-9)

It is all the more effective, since the statement comes from Helen's own mouth; in this passage, however, Helen is hiding her real identity from her interlocutor, and thus we have to dig a little deeper to ascertain the truth: the first option is that Achilles did indeed court Helen, since she herself must know it best and is therefore the most reliable source. The second — and somewhat more likely — option is that Helen is quoting false information on purpose, to enhance her disguise. She has either actually heard or made up a false tale about herself and pretends to believe it, and in this way hopes to make Teucer well-disposed towards her invented self, by 'gossiping' about her legendary real self. Furthermore, Helen is double-bluffing: Teucer must know for a fact that Achilles was not among the suitors (either from his brother Ajax, who certainly was there, or from other comrades in the war or even since Teucer was competing for Helen's hand himself),[49] and Helen knows that he knows, and therefore claims the opposite. Consequently, the woman's apparent ignorance of specific details about the courting of Helen would for Teucer confirm the fact that she cannot be Helen.

Pausanias also has his say on the topic, explicitly referring to Hesiod and adding to the argument:

ἐν δὲ Ἀραΐνῳ καλουμένῳ χωρίῳ τάφος Λᾶ καὶ ἀνδριὰς ἐπὶ τῷ μνήματι ἔπεστι. τοῦτον τὸν Λᾶν οἰκιστὴν εἶναι λέγουσιν οἱ ταύτῃ, καὶ

[47] Tr. Most (2007).

[48] This passage has been adduced by Wright (2005: 144, 148) as an example of metamythology.

[49] Of the three lists of suitors we have (Hesiod *Catalogue of Women* fr. 68, Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.10.8, Hyg. *Fab*. 81) all agree on Telamonian Ajax being among them, and Apollodorus includes Teucer too.

ἀποθανεῖν φασιν ὑπὸ Ἀχιλλέως, Ἀχιλλέα δὲ καταᾶραί σφισιν ἐς τὴν χώραν Ἑλένην παρὰ Τυνδάρεω γυναῖκα αἰτοῦντα. λέγοντι δὲ ἐπ' ἀληθείᾳ Πάτροκλός ἐστιν ὁ τὸν Λᾶν ἀποκτείνας· οὗτος γὰρ καὶ ὁ μνηστευσάμενός ἐστιν Ἑλένην. καὶ ὅτι μὲν τῶν Ἑλένης μνηστήρων Ἀχιλλεὺς οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν Καταλόγῳ γυναικῶν, μηδὲν τοῦτο ἔστω τεκμήριον οὐκ αἰτῆσαι Ἑλένην αὐτόν· Ὅμηρος δὲ ἔγραψε μὲν τῆς ποιήσεως ἀρχόμενος ὡς Ἀχιλλεὺς χαριζόμενος τοῖς Ἀτρέως παισὶ καὶ οὐκ ἐνεχόμενος τοῖς ὅρκοις τοῖς Τυνδάρεω παραγένοιτο ἐς Τροίαν, ἐποίησε δὲ ἐν ἄθλοις λέγοντα Ἀντίλοχον ὡς Ὀδυσσεὺς πρεσβύτερός ἐστιν αὐτοῦ γενεᾷ, τὸν δὲ Ὀδυσσέα πρὸς Ἀλκίνουν περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἅιδου καὶ ἄλλα διηγούμενον καὶ ὅτι Θησέα ἰδεῖν ἐθελήσαι καὶ Πειρίθουν προτέρους ἄνδρας ἢ καθ' ἡλικίαν τὴν αὑτοῦ· Θησέα δὲ ἴσμεν ἁρπάσαντα Ἑλένην. οὕτως οὐδὲ ἐγχωροῦν ἐστιν ἀρχὴν Ἑλένης μνηστῆρα Ἀχιλλέα γενέσθαι.

At a spot called Arainus is the tomb of Las with a statue upon it. The natives say that Las was their founder and was killed by Achilles, and that Achilles put in to their country to ask the hand of Helen of Tyndareus. In point of fact it was Patroclus who killed Las, for it was he who was Helen's suitor. We need not regard it as a proof that Achilles did not ask for Helen because he is not mentioned in the *Catalogue of Women* as one of her suitors.

But at the beginning of his poem Homer says that Achilles came to Troy as a favour to the sons of Atreus, and not because he was bound by the oaths which Tyndareus exacted; and in the Games he makes Antilochus say that Odysseus was a generation older than he, whereas Odysseus, telling Alcinous of his descent to Hades and other adventures, said that he wished to see Theseus and Peirithous, men of an earlier age. We know that Theseus carried off Helen, so that it is quite impossible that Achilles could have been her suitor.

(Paus. 3.24.10-11)[50]

This passage is especially significant in that it clearly shows how concerned Pausanias is with establishing the age of Achilles in relation to Helen. He adduces authoritative evidence from Homer, examines it in the light of other established traditions about Theseus' abduction of Helen (on which see chapter 2.3) and makes a deduction. Although in this instance the aim is not to find a synchronicity of Achilles' birth and childhood with the story of Paris and Helen and Achilles' following participation in the Trojan War, it nevertheless suggests that mythographers would have sought to explain this issue also. But, as we shall see, since they were apparently unable to explain it, they instead chose to circumvent it.

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[50] Tr. Jones & Ormerod (1926).

Whether we take into account any time that Helen spends being married to Menelaus (with or without children) or whether we even suppose that she is — most improbably — carried off by Paris while only newly-wed; whether we assume that Helen's birth precedes that of Achilles by the duration of her marriage or whether they are peers; it is still the case that in the sequence of the *Cypria's* plot enough time must have passed between Peleus' and Thetis' wedding and Helen's abduction to allow for the gestation and sexual maturation of a boy. This is not given in the *Chrestomathia*, where only the building of Paris' ships may cause a small delay. It is of course possible that there was a major time span between the listed events which was omitted by the author of the summary. Perhaps the goddesses' quarrel lasted many years, until Zeus finally decided that it was time to settle it? Perhaps Paris did not set out to Greece straightaway after the judgement? Or potentially we can explain Achilles' fast growth on the basis that he is a demigod? It is reasonable, however, that there simply was a chronological incongruity in the *Cypria* itself. This seems to have been noticed by later writers. Apollodorus clearly cares about the (chrono-)logical consistency of his mythography and the agreement with important sources;[51] but his *Epitome*, whose information on *antehomerica* overlaps with Proclus' for the most part, conspicuously does not tell the context in which Strife throws the apple among the goddesses. He presents the action as a direct response to Zeus' grand plan, but there is no word about a wedding feast (*Epit*. 3.1-2). Apollodorus does tell of Thetis and Peleus at a different point (*Bibl*. 3.13.5), and again the account is curiously similar to what we know from the *Cypria*. But here, too, he does not link the wedding to Helen, but proceeds logically with the childhood of Achilles. In the same way, all extant versions, but one, apparently avoid continuous narratives in which the Judgement of Paris ensues from Peleus' wedding and in which Achilles then illogically appears as a youth. Hyginus' short *Fabula* 92 connects wedding and judgement, but stops with Helen's and Paris' escape. Dictys has Paris steal Helen without any divine prelude; in Dares the judgement is briefly mentioned as an occurrence in Paris' dream, but there is no wedding (7); Dracontius also has the judgement without the wedding, and the prowess of Achilles is discussed while Paris is in Greece (*Rom*. 8.321-2). Perhaps unconsciously, a creative solution for reconciling the myths is given much later by John Tzetzes' *Antehomerica*: firstly, albeit with some reserve and in a complicated way, he does make the judgement dependent on the wedding, also implying that it was part of Paris' education while living away from his family, but says nothing about a bribe or Helen (*Antehom*. 59-75). For the rest of his story he heavily draws on John Malalas and specifies that Paris was thirty years old when he returned to the royal household (*Antehom*. 76), then went to Greece in order to sacrifice to Apollo, and only met Helen accidentally. In this version, Peleus' wedding and the judgement could have taken place in Paris' teens, for example at age fifteen,

[51] For example, at *Epit*. 3.18 he explains why in *Il*. 24.765-6 Helen says that she has been away from Sparta for twenty years, although the Trojan War is commonly known to have lasted ten years.

which would leave about fifteen years before Achilles goes to war (at line 140 Tzetzes also says that Menelaus chased Paris around for one year before going to Troy).

The only text after the *Cypria* which incorporates the chronological error regarding Achilles is Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen*, and it must do so on purpose. As has already been established, the original full-length *Cypria* had disappeared some 300 years before Colluthus' time, so he could not have known it.[52] Nevertheless, his version shows many similarities with the *Cypria*-material known to us. The poet writing around 500 AD most probably had the same limited information about the lost epic as we do nowadays. This supposition may even shed some light on his objectives in composing the *Abduction*. Colluthus could have intended to write a more in-depth account of a story that he and others knew only as a plot summary. The narrative follows Proclus surprisingly closely. Although some points are not incorporated and others significantly expanded, the epyllion is generally compatible with the paraphrase. The only truly divergent detail is Menelaus' absence from Colluthus' scene altogether (he is only once mentioned indirectly at the end). This is, however, easily explained, if only with the length of the epyllion: while the long epic had more lines to spare to let Paris be entertained first by the Dioscuri and then by Menelaus, and to make the latter conveniently leave after a while, the shorter poem gives prominence to other events. Both by reason of economy and in order to enhance the effect of the story, Menelaus lends himself to being almost erased from a narrative which concentrates on Paris and Helen.

As for Colluthus' relationship with the *Cypria*-synopsis (whether that of Proclus or someone else), I suggest that he intentionally bases his work on its beginning with the goal of both reviving and 'overwriting' it and thus makes his own poem the new trustworthy version of the abduction of Helen.[53] By heeding the ancient account, he lends authority to his piece. While in their treatments of the episode other writers have disagreed with the remains of the *Cypria* to a greater or lesser extent, Colluthus demonstratively takes over even the chronological mistake (which could or could not have existed in the original *Cypria*). At the same time, lest the attentive reader should consider him careless, he makes his play blatantly obvious.

While the geography of Colluthus' piece is generally straightforward, taking the reader from Olympus to Troy, then to Sparta, and finally back to Troy, this cannot be said of the chronology. It has been often pointed out by commentators that the style is somewhat truncated, telling snippets of events rather than a continuous narrative.[54] While it is true that all the episodes are self-contained, and sometimes introduced without warning or an obvious connection, they nevertheless follow logically and causally upon one another. Each scene naturally feeds into the next, creating a domino

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[52] See also West (1970: 658), Orsini (1972: viii), Schönberger (1993: 8), Magnelli (2008: 163), Baumbach & Bär (2015: 621-2).

[53] The continuation of other texts of the epic cycle in late antiquity by Quintus Smyrnaeus, Triphiodorus and Nonnus has been investigated by Baumbach & Bär (2015).

[54] Livrea (1968: xx), Cadau (2015: 135).

effect: the wedding and lack of invitation causes Eris' wrath, which in turn leads to the judgement, the outcome of which motivates Paris to undertake the voyage and the abduction of Helen; ultimately, Helen's disappearance is the reason for Hermione's lament. Only the last few lines telling of the couple's arrival at Troy are an exception, as they are rather a continuation of the elopement scene, forming a kind of epilogue. Although the notion of time in the poem is deliberately vague, it gives the impression of haste through multiple scenes which follow upon one another uninterrupted.

Let us consider the likely duration of the poem's constituent parts. Whether the divine wedding party takes one or more days, we read of the entrance of the guests and the fact that Eris was not invited immediately. Eris' reaction to being scorned seems to be an immediate result of her still hot anger. The judgement, presented as a matter of some urgency, apparently also happens on the very same day or very soon thereafter, giving the contestants a little time to prepare (Coll. 80). The journey of Hermes and the goddesses from Olympus to Mt Ida should not take too long, and neither the judgement itself, even though Colluthus relates the exactness of Paris as a judge (Coll. 131-35). At 192-3 we learn of Paris' already passionate love and great yearning for Helen which spurs him on to get to her as soon as he can. Oaks are cut to provide timber (Coll. 195-6) and the craftsman Phereclus pleases the prince as he miraculously both designs the ships and finishes them *on the same day* (αὐτῆμαρ προβέβουλε καὶ αὐτῆμαρ κάμε νῆας: Coll. 199). Before setting out, Paris offers sacrifices on the shore to Aphrodite many times (πολλάκις: 203), which may have somewhat delayed him, depending on whether the propitiations occur one after the other or scattered over a few days. As the crow flies, the distance between Mt Ida and Sparta is 300 miles (c. 480km), and a route over the sea paths in a fast ship would have more than doubled this distance, resulting in a journey of about seven days.[55] An extra day should perhaps be added in this case, given the less than ideal weather conditions (waterspout: Coll. 205-9). The sailing on the Eurotas of c. 40 km upriver would have also taken most of another day. Thereafter, we learn that Paris first takes a bath and then walks to the palace at a leisurely pace so as not to dirty his feet or ruin his hair (Coll. 230-4). Once the prince has arrived, he surprisingly quickly persuades Helen to come with him, during only one conversation. At 316-324 we hear that the couple leaves in the small hours. We then witness Hermione's lament in the morning (Coll. 327), which seemingly spreads throughout the day, as she searches for Helen with her handmaidens until she cries herself to sleep. Another night falls; the girl has a dream of Helen and wakes up again. Parallel to the Hermione episode, Paris and Helen are on their way to Troy and finally the poem closes with their arrival after an uncertain number of days has passed. (Given the length of the outbound journey it is unlikely that the return only takes the 24 hours or so that are filled with the interlude on Hermione.)

Consequently, following the temporal outline above, the plot of the *Abduction* can be said to occupy the space of about twenty days. This is, however, complicated by a detail in Helen's first speech when she meets Paris: when she cannot

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[55] An estimate of six to seven days is also given by Magnelli (2008: 157).

recognise the Trojan she goes through all the major Greek families and heroes she knows, to see whether she can match Paris with any of them. She proceeds from a very old generation down towards her own contemporaries and, tellingly, at the very end of her list she says that she knows ἠνορέην Ἀχιλῆος. If only some days have passed since the wedding of Achilles' parents, it is of course impossible that Achilles already exists, let alone is known for his manliness (ἠνορέη).[56] This mention is not only a proleptic hint at the mythologically later *Iliad*, but also at the *Cypria* — or at least its summary — by drawing attention to the fact that the author forgot to leave the hero enough time to grow up. Colluthus' exaggeratedly swift ship-building could also be a pointed comment on the only potentially long-winded event at the beginning of the *Cypria*. Furthermore the presence of a childlike, yet eloquent, Hermione — she could be nine years old, as stated by Apollodorus — presupposes that Helen and Menelaus have at least had their tenth wedding anniversary when the abduction happened.[57] It is also prudent of Colluthus not to give any details or timings of Paris' and Helen's voyage to Troy, since opinions are divided about this too: for example, Apollodorus says that after their flight the couple stayed *for a long time* in Phoenicia and Cyprus so as to avoid persecution (*Epit*. 3.4), whereas Herodotus claims that in the *Cypria* the couple enjoys a calm sea and gets to Ilium in three days (2.117).[58] Through playing these chronology games and 'catching out' the ancient epic cycle, Colluthus shows off his knowledge of mythology.

3. The First Sack of Troy

An exploration of *antehomerica* is not complete without considering a less well-known precedent to the Homeric Trojan War: the sack of Ilion by Heracles. Information about it is already scattered throughout the *Iliad* in several digressions. The story is then established by mythographers and continues to bear relevance in our two *Abduction* epyllia. I shall first offer an exposition of the different versions of events collected from Homer into the Roman period, before showing how the tradition was used by late-antique authors.

We first hear through the words of Tlepolemus, Heracles' son, in *Il*. 5.638-42 that his father once came and sacked the city with just six ships, for the sake of the

[56] The emphasis on Achilles' virile qualities could also be a subtle jibe at the tradition of his disguise as a girl, as told by Apollodorus *Bibl*. 3.13.8 and Statius, *Achilleid* 1.

[57] It also poses more questions, for instance, how much older Hermione would be than Achilles' son Pyrrhus who traditionally becomes her husband (the wedding is celebrated at the start of *Od*. 3) and also whether she would be about thirty years old at her wedding, if indeed twenty years go by between Helen's abduction and her return (cf. *Il*. 24.765-6 and Apollod. *Epit*. 3.18). See also Eur. *Hel*. 282-3., where Helen complains that through her fault her daughter has grey hair and is still unmarried.

[58] For details of the return journey, see chapter 9.

horses of Laomedon. At *Il.* 7.451-453, in the context of the Greeks' wall-building, Poseidon mentions that he and Apollo once built a wall for the city of Laomedon. Heracles' sailing back after his sack of Ilion is referred to in passing (*Il.* 14.250-4). *Il.* 20.145-8 relates a gathering of the gods by the fortress of Heracles which the Trojans and Athene had built him, so that he could escape the sea-monster when it pushed him away from the shore inland. Finally, Poseidon reminds Apollo of their misadventure with Laomedon with which he explains his enmity towards the Trojans:[59]

μέμνηαι ὅσα δὴ πάθομεν κακὰ Ἴλιον ἀμφὶ
μοῦνοι νῶϊ θεῶν, ὅτ᾽ ἀγήνορι Λαομέδοντι
πὰρ Διὸς ἐλθόντες θητεύσαμεν εἰς ἐνιαυτὸν
μισθῷ ἔπι ῥητῷ· ὃ δὲ σημαίνων ἐπέτελλεν. 445
ἤτοι ἐγὼ Τρώεσσι πόλιν πέρι τεῖχος ἔδειμα
εὐρύ τε καὶ μάλα καλόν, ἵν᾽ ἄρρηκτος πόλις εἴη·
Φοῖβε σὺ δ᾽ εἰλίποδας ἕλικας βοῦς βουκολέεσκες
Ἴδης ἐν κνημοῖσι πολυπτύχου ὑληέσσης.
ἀλλ᾽ ὅτε δὴ μισθοῖο τέλος πολυγηθέες ὧραι 450
ἐξέφερον, τότε νῶϊ βιήσατο μισθὸν ἅπαντα
Λαομέδων ἔκπαγλος, ἀπειλήσας δ᾽ ἀπέπεμπε.
σὺν μὲν ὅ γ᾽ ἠπείλησε πόδας καὶ χεῖρας ὕπερθε
δήσειν, καὶ περάαν νήσων ἔπι τηλεδαπάων·
στεῦτο δ᾽ ὅ γ᾽ ἀμφοτέρων ἀπολεψέμεν οὔατα χαλκῷ. 455
νῶϊ δὲ ἄψορροι κίομεν κεκοτηότι θυμῷ
μισθοῦ χωόμενοι, τὸν ὑποστὰς οὐκ ἐτέλεσσε.

Remember what great evils we have suffered for Ilion's sake,
you and I alone among gods, when we came from Zeus to
arrogant Laomedon and were his servants for a year
for a fixed rate, but he showed us the work and gave orders. 445
Then I constructed a wall around the Trojan city,
wide and very elegant, so that the city might be indestructible;
but you Phoebus tended the curve-horned cattle that roll
in their gait on the shoulder of the woody Ida of many valleys.
But when the delightful seasons brought the time to pay 450
our wages, then violent Laomedon deprived us two of our
entire wages, and drove us away with threats.
He threatened to bind together our feet and hands
from above, and to carry us away to be slaves on remote islands.
He even swore that he would lop off the ears of both of us with bronze. 455

[59] Curiously, in Eur. *Troad.* 4-7, Poseidon gives the building of the Trojan walls as a reason for being well-disposed towards the people.

But we two went back with our hearts full of grudges
and angry about the wages which he had promised but not delivered.

(*Il.* 21.442-57)

From these snippets we can piece together most of this mythical account, which continues taking shape in later sources. Pind. *Ol.* 8.30-46 gives a detail not encountered elsewhere, that Apollo and Poseidon make Aeacus work on the construction of the Trojan Wall with them; once it is finished, Phoebus interprets a portent involving snakes to the effect that two generations of Aeacus' descendants shall destroy the fortification he has built (cf. *Isthm.* 5.35-8).[60] In *Isthm.* 6.26-30 Telamon is said to have come with Heracles to sack Ilium because of an offence by Laomedon. Sophocles' Ajax compares his father's glory in Troy under Heracles with his own dishonour from the Greeks after Achilles' death (Soph. *Aj.* 343-40).[61] In a choral ode to Telamon in Euripides' *Troades* (799-819), we find out that Heracles came to take revenge, because he had been cheated by Laomedon who had promised him horses. The ruined walls are this time mentioned as Apollo's work. Herodorus fr. 28 (= Tzetzes *Schol. in* Lycoph. *Alex.* 522) combines the wall-building and the withholding of the money and at the same time rationalises the myth somewhat: the gods did not really build the wall, but rather Laomedon used the sacrificial money intended for them to erect it.

Hellanicus (fr. 109 = Tzetzes on Lycoph. *Alex.* 469) says that Telamon crossed the city wall first, but when he saw that this angered Heracles, he constructed an altar for Heracles Alexikakos and thus pacified the chief. In fr. 26b he attests that after Laomedon's cheating Poseidon sent a sea-monster to Troy that would devour the humans and destroy the fruit of the land. According to an oracle, Laomedon had to set his daughter Hesione before the monster, which he did. He promised to give his immortal horses (a present from Zeus to Tros after he had stolen Ganymede) to whoever would kill the monster. Heracles volunteered and, using the screen built by Athena mentioned above, he leapt through the sea-monster's mouth into its belly and destroyed its flanks. Now Laomedon refused to give him the horses too, whereupon he ravaged Ilium and took them by force.

Lycophron, in his enigmatic *Alexandra*, makes multiple disjointed mentions of the events of the myth. He first refers to the fact that Ilium has been burnt once before (31-3). Later it is stated that Laomedon forced Phoinodamas to expose his three daughters to be a meal for the κῆτος; that one then called an assembly and persuaded the Trojans that Laomedon should sacrifice his own child, given that he was the cause of the evil (470-5; Tzetzes *ad* Lycoph. *Alex.* 472). The sea-monster, however, devours a

[60] Pindar speaks of the first and the fourth generations: by the first he means Telamon, whereas the fourth must be counting so as to include Aeacus himself as the first and means Neoptolemus and possibly Epeius who is descended from Aeacus via Phocus and Panopeus.

[61] See also Finglass (2011: *ad loc.*) for other instances of comparisons between the first and the second Sack of Troy in both literature and art.

‘scorpion’, Heracles, instead of the ‘woodpecker’, Hesione (476 and Tzetzes *ad loc*.), which may be a literary hint at a tradition that otherwise survives only in iconography: on a column-crater from the fourth century BC the hero substitutes himself for the maiden by covering himself with her veil in order to trick the monster into swallowing him to get into its stomach (*LIMC* Hesione 6). At 36-7 (with Tzetzes, *Scholia in Lycophronem* 34), we find out the intriguing detail that when Heracles re-emerged from inside the creature, after three days of hacking at its innards, the hair on his head had fallen out.[62] In the context of prophesying Priam's death, Cassandra recalls his youth. He was ransomed for his sister's veil and hence acquired the new name Priam from πρίαμαι (337-9). At 393 Lycophron also speaks of Poseidon as λατρεύς.

After these different fragments of the tradition, Apollodorus provides us with the only full and coherent telling of the events, embedded in Heracles' biography. According to the *Bibliotheca*, the hero visits Ilium first between his ninth and tenth labour, where he is offended by Laomedon. He later returns with an army, having completed the labours and having been cured from his madness, to exact punishment for the outrage:

> πρὸς δὲ τὰς λοιπὰς ἀγωνισάμενος ἀποπλεῖ, καὶ προσίσχει Τροίᾳ. συνεβεβήκει δὲ τότε κατὰ μῆνιν Ἀπόλλωνος καὶ Ποσειδῶνος ἀτυχεῖν τὴν πόλιν. Ἀπόλλων γὰρ καὶ Ποσειδῶν τὴν Λαομέδοντος ὕβριν πειράσαι θέλοντες, εἰκασθέντες ἀνθρώποις ὑπέσχοντο ἐπὶ μισθῷ τειχιεῖν τὸ Πέργαμον. τοῖς δὲ τειχίσασι τὸν μισθὸν οὐκ ἀπεδίδου. διὰ τοῦτο Ἀπόλλων μὲν λοιμὸν ἔπεμψε, Ποσειδῶν δὲ κῆτος ἀναφερόμενον ὑπὸ πλημμυρίδος, ὃ τοὺς ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ συνήρπαζεν ἀνθρώπους. χρησμῶν δὲ λεγόντων ἀπαλλαγὴν ἔσεσθαι τῶν συμφορῶν, ἐὰν προθῇ Λαομέδων Ἡσιόνην τὴν θυγατέρα αὐτοῦ τῷ κήτει βοράν, οὗτος προύθηκε ταῖς πλησίον τῆς θαλάσσης πέτραις προσαρτήσας. ταύτην ἰδὼν ἐκκειμένην Ἡρακλῆς ὑπέσχετο σώσειν, εἰ τὰς ἵππους παρὰ Λαομέδοντος λήψεται ἃς Ζεὺς ποινὴν τῆς Γανυμήδους ἁρπαγῆς ἔδωκε. δώσειν δὲ Λαομέδοντος εἰπόντος, κτείνας τὸ κῆτος Ἡσιόνην ἔσωσε. μὴ βουλομένου δὲ τὸν μισθὸν ἀποδοῦναι, πολεμήσειν Τροίᾳ ἀπειλήσας ἀνήχθη.
> […]
> μετὰ δὲ τὴν λατρείαν ἀπαλλαγεὶς τῆς νόσου ἐπὶ Ἴλιον ἔπλει πεντηκοντόροις ὀκτωκαίδεκα, συναθροίσας στρατὸν ἀνδρῶν ἀρίστων ἑκουσίως θελόντων στρατεύεσθαι. καταπλεύσας δὲ εἰς Ἴλιον τὴν μὲν τῶν νεῶν φυλακὴν Ὀικλεῖ κατέλιπεν, αὐτὸς δὲ μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων ἀριστέων ὥρμα ἐπὶ τὴν πόλιν. παραγενόμενος δὲ ἐπὶ τὰς ναῦς σὺν τῷ πλήθει Λαομέδων Ὀικλέα μὲν ἀπέκτεινε μαχόμενον,

[62] The sea-monster's belly is described as a fireless cauldron, which leads Hornblower (2015 *ad loc*.) to believe that the loss of hair is caused by heat. Ogden (2013: 119) reasons more persuasively that this is due to the digestive juices.

ἀπελασθεὶς δὲ ὑπὸ τῶν μετὰ Ἡρακλέους ἐπολιορκεῖτο. τῆς δὲ πολιορκίας ἐνεστώσης ῥήξας τὸ τεῖχος Τελαμὼν πρῶτος εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὴν πόλιν, καὶ μετὰ τοῦτον Ἡρακλῆς. ὡς δὲ ἐθεάσατο Τελαμῶνα πρῶτον εἰσεληλυθότα, σπασάμενος τὸ ξίφος ἐπ᾽ αὐτὸν ὥρμα, μηδένα θέλων ἑαυτοῦ κρείττονα νομίζεσθαι. συνιδὼν δὲ τοῦτο Τελαμὼν λίθους πλησίον κειμένους συνήθροιζε, τοῦ δὲ ἐρομένου τί πράττοι βωμὸν εἶπεν Ἡρακλέους κατασκευάζειν καλλινίκου. ὁ δὲ ἐπαινέσας. ὡς εἷλε τὴν πόλιν, κατατοξεύσας Λαομέδοντα καὶ τοὺς παῖδας αὐτοῦ χωρὶς Ποδάρκου, Τελαμῶνι ἀριστεῖον Ἡσιόνην τὴν Λαομέδοντος θυγατέρα δίδωσι, καὶ ταύτῃ συγχωρεῖ τῶν αἰχμαλώτων ὃν ἤθελεν ἄγεσθαι. τῆς δὲ αἱρουμένης τὸν ἀδελφὸν Ποδάρκην, ἔφη δεῖν πρῶτον αὐτὸν δοῦλον γενέσθαι, καὶ τότε τί ποτε δοῦσαν ἀντ᾽ αὐτοῦ λαβεῖν αὐτόν. ἡ δὲ πιπρασκομένου τὴν καλύπτραν ἀφελομένη τῆς κεφαλῆς ἀντέδωκεν: ὅθεν Ποδάρκης Πρίαμος ἐκλήθη.

And after fighting the rest he sailed away and landed at Troy. It happened that at the time the city was unfortunate because of the wrath of Apollo and Poseidon. For wishing to test the insolence of Laomedon, Apollo and Poseidon likened themselves to humans and promised to fortify Pergamum for a wage. But after they had fortified it, he did not pay them the wage. For that reason Apollo sent a plague, and Poseidon a sea monster that was brought up by the flood and which would seize the people on the plain. But when oracles foretold that there would be deliverance from the miseries, if Laomedon set out his daughter Hesione as a feast before the sea-monster, that one set her forth after fastening her to the rocks by the sea. Seeing her exposed, Heracles promised to save her, if he should receive from Laomedon the horses that Zeus had given as a recompense for the abduction of Ganymede. When Laomedon said that he would give them, he killed the sea-monster and saved Hesione. But when Laomedon did not want to pay up the price, he announced that he would make war with Troy and put out to sea.
[…]
After his service and set free from his disease, he sailed to Ilion with eighteen fifty-oared ships, having gathered an army of noble men who readily volunteered to go to war. And having sailed through to Ilion, he left the guarding of the ships to Oicles, but himself with the other noble men rushed upon the city. But Laomedon came beside the ships with the multitude and killed Oicles in battle, but was driven away by those around Heracles and was besieged. When the siege was laid, Telamon shattered the wall and marched into the city first, and after him Heracles. But when he perceived that Telamon had gone in first, he drew his sword and rushed at him, as he wanted nobody to be judged better than him. But when Telamon saw this he assembled stones that lay near, and when the other one asked

> him what he was doing he said that was preparing an altar for Heracles the Glorious Victor. Heracles commended him. Once he had taken the city and shot down Laomedon and his sons except Podarces, he gave Laomedon's daughter Hesione to Telamon as the prize of valour and conceded to her to take with her whomever of the captives she wished. When she chose her brother Podarces, he said that he first had to become a slave and then she would have to give something as ransom for him and take him. And she took the veil off her head and offered it in return for the one sold; hence Podarces was called Priam.
>
> (*Bibliotheca* 2.5.9, 2.6.4)

A very similar, more thorough treatment of the myth is given by Diodorus Siculus, with a few differences: he makes Heracles' passage through Troy an episode of the expedition with the Argonauts. The hero has to come back later, because he first has to gather the Golden Fleece.[63] The story of the sea monster is elaborated on in Diodorus and we hear that after her rescue Hesione is given the choice whether she would rather go with Heracles or stay with her parents. She chooses the former on account of his kindness which surpasses even familial ties, but also because she fears that the monster may appear again (4.42.6). In this tradition Heracles leaves for Colchis not yet hostile and announcing war, but as a guest-friend, showered with gifts, and promises to return after his mission on the way home to collect Hesione and the mares (4.42.7). We may infer from this that Laomedon either changes his mind in the meantime or pretends to stick to the agreement at first, in the hope that Heracles might never return from his journey to claim his prizes. In a later section, Diodorus expands on the exact events of the sack (4.49.3-7): Heracles sends Iphiclus and Telamon to fetch Hesione and the horses, but Laomedon throws them into prison and plans to ambush the others together with his sons. The only one to oppose his father is Priam; he smuggles two swords into the prison for Telamon and his companions to kill the guards and relates to them Laomedon's plans. Accordingly, they free themselves and warn the others to prepare for battle. Once Heracles has won and killed Laomedon, he makes Priam the new king and departs in peace and friendship.[64] Finally, the author also acknowledges the fact that some accounts do not place these events within the story of the *Argonautica*. Earlier on, a more concise rendition of the same story is given. Here Diodorus adds that Homer speaks of six, other sources of eighteen ships that sailed with Heracles (4.32.1-2) and also that the gift of Hesione to Telamon is presented as a reward for breaking into the city first, but there is no mention of Heracles' jealousy (4.32.3-5).

Most other accounts agree with (different parts of) Apollodorus' or Diodorus' versions with minimal deviations. Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* 2.451-578 tells the first part of the story at length in accordance with Diodorus (Hesione is rescued, Heracles

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[63] Cf. Hyg. *Fab*. 89.

[64] The kingship granted to Priam by Heracles is also alluded to in Sen. *Troad*. 718-35.

intends to come back for his horses, and Laomedon already plans how to cheat him), but there is no resolution, as the work is unfinished. Lucian, *De Sacrificiis* 4 explains that the human form was a punishment to Apollo for killing the Cyclopes. He and Poseidon were forced by poverty into brick-making and building and the sum Laomedon owed them was over thirty Trojan drachmas. Ov. *Met*. 11.194-220 relates the main events and says that Laomedon had difficulties building fortifications, and so the two gods helped him in disguise of men, in order to receive gold. Apart from sending the monster, Poseidon also flooded the Trojans' crops. Ovid adds that Peleus, too, was present at the sack. In Hyg. *Fab*. 89 Laomedon knows that his workers are deities and rather than wages he offers them sacrifice from his flocks that year; Hyginus guesses that he either withheld these or, according to others, he promised too little and caused offence. The sea-monster and the plague are here in a way combined into one, since the *cetos* is also referred to as a *pestilentia*. Triphiodorus refers to the city walls first as the work of Apollo (508) and later that of Poseidon (680-1). The *Aeneid* seems to take the story for granted, since at *Aen*. 8.157 Evander mentions that when he was young, Priam and Anchises visited Arcadia while they were on their way to see Hesione's kingdom Salamis. Servius' commentry *ad. loc*. agrees with the prevalent tradition. Interestingly, this somewhat recalls Apollodorus' account that Hesione bought Priam with her veil, so he could come with her. Servius also tells of Hesione's capture in his scholium to *Aen*. 10.91, and says that after some legates were refused Hesione, Priam sent Paris explicitly to abduct an equivalent lady from Greece, '*aut uxorem regis, aut filiam*'. Other miscellaneous mentions of the story are found in: Hyg. *Fab*. 31, Philostr. *Her.* 28.2 and 35.2, *Imagines* 12, Soph. *Aj*. 1299-1303, Verg. *G*. 1.502, Hor. *Carm*. 3.3.21-4.

In Late Antiquity the myth continues to be known and relevant, notably with the prose rendition of the history of Troy by Dares, in which the aftermath of the events is developed to tie in with the main Trojan War. The relevant parts of Dares' narration can be summarised as follows: it begins from the perspective of the Argonauts and in ch. 2 tells how they stop over by the Simois on their way to find the Golden Fleece. When Laomedon hears the news he is disturbed and thinks that letting Greeks come to his shore will constitute a *commune periculum*. So he sends messengers to tell the Argonauts to depart, or else he threatens to resort to violence to eject them. Jason's crew grow indignant at such a rough treatment for no reason, but obey, for fear that the barbarians might attack. In chapter three, after the quest is accomplished, Hercules still feels insulted by the Trojans and plans revenge. He gathers Castor, Pollux, Telamon, Peleus and Nestor with their armies. Once they land in Phrygia, Hercules, Telamon and Peleus advance the armies. On hearing this, Laomedon leads his cavalry to the shore, but now the Greeks are besieging Troy. The king turns back, but is intercepted and slain by Heracles. Telamon enters the city first and is given Hesione as a reward. At the time Priam is commanding an army in Phrygia. Hercules plunders the country and the Greeks go back home. In chapter four Priam returns to Troy with his family and fortifies the city with stronger walls and prepares more soldiers. He then waits for the right time to avenge his father. He sends Antenor to arrange the return of his sister, which would

placate him. In chapter five Antenor visits each of Achilles' former henchmen Peleus, Telamon, Nestor and the Dioscuri in turn to ask for Hesione and is turned down by each, with different reasons: the girl was a lawfully given war prize and no wrong has been done to Priam, and besides the Trojans have been the first to offend. Antenor returns without accomplishment, and urges Priam to start a war. In chapter six Priam assembles his sons and exhorts them to lead the army. Hector acknowledges the justness of the cause, but predicts that the expedition would fail, because the Greek fleet is much stronger and has many powerful allies. From chapter seven we learn that Alexander is willing to take command and he explains that he is confident of his success, since he had a dream in which he judged goddesses' beauty; therein he judged Venus the fairest, since she promised him the most beautiful Greek woman to wife. Priam is persuaded by the divine help, and Deiphobus and Troilus approve, though Helenus foretells calamity.

In comparison with the previous traditions outlined above, it is fair to say that in Dares' journal the heroic aspect is greatly impoverished and the focus shifted instead on inter-personal relations. This is undoubtedly due to the author's sympathies for the Phrygians; because of that, Laomedon's deviousness and cheating of either the gods or Hercules is not mentioned, but rather he drives the Argonauts off with a somewhat implausible excuse. Nevertheless, his motivation is the protection of his people, even at the expense of disregarding the laws of *xenia*, which in turn presents him as a good king who safeguards the welfare of his subjects. This is of course a stark contrast to the avaricious Laomedon-figure we have encountered elsewhere. In a related fashion, the plague and the sea-monster (exactly those evils which the selfish ruler brings upon his country) have no place in Dares' text. Neither can the new just Laomedon be shown to deliver his subjects' daughters, or his own, as a feast to a monster, nor is it appropriate to portray his enemy Heracles as kind enough to save a foreign maiden. These memorable elements of the story therefore had to be scrapped and give way to a much weaker plot twist resulting in the conflict. In addition, the resentful and aggressive temper in Heracles' character is stressed, since his reaction of murdering Laomedon and many other Trojans is perhaps incommensurate with the offence committed against him. Heracles also acts as a war criminal and enslaves a member of the royal household. Naturally, his friendliness toward Priam is likewise omitted, in order to supply the latter with a legitimate reason to seek revenge. The unfavourable depiction of the Greeks is perpetuated through their stubborn refusals of Antenor's plea to release Hesione.

The only other extant texts that use the story of Hesione as a prerequisite to the abduction of Helen are the *Excidium Troiae* and Dracontius' *Rom.* 8. However, the former mentions the rescue mission as the reason for Paris' journey to Greece only to forget about it altogether thereafter (*Excidium* p.7.5-14). Meanwhile, Dracontius makes it an important episode in his epyllion. It is either modelled directly on Dares' version or must have a source in common with it. The poet's aim, however, seems to be rather the opposite, namely to demonstrate the guilt of Paris and, by extension, of the Trojans in general. If it is indeed the case that Dracontius borrowed from Dares, he has

manipulated the myth superbly to achieve the desired effect. Dracontius also knew the original tradition, which he (re-)incorporates into material he shares with Dares: although the plot opens with Paris' youth, and thus the previous generation of Ilium does not form part of the subject matter, multiple analepses of the myth are still woven into the epyllion. When we first meet the Trojan royals, they are engaged in a procession to mark an anniversary of the restoration of the city after the destruction wrought by Hercules (*Rom*. 8.78-9). A little later, Priam is tellingly referred to as *Laomedontiades* (81). Apollo's speech is introduced through a reminder of previous events which still drive the god's intentions: he built a wall and did not receive payment and therefore wants to take revenge on the fraudster's family (185-8). In the Salamis episode, Antenor summarises the link between the past war and the present embassy, saying that Telamon took Hesione prisoner during the sack (265-275). Finally, two of Polydamas' puzzling remarks may have something to do with the proto-Trojan War. At 335-6, presumably referring to Telamon (though it could conceivably be Hercules), he says that the man who took Hesione's tiara gave her a diadem. A corresponding scenario is described by Suetonius: Nero removed the *tiara* from the head of the Armenian king Tiridates and replaced it with a *diadema* when crowning him as a client ruler of Rome (*Nero* 13). A τιάρα typically denotes an Oriental aristocratic head dress — including the Phrygian Cap — while a διάδημα is associated with Roman emperors.[65] The obvious interpretation is that Hesione has been enslaved by symbolically being deprived of the headgear that marked her as a Trojan princess, but she has since been made a Greek queen; she has recovered her status, albeit with a different cultural flavour. It is striking that, of all things, Dracontius focusses on Hesione's headgear: could this be an appropriation of the veil bargain to spare Priam? Relatedly, Polydamas continues to speak at length of the benefits to the Trojan ruler after the defeat by the Greeks (340-348), which perhaps also echoes the amicable terms between Heracles and Priam in some earlier myth. In conclusion, if Dracontius did use Dares' version as his prototype, he certainly made a point of 'setting it right' or making a show of uncovering the evidence that had been suppressed by the predecessor's pro-Phrygian report.

Dracontius also skilfully condenses two journeys of Dares (or a similar version) into one and simultaneously changes the tone completely. In Dares Priam first sends Antenor to retrieve his sister, but when the latter approaches Peleus, Telamon, Nestor and the Dioscuri he is turned away unkindly by each of them (Dares 5), thus justifying the Trojans' ensuing reactions. Thereafter Priam gathers men and sends Paris to ask for the return of his aunt one last time, before the army would be launched (Dares 8-9). Strangely, he tells him to go to Castor and Pollux about this matter, rather than to Hesione's captor Telamon, as one might expect. This is a rather weak pretext of a plot device with which to get Paris to Sparta to make the abduction possible. The Dioscuri happen to be absent and instead Paris meets Helen and takes her to Troy (Dares 10). Though perhaps not necessarily intended as such by Alexander, the kidnapping of Helen

[65] See Hurschmann (2009) and (2004).

is viewed as a direct retribution. Priam sees it positively as a measure of retrieving Hesione:

> Priamus gavisus est, sperans Graecos causa recuperationis Helenae sororem Hesionam reddituros, et ea quae inde a Trojanis abstulerant.
>
> Priam rejoiced, in the hope that with the motive of recovering Helen the Greeks would give back his sister Hesione, and besides the things which they had taken from the Trojans.
>
> (Dares 11)

Dracontius, however, seems to follow a different agenda through the same tale. Here Priam instructs Paris, accompanied by Antenor, Polydamas and Aeneas, to plead with Telamon directly — a much more efficient and credible narrative technique. When the Trojans ask Telamon to return Hesione, he flies into rage and threatens to attack Phrygia, but it is made clear that this is out of affection for Hesione (285-290). It is true that he has won her as a prize of war, but he treats her like a queen, as his beloved wife (304-8) and mother of the Greater Ajax. This latter detail is pointed to repeatedly (50-52; 290; 314-5), since it deviates from the usual tradition. In all early versions, including Sophocles', Ajax is the son of Telamon by his primary wife Eriboea/ Periboea,[66] while Hesione is only a slave received as a prize of war. Thus as a concubine she gives birth to the bastard Teucer whom Telamon does not love as dearly as Ajax.[67] This preference seems to be the case here, too, since Telamon praises Ajax exceedingly (319-20), while he only mentions Teucer's name when he enumerates the other Greek youths (325), and does not even acknowledge him as his offspring. The only other accounts in which Hesione bears Ajax are the *Ilias Latina* 624 and in fact Dares 19 (where this is, however, not mentioned in conjunction with the efforts of bringing her back).[68] Thus it is significant that Dracontius consciously emphasises Hesione's maternity of Telamon's favourite first-born son, in order to enhance her status as Telamon's lawful and only wife.

Priam's envoys are soon won over by Telamon's emotional speech, and give up their attempt to take Hesione away, either because they understand that it would be wrong or because they fear Telamon's threats of war. They then accept the invitation to spend a week as guests in Salamis, before saying goodbye with warm and friendly wishes (362-79). By expanding this episode and finally making it a harmonious family gathering, Dracontius has turned Dares' reasoning on its head: since Paris has been

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[66] Soph. *Ajax* 569, Pind. *Isthm.* 6.45, Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.12.7, Paus. 1.42.4, Enn. *Telamon* 327. Ister tells us that Theseus married Ajax' mother Meliboea (FGrH 334 F 110). Elsewhere this wife of Theseus is called Periboea (Plut. *Thes.* 29.1) or Phereboea (Pherecydes, FGrH 3 F 153). For a full exposition on the name of Ajax' mother, see Finglass (2011: 302-3).

[67] *Il.* 8.283-4, Soph, *Ajax* 1012-16, Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.12.7.

[68] Simons (2005: 258).

reassured — and has seen with his own eyes — that his aunt is well, there is no excuse for his abduction of Helen. The same technique is also used by Dracontius in the *Orestis tragoedia,* where Agamemnon is portrayed as innocent and does not sacrifice Iphigenia nor bring Cassandra home as a concubine, thus stripping Clytaemnestra of justifiable reasons for murdering him; instead, the sole motive of the killing is to put Aegisthus on the throne.[69]

Unlike in Dracontius' case, Heracles' sack of Troy is not essential for the events in Colluthus' *Abduction*. Nevertheless, there are occasional glimpses of the poet's awareness of that myth also. In line 19, Ganymede is mentioned in his role as cup-bearer at Peleus' and Thetis' marriage banquet. Though brief, the mention of the boy is significant, as the mythology about him prefigures two themes relevant to the rest of the poem. Firstly, he hails from Troy, and secondly, he was abducted, with a happy outcome. The story to follow, too, features a Trojan youth, but this time in the role of the abductor. The kidnapping of Ganymede is also repeatedly evoked in the context of the Judgement of Paris by Lucian (Luc. *Iudicium* 1, 6). While Homer acknowledges the fact that Ganymede was taken to Olympus because of his beauty and in order to wait on the gods (*Il*. 20.233-5), we never actually witness him performing his task, but instead it is Hebe who pours the nectar at a divine gathering (*Il*. 4.2-3). The other time the boy is mentioned in the *Iliad* is in conjunction with the immortal horses that his father Tros received from Zeus quasi in exchange for his son.[70] As we saw above, these are in turn described by Apollodorus as commodities offered by Laomedon, Ganymede's nephew, in the barter with Hercules for Hesione's rescue. Thus the introduction of Ganymede may deliberately evoke tales of past generations of Trojans, including that of the previous sack of the city.[71] It is also perhaps no coincidence that after Zeus the next gods to enter the banquet are indeed Poseidon and Apollo (Coll. 22-4).

The most apparent engagement of Colluthus' *Abduction* with past (hi-)stories of Troy occurs during the conversation between Paris and Helen. Here it is manipulatively used by the prince as part of his attempt to beguile the woman.[72] When asked about his identity, Paris introduces himself thus, with the aim of impressing Helen:

> εἴ τινά που Φρυγίης ἐνὶ πείρασι γαῖαν ἀκούεις,
> Ἴλιον, ἣν πύργωσε Ποσειδάων καὶ Ἀπόλλων·
> εἴ τινά που πολύολβον ἐνὶ Τροίῃ βασιλῆα 280

[69] See de Gaetano (2009: 39-40).

[70] See also *Hom. Hymn* 6. 202-17.

[71] Ganymede is also mentioned in Drac. *Rom*. 8.479, but this time as the founder of the art of augury. Though it comes from Paris' mouth and observes Ganymede's Trojan origin, in this instance the parallel between the two is not as apparent.

[72] This will be expanded on in chapter 6.3.

ἔκλυες εὐώδινος ἀπὸ Κρονίδαο γενέθλης·
ἔνθεν ἀριστεύων ἐμφύλια πάντα διώκω.
εἰμί, γύναι, Πριάμοιο πολυχρύσου φίλος υἱός,
εἰμὶ δὲ Δαρδανίδης· ὁ δὲ Δάρδανος ἐκ Διὸς ἦεν,
ᾧ καὶ ἀπ' Οὐλύμποιο θεοὶ ξυνήονες ἀνδρῶν 285
πολλάκι θητεύουσι καὶ ἀθάνατοί περ ἐόντες·
ὧν ὁ μὲν ἡμετέρης δωμήσατο τείχεα πάτρης,
τείχεα μὴ πίπτοντα, Ποσειδάων καὶ Ἀπόλλων.

If you have perhaps heard of a land on the bounds of Phrygia,
Ilios, which Poseidon and Apollo fenced with towers:
If you have perhaps learned about a certain very wealthy king 280
in Troy, from the well-born family of the son of Cronos:
from there I am the bravest and I follow my kinsfolk in everything.
I, woman, am the dear son of Priam, rich in gold,
I am a Dardanid. And Dardanus was from Zeus,
and him even the gods who are partners of men from Olympus 285
often served, even though they are immortals.
Of them Poseidon and Apollo built our
father's walls, walls that do not fall.

(Coll. 278-88)

Ilium's fortification by Poseidon and Apollo is overly emphasised, as it is mentioned at the beginning and also repeated later on, pointing out their service to a mortal. Paris also speaks of his famous Trojan ancestor Dardanus, a son of Zeus. It is not entirely clear whether the ᾧ in line 285 refers to Dardanus, but I take it to be the most straightforward reading, as reflected in the translation.[73] If this is indeed the case, Paris' statement has confounded two legends of his forbears. There are three possible reasons for this, two of which reflect negatively on the prince. First, Colluthus could have changed the myth for the purposes of his poem, but there is no apparent rationale for this. The second reason is that, embarrassingly, Paris is not as familiar with his own family saga as he should be and ascribes something that happened in the reign of his grandfather Laomedon to his great-great-great-great grandfather Dardanus. The third, by which I am most convinced, is that he deliberately contorts the facts to cover up the not-so-glorious past of his lineage by erasing Laomedon's name from his account. He still makes sure to share the magnificent detail of the walls, but suppresses all the compromising consequences. The misrepresentation is brought onto the next level and becomes an outright lie when Paris remarks that the city walls are ones that do not fall. This is doubly — retrospectively and prospectively — ironic, as at this point in the myth it both contradicts Heracles'

[73] Magnelli (2008, 157 with n.44) believes that it means Paris himself, thus enhancing his bragging. Paschalis (2008: 141) accepts my reading, but does not detect the inconsistency.

sack of Troy and works as an omen for the sack which is to occur as a result of this very encounter between Paris and Helen.

Helen's response to Paris is most curious:

> ἀτρεκέως, ὦ ξεῖνε, τεῆς ποτε πυθμένα πάτρης
> τὸ πρὶν ἐδωμήσαντο Ποσειδάων καὶ Ἀπόλλων;
> ἤθελον ἀθανάτων δαιδάλματα κεῖνα νοῆσαι
> καὶ νομὸν οἰοπόλοιο λιγύπνοον Ἀπόλλωνος,
> ἔνθα θεοδμήτοισι παρὰ προμολῇσι πυλάων 310
> πολλάκις εἰλιπόδεσσιν ἐφέσπετο βουσὶν Ἀπόλλων.
> ἀγρέο νῦν Σπάρτηθεν ἐπὶ Τροίην με κομίζων.
> ἕψομαι, ὡς Κυθέρεια γάμων βασίλεια κελεύει.
> οὐ τρομέω Μενέλαον, ὅταν Τροίη με νοήσῃ.

> 'Really, stranger, did Poseidon and Apollo once
> upon a time build the foundations of your fatherland?
> I would like to perceive those artworks of the immortals
> and the shrill-blowing pasture of the shepherd Apollo,
> where by the divine-built porches of the gates 310
> Apollo often pursued the oxen, rolling in their gait.
> Take me now and bring me from Sparta to Troy.
> I will follow, as Cythereia, queen of marriage, commands.
> I do not tremble before Menelaus when Troy should see me.'

(Coll. 306-14)

Of all the things Paris says in order to seduce Helen, she chooses to addresses the topic of the walls at the very start of her speech. She opens with a question that conveys her amazement at the story, and expresses a desire to visit the walls, but then supplies the detail not previously mentioned by Paris of Apollo's pasture. As we have seen above, in the *Iliad* Poseidon tells that he built the walls, while Apollo was tending cattle on Mt Ida (*Il*. 21.446-9).[74] Helen's statement seems to allude to that version, albeit altering some details regarding the exact location and chronology, as has been noted by Paschalis.[75] The epithet of the oxen, εἰλίπους, is in fact directly borrowed from the Homeric account (*Il*. 21.448). This makes it look as though Helen actually knows much more than expected and is aware of the background story of Troy. Read in this light, her

[74] In Ovid's *Her.* 16.181-2, the walls are said to have risen with the sound of Phoebus' lyre. This could either mean that Apollo was playing music during his shepherding duty or it is imagined that he magically manipulated the stones with his lyre to build the wall in the same way as Amphion built the walls of Thebes (*cf*. Paus. 6.20.18), as suggested by Smith (1844: 231, col. 1).

[75] Paschalis (2008: 142).

question whether Poseidon and Apollo *really* constructed the walls acquires a sarcastic tone. She probably knows the events as they are presented in Homer, but plays the ill-informed so as not to show up Paris' falseness. Helen's remark about the sights at Troy intimates that she cannot be outwitted. Helen is well-versed in Greek heroes, past and present, whom she enumerates in lines 269-75. Significantly, at least three of the seven names she mentions are Argonauts (Neleus, Peleus and Telamon). Surely, knowing about them, she should also know of other Argonauts and their exploits. She must be aware of Heracles' adventures and that Telamon accompanied his raid of Troy. The Spartan woman pointedly mentions the city walls and adds to the information to show that she knows more than what Paris tells her. Nevertheless, instead of unmasking his mendacity, she agrees to come with him to Troy under the very pretext that she would like to see its splendid fortifications. This of course invites the question of what Helen's motivation in following Paris actually is at this point, and this we will discuss in chapter 6.3.

In both Colluthus and Dracontius, the memory of the first sack of Troy foreshadows the second one to come. In Dracontius this is done in a very direct way, in that the attempt at settling old scores (the matter of Hesione) plants the seed that will give rise to a new conflict. Another war is also concretely imagined by an angry Telamon, who threatens to repeat the previous calamity if the Trojans insist on claiming back Hesione (292-8) and also lists the names of the young Greeks that would fight this time (316-25). Meanwhile, Colluthus in his treatment limits himself to heavy allusion. The Trojan city walls, the very emblem of the previous war, become a kind of code in the communication between the two lovers in the process of sealing Ilium's fate once again.

Chapter 2

Helen before Paris

The next two chapters explain the background of the protagonists before the abduction episode, including accounts of their respective parentage and childhood, as well as previous romantic attachments. A caveat before we proceed: though they come earlier in the mythical chronology, and are therefore treated here at this stage, most background narratives would have only been formed after the main story of the Trojan War and the abduction had gained some fame. Thus they are constructed specifically to set the scene and to introduce or explain circumstances which are relevant for subsequent events.

1. Birth and Parentage

There are varied accounts of Helen's pedigree, but she is most prominently described as the daughter of Zeus from Homer onwards (*Il*. 3.418, *Od*. 4.184, 219, 227). As for her mother, the names of Nemesis or Leda regularly appear as alternatives or even alongside each other, with Nemesis as biological mother and Leda as nurse and adoptive mother. According to Athenaeus, *Deipn*. 8.10=334 B (quoting *Cypria* fr. 9), before Zeus rapes her, Nemesis flees from him across the world and constantly changes her form into creatures of Ocean and land. We have noted in chapter 1.1 that Zeus' plan to start the Trojan War involved the marriage of Peleus and Thetis as well as the fathering of Helen, and thus Nemesis' shape-shifting could be a doublet of the wedding night of Peleus and Thetis, in which the bride transforms herself into various beasts, until the groom manages to dominate her.[76] As Zeus is minded to give the people of the earth what they deserve, it is logical that Helen, his instrument for the mission, is the product of his union with Divine Retribution personified. Compare also Andromache's blame of Helen for Troy's calamities in Eur. *Troad*. 766-73, which leads her to say that her sister-in-law was not begotten by Zeus, but by various personifications of evils: the Avenging Spirit, Envy, Slaughter and Death. Although Hesiod says that Helen was born neither from Leda nor from Nemesis, but from a daughter of Ocean and from Zeus (Hes. *Cat*. fr. 21 Most), his source could actually have referred to Nemesis, as some writers say that she was a child of Ocean (Pausanias 7.5.3, Tzetzes *ad* Lycoph. *Alex*. 88); this may also be why she seeks protection in the Ocean in Athenaeus. In another *Cypria* fragment (fr. 10 = Philodemus *On Piety*), we find out that Zeus impregnated Nemesis after changing καὶ αὐτὸν into a goose and thereafter she lay an egg from which Helen was born. Apparently Nemesis had first become a goose herself, as part of her many

[76] See chapter 4.1.

disguises, and the god simply matched this. In Cratinus (*PCG* iv Crat. Νέμεσις ii) the bird was a swan. Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.10.7, in turn, states that Nemesis transformed into a goose to escape Zeus, but he assumed the likeness of a swan to mate with her.

Since either one or both of her parents are avine, Helen, like a bird, is born from an egg in two stages, often by two mothers. Where Nemesis is said to have laid the egg, the responsibility for rearing it is passed on to Leda. In Cratinus' *Nemesis* fr. 115 the egg comes into the possession of Leda and she is told to behave like a hen and hatch a beautiful chick from it. Sappho fr. 166 tells that Leda once found an egg. According to Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.10.7, a shepherd found it and gave it to Leda, and she put it in a chest and kept it; when Helen was hatched, Leda brought her up as her own daughter. Pausanias 1.33.7-8 claims that the Greeks believed the double motherhood, and following the legend, Pheidias represented Helen being led by Leda to Nemesis. A more detailed story is found in Hyginus:

> OLOR. Hunc Graeci cygnum appellant; quem conplures, propter ignotam illis historiam, communi genere avium ornin appellaverunt. De quo haec memoriae prodi est causa. Iuppiter cum, amore inductus, Nemesin diligere coepisset neque ab ea ut secum concumberet impetrare potuisset, hac cogitatione amore est liberatus. Iubet enim Venerem aquilae simulatam se sequi; ipse in olorem conversus ut aquilam fugiens ad Nemesin confugit et in eius gremio se collocavit. Quem Nemesis non aspernata, amplexum tenens somno est consopita; quam dormientem Iuppiter compressit. Ipse autem avolavit, et quod ab hominibus alte volans caelo videbatur, inter sidera dictus est esse constitutus. Quod ne falsum diceretur, Iuppiter e facto eum volantem et aquilam consequentem locavit in mundo. Nemesis autem, ut quae avium generi esset iuncta, mensibus actis, ovum procreavit. Quod Mercurius auferens detulit Spartam et Ledae sedenti in gremium proiecit; eo quo nascitur Helena, ceteras specie corporis praestans, quam Leda suam filiam nominavit. Alii autem cum Leda Iovem concubuisse in olorem conversum dixerunt; de quo in medio relinquemus.
>
> The Swan: This one the Greeks call *cygnus*; many, because they were not familiar with the story, have called it *ornis*, a bird in the general sense. This is a reason to relate the account of this. When Jupiter, moved by desire, began to love Nemesis and could not achieve it that she would lie with him, he was freed from desire by the following design. For he ordered Venus to take the appearance of an eagle and to pursue him; he himself changed into a swan and, as though fleeing from the eagle, he took refuge with Nemesis and settled in her lap. Nemesis did not reject him, but holding him in her arms she fell into a deep slumber; while she slept, Jupiter forced himself upon her. But then he flew off, and since he was seen by men flying high in the sky, he was said to have been established among the constellations. Lest a wrong thing be said, Juppiter really placed himself flying and the eagle

> pursuing in the sky. But Nemesis, like one who is related to the race of birds, once her months were ended, produced an egg. Mercury took it away and carried it to Sparta and threw it into Leda's lap, as she sat there; from it was born Helen, who excelled all other girls in bodily beauty, and her Leda proclaimed her daughter. But others have said that it was Leda with whom Jove lay after changing into a swan. That we shall leave undecided.
>
> (Hyg. *Astr.* 2.8)

The version that Zeus consorted with Leda as a swan and that she brought forth an egg is first repeatedly given by Eur. *Hel.* (16-22, 214-16, 256-7, 1144-6), surely to aid his effort in making Helen a sympathetic character.[77] She is no longer a freak sprung from grim Nemesis to wreak havoc on earth, but an innocent woman with at least some human genes. This version arguably becomes the prevalent one. Isocrates maintains that Zeus had relations in the guise of a swan with Nemesis and then again with Leda (Isoc. *Hel.* 59), but he counts Helen among the children of Leda (Isoc. *Hel.* 16). In Ovid's *Heroides* Paris starts his letter with an address to *Ledaea* (Ov. *Her.* 16.1), while Helen tells how her mother was deceived by a feathered Jove (Ov. *Her.* 17. 45-6, 52-6). Pausanias 3.16.1 remarks that in a Spartan sanctuary there is an egg hung from the roof, tied with ribbons, which is said to be the one laid by Leda. Lucian also reminds us that Helen is the daughter of Leda and mentions the encounter with swan-Zeus (*Iudicium* 14, *Charidemus* 7).[78]

While Leda is mostly perceived as Helen's real mother, Leda's husband Tyndareus takes on the role of her mortal father, although Zeus is her progenitor. This generally seems unproblematic in the sources. Already the *Iliad* she is described as Zeus' daughter (*Il.* 3.418), but she also thinks of her mortal τοκῆες (*Il.* 3.140). Despite the fact that the siring of Helen strongly reminds of that of Hercules (in both cases the mother is taken advantage of by Zeus who deceives her through disguise),[79] it is also dissimilar in that no explanation of the arrangements appears necessary. There are multiple texts that deal with the aftermath of Alcmena's night with Zeus, who pretends to be her husband Amphitryon, such as Euripides' *Alcmena*, Plautus' *Amphitryo* or Hyginus' *Fab.* 29; fragments of the former suggest that, upon discovering that she was unfaithful, Amphitryon was going to kill his wife on a pyre, but she was saved by Zeus. Yet I have not found any sources that take an interest in Tyndareus' reaction when he finds out about Zeus' seduction of Leda. Instead, the two paternities of Helen co-exist as a matter of course, without any comment. The only engagement of Tyndareus with a newborn Helen seems to be a comic scene depicted on a krater which shows him hacking at Helen's egg with an axe to help her hatch (*LIMC* 'Helene' 5*).[80] Both Zeus and

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[77] Kannicht (1969 vol. ii: 24– 25).

[78] Cf. Schol. ad Lycoph. *Alex.* 88 for a rationalisation of the story.

[79] On their commonalities, see Isoc. *Hel.* 16-17 and chapter 1.1.

[80] Cf. Marshall (2014: 68) who also compares this to the comic birth-myth of Heracles.

Tyndareus are referred to as Helen's father throughout antiquity, depending on which identity, divine or human, is accentuated.[81] In her opening speech the *Helen* of Euripides' eponymous play presents herself first and foremost as a Spartan and daughter of Tyndareus, before recounting the story of Zeus the swan, not without some doubt (*Hel*. 16-21). Gorgias stresses it as common knowledge that her mother is Leda and her father is said to be Tyndareus, while it is in fact Zeus (*Encomium of Helen* 3). Ovid's Paris interchangeably calls her both daughter of Jove and Tyndaris. Dictys, who prefers to rationalise his myth and remove any divine agency, makes his Helen recount her family tree in reported speech; although she acknowledges Jupiter earlier in her line, Tyndareus *seems* to have begotten her (*ex quo ipsa genita videretur*, Dict. 1.9). Photius' summary of Ptolemy Chennus' *New History*, in its standard fashion, presents us with the odd, conflicting information that Helen was the daughter of Aphrodite, and a few lines later that she was the child of Helios and Leda (cod. 190.149a, 18; 31-2).

Colluthus is not concerned with the details of Helen's parentage, and simply accepts the mainstream. Thus, as in Ovid, Helen is once referred to as the offspring of Zeus (Coll. 353) and a little later as the daughter of Tyndareus (Coll. 376). Her divine descent is only marginally important, as it appears in the context of Hermione's hypothesis that wild beasts would have respect before a child of Zeus. Helen's mother is not mentioned. Likewise, in Dracontius' rendition Helen is introduced as both daughter of Jove and of Tyndareus (*Rom*. 8.440, 530). Her immortal descent is somewhat important in that the prospect of becoming 'the Thunderer's son-in-law' is part of the reason for Paris' courtship of Helen (*Rom*. 8.147-8). However, on two occasions Dracontius also calls Helen *Ledaea* (*Rom*. 8.497, 653), and he is most apparently aware of the swan story which he discreetly hints at. Just before Paris meets Helen, he is presented with an omen: he sees swans fluttering about and then doves being pursued by a hawk (*Rom*. 8.453-8). The sign is interpreted by an augur who makes clear the link with Helen's birth myth, by saying that the swan signifies a woman born from the race of Jove (464-5). What is more, the omen's set-up is rather reminiscent of Hyginus' story quoted above, but with some difference. While in Hyginus Jupiter the swan is being attacked by Venus the eagle, here a bird of prey attacks Venus' own doves.

2. Siblings

The question of Helen's (half-)siblings is no less confusing than that of her parentage. In the *Iliad*, Helen describes Castor and Polydeuces as her brothers, born of a single mother who remains unnamed (*Il*. 3.236-38). In *Od*. 11.298-304 the twins are said to have been borne by Leda to Tyndareus, and are enjoying the honour of Zeus in that they are both alive and dead on alternating days, but there is no mention of Helen. While

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[81] But cf. *Od*. 11.266-270, where it is told that Alcmena bore Heracles after lying with Zeus, but straight after the offspring is described as the son of Amphitryon.

their common tile Διόσκουροι literally defines Polydeuces and Castor by the fact that they are sons of Zeus, Pind. *Nem.* 10.79-90 recounts that they were both begotten in one night, but by different fathers: Zeus fathered Polydeuces and Tyndareus Castor, wherefore the former was immortal and the latter mortal; when Castor died, Polydeuces chose to share his immortality with him. The difference in the brothers' life expectancy is also captured in a fragment of the *Cypria* (fr. 8 = Clemens of Alexandria, *Logos Protrepticus* 20.30.4-5). The Dioscuri are often said to have been born along with Helen, also through an oviparous process, but opinions are divided on whether there was only one egg or two (one for the boys, one for the girls) or perhaps three. In the scholium to *Od.* 11.298, which quotes the νεώτεροι (*Cypria*?), we hear that Zeus changed into a swan and lay with Tyndareus' wife Leda, who then gave birth to *an egg* and put it into a chest; from it were born the Dioscuri and Helen. In Eur. *Hel.* 1644-5 the Dioscuri are said to have been born from Leda along with Helen, but no more information is given — yet Helen talks about Leda's egg-birth which produced her at *Hel.* 257-9. Horace mentions that the Trojan War started *ab gemino ovo* (Hor. *AP* 147), but it is inconclusive, as it could mean either 'two eggs' or 'a twin-egg', i.e. containing twins. Lucian tells us that Castor and Polydeuces each have half an egg shell and a star above them, which appears to be a symbol of their birth (Lucian, *Dial. Deorum* 24.1). Again, this could signify that each has half of the very same egg (as perhaps suggested by the definite article) or, if there were two eggs, perhaps they each kept the top part that was on their head at the point of hatching.

The Dioscuri are, however, often construed by narrative necessity as older than their sister. They are attested in all major sources to have been Argonauts, in the generation of Heracles and Peleus (if Peleus' wedding to Thetis is contemporary with Helen's birth, the age difference between her and her brothers must be between 10 and 20 years). We learn from the *Iliad* that by the end of the Trojan War they are already deceased (*Il.* 3.236– 42). Furthermore, on some vase-paintings, the two are apparently present at the birth of Helen, and therefore must be older (*LIMC* 'Helene' 4*, 7*). Edmunds rightly points out that they have to be her big brothers, if they are supposed to defend her from Theseus while she is a child (more on this in section 3 below).[82] Helen is most prominently associated with the twin brothers also in a cultic context: at the close of two Euripidean plays it is foretold that after her earthly life their sister will be deified and live with them and receive worship from mortals, according to the will of Zeus (Eur. *Hel.* 1666-9, *Orest.* 1683-90). The hypothesis to Critias' lost tragedy *Rhadamanthus* reveals that Artemis told Helen to establish a ritual for her brothers after their death (*TrGF* 1.43 F 15) Isocrates, in his attempt to show Helen's powers, says that it was she who made the Dioscuri gods (Isoc. *Hel.* 10.61).

Clytaemnestra is also traditionally included in the group: As an expansion of the above-mentioned account by Pindar, Apollodorus says that swan-Zeus and Tyndareus cohabited with Leda on the same night and as a result she bore Pollux and Helen to Zeus and Castor and Clytaemnestra to Tyndareus (*Bibl.* 3.10.7). Virtually the

[82] Edmunds (2015: 72-3).

same version is given by Hyginus (*Fabula* 77). The first pair is thus understood as semi-divine, and the second pair as mortal. However, the First Vatican Mythographer tells that Leda bore two eggs; one of them produced the two sons and one the two daughters (201). Apart from Clytaemnestra, two other daughters of Tyndareus and Leda are named by Hesiod as Timandra and Phylonoe (*Cat*. fr. 19). Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.10.6 lists Helen and her sisters and says that Timandra was the wife of Echemus (cf. Paus. 8.5.1), while Phylonoe was made immortal by Artemis (this detail seems to be also contained in Hesiod).[83] In connection with them, an interesting detail is recorded which markedly attributes the fate of Helen and her sisters not to the will of Helen's divine father Zeus, but to a mistake of their earthly father Tyndareus (nevertheless retaining the role of Aphrodite). The Scholiast on Eur. *Orest*. 249 gives us one fragment each of Stesichorus (fr. 85)[84] and Hesiod (fr. 247): according to the former, Tyndareus forgot to honour Aphrodite with sacrifice and, as a punishment, the angry goddess made it happen that his daughters would marry twice or thrice and desert their husbands (Stes. fr. 46). Meanwhile, the latter states that Aphrodite's reaction was due to her jealousy when she looked at the women (presumably because they were beautiful). Hesiod explains that Timandra left Echemus for Phyleus, Clytaemnestra left Agamemnon for inferior Aegisthus and Helen dishonoured the bed of Menelaus;[85] he does not name any adulterer(s) for Helen though, and while Paris must surely be the chief one, Hesiod could additionally mean Deiphobus, to whom Helen was given after Paris death,[86] and/or Achilles with whom she consorted after death.[87] Adding also Theseus and Menelaus, Lycophron called Helen a 'crazed woman of five beds' (πενταλέκτρος θυιάς: 143) and quintuply-married (πεντάγαμβρος: 146). Notably, Phylonoe is not listed in the context of the unfaithful women. While her sisters' lives are dictated by the love goddess to be promiscuous, she is pointedly associated with the virginal Artemis and no doubt must herself be a virgin. Her virtue apparently saves her from sharing in her sisters' lot and even elevates her to a divine status. Thus, the figure of Phylonoe puts the other three in

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[83] In Eur. *IA* 49-51 Leda had three daughters: Helen, Clytaemnestra and Phoebe. The latter may have been a conflation with a cousin (for whom see note 93 below). Davies & Finglass (2014: 324) suggest that Phoebe stands for Phylonoe, given her connection to Artemis who is herself called Phoebe (in analogy with her brother Phoebus Apollo), and draw attention to a 5th-century BC vase that pictures Phylonoe on one side and Leda and an egg on the other (*LIMC* 'Phylonoe' 2). Phoebe is also mentioned as Helen's sister by Ovid (*Her*. 8.77). Servius on Verg. *Aen*. 8.130, in turn, says that the three daughters of Leda and Tyndareus were Helen, Clytaemnestra and Timandra.

[84] This is attributed to the *Helen* by Davies & Finglass (2014: 319-20).

[85] Another first husband of Clytaemnestra, Tantalus, is sometimes named. Tantalus and Clytaemnestra's baby by him were killed by Agamemnon in order to make Clytaemnestra his wife (Eur. *IA* 1148-52, Apollod. *Epit*. 2.15, Paus. 2.18.2).

[86] Cf. *Ilias Parva*, fr.1, Ver. *Aen*. 6.509-530, QS 10.342-6, Dictys 4.22, Tzetz. *ad* Lycoph. *Alex*. 168, *Od*. 8.517-520 (and possibly *Od*. 4.276) also heavily hints at that scenario.

[87] Cf. chapter 1.2.

an even more negative light: if she should be foregrounded as the 'good girl', it is surely Helen who is the 'worst' of them all.

Pausanias (3.16.10) adds to the above that there is a statue of Aphrodite in Sparta with a veil and fetters on her feet. According to one story, the fetters were placed there by Tyndareus to symbolise faithfulness of wives to their husbands. The other theory Pausanias presents, and dismisses as silly, is that Tyndareus suspected the goddess' influence in his daughters' shame and punished her by binding a cedar figure of her with fetters.[88] Ptolemy Chennus also offers his own rendition of the story. He says that it was Menelaus who had promised a hecatomb to Aphrodite as thanks for his marriage to Helen, which he never delivered, and that the enraged goddess responded with arranging the abduction as a result.

As a child of Zeus, Helen is of course also the half-sister of Aphrodite, if we are to believe the *Iliad* where Aphrodite is the daughter of Zeus and Dione (*Il*. 5.370-1). Helen enjoys a special patronage and association with Aphrodite because of her beauty, but conversely also has to endure much bullying from her divine sibling who controls her love affairs.[89] But the family relationship is not uniform throughout the sources. In Hesiod's *Theogony* the account of Aphrodite's birth is strange, though very apt for an erotic deity: when the Titan Chronos overthrew his father Ouranos, he castrated him and flung the severed genitals into the sea. A foam (ἀφρός) developed around them and from it emerged the goddess who was hence called Aphrodite (Hes. *Theogony* 173-206, cf. *h.Hom*. 6). Given that Zeus is the son of Chronos, this would make Aphrodite Zeus' aunt, and thus one generation older. Alternatively, if Chronos' involvement in the creation of Aphrodite is to be regarded as a sort of claim to paternity, she could to an extent be seen as a sister of Zeus. Consequently, in this scenario Aphrodite would be a great-aunt or aunt to Helen. Ovid explicitly acknowledges Hesiod's version by saying that Venus is risen from the sea (*orta mari:* Ov. *Her.* 16.24).

Colluthus seems to conflate the two mutually exclusive birth accounts of Aphrodite: Paris sacrifices to Aphrodite to pray for a good sea journey, and according to most editions the sea is called the goddess' τιθήνη or 'nurse' (Coll. 202-4), yet later Helen is referred to as the sister of Aphrodite (Coll. 294). While it is conceivable that τιθήνη is here used to describe a nurse or carer in the strict sense, rather than a biological mother, this interpretation is not aided by a later instance in which Colluthus uses the word of Helen in relation to Hermione, clearly interchangeably with μήτηρ (Coll. 379). We can infer that Dracontius also makes Helen and Aphrodite half-siblings: on the one hand, as discussed, it is made clear that Helen is descended from Jove, and

[88] From an ancient magical point of view, this is actually not altogether unreasonable. We have other examples of wooden effigies of major Olympians being used in rites in both fiction and non-fiction. Cf. the Hermes statuette fashioned from ebony, which Pausanias' contemporary Apuleius was accused to have used for magic (*Apology* 61; 63-4) and the wooden likeness of Artemis that plays a role in a necromancy in the *Orphic Argonautica* (983-4). Binding, too, be it with actual fetters or spells, was common practice in such sympathetic doll magic, in order to gain control of the power resembled by the object (cf. Vergil, *Ecl*. 8).

[89] Cf. chapter 6.3.

on the other hand in his invocation to Venus Paris repeatedly speaks of Jove as her father also (472-5). However, neither the narrator nor the characters draw attention to this relationship between the women. It is rather Helen's kinship with Jupiter that is emphasised and exploited for narrative purposes throughout. Both Colluthus and Dracontius ignore the Dioscuri and Clytaemnestra in their respective narratives.

3. Abduction by Theseus

As we have seen in chapter 1.3, the sack of Troy by Heracles was made the precursor of the main Trojan War and in this way the story of Troy was on the one hand connected to that of the famous hero and on the other hand it became elevated by virtue of being of an even higher calibre in comparison to the previous, already grand, event. The crucial chapter in the biography of Helen, her abduction, has been subjected to the same process. This time the hero in question was Theseus. The story goes that he abducted Helen when she was still a maiden, but afterwards she was rescued by her brothers, the Dioscuri. This occurrence was invented as a doublet of the abduction by Paris, and was often adduced as a justification for the latter.[90] However, the crucial difference between the two abductions is that the one by Theseus is always presented as the kidnapping of an unwilling Helen, while in the vast majority of the sources Helen was not really abducted by Paris, but eloped with him readily.[91] This is corroborated by the scholium on *Iliad* 3.242 which explains that Helen assumed that her brothers had not come to Troy because they were ashamed of her, although they had come to recover her when she had been taken by Theseus. This implies that on the previous occasion the abduction was nothing to feel embarrassed about, while this time Helen was herself at fault, at least partly. The scholiast continues:

> [...] προτέρως ὑπὸ Θησέως ἡρπάσθη, καθὼς προείρηται· διὰ γὰρ τὴν τότε γενομένην ἁρπαγὴν Ἄφιδνα πόλις Ἀττικῆς πορθεῖται, καὶ τιτρώσκεται Κάστωρ ὑπὸ Ἀφίδνου τοῦ τότε βασιλέως κατὰ τὸν δεξιὸν μηρόν. οἱ δὲ Διόσκουροι Θησέως μὴ τυχόντες λαφυραγωγοῦσι

[90] For example at Ov. *Her.* 16.327-330.

[91] Cf. Edmunds (2015: 70). Nevertheless, at least one author felt that Theseus had a claim to Helen, whereas Paris did not: in Lucian's *VH*. 2.8 there is a legal dispute on the Island of the Blest as to whether Helen should live happily ever after with Theseus or with Menelaus. Conspicuously, Paris is not even a candidate. Rhadamanthus the governor decides that she belongs to Menelaus because of all the toil he has suffered on her account. But only a little later, at *VH* 2.25-6 Lucian invents a third Abduction of Helen by one Cinyras (a member of the narrator's expedition). He and Helen fall in love and plan to sail to a nearby island. However, their elopement is discovered and thwarted within half a day, resulting in a punishment for Cinyras. Helen cries and veils her face out of shame, but, as usual, gets away scot-free.

τὰς Ἀθήνας. ἡ ἱστορία παρὰ τοῖς πολυωνύμοις ἢ τοῖς κυκλικοῖς καὶ ἀπὸ μέρους παρὰ Ἀλκμᾶνι τῷ λυρικῷ.

> […] previously [Helen] had been carried off by Theseus, as has been said already. Because of the abduction that occurred then, Aphidna, a city in Attica, is sacked and Castor is wounded in the right thigh by Aphidnus, the king at that time. As the Dioscuri cannot get hold of Theseus, they take spoils from Athens. The story is in those of many names or the Cyclic writers and in part in Alcman the lyric poet.

(*Cypria* fr. 13 = Alcman fr. 21 *PMGF*)

The piece by Alcman referred to here is lost, but we have more information (perhaps about the same piece) preserved in Paus. 1.41.4 who says that the lyric poet in a song to the Dioscuri tells how they conquered Athens and carried off Theseus' mother, while Theseus himself was absent. He adds that Pindar agrees with this and says that the abduction happened because Theseus wished to be related to the Dioscuri and that he acted with his friend Perithous (Paus 1.41.5; cf. Hygin. *Fab*. 79). Again, that passage of Pindar cannot be located. The recovery of Helen by her brothers was also told by Ibycus (fr. S166 *PMGF*).[92]

A diametrically opposed reasoning is found in Isocrates, *Hel*. 19-20, where an arrogant Theseus was enamoured of Helen's looks and tried to gain her hand in marriage lawfully, but was refused, since her family was waiting until she would come of age and for the fulfilment of a Pythian oracle they had received (we do not find out about its content). Thereupon the hero seized her by force ὑπεριδὼν τὴν ἀρχὴν τὴν Τυνδάρεω καὶ καταφρονήσας τῆς ῥώμης τῆς Κάστορος καὶ Πολυδεύκους καὶ πάντων τῶν ἐν Λακεδαίμονι δεινῶν ὀλιγωρήσας (‘overlooking the sovereignty of Tyndareus and despising the power of Castor and Polydeuces and making little of all the dangers in Sparta’). Plutarch *Thes*. 31.1 offers some excuses for Theseus, although he adds that he does not believe them himself, but rather they are attempts at clearing his name. One possibility is that it was not Theseus himself, but rather Helen's cousins Idas and Lynceus who abducted her and then handed her over to Theseus to keep safe.[93] The other, even less probable, option is that a certain Enarsphorus, the son of Tyndareus' brother Hippocoon, and thus another cousin of Helen, wanted to take her by force when

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[92] The papyrus fragment is interpreted as such by Cavallini (1993: 49). West (2015: 72-4) agrees with the identification of the theme, but thinks that the poem was in fact by Stesichorus. Most recently Finglass (2017) argued in favour of Ibycus' authorship.

[93] Elsewhere Idas and Lynceus, the sons of Aphareus, or Apharetidae, are presented as rivals of the Dioscuri in conjunction with another example of bride theft. The Apharetidae were engaged to another pair of female cousins, Leucippus' daughters Phoebe and Hilaeira, but the Dioscuri stole the two women. A fight ensues, and Lynceus kills Castor, whereupon Pollux kills Lynceus. As a result, the Dioscuri are allowed to share Pollux' immortality on alternating days (Theoc. 22.137– 213; Ov. *Fasti* 5.699– 720; Hyg. *Fab*. 80; Ov. *Her.* 16.329).

she was still a child and therefore Tyndareus himself entrusted her to Theseus. However, Plutarch quickly admits that he favours the mainstream account.

Isocrates says that after helping his friend get Helen, Perithous wanted his aid in abducting a wife too. According to Diodorus Siculus (4.63.3) and Plutarch (*Thes.* 31.2– 3), the two men had not yet decided who would keep the girl before kidnapping her. Thus, after they had been successful, they cast lots to see who won her, with the agreement that the winner would help the loser procure another wife. Thus they ventured into an even more reckless feat: Perithous wanted Persephone herself to wife. After Theseus failed to dissuade him from the perilous mission, he nevertheless joined him in his descent to Hades' to return the favour.[94] Diodorus Siculus 4.63. says that Theseus was afraid to leave Helen in Athens, because the Athenians did not approve of what he had done, so instead he entrusted her to his mother at Aphidna. In the meantime the Dioscuri ravaged Aphidna, freed Helen and took Aethra, Theseus' mother, captive (Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.10.7). In some accounts, the local people even told the brothers where to find Helen, since they were so appalled at what had happened (Hdt. 9.73.2, Diod. Sic. 32.3)

It has been of interest to establish Helen's age at the time of that first abduction. All the sources confirm, either implicitly or explicitly, that the girl was too young for marriage. Specific ages are given as twelve (Apollod. *Epit.* 1.23), ten (Diod. 4.63.1) or even seven (Tzetz. *ad* Lycoph. *Alex.* 513 = Hellanicus fr. 168b) years. As to the latter case, Plut. *Thes.* 31.1 also remarks that Hellanicus gave Theseus' own age as fifty, and that this was offensive to some subsequent writers. Fowler suggests that Hellanicus may have purposefully tried to make the age difference as shocking as possible.[95] In any case, Theseus had already been married to Phaedra and had two sons, Demophon and Acamas, and had become widowed, before he abducted Helen (Apollod. *Epit.* 1.18, 1.23, Diod. Sic. 62.1, 63.2) In Diodorus, Perithous persuades Theseus to steal Helen precisely because he needs a replacement after the loss of his wife. However, this circumstance does not add anything to the present argument about Theseus' age, since, depending on the duration of his marriage to Phaedra, he could conceivably be anywhere between 20 and 50 years old at the time of her death. In the same way, his sons could be younger, older or the same age as Helen.[96] Isocrates remarks that the hero fell in love with Helen's beauty, although she was not yet in full bloom (ἀκμάζουσα) and her guardians would not consider his wooing until she reached maturity (ἡλικία), by which we should understand readiness for marriage (Isoc. *Hel.* 18-9). Plutarch says

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[94] Isoc. *Hel.* 20, Diod. Sic. 4.63.

[95] Fowler (2013: 488).

[96] Stesichorus fr. 90 says that Theseus fathered Demophon with Iope, the daughter of Iphicles, and Acamas with Phaedra; but his makes little difference to our chronology, as his affair with Iope supposedly also happened before the Helen episode (Plut. *Thes.* 29.1). Plut. *Thes.* 26-8 speaks of Theseus' union with the Amazon Antiope/Hippolyta which produced Hippolytus or, according to Pindar, Demophon (= Pind. fr. 176). Meanwhile, the scholiast to *Od.* 11.321 says that both Demophon and Acamas were born from Ariadne. On another point of contact between Helen and Theseus' sons, see chapter 7.2.

that Helen was not of marriageable age at the time of the first abduction (*Thes*. 31.1) and reports that she was snatched away while dancing at the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia, an activity which further emphasizes her youth (Plut. *Thes*. 31.2 = Hellanicus fr. 168a). In Lucian, too, Aphrodite remarks that Theseus kidnapped her when she was 'unripe' (ἄωρος, *Iudicium* 20.14). Moreover, the negative judgements against Theseus expressed by the Attic citizens may have to do not only with the abduction *per se*, but also with the fact that Helen was too young to be wed.

There are also different opinions about Theseus' intentions and actions towards the young girl. Isocrates vaguely suggests that his only aim in life was οἰκειότης with Helen (Isoc. *Hel* 18), which can be broadly rendered as 'friendly relations', but also 'domesticity' or 'marriage', but we do not find out for sure whether this was achieved. Diodorus specifies that when her brothers found Helen, she was still a virgin (Diod. Sic. 4.63.5). Plutarch says that Theseus left the unmarriageable Helen and his mother Aethra with Aphidnus and then went to find a bride for Peirithous, as they had agreed (Plut. *Thes*. 31.3-4). From this it can be understood that on the one hand he waited until Helen would be old enough to marry, but that on the other hand he would not enjoy his prize before his friend, too, had a suitable woman. This could be either out of courtesy, or else it is probable that the compromise between the two men required them to first fulfil their *Brautraub*-duties and only afterwards to commence their respective marriages simultaneously. Things, however, did not go according to the plan, and thus Theseus never had relations with Helen after all.

A number of authors claim the opposite. Athenaeus states that Helen was among the women whom Theseus married by force ('γάμων ἐξ ἁρπαγῆς μὲν Ἑλένην', Ath. *Deipn*. 13.4=557a), i.e. raped. According to Pausanias, Theseus had in fact impregnated Helen before going away with Peirithous. She was with child when rescued by her brothers and later gave birth to a daughter in Argos and subsequently handed the baby to her sister Clytaemnestra who was already married to Agamemnon. Stesichorus, Euphorion of Chalcis and Alexander of Pleuron, he says, all agree that Iphigenia was Theseus' daughter (Paus. 2.22.6-7=Stesichorus fr. 86*)*. Lycophron is also implicitly following this tradition, by describing Paris' abduction as already the second alien snare for Helen and mentioning that she was parted from two dove-offspring, surely Iphigenia and Hermione (Lycoph. *Alex*. 103-5); elsewhere he calls her θηλύπαιδος 'female-child-bearing' (*Alex*. 851).[97] Clytaemnestra, it seems, takes care of Iphigenia, because she is a married woman, while it is not socially acceptable for Helen to be a single mother. In the above version, the Dioscuri and Agamemnon appear to be fully aware of the situation. However, in a different one the women manage to keep it a secret even from the men of the family:

> Θησέως καὶ Ἑλένης τῆς Διὸς ἐγένετο θυγάτηρ
> Ἰφιγένεια καὶ αὐτὴν ἐξέτρεφεν ἡ τῆς Ἑλένης ἀδελφὴ

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[97] Ptolemy Chennus' statement that Clytaemnestra and Aegisthus had a daughter named Helen, who was killed by Orestes, may be a spin-off derived from this tradition (Phot. *Bibl*. cod. 149b).

> Κλυταιμήστρα, πρὸς δὲ τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονα εἶπεν αὐτὴ τεκεῖν· Ἑλένη γὰρ πυνθανομένων τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἔφη κόρη παρὰ Θησέως ἀπελθεῖν.
>
> Iphigenia was born the daughter of Theseus and Zeus' daughter Helen and Helen's sister Klytaimnestra nursed her; but she told Agamemnon that she had borne her herself. For when her brothers inquired, Helen said that she had departed from Theseus as a maiden.
>
> (Nicander fr. 58 = Antoninus Liberalis 27.1)

From the contradictory statements in the above passages, it becomes clear that the question of Helen's defloration by Theseus, as well as the tension between truth and appearances in the matter, was of some concern to ancient writers. The most creative variant is supplied by Photius' *Lexicon*: when explaining the word 'κυσολάκων', from κυσός, 'anus', and λάκων, 'a Spartan', as someone who penetrates boys anally (an alleged Laconian practice), he adds: Μελαίνῃ γὰρ Θησεὺς οὕτως ἐχρήσατο, ὡς Ἀριστοτέλης. (Phot. *Lex*. 1263: 'For Theseus would have intercourse with Melaine in this way, so Aristotle.') It is easy to see that the girl's name should be emended to Helen, especially given the connection with Sparta. Thus Theseus would presumably be able to enjoy sex with the girl whilst preserving her hymen. This tale is also picked up in Ovid's *Heroides*.[98] Here Paris first adduces the example of the previous abduction and says that if he were Theseus he would have certainly either taken Helen's virginity, or at least 'that which can be seized whilst keeping her virginity intact' (*vel mihi virginitas esset libata, vel illud / quod poterat salva virginitate rapi*. *Her*. 16.161– 62). This concern over what exactly happened — or is deemed to have happened — between the pair is later continued in Helen's reply as well, where she is adamant that all Theseus stole from her were a few kisses, despite her struggles, and that he later repented his deed (*Her*. 17.24–32). However, a reader familiar with the story from Nicander will have some doubts about Helen's assurance of her pre-marital chastity. The scepticism is furthered in *Heroides* 5, where Paris' ex-lover Oenone (who will be discussed below), in an attempt to denigrate Helen, reasons that there is no way in which a young, passionate man like Theseus would have given her back untouched (*Her.* 5.129). Colluthus and Dracontius merely allude to Helen's past with Theseus, at most. The former does so through the story of Phyllis,[99] while the latter compares Paris' lack of manliness with Theseus heroism (*Rom*. 8.603-6).

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[98] Edmunds (2015: 119).

[99] See chapter 7.3.

Yet another link between Helen and Iphigenia is an obscure account of Helen narrowly escaping sacrifice as a maiden, recorded by one Aristodemus, as quoted in Plutarch:[100]

> λοιμοῦ κατασχόντος Λακεδαίμονα, ἔχρησεν ὁ θεὸς παύσασθαι, ἐὰν παρθένον εὐγενῆ κατὰ ἔτος θύωσιν. Ἑλένης δέ ποτε κληρωθείσης καὶ προαχθείσης κεκοσμημένης, ἀετὸς καταπτὰς ἥρπασε τὸ ξίφος καὶ ἐς τὰ βουκόλια κομίσας ἐπὶ δάμαλιν καθῆκεν· ὅθεν ἀπέσχοντο τῆς παρθενοκτονίας· ὡς Ἀριστόδημος ἐν Τρίτῃ Μυθικῇ Συναγωγῇ.
>
> When a plague had taken hold of Sparta, the god proclaimed in an oracle that it would stop, if they sacrificed a noble maiden every year. And when one time Helen had been chosen by lot and was being led forward with adornments, an eagle flew down and snatched away the sword and having carried it off to the herds of cattle, let it fall on a heifer: for this reason they refrained from maiden-slaughter. So Aristodemus in his 'Third Collection of Stories'.
>
> (Plut. *Moralia, Greek and Roman Parallel Stories,* 314c)

John Lydus, *De Mensibus* 147 offers the same account in a slightly more embellished form, also making Tyndareus the performer of the almost-filicide, similarly to Agamemnon with Iphigenia. This would make sense, since, as the ruler of Sparta, Tyndareus would be particularly responsible for relieving his country from the plague.[101] As in Diodorus and Plutarch above, Helen's fate is again decided by the drawing of lots. In this case, however, she is even more passive than in the stories of her abduction by Theseus, and the episode appears forced and unfinished, especially next to its Italian parallel about Valeria Luperca, drawn from the same Aristodemus: there the eagle additionally drops a little hammer and it is the girl herself who then becomes an active protagonist. She interprets the sign, sacrifices the heifer, and then travels around, using the hammer to magically heal the sick. In contrast, Helen's story of averted sacrifice lacks any personal touch or resolution. Therefore I tend to agree with Edmunds that the event has been artlessly slapped onto Helen's *curriculum vitae*, because her time of maidenhood was not yet occupied enough.[102] Furthermore, it would have been conveniently appropriate for her to be saved by her father's bird, the eagle. Tzetzes *ad* Lycoph. *Alex*. 183 notes the similarity between a deer being killed in Iphigenia's stead (cf. Eur. *IA*) and the story of Julia Luperca, as he calls her, but there is no mention of

[100] On the phantom-motif also common to Iphigenia and Helen, see chapter 9.2.

[101] See chapter 6.1 for another, mythologically later incident of a plague in Sparta, this time tackled by Menelaus and set up as a prelude to the abduction of Helen.

[102] Edmunds (2015: 110).

Helen in that context. Finally, the story of Helen's near-immolation may have been known to Ptolemy Chennus, who, in his usual manner, closes the circle with a sophisticated alternative:

> Ὡς ἔνιοι τὴν Ἑλένην φασὶ
> παραγενομένην εἰς Ταύρους τῆς Σκυθίας σὺν Μενελάῳ
> ἐπὶ τὴν Ὀρέστου ζήτησιν σφαγιασθῆναι ὑπὸ Ἰφιγενείας
> τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι σὺν Μενελάῳ·
>
> Some say thus that Helen came to Scythia Tauris with Menelaus in search of Orestes and was slain as a victim to Artemis with Menelaus by Iphigenia.
>
> (Photius, *Bibl.* cod 190, 149a-b)

We have no more information on this episode, but it must be imagined to have happened not long before or even at the same time as the plot of Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris* where the eponymous heroine has been made the priestess of Artemis (after the goddess had rescued her from the sacrificial altar)[103] and has the task of sacrificing any Hellenes who land on the shores. Orestes is ordered to go to Tauris by Apollo, in order to be freed from the curse of the Erinyes who haunt him since he has killed Clytaemnestra. In Ptolemy Chennus' story Helen's and Menelaus' search for their nephew might have something to do with this, and they must be aware of his destination.[104] Of course, Iphigenia would have valid personal motives for killing Helen, such as the fact that, because of the Trojan War, she was about to be sacrificed by her own father and never saw her homeland again, as well as the subsequent intrafamilial murders. It is even more tragic, if by slaying Helen Iphigenia actually slays her birth mother, knowingly or not. This would present an interesting doubling of Orestes' matricide. Further perversion is added in that a daughter takes her mother's life as a dedication to the goddess of childbirth.[105]

4. Courtship and Wedding

In the Theseus episode the Dioscuri act as Helen's male guardians and rescue her without any involvement of her earthly father Tyndareus. When she has reached

[103] Proclus' synopsis of the *Cypria* tells that Artemis transported Iphigenia to Tauris and made her immortal. Cf. the fate of Phylonoe above in section 2.

[104] Cf. Euripides' *Orestes,* where the two are also involved in the aftermath of Clytaemnestra's death. Orestes is also later to marry their daughter Hermione (see chapter 8.4).

[105] Cf. the controversial simile of Helen as Artemis at *Od.* 4.121-2. For a rich discussion on the many points of contact between Helen and Iphigenia, see Lyons (1997: 134-168).

marriageable age, however, brothers and father join forces in finding a husband for Helen from among the many interested bachelors. The main sources for the wooing of Helen are Hesiod (Hes. *Cat*. frr. 154-5), Hyginus (*Fab*. 78 and 81) and Apollodorus (*Bibl*. 3.10.8-9), each of whom yields a slightly different list of suitors.[106] According to Hesiod, Castor and Polydeuces assume administrative roles: they are the ones who receive the gifts and messages which are either given in person or sent from afar. They have some sort of say in who becomes their brother-in-law, as we hear that they would have chosen Agamemnon, had he not already been married to their other sister Clytaemnestra. Instead, Agamemnon comes to woo Helen on behalf of his brother Menelaus (fr. 154 b). Odysseus sends no gifts because he knows that Menelaus is going to win Helen on account of his wealth (fr. 154c), which indicates that the courtship is not unlike an auction. A little later it is stated that Menelaus became Helen's husband, because he offered the most in material goods (fr. 155).

Famously, before a decision is made, Tyndareus makes each suitor swear an oath and pour a libation, assuring that if any man were to seize Helen by force, they would all offer their help in punishing him. This convenient story was necessary to explain the multitude of Greek fleets in the Trojan War.[107] The same account of the oath is given in scholium A *to Il*. 2.339, where it is attributed to Stesichorus (Stes. fr. 87). Isocrates omits the fact that the pledge was a requirement from Tyndareus, and rather presents it as voluntary and proof of how much each of the suitors hoped that he would be the lucky one (Isoc. *Hel*. 40-42). From Apollodorus we learn that the oath was a clever idea by Odysseus who asked for Tyndareus' assistance in winning Penelope as a bride in return for solving the quarrel. Hyginus, *Fab*. 78, supports this and adds that Tyndareus feared that Agamemnon might divorce Clytaemnestra. A burnt sacrifice is mentioned as part of the ritual oath by Euripides (*IA* 58-60). Pausanias describes the scene in more detail: he presents the 'Tomb of the Horse' as the place where Tyndareus sacrificed a horse, then made the suitors stand on its remnants and swear, and finally buried it (Paus. 3.20.9; perhaps there is a connection between the men standing on a dead horse with the same men later hiding inside the Trojan Horse). As we have seen in section 2, Tyndareus' responsibility for the quality of his daughters' marriages is also expressed in the story of his neglected sacrifice to Aphrodite. While the episode of the oath and that of Aphrodite's curse look conflicting at first, they may in fact be complimentary (though they are never explicitly linked in the sources): it is possible that Tyndareus demanded of the suitors that they should swear an oath precisely because he knew that Helen was destined to be an adulteress, and thus tried to ensure that none of the unsuccessful candidates would provide the opportunity for that. Conversely, Tyndareus may have resigned himself to the fact that there was no way to prevent the fulfilment of a divine prophecy, and thus the oath functioned as an insurance policy to get his daughter back, not if, but when she would commit the adultery.

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[106] Cf. chapter 1.2 for Achilles as Helen's suitor.

[107] But Thucydides 1.9 disagrees with this, and says that it was not the oath, but Agamemnon's power that mobilised the Greeks to fight at Troy.

While in Hesiod it is simply the man who offers the greatest gifts that will become Helen's husband, Apollodorus claims that it was Tyndareus who chose Menelaus, but his criteria are not stated. Hyginus, in turn, writes that her father actually gave Helen herself the choice of whom she would like to marry. She was to crown her favourite with a wreath, and chose Menelaus. Euripides, too, says that Tyndareus let his daughter choose the suitor 'to whom Aphrodite's lovely breezes might carry her' (*IA* 68-9). Helen is clearly encouraged to base her choice on sexual attractiveness, but the phrasing may leave us wondering whether we should understand Aphrodite here as just a personification of passion or whether the goddess herself perhaps strategically nudged Helen to do something, as is often the case. Helen's free choice of a husband has been adduced as an argument against the usual blame for her unfaithfulness, since she had been given the right to choose a partner and was therefore allowed to change her mind and go with Paris. However, Aristotle rightly refutes this by saying that Tyndareus' permission was only valid in the case of her first marriage, because as the wife of Menelaus she was no longer in her father's power (Arist. *Rh.* 1401a36). With regard to Helen's husband in the afterlife, in the *Odyssey* Proteus tells Menelaus that he shall dwell in Elysium with Helen, by the decree of the gods (*Od.* 4.561-9). In Lucian *VH* 2.8 the same judgement is made by Rhadamanthus, but only once they have died.[108] However, in Isocrates' imagination, Helen must be at liberty to determine who she wants to spend eternity with, since she establishes Menelaus as her immortal spouse (Isoc. *Hel.* 62). The alternative afterlife-marriage with Achilles (see chapter 1.2) appears to have been her choice. Where she is given to Deiphobus after Paris' death, this happens without any influence of her own. She is either given to him by Priam or simply taken by Deiphobus without consent.[109]

What is remarkable about the wedding of Menelaus and Helen and their early years together is that they are completely unremarkable. Theocritus' epithalamium for the couple (*Idyll* 18) could conceivably be a song about any other pair, if it were not for the fact that Menelaus is said to be the only man whose father-in-law is Zeus (Theocr. *Id.* 18.18; becoming related to the highest god through Helen is also a motivation for Alexander: see Isoc. *Hel.* 43; Ov. *Her.* 16.213-214; Drac. *Rom.* 8. 147-149). Helen is singled out in the wedding hymn as far surpassing her companions in beauty and skill, but that too is a standard practice, as shown, for instance, in Alcman's P*artheneion* (fr. 1 *PMGF*).[110] Eur. *Hel.* 722-5 reminds of Helen's and Menelaus' bridal procession in a chariot surrounded by wedding torches, while Stesichorus fr. 187 speaks of apples being thrown, perhaps at the newlyweds in the wedding ritual. Apples feature

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[108] Cf. note 91 above.

[109] Eur. *Troad.* 959-60, Apollod. *Epit.* 5.9, Serv. *ad* Verg. *Aen.* 2.166, Conon 34, Dictys 4.22, Tzetz. *Posthomerica* 600-1.

[110] Nagy (1990: 345) points out another instance in which Helen is portrayed as a chorus-leader of Spartan girls, Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* 1296-1321. See also Gumpert 2001: 96-7. For a comparison of *Idyll* 18 with the *Partheneion*, see Calame 2012: 256-62.

commonly in an erotic context (e.g. in the myth of Atalanta and Hippomenes),[111] but in this case especially the association with the apple thrown by Eris at Peleus' and Thetis' wedding might play a role. Helen's time as a young bride is probably the only period in her biography on which we have no interesting details. We know that Helen and Menelaus became parents before she left with Paris, but there are no spectacular events that anyone deemed worthy of elaboration (on Helen's offspring, see chapter 8.2).

5. Beauty and Nature

As mythical figures go, Helen is a special case, and this is a good point at which to introduce the different notions about her nature. She is, of course, most known for her extraordinary beauty. As has gradually become apparent, this characteristic is what defines her and it is a prerequisite to the myth of Helen and the Trojan War. It is impossible to name all the sources that mention the beauty of Helen.[112] The stock image makes Helen the natural comparandum for beauty (Sappho fr. 23; Philostr. *Her.* 23.28-30) and as the epitome of a beautiful woman, she inspires comments on the transience of beauty (Ov. *Met.* 15.232-3, Lucian, *Dialogues of the Dead* 5). This has remained the case even beyond antiquity: Christopher Marlowe famously attributed to her ‘the face that launched a thousand ships’.[113] From this circumstance, Helen's name even became a humorous measurement unit of beauty, with a ‘millihelen’ accordingly determining the amount of pulchritude necessary to launch one single ship.[114] Her beauty also protects Helen from harm: Stesichorus fr. 106 tells of men attempting to stone Helen, but dropping the missiles when they see her appearance or face (ὄψιν).[115] Not only Helen's face, but also her breasts are very persuasive in turning away attacks: in a number of descriptions of her encounter with Menelaus after the Fall of Troy Helen's husband draws his sword in rage, ready to kill her. However, when he sees her, she bares her bosom and he instantly lets the weapon drop.[116] An interest in her breasts

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[111] Brazda (1977: 42-3) makes clear the importance of apples and other multi-seeded fruit at weddings in particular, as symbols of fertility.

[112] Examples include Gorg. *Hel.* 4; Isoc. *Hel.* 14; 54; Ov. *Her.* 17.37-38.

[113] *Doctor Faustus*, Act 5, scene 1. The phrase is anticipated in Lucian, *Dialogues of the Dead* 5 (Menippus and Hermes), Vergil *Aen.* 2.198, Drac. *Rom.* 8. 126, 646.

[114] This seems to have originated with a letter in *The New Scientist* (13th Nov 1958, p. 1285) where it is suggested by one R.C. Winton.

[115] For this passage and Helen as the object of male gaze, see Finglass (2018).

[116] Eur. *Andr.* 627-30, Ar. *Lys.* 155-6 (the scholiast *ad loc.* says that the story derives from the *Little Iliad* (= fr. 19) and was also treated by Ibycus = Ibyc. fr. 296 *PMGF*).

is also apparent in Pliny the Elder who tells that Helen dedicated a goblet to a temple of Athena which was made to the measure of her breast (*Nat. Hist* 33.23).[117]

Helen's magnificent looks are frequently presented as both an attribute and a bane (e.g. Eur. *Hel.* 27, 260-3). Although her appearance is commonly put on a par with that of Aphrodite (Hes. *Cat.* 154a, Ov. *Her.* 16. 137-40, Lucian *Iudicium* 13, Drac. *Rom.* 8, 64-65), classical authors are reluctant to divulge what she actually looked like.[118] Like many other women in Homer, she receives the epithet λευκώλενος ('white-armed': *Il.* 3.121, *Od.* 22.27), but also reproaches, such as κυνῶπις ('dog-eyed': *Il.* 3.180, *Od.* 4.145).[119] Lucian tells us that, being the daughter of a swan, she is white — an ancient beauty ideal — and sporty (Lucian *Iudicium* 14).[120] In her epithalamium her peers also say that they practise athletics together (Theocr. *Id.* 18.22-3), as one would expect from Spartans, so one may infer that Helen has a well-sculpted body. At least some prominent authors also agree that she is blonde (Sappho fr. 23, Ibycus fr. 282 *PMG* = S151 *PMGF*, Stes. fr. 112, Eur. *Hel.* 1224), but nothing more is said about her. This vagueness with regard to her features is precisely what keeps the fame of her beauty alive. Thus when Homer tells us that Helen had beautiful hair (εὔκομος: *Il.* 7.355; καλλίκομος: *Od.* 15.58) or beautiful cheeks (καλλιπάρηος: *Od.* 15.123), he does not really say anything to describe her form, but rather animates each member of his audience to picture a manifestation of their personal idea of absolute beauty. To recount a detailed portrait of her eye colour, shoe size, etc. would limit the imagination and inevitably lead to disagreement.[121] The absence of information, in turn, allows for an infinite number of Helens, each beautiful as can be in the eye of her beholder. An excellent illustration of the process is offered by the anecdote about the painter Zeuxis who wanted to paint a picture of Helen. Since he did not judge any one woman perfect enough to be his model, he chose five girls, extracted the loveliest aspects of each, and assembled from them his image of Helen.[122]

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[117] A popular tale similarly attributes the shape of the 'bol sein' to that of Marie Antoinette's bust. Furthermore, inspired by this, Mayfair's 34 restaurant serves Champagne from coupes modelled on the left breast of Kate Moss since 2014.

[118] The chorus of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (738-43) speaks of Helen arriving in Troy in very abstract terms as a windless calm, a gentle treasure, a dart cast from the eyes and a flower of love, thus suggesting an inability to describe the person herself. However, according to Fraenkel (1950: 346, *ad loc.*), precisely this kind of portrayal 'raises Helen above the merely human, removes her from among her kind, and brings her close to unknown Powers.'

[119] See Clader (1976: 41-4) for a table of Helen's epithets in the Homeric epics and Homeric Hymns.

[120] Elsewhere, however, he uses Helen's swan-like looks to parody her: in *The Cock* (or *The Dream)* 17 he says that she was white and had a long neck like the bird, but that she was rather old at the time of the Trojan War and not as pretty as people say.

[121] Maguire (2009: 49).

[122] Dionysius of Halikarnassos, *de Imitatione* 31.1; Cic. *de Inv.* 2.1-3; Plin. *NH* 35.64.

Two late-antique authors, Dares and Malalas, no doubt influenced by the surge of physiognomics in the fourth century,[123] are keen to give exact descriptions of the character and physique of the actors in their works, including Helen. Dares first tells us that Castor and Pollux had blond hair, large eyes, faultless faces and were in good shape. He then says that Helen was similar to them, beautiful, with an ingenuous heart, charming; she had the best legs, a beauty mark (*nota*[124]) between her eyebrows and a little mouth (Dares 12). John Malalas' text depicts Helen as 'perfect, decent, with good breasts, white as snow, with good eyebrows, a good nose, good characteristics, with curly, yellowish hair; she had large eyes, was gracious, with a beautiful voice, and a tremendous sight among women, 26 years of age' (Malalas 5.1). While these two complementary accounts give a somewhat clearer impression of the most beautiful woman, they are still incomplete. Although the authors feed us a few creative details, for example about Helen's beauty mark, her hair and age, they in fact uncover even more uncertainties. The adjectives they use are for the most part as generic as those of Homer and other predecessors. In particular, of the fourteen pieces of information imparted by Malalas, six are prefixed with εὐ. Unless there was a wide-spread consensus in antiquity as to what constituted 'good' legs, breasts, eyebrows or noses, Malalas' and Dares' portrayals merely navigate the reader's fantasy. They give guidance as to which elements to concentrate on, but they are still ultimately unable to describe the beauty of Helen.

Dracontius includes a sketch of Helen's looks in a prominent anaphora construction uttered by Paris:

sic blanda genis, sic ore modesto,
Sic oculis ornata suis, sic pulchra decore,
Candida sic roseo perfundens membra rubore,
Sic flauis ornata comis, sic longior artus
Et procera regens in poplite membra uenusto

so alluring with her cheeks, of such a gentle mouth,
so adorned by her eyes, so beautiful with splendour,
so imbuing her white limbs with a rosy blush,
so adorned with blond hair, and such a tall joint
guiding the elongated limbs in a graceful knee;

(Drac. *Rom* 8.517-521)

The repetition of *sic* on the one hand intensifies each of the points, but on the other hand its function is a deictic one. Thus it emphasises that every comment about a feature of

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[123] Evans (1969: 15).

[124] See Maguire (2009: 59-65) on how from the 12th century onwards Helen's 'mark' was turned into a scar.

Helen's appearance is supposedly paired with a visual impression; however, the reader is of course denied the optical enjoyment, and relies solely on Paris intermediary words. One thing we notice is that Dracontius emulates the way authors before him spoke about Helen's beauty. Similarly to Dares and Malalas, he says much that is vague and that leaves open various possibilities for interpretation. He does, however, specify the light colour of Helen's skin and hair, in line with other accounts before. But at the end he adds something new: while Dares credited Helen with 'the best legs', Dracontius qualifies this further as 'long'. Helen is a tall woman. This notion is also found in an epigram by Dracontius' contemporary and compatriot Luxorius about a short pantomime girl who wants to grow as tall as Andromache and Helen through dancing their stories (*Anth. Lat.* i.i.310).[125] Tallness is regarded as a good thing in a woman already in Homer, and it is particularly seen as an attribute of goddesses.[126]

As has been noted by Morales, Colluthus does not describe Helen's optical charms.[127] Before she enters the scene, she is introduced by Aphrodite as lovely (ἐρατή: Coll. 163). Later she is said to be clear-voiced (λιγύθροος: 276) and to have lovely eyes (ἐρόεσσαν ὀπωπὴν: Coll. 303); two characteristics picked up also by Malalas in a similarly meaningless fashion. But Colluthus does not even make an effort to invent any details. Perhaps he recognised that Helen's name is sufficient to evoke connotations of utmost beauty. The choice is also in line with Colluthus' harking back to earlier traditions. Instead, the poet chooses to concentrate on the beauty of other characters, namely Aphrodite and Paris. The former's toilette before the Judgement is described at length (Coll. 81-100; cf. chapter 4.3) and during the contest she bares her breasts, in a gesture so reminiscent of Helen when faced with Menelaus' sword (Coll. 156-7; cf. chapter 4.4). The latter is portrayed as a dandy and his allure seems to have more effect on Helen than the other way round (cf. chapter 6.3).

None of the numerous monographs on the figure of Helen can bypass the role she played in various cults: she was worshipped jointly with Menelaus in Therapne (Hdt. 6,61; Paus. 3,15,3), in Rhodes she was *Helena Dendritis* (Paus. 3.19.10; cf. her Spartan tree cult at Theocr. *Id*. 18.43-48) and in Cenchreae and Chios she was a deity of springs (Paus. 2.2.3). Comparisons have been drawn between the figure of Helen and more ancient Indo-European daughters of the Sun or fertility-goddesses and various attempts

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[125] Giovini (2004: 292-4) and after him Wolff (2015: 364) note that these are the first two occurrences in Latin literature where Helen is said to be tall.

[126] See *Od*. 5.215-18 where Odysseus admits that his mortal wife Penelope is not as tall or beautiful as the divine Calypso. Moreover, Odysseus credits Nausicaa with the tallness (μέγεθος) of Artemis (*Od*. 6.151-2).

[127] Morales (2016: 65).

have been made at explaining the provenance and meaning of her name.[128] Helen appears to be both a literary character and a kind of supernatural presence in the real world: ancient Greeks, it seems, would have believed that the well-known stories about her were based on an extraordinary person who lived long before, but who still had special powers which could influence the lives of individuals in their time. This career, in conjunction with supposedly being the child of the supreme god, strikingly resembles that of Jesus, and thus it is not surprising that Helen has regularly been called a goddess by modern scholarship.[129] Whereas in antiquity her worship falls rather in the category of a heroic cult, stranger abilities are attested for her lifetime than those of comparable heroes and heroines, as we shall see.[130]

While I do not want to dwell on the history and practicalities of Helen's worship, there is an intriguing point of intersection between Helen the 'real person', albeit still in a fictitious context, and Helen the epic figure. This duality emerges on a few occasions where Helen is said both to feature in literary texts and to take control of them on a metaleptic level. Already in the *Iliad*, her first appearance is strikingly that of an artist and object of art at the same time. She is seated in her room, weaving a great tapestry which represents the battles carried out between Trojans and Greeks for her sake (*Il.* 3.125-8). The web is commonly accepted to be an ekphrasis mirroring the poem itself, and Helen the weaver is thus associated with the very bard. She similarly predicts during the narrative itself that later generations will sing of her and Paris' fate (*Il.* 6.357-8). Her egocentrism also comes through in her eulogy for Hector at the close of the epic (*Il.* 24.761-775), which focuses more on herself than on the deceased. It is therefore not too surprising when Isocrates tells us that it was no other than Helen herself who commissioned the *Iliad* from Homer by visiting him at night (presumably in a dream) and ordering him to compose an epic about the men who fell at Troy (Isoc. *Hel.* 65). Thus it is not so much the poet's genius that is responsible for the existence of the work, but the initiative of Helen herself. If she does in fact appear to Homer in a dream, this would indicate that she is either a ghost or a sort of deity. Anyhow, she appears to be imbued with sufficient authority that her wish is carried out without question. The subject of the poem paradoxically attains a higher status than the very author, and through a supposed conversation with him, she is rendered an actual human,

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[128] Nilsson (1932: 75) detected points of comparison with Persephone or Kore. See West (1975) for mythical and cultic resonances between Helen and accounts of the Daughter of the Sun; this is elaborated in West (2007): 227-37. See also Jackson (2006). In his study of parallels between Helen and Vedic tales, Skutsch (1987: 189) comes to the doubtful conclusion that there were originally two Helen figures. See Clader (1976: 63-80) for the etymology of Helen's name and her status as a nature divinity.

[129] Indeed, the divine aspect of Helen is so central that is has been incorporated into the very titles by Lindsay (1974), Clader (1976) and Hughes (2005).

[130] For Helen's cultic contexts, see Larson (1995). She explains Helen as a 'faded goddess' who then entered epic as a human (79). See also Lyons who frequently notes the ways in which Helen is set apart from other mythical heroines (1997: 63, 138, 141, 162). Conversely, Edmunds (2007: 28) downplays the divine associations.

or even superhuman, being. Ptolemy Chennus, too, has something to say about this (Phot. *Bibl*. cod 190, 149b, 22-26): he maintains that there were eighteen women with the name Helen around the time of the Trojan War, and that one Helen, the daughter of Musaeus of Athens, noted the story of Ilium and gave the subject to Homer. And better still, she owned a lamb that spoke two languages! But it is not clear whether the sheep was engaged in any translation work relating to the *Iliad*.

Isocrates cites another, more famous example of Helen's manipulation of literature about Helen just before telling of her encounter with Homer:

> ἐνεδείξατο δὲ καὶ Στησιχόρῳ τῷ ποιητῇ τὴν αὑτῆς δύναμιν: ὅτε μὲν γὰρ ἀρχόμενος τῆς ᾠδῆς ἐβλασφήμησέ τι περὶ αὐτῆς, ἀνέστη τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἐστερημένος, ἐπειδὴ δὲ γνοὺς τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς συμφορᾶς τὴν καλουμένην παλινῳδίαν ἐποίησε, πάλιν αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν φύσιν κατέστησεν.
>
> But she also displayed her power to Stesichorus the poet: for he had spoken ill of her at the start of an ode and rose up deprived of his eyesight; but when he realised the cause of his misfortune, he composed the so-called Palinode, she restored him to the same condition.
>
> (Isoc. *Hel*. 64 = Stes. fr. 91c)

In Plato's *Phaedrus*, Socrates adduces this tale as an example of an ancient purification rite and remarks that, unlike Homer, Stesichorus was aware why he had become blind and made amends straightaway (*Phaedrus* 243a-b). According to Pausanias, Stesichorus did not instinctively know that his blindness had resulted from her anger, but it was one Leonymus of Croton who sailed to the White Island where he met Helen and was ordered to enlighten the poet, whereupon the latter composed his recantation (Paus. 3. 19.13).[131] The narrator of Lucian's *VH* tells that he saw Stesichorus in the afterlife, by which time Helen, also present, had reconciled with him (2.15). The story is contested by Ptolemy Chennus in a similar fashion as before: his rationalisation is that Stesichorus was writing about his girlfriend, a certain Helen of Himaera, who had left him for Bupalus (Phot. *Bibl*. cod 190, 149b, 33-39).[132] Homer's visual impairment is also mentioned in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (*Hom. Hymn* 3.172), though we do not hear what caused it. Plato perhaps implies that his plight was akin to that of Stesichorus, and thus that he slandered Helen in one of his works. The anecdote about Stesichorus is most likely to have been invented by the poet himself for his narrative *persona*, so that he could associate himself with the man who was the very epitome of the blind poet. The story could have been presented in a proem to his recantation. Homer's double in the *Odyssey*, the bard Demodocus, suffered for his art in a similar way: he was a

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[131] On the contents of Stesichorus' palinode, see chapter 9.2.

[132] Is this the same Bupalus who gets repeatedly abused in Hipponax' poetry?

favourite of the Muse who gave him the gift of singing, but took away his ability to see (*Od*. 8.62-4). The trope of the blinded poet reveals an extraordinary take on the concept of poetry itself: it is perceived as a commodity which can be exchanged for the ability to see. In Demodocus' case this happens on the basis of an involuntary trade, while Stesichorus' eyesight functions rather as a deposit which is held until the debtor pays his dues with a corrective song. Consequently, poetry which is 'false' or displeases higher beings becomes a black mark against the author's name and carries a penalty, while its 'true' counterpart credits the singer's account and can be used to pacify the offended party. If there were indeed two palinodes, as stated by Chamaeleon (Stesichorus fr. 90), this would further suggest that slanderous verses accrue interest and thus need to be redeemed doubly or perhaps that one retraction will only buy back the function of one eye. Poetry thus somewhat shares in the properties of magic spells that can be reversed with another spell.

It is telling that Isocrates uses the word βλασφημέω, which implies not only slander, but sacrilege, and thus hints that Helen possesses divinity of sorts. Stesichorus imparts the same impression when in fr. 91a he addresses her directly in the second person, as though singing a hymn to her.[133] Edmunds argues strongly against understanding Helen as a goddess, and suggest rather that the veneration of her and Menelaus at Therapne is a joint hero-cult.[134] He adduces the other well-known early account of Stesichorus' recantation, found in Isocrates' contemporary and rival Plato. In the *Phaedrus* (243a-b), Stesichorus' blindness occurs through unknown means, and after he has delivered the Palinode his visual ability returns just as spontaneously, with no direct agency from Helen. In Isocrates, too, only the retransformation is specifically attributed to Helen.[135] This leads Edmunds to further negate her divine powers. However, I find this question on Helen's perceived nature impossible to answer, since in ancient imagination the lines between 'proper' gods and spirits of the dead are often blurred. This can be observed, for instance, in magic spells and curse tablets where sometimes ghosts are invoked to perform a task for a mortal in need, while at other times they are just the instruments with which to get the attention of the rulers of the underworld. Furthermore, Isocrates says that the Spartans made offerings to Helen and Menelaus 'not as to heroes, but as to gods' (οὐχ ὡς ἥρωσιν ἀλλ᾽ ὡς θεοῖς: Isoc. *Hel*. 63). This suggests that they were indeed heroes, but could be mistaken for deities, because they were treated better than other heroes. Consequently, they must be something in between, either minor deities or super-heroes.

Herodotus provides us with two accounts that exemplify two different concepts of Helen's impact. Firstly, he tells of a miracle that occurred at Helen's precinct

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[133] See Constantinidou (2004: 174-6) who additionally suggests that Stesichorus' palinode could have been 'the result of a real religious experience'. Kelly (2007: 3-4), too, calls the poem a 'hymnodic narrative' and connects it with the phenomenon of *Dichterweihe*.

[134] Edmunds (2007: 24).

[135] Horace, *Epod*. 17.42-44 = Stes. fr. 91e tells that it was the Dioscuri who punished Stesichorus for defaming their sister.

at Therapne: an ugly baby girl had been born to noble parents, and in order to do something about that embarrassment, her nurse would carry the child to Helen's shrine every day and beseech her to take away the ugliness. Once a woman appeared to her and repeatedly asked the nurse to show her the baby, which the nurse did reluctantly (the parents had forbidden her to show it to anyone). The woman stroked the girl's head and said that she would grow up to become the most beautiful woman in the whole of Sparta; and her appearance changed from that day. Herodotus does not tell us explicitly that the woman is Helen in epiphany, but this is the most logical explanation. In a rationalizing reading, it could also be a priestess of the temple.[136] Moreover, after the baby has become an unnamed beautiful adult, she is then taken away from her husband to become the wife of the husband's friend, the Spartan king Ariston, through a trick employed by the latter, rather like Helen herself (Hdt. 6.61-2; cf. Paus. 3.7.7). Thus, with Helen's gift of beauty comes the associated trouble.[137] It is also important to note that here Helen is actually referred to as a goddess (θεός). Secondly, Herodotus makes it apparent that Helen's existence as a historical figure would have been widely believed in to the extent that her legend had an effect on international relations in real life: at Hdt. 9.73 we learn that, because the people of Decelea had helped the Dioscuri recover Helen after the abduction by Theseus (see above), the Spartans henceforth treated them preferentially by exempting them from dues, giving them prime places at feasts and, what is more, even sparing Decelea in the Peloponnesian war. Thus Herodotus shows the cultic Helen as powerful in two distinct ways; on the one hand, she is said to magically appear and 'cure' humans in her temple, similarly to Asclepius (although we must bear in mind that this account too belongs largely to the realm of myth, despite the connection with the supposedly historical figure Ariston). On the other hand, in the rational story it is the very memory of her life, coupled with local myth, which can make men act in a certain way towards each other, without any supernatural occurrences. It is particularly striking that a woman who is commonly accused of causing thousands of deaths would later be given the function of a benefactor and protector from war.

Another detail from Pausanias combines the above elements of a not-quite-human Helen and her influence on military history. During the Second Messenian War, he writes, Aristomenes of Messene was launching an attack on Sparta, but was deterred by φάσματα of Helen and the Dioscuri (Paus. 4.16.9). This time she seems rather like a vengeful spirit, stepping in to defend her home country by haunting its foes. There is a long list of other instances in which Helen appears, disappears or shape-shifts. The most well-known one is certainly that the gods fashioned a phantom-doublet (εἴδωλον) in her image which was said by some authors, notably Stesichorus and Euripides in his

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[136] The human form perhaps ensures that the nurse is not scared away. A biblical parallel is Mary Magdalen's initial confusion of the resurrected Christ with the gardener near his tomb (*The Gospel of John* 20: 1-16).

[137] Blondell (2013:159) rightly points out that Helen here assumes patronage over a woman similarly to the way that she herself used to be the beautiful mortal double of Aphrodite.

Helen, to have gone to Troy with Paris instead of the real Helen (more on this in chapter 9.2). Furthermore, when in the *Orestes* Helen is captured by Orestes and Pylades, just as they are at the point of killing her, she wondrously vanishes. The messenger guesses that this was either due to drugs or magicians' tricks or that the gods stole her away (Eur. *Or.* 1493-1498); Orestes, too, attributes his victim's disappearance to the gods (Eur. *Or.* 1580;1586). Finally the *deus ex machina* Apollo reveals that in fact he spirited Helen away by order of Zeus and that she has undergone a katasterism (1629-1637). While Helen is in Troy, she also materialises in dreams of her family in Sparta: Aeschylus' chorus speaks of visions appearing in dreams (ὀνειρόφαντοι δόξαι) to Menelaus, which seem delightful, but then slip away through his hands (Aesch. *Ag.* 420-426). In Colluthus, Helen visits her little daughter Hermione in a dream and converses with her (Coll. 364-378; see chapter 8.3).

Helen is also recorded as displaying superhuman skills in her lifetime. Already in the *Odyssey* she is characterised by conspicuous knowledge: she is the first one to identify Telemachus as Odysseus' son when he arrives at Sparta (*Od.* 4.140-146); she remembers that at Troy she alone recognised Odysseus when he had stolen into the city to spy (*Od.* 4.244-251).[138] At the end of Telemachus' visit, only Helen is able to interpret a bird omen which is essential to the plot of the *Odyssey*, foretelling Odysseus' return, while the men struggle to do so; notably, Telemachus replies that if her prophecy comes true, he shall pray to her as though to a god (*Od.* 15.160-81). Helen's augury is also included in Stesichorus' rendition of the same scene (fr. 170). Menelaus recalls how she — inspired by some deity, he reckons — imitated the voices of the wives of the Greeks inside the Trojan Horse in order to make them betray their hiding place (*Od.* 4.274-284; this story must have led Ptolemy Chennus to state that Helen's proper name was Echo: Phot. *Bibl.* cod 190, 149b, 3-4). She also possesses the 'witchy' expertise of spiking wine with anti-depressant drugs (*Od.* 4.219-232; cf. chapter 6.4 on comparisons with the witch Medea). Relatedly, Pliny reports that a certain plant called Helenium has sprung from Helen's tears, and is used by women to make themselves irresistible, it inspires good mood when taken with wine — here Pliny relates it to the Homeric passage —, it is sweet, it helps against asthma and snake bites and supposedly kills mice (Pliny, *NH* 21.59; 159). Compare Ptolemy Chennus' story of the Rhodian 'Helen-herb', which grew on the spot on which Helen hanged herself and which causes strife, if consumed (Photius *bibl.* cod 190.149a). Furthermore, Ptolemy Chennus attests that Helen was very good at gambling. He says that she invented the drawing of lots with fingers and defeated Paris (Phot. *Bibl.* cod 190, 149a, 16-17). Could that be something she learnt when Theseus and Perithous drew lots over who can keep her? Moreover, she supposedly won a game of knucklebones against him, which was to determine which one of them their daughter will be named after (Phot. *Bibl.* cod 190, 149b).

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[138] At the opening of her Euripidean play, Helen recounts the plans of the gods with some detail (Eur. *Hel.* 36-41, see also chapter 1.1). In her commentary *ad. loc.*, Dale (1967: 71) rightly wonders how she has acquired such specific knowledge.

A study of the strange nature of Helen cannot be complete without the notion presented by a number of writers that she was an extraterrestrial being, or more precisely a Moon-woman. This may have been aided by the sound of her name; Ἑλένη — σελήνη, although we have to note that this is a *post-factum* connection, as there is no evidence that the two words share a root.[139] Neocles of Croton told that the egg from which Helen hatched had fallen from the moon, because egg-laying is the method of reproduction of lunar people, according to Herodorus of Heraclea (Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 2.50). Eustathius also says that authors after Homer made up a tale that Helen had fallen from the moon and that she was snatched back up again after she had played her part in accomplishing Zeus' plan (Eust. schol. *ad Od.* 4.121). This may be one of the many ways of exculpating her, by demonstrating that she was acting only at divine behest. Although her curious egg-birth does not otherwise have any real impact on Helen's mythical tradition,[140] it becomes quite central in this context, and it is worth dwelling on its significance a little longer. As with all things Helen, there is never just one possible interpretation. In Lucian's *Iudicium*, Helen's appearance is explained through the mode of her conception: she is white, because she is the offspring of a swan, and delicate, because she was nourished in an egg (*Iudicium* 14). One might say that birth from an egg is a more sublime form of procreation, being much more hygienic than the messy process of delivery in mammals. Ní Mheallaigh connects the oviparity on the moon with other Pythagorean accounts about the positive qualities of Moon-people, such as lack of excrement — a consequence of an aerial or non-existent diet —, superior beauty, tallness and health.[141] However, the opposite view is presented by Fulgentius who describes the origin of Helen and her brothers allegorically. He first claims that the Latin word for swan, *olor,* comes from the Greek ὀλιγωρία (contempt) and that the species is so full of insults that when it clamours, all other birds fall silent. Then he turns to defaming the egg-birth:

> Sed quid ex hac re concipitur, uideamus; nihilominus ouum, quia sicut in ouo omnis sordities, quae pur{g}ari potest in genere, continetur intrinsecus, ita etiam in effectus iniuriae omnis est inmunditia. Sed ex hoc ouo generantur tres, Castor, Pollux et Helena, nihilominus seminarium scandali et discordiae, sicut ante diximus, 'et geminum luctu concussit adultera mundum'.

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[139] Alsina Clota (1957: 377-8), Clader (1976: 64). It has long been noted, for example by Becker (1939: 102), *contra* Roscher (1886-1890: 1977), that this lunar association would stand as an opposite to Helen's initial identification with a Sun goddess. However, the cognate σέλας could conceivably have to do with any heavenly body. Nevertheless, the etymology of σέλας is itself problematic: see Frisk (1970: *ad. loc*), followed by Beekes (2010: *ad loc*.).

[140] Edmunds (2015: 107).

[141] Ní Mheallaigh (2014: 218-220).

> But let us see what is produced from this affair; nothing less than an egg, since, just as in an egg all the dirt which can be cleansed through birth is kept inside, thus too in the purpose of outrage everything is impurity. But from this egg are born three, Castor, Pollux and Helen, no less the seedbed of scandal and discord, as we have said before, 'and the adulteress shattered the two worlds with grief'.
>
> (Fulgentius, *Mythologiae* 2.13)

In the case of the Moon-people the egg-laying is seen as pure, because, unlike live birth, it is not accompanied by blood and the young emerge from the egg-shell undefiled. Fulgentius turns this argument on its head: since no residue is brought forth by the mother at the same time as an egg, he reasons that it must all be contained inside the shell. Presumably the filth would then be absorbed by the body within the egg. This is a good example of how the same circumstance can be employed to either elevate or debase, if combined with the right rhetoric.

The character of Helen is also reused in connection with the doctrine of a Gnostic sect, the Simonians, where she is given yet another origin and nature: she plays a prominent role in legends surrounding the figure of Simon Magus, a Samaritan sorcerer of the 1st century AD whom early Christian authors deemed a heretic and the diabolic rival of Jesus. According to a well-attested tradition, he freed a prostitute called Helen and consorted with her. The myth goes that in the beginning God had his first Thought (ἔννοια). She then created the angels, but they soon rebelled against her and created the world and imprisoned her there in a female body. She experienced many shameful incarnations, including that of Helen of Troy. Finally, she became a slave prostitute in Tyre, and God descended in the form of Simon Magus to rescue his Thought, the 'lost sheep', and to bring salvation to the earth.[142] The sources in which we can find this account are widely hostile towards Simon and accuse him of inventing the story to cover up his illicit affair. Through the tie to Helen and the Trojan War, Simon's record gains authority from a distant and famous past, in the same vein as chronicles that subsume classical myth within a Christian agenda.[143] Interestingly, in Rufinus' Latin translation of the *Recognitiones* 2.12 Helen is called Luna, which suggests that either her name was Σελήνη in the Greek original or that it was misread as such by the translator. From the perspective of our Trojan Helen, the conception of her as the Thought of God is tantamount to that of Helen the alien from the Moon. In both cases she is not a real person, only the human embodiment of a higher being that has no control or responsibility and is therefore not culpable for the Trojan War.

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[142] Justin the Martyr, *Apologia* I.26, Irenaeus *Contra Haereses* I. xxiii.2-3, Tertullian *De Anima* 34, Hippolytus *Philosophumena* vi.19, Philastrius *De Haeresibus* i, Epiphanius *Contra Haereses* ii.2-3, Theodoretus *Haereticarum Fabularum Compendium* i.1.

[143] Precisely this 'corruption of true Christian teaching by the introduction of pagan Greek thought' was one of the reasons for disparagement by the Christian writers (King (2003: 33)).

Chapter 3

Paris before Helen

1. Early Years

The myth of Paris begins while he is still in his mother's womb. The pregnant Hecuba dreams that she has given birth to a flaming torch which sets the city of Troy on fire. When Priam hears about it, he sends for an interpreter of dreams (sometimes named as Aesacus[144]), who declares that the child shall be the ruin of Ilium (Eur. *Troad*. 919-22, Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.12.5, Lycoph. *Alex*. 224-8, Ov. *Her.* 16.43-50; Dictys 3.26). According to Enn. *Alex*. fr 38-49, Priam made sacrifice and then begged Apollo for an explanation; the god's oracle foretold the bane and advised him not to accept the baby. Malalas omits Hecuba's nightmare and says that only after Paris' birth Priam asked Apollo about the newborn son. The reply was that he would ruin Troy when he reached thirty years (Malalas 5.2). In the *Excidium Troiae*, it is Hecuba herself who consults a temple after her dream (*Excidium* p. 4, 3).

Paris is then exposed on Mt Ida, but of course survives, as he is found and reared by shepherds (or cowherds, as in Eur., *IA*. 573-579, 1293). The blunder can be attributed to different individuals. In one version the seer Aesacus instructs Priam to expose the child (Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.12.5); in another he suggests the killing of both the newborn and the mother (Lycoph. *Alex*. 224-227), but Priam applies the guidance wrongly and instead kills his mistress Cilia and her son Munippus whom she had born to Priam on the same day as Hecuba bore Paris (in addition the two women are sisters, while Cilia's husband Thymoetes is Priam's brother: Lycoph. *Alex*. 319-22 and scholia *ad loc*.); in a third version the baby is supposed to be killed, but the servants in charge of the task take pity and expose him instead (Hyg. *Fab*. 91); in yet another the verdict is to slay Paris, but Hecuba secretly gives him to the shepherds (Dictys 3.26). Euripides says that it was Cassandra who begged her mother and the Trojan elders to kill him, in vain (*Andr.* 293-308).[145] In Apollodorus the servant Agelaus exposes the infant that is then suckled by a she-bear; five days later he finds the baby still alive and takes it up to be his son (Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.12.5; on the bear cf. Lycoph. *Alex*. 138, Ael. *Var. Hist*

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[144] He is a son of Priam either by his previous wife Arisbe (Apollodorus *Bibl*. 3.12.5) or an illegitimate son by the nymph Alexirhoe (Ov. *Met*. 11.749-759).

[145] However, this assumes that Cassandra already had her prophetic powers while she was a little girl. In one tradition she and Helenus were left in the temple of Apollo overnight as children and had their ears licked by Apollo's snakes while they slept, which allowed them to know the future (Tzetzes on Lycoph., *Alex*., Argumentum 26-37 and schol. on *Il*. 6.76a and 7.44-5). See Ogden (2013: 138-143).

12.42). Malalas offers a luxury scenario in which Priam builds his own city for the prince which he names Parion after him and sends him away to live and study there until the age of 30. Far from herding animals, the boy learns rhetoric and composes an encomium and a hymn on Aphrodite (Malalas 5.2-3). An interesting reverse parallel is the story of Telephos, as given by Alcidamas: his mother Auge and the baby Telephos are sent away by her father Aleos because of a prophecy that says that Aleos' grandchild will overthrow him; they land at the court of the Mysian king Teuthras who adopts the boy and then gives him to Priam to be educated in Ilium (Alcidamas, *Odysseus* 16).

A number of texts have no problem at all with accepting Alexander as both a prince and a shepherd at the same time, without losing his royal status. As a parallel to this, scholars usually cite Anchises who is said to be tending kine in the *Iliad* (*Il.* 5.313), despite his nobility.[146] We may perhaps imagine the pretence of a simple life as a fashionable country pastime à la Marie Antoinette. In Apuleius' account of a pantomime of the judgement of the goddesses, the royal and the pastoral side of Paris are intermingled, as the actor playing Paris tends a flock while he is wearing a golden tiara on his head (Apul. *Met.* 10.30). In Colluthus, too, he is referred to as both the son of king Priam and is said to be watching cattle, without further explanation (Coll. 71-2). No child exposure or alternative parentage is mentioned and he spends his time alone with his herds and dogs (116-8), never interacting with any other shepherds. However, it is conspicuous that in the prologue and the judgement scene Alexander is repeatedly called a herdsman of some kind (Coll. 5, 9, 11, 87, 158), but at the very moment that his ships are being built he is suddenly a βασιλεύς (Coll. 197); after that Helen also recognises his royalty upon seeing him, and he introduces himself as the son of a wealthy king and descendant of Zeus (Coll. 280-5): the shepherd Paris is henceforth completely eclipsed. So what do we make of this? The narrator's initially exaggerated insistence on Paris' animal grazing activity and the subsequent disposal of the theme suggest that the spoilt highbred youth likes to roam the countryside dressed up in a goatskin and equipped with a staff and a milk pail (Coll. 105-10, 127), pretending to be a simple man when the weather is nice, but does not take it too seriously.[147] This is corroborated by the fact that he cannot even decide whether he is a cowherd or a shepherd and that he easily forgets about the herds, playing his pipes instead (Coll. 112-3).[148]

Wherever Paris is said to have been exposed as an infant, his return to the royal family is often orchestrated as well. As a result, the dichotomy between Paris'

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[146] According to Davies (2003: 35-6), his son Aeneas too watches cattle in the *Cypria*. Although this is not explicit in Proclus' summary, which only states that Achilles drove off Aeneas' kine, *Il.* 20.90-3 and 188-94 seems to refer to the same story, where Achilles attacks Aeneas and his animals on Mt Ida.

[147] Incidentally, this makes him a perfect match for Helen who, as a married mother-of-one, likes to spend her leisure time outdoors behaving like a virgin (see chapter 8.3). On pastoral associations in Colluthus, following Nonnus, see Harries (2006).

[148] On Paris' atypical mixed herd of bulls and sheep, see Cadau (2015: 52-4).

roles as prince and as shepherd is foregrounded. As we shall see, this is also reflected in his choice of female companion. Growing up amongst poor folk, Paris is said to be better than his peers (Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.12.5, Eur. *Alex*. test. iii; cf. Dictys 3.26, *Excidium* p. 4.3), no doubt because his royalty shows through despite his humble circumstances. During his childhood or adolescence Paris also receives another name, Alexander, because he defends the herds against robbers (Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.12.5, Ov. *Her.* 16.359-60, hypothesis to Eur. *Alex*. = TrGF 5.3 iii = P. Oxy. 3650 col. i, Enn. *Alex*. fr. 56), although elsewhere he is referred to as Alexander in the royal family context, while it is said that the shepherds called him Paris (Eur. *Alex*. hypothesis, Hyg. *Fab*. 91). Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.12.5 also says that Agelaus called the baby Paris in the first place. In Malalas it is Priam himself who renames his son Alexander before sending him away. While Dictys and Dares refer to him exclusively as Alexander, many authors use his two names interchangeably. The name change motive must have first come about as a device facilitating an ensuing recognition scene (such as in the tragedies discussed below): nobody, including the prince himself, would at first know who he really is, because he is not known by the name which he received at birth. Colluthus and Dracontius use both names for their main male character in a random order, as far as I can tell, but each for different reasons. Colluthus does not engage with the exposition myth at all, while for Dracontius' plot it is essential, but his Paris is aware of his parentage nor does he pretend to be anyone else at the Trojan court, and thus does not need another name. When the hero's childhood years are described by the Carthaginian poet, he is once called Paris, but then again speaks of himself as *parvus Alexander* when revealing his identity to his family (Drac. *Rom*. 8.68, 97). Thus, if anything, we would have to assume that, like Euripides and Hyginus, Dracontius takes this to be his original name when he was exposed.

Paris' return to his rightful place in Troy is first dramatised by Sophocles and Euripides in their respective lost *Alexander*s.[149] While we know significantly more about the latter, both plays apparently dealt with the same legend of Paris' recognition of and by his family. The hypothesis of Euripides' work explains: Hecuba still grieves for Paris after twenty years and persuades Priam to organise games in his honour. Meanwhile Paris has become a young man and believes that he belongs among shepherds, although it becomes clear that he is better than those he grew up with. When he behaves arrogantly towards them, they bind him and bring him to Priam. Paris defends himself and is permitted to take part in the games, where he proves most successful. This angers Deiphobus who calls on Hecuba to kill Paris. Then Cassandra recognises him and shares her foreboding prophecies. Hecuba tries to kill him, but is prevented (we assume that at this point she does not yet know that this is her son). His adoptive father arrives and tells the truth, and so they find each other again. Euripides' plot was adapted by Ennius for his own *Alexander*, and then in turn a similar story is

[149] Roscher (1886-1890: 1582) thought that the tragedians took their theme from the *Cypria*, but without giving a convincing argument. I believe that the *Cypria*, like Colluthus, may have simply taken this duality for granted.

outlined in the latter part of Hyginus' *Fabula* 91, with minor differences. Most ostensibly, Hyginus includes a motive that sounds very much like an ancient version of *War Horse:* Paris has a favourite bull, and as it happens, Priam sends servants to take it away and make it a prize to the victor at Alexander's games. The youth is so fond of the animal that he decides to compete in the games himself. He overcomes even his own brothers, and wins back his bull. Stinton believes that this element may have been invented by Sophocles.[150] Fragments of both Euripides' and Sophocles' *Alexander* reveal that they make much of the clash between the entitlement stemming from nobility and the championing of the poor underdog against all odds, although this moment of egalitarianism is of course turned on its head, as Paris' skill can ultimately be attributed to his blue blood.

References to this tradition are also found scattered in Ovid. First the Paris of the *Heroides* tells Helen that, although he appeared to be a plebeian, his *forma vigorque animi* betrayed his noble descent (Ov. *Her.* 16.51-2). A little later, we learn that after a long time he was found again by his own family, recognised by 'established signs' (*rata signa*); the Trojan house is so overjoyed that it makes the date a festive day in its calendar (Ov. *Her*. 16.89-91). Importantly, Cassandra's warnings are not mentioned in this context, although they usually feature at the point of Paris' departure from Troy (see section 4). While showing off his prowess, the prince mentions that his name Alexander came from the fact that he killed an enemy who had stolen his herds, though he was almost still a child, and that he overcame other young men, including Ilioneus and Deiphobus, in various contests (Ov. *Her*. 16.359-64). This must be an allusion to the element of the games and Deiphobus' abuse of Paris in the *Alexander*-tragedies, but Ovid does not explicitly link the two. Servius tells us that, according to Nero's *Troica*, it was Hector who became so angry at being defeated by Paris that he drew his sword against him; but the latter revealed that he is his brother and showed his baby rattle (*crepundia*) as a proof (Serv. *ad* Verg. *Aen*. 5.370).

Dictys tells of Paris' youth in his typically sketchy style. After we have heard that baby Alexander was to be killed, but Hecuba gave him to shepherds, the happy homecoming appears to be encapsulated in one sentence: *eum iam adultum, cum res palam esset, ne hostem quidem quamvis saevissimum, ut interficeret, pati potuisse, tantae scilicet fuisse eum pulchritudinis atque formae* ('Now when he had become an adult, and when the events became public, not even his fiercest enemy could have borne to kill him; for he was of such beauty and stature': Dictys 3.26). This perhaps alludes to the attempt on Paris' life by Deiphobus or Hecuba reported in previous sources. Curiously, what saves Paris in this instance is his handsome appearance. This could either mean that they do not dare harm him, because he is too good-looking to be a shepherd — and they later find out that he is indeed noble — or perhaps his appearance has the same disarming effect as that of Helen when she is found in Troy by Menelaus (see chapter 2.5).

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[150] Stinton (1965: 55).

The *Excidium Troiae* knows of Paris' bull, but it plays no role in his homecoming. Instead it is used to show that Paris is a fair judge: his bull regularly wins in fights against other bulls and receives a gold crown from Paris, but when one time Mars changes into a bull and defeats him, Paris awards the crown to the god, thus showing himself to be fair (*Excidium* p. 4.11-20). Paris' recognition story begins with his desire to see the spectacles in Troy. Interestingly, we also witness the perspective of his adoptive father who tries to dissuade Paris, but finally gives in and accompanies him. At the games, Paris leaves his place in the audience and instead starts to fight with the contestants and wins at different disciplines. When Priam's sons complain, he defeats them as well and they start plotting to kill him. However, when his shepherd guardian realises this, he throws himself before Priam and tells him that Paris is his son. Hecuba confirms this and tells of her dream (in this version she alone was involved in his exposure). Although the priests warn Priam about the destruction of Troy, he replies that the city should perish, rather than his son (*Excidium* p. 5.19-p. 6.26).

Eventually Dracontius makes the family reunification a crucial part of his epyllion. Indeed, Paris' childhood experience has a profound effect on his self-image. In order to build a psychological profile of his Paris, the poet makes minor, but significant, alterations to the familiar myth. Above all, unlike previous exposed Alexanders, Dracontius' is unique in that he does not grow up in the misguided belief that he is just a shepherd boy. Instead, we hear that as a child he cajoled his nurse into telling him the whole truth about his provenance (*Rom.* 8.68-70). Why, then, does he not use his knowledge straightaway to return where he belongs? Perhaps he is content with a simple life or perhaps he does not feel worthy of his rightful position, because he has been tainted by his lower-class existence, and is waiting for a chance to prove himself. Accordingly, a drastic change occurs after he has been chosen to judge the goddesses: the Judgement of Paris, which elsewhere is never directly connected with the story of his humble upbringing, is here placed in this context and used as the trigger for his restoration to the royal household. The office of divine arbiter fills Paris with confidence, or even arrogance, and he is no longer satisfied with a life in the countryside, but decides to go to Troy instead (*Rom.* 8.61-8). In line with earlier authors' accounts of special occasions connected to Paris' return, in Dracontius there is a festive procession when Paris enters Troy (*Rom.* 8. 78-82). It is the anniversary of Priam's rebuilding of the city after its destruction by Hercules. This is an ironic touch, as readmitting Alexander into the household will lead to a second destruction in due course. He addresses his relatives, explaining what has happened to him, and says that he has redeemed his low status by judging the goddesses' beauty (*Rom.* 8.98-9). The shameful past is later covered up with purple robes, but Paris' sense of embarrassment persists (*Rom.* 8. 206-7; 213-7). Moreover, the reader is not allowed to forget it either, as Paris is labelled a *pastor* throughout the text, with an almost comic frequency. Paris finishes his speech with a proof of who he is: while in Ovid he was recognised by *signa* of an unknown nature, here, as in Nero's *Troica,* it is a baby rattle, an item with which he was exposed, that he shows to make himself believable (*Rom.* 8. 70-1, 102-3). There is no information about the exact events following Paris' birth, but it seems plausible

that his parents exposed him so that he would perish without bloodying their hands and that they were unaware of his survival. After Paris' plea the king and queen are gripped by a bad conscience, apologise to their long-lost son and display their affection for him (*Rom*. 8.104-115). However, there follow two prophetic speeches by Helenus and Cassandra in which they remind their parents why they refused to raise Paris in the first place and urge the family to murder him (*Rom*. 8. 119-182). There are many thematic overlaps here with Cassandra's prophecies in Ennius (*Alex*. 59-81), but there are differences too: for example, Ennius' Cassandra calls her parents 'the best' (*Alex*. 59, 62-3), while Dracontius' seer-siblings abuse them as 'impious', 'the worst', 'unjust' and 'unhappy' for not taking action against Paris (*Rom* 8.120, 135-6). The most crucial divergence is the fact that in Ennius she claims that she was inspired by Apollo to speak the truth (*Alex*. 61), but in Dracontius the god is working against her. Just as the twins are at the point of persuading the others, Apollo appears and tells them to reinstate Paris into the family, because that is Zeus' will, and they obey (*Rom*. 8.183-210).[151] By introducing this last plot twist, Dracontius not only explains Priam's change of heart about the original prophecy, but ingeniously adds an ideological dimension to his poem, which will be discussed below in section 4.

2. Oenone

Just like Helen, Paris, too, has a romantic past before his visit to Sparta. Two sources state, certainly by mistake, that he was first married to Arisbe (Ephoros *FGrH* 70 F 164, Serv. schol. *ad* Verg. *Aen*. 9.262), who is, however, usually regarded as Priam's first wife and indeed mother to his son Aesacus, the seer we encountered above (Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.12.5).[152] All other writers that know of Paris' love life pre-Helen, name the nymph Oenone, a daughter of the river-god Cebren, as his partner during his shepherding time.[153] She had prophetic abilities and foretold that Paris would desert her for Helen and also that years later he would be mortally wounded and Oenone herself would be the only one able to save him. She could not persuade Paris otherwise and thus he married Helen, leaving Oenone embittered. When during the Trojan War Paris

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[151] Dracontius' text is the only one known to introduce a *deus ex machina* at this point, but there has been speculation as to the dependency of this on Euripides' *Alexander* by Coles (1974: 31).

[152] It is easy to see how such an error could have crept up when copying (information from) a text. If for example the name of Arisbe was extracted from the story of Aesacus prophesying Paris' future, in which both Paris and Priam are featured, the names may have been confused, also aided by their shared initial. Furthermore, the two passages which we know contain the glitch are both compendiary in nature and thus the details provided therein are isolated from any narrative and cannot be fact-checked against the immediate context. Fowler (2013: 524) agrees that this must be an inconsistency.

[153] However, in other cases it suits better no to mention this, and for example in Eur. *Andr.* 281-2 the chorus insist that Paris' shepherd life was solitary and lonely.

was struck by the arrow of Philoctetes, he (or a messenger) came to Oenone to ask for help. She refused and sent him away, but soon after regretted her decision (or else she just pretended in order to show off her power in the first place) and hastened to Troy to cure Alexander. But she arrived just a little too late and found him already dead (his demise had perhaps been sped up by the loss of hope). She then killed herself (Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.12.6, Parth. *Erotika Pathemata* 4, epitome of Conon, *Narr.* 23 in Photius' *Bibliotheca*; QS treats the events after Paris has been wounded (10.279-355, 447-489); cf. Ov. *Her.* 5 for an *in-medias-res* account by the heartbroken Oenone).

Various authors give various methods for her suicide. Lycophron, *Alex.* 61-68 attests that she threw herself from a tower. Apollodorus and Conon say that she hanged herself (according to the latter she also smashes the messenger's skull with a stone, after he has brought her the news of Paris' death). The hanging is echoed by Malalas who, however, calls her Oinoe (*Chronogr.* 5.111). Either version might be supported by Bacchylides fr. 20D, which perhaps says that Oenone met death 'from high' (ὑψόθεν). In Quintus Smyrnaeus she leaps onto Paris' funeral pyre and subsequently shares a tomb with him (*Posthomerica,* 10.447-489). Dictys Cretensis only mentions that Paris had been married to Oenone (3.26), but omits any other dealings between them thereafter, to the point that her role becomes entirely superfluous. After Paris has died at the scene from Philoctetes' arrow, through no fault of Oenone's, his relatives bring his corpse to her — for no apparent reason. She is so consumed by grief that she eventually drops dead and is then buried with Alexander (4.21). Strabo, too, locates Paris' and Oenone's tomb in the same spot (13.1.33).

Parthenius says that Oenone possesses wisdom, and she has extraordinary prophetic powers (learnt from Rhea, according to Apollodorus). Furthermore, it is repeatedly recounted that she is skilled in drugs. Lycophron calls her a φαρμακουργός (*Alex.* 61); Conon and Apollodorus, respectively, credit her with harvesting πόας and bringing φάρμακα to heal Paris. In Ovid, Oenone presents her knowledge as a divine boon (Ov. *Her.* 5.145-150; I shall return to this passage below). One cannot but relate this to accounts of Helen's wisdom and her administering of drugs, as discussed above. As has been noted, Theseus is a precursor to Paris in the life of Helen, but the two are only compared with regard to their feat of abducting her, not in terms of their worthiness as her lovers. This contrast is rather made between Paris and Menelaus.[154] However, in Paris' case Oenone is both his first sweetheart and his most recent love interest before Helen, and the two women are regarded as rivals. Apart from contending for Paris' affections, they also belong to two different spheres and different chapters in Paris' life. Oenone stands for the rural world, while Helen promises royal luxury.

The union with Oenone is variously described as a marriage or else just cohabitation, but in any case seems to be subject only to the couple's volition. For example, at Ov. *Her.* 5. we learn of a private vow made by Alexander to Oenone, but it is clear that she has not been introduced into the palace as his official consort, and ending the relationship does not lead to any repercussions for him. In Lucian, Hermes

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[154] Cf. chapters 6.3-4 and 8.1.

says that Paris lives with Oenone, but does not seem exceedingly attached; the god also describes her as a country bumpkin (*Iudicium* 3). However, Ovid's Paris actually expresses his admiration for her beauty and claims that she would be the most apt to be Priam's daughter-in-law, if it were not for Helen (Ov. *Her*. 16.97-98; of course, this may be, at least partly, a way of enticing Helen by stirring her competitiveness). He also brags that at home he was popular with the girls, desired by both daughters of kings and nymphs (Ov. *Her*. 16.95.6). The Spartan replies that the episode with Oenone rather says something about Alexander himself and demonstrates his faithlessness, thus serving as a warning sign for Helen (Ov. *Her.* 17.191-197). In her own letter, Oenone on the one hand reminisces about her and Paris' lovely rustic life together, but on the other hand makes it clear that she, a nymph, was in fact nobler than Paris who was a slave at the time; given her divine descent, she reasons, she is perfectly well suited to become a princess (Ov. *Her.* 5. 9-20; 77-88). In accounts of Paris' plea to be healed by Oenone, her response often involves a defiant self-comparison with Helen, telling him to go and seek help from his new wife instead (Conon 23, Parth. 34, QS 10.330-351). She may not be as beautiful as Helen, but it turns out that her expertise ultimately prevails. Tragically, just as Paris realises her superiority, she loses him because of her own arrogance.

Both Theseus' abduction of Helen and Paris' liaison with Oenone happen during the protagonists' youth, but their consequences are felt later, during the fall of Troy in the freeing of Aethra and the death of Paris. During the intervening period the episodes 'lie dormant' for a long time – Aethra being Helen's slave and Oenone nourishing her jealous anger — and are therefore not as central to narratives concerned with the abduction and the war itself. Nevertheless, our late antique Abduction-epyllia show an awareness of those narratives. Dracontius includes Oenone towards the start of his poem in a list of all the things pertaining to Paris' shepherd existence which he has grown weary of.[155] Since he was made hopeful for Helen, Oenone now seemed almost ugly to him (*prope turpis*: Drac. *Rom*. 8.63), but she does not play any role in the text hereafter. It is important to note that her name is simply given in the text without warning or explanation, and thus it seems that Dracontius could expect his readers to know who she is. One could argue that, for a reader who knows the disastrous development of Oenone's story, the mention of her name adds to the premonitory character at the beginning of the poem.[156] However, it is altogether inconsequential for the purposes of the actual narrative. Even when helpless Paris is swept up by a sea storm, he redeems the bucolic lifestyle and remembers the pleasures of the landscape and the herd animals at length, but, tellingly, romantic aspects are not part of this (Drac.

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[155] Jacobson's conclusion about Paris' attitude towards Oenone in Ovid's *Heroides*, that 'she is a concrete objectification of his past, an ever-present reminder of his old servility of which he now wishes to be free' (Jacobson 1974: 185), is very much true of the Dracontian version as well.

[156] This will be explored in section 4 below.

Rom. 8.402-419).[157] When Helen says that she will be a *dignior uxor* for Paris (*Rom*. 8.534), his first wife is possibly implied as a comparandum to whom she claims to be superior (although she could not know about Oenone's existence on the basis of Paris' words).

Colluthus' work contains an even more oblique reference to Oenone. Aphrodite tells Paris: 'after Troy, Sparta shall see you a bridegroom' (Coll. 165), thus hinting at a previous marriage at home.[158] It has been noted that Colluthus is trying to suppress the memory of Oenone in his story, similarly to eradicating Menelaus' presence from it.[159] However, there is still enough in the text to provoke associations with the naiad. Colluthus begins his poem with an invocation to the 'Trojan nymphs, race of the river Xanthus' (Νύμφαι Τρωιάδες, ποταμοῦ Ξάνθοιο γενέθλη: Coll. 1). Although Oenone is usually regarded as the daughter of Cebren, it is easy to count her as the family of Xanthus (or Scamander[160]). In Ovid she is simply 'sprung from a great stream' (*edita de magno flumine*: Ov. *Her.* 5.10).[161] While calling upon nymphs, rather than Muses, for poetic inspiration is not new, especially for bucolic poetry,[162] one does wonder whether there is anything more to the fact that they constitute the very first word of Colluthus' epyllion. If his aim at this prominent point was to make any kind of allusion, there is not much choice of possible targets to allude to: Trojan nymphs feature in very specific instances of extant ancient literature. First, Homer mentions them in the *Iliad* as dwelling and dancing in the country, sometimes becoming sexual partners of shepherding Trojans and their allies, as well as assisting with their funerals.[163] The nymphs of Ida play an important role in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*. Anchises first mistakes the disguised Aphrodite for a nymph (97-9). After their union, the goddess foretells to Anchises that she will give the newborn Aeneas to the mountain nymphs to

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[157] Unless, of course, we were to detect in those lines any zoophile attitudes, as in Theocr. *Id*. 1.87-88.

[158] See (Livrea 1968: 148-9, *ad loc)*.

[159] Paschalis (2008: 145).

[160] *Il*. 20.74 tells us that the same river is called Xanthus by the gods and Scamander by mortals.

[161] A note in one dated work, Keith *et al*. (1767: 47 n.3), claims that she was the daughter of Xanthus according to some writers, but without backing this with a reference. I have been unable to find any ancient sources that would confirm this, although we do find the notion in the early modern period. For example, in Francesco Sbarra's libretto for the 1668 opera *Il pomo d'oro* Oenone is clearly Xanthus' daughter: we are told so in the *argomento*, and in act 3, scene 3 she refers to the shores of Xanthus as 'paterne arene'.

[162] Cadau (2015: 39) cites examples from Callimachus, Theocritus, Vergil and Statius. However, she also says that 'the Muses are called Nymphs' in Lycophron 274, which is not true: the nymphs are described there as weeping for Achilles after his death, and by this surely Lycophron means Achilles' own mother Thetis, a Nereid, and her sisters, who would naturally mourn him. There is no indication of their association with Muses.

[163] Larson (2001: 21-4).

rear;[164] once the boy reaches five years, he will live with his father, who is, however, forbidden to reveal to anyone that he had slept with Aphrodite: instead, she commands Anchises to tell everyone that his son's mother is one of the nymphs (256-90). Similarly, Ovid tells us that the Naiads nurtured Hermaphroditus, the son of Hermes and Aphrodite, in the caves of Mt Ida (Ov. *Met*. 4.288-9). In the *Cypria* the Nymphs and the Graces are Aphrodite's attendants; together they weave flower garlands to put on their heads and sing on Mt Ida (fr. 5). The fragment is cited by Athenaeus, just after another excerpt which is generally believed to be about Aphrodite's preparations before being judged by Paris (fr. 4).[165] This latter one, then, still taking place on Mt Ida, is quite likely to describe the celebrations of her victory:[166] it would be very apt to honour the winner of a contest by crowning her head and singing epinikia. Secondly, artistic representations of the judgement from the 6th and 5th century BC sometimes include other females.[167] In the second century AD we find even more interesting depictions on sarcophagi: one shows three naiads to the left of Hermes, the goddesses and Paris (*LIMC* 'Paridis iudicium' 81). Another has at its centre Paris and Eros to his right, while to his left is Oenone, holding a syrinx; to her left we see Aphrodite, Hermes and Athena; right of Eros is a mountain god and a local nymph (*LIMC* 'Paridis iudicium' 79). Oenone's presence at the judgement is quite astounding, given that the judgement will lead directly to the break-up of her union with Paris (although this could also be interpreted as an instance of narrative compression). Thirdly, Trojan nymphs, said to be the daughters of Xanthus and Simois, appear again and again in Quintus of Smyrna's *Posthomerica* where they act as a chorus lamenting the terrible fate of the city and its inhabitants (QS 8.345-6, 11.245-6, 12.459-60, 14.71-84). They are particularly relevant in Book 10 where they lament the death of Paris, and we learn that they knew the prince since he was little (QS 10.362-8): it may be implied that they played a role in his nursing too, like they did for Aeneas. Oenone flings herself upon Paris' funeral pyre while all the other nymphs are weeping around it, which leaves them stunned and makes them conclude that Paris was evil and foolish when he exchanged Oenone for Helen (QS 10.458-76).

Colluthus invokes the Trojan nymphs in the capacity of Muses and asks them to tell him the origin of the story he is about to present, because they themselves were

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[164] She calls them mountain nymphs, but also says that their lives are connected to those of trees (*Hom. Hymn* 5.264-72), which suggests dryads.

[165] Cf. Welcker (1849: ii. 88) and West (2013: 75).

[166] Davies (2003: 36) reasons that the fragment appears at '[a] slightly later stage of the narrative'. West (2013: 76) agrees that we are dealing with 'two passages that stood not far apart'.

[167] In *LIMC* 'Paridis iudicium' 6 there is another person; it has been suggested that she may be a nymph, Iris or Eris. In 11 there are other people behind the third goddess (Aphrodite with her entourage?). *LIMC* no. 30 shows Hermes, Hera and Athena on one side of the vase, and on the other Aphrodite with further persons. In *LIMC* 20 Iris adjusts Aphrodite's veil, and there are traces of a further woman.

there to witness the Judgement of Paris (Coll. 13-6). The above mythical survey adds some depth to this. The nymphs are already familiar with Aphrodite, having acted as child-minders to her offspring. Thus they are particularly likely to watch a contest in which she takes part. In the *Cypria*-fragment the nymphs also form part of Aphrodite's entourage. If my hypothesis about the provenance of this fragment is correct, it implies that the nymphs were in the audience during the Judgement of Paris, either watching it in hiding or disguise or openly cheering on Aphrodite. This again would mean that Colluthus perhaps took over the presence of the Trojan nymphs at the Judgement of Paris from the *Cypria*-poet. In his version they are portrayed as passive viewers of the scene, but since the poem, which is allegedly informed by their report, sympathises with Aphrodite, we may infer that they favoured her. Another parallel is found in Lucian's *D. Mar.* 7, where the (appropriately named) nereid Panope tells her friend Galene what she saw happen at Peleus' and Thetis' wedding banquet in the form of gossip. She expects that a messenger should come and announce the result of the beauty-contest soon, and Galene replies that only Aphrodite can win, unless the umpire has very bad eyesight. The main similarity of this short piece to Colluthus' work is that nymphs are represented as onlookers and reporters of antehomeric events. However, the notable difference is that Lucian's characters are nereids (sea-nymphs), not Trojan nymphs, and thus they are naturally invited to their sister's wedding, but do not feel compelled to watch the judgement for themselves. Galene's support for Aphrodite is based simply on independent observation, not her friendship with the goddess. Moreover, given that elsewhere the Trojan nymphs are associated with mourning for the Trojans who died in the Trojan War, placing them in the first line of the epyllion immediately evokes the grief that is to ensue years later.[168] Finally, it emerges that Oenone is the most famous Trojan nymph known by name, so it would be unnatural not to include her within the nymph-addressees of Colluthus' proem. Her anonymous presence would certainly yield her great importance as the very source of the poet's information. Whilst Prauscello thinks that 'certainly Oenone, more than other Trojan nymphs, can be invoked as a reliable witness of what occurred on Mt Ida and beyond',[169] I would suggest the opposite: since Oenone is negatively affected by the outcome of the judgement, we should in fact question whether an account brought to us from her partial point of view would not be biased. This might also explain why Colluthus does not comment on the nymphs' attitude towards Aphrodite.

At the same time Paris would be shown up as entirely reckless, if he indeed chose to receive a new wife, while his current wife was watching, as in the sarcophagus relief mentioned above (though in Colluthus she might be there unbeknownst to him). The Oenone of Ovid's fifth heroine letter actually voices her foreboding reaction to Paris' judgement, but here it is made explicit that she was not present at the time, but was told about it by Paris (Ov. *Her.* 5.33-40). She is alarmed, but it seems that she does not know about Helen, until Paris has brought her to Troy. Just before his departure,

[168] Prauscello (2008: 176).

[169] Prauscello (2008: 176).

Oenone says, they wept together and Paris was reluctant to leave her embrace and asked for more and more kisses (Ov. *Her.* 5.45-52). Thus in this version either Paris did not set out to Sparta with the aim of marrying Helen, or else he did know exactly why he was sailing away, but perfidiously pretends that he loves Oenone up until his departure (perhaps he wants to have the option to return to her, in case he should fail at wooing Helen). There are two other examples which suggest that Colluthus was more than aware of Oenone, and specifically Ovid's version of her. As has been pointed out by Magnelli, the paranarrative of Phyllis presented during Paris' journey to Sparta (Coll. 213-7) reminds one of Oenone, as she too is a spurned woman who proceeds to end her life.[170] Phyllis entertained Theseus' son Demophon, they formed a — more or less formal — union, and when Demophon needed to go back to Athens, he promised to return to her; he did not keep the promise and eventually Phyllis committed suicide. What is more, Colluthus mentions the nine-circled course (δρόμον ἐννεάκυκλον: Coll. 214) where Phyllis used to wander and cry and wait for Demophon. By this he means the place known as Ennea Hodoi, so called, because Phyllis is said to have made nine journeys to the shore on the day her lover was supposed to return (Hyg. *Fab*. 59). Ovid's Oenone, too, watches the sea, both as Paris departs and as he returns (Ov. *Her.* 5.53-67), and she is the first to see his ship from a high rocky cliff (Ov. *Her.* 5.61-3). In the *Abduction* it is Cassandra who espies Paris and Helen from the acropolis (Coll. 389-90). A connection between Cassandra and Oenone has been previously established by Ovid: Oenone boasts that she was once loved by Apollo who taught her the art of healing with herbs and roots, but laments that they cannot cure her from love (Ov. *Her.* 5.145-150). This unique version is strongly reminiscent of Cassandra who famously acquired her prophetic skills when she was pursued by the same god.[171] Indeed, Oenone even mentions in her letter that she had been warned by Cassandra's vision that another woman would steal Paris and calls her — probably in retrospect — a truthful prophetess (Ov. *Her.* 5.113-124). Thus Ovid first mingles the two female characters by ascribing a spin on an established Cassandra-tradition to the nymph. Perhaps in response to this, Colluthus in turn gives the role of observer of Paris' arrival, held by Ovid's Oenone, to Cassandra.

Another aspect of the Oenone-story, akin to the myth of Phaedra and Hippolytus, is given in a few sources. Parthenius 34, quoting the second book of Hellanicus' *Troica* and Cephalon of Gergitha, tells that Paris and Oenone had a son called Corythus who came to Troy to help the Trojans (presumably in the war) and there fell in love with Helen. She was also fond of him and his exceeding beauty, but when his father discovered his advances, he killed him. However, Parthenius says that according to Nicander Corythus was the child of Paris and Helen, not Oenone. In this case, the story would be one of near-incest and more similar to that of Perdica, though

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[170] Magnelli (2008: 160). The elements of Phyllis' story, which features in Ovid's *Heroides* 2, have also been studied in conjunction with those of Medea, Ariadne and Dido by della Corte (1973).

[171] Cf. section 4 below.

much less plausible within the chronology of the Trojan War.[172] Lycophron speaks of the arrows of Teutarus, which were given to Heracles and then in turn bequeathed to Philoctetes, thus evoking the instrument of Paris' wound, before speaking about Oenone:

> τὰ πάντα πρὸς φῶς ἡ βαρύζηλος δάμαρ,
> στείλασα κοῦρον τὸν κατήγορον χθονός,
> ἄξει, πατρὸς μομφαῖσιν ἠγριωμένη,
> λέκτρων θ᾽ ἕκατι τῶν τ᾽ ἐπεισάκτων γάμων.
>
> All these things the jealous wife will bring to light,
> after sending her boy to be a betrayer of his country,
> driven wild by her father's blame,
> and on account of her marriage bed and the imported wedlock.
>
> (Lycoph. *Alex*. 57-60)

Here Oenone is presented as the manipulative mother who uses her son to avenge herself. Apparently she makes Corythus an ally or spy of the Greeks. One might alternatively translate κατηγορέω as 'to indicate', which might perhaps mean that he provides the enemy with geographical intelligence. Oenone's desertion for the sake of Helen is an obvious and sufficient reason for her actions, but another one is presented: the blame of her father Cebren. This is the only extant version in which the river-god would have a role in the events. Tzetzes *ad loc*. says that Oenone was chided by her father, but does not go into further detail. It is easy to imagine Cebren's dishonour, because his daughter has found herself unmarried with a child, perhaps even a refusal to take her back into his protection in her misery, but we can only speculate. In his 23rd *Narration* Conon tells that Corythus was even more beautiful than Alexander and that his mother sent him to Helen, arousing Alexander's jealousy and plotting something evil against Helen. Corythus would come to Helen's room and sit beside her, but when Alexander once saw this, he fell into a suspicious rage and killed him straightaway. As a result, Oenone cursed Paris, that he may be wounded by the Achaeans, unable to be cured, except with her help. Then the narrative follows the other major sources. As in Lycophron, it is Oenone who is pulling the strings behind Corythus' actions, this time explicitly in order to harm Helen, though it is impossible to know how exactly. The youth evidently tries to seduce Helen, but the possibilities for the rest of the 'evil' plan are endless: maybe he was going to kidnap Helen (as is by now usual in her case) and bring her to Oenone who would use her magic to take revenge. But instead, Corythus is murdered, which gives Oenone yet another reason to hate Alexander and his wound is attributed to a curse. Thus Conon's text seems to be the only one known to join together

[172] For an in-depth discussion of the legends around the prince who falls in love with his own (step-)mother, see Ogden (2017: 207-46).

the prevalent account about Oenone and the less prominent existence of Corythus into an organic whole.[173]

3. *Excursus:* Dracontius' Proem

Given the subject matter of *Romulea* VIII, it is tempting to interpret the piece in a political way. This has been done most prominently by Díaz de Bustamente, in whose view the poem's message is the glorification of Rome as the eternal city which is to rise from the ashes of Troy.[174] I would agree with this if the author of the *De Raptu* were Publius Vergilius Maro. However, by the time of Dracontius the reality looked very different: the actual city of Rome had long lost its importance and had been replaced by Trier, Ravenna, Antioch and Constantinople as imperial residence. It ceased to be the *caput mundi,* except nominally, and in 410 it was, *horribile dictu,* pillaged by the barbarian Visigoths. In 455, around the time of Dracontius' birth, Rome was sacked for the second time by the Vandals. Yet Carthage, which the Vandals had conquered some 15 years earlier, remained the capital of their new kingdom. Thus one may see in this a continuation of the ancient rivalry between the two cities which started with the Punic Wars, with the scales tipped in favour of Carthago this time. The deposition of Romulus Augustulus in 476 which marked the Fall of the Western Roman Empire must have also had an impression on the young Dracontius. We cannot be sure whether poets like him would have been sentimental or *schadenfroh* about Rome's fall, but they must have been pleased that their own city, the former periphery, was now the centre.[175] The Vandals were striving to establish themselves in Carthage as the new superpower, not only militarily but also culturally, and literary activity flourished. The Africans had the last laugh over the Latians (at least for now), and thus it was a natural reaction for them to re-interpret Roman founding myths to suit the current situation. Vergil's *Aeneid* stands out as an obvious target for being the national epic,[176] and even more so since its proto-Roman protagonist tellingly abandons a Carthaginian queen in order to find his promised land and receives divine prophecies about its everlasting success. While an African poet could not simply re-write the story of Dido and Aeneas, he could certainly subvert the message of the *Aeneid* at its root, at a mythologically prior point. At the

[173] On the relationship between Conon and Parthenius and their sources, see Lightfoot (1999: 227-47).

[174] Díaz de Bustamente (1978: 124-96).

[175] See Paschoud (1967) for an exploration of other Latin authors' attitudes towards ‘Rome the Eternal City’ during the barbaric invasions.

[176] See Edwards (2004) on Dracontius as a typical example of an African writer's renunciation of Rome.

same time, this provided an opportunity to reinforce a Christian worldview against a narrative dictated by pagan gods.[177]

I do not wish to discuss in detail Dracontius' biography or his potential personal motivations; it will suffice to say a few words. There can be no doubt as to Dracontius' Christian belief, as evidenced by his great work *De Laudibus Dei* alone. As an advocate in Carthage, he seems to have been a patriot, too, though we know that his attitude towards the Vandal rulers was problematic. They probably deprived him of his land, which caused him to write a praise of a foreign ruler. This offended Gunthamund and ended in a prison sentence for the poet. Although after his liberation from prison Dracontius supposedly wrote a panegyric on Thrasamund,[178] this does not necessarily mean a sincere change of heart and true admiration of the king. Though brought up in Carthage, the poet enjoyed a traditional Roman aristocratic education and must have felt himself a Roman, as opposed to the barbarian rulers.[179] This may have caused an even greater accentuation of those differences, and an increased pride in the Roman heritage as a means of contrast with the Vandals. Rome was no more, but if any remnants of its cultural spirit still existed, they could be found in Carthage. On the one hand, the preservation of Romanness is a covert rebellion against the Vandal rule;[180] on the other hand, the usurpation of the throne of 'the Roman poet' must inevitably lead to a literary struggle with Vergil. Dracontius' awareness of this is also reflected in the hybridity of his piece, which follows Vergil in metre and general subject matter, but then chooses to present it contrarily to expectations by playing with the genre and the message, in a fashion reminiscent of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. I propose that in his *De Raptu Helenae* Dracontius defines himself against the past in this way, in particular undermining Vergilian and Augustan Rome. This is achieved throughout the piece on different levels, such as content, allusion and language. Already in the prologue the author aligns himself with the two great poets in an interesting way.

> ergo nefas Paridis, quod raptor gessit adulter,
> ut monitus narrare queam, te, grandis Homere, —
> mollia blandifluo delimas verba palato;
> quisquis in Aonio descendit fonte poeta,
> te numen vult esse suum; nec dico Camenae 15

[177] Another North-African contemporary of Dracontius, Fabius Planciades Fulgentius, tried to embed the *Aeneid* into his Christian ideology by laying it out as a moral allegory in his *Expositio Vergilianae continentiae secundum philosophos moralis*.

[178] Conant (2012: 147).

[179] The name Aemilius suggests a Roman senatorial family (Bright, 1987: 14). Cf. the similar allegiance expressed by Ausonius to both Rome and his native Bordeaux, as discussed by Ward-Perkins (1997: 381). However, Kuijper (1958: 9) suggests that Dracontius was of mixed blood, both Roman and Vandal.

[180] This was also voiced by Díaz de Bustamente (1978: 132) after Morelli (1912: 104) and Romano (1959: 20).

te praesente 'veni': sat erit mihi sensus Homeri,
qui post fata viget, qui duxit ad arma Pelasgos
Pergama Dardanidum vindex in bella lacessens —
et qui Troianos invasit nocte poeta,
armatos dum clausit equo, qui moenia Troiae 20
perculit et Priamum Pyrrho feriente necavit:
numina vestra vocans, quidquid contempsit uterque
scribere Musagenes, hoc vilis colligo vates.
reliquias praedae vulpes sperare leonum
laudis habent, meruisse cibos, quos pasta recusant 25
viscera, quos rabies iam non ieiuna remisit,
exultant praedam que putant nuda ossa ferentes.
Attica vox te, sancte, fovet, te lingua Latina
commendat: vulgate, precor, quae causa nocentem
fecit Alexandrum raptu spoliaret Amyclas. 30

Thus, so that, instructed, I may tell the crime committed by
Paris, the adulterous abductor, you, great Homer,
polish the pleasant words with your smooth-flowing palate;
Every poet who dips himself in the Aonian fountain
wants you to be his divinity; nor do I say 'come!' to the Camena 15
when you are present: for me will suffice the reason of Homer
who is alive after death, who led the Pelasgians to arms,
the avenger, shaking the Dardanids' Pergamum in wars;
and the other poet who invaded the Trojans by night
when he shut armed men in a horse, who destroyed the walls 20
of Troy and killed Priam with a blow from Pyrrhus:
calling upon your divinity, I, this base bard, fasten together
whatever either of the two Muse-begotten ones has disdained to write.
Foxes have fame in waiting for the leftovers of the
lions' prey, they exult when they have gained food which 25
the satiated guts refuse, which the rage, no longer hungry,
has given up, and they think it a prey, carrying off bare bones.
You the Attic speech cherishes, venerable one, – the Latin tongue,
in turn, values you. Divulge, I pray, what motive made baneful
Alexander pillage Amyclae with the abduction. 30

(Drac. *Rom*. 8.11-30)

Addressing Homer and then Vergil in turns (though he clearly, maybe pointedly, worships Homer a little bit more fervently and does not mention Vergil by name), he calls on the two as the only sources for inspiration he requires, whom he summons

instead of a muse (15-16), thereby validating his own poem and presenting it as sprung from their very minds. This claim echoes the ubiquity of Homer and Vergil in Greco-Roman education up to that very time.[181] By saying that Homer fought the Trojan War and Vergil was in the Trojan Horse and killed Priam, Dracontius ascribes to the artists the very actions performed by characters within their artworks (17-21). This is a fine example of a phenomenon that was coined by Lieberg as '*poeta creator*' or 'poet in action'.[182] This draws attention to the authority and omnipotence of the poets, but also to the fictitiousness of the epics. Dracontius shows himself overly reverent towards the earlier poets by calling himself a base bard (*vilis vates*), while the other two are elevated to the status of divine children of the Muses (23). He states that he has picked a topic to write about which the other two did not regard as good enough (22-3). In conjunction with this follows the first of several animal similes within the epyllion. However, whilst the other similes all describe characters within the narrative, this one is special, since it is concerned with the very creator of the text. The narrator implicitly likens himself to a fox that waits for the lions to have their fill of consuming an animal (which they have killed, presumably), until he can take the bones for himself. This is a curious understanding of poetic creation as a carnivorous act, where the author's degree of satiety directly correlates with the progress of the work. The available topics are prey which bards make their own by (tr-)eating them. At first glance the comparison is most respectful to the 'lion' epicists: as a weak animal that cannot hunt his own victim, and afraid of the big predators, Dracontius waits for the worthless parts of their feast which they did not want — stating that he is content that his story is not as 'meaty' as the events of the Homeric or Vergilian epics. Indeed, in terms of size, his epyllion is a mere morsel next to their large-scale poems.

The situation of the simile is consistent with the characteristics of the animals as presented in fables. In that genre the lion is always strong and unscrupulous in making other creatures his prey (sometimes employing tricks), and is therefore much feared by them.[183] On the one hand he is occasionally the just king of all beasts,[184] but on the other hand he is rash and violent.[185] The fox is stereotypically cunning, and famous for procuring advantages for himself by fooling others.[186] At other times he is an onlooker and clever commentator of others' plights.[187] However, when faced with

[181] Cameron (2004: 345).

[182] Lieberg (1982).

[183] Perry 469, 514.

[184] Perry 334, 487.

[185] Perry 149, 347.

[186] Perry 9, 124, 333

[187] Perry 126, 518.

physically stronger opponents, he is a coward.[188] Many fables featuring both a lion and a fox explicitly contrast the force of the former with the resourcefulness of the latter. In Aesop no. 394 Perry the fox is the lion's servant who points out the animals to be attacked by the lion, but when the fox tries hunting himself he gets killed. 147 Perry has a certain resemblance to our simile: while a lion and a bear fight over a fawn, a fox snatches it away. In another example (142 Perry) a lion pretends to be sick and then ravishes every animal that comes to visit him; only the fox holds his distance, having noticed that many footprints lead towards the lion's cave, but none out of it. In similar circumstances, where the lion poses a threat, the fox often saves his own skin by his eloquence and at the expense of another animal (Perry 339; 258; 336), although this does not work out in Perry 191 where the fox gets slain as well. Those stories illustrate the power struggle between brains and brutality, so familiar since Odysseus' encounter with Polyphemus. Regardless of which party wins, the association with the fable may cast Dracontius' simile in a different light. It is possible that, rather than just admitting his own inferiority, the poet subtly hints at the fact that the lions Homer and Vergil are not as refined as himself the fox. Furthermore, the juxtaposition is also somewhat applicable to the works themselves: as opposed to the big epics, *Romulea* 8 contains no gory scenes, but instead we find an abundance of pleading speeches and legal jargon.

If we read the metaphor at face value we would think that Dracontius yields to the more ancient poets; however, if we interpret it via the genre of fables, we will come to a very different conclusion. This route is, however, only open to those who are willing to engage with the less elegant literary form and take it seriously. Although the poet has chosen to write in heroic hexameters, he also identifies with 'low' animal prose, and clearly expects his audience to have knowledge of both in order to understand the full meaning of his proem. While on the one hand the fable connection somewhat debases the epic, on the other hand the fable is glorified at the same time.[189] However, Dracontius goes further and actually makes the epic poets themselves the actors in a fable. The fable-lens for the proem is also comparable to the Christian lens for the pagan myth, since both Christianity and fables originate from a low social background: the figure of Jesus and the father of the fable Aesop both have an association with the poor, children and the generally disadvantaged.

Despite is claim that he only picks up the leftovers, Dracontius' choice of narrative content for his poem is not entirely based on a process of elimination of material covered by Vergil and Homer: there is also another intention. The work is set in a mythical time before the Trojan War, which is a significant prerequisite to the plot of the *Aeneid*. Thus Dracontius' epyllion purports to precede Vergil's great work, although it is composed almost half a millennium later. It undermines the *Aeneid* by revealing the dark past of Rome's ancestry at Troy. While Vergil mostly strove to show the hardships and sacrifices bravely endured by a Trojan for the future of a glorious empire,

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[188] Perry 41.

[189] We can observe a similar process in the 1st century AD epyllion *Batrachomyomachia* which makes frogs and mice fight like Homeric heroes.

Dracontius' aim is to demonstrate the futility of the venture. As emphasised in both the opening lines and in the invocation (1-2, 11-2, 29-8), the central point of *Rom*. 8 is the vice of Paris as the main trigger for the war and the fall of Troy.[190] In his short work Dracontius treats a relatively vast mythological scope, with many pro- and analepses, which allows him to air as much dirty Trojan laundry as possible. There are continuous references to both the first defeat of Ilium by the Greeks under Heracles and to the even worse calamity which is to follow. Both are attributed to Trojan cheating. Apart from his chief crime of stealing Helen and breaking up a marriage, Paris also proves himself dishonourable by being a partial judge, becoming haughty because of the office and deserting Oenone and his country life, but then turning out to be a coward during a shipwreck.

4. Paris' Homecoming in Dracontius

After the proem the narrative opens with Alexander's quick judgement of the goddesses, following which the narrator's voice breaks into a menacing flash-forward outlining the consequences of the shepherd's decision:

Iudicis Idaei pretio sententia fertur
Damnaturque Paris; nec solus pastor habetur 40
Ex hac lite reus: damnantur morte parentes,
Damnantur fratres, et quisquis in urbe propinquus
Aut cognatus erat, cunctos mors explicat una.
Atque utinam infelix urbs tantum morte periret!
Damnantur gentes, damnatur Graecia sollers 45
Heu magnis uiduanda uiris; orbatur Eous
Memnone belligero, damnatur Thessalus heros
Et Telamone satus, pereunt duo fulmina belli.
Pro matris thalamo poenas dependit Achilles
(Vnde haec causa fuit), forsan Telamonius Aiax 50
Sternitur inuictus, quod mater reddita non est
Hesione Priamo; sic est data causa rapinae,
Cur gentes cecidere simul, cum sexus uterque
Concidit, infanti nullus post bella pepercit.
Sic dolor exurgit diuum, sic ira polorum 55
Saeuit et errantes talis uindicta coercet?

As a punishment a sentence was pronounced on the Idaean judge

[190] See also Simons (2005: 228-30); contra Bretzigheimer (2010) who thinks that this is only one of three factors, the other two being the fates and the wrath of the gods.

and Paris was convicted; nor was the shepherd alone made 40
guilty from this dispute: condemned to death were his parents,
condemned his brothers, and whosoever in the city was a neighbour
or relative — one death undid them all.
And if only the unhappy city alone would perish in death!
Races were condemned, ingenious Greece was condemned, 45
alas, to be widowed of great men; Dawn was bereaved
of warlike Memnon, condemned was the Thessalian hero
and the seed of Telamon: two thunderbolts of war perished.
For his mother's bed Achilles paid compensation
(whence this dispute arose), perhaps Telamonian Ajax 50
the invincible was laid low, because his mother Hesione had not
been returned to Priam; thus a motive for the abduction had been given,
for which races fell simultaneously, while either sex
was crushed, no-one spared the infant after the war.
Thus the gods' pain arose, thus the anger of the firmament 55
raged and such punishment oppressed the wandering stars?

(Drac. *Rom*. 8.39-56)

The description shows some sympathy for the innocent people who suffer because of the wickedness of Paris, but the main objective is to convey the vast extent of the crime. Not only does Dracontius disapprove of Paris' deeds, but he is outraged that everyone has to pay for them so dearly. The baleful tone evokes that of the beginning of Lucan's *Bellum Civile* where the poet deplores the war between kinsmen as a *nefas* encompassing the entire world and seeks to explain its causes (Luc. 1. 67-9). At the end of the above citation, heaven itself and the *errantes*, i.e. the stars,[191] are said to be affected by the events of the war. This is reminiscent of the heavenly bodies of Seneca's *Thyestes* which flee in horror at the sight of Atreus' violent murder and subsequent cooking of his nephews, thus plunging the world into darkness.[192] Similarly here infanticide (in general, but probably alluding specifically to the killing of Astyanax) also concludes the list of deaths. Moreover, in the tragedy Atreus wishes that he could stop the deities from disappearing and force them (*coactos trahere*) to watch his wickedness (Sen. *Thyest*. 893-5), which may have influenced Dracontius' choice of vocabulary. Another device peculiar to Neronian literature that the poet emulates is the accumulation of pathetic fallacies in response to an evil that is about to happen.[193] Thus

[191] See *LS s.v.* '*erro*' I A b.

[192] Sen. *Thyest*. 48-50; 789-874. De Gaetano (2009: 227-8) has also pointed out the reference to this motive in Luc. 1.540-544.

[193] Significant examples in the *Thyestes* are 688-702 and 767-775 where nature resists cooperation in the crime.

when Paris first approaches Troy, he unleashes a series of portents, appropriately sympathetic of the events of the war:

Vix uiderat arcem
Lassus, et intactae procumbunt culmina turris,
Ingemit et tellus, muri pars certa repente
Concidit et Scaeae iacuerunt limina portae;
Tunc Simois siccauit aquas, crystallina Xanthi 75
Fluminis unda rubet, sudat pastore propinquo
Palladium uel sponte cadunt simulacra Mineruae.

Weary, he had scarcely seen the
citadel and the tower's tops leant forward untouched,
the ground also groaned, a fixed part of the wall suddenly
collapsed and the thresholds of the Scaean gates were in ruins;
Then the Simois dried up its waters, the crystal wave 75
of the river Xanthus reddened, with the shepherd close by, the Palladium
was sweating and of their own accord the images of Minerva fell down.

(Drac. *Rom*. 8.71-7)

The relationship between Dracontius and Silver Latin poetry has been investigated in some depth by Myriam de Gaetano, according to whom Dracontius imitates Lucan, since he is the first epicist to adopt an agenda contrary to that of Vergil: rather than speaking of Rome's glorious rise, he tells of its ruin and equates the fate of Troy with that of Rome.[194] However, it is slightly more complex than that: as we have noted, the overall message of *Rom*. 8 is not immediately evident, inasmuch as Díaz de Bustamente was misled to believe that it describes the Trojan War as a necessary evil for the triumphant rebirth of the city as Rome. In the same way, Lucan, too, essentially makes it clear that he regards the Civil War as the greatest calamity imaginable, but he adds ambiguity from the very start. In his grand *laudatio* to Nero at the end of the proemium (Luc. 1.33-66), the poet excuses the horrible war by saying that it was a welcome price to pay, if this was the only way to secure Nero's rule. But then again, the sincerity of this passage has rightly been questioned by scholars.[195] Furthermore, despite the portrayal of Caesar as reckless throughout – unfavourable at first glance –, nevertheless his lack of deference may also be interpreted positively as enlightened, much to the liking of the progressive Lucan.[196] Finally, the narrator even avows that he is Caesar's partner in crime. In Book 9 he famously lets the general trample on the ancient sites of Troy,

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[194] de Gaetano (2009: 187-8). See also Ahl (1976: 214-222) and Fantham (1992: 8-9).

[195] Most prominently by Ahl (1976: 47-9). *Contra* Dewar (1994).

[196] See Leigh (2010: 209-13).

which are by now utterly dilapidated. Through this, Troy and Rome are on the one hand distanced from one another, but on the other hand they are assimilated in that, despite any physical decay that may occur, they will always be commemorated in poetry by Homer and Lucan, as the poet assures Caesar in an apostrophe:

nam, siquid Latiis fas est promittere Musis,
quantum Zmyrnaei durabunt uatis honores,
uenturi me teque legent; Pharsalia nostra 985
uiuet, et a nullo tenebris damnabimur aeuo.

For, if it is lawful to promise anything to the Latian Muses,
as much as the repute of the Smyrnean bard shall last,
those to come will read me and you; our *Pharsalia* 985
will live, and we shall not be doomed to obscurity by any age.

(Luc. 9.983-6)

Although Dracontian Paris shares many traits with the Lucanian Caesar,[197] unlike his model, Dracontius does not say anything positive about his protagonist nor anything hopeful about the future. The two poets, however, have in common their openly schizophrenic attitude towards Homer: on the one hand they tie the success of their own work to Homer's (Lucan in the passage above, Dracontius in the proem), but at the same time the contents of their poems reveal a hostility towards the Trojan saga. Ultimately, by aligning himself with Homer, Lucan also seems to be dethroning Vergil as the poet of Rome. As we are about to see, Dracontius makes his own contribution to defaming the *Aeneid*.

At the end of the terrible exposition of future events we find a sententia from the narrator concerning the fates:

Compellunt audere uirum fata, impia fata,
Quae flecti quandoque negant, quibus obuia nunquam
Res quaecunque uenit, quis semita nulla tenetur
Obuia dum ueniunt, quibus omnia clausa patescunt. 60

The fates drive a man to be bold, impious fates
which at any time refuse to be turned, whom nothing ever
attacks, for which no path is held fast
when they attack, for which everything shut opens up. 60

(Drac. *Rom*. 8.57-60)

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[197] de Gaetano (2009: 198-201) has shown that both characters look and behave like tyrants.

The lament about the power of the fates is a pathetic ending to the terrible vision with which the poem opens. This is the first time the fates appear in the narrative, but they keep being mentioned again and again throughout. Strikingly, after the above introduction by the narrator, we find *fata* only in character speeches. First, the prophet siblings Helenus and Cassandra deliver their pleas calling their family to sense against Paris and lament the fates which they cannot fight (*Rom*. 8.131, 156, 162); second, as a response to them, Apollo argues the opposite and assures that the fates command that Paris be reinstated (191, 198, 201); third, the augur interprets the fates from an omen given to Paris (465). Up to this point, it stands out that in every instance in which the *fata* are named this is done in the context of a prophecy, including the narrator's apocalyptic exposition. The last example provides a contrast. After Paris has praised Helen, she immediately concludes that the fates have prescribed their marriage (535, 539). As opposed to previous invocations of *fata,* this one cannot be taken seriously, but rather it is obvious that they are cited as an excuse by a woman who refuses to take responsibility for her own actions and tries to explain away the adultery she is about to commit. In the light of this insight, we might like to reconsider the meaning of the above passage about the fates. When re-reading it, it sounds demonstratively excessive, even so much so that its tone comes across as mockingly ironic. It could in fact be interpreted as an invective against those who, like Helen, misuse the fates to justify themselves. Though the statement is very general, the *vir* could also be specifically understood as Paris whose actions are determined by those wretched *fata*, while he himself supposedly has no choice in the matter. I shall further discuss the *fata* in conjunction with the remaining speeches below.

On the one hand this treatment of the fates is aimed at the guilt of Paris and Helen; on the other hand it also ridicules the *Aeneid* in which the fates are a constant presence and the highest motivation of *pius Aeneas*. To call them *impia* is a blunt jibe at both Vergil and pagan thought as a whole. It also reflects Christian ideology, since according to Augustine of Hippo, *De civ. Dei* 5 there is no fate in the sense of a horoscope inscribed in the stars, only God's providence. The theologian also goes to great lengths defending its existence alongside free will. Furthermore, he cites Cicero's reasoning against the Stoic belief in a fatalistic necessity which would cancel free will (which leads Cicero to deny *fata*). I suggest that Dracontius is trying to refute classical Roman mentality from within. Since the poem's action is set in a pagan world, he can point to the flaws of those convictions in a sophisticated manner.

First and foremost, Dracontius represents the traditional deities as base, implicitly opposing them with the true God of the New Testament. In lines 37-9, though briefly, Minerva is painted as a revengeful character who is going to make Paris pay for making her lose the beauty contest. She and Jove are also said to be *ingrati* in response to the annual propitiations offered by Priam (80-82). Cassandra explains that Paris enraged 'the Thunderer' *cuius postponens Vulcani laudat amorem* (168) ('whose love he disregarded and praised that of Vulcan'). Here *amor* may refer to both Juno as Jupiter's wife and Minerva as his daughter, as indeed the two are mentioned together two verses

before. Like Helenus before her, Cassandra foresees Troy's grim future, but unlike Helenus who gives up his prophetic speech because he accepts that the *fata* and *fortuna* are fixed and that there is nothing to be done (131-133) she actually rails against them.

The prophetess insistently tries to persuade her parents and brothers to kill Paris. This is of course a continuation of the myth of Paris' birth and exposition, discussed in section 1 above. We are not told what exactly happened in Dracontius' version, but it is safe to assume that the two had no heart to kill the boy, since their kindness and love towards him is evidenced by their affectionate behaviour (104-115): they blush, embarrassed about their former deed, and cry tears of joy and kiss him eagerly. However, this human reaction also reveals the inconsistency of their decisions. They are too good-natured to take radical steps, but also foolish enough to think that there will be no consequences. Thus Cassandra, despite her vicious demand and the harshness with which he blames her parents, is actually the only sensible one, trusting that the *fata* can be turned around. Unfortunately, the family's reaction to her chants is not revealed, but it is quite possible that Cassandra would have eventually persuaded them, were it not for an Apollo *ex machina* appearing at that very moment to give the fates a helping hand.

Apollo and Cassandra have a history which perhaps also plays a role here. She traditionally refused the god's sexual advances, whereupon he cursed her to the effect that nobody would believe her true prophecies.[198] Whether or not Dracontius had in mind those previous events, Apollo here goes so far as to prevent the Trojans from listening to Cassandra in person:

Dum canit infelix gemitus Cassandra futuros,
Visus adest cunctis Phrygibus Thymbraeus Apollo,
Qui mercede carens conclusit Pergama muro 185
Et genus ingratum poenas persoluat auari
Exoptat: stupuere Phryges, tacet ipse sacerdos.
Effatur: "Quid uirgo canit? Cur inuidus alter
Exclamat? Helenus deterret Pergama uerbis?
Pellere pastorem patriis de sedibus unquam 190
Fata uetant, quae magna parant. Stant iussa deorum:
Magnanimum Aeacidem solus prosternet Achillem.
Troianos regnare placet, qua solis habenae
Ostendunt tolluntque diem, qua uertitur axis
Frigidus et zona flammatur sole corusco. 195
Troianis dabitur totus possessio mundus,
Tempore nec paruo Troum regnabit origo.
Fata manent, conscripta semel sunt uerba Tonantis,
'Imperium sine fine' dabit. Cohibete furorem.

[198] For a comprehensive survey of Cassandra's development as a literary figure, see Neblung (1997).

Mortali diuum periet quo iudice iudex? 200
Nec hoc fata sinunt. Pudor est uoluisse nocere
Et non posse tamen. Pigeat, iam nemo minetur
Quem Clotho, quem Lachesis, quem uindicat Atropos ingens.
Scindite pellitas niueo de pectore uestes,
Murice Serrano rutilans hunc purpura uelet. 205
Nec pudeat, quod pauit oues: ego pastor Apollo
Ipse fui domibusque canens pecus omne coegi,
Cum procul a uilla fumantia tecta uiderem;
Alcestam sub nocte pauens deus ubera pressi,
Admetus intrantes haedos numerabat et agnos". 210
Dixerat, et Phoebum Priamus summissus adorat
Et grates securus agit, tacet optimus Hector.

While unhappy Cassandra chanted the future lamentations,
Thymbraean Apollo appeared present before all Phrygians,
who, though deprived of a reward, had enclosed Pergamum with a wall 185
and wished that the ungrateful race should pay the penalty for the
greedy one. The Phrygians were astounded, the priest himself was silent.
He spoke out: 'What is the virgin chanting? Why is the other envious one
crying aloud? Is Helenus deterring Pergamum with his words?
To expel the shepherd from his paternal dwelling the fates 190
ever forbid, who are preparing great things. The gods' orders stand firm:
he alone will overthrow Achilles, son of Aeacus.
It is determined that the Trojans should rule where the reins of the sun
reveal and remove the day, where the cold pole
is turned and the zone is inflamed by the flashing sun. 195
To the Trojans the whole world will be given as a possession,
and the lineage of the Trojans will not rule for a short time.
The fates remain, once the Thunderer's words have been written down,
'an empire without end' will he give. Curb your anger.
By which mortal judge will the judge of gods perish? 200
Nor do the fates allow this. It is a disgrace to have wanted to do harm
but still not be able to. You should be ashamed of yourselves, as no-one is to be
threatened whom Clotho, whom Lachesis, whom enormous Atropos protect.
Tear off the garments of skins from his snowy chest,
let purple, reddish from the Serranian murex, cover him. 205
Nor should it shame him that he tended sheep: I myself, Apollo
was a shepherd and, singing, I gathered all the cattle in the house,
when I saw smoking roofs far off from the farmhouse;
before daybreak, fearing Alcestis, I, a god, was squeezing udders,
Admetus would count the kids and lambs, as they entered.' 210
He spoke, and submissive Priam worshipped Phoebus

and, unconcerned, gave thanks; excellent Hector was silent.

(Drac. *Rom*. 8.183-212)

Even before he begins his speech, we are informed that Apollo has come with an evil intent. The memory of the wall building is evoked, which was the cause of the first sack of Troy. Priam's father Laomedon had promised to reward Apollo and Poseidon for encircling the city with a wall, but later denied them their rightful reward. Traditionally Apollo then sent a plague and Poseidon a sea monster. Nevertheless, Apollo still seeks to take revenge on Laomedon's descendants. This malice, so unlike the Christian God's mercifulness, was meant by Dracontius to arouse contempt for the pagan idol.

Thymbraean Apollo directly denies the statements of the priests by adducing the argument that the fates ordered by the gods do not allow Paris to be expelled. Simons has rightly remarked that the fates are used as part of a manipulative rhetoric.[199] They are of course the ultimate explanation for everything, and consequently defy any form of disagreement. However, judging from the untrustworthiness of the divinity, we are led to understand this as a trick. While Apollo claims that Paris' destiny has already been immovably decided, in reality it is nothing else than the god's very words that produce this destiny as he speaks. Since he also predicts a state of perpetual bliss after an episode of hardship – though this part is elegantly passed by – the fates can be said to function as a kind of opiate of the masses.

Lines 193-199 are most sensational. The promise of a never-ending rule for the Trojan race by decree of Jove echoes the passage in Book 1 of the *Aeneid* in which the highest god communicates to Venus the fate of her son. Tellingly, the wording of 199, *imperium sine fine dabit,* is identical with *Aen*. 1.279, and it is therefore put in quotation marks by editors to signal that Apollo here cites exactly what was foretold.[200] Just as Vergil had used the benefit of hindsight to make prophecies in his epic match already historical facts (and well-established fiction), Dracontius uses the same technique to cancel their validity. While Jupiter's promise would have been true for Vergil's times and Augustus' Golden Age, Dracontius already knows that it has turned out to be false. Thus by repeating the same prophecy despite the awareness of Rome's doom he completely reverses the message and exposes Apollo, the very patron god of Augustus, as a shameless liar, again in contrast with the omniscient God of Christendom.[201]

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[199] Simons (2005: 295).

[200] Cf. Quartiroli (1946: 182).

[201] Interestingly, in a somewhat chronologically twisted passage, Propertius actually imagines Cassandra's prophecy to the Danaans during Troy's fall to have been: *male vincitis! Ilia tellus / vivet et huic cineri Iuppiter arma dabit* ('You are victorious in defeat! The Ilian country will live and Jupiter shall provide arms for these ashes': 4.1.53-4). In Propertius' age, it was still valid to put these optimistic words into the priestess' mouth in order to glorify Rome. Meanwhile, by the time of Dracontius similar claims, uttered by Apollo, are known to be deceitful; Cassandra's true speech must be changed accordingly for it to remain accurate.

The mention of Admetus is intriguing: Díaz de Bustamente finds the reference difficult to interpret, but speculates that the story is intended to inspire hope in the Trojans through the precedent of Apollo's support for Admetus and his role in Alcestis' resurrection (though in construing an analogy with the resurrection of Troy he goes just a little too far).[202] I agree that Apollo's aim is to gain the Trojans' trust, but in order to lull them into a false sense of security. They may identify with Admetus and think that they have a benevolent god on their side, but they do not know that while Apollo was fond of Admetus he is ill-disposed towards themselves. Simons argues that the detail is intended to ridicule Apollo, since even the sheer idea of gods working for a human and thus being subordinary makes them despicable for a Christian audience.[203] However, this would not be in line with the praise of the poverty and suffering of Jesus, as well as the omnipresent representation of Christ himself as a shepherd, just like Apollo.

In sum, Dracontius attributes agency to humans, removing any fatalistic elements. The Trojans are deluded by Apollo, yet only because they have a need of fulfilling his seemingly fixed prophecy. The evil could have been averted if only the characters had followed reason over pagan superstition. The narrator ostensibly blames Paris for the future downfall of his city throughout the epyllion, since the abduction of Helen is his own wrongdoing. However, this could in turn be put down to an even earlier cause. Paris is spared through the pity of either his parents themselves or a middleman who received the order of killing him, and is instead exposed. Interestingly, in a fragment from Ennius' *Alexander* (fr. 38-49) and in John Malalas 5.2 it is no other than Apollo himself (or his oracle, respectively) that gives the prophecy to Priam, recommending to kill the newborn baby. This chimes with Apollo's interference in Paris' return to his family in Dracontius. While hints at the particulars of the background story are missing in the *De Raptu*, lines 106-9 betray that Hecuba and Priam are utterly embarrassed and beg forgiveness of Paris, certainly for the exposure, but probably also for the fact that they ordered his killing. While at the time the oracle would have told the truth (namely that Troy could be saved through infanticide), it is solely because its advice was carried out badly that the opposite happens: Paris becomes obsessed with his status precisely because of his low upbringing, which leads to his hunger for fame and the journey to Greece. Had the prince been raised as a prince, the bad outcome would arguably have been avoided. Thus everything is ultimately traceable to human agency that is based on a religious misapprehension. It also demonstrates the malice of the Trojan household and/or entity which interpreted the dream, since infanticide and child exposition are serious crimes within Dracontius' Christian context which would add a further dimension to the myth.

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[202] Díaz de Bustamente (1978: 196-7).

[203] Simons (2005: 289).

Chapter 4

The Judgement of Paris

Paris' judgement of Athena, Hera and Aphrodite is a near-essential for the abduction of Helen. I place this discussion after that of Alexander's early years and his reinstatement into the Trojan palace, but it is important to stress that these are two unconnected stories, and thus there is no strict or logical order as to which came first.[204] In fact, as we have seen, Dracontius is the only author who introduces a strong causal link between them. Scholarly material on the judgement, including the lead-up to it, can and does fill entire volumes by itself.[205] I shall therefore structure this section around the extended representation by Colluthus.

1. The Wedding of Thetis and Peleus

With the exception of Dares, who says that Paris only dreamt of judging the goddesses (7), all sources supplying the origin of the judgement are remarkably unanimous in saying that it came about because of a quarrel at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis.[206] As I have discussed in chapter 1.1, the wedding of Thetis is part of an overarching divine plan of Zeus, alongside the birth of Helen. Moreover, many sources tell us that Zeus courted the nereid at first. However, he desisted when it was declared that Thetis' son would become stronger than his father, and decided that she should marry a mortal instead.[207] Understandably, in light of the divine succession saga which saw Uranus

[204] Stinton (1965: 56-7).

[205] See, for example, Mancilla (2015) who compiled artistic and literary representations of the episode.

[206] The episodes are so organically connected that in Book 5 of Ptolemy Chennus Thetis is said to have herself had a dispute about beauty with Medea in Thessaly; the Nereid was pronounced the winner by Idomeneus, king of Crete. Medea was angered and called him a liar and put a curse on all Cretans that they are never to speak the truth (thus Ptolemy explains the stereotype of the lying Cretan). For Thetis as Medea's mother-in-law, see Ap. Rhod. 4.810-816.

[207] In Pind. *Isthm*. 8.27-48 both Zeus and Poseidon vie for Thetis and it is Themis who delivers the prophecy and a solution to the problem, while in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* 745-70, Prometheus states that he alone can save Zeus from committing the mistake (and probably does so in *Prometheus the Fire Bringer*). This latter version is followed by Hyg. *Fab*. 54, *Astronomica* 2.15, Serv. *ad* Verg. *Eclog*. 6.42, and Nonn., *Dionys*. 33. 355-60;. In Ov. *Met*. 11.221-8 Proteus foretells her destiny to Thetis. Similarly, in the *Excidium* Thetis herself knows about the prophecy and therefore rejects Jupiter's proposal (p. 3.8-12). In Libanius, Night advises Zeus (Lib. *Narr*. 27). The story is furthermore hinted at in Catullus' epyllion where, interestingly, Prometheus is also a guest at the wedding, entering just before Jove (Catull. 64.26-7, 294-8).

overthrown by Cronus, and Cronus in turn by Zeus, staying on the throne would be Zeus' chief worry and probably the only thing that could stop him from pursuing a woman he wanted. Apollonius Rhodius additionally says that Thetis refused Zeus' advances in the first place out of reverence for Hera, who acted as a mother figure to her and that it was Hera who chose Peleus as a worthy husband for her protégée and organised the nuptials (Ap. Rhod. 4.780-809; this is modelled on *Il.* 24.59-61). The two versions are related by Apollodorus, and also a third one in which Thetis' loyalty to Hera angered Zeus, who therefore made her marry a mortal by way of revenge (Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.13.5).[208] As an extension of this latter theme, numerous sources tell that Thetis was not very happy with the marriage and tried to escape Peleus' embraces by transforming herself into various creatures.[209] These background stories are omitted by Colluthus, although it is perhaps telling that in his banquet Hera apparently arrives separately from Zeus, and that she is called his sister, rather than his wife (25).

The feast takes place in Thessaly. Most accounts locate it in Chiron's home in the forest on Mt Pelion,[210] though in Catullus it happens in the groom's opulent palace (Catull. 64.33, 43-4). Already in the *Iliad* we hear that all the Olympians came to the wedding (*Il.* 24 62-3). Catullus uses the story as an example of the Golden Age when gods mingled socially with mortals,[211] though here Peleus first holds a party for his Thessalian subjects who later disperse to make way for the divine celebrations (Catull. 64.31-42, 276-9). Homer repeatedly speaks of gifts passed down to Achilles by his father: an ash spear which Chiron gave to Peleus on his wedding day and the immortal horses Balius and Xanthus that were a present from Poseidon.[212] Schol. (D) *Il.* 16.140 attributes the story to the *Cypria* and remarks that the spear was designed by Athena and made by Hephaestus.[213] In Catullus Chiron bears 'woodland gifts' and the river Penius provides various festive plants (Catull. 64.279-93). Ptolemy Chennus presents us with the most imaginative list of gifts: for Thetis a pair of wings from Zeus (which she would one day attach to the feet of Achilles, Hermes-style), for Peleus a sword from Hephaestus, jewellery with an engraved Eros from Aphrodite, the aforementioned horses from Poseidon, a cloak from Hera, a flute from Athena, and a

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[208] A rather lacunose fragment of Philodemus might confirm that this was found in the *Cypria*-author and in Hesiod (Philod. *De pietate* B 7241-50 Obbink).

[209] *Il.* 18.434a with schol. *ad* Pind. *Nem.* 3.35-6, 4.62-5, Soph. *Lovers of Achilles* fr. 150, *Troilus* fr. 618, Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.13.5, Paus. 5.18.5, Ov. *Met.* 11.221-65, QS 3.617-24; but Philostr. *Heroicus* 45.2-3 purposefully undermines this, saying that Thetis in fact seduced Peleus.

[210] Schol. *ad Il.* 16.140, Eur. *IA* 1046-7, Stat. *Achil.* 2.56-7, QS 4.143, Coll. 27. Pind. *Nem.* 3.56-7 remarks that Chiron arranged the wedding.

[211] Cf. Hesiod, fr. 1.11-12.

[212] *Il.* 16.140-9, 866-867, 17.194-7, 18.84-5, 19.387-91, 23.276-8. Cf. Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.13.5.

[213] The feast of the gods and the gift-giving are mentioned in passing by Pindar (*Pyth.* 3.92-5) and Quintus Smyrnaeus (4.49-54).

basket of special 'divine' salt from Nereus (Photius, *Bibl*. cod. 190).[214] As has been noted, Colluthus omits the wedding gifts in his description.[215] Another feature not included by Colluthus, but found elsewhere, is a prophecy given to the newlyweds about the future glory of their son Achilles.[216] This appears to be an alternative highlight of the banquet to the quarrel of the goddesses, depending on the author's focus, as no version incorporates both events. However, Dracontius, who does not describe the wedding as such, briefly remarks that Achilles shall pay the penalty for his mother's bed, which gave rise to the dispute.[217]

In Colluthus, as in Euripides, Ganymede pours the wine at the wedding feast (*IA* 1049-1053, Coll. 19). The mention of the Trojan youth who was abducted by Zeus sets the scene for a narrative which will involve another Trojan youth: Ganymede's own great-great-nephew Paris, and another abduction.[218] Colluthus' celebration also includes the standard chorus of Muses (cf. Eur. *IA* 1041, QS 4.141, Coll. 24), led by Apollo. By mentioning Apollo at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis the author, *nolens volens*, enters into an intertextual controversy. As has been laid out by Hadjicosti, there was a tradition, perhaps hinted at in the *Iliad* and developed by Aeschylus and Quintus Smyrnaeus, in which Apollo is seen as a traitor for killing Achilles, despite having been a guest at his parents' nuptials.[219] The notion reached its peak with Catullus who went as far as saying that Apollo, and with him his sister Diana, did not come to the wedding at all (Catull. 64. 299-302). His inclusion of Apollo in itself does of course not mean that Colluthus was aware of the debate, but a little later there is evidence that he was indeed engaging with Catullus.[220] While the Roman poet writes that Diana despised Peleus equally to Apollo (*Pelea nam tecum pariter soror aspernata est*: Catull. 64.301), the Egyptian tells us: 'Nor did Apollo's own sister, born of Leto, | Artemis disdain [the wedding], despite also being a huntress' (οὐδὲ κασιγνήτη Λητωιὰς Ἀπόλλωνος | Ἄρτεμις ἠτίμησε καὶ ἀγροτέρη περ ἐοῦσα: Coll. 32-3). Thus Colluthus, almost literally, negates Catullus' words. Moreover, he perhaps also illuminates them: while in the Latin epyllion Diana is understandably taking her brother's side, and seemingly has no other reason to scorn Peleus, the Greek epyllion gives us a clue by identifying Artemis as ἀγροτέρη. This might simply mean that the goddess usually prefers

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[214] The latter is supposed to explain a saying about 'divine salt' from Homer (*Il*. 9.214), also discussed by Plutarch (*Quaes. Conv.* 5.10).

[215] Karavas (2014: 4).

[216] See Pind. *Nem*. 4.65-8, Eur. *IA*. 1062-75 (prophecy delivered by Chiron from Phoebus), Catull. 64.303-83 (prophecy from the Parcae).

[217] *Pro matris thalamo poenas dependit Achilles, | unde haec causa fuit* (*Rom*. 8.49-50).

[218] Lucian also connects the two stories in his *Iudicium* 6.

[219] Hadjicosti (2006). The passages referred to are: *Il*. 24.62-3, Aesch. fr. 189 (from Plato, *Republic* 2. 383B), QS 3.115-50.

[220] Cuartero i Iborra (1992: 40-1).

roaming the wilderness to attending fancy gatherings, so her presence is particularly appreciated. However, it also draws attention to another story which involves Artemis and a bachelor Peleus: the Calydonian Boar Hunt. The boar had been sent by Artemis as a punishment for king Oineus, but was killed by his son Meleager and his comrades, one of whom was Peleus. This provides a very good excuse for the goddess to dislike Peleus, and Colluthus may have been thinking of this in particular, not least in view of the report by the *Suda* that he also composed a *Calydoniaca* in six books.

The wedding of Cadmus and Harmonia in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca* has long been identified as an important model for Colluthus' wedding episode.[221] This is most conspicuous in the representation of Ares. Both poets show us a different side of the war god. In Nonnus 'Ares the softie' (μείλιχος Ἄρης), stripped of his armour, puts his arm around Aphrodite, plays a love song on the trumpet and places a garland on his head instead of a helmet (Nonn. *Dion*. 5.93-100). Colluthus' Ares is also without helmet, spear or armour and dances, smiling (Coll. 34-7). There is, however, one crucial difference: in Nonnus Ares and Aphrodite are the parents of the bride and are open about their relationship, while Colluthus says that Ares was in the same leisurely garb in which he frequents the house of Hephaestus, thus hinting at their adulterous affair known from the *Odyssey* (*Od*. 8. 267-365).[222] This is a suitable taster of the main theme of Colluthus' poem.

2. Eris and the Apple of Discord

We come to the incident which constitutes the point of contact between the wedding of Thetis and the judgement of the goddesses' beauty. The earliest evidence is found in the *Cypria*, according to Proclus' synopsis, which says that Strife (Eris) came while the gods were feasting at the wedding of Peleus and stirred up a dispute between Hera, Athena and Aphrodite as to who was the most beautiful. The essence of the story remained, but it was expanded in later centuries. Eris' instrument of trouble becomes established as an apple. Apollodorus tells that she threw an apple as a prize for beauty (μῆλον περὶ κάλλους) among the three goddesses (*Epit*. 3.2). The apple appears only in later literary sources, but it is found in iconography from the first half of the 5th century BC.[223] However, West thinks that it may have already been there in the

[221] Weinberger (1896b: 142 n. 54). Peleus' and Cadmus' weddings are also compared in detail by Pindar (*Pyth*. 3.86-105).

[222] In the *Iliad* and beyond Hephaestus and Aphrodite are already divorced: his wife is one Charis (*Il*. 18.382-3; or, according Hesiod one of the Charites named Aglaia: Hes. *Theog*. 945-6), while Aphrodite apparently consorts with Ares (*Il*. 21.416-7). Cf. Karavas (2015: 95).

[223] *LIMC* vii,1: 176.

Cypria.[224] A second-century papyrus (P. Oxy. 3829 ii 9), included in West's *Cypria* edition as part of the *argumentum*, adds that while the other gods were invited to the wedding, Hermes stopped Eris from entering, on Zeus' orders. Angered, she then threw a golden apple into the party, which the three goddesses quarrelled over, and Zeus offered it as a prize (ἔπαθλον) for the most beautiful. Similarly, according to Hyginus, Eris was not invited and not admitted to the feast and threw the apple, saying that the most beautiful should take it (*Fab*. 92). In turn, in Lucian the same instructions are actually written on the apple itself (*Iudicium* 7).[225] In Apuleius, the apple is gilded with gold-leaf (*Met*. 10.30). Finaly, Libanius and the *Excidium* have an apple that is both golden and inscribed by Eris (Lib. *Narr*. 27, *Excid*. p. 3.16-7).

Colluthus inherits the tradition and makes significant innovations to it. Here it is not Zeus, but Chiron and Peleus, who neglect Eris (Coll. 37-8). What follows is the most elaborate representation of Strife's reaction in extant ancient literature, packed with stock epic diction. We learn that she was overcome by jealousy as when a heifer is stung by a gadfly (Coll. 41-5) — this is the only simile in the entire epyllion — and that she is set on revenge.[226] She repeatedly leaps up from her chair and then sits down again, presumably when she comes up with an idea, but consequently discards it (Coll. 46-7). This device of iteration to illustrate a character's mental turmoil is familiar from epic predecessors.[227] Eris also vents her anger by punching the ground (Coll. 47-8). Colluthus next reports her inner monologue and reveals her wicked plans which are the sole examples in this work of what Nesselrath terms 'Beinahe-Episoden' ('Nearly-Episodes'), another common epic feature.[228] They are presented loosely in the climactic form of strategy > dismissal > strategy > dismissal > final strategy. One solution is to open up the underworld and free the Titans, in the hope that this time they would destroy heaven and defeat Zeus. Strife also thinks of brandishing fire and striking up a war, but is dissuaded by her respective fear of Hephaestus and Ares (Coll. 49-58).[229]

Eventually, in a 'lightbulb moment', she remembers the golden apples of the Hesperides, takes one of the fruit, described as the first origin of war, and throws it into the celebration (Coll. 59-63). It is significant that, apart from being golden, the apple comes from the garden of the Hesperides. The notion is a very apt one and may well have existed before, despite only being spelled out by Colluthus. It is reinforced by the goddesses' reasons for wanting to claim the apple. According to a number of sources,

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[224] West (2013: 74).

[225] For the mythical practice of throwing an apple containing an inscription, cf. the story of Acontius and Cydippe (Callimachus, *Aet*. frr. 67-75, Ov. *Her*. 20 and 21).

[226] For a thorough investigation of the gadfly simile in Colluthus and previous epicists, see Cadau (2015: 83-90).

[227] Cf. Achilles in *Il*. 24.10-2 and Medea in Ap. Rhod. 3.645-55.

[228] Nesselrath (1992).

[229] Though, notably, in the *Iliad* she delights in the fight alongside Ares and is called his sister (*Il*. 4.440-1).

the golden apples were brought forth by Gaia on the occasion of the wedding of Zeus and Hera.[230] It is not surprising, then, that in Colluthus Hera is the first to try and seize the fruit and that she is described as 'the glorified fellow of Zeus' marriage-bed' in that particular moment (Coll. 64-5). But Aphrodite wants to have it too, because it is a possession of the Loves (Coll. 66-7), who, as we later hear, are her children (Coll. 84, 99-100). From here it is only a small leap to a well-known legend which involves the throwing of golden apples for erotic purposes:[231] when Hippomenes competed in a footrace against Atalante to win her hand in marriage, Aphrodite herself helped him out by giving him three golden apples to scatter on the racetrack. Every time Atalante saw an apple rolling, she was magically drawn to it and had to pick it up, which slowed her down and allowed Hippomenes to outrun her and take her to wife.[232] Most versions of the story do not declare the provenance of the apples, but according to Hellenistic sources Aphrodite took them from the garland on Dionysus' head,[233] while the most detailed one by Ovid states that Venus took them from her own tree which grows in a field dedicated to her in Tamasus (Ov. *Met*. 10.644-51).[234] However, Servius and others after him accept as a matter of fact that the apples indeed came from the orchard of the Hesperides.[235] Thus, by branding the golden apple as a Hesperid fruit, Colluthus connects it with related mythology and imbues it with a deeper meaning. This also explains why two of the three goddesses feel especially entitled to have it.

Accordingly, the apple's function as a beauty prize is only implicit at first, with Aphrodite being described as born superior to all (Coll. 66). Similarly to the version of the Oxyrhynchus papyrus above, the beauty contest as such is only announced by Zeus, without any prompting from Eris. As in previous accounts, it is the Father of the Gods who assumes responsibility over ending the quarrel. He calls Hermes and orders him to lead the goddesses to Paris who shall judge their beauty and award the apple to the winner (Coll. 68-79). As this is the next step of his grand design to provoke the Trojan War, Zeus has set the rules of the contest to secure the desired outcome, but he does not want to be associated with the result. He therefore needs Paris both to act as a scapegoat and thus to continue his predicted plan. It is thus not surprising that the god gives no compelling reason for choosing Paris as the arbiter, other than calling him a splendid youth (ἀγλαὸν ἡβητῆρα: Coll. 71). Elsewhere Zeus entrusts Paris with the task, because he does not want to make a decision himself, given

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[230] Apollod. *Bibl*. 2.5.11, Hyg. *Astr.* 2.3, Ath. *Deipn*. 3.83c.

[231] For the use of apples and similar fruit in love magic, see Faraone (1999: 69-78). However, the important case of Acontius and Cydippe is unfortunately omitted in this work.

[232] See Hes. *Catalogue* frr. 47-8, Theocr. *Id*. 3.40-1, Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.9.2, Hyg. *Fab*. 185, Ov. *Met*. 10.560-707.

[233] Philitas fr. 17 = Schol. Theocr. *Id*. 2.120b.

[234] For Cypris' apple-grove, see also Sappho fr. 2.

[235] Serv. ad Verg. *Aen*. 3.113, Ps.-Clement *Homily* 6.15, Paul the Silentiary *AP* 5.234, First Vatican Mythographer 39.

his personal ties with the contestants (i.e. his sister-*cum*-wife and one or two of his daughters, depending on the tradition of Aphrodite's birth). Lucian's *Iudicium* opens with a speech by Zeus in which he quite rightly explains that if he preferred one of them, the other two would turn against him. He also credits Paris with being the right man for the job on account of his nobility and honesty. Similar deliberations are voiced in the *Excidium* where the goddesses ask Zeus for his judgement, but he abstains for fear of offending anyone, and Paris' justice is illustrated by his track record with refereeing bull fights (*Excidium* p.3.21-p. 4.21).[236]

3. Aphrodite's toilette

Next Colluthus informs us that each of the goddesses made herself look even more stunning ahead of the judgement (Coll. 80). However, only Aphrodite's preparations receive any detailed attention, making it clear that she is to be the victress. This may be another common feature with the *Cypria*, as Welcker speculates that in the Cyclic epic the other two goddesses were surely not given as grand introductions as Aphrodite.[237] We have a fragment of the *Cypria* that appears to correspond to this beautification scene. In it the goddess puts on a garment which the Graces and the Seasons have decorated with various flowers (fr. 4). The location of the passage in this context seems to be corroborated by Apuleius' account of a Judgement-pantomime where, compellingly, the Graces and the Seasons strew flowers before her (*Met*. 10.32).[238] The episode also bears some striking resemblances to scenes in the *Homeric Hymns* to Aphrodite. In the fifth the goddess is bathed by the Graces and puts on clothing and gold ornaments (*Hom. Hymn*. 5.61-5; the lines are almost identical to *Od*. 8.364-6), while the sixth narrates how the Seasons adorned Aphrodite with raiment, a golden crown and precious jewellery after her birth from the sea (*Hom. Hymn*. 6.5-13).[239] Hellenistic poets represent Cypris as paying particular attention to styling her hair: in the *Argonautica* we witness her at home, performing what seems like a laborious combing routine, interrupted by the unannounced visit of Hera and Athena (Ap. Rhod. 3.45-50). In the *Bath of Pallas,* Callimachus briefly evokes the Judgement of Paris itself and contrasts the plain grooming of Athena and Hera, who require no mirrors, with Aphrodite's vanity which manifests itself in the fact that she changes the same lock of hair twice over

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[236] For Paris and his bull, cf. chapter 3.1.

[237] Welcker (1849, vol. ii: 89).

[238] It is very probable that Apuleius refers here to the *Cypria*, as he demonstrates a thorough knowledge of Greek authors, especially Homer, in both the *Metamorphoses* and the *Apology* and even labels the former a *fabula Graecanica* (*Met*. 1.1).

[239] Pandora is adorned by a team of Graces and Seasons, who provide gold jewellery and spring flowers, respectively, in Hes. *Op*. 73–5.

before she is satisfied (Call. *Hymn* 5.17-22).[240] Colluthus thus harks back to both archaic and Hellenistic models as he, too, concentrates on the way the goddess arranges her hair and adorns it with gold wreaths (Coll. 81-3).[241]

Aphrodite then calls her children, the Loves, to come to her aid and gives a motivational speech to herself (Coll. 84-100). In it she first worriedly emphasizes the strength of her rivals, but then finds confidence in her own assets. In other stories, which were possibly themselves influenced by notions of the judgement, Hera and Athena are best friends, while Aphrodite is the outsider of the trio, but even so the other two find themselves compelled to ask her for favours on occasion. For instance, in the *Iliad*, for obvious reasons, Aphrodite supports the Trojans, while the other two are on the side of the Greeks (cf. *Il* 4.7-11). In Book 5, Athena lifts the mist from Diomedes' eyes, so he can discern the gods from the mortals, and she admonishes him not to fight any Olympians, except for Aphrodite whom he should strike (*Il*. 5.129-32). When he later wounds the Cyprian, Hera and Athena mock her, saying that she cut her hand on the pin of a Greek woman's dress when she was urging her to follow a Trojan (*Il*. 5.418-25), clearly alluding to her role in Helen's and Paris' romance. Nevertheless, soon Hera needs Aphrodite's help with seducing Zeus in order to aid the Greeks. She asks to borrow her magic bandeau (κεστὸς ἱμάς), worn around the chest to stir the desire of the male sex. Hera falsely claims that she wants to use it to save the marriage of Tethys and Oceanus, and Aphrodite lends it to her (*Il*. 14.187-225).[242] But when Aphrodite tries to help Ares on the Trojan side, Athena strikes her in the breast on Hera's orders, causing her and Ares to fall to the ground (*Il*. 21.415-434). Similarly, at the start of Book 3 of Apollonius' *Argonautica*, set in a mythical time before the judgement, Hera and Athena band together and go to Aphrodite to ask for help with making Medea fall in love with Jason. Aphrodite sarcastically remarks that she is surprised to see them, because, superior as they are, they do not come to visit her often (Ap. Rhod. 3.52-4), but she does comply with their wishes.

Colluthus must have been thinking of those passages when he composed Aphrodite's statement. She first reverently recalls that Hera is the nurse of the Graces and the sovereign, while Athena is the queen of wars. In contrast, she terms herself the only powerless (ἄναλκις) goddess who does not wield a sceptre or arms. This has strong resonances with the advice of Iliadic Zeus after Aphrodite's encounter with Diomedes that she should not meddle in warfare, but instead do what she does best and take care of marriages (*Il*. 5.426-30). This is precisely the line of thinking that makes

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[240] The very same picture was presented in Sophocles' *The Judgement*, as summarised by Athenaeus (*Deipn*. 15.687c = TrGF 4 F 361.i).

[241] Aphrodite's hair in Colluthus is discussed in detail by Matthews 1996 and Cadau (2015: 96-104).

[242] Aphrodite answers that she could not deny Hera's request, because she sleeps at Zeus' side (*Il*. 14.211-3). This suggests that the love-goddess is not simply well-meaning and gullible, but that she suspects Hera of mischief, but thinks it wiser to please her. The scenario reappears in Nonn. *Dionys*. 31-2.

Colluthean Aphrodite reconsider her tactics and realise that her own weapons are just as mighty as — or even mightier than — those of warriors. This proves the winning strategy, as later Cypris will be able to sway the judge Paris by offering him the opportunity to make love, not war (Coll. 159-64). Her advantage is, however, described as a military one: instead of a lance she has her κεστός, which pierces with desire (Coll. 93-7). Aphrodite's toilette before the beauty contest can be interpreted as the equivalent of an arming scene before a battle (in fact, she even calls it an ἀγών).[243] However, her final utterance remains somewhat puzzling: she says that women who catch her love-sting often experience travails (ὠδίνουσι) and do not die from it (Coll. 97).[244] The verb can signify either travail in childbirth or love pangs, but in either case the statement is untrue. As is well-known, women do die in labour, and did so even more frequently in antiquity. As to death from hopeless love, there is an example of that in the very same poem just a little later, namely in the story of Phyllis.

4. The Judgement

Homer only makes one direct, though inexplicit, reference to the Judgement of Paris. In the final Book of the *Iliad*, we hear that Hera and Athena hated Ilium, since they had been insulted by Alexander who instead praised the one who gave him grievous lust (*Il.* 24.25-30). An eminent ancient commentator, Aristarchus, thought that Homer was not aware of the Judgement, because he never mentions it elsewhere, and thus believed these lines to be interpolated.[245] However, modern scholars predominantly reject this view.[246] Most importantly, traces of the Judgement underlie other parts of the text, such as Athena's and Hera's animosity towards Aphrodite, as we have seen above. Later sources build up a very uniform picture of the Judgement. The *Cypria* summary tells us that the goddesses were led to Mt Ida by Hermes and that Alexander was lured by the promise of marrying Helen and decided in favour of Aphrodite. Euripides, too, notes that the winner was not so much the most beautiful, but the most eloquent of the goddesses: he remarks that they first bathed themselves in a spring and then were vying with each other in malignant rhetoric, but that Aphrodite won with her deceitful (δολίοις) words (Eur. *Andr.* 2.84-90, *Hel.* 676-8). All sources place the Judgement on

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[243] For a discussion of this passage in terms of a *militia amoris*, see Williams (2001), who adduces a number of other examples from late-antique Greek poetry, including, most relevantly, Aphrodite arming herself with beauty in advance of the battle in Claudian's Greek *Gigantomachy* 43-54.

[244] Kotseleni (1990: 182, *ad loc.*) maintains that the claim makes sense, because one can survive Aphrodite's weapons, unlike Athena's murderous ones, but I am sceptical.

[245] His arguments can be found in Aristonicus of Alexandria, *De signis Iliadis, ad. loc.*

[246] Reinhardt (1948), Stinton (1965): 3-4, Davies (1981).

Mt Ida, except Strabo who locates it on a mountain called Alexandreia (*Geography* 13. 1. 51).

In Dracontius' *De Raptu*, the Judgement is an essential hinge for the plot, but he chooses only to sketch it briefly. He can afford to do this, as the episode would have been familiar enough to his readers. The representation, though short, is unique in that the natural features of Mt Ida are depicted as though they were a court room and the lawyer-poet employs specific legal jargon for the dispute and the bribing of the judge (*Rom*. 8.31-5).[247] The incident results in another 'lawsuit', as Minerva exacts punishment for her disgrace by sentencing Paris and all of his countrymen to death (*Rom*. 8.36-45). Later the image of the virgin goddess topples forebodingly as Paris enters the city of Troy (*Rom*. 8.77). Colluthus' Paris also beholds the image of Athena as he wanders around Sparta (Coll. 237-8). Similarly, perhaps the mention of Echo just before the judgement (Coll. 117-8) serves a similar purpose: according to Ovid, Echo was a nymph who distracted Hera to allow Zeus to have affairs behind her back; but when the goddess discovered her complicity she cursed her, so she could speak only as an echo of others (*Met*. 3.357-67). This may constitute a warning for Paris who is about to anger Hera with his judgement.

As Hermes and the goddesses draw closer to Ida, Paris sees them and starts up frightened (Coll. 123), but Hermes explains why they have come and what he needs to do (Coll. 126-30).[248] The motif of a scared Paris is also present elsewhere: in iconography he is sometimes depicted as fleeing in terror.[249] In literary representations by Ovid and Lucian, Alexander becomes anxious when he sees the deities (even despite the fact that in the latter they decide to walk, rather than fly, precisely to prevent the mortal from panicking), but is reassured by Hermes (Ovid *Her.* 16.67-8, Lucian *Iudicium* 5, 7). Lucian's inquisitive Paris nevertheless ascertains that the losers of the judgement shall have no hard feelings against him, just as Zeus exhorted them in the first place (*Iudicium* 2, 9).

As has been alluded to, the element of bribery became an integral part of the Judgement from the very outset. Some sources only mention Aphrodite's successful bribe, the promise of marriage with Helen (*Cypria* fr. 1, Eur. *Hel*. 23-30, Drac. *Rom*. 8.64-5). But most state that Paris chose this over proposals from Hera and Athena who offered to make him king of all Asia or an invincible warrior, respectively. In Lucian Hera and Athena are very outright with their bribery, which is rejected by the principled Paris, but Aphrodite's approach is more subtle: she first advertises Helen to him and then declares that she could arrange for them to marry, for the affordable price of an apple (*Iudicium* 11-16). The goddesses and their 'blessings' are virtually always introduced in

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[247] The passage is examined in this light by Santini (2006: 91-7).

[248] This stock image is employed everywhere except in the *Excidium* where the goddesses are ordered directly by Zeus to find Paris and bid him judge their beauty (*Excidium* p.3.25-6).

[249] See *LIMC* 'Paridis Iudicium' 5-17. In the corresponding entry it is reasoned that Paris was calm in the early epic tradition, and that the fear element came later (*LIMC* vol. vii.1: 186).

the canonical order of Hera-Athena-Aphrodite.[250] It is natural for Hera to come first, to emphasise her primacy, and for Aphrodite to come last, to increase the suspense. This sequence is, however, changed by Colluthus.[251] He still places Aphrodite's statement at the very end, to add to the sense of the 'underdog' prevailing against the odds, but makes Athena speak first and Hera second (Coll. 136-165). The reason might be that he wants to list the bribes climactically in order of appeal. As will become apparent in chapter 6.3, Paris is rather like Aphrodite with regard to warfare, and thus it is not surprising that he is not tempted by an offer from Athena's domain. Hera reacts to Athena's statement, saying that warriors go through hardships and die young, so he should rather choose to be a king ruling over both the brave and the cowardly. This ought to please Alexander somewhat more. However, it is Aphrodite who finally suggests a gift that he cannot refuse. The same order as in the *Harpage* can also be found in the *Excidium*. However, here Juno offers not kingship, but that Paris' sheep should multiply and always bring forth twins. This is certainly a generous proposition any shepherd should be glad of, but it is rather unimpressive compared to battle prowess from Minerva. Instead of elevating Paris to become a ruler of people, this would only further emphasize his pastorality.

There is a conflict between the sources as to the volume of data Alexander collected to inform his decision; in other words, did he view the goddesses covered or unclad? Classical Greek vase paintings usually show him sitting in front of three ladies adorned with their finery. However from the early Hellenistic period onwards, artists often portray either all three or only Aphrodite as (almost) naked. This detail entered literature somewhat later.[252] In the *Cypria* excerpt discussed above, Aphrodite dons a floral dress, but we cannot be entirely sure if she kept it on throughout the judgement. The goddesses all take off their garments in Propertius (2.2.13-4) and Ovid (*Her.* 17.115-6). In Lucian, too, Paris is given full autonomy over the judgement procedure and rules that the candidates should undress (*Iudicium* 9-10). Meanwhile, in Apuleius' description it is Venus alone who wears nothing but a thin silk sarong which, moreover, flutters about, thus actually revealing more than it hides (*Met.* 10.31). Dracontius implies that Paris saw Venus naked, but we get no clues about Juno and Minerva (*Rom.* 8.64-5). Colluthus plays with the tradition and presents Paris' scrutiny as somewhat comic: he considers the features of each deity and investigates even the soles of their feet (Coll. 131-5), before they each give their speech. But unexpectedly, Aphrodite lifts her robe and shows her cleavage as she is about to address the shepherd

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[250] *Cypria* synopsis, Apollod. *Epit*. 3. 2, Paus. 15. 9. 5, Hyg. *Fab*. 92, Ov. *Her*. 16. 79-84, Apul. *Met*. 10. 31-2. Cf. Orsini 1972: xv, West 2013: 79.

[251] He has the same order as Eur. *Troad*. 925-31.

[252] *LIMC* vol. vii.1: 188

(μηλοβοτῆρα).[253] She also removes the charm of the Loves, which must be the κεστός that she was going to employ as her weapon and that she probably put it in place as part of her preparations. The narrator even allows himself to pass a moral judgement, noting that she did not heed her breasts, suggesting shamelessness.[254] Aphrodite's divestiture lends support of her words and functions as a foretaste of Helen, or rather gives Paris an appetite which can only be assuaged through Helen.[255] Thus it is a combination of visual and auditory triggers which leads him to award her the apple without hesitation. It is, however, not entirely clear whether Paris is just a randy voyeur who is easily seduced by a bosom or whether it is rather the magic strap around Aphrodite's chest that has such a profound impact. Interestingly, in Lucian's version Athena insists that Aphrodite take off the item of lingerie before the judgement commences, lest she should enchant Paris with it (*Iudicium* 10). This might be exactly what happens in Colluthus' scenario.

As soon as she is crowned the winner of the contest, Aphrodite delivers an epinician for herself which takes the form of slandering her rivals (Coll. 166-191). Although in the *Cypria* Aphrodite possibly celebrates her victory by wreathing her hair and singing with nymphs,[256] and in Apuleius she dances triumphantly with her chorus while her opponents leave the stage angry (*Met*. 10.34), the hostile gloating found in the *Harpage* is unparalleled. She first mocks Hera who is the mother of Ares, Hephaestus and the Graces, but did not receive help from any of her children. This is very personal indeed: Aphrodite continues the argument from her previous monologue about the power of love defeating manliness while evoking the fact that she is sleeping with two sons of Hera. She is married to Hephaestus and is the lover of Ares, as has been discussed above. Thus, her charms have already prevailed over men's tough, warlike hearts, even to the point that they would desert their own mother. As to the Graces, multiple parentage is given for them by different authors,[257] but Hera as their mother is an innovation from Colluthus. Nevertheless, it may be rooted in a careful reading of Homer on his part, since in the *Iliad* Hera offers Hypnos the Grace Pasithea to wed, which could suggest that she is her daughter (*Il*. 14.267-8). Again, rather than accompanying Hera, the Charites are traditionally the attendants of Aphrodite, as we

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[253] On Colluthus' wordplay which exploits all the different meanings of μῆλον (sheep, apple, breast) see Paschalis (2008: 146). The *Excidium* is again very close to Colluthus, as there Venus comes to Paris wrapped in only a cloak which she strips off and offers her bribe in her birthday suit.

[254] Similarly, Clement of Alexandria argues that the nude goddesses show the scandalousness of Olympians in order to promote Christianity (*Protrepticus* 2).

[255] Cf. also chapter 2.5 for the breasts of Helen. In Ovid, Paris gets very excited when Helen's loose robe exposes her bosom to his gaze (Ov. *Her*. 16.249-50).

[256] See chapter 3.2.

[257] Examples include Zeus and Eurynome (Hes. *Theog*. 907-909), Zeus and Eunomia (*Hymn. Orph*. 59), Aegle and Helios (Paus. 9.35.5, citing Antimachus), and possibly Dionysus (*Anacreontea* fr. 38.8).

have seen already. Although they are not said to be part of her entourage in Colluthus, she is still called 'the queen of the Graces' (Coll. 16). Instead, it is the Loves who form Aphrodite's troops in the poem. Lucian makes fun of the support the goddess receives from personified entities, as she plans to bring Himeros, Eros, the Charites, Hymenaios and Pothos to help Paris conquer Helen (*Iudicium* 15-6). Aphrodite's abuse of Athena is even harsher. The sex goddess taunts the virgin goddess about being born out of Zeus' head and consequently being mannish. She says that Athena may be good at fighting, but stands no chance when her looks are judged, because she is neither man nor woman.[258] This hurling of invective at the pair constitutes a perfect prequel to the *Iliad*, as it makes it very understandable that Homer's Aphrodite is unpopular with them.

The Judgement is also frequently adduced as an example in various discourses, rationalised and allegorised. Naturally, the story is used early on in attempts at absolving Helen from guilt. She does so herself in Euripides' *Trojan Women*, saying that her affair with Paris saved Greece; had he chosen one of the other bribes, she reasons, Greece would have become subjected to barbarians, either through war or tyranny (*Troad*. 932-7). In Isocrates' speech in defence of Helen, Paris' choice is not one of the flesh, but one of reason: he wants children that will have great heritage and an honour that is unique to him (while war prowess and kingship can also be acquired by others, there is only one Helen). In line with Isocrates' general argument which asserts that those who have fallen for Helen's beauty are creditable, Paris is portrayed as a sensible character.[259]

In the AD period, the myth was given many rational spins: typically, Ptolemy Chennus states that the apple was not really an apple, but a beautiful boy called Melos, son of the river Skamander; the three goddesses quarrelled over whose priest he should become and Paris judged that Aphrodite would have him (Book 6). Dio Chrysostom in his '*Discourse Maintaining that Troy was not Captured*' challenges the motivations behind the Judgement, saying that it is suspicious that Athena would destroy her own city and oppose her father, that Hera would stoop so low as to be judged by a shepherd when she is the consort of Zeus himself, and that Aphrodite would repay a judgement in her favour with evils, also to the detriment of her own sister Helen (11.11-14). In another discourse, *On Retirement*, Dio states that Paris wanted Helen to wife and staged the judgement in his imagination, but in fact it was not Aphrodite who made the abduction possible, but rather his rich influential background (20.19-23). Similarly Dares weaves the judgement into his report in the form of a dream which inspires Paris (7). Malalas omits the Judgement in his account, but claims that Paris composed an encomium praising Aphrodite and a hymn to her, entitled 'κεστός' (Malalas 5.2). Furthermore, epigrammatists like to employ the legend in an absurd way, referring mythical events to their own reality, for example evoking the judgement when

[258] Cf. the dialogue between Eros and Aphrodite in which the boy says that he does not shoot his arrows at Athena, because he is frightened of her, and calls her worse than a man (Lucian, *Dial. D*. 23).

[259] Zajonz (2002: 30-31, 224-5).

commenting on (the beauty of) statues of the three goddesses (*AP* 16.165, 166, 169, 170, 172) or using it as a cautionary tale for dealing with women (*AP* 5.35-6). In Philostratus a lover tells his beloved that she would have been a worthy contestant in Paris' judgement and would have won the prize (Philostr. *Ep*. 34).

Finally, in the Christian era the myth was given many allegorical interpretations. The 4th-century Neo-Platonist Sallustius sees the golden apple as the world and the contending gods as different powers affecting it; since Paris is merely a soul governed by senses, he is only capable of perceiving beauty, but not the other powers, and thus decides that the apple must belong to Aphrodite (*On the Gods and the World* 4). In the Ps.-Clementine *Recognitions*, Peter's disciple Nicetas explains to Clement how the Gentiles interpret the wedding banquet of the gods as the heavenly bodies;[260] within the judgement, Mercury is speech which conveys instructions, Juno is chastity, Minerva courage, Venus lust: Paris' choice illustrates the ruin that befalls one who chooses the latter (10-40-1; cf. *Homiles* 6.15). This reasoning is akin to the choice of Heracles. In the same fashion, Fulgentius asserts that Paris made a stupid choice, as each of the goddesses stands for a certain lifestyle, as he explains in detail — Minerva for wisdom, Juno for business, Venus for pleasure (*Myth*. 2.1). He also treats the wedding of Peleus and Thetis in a separate section, saying, *inter alia,* that Thetis (water) cannot blend with Zeus (fire), because she would extinguish him, and instead mingled with Peleus (earth) (*Myth*. 3.7).

[260] Even at the beginning of the 20th century the characters of the Judgement were interpreted as astronomical personifications: see Plunket (1908).

Conclusions from Part I

In the first and longest part of the present exposition we have situated the Abduction of Helen within a web of different contexts, which will serve as foundations for later chapters. Chapter 1 dealt with its relationship with the wider legend of the Trojan war. We explored both causal and chronological links and cleared up occasional inconsistencies. We also discussed the significance of the First Sack of Troy, an instance of ante-*antehomerica*, so to speak. This material is particularly important for the Abduction-narratives of Dares and Dracontius, where it functions as a springboard for the plot. However, it is also relevant for our interpretation of the dialogue between Paris and Helen in Colluthus.

In chapters 2 and 3 we met the figures of Helen and Paris before the commencement of their affair. In both cases, we have uncovered interesting birth accounts and traced previous love stories which continue to affect the protagonists and only become fully resolved during the fall of Troy. This was also a good opportunity to explicate some facets of the character of Helen, concentrating on her proverbial beauty, her fascinating status as both a fictional character and a kind of deity and the readiness to absorb her person into surprising tales. Paris' youth is treated at length at the beginning of Dracontius' *De Raptu* and I have argued that, in conjunction with his prologue, this provides the author with a platform for a powerful programmatic statement. He defines his epyllion against the great epics of Homer and Vergil and advertises an alternative worldview in accordance with his own times by ingeniously ‘correcting’ the premise of the *Aeneid*.

Chapter 4 was dedicated to the wedding of Peleus and Thetis and the resulting Judgement of Paris, which most traditions regard as a direct preliminary to Helen's abduction. The focus of this chapter is on the representation of these events by Colluthus who tweaks and expands established narratives. His in-depth portrayal of Eris and the multi-layered relations between Hera, Athena and Aphrodite deserve special mention.

Part II

Abduction

Chapter 5

The Outward Journey

1. Motives

Paris' journey to Hellas is most commonly and most logically portrayed as a result of the Judgement, with the seduction and abduction of Helen as the sole objective. This is apparently the case in the *Cypria*, Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis* (580-6), *Hecuba* (634-5) and *Helen* (234-7) as well as Ovid's *Heroides* 16 and Colluthus' *Harpage*. However, Herodotus says that Paris did not go in search of Helen specifically, but just any Greek woman for a wife (Hdt.. 1.3). Servius' scholium to *Aeneid* 10.91 explains that Priam told Paris to abduct any daughter or wife of a Greek king as retribution for Hesione. But according to some later authors, Paris' primary concern is an altogether different one, and meeting Helen is just a coincidence. In Dares, Dracontius and the Excidium this pretext is the recovery of Paris' aunt Hesione, while in Malalas it is religious pilgrimage.

Towards the beginning of his letter to Helen, Ovid's Paris assures her that he has made the journey over the sea specifically for her and contrasts this with three other possible reasons for a journey to Greece:

Attulimus flammas, non hic invenimus, illas.
    hae mihi tam longae causa fuere viae,
nam neque tristis hiemps neque nos huc appulit error;
    Taenaris est classi terra petita meae. 30

nec me crede fretum merces portante carina
    findere — quas habeo, di tueantur opes!
nec venio Graias veluti spectator ad urbes
    — oppida sunt regni divitiora mei.
te peto, quam pepigit lecto Venus aurea nostro. 35

I have brought my flame; I did not find it here.
    This was my reason for such a long voyage,
for neither a gloomy tempest nor stray wandering has driven me here;
    Taenaris is the land my fleet aimed for. 30

Nor think that I part the ocean with a keel that carries profit
    — may the gods guard the goods that I own!

Nor do I come as a spectator to Greek cities
— the towns of my own kingdom are wealthier.
It is you I seek, you whom golden Venus promised for my bed. 35

(Ov. *Her* 16.27-35)

Although Ovid has chosen to tie in with the early poets in making Helen the only motivation for Paris' visit, his priamel encapsulates three other possibilities in which getting Helen is not the sole aim for the voyage, but rather a fortuitous byproduct. Those scenarios — Paris the shipwrecked, Paris the merchant and Paris the tourist — are rather another learned display of his awareness of alternative mythical traditions and have inspired later authors. Let us take a look at each one in turn.

The storm is first associated not with Paris' inbound journey, but with his and Helen's voyage back from Sparta to Troy. Proclus' summary of the *Cypria* tells us that Hera sent a storm which drove the couple to Sidon. This is echoed by Apollodorus *Epitome* 3.4. Later Dictys says that when sailing back from Sparta Paris took no heed of the weather and strong winds forced him to Cyprus (1.5), but we have no mention of a storm on the outbound way before Ovid. It is probably an allusion to similar stories, most notably that of Vergil's Aeneas who was driven off course by a storm and landed in Dido's Carthage (Verg. *Aen*. 1). Severus of Alexandria has Menelaus say that Alexander came after wandering astray (Ἀλέξανδρος ἧκε πεπλανημένος: *Ethopoea* 3), which could imply that he got lost or was brought by a sea storm. Dracontius adopts exactly that version of events. His Paris has been promised a beautiful wife by Venus and Priam reckons that he might meet her in Greece (*Rom*. 8.228-9), but his main mission is the recovery of Hesione. After their visit to Salamis, Paris and his crew steer back towards Troy, but encounter a heavy storm. While the other ships eventually continue to Troy, one ship — that of Paris, of course — is thought to have sunk. The prince is presumed dead, but is in fact driven to Cyprus, where he will meet Helen. The tempest is described in some detail by Dracontius and contains a monologue by Paris in which he laments the mortal dangers of the sea and suddenly longs for being a shepherd again. Thinking that he is about to perish, he launches into a praise of the joys of the countryside (*Rom*. 8.400-24). This exposes Paris' cowardice and shows that Dracontius is right in incessantly calling him a shepherd.[261] The idea of sea-travel being dangerous for landlubbers is very old: already Hesiod warned his brother Perses about sailing, especially in the wrong season, and preferred to stick to farming (Hes. *Op*. 618-62). A terrestrial creature venturing into a big body of water and then regretting is also a motif in the fable. One example is Perry 384 = *Vita Aesopi* 133, where a mouse agrees to join a frog in the water and drowns.[262] The story was also adapted for the premise of the *Batrachomyomachia*, where the mouse delivers a dying speech, not unlike Paris, in which he complains that he is the best at anything on land, but is helpless in the water

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[261] This is consistent with Paris' representation in the *Iliad* (see chapter 6.3).

[262] This is quite a literal example of the German term 'Landratte'.

(*Batr.* 95-7). But there is an even more striking parallel between Dracontius' storm episode and the fable of the shepherd and the sea (Perry 207).[263] There a shepherd sees that the sea is calm and decides to sell his flock and instead buys dates to make a profit. He loads the fruit onto a ship and sets sail, but is caught up in a storm which capsizes the vessel. He loses all of his cargo and barely escapes with his life. The moral is similar in Dracontius and the fable: if a shepherd becomes haughty and pretends to be somebody else, he will suffer bad consequences. But while the shepherd of the fable learns from the incident, it does not seem to have any effect on Paris who goes on to unleash a calamity far greater than the loss of some dates.

One has to wonder whether there may be any connection between (Dracontius' echo of) the fable of the shepherd-turned-merchant and the second hypothetical reason for sailing the sea presented by Ovid's Paris. As sea travel is commonly linked to trade, this is a plausible addition to the tricolon. However, it is not rooted in any tradition of the Trojan saga or any other myths, since money-making does not belong to the realm of grand tales about aristocrats. It must rather be a more recent spin. In the context of seducing Helen, again, Paris' refusal of monetary gain underlines his romantic aspirations as well as his wealth without the need of earning it. Yet there is one later text which does in fact portray Paris as a quasi-salesman: in the *Excidium Troiae* (p. 7, 24-p. 8, 13) Helen and a richly adorned Paris catch sight of one another on the shores and fall in love. Helen then sends messengers to Paris under a pretext, asking if he had any *ornamentum* for sale that would please a queen. It is not clear whether she genuinely thinks that the Trojans have come to Greece to trade or whether she only pretends as an excuse to make contact. Paris replies that he does indeed have something she might like and she asks for it to be brought to her. Then Paris changes his clothes, presumably so as to look like one of his servants, and comes to Helen with some goods. She is smitten when she sees him and tells him that she would like to meet his king in secret, because she fell in love with him on the shore. Thereupon Paris reveals that he is actually the king she saw, but that he disguised himself so as not to be recognised, and thus the affair ensues.

It is not explained what the exact purpose of Paris' costume might be; is he trying to trick Helen to see whether she is interested in him as a person or just in his rich attire? Or is he rather deceiving everybody else, pretending that his acquaintance with Helen is just a business relation, in order that their flirtations would go unnoticed? As to Helen, does the fact that she is attracted to the 'merchant', but asks to see his king, mean that she is not really fooled by the disguise? Much is baffling about this episode and the *Excidium* in general. While it is possible that the salesman story originates from this text, and may well have been drawn from these two lines of Ovid, the compressed style of narration suggests that it is a digest of another, more elaborate tale. I seems to be a vestige of a version in which Paris, à la Odysseus, is at first reluctant to reveal his true identity for whatever reason. If this is a legitimate assumption, the next question is obviously whether this niche material preceded Ovid. If so, we can be almost certain

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[263] I am grateful to Anna Lefteratou for pointing this out to me.

that the accomplished poet would have picked it up and commented on it. Thus an ideal reader would understand exactly what Paris means in the *Heroides*: not only is he not a merchant, but he is not even pretending to be.

The third motivation denied by Ovidian Paris is *Wanderlust*. This one is quite well-established in antehomeric mythology. It is found as early as Alcidamas who says that after speaking to Telephus Paris went to Greece to see three things: Delphi, Helen's beauty and Telephus' birthplace (*Odysseus* 17). It is interesting that Helen forms part of the triad, but is tucked away in second place, being neither the top of the list nor the grand finale. This reduces the beautiful woman to just another sight, alongside famous cities and shrines, and thus provides an even starker contrast to Ovid's Paris who cares about nothing else but Helen. Paris' sightseeing comes up again and again in post-Ovidian authors. In Lucian's *Dearum Iudicium*, Aphrodite promises Paris that he shall marry Helen and briefs him on how to achieve that. Her first instruction is that he should go abroad as though to look around Greece (ἀποδημήσεις ὡς ἐπὶ θέαν τῆς Ἑλλάδος: 15). In this instance, just as the merchant story of the *Excidium*, Paris only simulates touristic intentions in order to get to Helen. For Dictys, however, it is a genuine travel bug: 'he embraced the desire of seeing regions and kingdoms located far away' (*quem […] cupidinem cepisse visendi regiones atque regna procul posita*: 3.26).

In Colluthus, finding Helen is of course Paris' chief concern, but the poem still taps into the sightseeing tradition for a different purpose. We first hear that the fleet sails through Thrace, which gives Colluthus the opportunity to tell the embedded story of Phyllis and *Ennea Hodoi* (211-7).[264] Thereafter Paris' ship comes to Thessaly (Haemonia), where Peleus had married Thetis at the beginning of our poem (Coll. 17-8), and Phthia and Mycenae are briefly singled out as places he passes through (Coll. 220). This, I believe, is not without significance: Phthia is home to Achilles, while Mycenae is ruled by Agamemnon and it is the place where he and Menelaus grew up. After Paris will have completed his journey, those men will become important figures in the life of the prince and of Troy. For now, however, he passes cluelessly and peacefully in full view of the people he is about to make enemies of.[265] There is much irony in this one verse, since the Greek chiefs would have actually been able to stop Paris in his tracks, and thus prevent the Trojan War there and then, if only they had known of his intentions.[266] Once Paris finally gets to Sparta and disembarks, he still does not go straight to the palace, but first looks around the city with its houses and the temples of Athena and Apollo, as well as the shrine of Hyacinthus which is used as a peg for another paranarrative, the aetiology of the hyacinth flower (Coll. 235-46). Although not explicitly stated by Colluthus, learned readers would have known that Hyacinthus was a

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[264] See the relevance of this in chapter 7.3.

[265] Cf. chapter 6.3 for Helen's speech on Phthia and its men.

[266] Cf. also the tale by Ister, presented by Plutarch as very doubtful, that Paris was overcome in battle by Achilles and Patroclus in Thessaly (Plut. *Thes*. 34.2 = FGrH 334 F 7). It is, however, not explained at what point this is supposed to have happened, why they fought or what the consequences were.

young boy whom Apollo loved, but accidentally hit him with a discus and killed him (Apollod. *Bibl*. 1.3.3). I thoroughly agree with the suggestion by Magnelli that this story must be designed to mirror an obscure myth that explains another possible motivation for Paris' coming to Greece.[267] According to Tzetzes' scholium to Lycoph. *Alex*. 132, Paris had accidentally killed his and Deiphobus' beloved, Antenor's son Antheus, during a game and therefore fled Troy to Sparta. The similarities are too obvious.[268] The *Harpage* thus challenges us to make a connection through high-level mythical synthesis.

Dracontius' Paris, too, shows some remnants of the explorer motif, though for him it is not about seeing the world, but about winning glory to make up for the ignominious shepherding years (*Rom*. 8.215-9). During the journey itself, the sailors pass Tenedos, Abydos and Sestos before they reach Salamis (*Rom*. 8.246-8). Finally John Malalas relates that exactly 57 days after he had been reunited with his family after the exposure, Priam sent Paris on a journey to Greece to make sacrifice to Apollo Daphnaios (perhaps at the temple of Apollo Daphnephoros in Eretria?), as thanks for his return. Priam also gives Paris a letter to show to the kings of Europe as proof of who he is, as well as gifts to give them for their hospitality (5.3). However, he ends up doing the opposite: not only does he not go to the temple nor make any sacrifice, but also rather than giving gifts to his host he actually steals his wife plus a considerable amount of treasure (5.5). Thus here, as in Dracontius, Paris' voyage is not primarily linked to his future with Helen, but rather to his past, and represents a rite of passage.

2. Shipbuilding

As to the practicalities of Paris' journey, we often hear that his ships had to be built first, before he could sail off. One source even intimates that the Trojans had never built any ships before (Dares 6). In fact, it is only Dracontius who makes it clear that the vessels already existed, as Paris sees them on the shore before asking Priam to let him go (*Rom*. 8.218). All texts that talk about the construction of Paris' ships agree that they were made using timber from Mt Ida, or more precisely Phalacra.[269] Where the kind of wood

[267] Magnelli (2008: 160-1).

[268] Perhaps Paris and Deiphobus are rivals for Antheus' heart as Apollo and Zephyrus are for Hyacinthus'. Interestingly, it is none other than Deiphobus who marries Helen after Paris' demise.

[269] Eur. *Hec*. 631-3 Lycoph. *Alex*. 22-7, Triph. 60-1, Dares 8, Coll. 195

is specified, it is either pine or fir, two conifers that can easily be confounded, so much so that both kinds are named in different pieces by Euripides and Ovid, respectively.[270]

Regarding the engineer of the ships, there is some confusion at the beginning of the tradition, due to unfortunate grammar and syntax in a passage from the *Iliad*:

> Μηριόνης δὲ Φέρεκλον ἐνήρατο, τέκτονος υἱὸν
> Ἁρμονίδεω, ὃς χερσὶν ἐπίστατο δαίδαλα πάντα
> τεύχειν: ἔξοχα γάρ μιν ἐφίλατο Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη:
> ὃς καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τεκτήνατο νῆας ἐΐσας
> ἀρχεκάκους, αἳ πᾶσι κακὸν Τρώεσσι γένοντο
> οἷ τ᾽ αὐτῷ, ἐπεὶ οὔ τι θεῶν ἐκ θέσφατα ᾔδη.
>
> And Meriones slew Phereclus, son of the craftsman
> Harmonides, who was skilled in fashioning all kinds of curious work
> with his hands; for Pallas Athene loved him above all.
> He it was who had also built for Alexander the well-balanced ships,
> the sources of evil that became a bane for all the Trojans
> and for himself, since he did not know anything of the oracles of the gods.
>
> (*Il.* 5.59-64)

Homer's exposition leaves us none the wiser as to who built Paris' ships. Was it Phereclus or his father Harmonides? Furthermore, some editors add another complication by printing τέκτων as a name, which would make Tekton Phereclus' father and Harmon his grandfather. Thus depending on who the carpenter is, the doom he brings upon himself would be either his own death or that of his son or even grandson. The argument in favour of Phereclus is that this is his dying scene, so the analepsis should be about his life, but then again it would certainly not hurt to mention the fame of his ancestors at this point either. The counterargument is that Phereclus' name is not related to carpentry like that of Harmonides (or Tekton, for that matter) and that perhaps he should not be a soldier as well as a builder.[271] One ancient Homeric scholar indirectly shows that the above lines have always been prone to misunderstanding: he takes the ship-builder to be Harmonides, but acknowledges that some post-Homeric writers opted for Phereclus instead (Schol. *Il.* 3.443). Perhaps for that reason, Euripides steers clear of the debate and attributes, surely by way of metonymy, the tree-cutting and ship-building to Paris himself (*Hel.* 229-235, *Hec.*

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[270] Eur. *Hel.* 229-35 (πεύκη), *Hec.* 631-3 (ἐλάτη). Ovid refers to firs in one poem (Ov. *Her.* 5.41: *abies*), but to pines and other trees in another (Ov. *Her.* 16.107-8: *pineta […] quaeque erat aequoreis utilis arbor aquis*). Colluthus talks of δρύες (195), but this is likely to mean simply 'tree', rather than 'oak'.

[271] Cf. Kirk (1990: 60), Currie (2015: 287).

631-4). However, after that it is Phereclus who is established as the naval engineer in all subsequent authors.[272]

As we have seen, wherever the construction process is described further, the ships often carry ominous attributes and are called the start of all ills, being the manifestation of Paris' intention to sail to Greece.[273] Triphiodorus compares Paris' ship with the Trojan Horse, because its inventor Epeius worked with wood cut from Ida, just as Phereclus had done before him (57-61).[274] But the two projects also have in common the fact that they are baneful to the very place they came from: one vehicle is used to start the War, the other to end it, in both cases to the detriment of the heedless Trojans. The building of Alexander's ship(s) also compares unfavourably to that of another famous vessel, the Argo.[275] Apollonius tells us at the start of his *Argonautica* that, according to former bards, Argus wrought it under instructions from Athena (Ap. Rhod. 1.18-9), who is the patron goddess of carpentry.[276] She also made a beam from Dodonian oak for its keel which uttered prophecies (Ap. Rhod. 1.524-7, 4.580-3). Later writers even say that it was the first ship ever to sail the sea.[277] In contrast, already the *Cypria*-summary tells that Paris' ships were made at Aphrodite's suggestion. This circumstance is further developed by Colluthus. He says that, amazingly, Phereclus designed and completed the ships in a single day, but states explicitly that Athena was neither involved in their planning nor their furnishing (199-200). Instead, Paris beseeches Aphrodite with sacrifice before he begins the voyage (202-3). As has emerged in the previous chapter, Athena the warrior and Aphrodite the love-maker are diametrically opposed, and this could be expanded to the aspect of sailing. Additionally, Paris acts as an extension, or minion, of Aphrodite throughout.[278] While Athena is presented as untaught of the harmony of love and marriage (Coll. 31, 185), Paris is

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[272] Lycoph. *Alex.* 97, Apollod. *Epit.* 3.2, Ov. *Her.* 16.22, Triph. 60-1, Coll 196-8. Curiously, Plutarch tells us that according to Simonides a certain Phereclus, son of Amarsyas, was the pilot of Theseus' ship (*Thes.* 17.5 = Simonides fr. 550 *PMG*).

[273] The adjective ἀρχέκακος (*Il.* 5.63) is echoed by Colluthus 196, but applied to Phereclus himself. The ships are also described as ὀλόμενον σκάφος (Eur. *Hel.* 232) and πήματος ἀρχή (Triph. 61).

[274] Unlike Phereclus, Epeius is the undisputed builder of the horse across our sources: *Od.* 8.492-3, *Il. Parv.* fr. 1 (synopsis by Proclus), Verg. *Aen.* 2.264, QS 12.108-10, cf. Stesichorus fr. 100 (from the beginning of the *Sack of Troy*), where Epeius used to be the water-carrier for the Atreids.

[275] For parallels between the story of Jason and Medea and that of Paris and Helen, see chapter 6.4.

[276] Cf. Ap. Rhod. 3.340-1, Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.16. In the *Orphic Argonautica* Hera orders Athena to build the ship (63-9), but Argus engineers its launch (237-40) and is said to have attached the oak beam at Athena's behest (266-8).

[277] Ps-Eratosthenes *Catasterismi* 35, Catull. 64.11, *Orphic Argonautica* 66-9.

[278] Here, again, he is opposed to Jason who is the favourite of both Athena and Hera (Ap. Rhod. 3.66-73)

ignorant of the sea (Coll. 8). Moreover, the abuse hurled at Athena by Aphrodite that she is neither man nor woman (Coll. 185-9) is later echoed by Paris in what appears to be a jibe at Menelaus (Coll. 299-302). The lack of help from Athena with the construction of ships is just one in a series of foreboding signs Paris encounters.[279] Another one is the waterspout that is described in some detail and even evaluated by the narrator as 'portents of miserable hardships' (πολυτλήτων σημήια φαίνετο μόχθων: Coll. 205-9).[280] But Paris takes no notice. In other works, the moment of Alexander's departure triggers grim prophecies by (Helenus and) Cassandra.[281] Colluthus chose to include a snapshot of Cassandra's lamentation at the very end of his piece, so these omens may be regarded as a substitute for the seers at this point. Dracontius and Colluthus both insert a hostile maritime phenomenon into Paris' journey.[282] Yet their purposes are entirely different: whilst Dracontius' storm is necessary to advance the narrative, Colluthus' waterspout is merely a decoration which has no effect on the plot. However, in both instances the behaviour of the ocean can be taken as a warning (from the gods?) and in both instances Paris is ultimately oblivious.

3. Companions

Despite the obvious focus on Alexander, I am not aware of any text which claims that the prince went on his journey all by himself. Although sometimes authors speak only of a singular ship of Paris, namely the one he was personally aboard, this does not exclude other accompanying ships. Most times we indeed hear of an entire fleet being built and putting out to sea. Lycophron even specifies that there were nine vessels, while Dares knows of twenty-two (Lycoph. *Alex.* 101, Dares 44). Homer's Paris sailed the ocean after gathering trusty companions (*Il.* 3.47). Ovid, too, speaks of some unnamed *comites* (Ov. *Her.* 5.50). Malalas mentions 100 Phrygian youths (5.3). As one might expect, the scenario of the 2004 film *Troy*, where Hector and Paris go to Greece on a 'Grand Tour' or political mission which ends in a disaster because of Paris' foolish lust (he hides Helen under deck without Hector's knowledge), is not grounded in any ancient evidence. One story which vaguely points towards the brothers' journey together is

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[279] See Magnelli (2008: 159-62) on evil omens that go unnoticed in Colluthus.

[280] Giangrande (1975) praises Colluthus' descriptive accuracy in this passage modelled on Ap. Rhod. 2.169-87.

[281] *Cypria* fr. 1, Lycophron *Alexandra*, Ennius, *Alex. 57-72* = Cicero*, de Div.,* 1.31.66.

[282] De Prisco (1977: 296-7), however, wrongly states that Colluthus also speaks of a storm, in order to equate the two.

outrightly dismissed even as it is transmitted by Plutarch, its only surviving source.[283] Instead, other Trojan nobles recur as companions on Paris' journey. In Proclus' *Cypria* synopsis Aphrodite orders her son Aeneas to go with Paris, though we hear nothing else of his involvement. This idea was also perpetuated in later imperial literature: Dictys mentions that Paris came with Aeneas and other of his relatives (3), but their function is not clear here either, as they are not mentioned again in that chapter. Dares makes the journey preparation a joint venture of Paris and Deiphobus who raise an army (8). Priam appoints Paris as the commander-in-chief and Deiphobus, Aeneas and Polydamas as officers; they are also piloted by the same (unnamed) man who had previously gone to Greece with Antenor (9). But again the companions play no role whatsoever in the abduction or its aftermath.

Only Dracontius finds a reasonable occupation for Alexander's entourage. As he collapses Dares' two journeys into one, he does the same with the travellers, and thus has Antenor, Polydamas and Aeneas go with Paris (*Rom*. 8.240). Antenor and Polydamas each give a long speech during the encounter with Telamon, the former enraging the king and the latter calming him down again (*Rom*. 8.260-84, 327-48), while Aeneas later speaks some parting words after the conflict has been resolved (372-378). Paris himself remains conspicuously silent. When the legates later return to Troy without Alexander, they are given more reported speech. Aeneas informs Priam of the outcome of their negotiations with Telamon (*Rom*. 8.586-7) and Antenor breaks to him the sad news about the storm and Paris (*Rom*. 8.590-6). The companions are thus essential as witnesses and messengers to this unique plot twist. But the companions, and particularly Aeneas, are important not only on a literal, but also on a symbolic level. In addition to the discussion in chapter 3.4, another way in which Dracontius' *De Raptu* antagonizes the *Aeneid* is through the polarity of their male protagonists, and Paris' journey becomes a kind of distorted prototype of the Aeneiadic voyage.[284] Traditionally, there is a notable familial tie between the two characters, as they are both second cousins and brothers-in-law.[285] Simons has drawn attention to the fact that Paris is an anti-Aeneas.[286]

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[283] The fragment in question comes from Ister's *Attic History* and tells that while Paris was being defeated by Achilles and Patroclus in Thessaly, Hector took and plundered Troezen and carried away Aethra (Plut. *Thes*. 34.2 = FGrH 334 F 7), Helen's attendant woman who is often said to have been taken to Troy alongside her (cf. chapter 7.2 for the full tradition around Aethra). We do not find out at what point these events are supposed to have taken place, but the kidnapping of Aethra would suggest that it was in conjunction with the abduction of Helen, and thus implies Hector's presence on that journey.

[284] Interestingly, in Dares 44, when Aeneas escapes from Troy he takes the 22 ships which Paris used to sail to Greece.

[285] Their common great-grandfather is Ilus, and Aeneas' wife Creusa is commonly known as Paris' sister (Apollod. *Bibl*. 3. 12. 5 and Hyginus *Fab*. 90).

[286] Simons (2005: 280-2).

Priam chooses Aeneas to go with Paris for his divine descent and good reputation (*Rom.* 8.238-41).[287] In his few appearances he shows himself to be quite the type of pious hero we know from Vergil: he converses with Ajax (*Rom.* 8.364-5) and praises his war prowess in the farewell address to Telamon, (*Rom.* 8.372-378). Of course this is an ironic detail, given that the same Ajax is later to destroy his city, but it also furthers the disparity between Aeneas and Paris: the former tries to maintain friendly terms which are subsequently thwarted by the latter's folly. Aeneas wishes the family well and, as we might expect from his famous care for multiple generations (illustrated by his rescue of his father and his son from the burning city of Troy), he speaks of a happy old age for Telamon and a blooming youth for Ajax. Paris then presents a stark contrast, since his actions are to rend apart the family bliss. And sure enough, once Aeneas' good influence is removed from the scene through the shipwreck, Paris is free to wreak havoc and seduces Helen. Significant parallels have been drawn between the meeting scene of Paris and Helen and that of Aeneas and Dido in Vergil.[288] However this only alerts us further to how different the outcomes are: with Aeneas, reason ultimately wins over passion, but the opposite is true of Paris. The two heroes reflect on each other unfavourably: it is easy to see that on the one hand Paris' negative characterisation is to a large extent based on his role as a counterpart to Aeneas. On the other hand, this does not make Aeneas better, but rather taints his image, since he is part of a race of Trojans who are all adulterers and cheaters. It thus undermines the very foundation of the *Aeneid* and Roman founding myth: in the new Christian era the descendants of the lustful, egoistic Phrygians do not deserve to rule the world, but to meet a ruinous end — which they indeed did with the Vandal invasions.

[287] Díaz de Bustamente (1978: 128) credits Aeneas with importance in the epyllion, but this is only true on a symbolic level.

[288] Morelli (1912: 109), Bright (1987: 122-4), Edwards (2004: 155), Wasyl (2011: 83-4).

Chapter 6

Paris and Helen

We now come to the central topic of this exposition; the Abduction of Helen itself. First, it will be useful to survey notions from a multitude of sources to see how apt it is to describe the event as an abduction at all. Next the different versions of the mythical circumstances will be presented. Thereafter I shall discuss the nature of the pivotal interactions between Paris and Helen that lead to their departure, where the receptions of predecessors and the creativity displayed in the versions by Colluthus and Dracontius will become clear. We have frequently noted that, despite their common title, the two *Abduction of Helen* epyllia exhibit little related material. However, the most conspicuous scene that is shared by the two texts is the first conversation between Paris and Helen which results in an immediate decision to elope.

1. Menelaus on Crete

Early sources agree that when Paris arrived in Sparta, Menelaus was present at first, but then went to Crete, thus leaving the stranger free to seduce Helen. While the episode is not narrated in the *Iliad*, Menelaus implies that he hosted Paris by saying that the Greeks have offended Ζεύς ξένιος, the god of guest-friendship, when they carried off his wife (*Il*. 13.623-7). At *Il*. 3.230-233 Helen points out the Achaeans to Priam and says of Idomeneus that he used to be Menelaus' guest in their house whenever he came from Crete, which may present a link to the story of the abduction, during which it was Menelaus who went to Crete. The journey is first mentioned by the *Cypria*: the synopsis states that when Alexander comes to Lacedaemon, he is first entertained by the Tyndarids, i.e. the Dioscuri, and afterwards by Menelaus in Sparta and gives gifts to Helen during a feast; afterwards Menelaus departs for Crete, ordering Helen to provide the guests with whatever they require. It is also alluded to in Eur. *Troad*. 943-4, but without giving a reason for it. In Alcidamas the children of Molos come from Crete, saying that their father has died and they cannot agree on the division of his estate and ask Menelaus for help; so he decides to sail to Crete (*Odysseus* 17). Apollod. *Epit*. 3.3 states that Menelaus entertained Paris in Sparta for nine days, but on the tenth he left for Crete where he had to perform the funeral of his maternal grandfather. Ovid reminds us several times of Menelaus' whereabouts, but with no explanation (Ov. *Her.* 16.301-2, 17.163). However Helen states *magna fuit subitae iustaque causa viae* ('there was a great and just reason for his sudden journey'), and adds that he was unsure whether he should go or not (Ov. *Her.* 17.156-158). A different, even more meaningful interaction between Menelaus and Paris is found in Lycophron, along with explanations by Tzetzes. Sparta was afflicted with a plague, so, at the behest of an oracle, Menelaus went to Troy

to offer sacrifice at the tombs of Lycus and Chimaereus. There he chanced upon Paris. The latter had accidentally killed his and Deiphobus' young beloved Antheus during a game.[289] He was therefore on the run and sought refuge with Menelaus who took him back to Sparta and offered him hospitality (Tzetzes, schol. in Lycoph. *Alex*. 132).

From this survey, it is conspicuous that Menelaus' motivations are always altruistic, as if to provide an even starker contrast between his piety and observance of social norms and reckless Paris who takes advantage of those benevolent qualities. The unique story from Lycophron, in particular, shows both Menelaus' dedication to his kingdom and his extraordinary kindness towards Alexander, the abuse of which is especially outrageous. Not surprisingly, this sense of unfairness is addressed in the short ethopoeia of Menelaus by Severus of Alexandria. He opens his speech by stating that 'the ones who were living piously have failed' (ἠτυχήσαμεν εὐσεβήσαντες) and that his favours have been repaid with misfortunes, his φιλοξενία with tears (*Eth*. 3.1-10).

Dictys, so-called Dictys Cretensis, unsurprisingly takes Menelaus' business at Crete as the starting point of his six-book account, albeit with some modifications. He says that Menelaus and Agamemnon, who were sons of Plisthenes, were adopted by Atreus, the son of Minos. The two went to Crete to collect the share that was bequeathed to them after his death. This plays with the other authors' reasons for Menelaus' departure mentioned above. Firstly, his grandfather from Crete whom Menelaus goes to bury in Apollodorus is Catreus, the son of Minos, so it is easy to see how the name has been changed to Atreus who is usually the Atreids' biological father.[290] Secondly, while Molos' son Meriones is also among the heirs, as in Alcidamas, Menelaus goes to Crete for his own gain, rather than to act as a judge. While Dictys' text puts emphasis on the Crete episode as a means of advertising its narrator's home country, Dares Phrygius probably avoids mention of it for a related reason. As Dares' story was designed deliberately to rival that of Dictys, it seems to make a point of actively withdrawing attention from Dictys' island, even at the cost of openly subverting an established tradition. Then again, Dares' chief concern is the innovation and manipulation of the Troy myths and thus he probably takes pride in being the only author to alter Menelaus' travel destination. What is more, he does this in a 'big way': in Dares 9, Paris and Menelaus actually pass each other on the sea. Paris is supposedly on the way to Sparta to ask Castor and Pollux for the return of Hesione, while Menelaus is going to Pylos to visit Nestor (shortly before, Antenor had gone there too to recover Hesione, without success). Dares states that each party wondered whither the other was heading. It is not clear whether Paris ever gets to Sparta, but we are told that the Dioscuri had gone to visit Clytaemnestra at Argos and taken Hermione with them, thus,

[289] On the mirroring of the Antheus-myth in Colluthus' story of Hyacinthus, see chapter 5.1.

[290] Plisthenes is, however, given as the father of Agamemnon and Menelaus by Hesiod (*Catalogue of Women*, fr. 69) and Aeschylus (*Agamemnon*, 1569, 1602). See also Stes. fr. 180, Ibyc. fr. S151.21 *PMGF* and *Bacchyl*. 15.48. In a scholium on Pind. *Ol*. 1.144ce Plisthenes is Pelops' son and Atreus' brother. According to Hyginus, *Fab*. 86, Plisthenes was Atreus' son, but was raised by Atreus' brother Thyestes. Later Thyestes sent the young man to kill Atreus, but Atreus killed him instead, unaware that it was his own son.

conveniently, leaving Helen all alone. Again contrary to expectations, Paris does not meet Helen in Sparta, but the location of their encounter is also changed to Cythera, tellingly the island sacred to Aphrodite, where Helen decides to go for religious reasons (10). Dares' move of the love story to a remote place associated with the Goddess of Love is clearly echoed by Dracontius who in turn transfers it to Cyprus. Curiously, Dares' Helen goes to Cythera to worship Diana and Apollo, while in Dracontius it is, more appropriately, the festival of Dione who is Aphrodite's mother according to the *Iliad* (*Rom.* 8.435-6; *Il.* 5.370). Schissel von Fleischenberg thought that Dares based his work on Dracontius' — it has since been established that the authors' dependency in fact works the other way — but was unaware of the figure of Dione and substituted the more well-known goddess of a similar name, also adding her brother Apollo.[291] The introduction of Diana into the abduction of Helen may furthermore not be as surprising as one might think. Ptolemy Chennus recorded a tradition in which Helen was abducted while hunting on the mount of the Virgin (Photius, *bibl. cod.* 190, 149a), which strongly suggests a link with Artemis. The *Excidium* says that Menelaus and Agamemnon went abroad to an unspecified place (probably together) and their wives went alone to the suburbs (*Excidium* p.7.20-3). But it is unclear why Agamemnon's wife, who is not even named, plays a role, since there is no mention of Clytaemnestra after that. Malalas, as usual, inspired by Dictys, says that Menelaus' father was Plisthenes, but that he was brought up by Atreus together with Atreus' own son Agamemnon. The chronographer portrays him as a super-host who received Paris as though he were his own son. However, he was about to sail off to Crete with his relatives, as was his annual custom, to sacrifice to Zeus and Europa, who was his own ancestor.

Colluthus' and Dracontius' versions are jointly unique in that they both assume that Menelaus is in Crete from the outset. Dracontius tells us early on that Helen came to Cyprus while Crete kept her husband (*Rom.* 8.440-1); *retinet* could mean simply that the island holds Menelaus in a spacial sense, but it is probable that, as in other versions, he is detained there on some business. In Colluthus' poem the information about Menelaus is only imparted near the end, and even then it needs to be inferred from Hermione's request to the birds to fly to Crete and tell her father what happened at home (Coll. 382). The closest Paris gets to meeting Menelaus is when he passes the Atreid kingdom of Mycenae on his way to Sparta (220), but it is unclear whether he is aware of its relevance. Unlike in the versions in which Menelaus is there at first, in the two epyllia the lovers have no opportunity to get to know each other and seemingly decide to elope having only just met, which is much less realistic; although it is possible that their courtship period has been collapsed for narrative economy.

[291] Schissel von Fleischenberg (1908: 154-6).

2. Abduction or Seduction?

The question of Helen's willingness to go with Paris is often directly translated into blame for causing the Trojan war. It is not my concern to pass such judgements, but rather to explore the various opinions as well as possible reasons for them. As will become apparent, most authors present the elopement of the couple as strictly speaking the result of a seduction (with or without divine assistance), rather than a violent abduction. In the *Iliad* guilt-ridden Helen constantly insults herself, wishes that she had had a better husband or that she had died before coming to Troy. It is clear that she did follow Paris willingly, but came to regret it. Nevertheless, she also attributes this to Aphrodite and the fate given by Zeus (*Il*. 3.173-6, 6. 24.763-6, 6.344-8). The issue of Helen's responsibility is prominent in tragedy. In a fragment of Sophocles' Ἑλένης ἀπαίτησις (*Demand for Helen's return*), which probably deals with the embassy sent to the Trojans before the war, Helen is said to scratch her cheeks with pencils (fr. 177), which could either be a sign of mourning for her kidnapping or self-punishment for committing adultery. A fragment attributed to Aeschylus' *Palamedes* mentions τὴν βίαιον ἁρπαγὴν with the name of Paris (fr. 180a.5). This would make sense if spoken by a Greek who is trying to incriminate the enemy. In Euripides' *Troades* Helen's fault is a recurring theme. Helen claims that Paris married her with the help of Aphrodite and under constraint (*Troad*. 924-50; 963), while Cassandra and Hecuba think it ludicrous and attack her for joining Paris of her own accord (*Troad*. 373, 983-4, 998-1001). Menelaus, too, agrees with them, and adds that his wife invented Aphrodite's involvement in order to boast (*Troad*. 1036-9).

Gorgias, in his defence of Helen, introduces the possible reasons for her action as fortune, divine plans, force, persuasion or being conquered by Love (6), all of which are expanded in the speech. In modern terms, this description might chime with Helen as a victim of grooming. Isocrates in his version concentrates chiefly on the plan of Zeus as the sole cause of everything (17), thereby also depriving the woman of agency. Alcidamas' Odysseus says that Paris deceived Helen (18). Lycophron portrays Helen as unwilling, either beguiled or raped or both, by comparing the pair to a wolf and a heifer or a fowler and a bird (*Alex*. 102-9). Apollodorus (*Epitome* 3.3) remarks that Alexander persuaded Helen to come with him. In Ovid's *Heroides* Oenone tries to demonstrate Helen's lack of propriety, for obvious reasons, and purports that surely she offered herself to the abduction, given that it had already happened once before with Theseus (*Her.* 5.132). In Lucian's *Iudicium* 15, Aphrodite assures Paris that she will compel Helen to fall in love with him, aided by Love and Desire. Dictys mentions that he fell in love and carried her away without any more details (1.3), but later Helen begs Priam not to return her to the Greeks; the two possible reasons for this are cited as her love for Paris or fear of punishment by Menelaus (1.9). Meanwhile, in Dares Helen is 'not unwilling' to leave Sparta, but has regrets and is comforted by Paris shortly after when the couple stop over on Tenedos (10) and again in Troy where she is comforted by Priam who had sent Paris to Greece in the first place (11). Ptolemy Chennus could be

hinting at the fact that Helen was running away from Paris' forced advances when he relates that a place called Sandalion in Sparta took its name from Helen's sandal, since she fell there while being pursued by Alexander (Photius *Bibl.* cod 190.149b).

Before Colluthus and Dracontius, the only other author that gives a detailed insight into the workings of Helen's and Paris' courtship is Ovid. His *Her.* 16 (*Paris Helenae*) and 17 (*Helena Paridi*) are a pair of love letters exchanged between the lovers, presenting the events from their point of view at this crucial moment. Full of pro- and analepses, the letters are relevant to our subject throughout, but in particular to the courtship episode. The initial circumstances are recapitulated in a series of situations which have finally escalated in the letters to hand. We hear about the pair's furtive flirtations hitherto and Paris airs his frustration at seeing Helen with Menelaus (*Her.* 16.215-34; 17.75-90). He recalls the judgement of the goddesses and Aphrodite's aid in coming to Sparta (*Her.* 16.51-88). Ovid's Alexander is persuasive, if a little arrogant. He promises gifts and riches to win Helen over (*Her.* 337-8). He also sees everything in an overly positive light and does not care about any difficulties which may arise from the affair (*Her.* 16.341-4). In contrast, Ovid's Helen is portrayed with much depth, vacillating between reason and passion (17. 175-188). In her sober approach, she does not care for the offer of gifts (*Her.* 17.56-72, 225). She is reluctant to be disloyal to Menelaus and is very preoccupied with her reputation (*Her.* 17.11-18, 95-8, 113-4).

Quite the opposite is true of the Helen in the *Excidium Troiae* (p. 8.6-25). Paris is in disguise and professes his love as soon as he meets Helen. She asks him who he is. He answers concisely and states that Venus has promised her to him as a bride. She replies that she would like that too. Paris, somewhat surprised, asks how that might be possible. Helen explains that she would die, if they do not get married and that she already has a plan for their escape. As we are about to see, the courtship of the pair in the *Harpage* and the *De Raptu* is unrealistically brief and in each case Helen does not need much persuasion, but the speed-dating record is certainly set by the scene in the *Excidium*.

3. Colluthus and Predecessors

Ovid dedicates a combined total of 646 lines to his imagined correspondence, and thus he treats all imaginable aspects of the mythology most comprehensively. As such, it is not surprising that the significantly shorter conversations in the versions of Colluthus and Dracontius cover much of the same ground. Of course the epyllia display some obvious differences from Ovid, such as the absence of Menelaus from the beginning and Helen's complete lack of hesitation to betray her husband, but these can be attributed to their need for brevity. Yet the lines of reasoning and rhetoric resemble those in Ovid very much. I must note in particular that the similarities between some lines of Ovid and of Colluthus are striking. This has been observed long ago by Zöllner: he lists many

parallels in the instance of the Judgement of Paris. Moreover, in both texts, Paris longs for his promised bride, although he has never seen her (*Her.* 16.36, 103, Coll. 192).[292] Before looking at Helen, however, he visits the sights of Sparta: in Ovid he is shown around by Menelaus (*Her.* 16.131-2), while in Colluthus he embarks on a self-guided tour (Coll. 235-9). As a consequence, Sparta is compared with Troy (*Her.* 16.33-4, 177-91, Coll. 278-9, 312, 314) and Paris with Menelaus (*Her.* 16.205-11; Coll. 280-84; 299). Both poems emphasize Paris' hardship in completing a long sea journey for Helen's sake (Ov. *Her.* 16.27-8, 17.73-4, Coll. 295) However, Zöllner's survey also includes some rather tangential similarities and is not exhaustive: it can be pointed out in addition that, according to Ovidian Paris, Venus helped him by navigating through the sea and sending a favouring wind; he concludes that her ability to command the sea is logical, since she rose from it, and prays for her continued support (*Her.* 16.21-6). Meanwhile, in Colluthus Paris, too, beseeches his helper Aphrodite with sacrifices before he sails away (Coll. 202-3) and then the sea is described as a 'nurse' (τιθήνης, Coll. 204), which again suggests the birth of the goddess. In both authors the Cytherean promises Alexander that he will share a bed with Helen (*Her.* 16.20; Coll. 163-4), and as a result he asks Helen to marry him by invoking the divine endorsement from Venus/ Aphrodite (*Her.* 16.297-8, Coll. 296-7).

These parallels form the basis of a debate which is worth being recounted in brief. Despite putting forward the analogies between Ovid and Colluthus, Zöllner does not in fact accept that we are dealing with a direct dependency, but instead supposes a common lost Alexandrian model — he proposes Callimachus' *Aitia* — which he reconstructs from Ov. *Her.* 16 and Lucian's *Iudicium*.[293] This view is opposed by De Lorenzi who points out discrepancies with regard to plot in Colluthus in contrast with Ovid and Lucian and maintains that only the proem of the *Abduction* — which he believes to have been added by someone other than Colluthus — is based on Callimachus, while the narrative proper is inspired by the *Cypria*.[294] Zöllner's reasoning is however cautiously accepted by Livrea who rejects De Lorenzi's arguments by attributing the variations in Colluthus to his preferences for Nonnian style.[295] This can of course be neither proved nor disproved. West thinks that Colluthus may well have been directly influenced by Ovid.[296] Rocca concludes that Colluthus would have known parts of Ovid's *Her.* 16.[297] The same question, sometimes termed 'the Latin Question', has been much disputed in relation to Nonnus' knowledge of Ovid. Here, too, scholars

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[292] Cf. Lucian *Iudicium* 15.

[293] Zöllner (1892: 55-115).

[294] De Lorenzi (1929: 42-58).

[295] Livrea (1968: xiv-xxiii).

[296] West (1970: 658).

[297] However, she also senselessly claims that, if he had known the entire piece, he would have made more use of it (Rocca 1995: 46).

have indicated many points of contact between the two, but are reluctant to argue for a direct influence and instead often take the easy way out via lost Hellenistic intermediates. We know, however, that Claudian, a near-contemporary of Nonnus and also an Egyptian in origin, was bilingual. He was active in Rome and composed poetry mainly in Latin, but also a Greek *Gigantomachy*.[298] I see no problem with crediting Colluthus with an adequate knowledge of Latin as well as of the main Roman authors, which leads me to believe that he did indeed draw inspiration from Ovid.[299] I shall intersperse the following discussion with relevant references from Ovid and make clear the ways in which the *Heroides* may even serve as a key to unlock ambiguities about the *Abduction*.

Colluthus' meeting scene is demonstratively set out as a prequel to Book 3 of the *Iliad*, which therefore becomes its most prominent intertext. In Homer, Paris famously challenges Menelaus to fight to the death in single combat, with Helen and her possessions as the prize for the winner. After Paris' cowardly performance, just as Menelaus is about to kill him, Aphrodite snatches him up from the battlefield, hidden in a mist, and carries him to his bedroom. She then summons Helen to go and sleep with him. The latter refuses at first, ashamed of Paris' defeat, but is then threatened by the goddess and obeys. In the bedroom she first rebukes the man, but nevertheless follows him to bed. The very first encounter between Paris and Helen as presented by Colluthus is an inversion of these Iliadic events which are to take place about ten years later. Echoing the Homeric model that shows Helen's disappointment and resentment after many years of marriage, Colluthus creates a suitable account of the earliest stages of the relationship. He implicitly attributes the abduction to Paris' shameless mendacity and Helen's rose-tinted glasses, and it is easy to imagine a chronological progression from there to the hypotext. However, as will be shown, the reader is also oftentimes left in doubt with regard to events, the interpretation of speeches and the motives behind them, as the text refuses to spell them out.

Already at the opening there is an obvious juxtaposition with the *Iliad*:

> ἤδη δ’ ἀγχιδόμοισιν ἐπ’ Ἀτρείδαο μελάθροις
> ἵστατο θεσπεσίῃσιν ἀγαλλόμενος χαρίτεσσιν.
> οὐ Διὶ τοῖον ἔτικτεν ἐπήρατον υἷα Θυώνη·
> ἱλήκοις, Διόνυσε· καὶ εἰ Διός ἐσσι γενέθλης, 250

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[298] Cameron (1982: 233) also argues for the dissemination of Latin in 5th-century Egypt.

[299] As demonstrated by Cribiore (2007: 58), Latin teaching in Egypt was on a high after Diocletian and the Egyptian elite would have had at least a passive grasp of the language, if only for the purposes of becoming a civil servant or for a legal career, which involved learning Roman law. We might expect a court poet like Colluthus to know rather more than the average lawyer, but an ability understand and enjoy Ovid's poetry would have been enough to draw inspiration from it. Cf. also Agosti (2012: 370) for Latin poetry in Egypt and De Stefani (2006) for the specific case of Paul the Silentiary.

καλὸς ἔην καὶ κεῖνος ἐπ' ἀγλαΐῃσι προσώπων.
ἡ δὲ φιλοξείνων θαλάμων κληῖδας ἀνεῖσα
ἐξαπίνης Ἑλένη μετεκίαθε δώματος αὐλὴν
καὶ θαλερόν προπάροιθεν ὀπιπεύουσα θυράων
ὡς ἴδεν, ὣς ἐκάλεσσε καὶ ἐς μυχὸν ἤγαγεν αὐλῆς 255
καί μιν ἐφεδρήσσειν νεοπηγέος ὑψόθεν ἕδρης
ἀργυρέης ἐπέτελλε· κόρον δ' οὐκ εἶχεν ὀπωπῆς
ἄλλοτε δὴ χρύσειον ὀισαμένη Κυθερείης
κοῦρον ὀπιπεύειν θαλαμηπόλον—ὀψὲ δ' ἀνέγνω,
ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν Ἔρως· βελέων δ' οὐκ εἶδε φαρέτρην— 260
πολλάκι δ' ἀγλαΐῃσιν ἐυγλήνοιο προσώπου
παπταίνειν ἐδόκευε τὸν ἡμερίδων βασιλῆα·
ἀλλ' οὐχ ἡμερίδων θαλερὴν ἐδόκευεν ὀπώρην
πεπταμένην χαρίεντος ἐνὶ ξυνοχῇσι καρήνου.
ὀψὲ δὲ θαμβήσασα τόσην ἀνενείκατο φωνήν· 265
'ξεῖνε, πόθεν τελέθεις; ἐρατὸν γένος εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν.
ἀγλαΐην μὲν ἔοικας ἀριζήλῳ βασιλῆι,
ἀλλὰ τεὴν οὐκ οἶδα παρ' Ἀργείοισι γενέθλην.

Now he stopped by the near-dwelling palace of
Atreus' son and exulted in his divine graces.
Thyone did not bear such a lovely son to Zeus:
Forgive, Dionysus: even though you are an offspring of Zeus, 250
that one, too, was beautiful with the splendour of his face.
And she, Helen, unbarred the bolts of her hospitable
bedchambers and of a sudden came to the court of the house
and watching the blooming man in front of the doors,
just as she saw him, she called him and led him to the inmost part of 255
the hall and told him to sit down on a newly-made chair
of silver: and she would have no surfeit of the sight,
at one point she supposed that she was looking at the golden
youth who attends Cypris' bedchamber — and late she realized
that it was not Eros: she saw no quiver of arrows — 260
and often in the splendours of his bright-eyed face
she expected to look at the king of vines:
But she did not observe the blooming fruit of vines
looking upon the parting of his graceful head.
But after marvelling for a long time, she uttered such a voice: 265
'Stranger, where do you come from? Tell me your lovely lineage as well.
In beauty you look like a magnificent king,
but I do not know your family among the Argives.

(Coll. 247-68)

Rather than praising the beauty of Helen, as one might expect, Colluthus stresses the good looks of Paris. As has transpired in previous chapters, Paris is also portrayed as handsome by other authors. The most memorable instance is Philostratus' satirical *Heroicus* 40, where we hear that Paris always made a big fuss over his looks and was vain like a peacock (cf. Coll. 231-4). Ovid's Helen, too, admits that Paris' beauty is rare (Ov. *Her.* 17.93). Dares tells us that, as in Colluthus, Paris was very confident in his looks before he went out to meet Helen (Dares 10, Coll. 248). But while in Dares both parties are utterly struck by each other's beauty and gape at one another at length, Colluthus only shows Helen's attraction to Paris through an exaggerated description of staring, with Helen as focaliser. In the above passage we find no less than ten words pertaining to looking, one in almost every line.[300] Helen's predatory gaze at Alexander as the object reverses the standard literary gender roles.[301]

The comparison between Paris and Dionysus (249-51) and Helen's initial assumption that he is the god of wine (261-64) is curious. This has to be a humorous intertextual reference. One possibility is that it is some kind of comment on Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*, given that Colluthus borrows its language — throughout his poem, but in this instance in particular — and proceeds to put his own hero above that of his model.[302] However, it seems more plausible that it alludes to (material related to) Cratinus' *Dionysalexandros*, a comedy now largely lost, but very probably still available in Colluthus' time.[303] In that play Dionysus steals Helen pretending to be Paris and his effeminate prettiness is probably made fun of.[304] In fact, instead of offering him Helen directly, Aphrodite bribes Dionysus with the promise of making him most beautiful and attractive. Therefore it would be most appropriate for the narrator of the epyllion to apologise to the deity with an overblown apostrophe for preferring Paris' beauty. It would then be even more appropriate for a metaliterarily savvy Helen to suspect that her visitor might be Dionysus. Furthermore, Cratinus' play offers a refreshing moral evaluation of both Helen and Paris: we do not find out whether Dionysus leads Helen away (ἐξαγαγών) with or without her consent, but one might be more ready to forgive her for being unable to resist a god who is also beautified by Aphrodite. As for Paris, he

[300] ὀπιπεύουσα (254), ἴδεν (255), ὀπωπῆς (257), ὀισαμένη (258), ὀψὲ (259), εἶδε (260), παπταίνειν ἐδόκευε (262), ἐδόκευεν (263), πεπταμένην (264), θαμβήσασα (265).

[301] Morales (2016: 65).

[302] Orsini (1969: 22-3) argues that Colluthus makes a humorous statement about Nonnus' technique of apostrophising. See also Kotseleni (1990: 266 on line 249).

[303] Surviving fragments are cited, *inter alios,* by Macrobius (a century before Colluthus) and Photius (over three centuries after Colluthus).

[304] Wright (2007: 424) speculates that there may also have been a joke in the fact that Helen's abductor looks better than Helen herself. While Colluthus by no means implies that Helen is ugly, he concentrates only on Paris' looks, thus imbuing him, too, with an air of comedy.

is uniquely represented as an altruistic character. When he finds out about the abduction, he wants to give Helen back to Menelaus. When she is unwilling to go back, however, he takes pity on her (οἰκτείρας) and instead keeps her as his own wife (the motif of taking a bride partly out of pity has of course been pioneered by none other than Dionysus himself, who picks up Ariadne on Naxos).[305] Thus the playwright to some extent absolves Paris and Helen by scapegoating Dionysus. In Colluthus, the moment of confusion between Dionysus and Alexander briefly opens up that possibility. But as quickly as the doubts about Paris' identity are dispersed, we are reminded that this is not a comedy and the guilt of the couple becomes even more glaring.

While Colluthus' Helen enthusiastically invites Paris into her house (252-255) and delights in his beauty (254; 257-68), in the *Iliad* it is Aphrodite who tells the woman to come home to his bedchamber and has to persuade her of his appealing looks:[306]

δεῦρ' ἴθ'· Ἀλέξανδρός σε καλεῖ οἶκον δὲ νέεσθαι.
κεῖνος ὅ γ' ἐν θαλάμῳ καὶ δινωτοῖσι λέχεσσι
κάλλεί τε στίλβων καὶ εἵμασιν· οὐδέ κε φαίης
ἀνδρὶ μαχεσσάμενον τόν γ' ἐλθεῖν, ἀλλὰ χορὸν δὲ
ἔρχεσθ', ἠὲ χοροῖο νέον λήγοντα καθίζειν.

Come here; Alexandros summons you to return home.
Indeed he is in the bedchamber and the bed covered with spirals
and calls for you shining also with his garments; you would not think
that he has just come back from fighting against a man, but that he is in fact
going to a dance, or that he is reclining after he has stopped dancing recently.

(*Il*. 3.390-4)

In the *Harpage* a proactive Helen encourages Paris to take a seat in a chair (Coll. 256-7), whereas in the *Iliad* Aphrodite brings a chair for Helen, facing Paris.

τῇ δ’ ἄρα δίφρον ἑλοῦσα φιλομειδὴς Ἀφροδίτη
ἀντί’ Ἀλεξάνδροιο θεὰ κατέθηκε φέρουσα·
ἔνθα κάθιζ’ Ἑλένη κούρη Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο

But laughter-loving Aphrodite took a stool
and the goddess carried it and placed it before Alexandros:

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[305] On the pity of Paris, see Finglass (2016).

[306] At Coll. 164 Aphrodite tells Paris that, if he awards her the beauty prize, he can enter Helen's bed (ἀντὶ δὲ κοιρανίης Ἑλένης ἐπιβήσεο λέκτρων). Cadau (2015: 128) rightly noted that this constitutes a prequel to Aphrodite's words in the *Iliad*, yet without going into it in any more detail.

there Helen, daughter of Zeus the Aigis-bearer, sat down

(*Il*. 3.424-6)

Colluthean Helen proceeds with her speech, naming all the Greek tribes she knows, but is unable to place Paris in any of them:

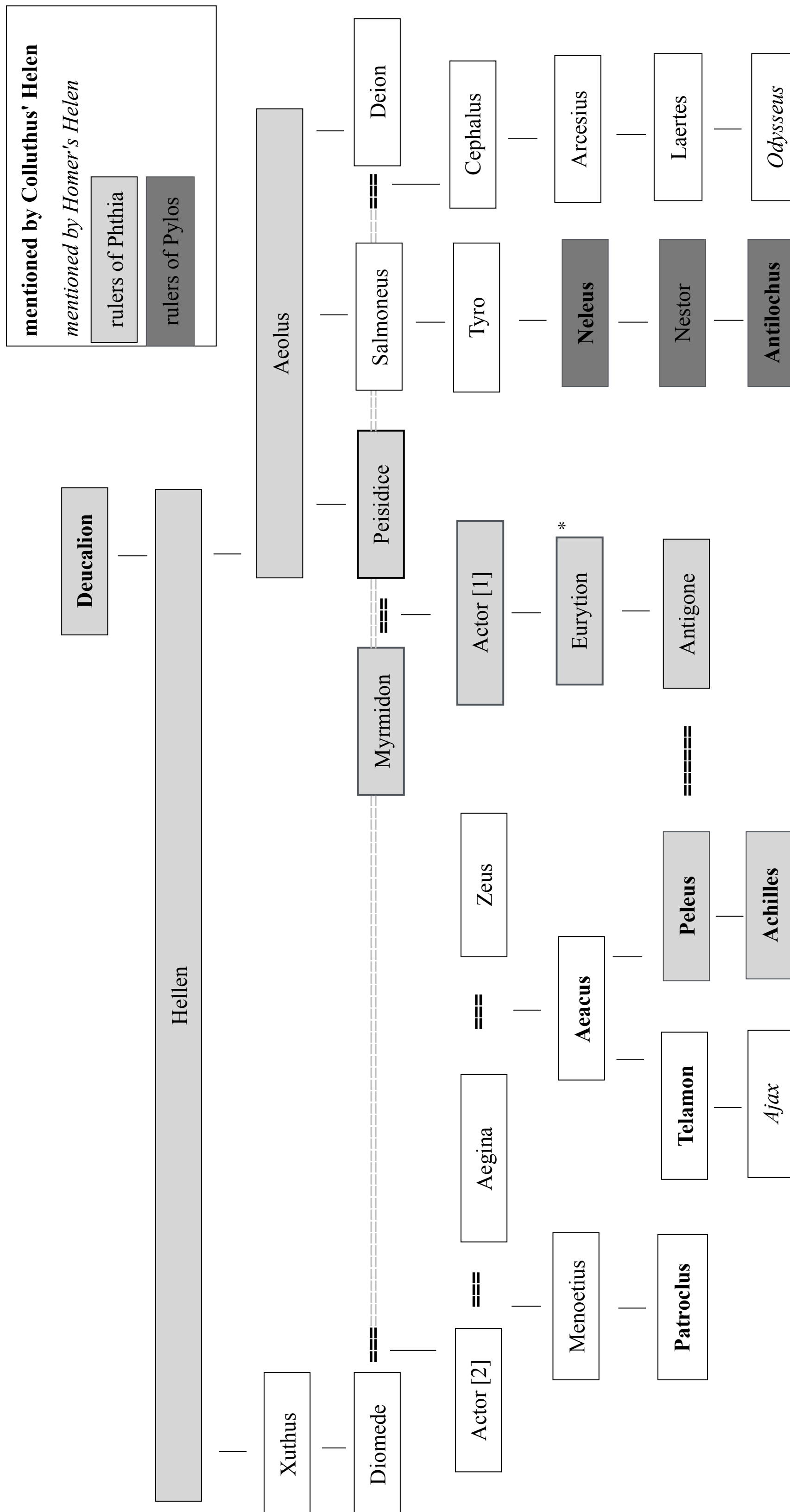
ἀλλὰ τεὴν οὐκ οἶδα παρ' Ἀργείοισι γενέθλην.
πᾶσαν Δευκαλίωνος ἀμύμονος οἶδα γενέθλην·
οὐ Πύλον ἠμαθόεσσαν ἔχεις, Νηλήιον οὖδας, 270
—Ἀντίλοχον δεδάηκα, τεὴν δ' οὐκ εἶδον ὀπωπὴν –
οὐ Φθίην χαρίεσσαν, ἀριστήων τροφὸν ἀνδρῶν·
οἶδα περικλήιστον ὅλον γένος Αἰακιδάων,
ἀγλαΐην Πηλῆος, ἐυκλείην Τελαμῶνος,
ἤθεα Πατρόκλοιο καὶ ἠνορέην Ἀχιλῆος.' 275

but I do not know your family among the Argives.
I know the entire family of blameless Deucalion:
You don't dwell in sandy Pylos, Neleian ground, 270
I have met Antilochus, but I have not seen your appearance —
not in graceful Phthia, the rearer of chief men.
I know the whole all-famous race of Aeacus' sons,
the splendour of Peleus, the good reputation of Telamon,
the manners of Patroclus and the manliness of Achilles.' 275

(Coll. 268-75)

With this exercise in thinking aloud Helen shows off her knowledge of the Greek houses, indicated especially by the repeated use of οἶδα (269; 273) and δεδάηκα (271). This lends emphasis to the fact that she does not know Paris: οὐκ οἶδα (268); οὐ … ἔχεις (270); οὐκ εἶδον (271). If Paris were a member of any of the families mentioned Helen would know it, wherefore it follows that he is not. At the same time, Colluthus' Helen demonstrates that she is just as knowledgeable as her counterpart in the Iliad who answers Priam's questions about the Greek heroes fighting at Troy (*Il*. 3.162-233). It can even be said that she outdoes her, as the men she names are for the most part more ancient and the relationships between them much more complex and obscure (cf. the family tree below).

Figure 1: Genealogy of Greek rulers[307]



* Eurytion is the son of Actor [1] in Apollodorus, while Apollonius Rhodius and Hyginus make him the son of Irus, who is the son of Actor [2].

[307] The diagram follows Newman & Newman (2003).

She first speaks of Deucalion whose son Hellen has lent his name to the Hellenes and is said to be the forefather of all the Greeks.[308] Thus by claiming that she knows the entire family of Deucalion (269) Helen means that she knows each and every Greek tribe. At 270-71 there is mention of Pylos, its king Neleus and his grandson Antilochus. They represent one strand of descendants of Hellen's son Aeolus. The other place we hear about is Phthia (272) and the men Aeacus, Peleus, Telamon, Patroclus and Achilles (273-5). Some verses before, Colluthus mentioned in passing that Paris sailed via Phthia on his way to Sparta (220). Homer informs us that Phthia is home to Peleus, Achilles and the Myrmidones (*Il*. 1.155, 2.683-4, 19.322-3, *Od*. 11.495-6), of whom Patroclus is one (*Il*. 18.10-12). Aeacus banished his sons Peleus and Telamon for killing their half-brother Phocus. Thereupon Peleus fled to Phthia, where king Eurytion purified him and gave him his daughter Antigone in marriage, along with part of the kingdom (Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.13.1).[309] Eurytion is also descended from Aeolus via a different connection. The other link that exists between Deucalionids and Aeacids is the fact that Patroclus, scion of Hellen in the fifth generation, shares a grandmother (Aegina) with Peleus and Telamon. The heroes at the end of those lines, Antilochus, Patroclus and Achilles, are commonly associated as good friends and Achilles avenges the deaths of the other two. The three men are also mentioned together in the Odyssey when Agamemnon speaks of Achilles' funeral, and feels a need to explain that Antilochus is not buried with the other two, although he was Achilles' second favourite.[310]

In contrast to that expansive genealogical knowledge, Homer's Helen only speaks about Agamemnon (*Il*. 3.178), Odysseus (*Il*. 3.200), the great Ajax (*Il*. 3.229) and Idomeneus (*Il*. 3.230). Colluthus' character knows the very ancestors of all those heroes: the lineage of the Atreidae is not explicitly mentioned by Helen, but we can assume that she knows her husband's — and Agamemnon's — family well enough not

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[308] Hes. fr. 2, schol. *ad* Hes. *Op*. 158a, Thuc. 1.3.2 and Diod. Sicul. 4.60.2 state that Deucalion is Hellen's father, although schol. *ad* Pl. *Symp*. 208d and Apollod. *Bibl*. 1.7.2 also name Zeus as another possibility.

[309] The Myrmidones either derived their name from king Myrmidon, who was fathered by Zeus in the form of an ant (Eratosth. in Serv. *ad Aen*. 2.7, Clem. Al. *Protreptikos* 34), or they were the people who followed Peleus from Aegina to Phthia (Strabo, *Geographica* IX.5.9). In that case they had either lived in a way similar to ants (μύρμηκες) or Zeus had transformed them from ants into humans to populate Aeacus' land (Strabo, *Geographica* VIII.6.16 mentions both versions, but prefers the former; Ovid, *Met*.7.624-57 has the latter).

[310] ἐν τῷ τοι κεῖται λεύκ' ὀστέα, φαίδιμ' Ἀχιλλεῦ,
μίγδα δὲ Πατρόκλοιο Μενοιτιάδαο θανόντος,
χωρὶς δ' Ἀντιλόχοιο, τὸν ἔξοχα τῖες ἁπάντων
τῶν ἄλλων ἑτάρων μετὰ Πάτροκλόν γε θανόντα.

In this lie your white bones, glorious Achilles,
together with those of the dead Patroclus, son of Menoetius,
but separate from those of Antilochus, whom you honoured above all
of the other comrades, after the dead Patroclus.

(*Od*. 24.76-79)

to wonder whether Paris could be related to them. Odysseus is a descendant of Deucalion in the seventh generation, via Aeolus. Ajax is Telamon's son and an Aeacid. As for Idomeneus, according to *Il*. 12.117 and 13.450-2 his father is another Deucalion (of Crete, son of Minos). Since Helen does not specify which Deucalion she means, this could be an intentional ambiguity. We can rightly infer from the fact that she continues with the rulers of Pylos and Phthia who are descended from the ancient Deucalion that this is the one she means. She does not, however, make an explicit connection between the names, so that we may also choose to understand Deucalion as referring to Idomeneus' Cretan father. Thus Colluthus, consciously or accidentally, kills two birds with one stone.

As for her 'contemporaries', Colluthus' Helen importantly includes Achilles in her list, to whom the Homeric Helen cannot point when she speaks to Priam, because he is not fighting at the time of Book 3. The mention of Achilles within the epyllion — prominently at the end of the speech — is significant as a covert threat to Paris, even though it cannot be meant as such by Helen. By making Helen mention the ἠνορέην Ἀχιλῆος (275) Colluthus could allude to Achilles' future career which is linked to Paris and Helen. It certainly gives rise to a number of associations: firstly and most obviously, to the fact that he and his comrades later fight in the Trojan War, which perhaps is supposed to put the present scene in an unfavourable light; secondly, to the death of Achilles at the hands of Paris and Apollo – a somewhat questionable moment of glory; thirdly, to the accounts in which Helen becomes the wife of Achilles in the afterworld (Paus. 3.19.11-13), thus in a way letting Achilles prevail over Paris after all.[311] This may be a subtle reminder that the union of Paris and Helen is doomed from the start. In sum, in making his Helen vie with and win over Homer's Helen, Colluthus also demonstrates the learnedness of his time and the superior complexity of mythological references recorded in a written culture in comparison to the archaic oral composition.

Paris reply to the question about his lineage fills the reader with instantaneous suspicion:

αὐτὰρ ὁ μειλιχίην ἠμείβετο γῆρυν ἀνοίξας·
εἴ τινά που Φρυγίης ἐνὶ πείρασι γαῖαν ἀκούεις,
Ἴλιον, ἣν πύργωσε Ποσειδάων καὶ Ἀπόλλων·
εἴ τινά που πολύολβον ἐνὶ Τροίῃ βασιλῆα 280
ἔκλυες εὐώδινος ἀπὸ Κρονίδαο γενέθλης·
ἔνθεν ἀριστεύων ἐμφύλια πάντα διώκω.
εἰμί, γύναι, Πριάμοιο πολυχρύσου φίλος υἱός,
εἰμὶ δὲ Δαρδανίδης· ὁ δὲ Δάρδανος ἐκ Διὸς ἦεν,
ᾧ καὶ ἀπ' Οὐλύμποιο θεοὶ ξυνήονες ἀνδρῶν 285
πολλάκι θητεύουσι καὶ ἀθάνατοί περ ἐόντες·
ὧν ὁ μὲν ἡμετέρης δωμήσατο τείχεα πάτρης,

[311] On the tradition of a romantic attachment between Achilles and Helen, see chapter 1.2 above.

τείχεα μὴ πίπτοντα, Ποσειδάων καὶ Ἀπόλλων.
αὐτὰρ ἐγώ, βασίλεια, δικασπόλος εἰμὶ θεάων·
καὶ γὰρ ἀκηχεμένῃσιν ἐπουρανίῃσι δικάζων 290
Κύπριδος ἀγλαΐην καὶ ἐπήρατον ᾔνεσα μορφήν,
ἡ δὲ περικλήιστον, ἐμῶν ἀντάξιον ἔργων,
νύμφην ἱμερόεσσαν ἐμοὶ κατένευσεν ὀπάσσαι,
ἣν Ἑλένην ἐνέπουσι, κασιγνήτην Ἀφροδίτης,
ἧς ἕνεκεν τέτληκα καὶ οἴδματα τόσσα περῆσαι. 295
δεῦρο γάμον κεράσωμεν, ἐπεὶ Κυθέρεια κελεύει·
μή με καταισχύνειας, ἐμὴν καὶ Κύπριν ἐλέγξῃς.
οὐκ ἐρέω· τί δὲ τόσσον ἐπισταμένην σε διδάξω;
οἶσθα γάρ, ὡς Μενέλαος ἀνάλκιδός ἐστι γενέθλης
εἰ τοῖαι γεγάασιν ἐν Ἀργείοισι γυναῖκες. 300

But he opened honeyed speech and answered:
If you have perhaps heard of a land on the bounds of Phrygia,
Ilios, which Poseidon and Apollo fenced with towers:
If you have perhaps learned about a certain very wealthy king 280
in Troy, from the well-born family of the son of Cronos:
from there I am the bravest and I follow my kinsfolk in everything.
I, woman, am the dear son of Priam, rich in gold,
I am a Dardanid. And Dardanus was from Zeus,
and him even the gods who are partners of men from Olympus 285
often served, even though they are immortals.
Of them Poseidon and Apollo built our
father's walls, walls that do not fall.
But I, queen, am the judge of goddesses.
For even judging the annoyed heavenly ones 290
I praised Cypris' beauty and lovely appearance,
and she promised that as a recompense for my labours
she would give me a far-renowned charming bride,
whom they call Helen, the sister of Aphrodite,
for whose sake I have endured even to traverse such waves. 295
Come, let us mingle in marriage, since Cythereia orders.
Don't put me to shame and question my Cypris.
I won't say — why should I teach you who has knowledge of so much? —
For you know that Menelaus is of a powerless family,
if such women are born among the Argives. 300

(Coll. 277-300)

The speech is introduced with what can be taken as a warning about Paris' sweet-talking (277).[312] After Helen has praised her own countrymen Paris feels compelled to also plume himself on his divine descent from Dardanus (284-6) and his capacity as the judge of goddesses (289). He is proud of the fact that Poseidon and Apollo have built the city walls of Troy (285-8), but entirely omits the many negative connotations of this, and deliberately glosses over the well-known dark mythology of Troy.[313] His lies are in fact reminiscent of those of his grandfather Laomedon, the very person whose mention he is avoiding.[314] He commends Helen for her knowledge (298) and eloquently adds that therefore she should know herself that Menelaus' race is weak (299), though it is unclear what this has to do with the nature of the Argive women (300). Both the opinion about Menelaus and Paris' claim that he is the bravest within his family (282) stand out as blatant lies when read against the *Iliad* where Paris runs in terror from Menelaus. This circumstance has also been exploited to a similar effect by Ovid, whose Paris equally boasts of his martial achievements and deems them better than Menelaus', and even goes as far as predicting the war and wishing for a contest such as that of *Iliad* 3 (*Her.* 16.263 f; 353-69). In reality, it is common knowledge that in Homer Paris is the loser and is chided by his valiant brother Hector for his unmanliness:[315]

Τὸν δ᾽ ὡς οὖν ἐνόησεν Ἀλέξανδρος θεοειδὴς 30
ἐν προμάχοισι φανέντα, κατεπλήγη φίλον ἦτορ,
ἂψ δ᾽ ἑτάρων εἰς ἔθνος ἐχάζετο κῆρ᾽ ἀλεείνων.
ὡς δ᾽ ὅτε τίς τε δράκοντα ἰδὼν παλίνορσος ἀπέστη
οὔρεος ἐν βήσσῃς, ὑπό τε τρόμος ἔλλαβε γυῖα,
ἂψ δ᾽ ἀνεχώρησεν, ὦχρός τέ μιν εἷλε παρειάς, 35
ὣς αὖτις καθ᾽ ὅμιλον ἔδυ Τρώων ἀγερώχων
δείσας Ἀτρέος υἱὸν Ἀλέξανδρος θεοειδής.
Τὸν δ᾽ Ἕκτωρ νείκεσσεν ἰδὼν αἰσχροῖς ἐπέεσσιν·
Δύσπαρι εἶδος ἄριστε γυναιμανὲς ἠπεροπευτὰ
αἴθ᾽ ὄφελες ἄγονός τ᾽ ἔμεναι ἄγαμός τ᾽ ἀπολέσθαι· 40
καί κε τὸ βουλοίμην, καί κεν πολὺ κέρδιον ἦεν
ἢ οὕτω λώβην τ᾽ ἔμεναι καὶ ὑπόψιον ἄλλων.
ἦ που καγχαλόωσι κάρη κομόωντες Ἀχαιοὶ
φάντες ἀριστῆα πρόμον ἔμμεναι, οὕνεκα καλὸν
εἶδος ἔπ᾽, ἀλλ᾽ οὐκ ἔστι βίη φρεσὶν οὐδέ τις ἀλκή. 45

[312] In Homer honey-sweet words are persuasive and pleasant to hear, but often dangerous. See, for example, Worman (2002: 45).

[313] For a thorough exposition of the First Sack of Troy, see chapter 1.3.

[314] This leads Magnelli (2008: 157) to suggest that Paris' comment at 282 about following his kinsfolk might indeed refer to 'hereditary dishonesty'.

[315] Although Magnelli (2008: 158 and 169 n.52) points to two Iliadic passages which describe Menelaus as lazy and weak in battle (*Il.* 10.121 and 17.588). Euripides expanded on this by adding the trait of cowardice in his *Orestes* (1056-7, 1201-2) and *Andromache* (590-4).

ἦ τοιόσδε ἐὼν ἐν ποντοπόροισι νέεσσι
πόντον ἐπιπλώσας, ἑτάρους ἐρίηρας ἀγείρας,
μιχθεὶς ἀλλοδαποῖσι γυναῖκ' εὐειδέ' ἀνῆγες
ἐξ ἀπίης γαίης νυὸν ἀνδρῶν αἰχμητάων
πατρί τε σῷ μέγα πῆμα πόληΐ τε παντί τε δήμῳ, 50
δυσμενέσιν μὲν χάρμα, κατηφείην δὲ σοὶ αὐτῷ;
οὐκ ἂν δὴ μείνειας ἀρηΐφιλον Μενέλαον;
γνοίης χ' οἵου φωτὸς ἔχεις θαλερὴν παράκοιτιν·
οὐκ ἄν τοι χραίσμῃ κίθαρις τά τε δῶρ' Ἀφροδίτης
ἥ τε κόμη τό τε εἶδος ὅτ' ἐν κονίῃσι μιγείης. 55
ἀλλὰ μάλα Τρῶες δειδήμονες· ἦ τέ κεν ἤδη
λάϊνον ἕσσο χιτῶνα κακῶν ἕνεχ' ὅσσα ἔοργας.

But when the godlike Alexandros perceived him 30
appearing among the champions, his dear heart was terrified
and he withdrew back into the band of his companions to avoid death.
As when one backs off when seeing a snake
in the mountain glens and a shudder overcomes his limbs
and he turns back, and a paleness seizes his cheeks, 35
thus godlike Alexander dived back into the crowd of
lordly Trojans, fearing the son of Atreus.
But Hector saw him and rebuked him with ugly words:
'Paris the Unhappy, you most handsome in appearance, woman-crazy cheat,
if only it were you had not been born or had been killed unmarried: 40
and I would wish for that, and it would be much better
than to exist as a disgrace and a laughing stock for others.
Surely now the Achaeans with their long hair on their heads are rejoicing
thinking you were the bravest chief, since you are beautiful
in appearance, but there is no strength in your heart nor any prowess. 45
Is this what you were like when in seafaring ships you
sailed the ocean, having gathered trusty companions,
and mixed with the foreigners and brought back a pretty woman
from a distant land, the daughter-in-law of spearmen,
a great bane to your father as well as both the city and its people, 50
a source of joy to the enemies, but a shame to yourself?
Wouldn't you now stand fast against warlike Menelaus?
You would find out from what a man you took his blooming wife:
And your cithara will be no help to you nor the blessings of Aphrodite,
nor your hair and appearance, when you've been tossed around in the dust. 55
But the Trojans are truly cowards: or else you would long before
have been clad in a cloak of stones because of all the evils you bestowed.'

(*Il.* 3.30-57)

This makes clear that Paris, far from 'following his family in everything' (Coll. 282), is actually the black sheep, being a coward and making it worse by bringing war upon his country (*Il*. 3.50-51; cf. also *Il*. 3.454). Hector points out that the Greeks believed Paris to be strong, just because he is handsome (*Il*. 3.43-5), which happens also to be Colluthean Helen's mistake. Furthermore, Hector voices his outrage at the fact that, being so weak, Paris dared to sail away and abduct a better man's wife (*Il* 3.46-9), which is a perspective on the very events of the epyllion. Hector expresses this through a long rhetorical question (*Il* 3.46-51), asking his brother whether he was such a coward when he abducted Helen. Colluthus seems to deliver the answer to this in his poem: yes, Paris was just as cowardly, but managed to hide it through false rhetoric. Hector credits the Achaeans with war prowess (*Il*. 3.49) and Menelaus with superiority (*Il*. 3.52-3), in opposition to Paris' claim at Coll. 299. Interestingly, he also states that Paris' beauty and his hair would not help him when, defeated, he rolled in the dust (*Il*. 3.55), which is reminiscent of the Paris of the *Harpage*, who walks carefully

> μὴ πόδες ἱμερόεντες ὑποχραίνοιντο κονίης,
> μὴ πλοκάμων κυνέῃσιν ἐπιβρίσαντες ἐθείρας
> ὀξύτερον σπεύδοντος ἀναστέλλοιεν ἀῆται.
>
> lest his desirable feet should be defiled with dust,
> lest the breezes, blowing upon his helmet,
> should stir up his hair in locks, if he rushed too keenly.
>
> (Coll. 232-4)

Likewise, the Homeric Helen reproaches Paris in similar ways to Hector. When she is seated across from Paris she averts her eyes (ὄσσε πάλιν κλίνασα, *Il*. 3.427) in embarrassment at Paris' cowardice. Colluthus, too, makes her fix her eyes on the ground (303), but at this point it is in (feigned?) modesty. This again demonstrates the transition between the two texts from Helen's excitement with a naive affair to her disillusionment with the realities. These two aspects are most tellingly tied together in the following comment: ἦ μὲν δὴ πρίν γ' εὔχε' ἀρηιφίλου Μενελάου | σῇ τε βίῃ καὶ χερσὶ καὶ ἔγχει φέρτερος εἶναι ('Yes, in the past you would indeed boast that you were better than war-loving Menelaus in your strength and with your hands and the spear.' *Il*. 3.430-31). This seems to have been the main trigger for the way in which both Ovid and Colluthus present their courtship scenes, in which this very memory of Iliadic Helen is reconstructed. At the same time, this brief analeptic remark in Homer is hugely important in validating the respective persuasions of Paris as something that really did occur prior to the established version of the Trojan War.

In his speech quoted above, Paris also speaks of the fact that Aphrodite promised him Helen in marriage in exchange for awarding her the beauty prize (291-4).

Homeric Aphrodite seems to be still bound by this gratitude. She saves Paris from death at the hands of Menelaus (*Il*. 3.373-82) and makes Helen come to him as consolation. When Helen at first refuses, implying that Aphrodite is herself fond of the man in an erotic way (*Il*. 3.406-9) — a cheeky reply to her praises of him — Aphrodite's reaction is quite violent (*Il*. 3.414-17). After she has forced Helen to consent, she helps out with the union by escorting Helen to the house (*Il*. 3.420) and seating her (*Il*. 3.424). A proper reason for her kindness to Paris is not given in the *Iliad* itself, although Helen does say that it was Aphrodite who made her escape to Troy, because the goddess loves Paris (*Il*.3.399-402). However, upon reading Colluthus' prequel we can grasp better why she might feel obliged to preserve the marriage which has resulted from a divine pledge (Coll. 324).

In both Homer's and Colluthus' encounters between the couple, Paris' speech ends with an invitation which Helen follows. Colluthus' Paris, having explained his deal with Aphrodite, says: ‘δεῦρο γάμον κεράσωμεν, ἐπεὶ Κυθέρεια κελεύει· | μή με καταισχύνειας, ἐμὴν καὶ Κύπριν ἐλέγξῃς’ (‘Come, let us mingle in marriage, since Cythereia orders. | Don't put me to shame and question my Cypris.’: Coll. 296-7).

Homer's character replies to Helen's accusations:

“μή με γύναι χαλεποῖσιν ὀνείδεσι θυμὸν ἔνιπτε·
νῦν μὲν γὰρ Μενέλαος ἐνίκησεν σὺν Ἀθήνῃ,
κεῖνον δ' αὖτις ἐγώ· πάρα γὰρ θεοί εἰσι καὶ ἡμῖν. 440
ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ φιλότητι τραπείομεν εὐνηθέντε·
οὐ γάρ πώ ποτέ μ' ὧδέ γ' ἔρως φρένας ἀμφεκάλυψεν,
οὐδ' ὅτε σε πρῶτον Λακεδαίμονος ἐξ ἐρατεινῆς
ἔπλεον ἁρπάξας ἐν ποντοπόροισι νέεσσι,
νήσῳ δ' ἐν Κραναῇ ἐμίγην φιλότητι καὶ εὐνῇ, 445
ὥς σεο νῦν ἔραμαι καί με γλυκὺς ἵμερος αἱρεῖ.”

“Woman, do not abuse my heart with harsh reproaches.
For now Menelaus has triumphed with Athena,
hereafter I shall defeat him; for we have gods on our side too. 440
But come now, let us lie down and enjoy love.
for never until now has passion enfolded my heart so much,
not even when I was first sailing back from lovely Sparta,
having carried you off in seafaring ships,
and united with you in love and bed on the island Cranae, 445
as I long for you now and sweet desire seizes me.”

(*Il*. 3.438-446)

The above passages exercise reciprocal intertextual influences. When at *Il*. 3.440 the prince mentions that gods stand by him too, combined with the continuation and the result of his speech, we may infer that by ‘gods’ he actually means Aphrodite, and that

his victory over Menelaus — who has Athena as a helper — would not necessarily be a military one.[316] This is explicitly spelled out in the corresponding passage of the *Ilias Latina* (332-8). There seems to be a direct comment on this also in the letter exchange by Ovid. Paris talks of his exploits and then says that, in case of a war, he has harmful weapons, too (*et mihi sunt vires, et mea tela nocent*, *Her.* 16.354). However, in her response Helen is outright in telling Paris that, judging from his looks, he is better suited for Venus than for Mars, and should thus stick to love, which, most intriguingly, she calls *altera militia* (*Her.* 17.251-6). In turn, the Homeric quotation makes the exhortation by Colluthean Paris a riddle which could have been intended by Colluthus, as I will show below.

At Coll. 296 he asks Helen to 'mingle in marriage', to which, after lengthy deliberation (Coll. 304-5), she replies:

ἀτρεκέως, ὦ ξεῖνε, τεῆς ποτε πυθμένα πάτρης
τὸ πρὶν ἐδωμήσαντο Ποσειδάων καὶ Ἀπόλλων;
ἤθελον ἀθανάτων δαιδάλματα κεῖνα νοῆσαι
καὶ νομὸν οἰοπόλοιο λιγύπνοον Ἀπόλλωνος,
ἔνθα θεοδμήτοισι παρὰ προμολῇσι πυλάων 310
πολλάκις εἰλιπόδεσσιν ἐφέσπετο βουσὶν Ἀπόλλων.
ἀγρέο νῦν Σπάρτηθεν ἐπὶ Τροίην με κομίζων.
ἕψομαι, ὡς Κυθέρεια γάμων βασίλεια κελεύει.
οὐ τρομέω Μενέλαον, ὅταν Τροίῃ με νοήσῃ.

'Really, stranger, did Poseidon and Apollo once
upon a time build the foundations of your fatherland?
I would like to perceive those artworks of the immortals
and the shrill-blowing pasture of the shepherd Apollo,
where by the divine-built porches of the gates 310
Apollo often pursued the oxen, rolling in their gait.
Take me now and bring me from Sparta to Troy.
I will follow, as Cythereia, queen of marriage, commands.
I do not tremble before Menelaus when Troy should see me.'

(Coll. 306-14)

[316] Alden (2000, 43 n.85) gives a perceptive reading of the passage: Menelaus is essentially able to win back the honour taken away from him through Paris' affair with his wife by defeating the adulterer in combat. Paris then reverses this by pointedly sleeping with Helen once more while Menelaus is still raging by the city walls (*Il.* 3.448-50). Thus Paris' prediction is fulfilled very soon, but, rather typically for him, his triumph is not one of the battlefield, but rather of the bedroom. Blondell (2013:57) notes that this quality closely associates Paris with Aphrodite, who is also good at seduction, but 'martially challenged', as evidenced in *Il.* 5.

Given the well-known literary history of the wily character of Helen, it is legitimate to question her utterances and reactions. At face value, she is so taken with the stranger that she believes anything he says and is won over almost too easily. After Paris' courtship speech, the one thing that is picked up in her response are the Walls of Troy, which she is overly impressed with and which she yearns to behold (306-8). Naturally, this evokes Helen's main *Iliadic* appearance in the *teichoskopia,* where she actually looks down from the walls, not just at them, but, on the contrary, wishes that she had never left her home (*Il*. 3.171-5). Thus Colluthus' supplement tragically makes the *teichoskopia* seem like a wonderful dream which has, however, turned into a bleak reality. Paschalis has pointed out that Helen's obsession with walls ridicules love poetry, since apparently Helen's chief reason for coming to Troy is not Paris, but a desire for sightseeing.[317] I, on the contrary, view this as a highly romantic statement. Helen plays a shy girl who likes a boy, but instead of telling him this outright, she shows a heated interest in whatever he is passionate about, be it a football club, a stamp collection or a city wall. She pretends that it is her awe of the divine fortifications, rather than Paris, that instils in her the wish to go to Ilium. This also adds to Helen's attempt at representing herself as a respectable young maiden,[318] when we know that she really is not. The continued references to Helen as a νύμφη may have been taken from Ovid, where Paris addresses her as *nympha* (Ov. *Her*. 16.128).

There is also another layer to the topic of the walls. As I have suggested previously,[319] it is another opportunity to showcase Helen's learning and it hints at the fact that she is not really buying Paris' bluff, but chooses not to expose it. This would also be corroborated through a comparison with Ovid: in the *Heroides* Paris also mentions his descent from Zeus and the family members he is proud of (*Her.* 16.173-6; 199-204), while passing over the embarrassing ones; what is more, he even draws attention to Menelaus' ancestry, the gruesome House of Pelops, and asserts that his family is not like that, wherefore the queen should choose to be with him instead. Ovidian Helen notices this and calls him out on it: *i nunc et Phrygiae late primordia gentis cumque suo Priamum Laumedonte refer! quos ego suspicio* (*Her.* 17.57-9, 'Go now and relate everywhere in Phrygia the origin of your clan and Priam with his Laomedon! To them I look up'). Confusingly, Priam and Laomedon are here yoked together with a relative pronoun, and it is far from clear whether they are both seen as good or bad characters. The exegesis of this passage can be twofold, depending on how one chooses to translate *suspicio*. On the one hand it can mean 'I look up to in admiration' in the sense of 'respect' or 'honour'; on the other hand, it can mean 'I look from underneath' or 'askance' and thus, as naturally suggested by the root, 'I suspect' or 'I mistrust'. For the second meaning the *L&S* notes that it perhaps only exists in the

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317 Paschalis (2008: 142).

318 Adding to this portrayal is the role reversal between Helen and Hermione later in the text of a mother desperately seeking her daughter (Ceres and Persephone) and the related image of Helen as a girl on a flowery meadow (342 and 347-8). See chapter 8.3.

319 See chapter 1.3.

form of a participle and that it is most common in the perfect participle, *suspectus*. Therefore it would be more instinctive to render the verb and thus Helen's utterance positively: Paris should not forget to mention two such important men whom she esteems. However, Ovid ingeniously leaves open another option: it is conceivable that, on the contrary, Helen does nor hold Priam and Laomedon in high regard and therefore Paris' omission of them makes her distrustful. Later in the letter Helen describes herself as a potential *pronurus magni Laumedontis* (*sic,* 'great Laomedon's granddaughter-in-law': *Her.* 17.206), and again the adjective could easily be understood as ironic. Helen probably knows about Paris' ancestors, as she even makes a sophisticated comment about his family tree (*Her.* 17.59-60).

In a similar way, Colluthean Helen, despite being familiar with tales of Troy, seemingly lets herself be seduced by Alexander's eloquence. Again, the reasons could be manifold: either she selectively believes his speech, or she actually knows the truth but follows him anyway, just because she has a desire for him. In line 313 Helen explains her decision to come to Troy with the fact that she is obeying Aphrodite's orders. Are we to imagine a similar situation as in the *Iliad*, where the goddess threatens and terrorizes Helen, her half-sister, to join Paris' bed (*Il.* 3.414-17)?[320] Conspiracy theorists may say that she feigns ignorance, while in reality she is initiated in the gods' wider plans regarding Greece and Troy and accordingly plays her role as their accomplice to lure the prince into a trap. This air of enigma would be consistent with Helen's image throughout classical literature. Her association with the sinister is furthered by the mention of the deceitful dream in which she later appears before her daughter (Coll. 369-70), from the gate of false dreams (Coll. 321). Although she is fraudulent in her claim that she has been abducted, nevertheless one detail is in fact accurate: that Paris is an ἀπατήλιος ἀνήρ (Coll. 378). If we are to take Helen in the dream as the same as the real Helen, this designation for her lover, foreshadowing her attitude towards him in *Iliad* 3, could mean two things: that she has either, to her dismay, recognised his true colours during the journey or that she may have known all the time. There is no definite answer as to who is deceiving whom. In fact, perhaps Paris and Helen are simply two dishonest people who deserve each other. Finally, if we read the *Iliad* as a continuation of the *Abduction*, we may also begin to doubt the sincerity of the guilt and struggle with the past displayed by the Homeric Helen. This retroactive manipulation of Homer's grand epic would surely be Colluthus' greatest success.

After Helen's agreement, there follows a six-line description of the first dawn and the gates of true and false dreams, and then the narrative resumes:

> αὐτὰρ ὁ ποντοπόρων Ἑλένην ἐπὶ σέλματα νηῶν
> ἐκ θαλάμων ἐκόμισε φιλοξείνου Μενελάου,
> κυδιόων δ' ὑπέροπλον ὑποσχεσίῃ Κυθερείης

[320] Miguélez Cavero (2005: 450) suggests that Paris mentions the command of Cytherea at 295, because he knows that this will force her to consent to his wishes.

φόρτον ἄγων ἔσπευδεν ἐς Ἴλιον ἰωχμοῖο.

But he carried Helen on the decks of the seafaring
ships from the bedchambers of hospitable Menelaus,
and exulting presumptuously in the promise of Cytherea
he hastened to Ilios, carrying his freight of battle.

(Coll. 322-5)

Verses 323-4 in particular become suspicious when read against the outcome of the Iliadic passage:

Ἦ ῥα, καὶ ἄρχε λέχος δὲ κιών· ἅμα δ' εἵπετ' ἄκοιτις.
Τὼ μὲν ἄρ' ἐν τρητοῖσι κατεύνασθεν λεχέεσσιν.

He said, and started leading the way to the bed; and his wife followed
in step with him. And so the two lay down in the perforated bed.

(*Il*. 3.447-8)

What are we to understand that the pair are doing all night until the beginning of dawn? What happened in the 'stranger-loving'[321] bedchambers before the departure? What can we expect from a 'wedding' that has Aphrodite as a patron? Is Paris' exceeding joy a sign of contentment or rather anticipation? On the one hand, Helen lusts for Paris from the first time she sees him and cannot stop gaping at him, and is longing for him (Coll. 276), but on the other she only explicitly agrees to coming to Troy with him, not to holding their wedding night straightaway — although it could of course be that she is being discreet. After all, Aphrodite has told Paris that Sparta would see him a bridegroom (νυμφίον ἀθρήσει σε μετὰ Τροίην Λακεδαίμων: Coll. 165). The couple are, however, also called bride and groom, rather than husband and wife, when they arrive in Phrygia (Δαρδανίης λιμένεσσιν ὁ νυμφίος ἤγαγε νύμφην: Coll. 388), so perhaps it is imagined that Paris is coming to Sparta as a groom to pick up his bride and lead her to his home for the wedding. This would also explain Paris' rush to get back to Troy and consummate the union (ἔσπευδεν: Coll. 325).

The question of the time and place of Helen's and Paris' first sexual contact is an issue of debate among the sources. In the speech cited above, Homeric Paris remembers their first time during a stopover on the island Cranae (*Il*. 3.443-6). The same is reported by Strabo 9.1.22 who cites *Il*. 3.443-5 and adds: ταύτην γὰρ λέγει Κρανάην τὴν νῦν Ἑλένην ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐκεῖ γενέσθαι τὴν μῖξιν ('For he calls Cranae

[321] They are described as such at 252 (φιλοξείνων θαλάμων), and Schönberger's edition also applies the adjective to the bedrooms at 323.

what is now called Helene, from the fact that the intercourse happened there.’).[322] Pausanias 3.22.1-2 says that after the union Paris set up a temple to Aphrodite Migonitis on Cranae. Lycophron also tells of the lovemaking on a stopover, but calls the place Dragon Island (*Alex*. 110-1). However, in the *Cypria* Aphrodite induces the two to sleep together before they sail off from Sparta:

> ἐν τούτῳ δὲ Ἀφροδίτη συνάγει τὴν Ἑλένην τῷ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ καὶ μετὰ τὴν μίξιν τὰ πλεῖστα κτήματα ἐνθέμενοι νυκτὸς ἀποπλέουσι.
>
> Then Aphrodite brings Helen together with Alexander and after the intercourse, having loaded very many possessions onto the ship, they sail away by night.
>
> (*Cypria* synopsis)

Since Colluthus' *fabula* generally follows that of the *Cypria* very closely, it is tempting to think that this applies to that particular detail as well. Hesiod says that Helen shamed Menelaus' bed (ἤσχυνε λέχος: fr. 247); perhaps we are to take that literally, meaning that the adultery happened not only in Sparta, but in the very matrimonial bed. Again, a glance at Ovid's *Heroides* may be helpful. In his letter Paris is very outright about his intention to join Helen's bed first and to marry her only later (*Her.* 16.297-8; 317-322). Dracontius, in turn, places the wedding night only after the wedding celebrations in Troy (*Rom*. 8.638-50). Colluthus, however, refuses to say anything specific, but hints at either scenario. He tactfully conceals his characters from the readers' glances by — literally — drawing the curtain of night.[323] When dawn breaks we are left wondering: did Paris and Helen have sex? Did they pack riches on board the ship?[324] Or both? Or perhaps they just spent all night talking? The text remains deliberately ambiguous.

Depending on whether we choose one or the other interpretation, this carries certain implications for the characterisations of our protagonists. The author of scholium A to *Il*. 3.445a reasons that Alexander did not sleep with Helen in Sparta in order that he would not be seen, or caught in the act (μὴ περιφανὴς γένηται). As has been noted with reference to this, the couple's abstinence in the Spartan palace is on the one hand another example of Paris' fear, of Menelaus or others, and on the other hand it also

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[322] Euripides, possibly meaning the same place, has Castor say at the end of the *Helen* that the island off Akte to which Hermes first brought Helen after taking her from Sparta will henceforth be called Helene (Eur. *Hel*. 1670-5). Here, however, it is pointedly not the site of Paris' and Helen's adultery, but, on the contrary, it is described as the first point of refuge from Paris. Verrall (1905: 69-76, 86) explains the curious mention of the island as part of a geographical game. Cf. Paus. 1.35.1-2 who explains the island's new name with the fact that Helen landed there *after* the Sack of Troy.

[323] Cuartero i Iborra (1992: 48) agrees that the interlude about the two kinds of dreams lends an air of mystery to the protagonists and their actions.

[324] Cf. chapter 7.1.

makes Helen's infidelity a little less scandalous: at least she respects her marriage bed enough not to lie in it with another man.[325] Thus if Colluthus wants us to assume that the two gained carnal knowledge of each other before setting sail, this would suggest the opposite: the poet may add to a portrayal of Paris as brave (unlikely) and/or bring Helen's lewdness to an extreme (very likely).[326]

4. Dracontius and Predecessors

Dracontius' Paris is washed up on the shore in Cyprus, where Helen happens to be visiting for the festivities of Dione's birthday, as mentioned in section 1 above. As the rumour of his arrival spreads, Helen sends slaves to invite him to be her guest, reasoning that a prince should be received properly, rather than left to dwell on the shore like a sailor (*Rom*. 8.435-52). On the way to the temple of Venus, Paris encounters an adverse bird omen (453-80). As he enters the temple, everyone watches and admires his beauty and Helen falls in love instantly (480-507). Helen's gaze and bashfulness is a shared feature with Colluthus' version. The other commonality is Paris' seduction speech, in which he praises Helen and slanders Menelaus (507-529). Helen is persuaded at once and suggests that they should elope together. She says that this is their fate ordained by Jupiter (*Rom*. 8.530-40).[327] This, too, has resonances with Colluthus' passage where Paris presents the couple's union as commanded by Aphrodite.

As has been shown, Colluthus' meeting scene between the protagonists is a pointed response to their representation in *Iliad* 3, whilst also occasionally borrowing from Ovid. Points of comparison with Ovid can also be detected in Dracontius' *Rom*. 8.[328] Both are among the few sources that treat Paris' reunion with the Trojan household after his judgement over the goddesses: Ovid mentions this briefly, explaining that he was recognised through *rata signa* and that the happy day was subsequently added to Troy's festive calendar (*Her.* 16.89-92), while in Dracontius' more elaborate account Paris arrives on a public holiday and shows his baby rattle as a form of identification (*Rom*. 8.78-9, 102). In *Her.* 16.97-100 Alexander says that Oenone's beauty was praiseworthy until he was given the prospect of a marriage to Helen; now all other women provoke *fastidia*. He notices that Helen's face looks like that of Venus (*Her.* 16.137). Dracontius, too, describes Alexander's dislike for Oenone who now seems *prope turpis* to him, e*x quo pulchra Venus talem promisit in Ida, qualis nuda fuit* ('since

[325] Davies & Finglass (2014: 300 with n.13).

[326] For the theme of Menelaus' bed and Helen's moral depravity, chapter 8.3 and 8.5.

[327] As noted by Stoehr-Monjou (2014: 94) it appropriate that Jupiter, given his own extra-marital adventures, should be the instigator of adultery.

[328] Ovid's corpus is very much present throughout both Dracontius' Christian and classical works, as has been shown by Bouquet (1982).

on Ida beauteous Venus promised him one just like she herself was when naked', 63-5). Ovidian Paris is very proud of his ancestors and mentions that Jove is among them (*Her.* 16.175-6, cf. Coll. 284); however, Helen, unimpressed, tells him not to brag about being related to Jupiter five generations before, as she herself is his direct descendant (*Her.* 17.59-60). However, the circumstance is exploited by Dracontius positively: when Paris mentions their shared origin, she interprets this as a sign from Jupiter who has sent her Paris as a more adequate match (*Rom.* 8.528-9, 533-5).[329] Finally, among the techniques Ovidian Alexander employs to win Helen over, we repeatedly find the argument that their union has been ordained by the fates (*Her.* 16. 241, 281); however, the topic is not revisited in the letter from Helen, who appears more level-headed. In the *De Raptu* the woman is quick to succumb to the Trojan's blandishments and in her keenness it is she who attributes the situation to the will of the *fata* twice within a nine-line speech (*Rom.* 8.535, 539).[330]

Conspicuous intertextual links can be identified between our epyllion and other famous love stories. It has long been noted that there are obvious similarities with Vergil's affair between Dido and Aeneas. However, the development of the romance appears to me also to be modelled rather closely on an earlier precedent, namely that of Jason and Medea in Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*. The material is of course prominently treated by Dracontius himself in his *Medea* epyllion (*Rom.* 10), but with many details and characteristics altered from the prevalent storyline found in Apollonius and others. Instead, Dracontius seems to have grafted the form of the *Argonautica* liaison onto Trojan subject matter. Firstly, both encounters are heralded by a bird omen involving doves and a bird of prey which is explained by a seer (*Rom.* 8.453-69; Ap. Rhod. 3.540-554).[331] In both instances the man comes in a ship to a foreign court and enters with his companions, but stands out among them and attracts everyone's looks (*Rom.* 8.487-9; Ap. Rhod. 3.442-4; 924) with his gleaming beauty (*Rom.* 8.486; Ap. Rhod. 3.925).[332] The woman then beholds him among a multitude of people, as her gaze wanders and keeps looking at him (*Rom.* 8.490-91; Ap. Rhod. 3.287-8; 444-5). His comely features, notably the clothing, are presented to the reader in a series of relative clauses, focalised by the woman (*Rom.* 8.491-3; Ap. Rhod. 3.454-6).[333] She falls hopelessly in love because she has been shot with a dart of Eros who has been sent by

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[329] In Dictys (1.9) and Malalas (5.6) Helen adduces the proximity of familial ties in front of the Trojans as an argument in favour of her marriage to Paris, rather than Menelaus. However, there she keeps silent about her divine father and instead traces the lines via her mortal parents.

[330] See chapter 3.4 for a detailed discussion of the *fata* in the *De Raptu*. As in Apollo's speech before, the *fata* seem to be an easy excuse for Helen's own guilt; cf. Provana 1912: 68, Simons 2005: 295.

[331] See Gärtner (2001) for Latin classical models of this scene in Dracontius and their medieval derivatives.

[332] See also Valerius Flaccus *Arg.* 5.364-77.

[333] Paris' attire of purple and gold, described in detail at *Rom.* 8.481-6, bears remarkable resemblance to that of Dracontian Jason (*Rom.* 10.258-260).

his mother (*Rom*. 8.495-8; Ap. Rhod. 3.275-84; 127-144).[334] The feeling manifests itself in the woman's cheeks that blush and become pale in turns (*Rom*. 8.499-501; Ap. Rhod. 3.297-8). As she encounters him alone, in a temple or shrine, she is left bashful and speechless (*Rom*. 8.502-7; Ap. Rhod. 3.967-72; 1011), but eventually speaks and asks the stranger about his stock (*Rom*. 8.503-5; Ap. Rhod. 3.1071-4). Upon detecting her affection, he showers her with praises as a means of persuasion (*Rom*. 8.507-8; Ap. Rhod. 973-4; 1006-7). Later, after or during their escape, he carries her and seats her down at the stern of his ship (*Rom*. 8.565-6; Ap. Rhod. 4.188-9). Apart from those textual parallels, both women display a high degree of authority in the respective relationship and manage their lovers during the escape from their countries when they are pursued by their former male guardians; Medea thinks up plans to help the Argonauts and their success depends entirely upon her favour. Shockingly, she is also the one who first proposes the murder of her brother Apsyrtus (Ap. Rhod. 4.410-20). Meanwhile, Dracontius' Helen proactively suggests marriage and elopement to Paris (533-4) and encourages him to order his comrades to assist with their flight when he is despondent on account of the many pursuers (551-5). This of course also reflects on the two men whose behaviour is rather unheroic. Jason is commonly known by his epithet ἀμήχανος, while Paris also proves himself a coward during the storm that brings him to Cyprus.[335]

Why might Dracontius use Apollonius as a model? First of all, this would be in line with his habit of echoing an unexpected variety of texts. It also shows that Dracontius must have been familiar with Greek material beyond Homer. Interestingly, Medea and Helen are also connected elsewhere. At the opening of Herodotus' *Histories*, where a string of reciprocal abductions of women between Hellenes and barbarians is told (Hdt. 1.1-3), the two are presented as counterparts. The historian starts with Io and Europa as the first pair of abductees, whose stories as objects of Zeus' lust have been rationalised: the former was taken from Argos by Phoenecian tradesmen, while the latter was carried off by Cretans in retribution. The second pair are Medea and Helen, inasmuch as Paris is said to have heard about the precedents of kidnapping foreign women and wished to abduct a Greek wife for himself. When envoys are sent to recover Helen, the reason for taking her is given as seeking satisfaction for Medea. The chain of stealing royal women is similarly found in Lycophron, who tells it at length (Lycoph. *Alex*.1291-1368). There is also mention of it in Dictys in an attempt by Aeneas to justify Helen's abduction (2.26). It is perhaps in response to these accounts that Dracontius also significantly employs a simile of Europa and Zeus the bull as a foil for Paris, as he carries Helen to his ship. Herodotus remarks that up to the abduction of Helen the tit-

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[334] Cf. Medea's sudden love frenzy in *Rom*. 10.219-24.

[335] Weber (1995: 221) notes similarities between Dracontius' *Hylas* (*Rom*. 2) and Hellenistic works, including Book 3 of Apollonius' *Argonautica*, but concludes that a direct dependency is ‘nicht nachweisbar’, since the common motifs had long been picked up in earlier Latin poetry. Nevertheless, the overlaps with the particular scene at hand seem to me too numerous to be accidental.

for-tat had remained peaceful, but the Hellenes were the first to start a war because of Helen (Hdt. 1.4). This is also alluded to by Ovid: when persuading Helen to elope, Paris conjures up the exempla of Jason and Medea and Theseus and Ariadne to show that these scenarios did not lead to armed conflicts and that therefore, ironically, they themselves need not fear it either.

As we have discussed, Dracontius makes Paris' motivation for sailing to Greece the kidnapping of another woman, Hesione. That episode, too, is often tied to the expedition of the Argonauts. This is the case in Dictys Cretensis who presents the abduction of Helen as a retribution for that of Hesione. Dracontius departs from that causal link, nor does he mention Medea or explicitly suggest any relation between her departure and Helen's. Nevertheless, the resonances invite comparisons, however subconscious. The two women are widely known to have an affinity with the supernatural: in Book 4 of the *Odyssey* Helen has powers of unexplainable knowledge and deceptive voice imitation and possesses a casket of good and evil *pharmaka* (see also chapter 2.5).[336] Medea, too, has a box of substances that can either save or kill and supplements them with enchantments (Ap. Rhod. 3.802-3, 844-5, 4.156-8). She is clearly already a sorceress in Apollonius, looking for roots and corpses by night (Ap. Rhod. 3.858-66, 4.50-3), and this is aided by the fact that she is the niece of the arch-witch Circe. Later writers further expanded on this portrayal. Strikingly, Helen and Medea are each independently presented in multiple sources as the bride of Achilles in the afterlife.[337] Through the connection with Medea, Dracontius may have wanted to remind us of Helen's sinister side. It may also be a comment on the responsibility for the elopement and ensuing war; the narrator's programmatic statements blame solely Paris, however Helen's behaviour later on makes it clear that she is not without fault.[338] The association with Medea furthers this interpretation. In fact, even more than her similarities with Medea, the differences show Helen in a more negative light. The obvious disparity is Helen's status as the wife of another man, whilst Medea is a virgin and betrays only her father. Another qualitative difference is evident by way of contrast between Medea's prolonged agony and consideration for her homeland and Helen's rash, selfish actions.

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[336] On Helen's witchiness, see also (Gumpert 2001: 40-41).

[337] This is an established tradition for Helen (found in Lycophron, Pausanias and Ptolemy Chennus), as has been discussed in chapter 1.2. In the case of Medea we hear this in the form of a prophecy uttered by Hera to elicit Thetis' support (Ap. Rhod. 4.810-816). The scholium *ad loc.* states that Ibycus (fr. 291 *PMG*) and Simonides (fr. 558 *PMG*) first wrote about Achilles' marriage with Medea in the Elysian plain. The tale is also mentioned by Apollodorus (*Epit.* 5.5).

[338] Bright (1987: 86).

Chapter 7

Luggage and Entourage

This section explores the tradition of a somewhat neglected byway of Homeric mythology, namely the things and people who may or may not have come to Troy on Paris' ship together with Helen. There is an exciting little story of its own to be discovered here, which is developed by writers over time at various stages. I shall first investigate the question of Helen's inanimate property, before moving on to her human companions.

1. Luggage

In the *Iliad* the reason for the Greek expedition is often cited as reclaiming not just Helen, but Ἑλένην καὶ κτήμαθ' ἅμ' αὐτῇ, | πάντα μάλ' ὅσσά τ' Ἀλέξανδρος κοίλῃς ἐνὶ νηυσὶν | ἠγάγετο Τροίηνδ' ('Helen and all the possessions with her, and so many as Alexander brought on the hollow ships to Troy.' *Il.* 22.114-6).[339] Furthermore, Menelaus addresses the Phrygians in rage at *Il.* 13.626-7: οἵ μευ κουριδίην ἄλοχον καὶ κτήματα πολλὰ | μὰψ οἴχεσθ' ἀνάγοντες, ἐπεὶ φιλέεσθε παρ' αὐτῇ ('you who went away in vain carrying off my wedded wife and many possessions, when you were treated kindly by her'). The κτήματα are a sort of perverted dowry which Paris has stolen along with the bride, and therefore inseparable from her. In fact, the formula combining Ἑλένη (or γυνή) with κτήματα is used eight times in Book 3 alone (*ll.* 70; 72; 91; 93; 255; 282; 285: 458).[340] Most translators, including Lattimore, render these verses as 'Helen and (all) *her* possessions [my emphasis]', although there is no possessive pronoun to indicate ownership of the treasures. On the contrary, Menelaus' talks about κτήματα πολλά, which rather indicates that the choice of booty was quite random and that it included items Menelaus considers his own, not just Helen's personal things.[341] We have to note, however, that it was only because of his marriage to Helen that Menelaus became ruler over the kingdom of Sparta, which her father Tyndareus

[339] Cf. also *Il.* 7.389-90.

[340] Incidentally, the Odyssey also likes mentioning ἄλοχος/ἄκοιτις in conjunction with κτήματα as booty (*Od.* 9.41), rewards (*Od.* 21.214), the joys of home (*Od.* 14.244-5, here also mentioning children), and especially with regard to Penelope (*Od.* 18.144; *Od.* 24.459) who, like Helen, is a wife that comes with desirable riches and is wooed by men who do not respect the laws of hospitality.

[341] In the *Odyssey* we observe — also through the example of Helen — that items used by women are regarded by them as their own and can be given away by the woman as presents to other women, while the men swap tripods, cauldrons and suchlike. Helen uses gifts she received from her Egyptian friends — a spindle and basket given to her by Alcandre (*Od.* 4.120-132) and drugs from Polydamna (*Od.* 4.220-232) — and in turn on Telemachus' departure she presents him with a robe she has woven for his bride to wear on the wedding day (*Od.* 15.120-130).

passed over to his son-in-law.[342] So we have to bear in mind that of the things in the Spartan palace there is nothing that really belongs to Menelaus directly, since his claim to the throne depends on his union with Helen.[343] It would therefore be reasonable to suppose that the things taken away from his house are exactly the most valuable items which formed part of her dowry — by taking them away she gives the separation from her husband a material dimension.

Ultimately, it does not matter too much whether the property is explicitly Helen's or not, since whoever has her has also her belongings; but for translation purposes, it seems more accurate to understand the κτήματα not as subordinate, but coordinate to Helen who appears to be just the most precious single piece of a considerable treasure (and as the same time the key to the treasury, so to speak). It is disputable how important she actually is in her own right. When the Trojans want to make peace and urge Paris to return Helen and the riches, he replies that he will not give the woman, but is willing to return all the assets and add some of his own wealth too (*Il.* 7.362-4). This could be an expression of his true affection for Helen, but at the same time a jibe at Menelaus whom Paris implies to be 'only in it for the money'.[344] It is more likely, however, that Paris has the very same values as Menelaus. Helen is his choicest possession, even without the accessoires, and he refuses to give up the honours associated with her. Paris has enough wealth and things can always be acquired, but the world's most beautiful woman is an irreplaceable rarity. It also adds to her objectification that Alexander believes that he could exchange her for his own riches.[345]

The *Cypria* knows of the stolen goods, too: Proclus remarks that before sailing off at night Paris and Helen put τὰ πλεῖστα κτήματα (*Chrestomathia* 101) onto the ship. This can be understood as 'the greatest possessions' or, especially with the article, as 'most of the possessions [in the palace]'.[346] While the *Iliad* accuses Paris alone of the theft, and Proclus certifies a joint agency of the couple, Apollodorus states that it was Helen herself ἐνθεμένη τὰ πλεῖστα τῶν χρημάτων (*Epit.* 3.3). Grammatically, the partitive is more explicit here: 'putting on board the largest part of the belongings'. The change of vocabulary from κτήματα to χρήματα is equally notable, since the latter carries the notion of 'necessities', and thus things one would actually use, not just possess. On the other hand, it can simply mean 'money' as well,

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[342] Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.11.2, Hyg. *Fab.* 78. Atreus' Mycenean kingdom was taken over by his brother Agamemnon.

[343] It is possible that for this reason Menelaus has to bring Helen back to Greece, since he may not be entitled to rule Sparta without Helen by his side.

[344] Diomedes, speaking for all Greeks, replies to this suggestion that neither the treasures nor Helen shall be accepted, now that Troy is so close to being taken (*Il.* 7.400-402). This shows that the war is more about honour and the prospect of plundering the entire city's wealth. The satisfaction must be greater than what was originally taken. Helen seems unimportant in her own right; what counts is the claim to victory and the booty.

[345] Blondell (2013: 59) suggests that there may also be a pun in Ἑλένη-ἑλών.

[346] West (2003) even translates it as 'most of Menelaus' property'.

though that is unlikely in this context. Consequently, the familiar Ἑλένην καὶ κτήματα formula is updated, and thus the envoys Menelaus and Odysseus ask for τὴν Ἑλένην καὶ τὰ χρήματα (*Epit*. 3.28). The image Apollodorus evokes is one of Helen packing her suitcase for her new life as a Trojan princess. It is, however, still unclear whether she only takes her personal items, e.g. her jewellery, or also other precious things, such as dinnerware. The latter seems more probable by comparison with Alcidamas' version which testifies that it was Alexander who seized from the house as much as he could (ἐκ τῶν οἴκων λαβὼν ὅσα πλεῖστα ἐδύνατο, *Odysseus* 18), but later is said to bring τὰ χρήματα καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα to Asia. Since here Paris plunders the entire palace, χρήματα cannot mean just the contents of Helen's wardrobe. In the *Excidium,* Helen suggests to Paris that her most trusted slaves will secretly bring *thesauros vel ornamenta* onto his ship by night (*Excidium* p.8.21-p. 9.2), a scenario reminiscent of the *Cypria*.

According to Dictys, it was Paris who *amore eius captus ipsam que et multas opes domo eius aufert* (seized by love for her he carried away the woman herself and many riches from her house; 1.3), and later Helen assures Priam and Hecuba in reported speech that she only took her own things from Menelaus' house and nothing else (*ea se cum domo Menelai adportata, quae propria fuissent, nihil praeter ea ablatum*. 1.9). The different viewpoints regarding the Spartan palace are noteworthy: at the point of the abduction, it is described (and focalized by Paris) as Helen's house, while upon her arrival at Troy Helen herself refers to it as *domus Menelai*. This potentially problematizes matters of ownership: at 1.3 the impression is given that Paris has taken many expensive things (*multas opes*[347]), without very careful selection, since everything in Helen's house is hers, whereas at 1.9 Helen who is pleading with her new in-laws not to give her back to the Greeks deliberately distances herself from the Spartan household. From her words it seems as though she has taken the conscious decisions what to take and what to leave and that she only brought her own personal items of furniture, clothing or jewellery (or at least that is what she wants her interlocutors to believe). On the other hand, this may be an ironic comment on the fact mentioned above that everything in the house was Helen's anyway, since it came from her dowry. By taking it back to her new home she has technically divorced Menelaus, and now that the palace is empty of desirable things it can be called his house.

Another argument in favour of the *opes* being more than just Helen's attire is the insistence of both sides on having them. The Greeks' demands for Helen and the treasures are especially firm. At Dictys 1.4 Greek legates are sent in the familiar fashion, *uti conquesti iniurias Helenam et quae cum ea abrepta erant repeterent* (in order that they complain of the wrongdoings and demand back Helen and the things stolen with her), and at 1.12 they threaten: *ni Helena cum abreptis redderetur, bellum se Priamo inlaturos confirmant* (unless Helen was returned with the stolen things they assured that they would start a war against Priam). The Trojan's reasoning is even more intriguing: a

[347] Cf. κτήματα πολλά (*Il*. 13.626-7), which may also have been the wording of the Greek version of Dictys.

little earlier Priam calls together a council of his sons and asks them what they should do regarding Helen.

> qui una voce minime reddendam Helenam respondent. videbant quippe, quantae opes cum ea advectae essent; quae universa, si Helena traderetur, necessario amitterent. praeter ea permoti forma mulierum, quae cum Helena venerant, nuptias sibi singularum iam animo destinaverant, quippe qui lingua moribus que barbari nihil pensi aut consulti patientes praeda atque libidine transversi agebantur.
>
> They answered unanimously that Helen should by no means be returned. They saw, of course, how many riches had been brought with her; if Helen were handed over, they would unavoidably lose these altogether. Furthermore, they were stirred by the beauty of the women who had come with Helen and were already in their minds making plans to marry certain ones, and inasmuch as they were barbarians in language and morals and not patient to weigh up or consider anything, they were led astray by booty and lust.
>
> (Dictys 1.7)

Dictys bluntly spells out what elsewhere is only implied, namely that the treasures and captives carried away with Helen are at least as important, if not more important than the queen herself. Similarly, in Philostratus' *Heroicus* 25.12 it is said that Helen was in Egypt, and the Greeks knew it, but they nevertheless fought for the wealth of Troy. Thus perhaps the recovery or Helen's possessions is an excuse to attain even more riches.

Although in Dares Paris and Helen do not meet in Sparta nor escape from there, but rather a temple of Apollo and Diana on the island Cythera, a booty (*praeda*) is frequently mentioned. In chapter 10 we learn that after Alexander has fought off those who attempted to stop him from abducting Helen, *fanum expoliavit, homines se cum quam plurimos captivos abduxit, in naves inposuit, classem solvit, domum reverti disposuit* (he plundered the temple, led away with him as many captive men as was possible, put them onto the ships, set sail, arranged the return home). And shortly after in chapter 11: *Alexander ad patrem suum cum magna praeda pervenit* (Alexander reached his father with a great booty). This booty differs very much from that taken to Troy in other texts, since it consists of objects from the temple as well as a multitude of slaves, which means that the restoration is not so much Menelaus' personal matter, but rather a Panhellenic issue. Nevertheless, following the familiar pattern, Helen and the booty are always demanded back as a pair:

> Inde [Agamemnon] legatos ad Priamum mittit, si velit Helenam reddere et praedam quam Alexander fecit restituere.

Meanwhile [Agamemnon] sent envoys to Priam, asking if he wanted to restore Helen and the booty which Alexander had gained.

(Dares 16)

Ulixes mandata Agamemnonis refert, postulat, ut Helena et praeda reddatur satis que Graecis fiat, ut pacifice discedant.

Odysseus reported Agamemnon's commands, demanding that Helen and the booty be returned and the Greeks be compensated, so they would depart peacefully.

(Dares 17)

suadet potius esse, ut Helena his reddatur et ea quae Alexander cum sociis abstulerat et pax fiat.

He urged that it would be better, if Helen were returned to them, as well as the things that Alexander had carried off with his companions, and there would be peace.

(Dares 37)

deinde [Priamus obiurgat] Aeneam qui cum Alexandro Helenam et praedam eripuerit.

Then [Priam rebuked] Aeneas who had seized Helen and the booty with Alexander.

(Dares 38)

Apart from the interesting detail about Aeneas' aid, it should be noted that Paris is always the agent in the theft while Helen is further objectified by always sharing a verb with *praeda*.

Malalas 5.3 even goes as far as enumerating more closely the items in question. He records that Paris took Helen and fled in the ships μετὰ χρημάτων λιτρῶν τριακοσίων καὶ κόσμου πολλοῦ πολυτίμου καὶ ἀργύρου (‘with 300 *litrai* of money and much decoration and silver’). Unlike with Apollodorus above, χρήματα in this

instance should more likely be rendered as ‘money’, since the unit is specified.[348] This is of course an anachronistic detail, as this did not exist in the archaic period, but it corresponds to Malalas' love of adorning and rationalising myths through measurements and numbers. Following Malalas, Tzetzes writes in *Antehomerica* 131: νηῒ ἐνὶ θέμενοι δμωὰς κόσμον τ' ἐράτεινον (having put onto the ship slave women and lovely decoration). The connection with the female slaves and the adjective associated with the feminine[349] suggest that by κόσμος the author means women's jewellery, dresses etc., which may also be true of the same word in Malalas.

One item among the riches is given particular attention in an exciting story found in Diogenes Laertius 1.1.27-32. He talks about a certain tripod which was found by fishermen in the Coan sea and sparked a heated dispute among different nations as to who should keep it. This escalated into a war. Then an oracle pronounced that the tripod should be given to the wisest man.[350] It was given to Thales, then it was passed around the Seven Sages and finally dedicated to Apollo at Didyma. One version relates that the tripod came from a shipwreck, but another background story goes that Hephaestus made the tripod and gave it to Pelops as a wedding gift; it was inherited by Menelaus and was carried off by Paris along with Helen; but Helen said that it would cause strife and threw it into the sea. On the basis of this account we can observe that the fact that Paris and Helen took precious things on their departure was common knowledge, so much so that it even permeated into unrelated tales. It is notable that the tripod is explicitly described as belonging to Menelaus. However, the decision about what to do with it apparently lies with Helen, although it would be interesting to know how she knew that it would cause trouble. Nevertheless, despite Helen's attempt at averting the evil that would come from the object, its destiny is later fulfilled after all. The tripod has a ‘life’ of its own and here it is Helen who constitutes an episode in its series of adventures, not the other way round. It is of course not surprising that in order to add to the item's destructiveness it has been linked with the cursed house of Pelops and the person of Helen, who is herself about to cause a great conflict.

2. Entourage

It has started to emerge that where the possessions taken with Helen are mentioned, often slaves are also counted among them, and they play an increasingly important role as the tradition progresses. Special attention is given to Aethra and Clymene, Helen's handmaids, whose characters were constantly developed over time. They are found as

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[348] It is impossible to establish how much money this was, but it must mean to say that Paris stole a little fortune. A *litra* was both a silver coin and a weight unit of 109.15 g (see Stumpf (2005)), so perhaps 300 *litrai* are supposed to mean 30 kg (of gold?).

[349] Cf. *LSJ s.v.* ἐρατεινός.

[350] At 1.5.82 Diogenes Laertius says of the same tripod that it was made of bronze and carried the inscription ‘for the wise one’, which makes it a counterpart to the Apple of Discord (on which see chapter 4.2), but for wise men rather than beautiful women.

early as in the *Iliad*, when they accompany Helen to watch the fight between Menelaus and Paris: ἅμα τῇ γε καὶ ἀμφίπολοι δύ' ἕποντο, | Αἴθρη Πιτθῆος θυγάτηρ, Κλυμένη τε βοῶπις· (with her also followed two handmaids, Aethra, the daughter of Pittheus, and Clymene the ox-eyed, *Il*. 3.143-4). Although it is not specified by Homer that Paris took slaves from Sparta, we do hear about women he took from Sidon on his return journey with Helen that are now weavers for the Trojan royalty (*Il*. 6.289-92), so there is no reason to believe that slaves did not form part of the stolen κτήματα.

Sadly, neither the fragments nor the summary of the *Cypria* give any information on slaves taken from Greece. Of course, this does not mean that they did not appear at all (in fact, they could have been useful in the narrative when the focus was on Helen), but they may have been too minor characters to be taken into account in Proclus' synopsis.[351] However, Aethra is mentioned at the end of his summary of the *Iliupersis* as well as in the corresponding fr. 6. She was, moreover, apparently present in the *Ilias Parva* (fr. 20 = Pausan. 10.25.8, discussed below). A hint at Spartan slaves is also provided by Euripides' *Helen*, where the chorus consists of captive Greek women to whom Helen gives orders and whom she calls φίλαι (Eur. *Hel*. 330).

Aethra's story in particular becomes rather famous and her fate becomes more and more associated with Helen. It is probable that by giving her father's name Homer alludes to the fact that the myth is widely known.[352] She was the mother of Theseus by two fathers, Aegeus and Poseidon: Aegeus was hosted in Troezen by king Pittheus, a descendant of Tantalus, who made him drunk and made him have sex with his daughter. Poseidon also visited her the same night (see Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.15.7). She gave birth to Theseus and reared him until he was old enough to look for his father, famously equipped with the sword and sandals left by Aegeus under a heavy rock in Troezen. After Theseus kidnapped the young Helen, the Dioscuri freed their sister and with her also led away Theseus' mother Aethra as a captive (Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.10.7; *Epit*. 1.23; Plut. *Theseus* 31.1-34.2[353]). Pausanias describes this scene on the chest of Cypselus:

> Αἴθρα δὲ ἡ Πιτθέως ὑπὸ τῆς Ἑλένης τοῖς ποσὶν ἐς ἔδαφος καταβεβλημένη μέλαιναν ἔχουσά ἐστιν ἐσθῆτα, ἐπίγραμμα δὲ ἐπ'

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[351] On the basis that the *Cypria* does away with the Dioscuri before the abduction, Currie (2015: 287-8) suggests that in this context there could also have been an analeptic account of Helen's abduction by Theseus and her recovery by her brothers. If this is right, the digression almost certainly would have contained the retributive abduction of Aethra.

[352] This is the prevailing scholarly view (see Jenkins (1999: 209) and Burgess (2001: 152 and 247 n.75) for a summary of previous debates on the matter). *Contra* Willcock (1978: 218) who argued that the Homeric line existed first and the myth was invented afterwards to explain it.

[353] Within this lengthy account see especially 34.1-2 where Plutarch notes that some editors do not accept *Il*. 3.144 and also recounts an anomalous version given by a certain Ister, a pupil of Callimachus, that it was Hector who kidnapped Aethra during his sack of Troezen, but he deems it implausible.

αὐτοῖς ἔπος τε ἑξάμετρον καὶ ὀνόματός ἐστιν ἑνὸς ἐπὶ τῷ ἑξαμέτρῳ προσθήκη· 'Τυνδαρίδα Ἑλέναν φέρετον, Αἴθραν δ' ἕλκετον Ἀθάναθεν.'

But Aethra, daughter of Pittheus, is lying thrown to the ground at the feet of Helen, and is clothed in a black garment; and the inscription above them is a hexameter line and a single word is added to the hexameter:

'The two Tyndarids are carrying off Helen and dragging Aethra from Athens.'

(Paus. 5.19.3)

Hyginus *Fab.* 79 moreover mentions that the Dioscuri gave Aethra and Phisadie as slaves to Helen. Phisadie is otherwise unknown, but is here said to be the sister of Theseus' accomplice Pirithous, so both women have been taken away in retribution for Helen's abduction. *Fab.* 92 tells that Paris abducted Helen *cum ancillis duabus Aethra et Thisadie, quas Castor et Pollux captivas ei assignarant, aliquando reginas* (with two handmaids, Aethra and Thisadie, whom Castor and Pollux had assigned to her as captives, but who had once been queens). This slight change of name from Phisiadie to Thisadie (surely meant to be the same person) must be a simple slip of the pen which demonstrates just how minor a character she is. She was probably invented by Hyginus, and never adopted by subsequent authors.

Two new handmaids of Helen are are also exclusively introduced on a painting of the Sack of Troy by Polygnotus (5th cent. BC), which in turn is described in Pausanias' *Description of Greece* (10.25.4). One Panthalis is standing beside Helen and another by the name of Electra is fastening her mistress' sandals. In his report, Pausanias himself acknowledges the fact that Homer gives different names for Helen's slave women. This statement would suggest that he thinks these women to be alternative names for Aethra and Clymene, but this proves false if we read ahead, as the two actually feature later on in their own right. However, at this stage they are no longer Helen's servants, but are being claimed back. (Paus. 10.25.7-9; 10.26.1, each discussed below). The fact that Polygnotus felt the need to replace them with two nondescript figures shows that the former handmaids had already worked their way up in the tradition from zeros to heroines, even somewhat independently of Helen. However, their names in Homer are apparently not that prominent, given that Pausanias causes confusion by failing to recognise Aethra and Clymene as the Iliadic handmaids when they appear a little later. The reason for this may be that he refers to other cyclical poems as his sources. He probably did not have the lines of the *Iliad* present enough to recall that the attendants were called Aethra and Clymene, even when encountering the names again, but present enough to tell that they were not Panthalis and Electra. Another possibility is that he took over someone else's comment on this detail, without double-checking the reference. If he did indeed look up the relevant passage, he either forgot the names only three sections later or did not think the link worth mentioning, or

indeed he took it for granted that his readers would be so familiar with Homer that pointing this out would not have been necessary.

After the Trojan War, the authors allowed Aethra to regain her status, as she was saved by her grandsons. Proclus includes this briefly at the end of his synopsis of the *Iliupersis:* Δημοφῶν δὲ καὶ Ἀκάμας Αἴθραν εὑρόντες ἄγουσι μεθ' ἑαυτῶν ('But Demophon and Akamas found Aethra and took her with them'). Fr. 4 Davies even suggests that this was their only mission in Troy:

> μη<δὲν> γὰρ εἰληφέναι τοὺς περὶ Ἀκάμαντα καὶ Δημοφῶντα ἐκ τῶν λαφύρων ἀλλὰ μόνην τὴν Αἴθραν, δι' ἣν καὶ ἀφίκοντο εἰς Ἴλιον, Μενεσθέως ἡγουμένου.
>
> For [they say] those with Acamas and Demophon did not take anything from the spoils, but only Aethra, for whose sake they had also come to Ilium, with Menestheus leading the way.
>
> (Schol. on Eur., *Troad*. 31 = *Iliupersis* fr. 6)

Plutarch also mentions a lesser-known legend, according to which Demophon secretly fathered a child, Munychus, with Priam's daughter Laodice, and Aethra helped to rear the baby in Ilium (Plut. *Thes*. 34.1). However, according to Parthenius and Tzetzes, it was Acamas who was the father and the son's name was Munitus (Parthenius 16; Tzetzes *Schol. ad* Lycoph. 495).

Apollodorus says:

> Μενέλαος δὲ Δηίφοβον κτείνας Ἑλένην ἐπὶ τὰς ναῦς ἄγει· ἀπάγουσι δὲ καὶ τὴν Θησέως μητέρα Αἴθραν οἱ Θησέως παῖδες Δημοφῶν καὶ Ἀκάμας· καὶ γὰρ τούτους λέγουσιν εἰς Τροίαν ἐλθεῖν ὕστερον.
>
> But Menelaus slew Deiphobos and led Helen to the ships; and the children of Theseus, Demophon and Acamas, also led away Aethra, the mother of Theseus: for they say that they too later came to Troy.[354]
>
> (Apollod. *Epit*. 5.22)

In his description of Polygnotus' painting, Pausanias provides a fascinating detail which is said to originate from Lesches (or Lescheos), commonly known as author of the *Ilias Parva*:

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[354] *Epit*. 1.23 also mentions that Demophon and Acamas managed to flee from the Dioscuri when they captured Aethra.

> Λέσχεως δὲ ἐς τὴν Αἴθραν ἐποίησεν, ἡνίκα ἡλίσκετο Ἴλιον, ὑπεξελθοῦσαν ἐς τὸ στρατόπεδον αὐτὴν ἀφικέσθαι τὸ Ἑλλήνων καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν παίδων γνωρισθῆναι τῶν Θησέως, καὶ ὡς παρ' Ἀγαμέμνονος αἰτῆσαι Δημοφῶν αὐτήν· ὁ δὲ ἐκείνῳ μὲν ἐθέλειν χαρίζεσθαι, ποιήσειν δὲ οὐ πρότερον ἔφη πρὶν Ἑλένην πεῖσαι· ἀποστείλαντι δὲ αὐτῷ κήρυκα ἔδωκεν Ἑλένη τὴν χάριν. ἔοικεν οὖν ὁ Εὐρυβάτης ὁ ἐν τῇ γραφῇ ἀφῖχθαί τε ὡς τὴν Ἑλένην τῆς Αἴθρας ἕνεκα καὶ τὰ ἐντεταλμένα ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος ἀπαγγέλλειν.
>
> But Lescheos wrote of Aethra that, when Ilium was falling, she slipped away and arrived at the camp of the Greeks and was recognized by the sons of Theseus, and thus Demophon asked for her from Agamemnon; now he wanted to grant him the favour, but said he would not do it before Helen was persuaded first. After he had sent off a herald, Helen granted him the favour. So it seems that Eurybates in the painting has accordingly come to Helen about Aethra and that he is delivering what he has been commanded to say by Agamemon.
>
> (Paus 10.25.8)

This passage shows Aethra's self-determination, but also her ambivalent relationship with Helen at this point: she must have been a good servant and possibly friend during the years in Troy, as Helen considers her worthy of regaining her freedom; yet Aethra sees it as necessary to make a stealthy escape and get help from the Greeks, rather than begging Helen to let her go in person. It would be very interesting to find out more about the characters' reasoning within this story. Furthermore, it is remarkable that even after Troy has been taken Agamemnon sees it fit to ask Helen's opinion and that Aethra is still viewed as her personal property.

Another source gives yet another description of Helen's liberation of Aethra which beautifully combines this section's two overarching themes of riches and slaves. The scholion on Eur. *Hec*. 123 agrees that Theseus' sons did not come to Troy to fight, but merely to recover their grandmother. Within this, Dionysius of Samos (around 300 BC) is cited as follows:

> Δημοφῶν δὲ ὁ Θησέως ἐδεῖτο αὐτῶν δοῦναι Αἴθραν τὴν Πιτθέως τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς μητέρα, ὅπως αὐτὴν κομίσωσιν οἴκαδε. Μενέλαος δὲ πρὸς Ἑλένην πέμπει Ταλθύβιον κελεύσας ἄγειν Αἴθραν· καὶ Ἑλένη δωρησαμένη Αἴθραν παντοδαπῷ κόσμῳ ἀποστέλλει πρὸς Δημοφῶντα καὶ Ἀκάμαντα.
>
> Demophon, Theseus' son, asked them to give them Aethra, Pittheus' daughter, their father's mother, so that they might bring her home. And Menelaus sent Talthybius to Helen, with the order to fetch Aethra; and

Helen bestowed gifts of all kinds of ornaments onto Aethra and sent her on her way to Demophon and Acamas.

(*FGrH* 15 F 5)

Although Helen apparently does not return Aethra so much out of choice as because of Menelaus' command, she nevertheless shows her goodwill by adding something of her own accord that goes beyond her husband's exhortation. The costly presents given by her to Aethra are highly significant on a number of levels: in a patriarchal sense, Helen perhaps compensates Aethra's male custodians for the prolonged dishonourable treatment of their relative (however, one might argue that this is not necessary, since Aethra's enslavement was a retribution for Theseus' former abduction of Helen). Moreover, the riches might be meant as a little something for Aethra's grandsons who will not receive a share of the Trojan spoils, as they have not fought in the war. On a personal level, Helen is clearly offering remuneration and thanks for Aethra's long time in her service, but at the same time through gift-giving, an act of guest-friendship, she makes the woman her equal. Relatedly, for Aethra herself this means that from being someone else's possession, she has become someone who has possessions. This symbolically ends Aethra's slavery and restores her humanity and royalty.

Aethra's reunion with her grandchildren is also treated at length by Quintus Smyrnaeus (13.547-595). In this version she wanders around fleeing from the fire and comes upon the Greeks by chance. They mistake her for Hecuba and want to take her prisoner, when she reveals her identity and demands to be seen by Theseus' sons. Demophoon — as he is here called — and Acamas recognise her and we are told in analepsis of the events before the war. They assure their grandmother that they will bring her back to Greece. Aethra embraces and kisses the two, and they all weep. Here it is assumed that she can be taken back to her family without a need to consult Helen. The focus is on the portrayal of Aethra as a fragile, yet majestic, elderly woman who has suffered much in her life and now has finally found relief in old age.[355]

Aethra's age is also the subject of a schol. *ad Il.* 3.144c1 where it is questioned whether she would not have been too old for servitude, or even how she

[355] Aethra's story is in many points reminiscent of that of Hypsipyle: she was the queen of Lemnos. Because of a curse, the Lemnian women decided to kill all their male relatives, but Hypsipyle secretly spared her father Thoas. When the Argonauts stayed in Lemnos for some time, Hypsipyle bore twins to Theseus, but he then left her to sail on to Colchis. After the women found out about Hypsipyle's betrayal, they sold her as a slave to king Lycus of Nemea (alternatively she was captured and sold by pirates after fleeing Lemnos). There she was made the nanny of the king's infant son (we do not hear what happened to Hypsipyle's own sons). When the Seven against Thebes passed through Nemea, they asked Hypsipyle for some water. She set her charge down and left him unattended while fetching the water: in the meantime a dragon devoured the child. The Seven killed the monster, defended Hypsipyle against Lycus' rage and established the Nemean Games in honour of the boy (Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.17, 3.6.4, Hyg. *Fab.* 15, 74). From what we can gather about Euripides' fragmentary *Hypsipyle*, her own sons, now grown, came back to compete in the games — they had been in the care of Jason, Orpheus and their grandfather Thoas — and after a recognition scene they saved their mother.

could still be alive, given that at *Od*. 11.630-31 Odysseus describes Theseus and Perithous as men of a past generation. However, according to Hyginus, Aethra actually outlived her son. She is included in *Fab*. 243, a designated list of women who committed suicide, which is also the only mention of Aethra's story after captivity: *Aethra Pitthei filia propter filiorum mortem ipsa se interfecit*. ('Pittheus' daughter Aethra killed herself because of the death of her children'). It is curious that Hyginus mentions plural children, given that we never hear of another than her only son Theseus. Could it be that her grandsons are also included in the term *filii*? If so, it is conceivable that the veteran heroine decided to end her life precisely because she could not bear to survive two entire generations after her. In any case, Hyginus' input deals with the confusion, by attesting Aethra's longevity and thus probably also a fitness for servile duties even into an advanced age.

Despite Hyginus' attempts at inventing alternative names for Aethra's fellow slave, the Homeric Clymene has been most widely accepted by subsequent writers. Like her doubles, she does not have a history of her own, but rather functions as a nondescript backdrop for Aethra. Mythology knows a number of more conspicuous women called Clymene, but of those none can be identified with Helen's handmaiden. The only time she is given a little attention is in Pausanias (10.26.1 = Stes. fr. 110), also in connection with the same painting by Polygnotus discussed above. She is depicted as a captive amongst three other women, in proximity to Aethra (which is what leads one to suppose that this is our Clymene). She is listed first and Pausanias comments that Stesichorus counts Clymene among the captives in the *Iliou Persis,* but we do not receive any additional information. Nothing is said of her ties with Helen, but I guess that the author deems no explanation to be necessary, since Clymene is famous enough (after all, he also assumes Aethra's background story to be known to his readership). The others are singled out as Aeneas' wife Creusa, Priam's daughter Aristomache and an unknown Xenodice. It is thus possible that Clymene is the only non-Trojan of the group, but one cannot be certain. While Aethra is given a new story of her own, Clymene is perhaps only 'promoted' in order not to break up the familiar double act. Instead, as we have seen above, another pair of women take over the task of attending to Helen.

Most of the times Aethra and Clymene share a *Nachleben*, in which they often act as facilitators of Paris' and Helen's courtship.[356] They are included as such in Ovid's *Heroides* where Paris tells the following account:

> et comitum primas Clymenen Aethramque, tuarum
> ausus sum blandis nuper adire sonis;
> quae mihi non aliud, quam formidare locutae
> orantis medias deseruere preces.

[356] The theme of a maid's involvement in that part of the story must have become quite prominent, as Ptolemy Chennus recounts within the abduction context that Hera received Aphrodite's κεστὸς ἱμάς and gave it to Helen, but it was stolen by an otherwise unknown servant of Helen by the name of Astyanassa. It was then recovered by Aphrodite (Photius, *Bibl*. cod 190, 149a).

And the first among your companions, Clymene and Aethra,
I have lately ventured to approach with alluring speech;
they told me nothing else than that they were afraid
and left me in the midst of my entreaties as I begged.

(*Her.* 16.259-62)

Perhaps in reaction to this, Helen responds: *et quasdam voces rettulit Aethra mihi* ('and Aethra has repeated certain words to me', *Her.* 17.150). But she ends her letter in this way: *cetera per socias Clymenen Aethramque loquamur, | quae mihi sunt comites consiliumque duae* (the rest let us say through my companions Clymene and Aethra, the two who are my attendants and advisors, *Her.* 17.267-8). Ovid has polished the characters of the slave pair. Their loyalty to their mistress is striking: they do not speak to Paris without Helen's permission, but apparently they will do so at her request; they report everything they hear to Helen; and they are praised by her as reliable and trustworthy. The detail about the handmaidens' fear is compelling, though: is it Helen herself they fear? Do they fear lest Menelaus should find out and punish them? Or do they already sense the consequences that could develop from the love affair and are trying to stop it?

Dares omits Aethra and Clymene, and only mentions that when Helen is taken onto the ship some other unnamed women are also seized (*et cum ea mulieres aliquas depraedantur,* 10). Conversely, Dictys weaves them into his narrative at different points and even elevates them from their servitude to a noble status as Menelaus' kin. This notion already existed to some extent very early on: *Il.* 3.144 presents Aethra as the daughter of Pittheus, while scholion b1 on the same line informs us that, according to Antimachus,[357] Clymene was the daughter of Hippalkmos. Both Pittheus and Hippalkmos are sons of Pelops and Hippodameia, which makes Aethra and Clymene cousins. They are therefore also cousins of Menelaus, who is famously the son of the Pelopid Atreus. This is a fairly straightforward connection which was probably intended when the women's pedigree was invented, but of course it does not quite agree with the story of the servitude, as Menelaus would hardly have kept his family as slaves in his house.[358] Thus Dictys is the first extant source to draw attention to the kinship and to construct a narrative around it. He says that apart from Helen and the riches Paris carried off *Aethram etiam et Clymenam, Menelai adfines, quae ob necessitudinem cum Helena agebant* (also Aethra and Clymene, Menelaus' relatives, who associated with Helen because of their bonds, 1.3). The mention of *necessitudo* is entertaining, as it can be interpreted in two antithetical ways: in this context it is natural to translate it as 'close family relationship', although the primary meaning is 'compulsion' or

[357] This could be either Antimachus of Teos (8th century BC) or of Colophon (around 400 BC).

[358] See also schol. *ad Il.* 3.144c1 which poses the same question, but making Aethra Menelaus' aunt.

'inevitability'. Thus if we understand the latter, we can humorously infer that it does not matter whether Clymene and Aethra are slaves or members of the royal house, since they are unable to get away from Helen either way.

The two are again given prominence a little later when Menelaus hears the rumours about the abduction (1.4): *Quis cognitis Menelaus, etsi abstractio coniugis animum permoverat, multo amplius tamen ob iniuriam adfinium, quas supra memoravimus, consternabatur* ('When Menelaus found out about this, though the abduction of his wife had shaken his heart, he was still much more dismayed at the wrongdoing of his relatives whom we have mentioned above'). The phrase can again be understood in two ways: *iniuria adfinium* can signify either the injury suffered by the relatives or the injury inflicted by the relatives. In the former instance this would mean that Menelaus loves his cousins better than his wife, since it saddens him more to lose them than to lose Helen. The latter possibility assumes a blame of Aethra and Clymene for not preventing — or even promoting — the abduction. This could imply that they had been strategically put in charge of Helen by Menelaus in order to keep a watchful eye on her, and to prevent her from adultery, which he may have expected to happen at some point. This would also explain why he is more upset about the betrayal by his kinswomen than by his wife, since the latter's infidelity is less surprising. Menelaus thought that he could trust Clymene and Aethra because of their blood ties, but they have proved disloyal, as they did not report anything to him, but joined Helen in her escape, and possibly even assisted with it. The two should probably also be counted among the women whom Priam's sons intend to marry at 1.7 (see above).

The next instance in which they are mentioned is after Troy's fall, when the defeated people are allocated to their respective Greeks. While in previously discussed sources it was only Aethra who is taken back by Demophon and Acamas, now it is both women (*Aethram et Clymenam Demophoon atque Acamas habuere,* 5.13). This makes sense in conjunction with the next innovative piece of information we get about the two, for the mythical tradition has established such a strong connection between them that Dictys even makes Clymene Aethra's daughter (*interim Menestheus cum Aethra Pitthei et Clymena filia eius ab Atheniensibus recipitur, Demophoon atque Acamas foris manent;* Meanwhihle, Menestheus was welcomed by the Athenians together with Pittheus' child Aethra and her daughter Clymene, but Demophon and Acamas remained outside, 6.2). They are finally received back at home with Menestheus, who also fought at Troy. He had been made ruler of Athens by the Dioscuri when they took Helen back, whereafter Theseus was not allowed to return,[359] and was possibly even killed at Menestheus' behest.[360] It is therefore logical that Theseus' sons should remain outside Athens,[361] although strangely the women accompany Theseus' enemy.

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[359] Paus. 1.17.5-6.

[360] Plut. *Thes*. 35.4.

[361] In the *Iliupersis* fr. 6, Menestheus however leads Demophon and Acamas to Troy and receives gifts from Agamemnon together with them.

Later Malalas also makes Aethra and Clymene royal ladies-in-waiting, but not directly related to each other. At 5.5 we are told three times that they are Menelaus' family; Aethra is descended from Pelops, and Clymene from Europe. The two are crucial to Paris' and Helen's liaison. When Paris first sees Helen she is walking around the garden with the two women. Then it is explicitly stated that it was through them that Paris seduced Helen, although we do not find out whether this is her wish or Aethra's and Clymene's initiative. It is, however, easy to imagine them as similar to the matchmaking nurse of Euripides' *Hippolytus,* and potentially even makes them the new culprits in the question of who started the Trojan War. Finally, again Paris carries off Helen and many specific possessions ἅμα τῆς Αἴθρας τῆς ἐκ γένους τοῦ Πέλοπος καὶ τῆς Κλυμένης τῆς ἐκ γένους Εὐρώπης καὶ ε′ δουλίδων κουβικουλαρίων αὐτῆς (‘with Aethra from the family of Pelops and Clymene from the family of Europa and her five chambermaids’: Malalas 5.5). The addition of the five chambermaids reinforces the new rank of Aethra and Clymene who are no longer themselves the slaves (cf. Pausanias above). Similarly to Dictys' version, Menelaus is also told that Paris has carried off Helen,

> καὶ ὅτι μετ’ αὐτῆς ἔλαβε καὶ τὴν Αἴθραν τὴν συγγενίδα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν Κλυμένην. καὶ ἀπέμεινεν ἀκούσας ὁ Μενέλαος ὡς ἔξηχος· πολὺ γὰρ ἐλυπήθη διὰ τὴν Αἴθραν· ἦν γὰρ ἔχουσα ὑπόληψιν παρ’ αὐτῷ σώφρονος πάνυ.
>
> and that with her he had also taken Aethra, his relative, and Clymene. And when Menelaus heard this it left him as though stupid; for he was very vexed by Aethra; for in his judgement she had had a good reputation for great chastity.
>
> (Malalas 5.5)

Again Aethra is given prominence over Clymene. Malalas specifies further what in Dictys we could only guess: Menelaus has indeed supposed Aethra to be well-behaved and to be a good influence on Helen. We also know, unlike in Dictys, that his anger is justified, since, as has been mentioned, it was with help from the two attendants that Paris persuaded Helen to come with him.

Finally, Tzetzes receives the tradition mostly from Malalas and slightly confounds it. He too places Paris' and Helen's love at first sight in a similar setting to Malalas: while he is dining with his companions, he sees her passing through the garden with her attendant slaves (δούλαις ἀμφιπόλοισι, *Antehom*. 110), whose names are however not given. If we are to understand them as Aethra and Clymene, this would mean that Tzetzes has again degraded them to an unfree status. Clymene is not mentioned at all, but instead Aethra has an important role and is backed by a number of other insignificant women. After we have heard about the mutual attraction of Paris and Helen and their beauty, the abduction is told in brief in the *Antehomerica*:

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ σήμηναν ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισιν ἔρωτα,
Αἴθρης ἐννεσίῃσι καὶ ἄλλων θηλυτεράων
νηΐ ἐνὶ θέμενοι δμωὰς κόσμον τ' ἐράτεινον,
ἠδ' αὐτὴν Αἴθρην δολοέσσαν πρὸς δὲ καὶ αὐτοὺς,

But when they had declared love to each other,
at Aethra's suggestion and other maidens',
they put onto the ship serving women and lovely jewellery,
and cunning Aethra herself with them as well.

(Tzetz. *Antehom.* 129-32)

It is not quite clear whether line 130 is to be taken with line 129 or 131, namely whether it is the women's idea that the couple disclose their love or that they take riches and slaves onto the ship. The former option makes more sense if we take into account Malalas' version in which Paris is aided in seducing Helen by her attendants. However, no such thing is mentioned by Tzetzes otherwise, and it may well be a deliberate ambiguity. If it is really intended to mean that Aethra and other maidens influence the decision about the escape and what and whom to take aboard the ship, this would concede very great authority to them. We should then wonder what Aethra's and the others' status is supposed to be, if they have power over the fate of other slaves and apparently Aethra herself as well. Does she receive special mention apart from the slave women because she is noble and not one of them? Or is she to be counted among the servants, but stands out from them because she is δολοέσσα? In either case, it seems as though she is the wily leader. The adjective could, however, also be rendered as 'treacherous', which perhaps could imply her disobedience to Menelaus noted in previous texts.

3. Dracontius and Colluthus

On the basis of this rich material on the objects and women brought back with Helen in Paris' ship, Colluthus and Dracontius are clearly atypical in that they ignore those two details altogether. In *Rom.* 8.469, an augur interprets a bird omen for Paris: *Martius accipiter dotem fera bella minatur.* ('The hawk of Mars threatens the dowry with fierce wars.') This can be understood as the familiar motive of the Greek troops demanding back the κτήματα, but Dracontius does not mention that Paris takes any property from Sparta to Troy. Instead, almost mockingly, the narrator prophesies that the dowry Paris shall receive is the blood of the Trojans (*sanguine Troiano dabitur dos: Rom.* 8.652). However, given the description of the escape scene (*Rom.* 8.540-585) in which Paris has

to carry Helen in his arms and run to the ship while being pursued by an angry mob, it would be very unrealistic indeed if he delayed himself with anything or anybody else. Furthermore, striving for riches would probably not fit Paris' character as projected by Dracontius, since we hear at *Rom.* 8.213-7 that – whether honestly or just for show – he deems expensive material goods to be worthless, and rather wants to increase his fame. Therefore in this particular instance Dracontius did not model his version on Dares' where Paris plunders a temple and takes captives as well as some unnamed women. Helen herself is what Dracontian Paris wants, and as such he is referred to as *praedo,* whereas she is his *rapina* (*Rom.* 8.544). It is also logical for Dracontius not to include Aethra and Clymene or anyone else to initiate or assist the couple with the affair, since he constantly makes a point of the fact that the adultery is entirely their own fault, and constantly blames them for it. There is in fact a prediction of the war made by Telamon in his rage that is caused by an abducted woman and riches, but he names Hesione as the reason: he says that since he never received a dowry for the princess, this should be corrected, or else their son Ajax would claim his mother's inheritance from the Trojan treasury (*Rom.* 8.311-315).

Colluthus presents the departure of Paris and Helen as clandestine and, as in the *Cypria*, under the cloak of darkness. It is therefore even more striking that no possessions are said to have been taken, although this is mentioned in Proclus' summary. Perhaps the *Harpage* is making a point about the genuine, naive and non-materialistic nature of the couple's love. Hermione complains that the stranger has destroyed the palace's beauty (383-4), but this surely refers to Helen's abduction from it rather than any stolen things. As for attendants, too, it is Hermione who is surrounded by both women and girls of her own age (333-4), but none are said to have sailed off with Helen. As we shall see in chapter 8.3, the women are not particularly sympathetic towards Hermione, so it would be conceivable that they actually know the truth about Helen's elopement, but are covering for her.

There is, however, one passage which may indicate Colluthus' appreciation of the connectedness of Helen's story with Theseus and his family. In conjunction with Paris' journey to Sparta, the seemingly unrelated aetiological myth of Ennea Hodoi is told:

> αἶψα δὲ Θρηικίοιο μετ’ μετὰ ῥία Παγγαίοιο
> Φυλλίδος ἀντέλλοντα φιλήνορος ἔδρακε τύμβον
> καὶ δρόμον ἐννεάκυκλον ἀλήμονος εἶδε κελεύθου,
> ἔνθα διαστείχουσα κινύρεο, Φυλλίς, ἀκοίτην 215
> δεχνυμένη παλίνορσον ἀπήμονα Δημοφόωντα,
> ὁππότε νοστήσειεν Ἀθηναίης ἀπὸ δήμων.

> quickly after the peaks of Thracian Pangaeon
> he espied the tomb of Phyllis, who loved her husband, rising
> and saw the nine-circled course of the wandering path,

where you, Phyllis, walked and bewailed your bedfellow, 215
waiting for Demophon to be back again unharmed,
when he should return from the countries of Athena.

(Coll. 212-7)

Importantly, the inclusion of Demophon in a poem about Helen may be a nod towards the above-mentioned interaction between the two characters at the end of the war, and thus also to Aethra; and through her in turn to the first abduction of Helen by Theseus (cf. chapter 2.3).[362] From other texts (notably Hyg. *Fab*. 59 and Ov. *Her.* 2) we know that Demophon came to Thrace where the princess Phyllis entertained him and fell in love with him. The man went back to Athens with the promise that he would return to her (the sources are at variance regarding the question of whether they were married or only betrothed), and she came to the shore nine times to look for him (hence Ennea Hodoi), but to no avail. When Phyllis realised she had been taken advantage of, she committed suicide with a noose. From her tomb sprang trees which mourn her death by shedding their leaves, which are called φύλλα from her name (in Verg. *Culex* 131-2 she is herself turned into an almond tree).[363] The tragic affair traditionally takes place on Demophon's return from Troy, and thus it seems odd that Paris can see Phyllis' tomb before the War has even started. This circumstance has been easily explained away with the fact that Colluthus is not very concerned with correct chronology.[364] There is, however, another possibility: The tomb does not necessarily have to be a literal one, but it could be a *pars pro toto* for the general area which is *later* to witness Phyllis' death. A direct analogy for this is found in the *Greek Anthology*: ἠρίον Ἠδωνῆς Φυλλίδος, Ἀμφίπολι (‘Amphipolis, tomb of Edonian Phyllis’, *AP* 7.705.2). It would still be legitimate for the omniscient narrator to give a digest of the Phyllis-story in the imperfect (κινύρεο), although it has not yet happened at this point of the narrative, which would create a sort of analeptic prolepsis.

In any case, it is apt for Colluthus to enrich the myth of Paris and Helen with that of Phyllis and Demophon, since they lend themselves to being compared and

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[362] Magnelli (2008: 160) rightly sees in Phyllis a resemblance to Paris' first wife Oenone (on whom see chapter 3.2). Thus the passage may at the same time be an allusion to both Paris' and Helen's ex-lovers.

[363] According to Servius' commentary on Verg. *Ecl*. 5.10, Demophon did eventually come back and when he saw his beloved transformed into a leafless almond tree, he embraced the trunk, whereupon she grew leaves. Servius therefore argues for the etymology of φύλλα from her name. A very different version is presented in Apollod. *Epit*. 6.16-17 where Phyllis gives Demophon a casket he is only to open if he cannot come back. When he does, he is terrified, mounts his horse, gallops away and is then thrown off the horse onto his own sword and dies. See also Gantz (1993: 701-2) for further details and accounts in which Phyllis' lover is not Demophon, but his brother Acamas.

[364] Rocca (1997: 175 n.18) and Cadau (2015: 174 n.166). Schönberger's (1993: 66) typically fatuous remark ‘hat Paris eine Vision?’ deserves no further comment.

contrasted with each other. Like the main narrative, the inserted story tells of a woman who falls in love with a man who came to her homeland in a ship and thus it may have a programmatic function before Paris' and Helen's meeting. In fact, Philostr *Ep*. 28, lists Helen and Phyllis together among mythic exempla of women who accepted the courtship of strangers. The obvious difference between the two is the fact that Phyllis is the very epitome of marital faithfulness, while Helen is rather that of adultery.[365] Their juxtaposition could on the one hand aim at exposing the discrepancy, but on the other hand by aligning Helen's story with that of Phyllis, her union with Paris might gain a more rightful status (as indeed the characters make themselves believe by calling it a γάμος; 296; 313). References to Phyllis' unhappy ending are omitted by Colluthus, save the mention of the tomb, as he possibly also wants to avoid a direct foreshadowing of the unhappy events ensuing from the abduction. Nevertheless, the knowledgeable reader will spot both the antitheses in time — the two events bookending the Trojan War — and the similarities in plot.

There is another morbid element which may connect the two women, although it is questionable whether Colluthus was conscious of it: as is heavily hinted by Ovid. *Rem*. 602-4 and spelled out by Pliny *NH*, 16.108, Phyllis hanged herself from a tree (this is perhaps a rationalisation of the tree-metamorphosis). In a unique account by Ptolemy Chennus, Helen hanged herself from a tree in Rhodes, whereupon the 'Helen herb' grew underneath it, which brings strife to anyone who eats it (Photius *bibl*. cod 190.149a).[366] Somewhat relatedly, Pausanias 3.19.9-10 reports that Helen met her end by being hanged on a tree in Rhodes:[367] after Menelaus' death, Helen was driven off by his sons and found refuge with her friend Polyxo who was originally an Argive, but later fled to Rhodes with her husband Tlepolemus.[368] However, since Tlepolemus had died at Troy, Polyxo decided to avenge his death and ordered her handmaids, dressed as furies, to attack Helen whilst she was bathing. Pausanias' contemporary Polyaenus tells of a similar incident in his *Stratagems* 1.13, but gives the events a different turn, which, interestingly, brings us full-circle back to Helen's attendants and finery. He says that while Menelaus and Helen were returning from Egypt they had to put in at Rhodes. Polyxo gathered many men and women and approached their ship armed with fire and stones to exact retribution for Tlepolemus. The wind did not permit Menelaus to escape to the sea, so instead he hid his queen under deck and dressed the most beautiful of her

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[365] See Orsini (1972: xix), Schönberger (1993: 16, 66).

[366] Cf. also the odd detail in Euripides that Leda hanged herself because of her daughter's disgrace (Eur. *Hel*. 134-6).

[367] The story is told in relation to her cult at Rhodes as Helena Dendritis, and West (1975: 81) states that the story 'was no doubt invented to explain a cult practice of hanging her image on a tree.'

[368] Tlepolemus had killed Heracles' uncle Licymnius, either by accident or deliberately (Iliad 2.653–70; Apollod. *Bibl*. 2.8.2; Pind., *Ol*. 7.20-35). Cf. Paris' flight after accidentally slaying Antheus (chapter 5.1).

handmaids in Helen's κόσμος and διάδημα.[369] The Rhodians mistook her for Helen, killed her with their missiles and then withdrew, satisfied by the false security that Helen was dead, thus allowing the Spartan couple to continue their journey.

[369] This may be a rationalisation or a doubling of the phantom of Helen (cf. chapter 9.2), given that Egypt is also mentioned.

Conclusions from Part II

My second, central part has investigated the issues and intertexts pertaining to the Abduction of Helen *per se*. Chapter 5 outlined the various notions about the preparations and circumstances of Paris' outward journey. We delved into the possible reasons why Alexander should sail off, not necessarily with a view to meeting Helen. The processes of shipbuilding emerged as a stock image. Most authors furnish Paris with named or unnamed companions for his voyage, but Dracontius alone uses them effectively to drive the narrative.

The substantial chapter 6 discussed the pivotal moment of Paris' and Helen's first encounter. I first explained the absence of Menelaus, before establishing that in most cases the term 'abduction' is not an accurate description of what happened to Helen. The three ancient authors who provide us with the most detailed accounts of the mechanics of the couple's courtship are Ovid, Colluthus and Dracontius. I have investigated the ties between their poems, which strongly suggest an Ovidian influence on the two late-antique writers, thereby voicing my stance in the debate about Colluthus' knowledge of Latin. I give detailed readings of the conversations between Paris and Helen and show how Colluthus and Dracontius engage with other models, notably the *Iliad* and Apollonius' *Argonautica*.

Chapter 7 was concerned with practical details of the pair's escape, and specifically the question of what and who else joined them on their journey. I explored the information surrounding any valuable possessions taken by the two and the implications thereof. Thereafter I reconstructed the rich tradition of Aethra and Clymene, two women who are said by various sources to have accompanied Helen to Troy. Their biographies have been progressively elaborated by writers over many centuries and inextricably linked with Helen, until these marginal figures became active characters in tellings of the Abduction. Exceptionally, the evidence of this chapter does not find a proper foothold in the outputs of our *Abduction*-epyllia, although Colluthus possibly shows awareness of it.

Part III

Aftermath

Chapter 8
Menelaus and Hermione

1. Menelaus' Reactions

As we have established in chapter 6.1, Menelaus makes himself scarce in order to facilitate the escape of Helen with Paris. Some texts also deal with the aftermath and Menelaus' reaction when he finds out that he has been cheated by his guest. Already the *Cypria* contained such an episode. Proclus' summary (*Cypria* fr. 1) says that, following Paris' and Helen's arrival at Troy and the immortalisation of the Dioscuri after their battle with the Apharetidae, Iris informs Menelaus of what has happened at home. Menelaus returns and makes plans for an expedition against Ilium with his brother. Then he goes on to Nestor who, in a digression, tells him a number of stories, just as he is wont to do in the *Iliad*. He relates how Epopeus was destroyed after seducing the daughter of Lycus, the legend of Oedipus, the madness of Heracles and the myth of Theseus and Ariadne. Then they travel around Greece, assembling the leaders.

Despite only being a condensed version of the poem, the excerpt nevertheless illustrates nicely Menelaus' psychological progression. His initial response after receiving the news seems to be aggression. It is easy to imagine his choleric outburst, probably reinforced by Agamemnon, and the immediate decision to seek revenge and save the family honour by annihilating both Paris and his entire clan. By the time he visits Nestor, the emotions have died down a little, and a more melancholic mood sets in. The *Epitome* of Apollodorus says that as soon as Menelaus became aware of Helen's disappearance, he went to Agamemnon and begged him (δεῖται) to muster an army (*Epit*. 3.6), but the sojourn with Nestor is not mentioned, perhaps, because it was not essential to the plot.[370] Thus it is all the more fortunate that it has survived via Proclus, along with some fascinating details. Not without reason, there is a wide consensus that Nestor could be the speaker who advises Menelaus to drown his cares in alcohol in a transmitted *Cypria*-quotation: 'οἶνόν τοι, Μενέλαε, θεοὶ ποίησαν ἄριστον | θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποισιν ἀποσκεδάσαι μελεδῶνας' ('Wine, I tell you Menelaus, the gods have made the best thing | for mortal men to scatter sorrows': *Cypria*, fr. 17 = Athen. 2.35c).

It is also clear that Nestor's storytelling serves the general purpose of cheering his guest up with examples from the past, whilst still maintaining general tristesse by employing material fit for tragedy. The myth of Epopeus, where a sexual perpetrator is duly punished, is most appropriate in the context, as it has a direct link to

[370] Cf. Alcidamas' version where Menelaus asks for troops as soon as he discovers the abduction (*Odysseus* 20).

Menelaus' situation.[371] The parallels with the other narratives are not as instantly obvious, but he lowest common denominator is that all of these are love stories 'gone wrong'.[372] Oedipus also in a sense 'stole' another man's wife, albeit unknowingly, with disastrous consequences. The mad Heracles traditionally kills his children and in most versions their mother Megara, who is a most innocent victim (as in Euripides' *Hercules Furens*). This could be an example of the powerlessness of the fairer sex, and perhaps aimed at reassuring Menelaus that his wife must have been either taken by force or tricked. Heracles' downfall, too, is famously caused by a naïve woman, Deianeira, so through his myth Nestor could have certainly made some misogynistic points of the type familiar from Odysseus' conversation with the ghost of Agamemnon (*Od.* 11.385-464)[373] or Semonides fr. 7. Finally, the flight of Ariadne with Theseus corresponds rather closely to that of Helen with Paris. A plausible moral is that a woman who elopes with a stranger will soon come to regret it, if he suddenly decides to abandon her on a desert island (in spite of everything, this might also instil some worry about Helen's wellbeing). According to the *Odyssey*, Ariadne was actually killed by Artemis 'according to the evidence of Dionysus', before Theseus could bring her to Athens (*Od.* 11.321-5, cf. Eur. *Hipp.* 339-41). Theseus, too, is punished for his wrongdoing, through effectively being made guilty of the suicide of his father Aegeus. Maybe Nestor finished his monologue on an upbeat, to encourage Menelaus to assemble his troops, by reporting how Dionysus came to Naxos, rescued Ariadne from distress and made her his divine wife. Menelaus would of course have identified himself in that glamorous role, and the happy ending would have stirred him to action. Incidentally, this happens to be a very precise prediction of events beyond the scope of the *Cypria*, as Helen will ultimately be forgiven by Menelaus and restored to her original privileged status by his side, without any repercussions.

The chorus of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* states that any man who behaves lawlessly will be brought to justice by divine providence, referring to Paris who was eventually laid low for his sin against Zeus *xenios*, the patron of hospitality, by betraying his host (*Agamemnon* 355-402). The effect of Helen's absence on Menelaus and the Spartan household is also described with much empathy:

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[371] The woman in question is Antiope, but the story is not uniform: see Harder (2002). The version most closely related to the sketch in the *Cypria* seems to be that of Pausanias. Here she is the daughter of Nycteus, who marches against Epopeus to rescue her; both men get wounded, but Epopeus prevails, while Nycteus dies. He appoints his brother Lycus as the new king and Antiope's guardian (hence probably the *Cypria* poet says he was her father) and orders him to take revenge. However, this becomes superfluous when Epopeus, too, dies of his wound and his successor returns Antiope (Paus. 2.6.1-6).

[372] West (2013: 98-100) discusses the relevance of each myth, but points out that some may have been shoehorned into the *Cypria,* simply because they seemed interesting to the poet.

[373] Interestingly, as has been pointed out by von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf (1884: 149), the heroines of Nestor's four tales (Antiope, Jocasta/Epicaste, Megara and Ariadne) appear in almost the same order before Odysseus (*Od.* 11.260-325).

ἰὼ ἰὼ δῶμα δῶμα καὶ πρόμοι, 410
ἰὼ λέχος καὶ στίβοι φιλάνορες.
πάρεστι σιγὰς ἀτίμους ἀλοιδόρους ἀλίσ-
τοὺς ἀφειμένων ἰδεῖν·
πόθῳ δ᾽ ὑπερποντίας
φάσμα δόξει δόμων ἀνάσσειν. 415
εὐμόρφων δὲ κολοσσῶν
ἔχθεται χάρις ἀνδρί·
ὀμμάτων δ᾽ ἐν ἀχηνίαις
ἔρρει πᾶσ᾽ Ἀφροδίτα.
ὀνειρόφαντοι δὲ πενθήμονες 420
πάρεισι δόξαι φέρου-
σαι χάριν ματαίαν·
μάταν γάρ, εὖτ᾽ ἂν ἐσθλά τις δοκοῦνθ᾽ ὁρᾷ,
παραλλάξασα διὰ
χερῶν βέβακεν ὄψις, οὐ μεθύστερον 425
πτεροῖς ὀπαδοῦσ᾽ ὕπνου κελεύθοις.

Alas, alas for the house, the house and the chiefs, 410
alas for the bed and the husband-loving traces.
One can see silence of those deserted, dishonoured,
neither reviling nor beseeching:
but because of longing for one who is over the sea
a spectre will seem to rule the house. 415
The charm of well-formed statues
has become hateful to the man:
but in the lack of eyes
all loveliness disappears.
Mournful visions appearing in dreams 420
visit him, bringing
empty delight:
for vainly, whenever one sees things that seem good,
the vision slips through
one's hands and is gone, without delay 425
following the paths of sleep on its wings.

(Aesch. *Ag*. 410-26)

The tragedian captures the gloomy atmosphere very sensitively. The imprint of Helen is still detectable in the marriage bed. Menelaus is so dismayed at what has happened that he cannot even rage nor lament. The plural verbs, as well as πρόμοι, might refer to the other men of the house, notably Tyndareus, Castor and Pollux. The grief-stricken

Menelaus is merely a shadow of a man. He finds himself unable even to look at beautiful statues, presumably of Helen herself: they remind him of her, but since they are not alive, they ultimately make his plight worse. His nights, too, are spent dreaming of Helen, but he is unable to embrace her.[374] Aeschylus presents us with a believable picture of a loving husband, broken by the loss of his wife, as though she had died.

In Euripides' *Trojan Women*, set already after the Sack of Troy, Menelaus is confident that he has settled his score with Paris, but he also blames Helen, saying that he will not even mention her by name (*Troad*. 864-71). However, when speaking at length in her own defence, Helen remarks that Menelaus is also at fault for leaving her alone with a man who had the support of Aphrodite (*Troad*. 940-3).[375] Menelaus is usually portrayed as a gracious host who does not deserve the treatment he receives from Paris, which further aggravates the latter's violation of *xenia*. This goes as far as Menelaus telling Helen to take good care of the guest while he is away, as stated in the *Cypria*-summary. The irony of this is exploited in Ovid's *Heroides,* where Paris calls Menelaus a fool for providing this opportunity and also brashly teases Helen, saying that in order to comply with Menelaus' instructions, she has to grant him whatever he wants (*Her.* 16.299-316).

In another poem, the *Remedia Amoris,* Ovid uses Menelaus' experience, amongst other mythical episodes, as an example to demonstrate how jealousy increases love:

> Quid, Menelae, doles? ibas sine coniuge Creten,
> Et poteras nupta lentus abesse tua.
> Ut Paris hanc rapuit, nunc demum uxore carere
> Non potes: alterius crevit amore tuus.
>
> What are you deploring, Menelaus? You went to Crete without your spouse,
> and you managed to be parted from your bride and did not mind.
> Now that Paris has snatched her, precisely now, you cannot
> be without your wife: through another's love your own has grown.
>
> (Ov. *Rem. am.* 773-6)

Again, Menelaus is given blame, not only for leaving Helen with Paris, but also for not appreciating her enough while he still had the chance. This is the only text which rightly questions why the king did not take his queen to Crete to accompany him. The situation is strongly reminiscent of a child who has forgotten about his toy, but has a tantrum

[374] Could this apparition of Helen be an allusion to her phantom (on which see chapter 9.2)? Menelaus is furthermore himself described as a φάσμα (415). Cf. Helen's visit in Hermione's dream in section 3 below.

[375] Cf. Eur. *Andr.* 591-596.

when he sees another child playing with it; the narrator's tone is that of a parent teaching him a lesson. Ovid implies that either Menelaus does not actually love Helen as much as Paris does, or even that he ought to be grateful to the lover for rekindling his passion for his wife.

Severus of Alexandria, a student of Libanius, explores Menelaus' state of mind after the abduction of Helen in his *Ethopoeia* 3. In this speech, far from finding any fault with himself, he views himself as the pious man who has become a victim of barbaric behaviour. He tells how he took Paris in out of pity, because he was in distress far from his own country (it is perhaps implied that he got shipwrecked). But in recompense for his guest-friendship, he says, he received only tears. He realises that, unawares, he has been fostering an adulterer for his wife. Next, he considers the wrong done to him as universally valid and reasons that it will lead to a boycott of *xenia*: after hearing this tale, no husband will ever welcome a stranger to his house again. Therefore Alexander has harmed not only Menelaus, but also any man who may be in need of hospitality in the future. Finally, he resolves to march against him and either perish with his men or avenge himself. This readiness to die underlines Menelaus' manliness and surely alludes to the duel between the two men in *Iliad* 3, where his rival shows himself a coward.

The audience's knowledge of these issues is presupposed by Colluthus who, similarly to Ovid, uses the concept of Menelaus as a caring host in a witty, and slightly outrageous, comment: as Paris arrives at the Spartan palace, Helen sees him and unbars the bolts of her 'hospitable chambers' ('φιλοξείνων θαλάμων': Coll. 252). At the very end of the scene, Paris takes Helen onto his ship 'from the chambers of hospitable Menelaus' (ἐκ θαλάμων [...] φιλοξείνου Μενελάου). This creates a humorous double-entendre, especially if the meaning of the adjective is taken literally in the sense of 'stranger-loving': Helen will, quite literally, love the stranger, possibly in that very bedchamber.[376] Meanwhile, Menelaus is so kind to his guests, that he even provides his own wife as a parting gift! An additional degree of mockery lies in the fact that the king is not even aware of Paris' presence at his palace. When the little Hermione later ascertains Helen's elopement, she addresses the birds, ordering them to fly to her father and inform him (Coll. 381-4), but that is most certainly just a dramatic embellishment. Colluthus never tells us how Menelaus actually found out about his wife's disappearance.

Dictys of Crete gives us another distraught Menelaus (1.4). When he learns what has happened he is deeply upset about Helen's departure, but even more about the fact that Aethra and Clymene, Helen's ladies-in-waiting and his own relatives, did not prevent it.[377] His reaction is focalised by Palamedes, who notices that the king has lost his wits owing to his great indignation. Accordingly, he provides practical support and prepares Menelaus' ships, briefly offers his sympathies and sends him on his way to

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[376] See chapter 6.3 for the indeterminacy of Helen's sexual union with Paris in Colluthus' epyllion.

[377] On Helen's attendants, see chapter 7.2.

Sparta. Other rulers of Greece also assemble there independently and envoys are sent to Troy before Paris himself has even arrived back.

In Malalas' rendition of the events, Spartan soldiers first find out that Helen is gone and are terrified to break the news to Menelaus, but eventually choose three brave men for the mission. Menelaus is stupefied on hearing it and, as previously in Dictys' version, blames it on Aethra. He returns to Sparta, searches everywhere, but cannot find the women (Malalas 5.5). Later Menelaus and Agamemnon become aware that Helen is in Troy with Paris and send ambassadors there. Uniquely, Clytaemnestra also writes a letter to her sister, trying to persuade her to come home, and gives it to Menelaus (5.7).

The tradition reaches a culmination in Dracontius' *De Raptu*. During the courtship scene, Paris takes up the argument we have encountered above: he tries to persuade Helen that she is being neglected by her husband, whilst also insisting that he himself would treat her the way she deserves to be treated, viz. always be ready to fulfil her every wish like a slave and adore her as though she were a goddess (*Rom*. 8.522-9). The approach proves successful and Helen agrees to run away with Alexander. What follows is a unique elopement scene: rather than secretly stealing away by night, the pair is sighted on their way to the shore and chased by Menelaus' army coming from the city (*Rom*. 8.540-9). Paris fears that he and Helen will be apprehended and put to death, but she tells him to stop talking, pick her up and order his crew to run faster; the escaping couple is compared to Europa clinging to the neck of Jove the bull (*Rom*. 8.544-62). The exhausted Paris sets the woman down on the ship and the sails are lifted; they sail far enough that the pursuers have to give up (as they arrive on the beach, they strike their foreheads and throw away the weapons); now into view comes Menelaus himself, on a sweating horse — we hear that he was shattered by the news when he came to Cyprus to sacrifice (*Rom*. 8.563-73). This is rather odd, as we have learned earlier that Menelaus was on Crete (*Rom*. 8.441), but now he appears from the Cyprian mainland. Evidently, either an imperceptible time warp must have occurred along the way or Menelaus did not actually go anywhere. Be that as it may, the intention of offering sacrifices again marks him as a god-fearing man.

What follows is a description of the king's heartbreak, as he looks on helplessly, while the ship carrying his wife moves towards the horizon (*Rom*. 8.574-85). He breaks down in the sand, groans and tears out his blond hair. This prompts a simile which likens a man to a big cat, a feature favoured by Dracontius, but not in the usual manner. Menelaus' hopelessness is compared to that of a tigress whose cubs have been taken by a human. She runs after the horse and rider, but when her offspring are carried over the river, she comes back bereft and groaning. While the example of a wild animal conveys well Menelaus' unbridled desperation, there are also some incongruities: most obviously, it is the Spartan chief who sits on a horse, while the lovers are fleeing on foot, whereas in the simile it is the other way around. But more importantly, comparing the love of a husband for his wife with that of a mother for her children skews the

picture somewhat.[378] On the one hand it seems inappropriate and could confirm Paris' suggestion that Helen's first marriage is not a healthy one. On the other hand, it may be interpreted in the opposite way: Menelaus loves Helen not only as someone to whom he is bound by law, but as his very own flesh and blood. Furthermore, the little tigers are taken from their natural habitat, and their abductor is likely to be a hunter who does not mean well. Conversely, Helen has been removed from the place and the man to which she belongs and is sailing towards an uncertain future.

Stoehr-Monjou has observed that the equation of Helen with baby tigers also points to Menelaus' loss of the ability to father legitimate children.[379] This harmonises well with Dracontius' exposition at the very start of his poem, which promotes wedlock as a means of producing offspring and even stresses the importance of the mother over that of the father (*Rom.* 8.3-10). This, of course, stands out as a stark contrast to the well-known argument in Aeschylus, where Apollo says that a child is created only by the father, while the mother is seen as a mere 'incubator' (Aesch. *Eum.* 657-66.).[380] As we have seen, at another point in the *De Raptu* Hesione is honoured in the eyes of Telamon particularly for bearing him a son.[381] As Dracontius keeps silent on the matter, we may assume that in his version the marriage between Menelaus and Helen is a childless one. Her elopement has thus at the same time crushed the hope for heirs to the Spartan throne. These deliberations additionally show up the surprising fact that none of the previous sources surveyed in this chapter touches on any such concern for progeny on Menelaus' part. His sadness about Helen's departure is egocentric and his anger stems from being the victim of a wrongdoing himself, but it is never acknowledged that the situation has either thwarted his potential of having children or that it has deprived any existing children of maternal care, although that kind of reasoning may have been expected. This, then, makes the material found in Colluthus, which will be discussed in the next sections, even more special.

2. Hermione's Mythical Background [382]

Colluthus dedicates sixty-one verses to Helen's little daughter Hermione and her distress when she discovers that her mother is gone. He is the first and only ancient author to feature Hermione's perspective on the events in such depth. The following three sections

[378] See also section 3 of this chapter for an opposition of erotic and parental love in Colluthus.

[379] Stoehr-Monjou (2014: 97-8).

[380] Apparently, Dracontius takes pleasure in discrediting the words of Apollo, which he also does later in the poem (cf. chapter 3.4).

[381] See chapter 1.3.

[382] The following sections in this chapter are adapted from my MSt dissertation (Oxford, 2014).

will explore how the Hermione scene functions within the epyllion as a whole, and in what ways it draws on the previous literary tradition surrounding the figure of Hermione, both as a child and as an adult. First, it will be useful to give an overview of the representations of Hermione's background in classical texts before Colluthus. Naturally, the child is always mentioned in conjunction with her parents. Her first appearance by name is in the *Odyssey*:

> Ἑλένῃ δὲ θεοὶ γόνον οὐκέτ' ἔφαινον,
> ἐπεὶ δὴ τὸ πρῶτον ἐγείνατο παῖδ' ἐρατεινήν,
> Ἑρμιόνην, ἣ εἶδος ἔχε χρυσῆς Ἀφροδίτης.
>
> To Helen the gods granted no more offspring,
> since she had first given birth to a lovely daughter,
> Hermione, who had the appearance of golden Aphrodite.
>
> (*Od.* 4.12-4)

Already here two prevailing themes are introduced which seem to recur throughout ancient literature whenever Hermione is mentioned: firstly, her status as Helen's only child and secondly, her beauty. In *Il.* 3.174-5 Helen regrets that she came to Troy λιποῦσα | παῖδά τε τηλυγέτην. The attribute τηλύγετος, an epithet used for children, can be rendered as 'most beloved', but literally means 'the latest born', i.e. the youngest, and is also applied to only children.[383] Hesiod stresses Hermione's looks and tells that her birth was unexpected, perhaps in the sense that her parents had given up any hope for children:

> ἀλλ' ἄρα τὴν πρίν γ' ἔσχεν ἀρηΐφιλος Μενέλαος·
> ἣ τέκεν Ἑρμιόνην καλλίσφυρον ἐν μεγάροισιν
> ἄελπτον.
>
> But her [Helen] then Menelaus dear to Ares had first to wife:
> she bore beautifully-ankled Hermione in the palace,
> an unhoped-for child.
>
> (Hes. fr. 204.93-5)

But curiously elsewhere Hesiod also mentions that she has a brother:

> ἣ τέκεθ' Ἑρμιόνην δουρικλειτῶι Μενελάωι·
> ὁπλότατον δ' ἔτεκεν Νικόστρατον ὄζον Ἄρηος

[383] *LSJ ad. loc.*

She bore Hermione to spear-famed Menelaus:
but as the youngest she bore Nicostratus, scion of Ares.

(Hes. fr. 175)

Since in Hesiod Nicostratus is ὁπλότατος, we can argue that he has only been conceived after the war and Hermione was still an only child when Helen left Sparta. But in Sophocles' *Electra* Clytaemnestra makes it clear that Menelaus had two children with Helen before the war:

πότερον ἐκείνῳ παῖδες οὐκ ἦσαν διπλοῖ,
οὓς τῆσδε μᾶλλον εἰκὸς ἦν θνῄσκειν, πατρὸς
καὶ μητρὸς ὄντας, ἧς ὁ πλοῦς ὅδ' ἦν χάριν;

Did he [Menelaus] not have two children,
who should really have rather died, since they are of the father
and mother for whose sake this voyage happened?

(Soph. *El*. 539-41)

Hermione in Euripides' *Andromache* stresses, in turn, that she is Helen's only child:

ἥνπερ μόνην γε Τυνδαρὶς τίκτει γυνὴ
Ἑλένη κατ' οἴκους πατρί· μηδὲν ἀγνόει.

Indeed me alone the Tyndarid woman Helen
bore in my father's house: know this well!

(Eur. *Andr*. 898-9)

Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.133 also states that after getting married the couple conceived Hermione and, according to some writers, Nicostratus, thereby acknowledging the divergent accounts.

Various other sources further complicate Helen's motherhood: we have already mentioned the tradition by which Helen and Theseus are the natural parents of Iphigenia, who is then adopted by Agamemnon and Clytaemnestra (see chapter 2.3). The *Cypria*-writer maintains that Helen and Menelaus had a son Plisthenes (cf. also section 1 above on Menelaus' alternative father by that name) and that she also bore Aganus by Paris (*Cypria* fr. 9 = schol. Eur. *Andr*. 898). The scholiast on *Il*. 3.175 lists three children of Menelaus and Helen: Hermione, Nicostratus and Aithiolas. Ariaethus also mentions one Maraphius (*FGrH* 316 F 6). While Homer apparently leaves the illicit union between Paris and Helen pointedly childless, thus contrasting it with the perfect

marriage of Hector and Andromache,[384] this concern was not shared by his successors. Dionysios Skytobrachion knows of one Dardanus born to Helen and Paris (*FGrH* 32 F 11). More recent writers name a son Corythus or Helenus, according to a scholium on *Od*. 4.11. Dictys presents three sons of the pair: Bunomus, Corythus, and Idaeus; however, the first time we hear about them is at the same time the last, as they are killed by a collapsing roof during the Sack of Troy (Dictys 5.5). Furthermore, Corythus is actually better known as the child of Paris and Oenone (as discussed in chapter 3.2). Ptolemy Chennus alone says that Helen had a daughter by Alexander, whom she wanted to call Helen, but he preferred the name Alexandra. They played a game of knucklebones to decide the matter, which Helen won and thus named the child after herself. However, Chennus proceeds, Helen Jr. was killed by Hecuba during the Sack of Troy (Phot. bibl. cod 190, 149b, 8-12).

Hermione's beauty is of course associated with Helen who is known to be the most beautiful woman in the world. In the Odyssey passage above, Hermione is said to have the looks of golden Aphrodite. In Homer Aphrodite and Helen are half-sisters, since both are the daughters of Zeus (cf. chapter 2.1), wherefore we can infer that Hermione's beauty is inherited from the mother's side. Hermione is used in love poetry as a *comparandum* for beautiful women.

>]τιον εἰσίδωσ[
>] Ἐρμιόνα τεαυ[τα
>] ξάνθαι δ' Ἐλέναι σ' ἐίσ[κ]ην
>
> … look
> Hermione herself
> to compare you to blonde Helen
>
> (Sappho fr. 23.3-5)

> tu licet Antiopae formam Nycteidos, et tu
> Spartanae referas laudibus Hermionae,
> et quascumque tulit formosi temporis aetas;
> Cynthia non illas nomen habere sinat:
>
> You may cite with praises the looks of Nycteus'
> daughter Antiope and of Spartan Hermione,
> and all the women the age of beautiful time has brought forth:
> Cynthia won't let them have a name.
>
> (Propertius 1.4. 5-8)

[384] Griffin (1977: 43).

Although the passage from Sappho is very fragmentary, it is mostly agreed that the speaker praises the beauty of a girl by comparing her to Hermione and then to Helen. Since the praise is likely to be climactic, as in the piece by Propertius, we can expect the comparisons to become bolder, as an even better comparandum to match the girl's supreme looks is sought every time. Thus, we should understand that, since Hermione is listed before Helen, the beautiful daughter is still in her mother's shadow. It is this very theme that can be observed most of the time whenever Hermione is mentioned. Normally we only ever encounter her when Helen is the main subject under discussion. Hermione is then presented either for the sake of mythological completeness or to make a point about the characterization of Helen, whether it is demonizing or sympathetic.

Sappho demonstrates the great power of love using Helen as an example. Passion for Paris took hold of Helen ‘κωὐδὲ παῖδος οὐδὲ φίλων τοκήων | πάμπαν ἐμνάσθη’ (‘nor did she at all remember her child | nor her dear parents’: Sappho fr. 16. 10-1). Thus Sappho very much excuses Helen's actions, saying that erotic love is even stronger than love for one's parents and children.[385] In Stesichorus S 104, as in *Iliad* 3 above, Helen seems to voice her longing for Hermione, thereby marking her change from the ruthless adulteress back into the good wife and caring mother. In Triphiodorus, Helen's neglect of Hermione adds to her image as a volatile character. Athene chides her: οὔποτε δ’ οἰκτείρεις πρότερον πόσιν οὐδὲ θύγατρα | Ἑρμιόνην ποθέεις; (Don't you pity your former husband nor long for your daughter Hermione?; Triph. 493-4). Similarly to the bitter Clytaemnestra of Soph. *El.* (see above), in Eur. *IA* Clytaemnestra is also angered at Helen and suggests that Hermione be sacrificed instead of (or at least in addition to) her own daughter Iphigenia:

> ἢ Μενέλεων πρὸ μητρὸς Ἑρμιόνην κτανεῖν,
> οὗπερ τὸ πρᾶγμ’ ἦν. νῦν δ’ ἐγὼ μὲν ἡ τὸ σὸν
> σῴζουσα λέκτρον παιδὸς ἐστερήσομαι,
> ἡ δ’ ἐξαμαρτοῦσ’, ὑπόροφον νεάνιδα
> Σπάρτηι κομίζουσ’, εὐτυχὴς γενήσεται.
>
> Or Menelaus should have killed Hermione for her mother,
> for it was his business. But now I, having preserved
> your bed shall be deprived of my child,
> while she who has done the wrong will receive
> her sweet girl back in Sparta and be happy.
>
> (Eur. *IA* 1201-5)

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[385] West (2002: 211) aptly points out that this is ‘a sympathetic response to the story from a woman with a daughter of her own whom she would not exchange for the whole of Lydia ([Sapph. fr.]132).’

Here Hermione is objectified as a precious possession which Helen does not deserve and of which she should be stripped, according to Clytaemnestra's an-eye-for-an-eye logic.

The passage that most strikingly shows how Hermione is seen in relation to Helen and also addresses the question why she was an only child is a comment by Porphyrius:

> διὰ τί [δὲ] Ἑλένη μόνην τὴν Ἑρμιόνην ἔτεκε; διότι τὸ πολλὰ τεκεῖν ἀλλοιοῖ τὸ κάλλος τῆς γυναικός. μελλούσης γὰρ αὐτῆς μεσολαβῆσαι εἰς τὸν πόλεμον τῶν Τρώων καὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων, οὐκέτι ἐδίδουν αὐτῇ τέκνον οἱ θεοί, ἵνα τὸ κάλλος φυλάττῃ, ᾧ Ἀλέξανδρος ἡδυνθῆναι ἔμελλε. τὸ δὲ παντελῶς εἶναι ἄτεκνον ἦν δύσδαιμον καὶ κακόν, τὸ δὲ τεκεῖν εὔδαιμον καὶ μακάριον. διὰ τοῦτο ἔτεκεν ἕν, ἵνα μακαρία λογίζηται καὶ ἵνα τὸ κάλλος ἔχῃ. ἐπιφέρει δὲ καὶ ὁ ποιητής· ‘Ἑλένῃ δὲ θεοὶ γόνον οὐκέτ’ ἔφαινον.’ πιθανῶς, ἵνα ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ἀκμάσῃ ἢ ἵνα δι’ Ἀλεξάνδρου γόνον μὴ σχῇ.
>
> [but] why did she only give birth to Hermione? Because giving birth to many would alter the beauty of the woman. For since she was destined to be seized into the war between Trojans and Greeks, the gods gave her no other offspring, so that her beauty may be preserved and that Alexander would have delight. But being completely childless was ill fortune and bad, while giving birth was good fortune and a blessing. For that reason she bore one, so that she may be considered blessed and that she may keep her beauty. The poet too adds: ‘To Helen the gods granted no more offspring’, plausibly, that she may still be in her fullest bloom and not have offspring by Alexander.
>
> (Porphyrius *ad Od*. 4.11)

Porphyrius notices that Hermione is crucial to constructing the figure of Helen. He represents Helen as an instrument with which the gods steered the Trojan War. The reasoning is rather simple: Helen has to be beautiful for Paris; children spoil a women's looks; therefore she has to be childless; but childlessness is a κακόν; so the happy medium is for her to have just one child. However, this leaves us with an ambivalent attitude towards Hermione who is seen as a ‘necessary evil’. Again, she only exists as an accessory of her mother, to aid a particular portrayal of her. She is needed in order to make Helen privileged; but at the same time she devalues her from a patriarchal perspective, by claiming through the birth some of the beauty that is reserved for Paris or whichever man possesses Helen. Thus there is a dichotomy between two aspects of female nature: bearing children and being sexually desirable. Furthermore, a kind of rivalry is created between the child and the lover.

Paris also somewhat competes with Hermione for Helen's attention in Ovid's *Heroides*. Following a version of the myth in which Paris was entertained at the Spartan court for some time before he sailed off with its queen (see chapter 6.1), Ovid makes him say in his letter to Helen:

> oscula si natae dederas, ego protinus illa
> Hermiones tenero laetus ab ore tuli.
>
> If you had given your daughter kisses, forthwith I would
> joyfully snatch them from her soft mouth.
>
> (*Her*. 16.255-6)[386]

This sketch of a scene is brief, but very telling: Paris channels his as yet unrevealed passion for Helen and first erotic contacts with her through Hermione. But from Hermione's perspective, this must mean that she witnessed the development of their relationship, probably as the whole family was spending time together with their Trojan guests. What is more, the girl must have been close enough with Paris to let herself be kissed by him. He must have won her over by giving her attention, though not for her own sake, but in order to gain favour with Helen. One can imagine that this is even worse, for when the couple left Sparta, Hermione would not only have been deserted by her mother, but also cheated by Paris whom she trusted and was attached to. Thus the daughter is again only a puppet in her mother's story.

So far, we have mostly found Hermione mentioned either very generally as Helen's beautiful child or when she is spoken of and remembered in a Trojan context. There are only two extant sources before Colluthus that describe the very moment of her abandonment in Sparta. Apollodorus informs us that Hermione was nine years old when Helen left:

> ἡ δὲ ἐνναέτη Ἑρμιόνην καταλιποῦσα, ἐνθεμένη τὰ πλεῖστα τῶν χρημάτων, ἀνάγεται τῆς νυκτὸς σὺν αὐτῷ
>
> And she, leaving behind nine-year-old Hermione, put onboard most of the belongings and was carried away with him by night.
>
> (Apollod. *Epit*. 3.3)

In another passage from the *Heroides* the adult Hermione herself reminisces about that ominous day:

> Taenaris Idaeo trans aequor ab hospite rapta

[386] It is similar to *Aen*. 4.84-5 where Dido is secretly in love with Aeneas and *gremio Ascanium genitoris imagine capta / detinet, infandum si fallere possit amorem*.

Argolicas pro se vertit in arma manus.
vix equidem memini. memini tamen: omnia luctus,
omnia solliciti plena timoris erant.
flebat avus Phoebeque soror fratresque gemelli,
orabat superos Leda suumque Iovem.
ipsa ego non longos etiam tunc scissa capillos
clamabam 'sine me, me sine, mater abis?'
nam coniunx aberat.

The Spartan abducted across the sea by the Idaean guest
turned Argive hands to weapons for her sake.
Certainly, I hardly remember. But I do remember still: everything was mourning,
everything was full of worried fear.
Grandfather cried and her sister Phoebe and her twin brothers,
Leda prayed those above and the highest Jove.
I myself cut off my locks which we not yet long then
and cried 'Without me? Without me, mother, you go away?'
For her husband was absent.

(Ov. *Her*. 8.73-81)

Just as we have seen with Menelaus' reactions to Helen's disappearance, here too the overwhelming grief is apparent; Hermione cuts off some hair, as is customary when a loved one has died. However, the crucial difference is that, unlike Menelaus, she does not pity only herself, but depicts the whole family's shared sorrow and points out the individual responses of her grandparents, aunt and uncles. In the brief snapshot of the girl's incredulous questions Ovid powerfully conveys the childish inclination of never wanting to be separated from the mother. While most authors are not interested in Hermione's reaction, Dares at least provides an excuse for himself. He takes not only Menelaus out of the picture to facilitate the abduction, but also takes care of other family members: he says that Castor and Pollux went to visit Clytaemnestra at Argos, on the occasion of a festival of Juno, and they took along their niece Hermione (Dares 9). But nowhere is the child Hermione treated at such length and in so much detail as in Colluthus.

3. Hermione in Colluthus

After the Judgement of Paris (Coll. 121-189) Colluthus' narrative does not have a real climax. Paris does not encounter any problems while sailing to Sparta (Coll. 190-246), although there are a number of clearly bad omens for the voyage, which are simply

ignored (cf. chapter 5.1). Helen follows him willingly, they board the ship and set sail for Troy (Coll. 247-325). Thus the divine plan is fulfilled and the narrative could well end here in a straightforward way, celebrating the affection of the couple, carefree for the time being, and leaving the apparent problems related to the union to be the concern of other poets. But that would make the piece rather boring. Instead, the text goes on: Ἑρμιόνη δ' (Coll. 326).

The sudden introduction of the name at the beginning of the line, fitting the abrupt style of the epyllion,[387] switches the scene from the open sea back to a chamber in the Spartan palace without warning. At once we remember that something has been completely forgotten in the story: Helen's daughter Hermione has been left behind by her mother, and we witness the child's lament as she realizes it. This, of course, now casts the seemingly perfect romance of Helen and Paris in an unfavourable light. Hermione has not even been alluded to before.[388] Paris carries Helen away from Menelaus' chamber (323), but there is no indication that Hermione is also sleeping there, as we learn a little later (332). Hermione is not famous enough for us to think about her automatically in conjunction with the story of Helen's abduction, and her appearance is therefore very unexpected.

The scene featuring Hermione spans about 24 hours, but the delineations of time and the sequence of events are rather blurry, perhaps reflecting the fact that Hermione would have remembered that day in a distorted way. After Helen has left with Paris at dawn (Coll. 316-18), Hermione wakes up in the morning (ἱσταμένης [...] ἠριγενείης, Coll. 327) and discovers her absence. In tears, she asks her handmaidens where her mother could have gone and the girls cry with her (Coll. 328-333). The attendant women (γυναῖκες, as distinct from her peers, the παῖδες) gather around her and try to comfort her, saying that Helen will return soon and thinking up explanations for her disappearance (Coll. 334-345). But Hermione easily disproves those possibilities and gets even more worried (Coll. 346-362).

She says that she has looked for Helen in the woods, but could not find her (Coll. 356-8). This seems odd, since we have just been told that she was conversing with the women after she had woken up. Apparently there has been a time warp in the meantime. Since the whole scene is made up mostly of these two monologues, it seems that they are more than just abstract. We must imagine them as dramatic, accompanying action, spanning several hours. The speeches are a condensed showcase of the things that would have been said (again and again?) during the day.[389] Especially the plural voice of the attendants must be understood as an amalgam of utterances by different

[387] On the lack of connections between the scenes in Colluthus, see Livrea (1968: xx) and Schönberger (1993: 16).

[388] Cuartero i Iborra (1992: 38) agrees that Colluthus left her out of the proem on purpose to surprise his readers.

[389] This may be an argument in favour of Cadau's (2015: 206-23) suggestion that the epyllion served as a pantomime libretto.

speakers.[390] Thus when the women say that Hermione will see her mother even while she is weeping (Coll. 337), we may suppose that they simultaneously take her for a walk to look for Helen in all the places they mention, and each time the girl replies that she cannot find her there, and is at a loss. Another, perhaps more plausible, possibility is that Hermione rejects their suggestions straightaway (Coll. 347-8), but nevertheless goes out to search the area and test her own, much gloomier, speculations (Coll. 352-362).

At some point it becomes evening, as we can infer from Hermione's remark that the stars are rising (Coll. 350). From this point the narrative sequence becomes clearer. Hermione is exhausted with crying and falls asleep (363-368). She dreams of Helen who tells her that she has been abducted (Coll. 369-378). Hermione awakens with a start, cries even more than before, and commands birds to report the 'abduction' to Menelaus who is in Crete (Coll. 379-384). We may deduce from the presence of the birds that it is now early morning. The episode closes with Hermione once more wandering in vain, seeking Helen (Coll. 386), and one gets the impression that she is going to spend yet another day in this way.

Importantly, the first thing Hermione does when she appears in the text is to throw off her veil (ἀπορρίψασα καλύπτρην: Coll. 326), an action which problematizes the issue of her age from the outset. As has been noted above, Apollodorus maintains that she is nine years old at the time of Helen's departure from Sparta. This is an interesting stage of life, since it constitutes both late childhood and early adolescence. Nowadays a person, and especially a girl, of nine could be termed a preadolescent or a 'tween' (compound of 'teen' and 'between'), an American neologism signifying the age group of c. 9-12. As will be shown below, the behaviour and reasoning of Colluthus' Hermione oscillates between that of a child and that of an adult, but she is predominantly childlike, and thus she could well be a nine-year-old. This will lead me to argue later that Colluthus' representation of the girl is the very first in-depth treatment of a fictional female child in Greek and Latin poetry. My criterion for identifying a pre-adolescent girl is simply the absence of interest in the opposite sex and/or marriage, but rather a strong tie to the parents and the birth home.

The mention of a veil upon Hermione's head, however, slightly complicates this claim: Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones, who has investigated veiling from the archaic period up to the second century AD, asserts in the conclusion of his eighth chapter that Greek females, just like women of modern-day veil-societies, were '[n]o doubt first veiled at menarche.'[391] It would follow from this, that for Colluthus' Hermione to be veiled she must have reached sexual maturity, and thus it is questionable whether she is still a child. There are three reasons for which I contend nevertheless that Hermione should be classified as a child. Firstly, veiling practices could have significantly changed by 500

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[390] This is a good strategy for keeping the epyllion short, but this is certainly not the primary aim. Vian (1969: 73-4) points out that Quintus Smyrnaeus collapses several speeches by Sinon into one (QS 12.375-86).

[391] Llewellyn-Jones (2003: 247).

AD (perhaps with the onset of Christianity) and girls could have been veiled pre-emptively from a certain age, before they became fertile. Furthermore, at nine years an early-blooming girl could conceivably be menstruating, yes, but still very much be a child mentally, which is true of Hermione' concerns and the way she speaks. At any rate, there is nothing else in the text that would point to the fact that she is marriageable. Secondly, Hermione's veil which, as I will show, is crucially inspired by and dependent on the Homeric tradition, may also have a different function. As Llewellyn-Jones states, the veils of Homer's female characters are signifiers of high status;[392] thus veiling may be appropriate for a royal of any age. The headgear is exploited here as a literary commonplace, rather than a realistic representation. An even more convincing explanation is that Hermione's veil is an expression of mourning.[393] She does not wear it on a daily basis, but temporarily dons it in her moment of distress, which is most similar to grieving over a death. Thirdly, and most importantly, Colluthus introduces the detail of the veil in order to establish major inter- and intratextual links. The discarding of the veil bears significant connotations with bereaved Homeric women. The wording is modelled on *Il.* 22.406 (ἔρριψε καλύπτρην) where Hecuba does the same to express her mourning for Hector. A little later (*Il.* 22.739-40), Andromache collapses, shocked at the news of her husband's death, and her head-dress (κρήδεμνον) falls off her head. In the *Odyssey* Nausicaa and her handmaids σφαίρῃ ταὶ δ᾽ ἄρ᾽ ἔπαιζον, ἀπὸ κρήδεμνα βαλοῦσαι (*Od.* 6.100).[394] Through the comparison of Hermione with those predecessors general themes emerge that will become relevant throughout the passage.

The same action of losing the veil can mean two very different things in Homer: in the two Iliadic examples it stands for deep anguish whereas in the *Odyssey* it shows the girls' high spirits. While at her age we should expect Hermione to take off her veil in order to play with her companions, she casts it off and then weeps together with the παῖδες (333). Her situation is thus contrasted with Nausicaa's, and actually corresponds to that of the adult women in the *Iliad*, as Hermione too has lost a dear person. At this point we are introduced to the fact that the girl is much more grown up than she should be. Her serious behaviour is contrasted with the immaturity of Helen who is impulsive and naïve enough to escape with a stranger who tells her that Aphrodite wants her to be his bride (247-314). Accordingly, the comparison of Hermione with Hecuba who mourns for her child somewhat establishes a reversal of the mother-daughter relationship between Hermione and Helen. Furthermore, the parallel with Andromache who cries for her husband — who is the same person as Hecuba's son — foreshadows the theme of competition of erotic vs filial love, already apparent in Sappho 16, Porphyrius and Ovid, *Her.* 16 above, and continued by Colluthus. Llewellyn-Jones argues that the tossing away of the veils by Hecuba and Andromache

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392 Llewellyn-Jones (2003: 121-130).

393 Llewellyn-Jones (2003: 302-3).

394 On these and other Homeric veils see Lewellyn-Jones (2003: 28-32) where the synonymity of καλύπτρη and κρήδεμνον is also established.

signifies their loss of status through the death of their male guardian:[395] while Hector was alive they enjoyed his protection and were literally protected under their veils; now they are vulnerable and virtually at any man's disposal. Although Helen is not Hermione's male guardian, the girl still feels exposed and fearful without her present. We need to bear in mind that Menelaus, too, is not at home, so that she is now without either parent. However, the fact that she throws away the veil because of Helen's disappearance suggests that the attachment to her mother and the homely safety it brings are at least as important, if not more important, to the little girl than her father's actual power over palace and kingdom. Finally, while the Iliadic women's laments for Hector mark the beginning of the end of the Trojan war, Hermione's lament for her mother can be interpreted as its starting point.

The abandonment of female headgear is a recurrent motif at various stages of Colluthus' epyllion. In the proem the poet calls upon the Trojan nymphs who often leave their κρήδεμνα and their toys on the shore and go dancing on Mt. Ida (2-4). The resonances with the Nausicaa passage are striking, and the same contrast with Hermione is present. But apart from the apparent differences between the nymphs and the girl, they have something in common: in both cases the action of taking off the head-dress is a marker at the opening of a new scene. Thus we can suppose that Hermione and the nymphs have similar functions in the narrative.[396] The nymphs, a Colluthean substitute for the Muses,[397] are a source of information for the narrator. But significantly he only asks them to tell him what they know about the events up until the Judgement of Paris (5-13). As we have noted, the Hermione scene is somewhat detached from what came before it, and forms an unhappy contrast to Paris' and Helen's seemingly happy ending. Therefore, while the earlier events are covered by the account of the nymphs who merrily leave their headbands, Hermione, who casts off her veil in despair, assumes the authority over the latter part of the poem.

Another instance of the headgear-motif can be found in lines 81-2, where Cypris makes herself up for the beauty contest and ἀναπτύξασα καλύπτρην wreaths her hair with gold. This seductive context possibly introduces the meeting of her sister Helen and Paris in Sparta, for which Aphrodite herself is responsible after all and for which she has given instructions (295-6). So again the abandonment of the veil may introduce a new section, although, admittedly, it does not stand at its beginning. The last fall of a veil in *The Abduction* is found in the epilogue. When Paris is about to enter Troy with Helen, Cassandra watches the scene from the acropolis and, since she knows that their union is going to bring doom upon the city, she tears her hair and ἔρριψε καλύπτρην (389).[398] Of all the headgear motifs, this one most clearly echoes that of

[395] Llewelyn-Jones (2003:130-1).

[396] Paschalis (2008: 139), who describes the poem as a series of *aitia,* points out that both the proem and Hermione's lament feature similar questions, such as 'how?' 'why?' 'where?'.

[397] On the Bucolic character of this, see Magnelli (2008: 153).

[398] Paschalis (2008: 134-5) has also paralleled this line with Hecuba's mourning.

Hermione, both lexically and in being closest to her situation. Hermione and Cassandra, two mourning mortals, are opposed to the divine bliss of the nymphs of the prologue and Aphrodite. Hermione casts away her veil upon Helen's departure, and Cassandra mirrors this by reacting in the same way upon Helen's arrival at the gates of Troy. Colluthus' epyllion is a prequel to the *Iliad*, and the Cassandra episode forms a transition between the two. In fact, it even echoes the ending of the *Iliad* where Cassandra, again standing on a high point, sees Priam approaching the city gates in his chariot, bearing the dead body of Hector (*Il*. 24.696-709). Thus the admission of Helen into the city foreshadows the mourning she will bring upon it. Not only do Hermione and Cassandra represent the two sides involved in the war to come, Greece and Troy, respectively; they may also draw attention to the contrasts between the *Iliad* and *The Abduction*. The expressions of grief in both characters are prompted by the same event, but in different ways. While Hermione in her bedroom cries for her destroyed family and palace (384), Cassandra on the acropolis mourns Troy. Similarly, through Helen's crossing of the sea, we move from the internal to the external; from the miniature epyllion which explores the sorrows of a small child and the influence of the abduction on the private domestic sphere to the big epic about the big city where Helen's flight has a political impact.

Colluthus is the very first to expand on the topic of the little Hermione and her personal relationship with Helen. Of the previous literary treatments Homer and Hesiod note that her daughter is dear to Helen. In Ovid, *Her.* 16 she shows her affection for her child with kisses. Hermione's attachment to her mother is also apparent in *Her.* 8. Colluthus goes even further in highlighting their bond, to contrast the previous circumstances with Helen's sudden absence. Hermione addresses her handmaidens:

> παῖδες, πῇ με λιποῦσα πολύστονον ᾤχετο μήτηρ,
> ἣ χθιζὸν σὺν ἐμοὶ θαλάμων κληῖδας ἑλοῦσα
> ἔδραθεν ὑπνώουσα καὶ ἐς μίαν ἤλυθεν εὐνήν;
>
> ‘Girls, where has my mother gone, having left me with many sighs,
> she who yesterday took the keys of the bedchambers and while putting me
> to sleep slumbered and entered one bed with me?’
>
> (Coll. 330-332)

κληῖδας ἑλοῦσα suggests that Helen locked the door from the inside in order for her and Hermione to be safe and undisturbed.[399] Therefore Hermione may conclude that wherever her mother has gone, she did so of her own free will, because she must have

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[399] Livrea (1968) *ad loc.*, draws a comparison with Achilles Tatius 2.19.4-5 where Leucippe's mother always sleeps with her daughter and takes care to lock the door doubly, both from inside and outside.

unlocked the door.[400] It has been argued that ἕδραθεν ὑπνώουσα, translated by Mair as 'fell asleep', is a tautology. Livrea disagrees, as the two words have different meanings.[401] He claims that ὑπνώουσα denotes 'esser stanco, addormentarsi'. The *LSJ s.v.* ὑπνώω in fact gives 'to be drowsy, tired' as a possibility, but also notes that in other places it is used simply with the meaning 'to sleep'. Livrea *ad loc*. cites ὑπνώουσιν in line 368 as a parallel for meaning 'drowsy'. But I think both there and especially in line 349 (ὑπνώουσι) the verb should be rendered as 'to sleep'. However, if we look up the non-epic form ὑπνόω — whose sense Colluthus perhaps had in mind, but wanted to give it a poetic colour — it primarily means 'to put to sleep' in the active. For an object we can supply Hermione from σὺν ἐμοὶ in the previous line. So the picture this rendering would paint is that Helen was putting her daughter to bed, but fell asleep herself in the process. This would then even make the phrase the very opposite of a tautology.

The bed-time ritual is a deeply poignant moment and demonstrates the intimacy of the mother-daughter-relationship. However, it is very hard to believe that that night Helen would have actually fallen asleep when she had an escape planned. Rather, she would have waited for Hermione to be asleep, possibly before bringing all her belongings onto Paris' ship and/or having intercourse with him during the night,[402] and would have sailed away in the morning. But the events are told from Hermione's own perspective and, since Helen apparently took care to make everything seem normal and unsuspicious, we hear the scenario that would usually take place, rather than what really happened.

Line 332 continues: καὶ ἐς μίαν ἤλυθεν εὐνήν. On the one hand, this is a minor *hysteron proteron* which, like the temporal incongruities in her second speech discussed above, can be explained with Hermione's emotional turmoil. On the other hand, the powerful image of the shared bed is given prominence through being placed at the end of the speech. Later in line 373 Hermione, in passing, provides the additional information that this is her father's bed, i.e. his and Helen's marriage bed. The fact that Hermione occupies it during Menelaus' absence from home is therefore significant. It has been rightly argued that 'she almost substitutes for him'.[403] The fusion of erotic and filial love alluded to in previous texts here manifests itself in the symbolism of the bed. It is the place in which Helen would sleep and have sex with Menelaus, in which she would have conceived and probably given birth to their daughter, and in which they now cuddle and sleep together. In short, it is the emblem of the family bliss and stability

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[400] Schönberger (1993: 71) unnecessarily and arbitrarily attributes the fact that Hermione noticed nothing and that Paris could enter the chamber although it was locked to the 'Zauberwirkung Aphrodites'. In fact, Helen would have simply opened the door and Hermione would not have heard her leaving, because she was asleep. On page 73 Schönberger contradictorily adds that 'Hermione und Kassandra sind vom Zauber nicht erfasst'.

[401] Livrea (1968: *ad loc)*.

[402] For the uncertainty with regard to the nocturnal activities, see chapter 6.3.

[403] Paschalis 2008: 140.

which has the woman at its centre. Thus when Helen flees from the Spartan bedroom in order to join that of her lover, she deserts not only her husband and child but disrupts the entire basis of the household (cf. Hermione's words at Coll. 384 that Paris ἀγλαΐην ξύμπασαν [...]ἀλάπαξε μελάθρων).[404]

In the sketch of the day of Helen's disappearance in *Her.* 8 (section 2 above) Hermione is surrounded by her relatives to share in her grief; although it is only a brief passage, the individual reactions of five family members are described. In contrast, in *The Abduction* the princess seems very isolated. Her only interlocutors are her female attendants, but it is questionable how much they really feel for her. Her address to the birds at 382 is also a demonstration of her loneliness. After Hermione's initial question the narrator resumes: ἔννεπε δακρυχέουσα, συνωδύροντο δὲ παῖδες (Coll. 333). However, the handmaidens' wailing seems less sprung from heartfelt sympathy, but rather from duty. Their lamentation has a theatrical flavour, with Hermione leading the dirge and the girls responding as a chorus. The chief concern of the adult women is to stop their protégée from crying: ἐρύκειν | Ἑρμιόνην στενάχουσαν ἐπειρήσαντο γυναῖκες (Coll. 334-5). Their speech is much more about maintaining appearances than about providing real comfort. At 337 they remark that Hermione's θαλεραὶ παρειαί are disfigured because of the crying — this is almost ironic, given that in earlier texts the girl's beauty is constantly stressed as her trademark. The women also tell the child that her mother will come back soon (Coll. 336-7) and make guesses as to where she may have gone (340-61). It is doubtful, however, whether they actually believe their own rhetoric.

The women's suggestions as to what could have detained Helen are: (a) she went to a meeting of young women, but wandered off the path; (b) so maybe she is sitting on the meadow of the Hours; (c) or she went to take a bath in the river and tarried there. Hermione's response addresses those assumptions directly (Coll. 347-8): Helen knows the hill (a?); she learnt the flow of the rivers (c); and she knows the paths to the roses and the meadow (c&b). Instead, Hermione has her own suppositions about what could have happened if she can exclude the possibility that her mother got lost. She voices them pathetically as apostrophes to Helen, and they also somewhat correspond to the versions of the attendants (Coll. 352-62): Helen did not meet other women, but wild beasts that killed her (a); rather than strolling to the meadow she took the chariot, had a fatal (?) accident and lies in the coppice (b); if she was bathing in the river she drowned (c). But for each explanation Hermione herself provides a plausible counterargument straightaway. We witness her train of thought as she is coming to terms with the lack of certainty. She vacillates between utter despair and moments of logical reasoning. She is sensible enough to check her own mistaken deliberations and defends herself quite vehemently against being mislead by others: 'τί μοι φθέγγεσθε, γυναῖκες;' ('What are you talking to me, women?': Coll. 348).

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[404] On beds as social symbols in Homeric epic see Zeitlin (1996: 26-32).

We may compare Hermione's surprisingly critical judgement with the lack of resource of her attendants and with the previous scene in which Helen shows herself incredibly gullible (Coll. 247-314). She opens the gates of her palace to a stranger, is alone with him and blindly trusts the ambiguous truths he tells about himself.[405] Then she instantly agrees to escape with him, because he took her fancy. While in Sappho fr. 16 Helen is said to have forgotten her child and fled with Paris because she was overwhelmed by love, here it seems completely unrealistic and irresponsible, as she has only just met him. Neither do we hear of any divine agency. So Helen must just be incredibly whimsical, which maybe also led the attendant women — who know her character — to think it plausible that she would wander off and get lost on her way. In fact, she is almost childish in her behaviour. Throughout the narrative, Colluthus conveys the impression that Helen is much younger than she really is, by calling her a νύμφη (Coll. 12-3; 276; 304; 315; 388) and avoiding references to her status as the wife of Menelaus.[406] There is also no mention of the fact that she is a mother before she leaves Sparta.

As Livrea, *ad loc.*, rightly points out, the reference to the meadow of roses at Coll. 348 alludes to Helen picking them and, alongside other elements, evokes Mosch. *Eur.* 30-32. But if we are to liken Helen's situation to that of a flower-gathering maiden who is then kidnapped by a lusty Olympian, the case of Persephone seems even more appropriate.[407] For Hermione perfectly suits the part of a Demeter who searches the whole world to find her child. This role reversal may be a response to the *Rape of Persephone* by Claudian whom Colluthus knew, as has been demonstrated by Cadau.[408] Interestingly, the imagery of headgear presented above is also found in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*. When the goddess hears her daughter's cries she tears her veil with her hands (κρήδεμνα δαΐζετο: *Hom. Hymn.* 2.40) and hastens to rescue. Later, in mourning, she is covered (κατὰ κρῆθεν κεκαλυμμένη: *Hom. Hymn.* 2.182) and holds the veil in front of her face (προκατέσχετο χερσὶ καλύπτρην: *Hom. Hymn.* 2.197). Furthermore, Hermione's nature is depicted as that of an adult at 367-8: the princess falls asleep, weighed down with weeping, and the poet comments that this is often the case with γυναῖκες. The obvious example is Penelope in *Od.* 4.787-794 who falls asleep whilst worrying about Telemachus. Thus Colluthus reverses the standard roles of child and parent, by presenting us with an infantile mother and a grown-up nine-year-old.

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[405] But see chapter 6.3 for a problematisation.

[406] See Paschalis (2008: 145).

[407] Another example of this motif is Creusa: she collects flowers and is then led away by Apollo and assaulted while calling for her mother (Eur. *Ion* 887-96). Moreover, in Euripides' scenario Helen is snatched up by Hermes while she is gathering roses and is carried to Egypt (*Hel.* 240-51).

[408] Cadau (2015: esp. 48-50).

The part of the Hermione episode that is most complex and therefore most difficult to interpret is the dream scene. Its intertextual parallels will be treated at the end of this chapter. The girl is said to wander about δολοφροσύνῃσιν ὀνείρων (Coll. 369). The dream is widely understood to be of the False Gate which is earlier also described as that of δολοφροσύνη (Coll. 321).[409] But the dream's origin is a riddle. While in Homer some deity is always responsible for sending dreams to humans, Colluthus is not clear about this aspect, thus inviting speculations as to where the words uttered in the dream come from. This ambiguity has been described as deliberate.[410] The passage opens with an assertive Hermione accusing Helen for abandoning her. Again sounding like the moralizing parent, she employs three rhetorical questions:

> ποῖον ὄρος μεθέηκα; τίνας προλέλοιπα κολώνας;
> οὕτω καλλικόμοιο μεθ' ἁρμονίην Ἀφροδίτης;
>
> Which mountain have I left out? What hills did I neglect?
> Is this in accordance with the harmony of beautiful-haired Aphrodite?'
>
> (Coll. 374-5)

The last, most reproachful question is striking: what does Hermione mean when she asks if this is how one pursues harmony with/of Aphrodite? Mair's translation 'Followest thou thus the love of fair-tressed Aphrodite?' is misleading, as it could mean both Helen's reverence for the goddess or love as her realm. Hermione has no means of knowing that Helen's disappearance has an erotic background, but since Helen has a special relationship with Cypris, she concludes that her disappearance must have something to do with the goddess. Thus confronted, Helen, like a child, refuses to take the blame and lays it on Paris instead:

> τέκνον ἀκηχεμένη, μὴ μέμφεο δεινὰ παθούσῃ·
> ὁ χθιζός με μολὼν ἀπατήλιος ἥρπασεν ἀνήρ.
>
> 'Sorrowing child, do not blame me who has suffered terrible things.
> The guileful man who came yesterday has abducted me.'
>
> (Coll. 377-8)

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[409] For the suggestion of moving verses 316-321 before 369, see Livrea (1968: *ad loc).*

[410] Cuartero i Iborra (2003: 194). Magnelli (2008: 172 n.95) agrees.

This is of course a blatant lie, as the reader knows that Helen was not kidnapped, as she says, but came with Paris of her own free will.[411] She also provocatively calls Paris ἀπατήλιος. What are the δεινὰ she claims to have suffered? The purpose of this statement is variable, according to what we suppose to be the source of the dream. If we attribute it to Hermione's psyche alone, Helen's reply may be caused by the girl's wishful thinking. She does not want to admit to herself that her mother could have betrayed her and tries to find excuses for her. But then the question still remains how Hermione knows about Paris. Perhaps she has actually met him when he arrived. Certainly the fact that he is spoken of as ὁ [...] ἀνήρ, with the definite article, gives the impression that the interlocutor knows who is meant. Another possibility is that the real Helen's image has crept into her daughter's dream and displays a manipulative character, scapegoating Paris to save face herself before Hermione. Or perhaps Helen really feels that she has been abducted, as she may have discovered that Paris has lured her with false promises and she already regrets the escape (as she does in *Il.* 3; cf. chapter 6.3).[412] Finally, a god could have sent the dream, either in order to comfort Hermione or, on the contrary, to wreak some havoc.

Paschalis argues that Hermione is exploited by the poet as an instrument to drive forward the plot leading to the Trojan War, as she, being a child, would be the only one to believe the story of the abduction and tell it to Menelaus who would then send troops.[413] This assumes that Hermione knows *who* the deceitful man Helen told her about actually is. The interpretation is very tempting, as it attaches to the girl an importance that goes even beyond the poem. Even though, as has been shown, Hermione is surprisingly sensible for her age, she may still believe something her darling mother herself tells her (if the poem's mindset is understood to be Homeric, such appearances in dreams are nothing strange in themselves). Her words at Coll. 381-4 seem to confirm this. However, what makes me hesitate to completely accept Paschalis' reading is that immediately afterwards, in the last verse of this episode, she still searches for her mother and wanders around in vain (μητέρα μαστεύουσα, μάτην ἐπλάζετο κούρη: Coll. 386). She could not have taken the dream that seriously after all, if she still continues searching. Hermione apparently does not know what she is supposed to think — and neither does the reader. Colluthus shows again that he likes introducing a certain state of affairs and then letting us fill in the gaps between the lines.

[411] Paschalis (2008: 140) brilliantly notes that Helen's distortion of the facts is reflected in the title of the poem (ἥρπασεν — Ἁρπαγή), which does not suit the narrative.

[412] Cf. Magnelli (2008: 165).

[413] Paschalis (2008: 140).

4. The Adult Hermione

As shown in the second section of this chapter, there are very few instances in literature before Colluthus that portray Hermione during her childhood in any detail. However, we hear much more about her as a grown-up, owing to her somewhat difficult marital status. According to most accounts, Hermione was betrothed to her cousin Orestes from a young age, and in some accounts already married to him during the Trojan War by her grandfather Tyndareus; but Menelaus is in Troy, unaware of the engagement, and towards the end of the war promises his daughter's hand in marriage to Achilles' son Neoptolemus (also called Pyrrhus), provided that he captures Troy;[414] Neoptolemus then snatches Hermione away from Orestes.[415] Their wedding feast is celebrated by Menelaus in *Od*. 4.3-9, but the marriage notoriously remains childless.[416] However, Pyrrhus has a son, Molossus, with Andromache whom he brought back as a slave from Troy.[417] Thereafter Orestes, after murdering his mother, kills Neoptolemus also and claims back his bride.[418] Hermione and Orestes have a son Tisamenus who succeeds to the throne of Sparta.[419]

While in all the above sources only the bare facts about Hermione's situation are given, we also have literary treatments which are more focussed on her own feelings, the two major ones being Euripides' *Andromache* whose subject is Hermione's jealousy of the eponymous heroine, and Ovid's *Heroides* 8, written as a love letter by Hermione herself to Orestes. In the following I shall examine whether Helen's abandonment of her child as narrated by Colluthus can be linked (intertextually) to representations of Hermione's future life in other sources.

The adult Hermione is first and foremost a tragic figure. Sophocles wrote a play with the title *Hermione* that dealt with similar issues to the *Andromache* of Euripides. Unfortunately, it is lost but for a few fragments which do not aid the present discussion. Hermione is a marginal character in Euripides' *Orestes* where the plot is slightly different from the tradition: when Menelaus refuses his help in defending Orestes and Electra from punishment for the killing of their mother, the siblings take Hermione hostage and threaten to kill her. Finally Apollo *ex machina* announces, amongst other things, that, although Neoptolemus was hoping to wed her, Orestes is supposed to take her as his bride (*Or.* 1653-9). Hermione herself only speaks briefly at 1321-1346 when she is being lured into the trap by Electra, but from their dialogue we can see that she is willing to help her cousins (1344-5) who then take advantage of her

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[414] He gives this promise in Quintus Smyrnaeus 6.85-92.

[415] Schol. *ad Od*. 4.4, Ov. *Her.* 8.31-6, Servius *ad* Verg. *Aen*. 3.330 and 297.

[416] Pherecydes fr. 98.

[417] Paus. 1.11.1; Apollod. *Epit*. 6.12.

[418] Apollod. *Epit*. 6.14; Aen. 3.325-32.

[419] Apollod. *Epit*. 6.28; Paus. 2.18.6.

trustfulness. We also learn at 1340 that she was nursed by Clytaemnestra, supposedly after Helen had gone to Troy.

In his *Helen* Euripides mentions Hermione briefly, but significantly, as he relates her life during and immediately after the Trojan War to Helen's infidelity (even though in this version Helen is freed from this charge, since it was her *eidolon* that went to Troy while she herself was in Egypt, this does not change the perceptions of others nor the fact that her child had to grow up without both parents):

Με.: ὤμοι· θυγατρὸς δ᾽ Ἑρμιόνης ἔστιν λόγος;
Ελ.: ἄγαμος ἄτεκνος, ὦ πόσι, καταστένει
γάμον ἄγαμον αἰσχύνα.

Menelaus: Woe to me! Is there news of our daughter Hermione?
Helen: Unmarried, childless, my husband, she laments
my shameful unmarried marriage.

(Eur. *Hel*. 688-91)

Helen's reputation has also dishonoured Hermione in the eyes of potential husbands. Her actions would thus have ruined her daughter's whole life, both in the early years and in adulthood. This is not surprising, since, as has been shown in section 2, Hermione's very existence as a mythological figure is inextricably connected with — and even due to — her mother's infamy.

It has been argued, very persuasively in my opinion, that Apollonius of Rhodes in the *Argonautica* portrays the young Medea in a way that foreshadows her representation as a child-killing mother by Euripides.[420] I would like to apply this method to *The Abduction* and test to what extent Colluthus' little Hermione is consistent with the way she was represented as an adult in earlier literature. Euripides' *Andromache* is the first extant text in which Hermione's own character is established. She is presented as Neoptolemus' young bride, humiliated by her own sterility and the fact that her husband's concubine Andromache has born him a son. The princess fears that the slave woman could therefore displace her. While her husband is away, Hermione, with Menelaus' support, tries to kill her rival and the child, but Peleus steps in and reprimands them. Menelaus' confidence wanes and he leaves. Deserted by her father, Hermione now fears that Pyrrhus will kill her when he hears of the evils against Andromache. She repeatedly tries to take her own life, but is prevented by her nurse. Thereupon Orestes, who happens to be in the area, visits and — after the message of Neoptolemus' death has arrived — takes Hermione as his bride, since she had been engaged to him even before Pyrrhus married her.

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[420] Dyck (1989), Knight (1991); Byre (2002) calls this the 'Euripidean hypothesis'; *contra* Mori (2008: 187-9).

Against Pagani, who calls the Euripidean Hermione 'una creatura piuttosto mediocre'[421], I contend that she is depicted with considerable complexity. There are two very different sides to her character. The Hermione we see in the first half of the play is an extremely disagreeable person. Her character is drawn as the opposite of the sympathetic Andromache who presents herself enduring the hardships of servitude as befits her royal blood. Because of her status as the lady of the house she is arrogant and demeaning to Andromache (*Andr.* 147-80). At *Andr.* 205-12 the Trojan indicates that her mistress is beautiful, but a bad wife for her lack of respect and devotion to Neoptolemus. The beauty she is so famous for in other authors may have developed into vanity. The other side of Hermione's character emerges after Menelaus' departure when she becomes hysterical, suicidal and — if the words of her nurse can be trusted — even remorseful (*Andr.* 805). We understand that the self she exhibited before was only a mask covering up her emotional instability. She is now perhaps slightly more likeable because of the pitiful state she is in, but her behaviour is still far from honourable.

In the *Andromache* Hermione 'is comprehended [...] in terms of her past.'[422] As we would expect, although Helen is not a *dramatis persona*, her presence looms on the scene throughout. Hermione herself, tellingly, remains mute about Helen, and when Andromache mentions her she clearly hits Hermione's sore spot (*Andr.* 248-9). Allan sums up the dynamic: 'The mother's notorious promiscuity seems to have affected her daughter. Andromache insinuates that Hermione's monogamous jealousy is really just another form of her mother's sexual insatiability (*Andr.* 218-19, 229-31).'[423] Peleus also claims that she is not good enough for his grandson, because daughters are like their mothers (*Andr.* 619-23). Helen did most probably indeed have a great influence on Hermione, but this has nothing to do with genetic disposition. Rather, the childhood trauma of losing her mother, which is the subject of Colluthus' work, has left lasting psychological damage. Perhaps the young woman desperately seeks exclusive attention from her husband, since she did not enjoy it from her parents as a child. The idea of compensating for parental affection through an erotic relationship is also present in Colluthus, as we have observed with regard to Menelaus' and Helen's bed that the love of the married couple and the love of the child are intermingled.

Furthermore, the grown-up Hermione must be so obsessed with monogamy, because an extramarital affair has caused her much distress before. Her hatred of Andromache may be even greater for her Trojan origin (*Andr.* 173-7): the Spartan princess is scared that the barbarian will steal Neoptolemus from her, just as Paris, Andromache's brother-in-law, once stole Helen. Her inability to become pregnant has in addition led to an inferiority complex. Thus when Andromache is prepared to give her own life for the life of Molossus (*Andr.* 407-18), this would be especially infuriating to Hermione whose selfish mother would have never made sacrifices for her.

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[421] Pagani (1968: 205).

[422] Allan (2000: 88).

[423] Allan (2000: 183).

As to Menelaus, he has spoilt his daughter very much in the past, as she herself boasts when she first appears at *Andr.* 147-53. Even now, as a married woman, she is still very much 'daddy's little girl' and Menelaus protects her in Pyrrhus' household. Father and daughter seem to be very close, even though they have an unconventional way of bonding, namely their joint attempt at murdering Andromache and her son. Their victim refers to them as 'the two vultures' (δισσοὶ γῦπες: *Andr.* 75). In Colluthus, too, Hermione looks to Menelaus and maybe idolizes him as a hero who would bring back her mother. Both Menelaus and Hermione act in a very self-assured manner towards someone weaker, but wimp out before figures in a higher position. When Menelaus leaves, reproached by Peleus, Hermione voices her disappointment (*Andr.* 854-5) and we cannot but remember that this is the second time in her life in which she is let down by a parent.

As a response to the abandonment by father and mother, respectively, Euripides' and Colluthus' Hermione both cast their veils to the wind (Coll. 326; *Andr.* 830-1). But apart from that their personalities could hardly differ more: from girlhood in the epyllion to her appearance in tragedy, Hermione's self-confidence has drastically diminished. While in the former she behaves like an adult, in the latter her irrationality and youth are stressed again and again (*Andr.* 184-5, 192, 238, 326). Both characters are given bad advice by some γυναῖκες, but while the Colluthean version refuses to listen to them, her adult counterpart tells how she was influenced by their ill talk, inciting her to attack Andromache (929-38). She lays all the fault for her wrongdoing with them and, unable to accept the fact that she is barren, she accuses Andromache of drugging her (155-60). A reminiscence of this is found in the devious Helen in Colluthus who blames Paris for her 'abduction'.

In *Andr.* 826-8. Hermione, in her frenzy, says that she will pluck her hair and scratch her cheeks and the nurse tries to restrain her from disfiguring herself; in the *Harpage* the women say something very similar to the girl. In both situations the character is deeply aggrieved and does not care about her appearance, which is atypical of the Euripidean Hermione. A few lines later, at *Andr.* 831-5, she dramatically bares her breasts. This again is a behaviour we know well from Helen (see chapter 2.5) as well as Colluthus' shameless Aphrodite (chapter 4.4). Thus we may conclude that Euripides' Hermione, despite trying not to, has in a sense become just like her mother. If Colluthus was inspired by some motifs pertaining to the tragic Hermione, he used them on the one hand to contrast his young character with the one portrayed by the predecessor and on the other hand to align the Hermione of Euripides with his Helen. Consequently, we have to wonder whether the little girl in Colluthus is destined to become like that after being wronged by her parent.

As I have outlined in chapter 6.3, I see no reason to claim that Colluthus did not know Ovid's *Heroides* 16. If this is true, he would also very possibly have been familiar also with *Her.* 8. Here Ovid depicts an adult Hermione who in turn differs from Euripides'. There is a slight difference in the plot: Hermione was married to Orestes, but Neoptolemus abducted her, since Menelaus unwittingly promised her in Troy. Now she

writes to Orestes, begging him to come and rescue her. At the beginning she describes how Neoptolemus dragged her into his house, and compares her suffering to that of Andromache (*Her.* 8.11-4). While this cannot but be an intertextual comment on Euripides' play, it is also true that this Hermione would be sympathetic to Andromache and identify with her, because in this version they would be on a similar level, both kept as Pyrrhus' lovers against their will.

In contrast to the passive, unstable Euripidean Hermione, the Ovidian character knows what she wants and prompts Orestes to take action (*Her.* 8.16). We can see the same assertiveness in Colluthus' young Hermione. While in the *Andromache* she would be content with anyone as a husband, if he is faithful, here she is actively driven by love for Orestes. Moreover, unlike the tragic Hermione, she is very open about her past. She admits herself that having Orestes as her husband made up for not having parents in childhood (*Her.* 8.89-101). Interestingly, she says that her mother missed the first years of her life and describes her own development from being a toddler, learning to speak and reaching for her parent's neck (*Her.* 8.91-95), so Ovid must have imagined that she was abandoned much earlier than at the age of nine. She heart-rendingly recalls Helen's escape (*Her.* 8.73-81, cited above in section 2) and her return:

obvia prodieram reduci tibi — vera fatebor —
    nec facies nobis nota parentis erat!
te tamen esse Helenen, quod eras pulcherrima, sensi;
    ipsa requirebas quae tua nata foret.

I went out to meet you to escort you back — I say the truth —
    and the face of my parent was not known to me!
I still figured that you were Helen, because you were the most beautiful,
    but you asked around which one your daughter was.

(Ov. *Her.* 8.97-100)

This passage captures the theme of Hermione as being outshone by Helen's fame and beauty. As to her own looks, she tells about her constant weeping that makes her cheeks *incultae*, which is strikingly similar to the handmaids' concern about Hermione's appearance in Colluthus (Coll. 338-9).

Surprisingly, when we might expect Ovid's narrator to blame her mother for her cruel fate, she instead wonders why the heavens are against her (*Her.* 8.87-8). In fact, she even turns the tables and from the start of her letter cites her parents' story as a model for her own when persuading Orestes to fight for her (*Her.* 8.19-22). Menelaus and Helen, she says, will approve of the fact that their child follows love:

    succubuit telis praepetis ipse dei.
quem sibi permisit, genero concedet amorem.
    proderit exemplo mater amata suo.

[Menelaus] himself succumbed to the shafts of the flying god.
The love he allowed himself he will grant his son-in-law.
My beloved mother will be useful with her example.

(Ov. *Her.* 8.38-40)

That Menelaus will grant to Hermione's husband what he allowed himself may be another way of spoiling his daughter. The verse about Helen is more complicated: Which *exemplum* does Hermione mean? Her mother's elopement for the sake of true love or — on the contrary — her return home? Ovid is intentionally ambiguous: in lines 41-2 Hermione likens Pyrrhus' role to Paris', which implies that she really believes that Helen, like herself, was kidnapped. But it is more probable that Hermione knows the truth full well, but bends it for the purpose of creating a more suitable precedent.

Had it not been for Helen as the cause of the war, Hermione would have been spared the nightmare of the union with Pyrrhus in the first place. Still, rather than bearing grudges, the young woman does her best to turn the events into a useful argument for herself. Despite her unhappy plight, she still manages to find a solution. This practical and resourceful Hermione is much closer in personality to the Colluthean one than Euripides' version. However, we should remember that shrewd manipulation as a means to saving one's skin is also Helen's speciality. So again Hermione cannot escape her mother's legacy; but the difference between the Euripidean and the Ovidian Hermiones is that the former is destroyed by her past, whereas the latter has not only come to terms with it but also reinvents it to her own present advantage. Through this, the daughter is finally able to 'outgrow' the mother.

5. Children and Christianity

Given the multitude of classical literature engaging with virtually every aspect of the Trojan War on the one hand and the richness and complexity of the myth of Hermione's abandonment on the other, it is puzzling that no other extant work before Colluthus engages with Helen's elopement from her daughter's intriguing perspective at the time of the event. As has been discussed above, representations of the adult Hermione do exist and in those the loss of her mother is always, implicitly or explicitly, drawn upon as a crucial component in her characterisation. However, we have no other representations of the child's feelings for their own sake and importance, rather than as an interpretive tool for her later life. I strongly suspect the reason for this to be that ancient Greek and Roman literature is not interested in children and their thoughts.[424] This is especially true of girls who only seem to feature as persons once they are

[424] See Dixon (1992: 100).

sexually mature and ready to become wives. Therefore my criterion for identifying a female child is a lack of immediate interest in a nuptial union (except possibly some typical 'when-I-grow-up' prattle of little girls about their future husband).

The overall view emerges across a multitude of sources that in antiquity children are considered irrational creatures and 'unfinished' humans.[425] Cicero says that the only good thing about children is their potential to grow up (*De Republica* 137.3). Fictive children are generally silent, weak or inept. They are often present in the text beside their parents, because they are necessary for the plot, but either do not get a voice at all or their utterances are limited to helpless cries. This can be observed well in tragedy: in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* the young Antigone and Ismene are *personae mutae*, but when they become older in *Oedipus at Colonus* they do speak and actively take part in the play as their father's messengers and sensible advisors; in the *Antigone* the entire plot is of course driven by them. In Euripides' *Medea*, the heroine's children do not even have names, but are referred to as 'child A' and 'child B'. They are only significant as vehicles of Medea's atrocity and by definition they do not survive to reach adulthood, and thus inventing names for them would be a superfluous exercise. The only few lines they get in the play are words of despair as they are being murdered by their mother (Eur. *Med*. 1270a-1279). In Seneca's version of the tragedy they remain mute altogether. In the same way, Itys in Ov. *Met*. 6 greets and beguiles his mother Procne in reported speech (624-6), but his only real words are '*mater! mater!*'(640) when he realises that he is about to die. Another quality of children in ancient literature is stupidity. For example, in Seneca's *Thyestes,* the protagonist converses with his son Tantalus who is used to illustrate utter naivety and a deficiency of *ratio* as a contrast to his father who at that time is still a good cautious Stoic (Sen. *Thyest*. 421-490). The other two children are mute, and one of them is also unnamed.

Furthermore, children in the *Iliad* have been identified as the opposite of the ideal hero on account of both physical and mental inferiority.[426] Whenever childhood is portrayed in a positive light or is given prominence, this is always with a view to the child's future as an adult. For instance, the existence of Ascanius, whom we see growing up throughout the *Aeneid,* is teleological like the epic itself: he receives much attention in the poem as a boy, because he will become the great founder of Alba Longa when he comes of age.[427] An interesting case is that of Gorgo, daughter of Cleomenes, who is said by Herodotus to have advised her father on politics at the age of eight or nine with a witty comment (Hdt. 5.51). While this passage is concerned with a real person, the account is nevertheless fictitious. The brief story is unique and delightful in that it grants power and wisdom to a female child of about the same age as that of little Hermione, according to Apollodorus. However, Gorgo's childhood anecdote is hardly significant

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[425] See Bakke (2005: 16).

[426] Cf. Ingalls (1998: 17-8). Notwithstanding, the poem also displays the devotion of parents to their children; see Pratt (2007).

[427] Feldmann (1953: 304-5).

for its own sake, but is rather intended as a flattery of the figure who later becomes queen, to show that she had been very capable early on.

The same is true for the interesting case of aetiological episodes from the childhood of deities, where amusement is created by pairing the expectation of helplessness in a child with supernatural powers. This begins with the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* that tells how the one-day-old Hermes, already able to speak and walk, steals Apollo's kine as his very first trick and ultimately earns respect for himself. The theme was mainly taken over and elaborated in the Hellenistic period:[428] Theocritus *Id*. 24 presents us with the story of baby Heracles strangling the snakes in his cradle and an account of his upbringing. Young Artemis in her Callimachean hymn sits on Zeus' lap, and asks to be allowed to keep her maidenhood forever and to receive a bow and arrows and all the other emblems associated with her; but she is too small to reach his beard with her arm. A sibling rivalry with her twin brother Apollo can also be detected. Meanwhile, in Ap. Rhod. 3.114-26 Eros cheats Ganymede at a game of dice, but is subsequently bribed by Aphrodite with the promise of a new toy. All these instances of childish gods capture and promote the delightful charms of their age, which means that this cuteness was at least appreciated by authors and readers alike.

One example of comparable perceptions about mortal children that springs to mind is the little Astyanax who is frightened by his father's helmet, to the hilarity of his parents (*Il*. 6.466-85). However, the scene could also be interpreted as highlighting the silliness of infants, and arguably its main function is to evoke pathos in conjunction with Astyanax' subsequent death. Again, it is not so much the toddler who is the object of pity, but his mother whose hope for the son's future shall remain unfulfilled.

The above survey reveals that if we do encounter fictitious children in ancient texts they are, unsurprisingly, almost exclusively male. It is indeed a challenge to find in them a female mortal prepubescent individual, yet Colluthus' Hermione occupies a non-negligible proportion of his poem in which we gain an insight into her thoughts and feelings. Moreover, far from being a foolish child, she shows herself remarkably sensible, indeed more sensible even than her mother. The only instance I was able to identify as a kind of predecessor to Colluthus' episode is the παῖς of Alcestis in Euripides' eponymous tragedy who delivers a dirge after his mother has died.

ΠΑΙΣ
ἰώ μοι τύχας. μαῖα δὴ κάτω
βέβακεν, οὐκέτ᾽ ἔστιν, ὦ πάτερ, ὑφ᾽ ἁλίῳ, 395
προλιποῦσα δ᾽ ἐμὸν βίον ὠρφάνισεν τλάμων.
†ἴδε γὰρ ἴδε βλέφαρον καὶ†
παρατόνους χέρας.
ὑπάκουσον ἄκουσον, ὦ

[428] Ambühl (2007: 373) states on the first page of her chapter that ‘[t]he Hellenistic age is said to have discovered childhood as a subject in its own right’, but adds on the last page: ‘the children in Callimachus's poetry are always set into a relationship with adult figures’ (383). Thus here too childhood is only a pre-stage of what really matters, but is not important in itself.

μᾶτερ, ἀντιάζω. 400
ἐγώ σ᾽ ἐγώ,
μᾶτερ, <μᾶτερ,> ὁ σὸς
ποτὶ σοῖσι πίτνων καλοῦ-
μαι στόμασιν νεοσσός.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
τὴν οὐ κλύουσαν οὐδ᾽ ὁρῶσαν· ὥστ᾽ ἐγὼ
καὶ σφὼ βαρείᾳ συμφορᾷ πεπλήγμεθα. 405

ΠΑΙΣ
νέος ἐγώ, πάτερ, λείπομαι φίλας
μονόστολός τε ματρός· ὦ σχέτλια δὴ παθὼν
ἐγὼ ἔργ᾽ ἃ σὺ σύγκασί μοι συνέτλας κούρα. 409-410
<. . . . .
. . . . > ὦ πάτερ, 411
ἀνόνατ᾽ ἀνόνατ᾽ ἐνύμφευσας οὐδὲ γήρως
ἔβας τέλος σὺν τᾷδ᾽·
ἔφθιτο γὰρ πάρος· οἰχομένας δὲ σοῦ,
μᾶτερ, ὄλωλεν οἶκος. 415

CHILD
Ah, for my fate! Mama has gone
below, and, o father, she is no more under the sun, 395
but she has left and orphaned my life, the wretched one.
For look, look at the eyelids and
the arms stretched out by the sides.
Listen to me, o mother,
listen, I beg you. 400
It is I, I,
mother, mother, who
is calling you, falling upon your
lips, your little baby.

ADMETUS
She does not hear nor see. So I
and you two are struck with heavy misfortune. 405

CHILD
Young, father, am I left by my dear
mother, and alone. Oh, indeed cruel things
have I suffered, which you have endured with me, my own sister. 409-10
<. . . . .

. . . . > o father, 411
in vain, in vain did you marry and did not come
to the end of old age with her;
for she died sooner; with you gone,
mother, the house is ruined. 415

(Eur. *Alc*. 394-415)

The child lacks a name, but we know that he is a boy because he uses the masculine forms to describe himself and also addresses his sister (it is established beforehand that Admetus and Alcestis have a son and a daughter). Despite its shortness, the passage contains a number of parallels with the speeches of Hermione. Importantly, the topics are strikingly similar: the boy grieves for his dead mother, while Hermione cannot explain the loss of her parent except with death and her reaction is accordingly one very close to mourning. The process of dealing with the situation is also almost identical in both cases. It consists of three stages. Both speakers begin with addressing others who are present (Admetus and Hermione's handmaids, respectively) and state what has happened. Next, they switch to a direct apostrophe to the mother herself, as though to ascertain whether she will hear it. Finally, they resign and once again turn to the interlocutors before them (the boy to his father and sister; Hermione to the birds). The children each open their lament by saying that the mother has left them and gone away (‘βέβακεν […] προλιποῦσα δ᾿ ἐμὸν βίον’, *Alc*. 395-6; με λιποῦσα […] ᾤχετο, Coll. 330, and later ‘με […] φυγοῦσα | κάλλιπες’, Coll. 372-3). There is a note of blame detectable in the words, and rightly so, since both Alcestis and Helen have left of their own choice — though the former has done it for virtue, the latter for vice. The boy also applies to Alcestis the adjective τλάμων, which, just like the English ‘wretched’, can mean ‘miserable’ in a compassionate sense, but it can also be translated in a rebuking manner as ‘reckless’. Hermione too complains to her mother with embittered questions at Coll. 372-5. Another shared feature is the mention of heavenly bodies in conjunction with the loss which gives it a cosmic dimension: Alcestis does no longer walk under the sun (*Alc*. 395), while Helen has not returned despite the fact that the stars have awoken (Coll. 349-50). The boy also draws attention to the features of his mother's lifeless body lying before him (*Alc*. 397-8, 404), whereas Hermione imagines finding Helen's corpse in the woods (Coll. 355, 358). While Hermione proceeds from worry towards blame, the πάις starts with blame, but then addresses his mother almost apologetically and desperately implores her to listen to ‘her chicklet’, as she perhaps used to call him endearingly, and kisses her lips (Eur. *Alc*. 399-403).[429]

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[429] This moving childish reluctance to accept a parent's death also features in the memorable scene after Mufasa's death in Disney's *The Lion King*, where his son Simba tries to stir his body and urges him to get up and come home. Like Admetus in the *Alcestis* who explains to the child that his mother cannot hear nor see him, here too an adult figure, Simba's uncle Scar, steps in and makes the little lion realise the truth.

The boy's concern is for his childhood without a mother and says that he and his sister have suffered awfully (*Alc*. 406-8). The positioning of νέος and μονόστολος at the respective beginnings of the verses provides a focus on the main message, namely that he is too young to be bereaved. Like Hermione, he refers predominantly to the present circumstances and how he himself is affected by them. The only time the child speaks about something in the future it is not about himself, but about Admetus' old age (*Alc*. 411-13). Conversely, when Alcestis prepares to die and says farewell to her family on her death bed, her thoughts about her offspring are all located in their more distant adult future. She prays to Hestia, asking for two things for the children: that they obtain, respectively, a loving wife and a noble husband and that, unlike herself, they live their lives to the full, rather than dying untimely (*Alc*. 162-169). The combination of these two prayers — for good spouses and long lives — may constitute a comment on the present situation: Alcestis pronounces herself as the measure of the best possible wife who faces death for her husband's sake (*Alc*. 323-4), and it is probably such a wife that would also be desirable for the son; perhaps a good husband for the daughter would be one who would not ask for this kind of sacrifice in the first place? She reiterates the concern for their adulthood in her last address to Admetus, where she warns against a potential stepmother. She also adds that the boy would have the protection of his father, but tells the girl that a stepmother would do harm to her reputation, and thus spoil her chances for marriage. Furthermore, Alcestis bemoans the fact that she will not be there to support her daughter in childbirth (*Alc*. 302-19). This corroborates the argument that in antiquity young people, and especially females, do not count before they are ready to wed. It is comprehensible that those are a mother's cares, yet Alcestis fails to realise that they are not shared by the children. As evidenced by the boy's utterances, he does not fear for the future, but rather is distressed at being orphaned *right now*. Remarkably, both Alcestis' son and Hermione come to the same conclusion at the very end of their speeches. They claim that through the absence of the mother their home has been ruined (‘οἰχομένας δὲ σοῦ, | μᾶτερ, ὄλωλεν οἶκος.’: *Alc*. 414-15; ‘χθιζὸν ἐπὶ Σπάρτην τις ἀνὴρ ἀθεμίστιος ἐλθὼν | ἀγλαΐην ξύμπασαν ἐμῶν ἀλάπαξε μελάθρων’: ‘yesterday some lawless man came to Sparta and destroyed the entire splendour of my palace’: Coll. 383-4). This very much chimes with a modern child's (stereo-)typical primary worries about their family life: Euripides and Colluthus created very realistic figures of children by making them voice the most deeply ingrained wish for an ideal household with their mum and dad, and their sense of the whole world collapsing when a parent is no longer there.

The child in Euripides' *Alcestis* offers an excellent comparison with Hermione in the *Abduction*, although of course the latter is undeniably represented in much more depth. Constructing an entire literary scene around a young girl is a great innovation by Colluthus.[430] But why does he venture into taking children seriously? I suggest that his extensive treatment of Hermione's feelings reflects the society within which he wrote. Colluthus was a poet a time in which traditional *paideia*, including a

[430] Livrea (1968: 219) agrees that the Hermione scene is Colluthus' most original contribution.

good knowledge of classical mythology, coexisted with Christianity as the state religion.[431] It is thus to be expected that a Christian way of thinking would have manifested itself in his writing — whether consciously or not — even within the most pagan of subject matters. Bakke has traced ancient perceptions about children from a cultural-historical angle, and, as suggested by the title of his monograph (*When Children Became People: the Birth of Childhood in Early Christianity*), has found that they changed radically with the rise of Christianity. There is evidence that Christian parents may have spent more time with their children than pagans and were closer to them emotionally as a result.[432] We see this played out in Colluthus through Helen's and Hermione's bed-time ritual. The church began to value children for their own sake: St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage in the mid-third century, regards them as complete human beings from birth, because they are made by God, and as equal to adults (*Ep*. 64.2-3). Clement of Alexandria praises children for the very fact that they are truthful and innocent and for their lack of sexual desires, and therefore even poses them as examples for adults (*Paedagogus* 1.5-6). Ambrose states that Christ does not discriminate between ages, but even as a child one is as answerable and mature as an adult; he says that even small children bear witness to Christ when faced with persecutors (*Ep*. 72.15).

Colluthus, too, portrays Hermione as grown-up and a much better person than Helen. He even pointedly de-sexualises the girl:[433] the dream scene inverts the literary topos of the maiden who has a dream which involves her parents and a future husband, demonstrating her readiness for marriage. An early version of this can be observed with Nausicaa who is told by Athena that she will not remain a virgin for much longer (Od. 6.25-40). Pre-nuptial dreams are then developed into more vivid and disturbing nocturnal phantasies: Medea fights with bulls and chooses to abandon her parents for a stranger (Ap. Rhod. 3.616-633), while Ilia is abducted by a beautiful man and errs about an unknown place, but is reassured by her father's voice (Ennius, *Annales* 32-48 = Cic. *de divinatione* 1.40-41).[434] The theme is also somewhat subverted in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca* where Erigone is visited in her sleep by the ghost of her father who tells her that because of his murder she is never to be married (Nonn. *Dionys*.

[431] Cameron (2004b: 340-4).

[432] Bakke (2005: 285).

[433] Morales (2016: 72) presents the opposite view: she suggests that Hermione can be eroticised as a substitute for her mother, since she sleeps in Menelaus' bed (373), which reminds of father-daughter incest scenarios during the mother's absence. However I disagree, since she sleeps there not with Menelaus while Helen is away, but precisely with Helen while Menelaus is away and thus she is rather a replacement for him (as Morales: 72 n.23 herself concedes). Apart from nothing in the text pointing to child sexual exploitation, it only makes sense for Menelaus to be concerned with finding a husband for his only daughter — as he is in the mythical tradition — and to preserve her virginity. If anything, this notion would have only intensified with a Christian society.

[434] See Krevans (1993, esp. 261-2).

47.161-186).[435] In contrast to those examples, Hermione's nightmare focuses on her puellile attachment to her mother and her birth-family, rather than a willingness to be carried off from home by a husband. As in the cases of Medea and Ilia, the vision does also feature a stranger who separates her from her parent, but with the difference that he snatches away the latter. The child does not dream about her own love-life, but about her mother's erotic escapade, and seems not even to grasp it fully. The *topos* is thus skewed on two levels: firstly, the intertextual associations enhance the distorted image of Helen as a passive maiden (discussed above in section 3). Secondly, as opposed to the typical scenario which points to the dreamer's sexual maturity, here the child's innocence is highlighted.

Church Fathers give guidelines on educating children: it is the parents' responsibility to care for their wellbeing in both body and soul, which, according to the *NT*, is the way to salvation.[436] John Chrysostom, *Oppugn*. 3.3, considers neglect of one's child to be the height of sin. The exception are godly women who desert their children for their faith.[437] Hermit practice had sprung from Egypt with St Anthony of the Desert in the third century and continued to flourish there with ascetic communities of 'Desert Fathers' and 'Desert Mothers' into Colluthus' time. St. Jerome tells of two 4th–5th-century women, Melania the Elder and Paula, who left their wealth and their children behind in order to fully dedicate themselves to religion in that way (*Ep*. 45.4). In *Ep*. 108.6 he comments that Paula's love for Christ was even greater than her love for her children. As a contrast, Helen leaves her daughter behind not only not for God, but actually for sinful lust.[438] She would therefore be doubly condemned in the eyes of a Christian audience for being both promiscuous and a bad mother. Thus a Christian dimension may be added to Colluthus' epyllion, which complements and competes with the pagan tradition.

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[435] Nonnus' Erigone has been cited as an inspiration for Colluthus' Hermione by Orsini (1972: xxiii-xxiv) and Cuartero i Iborra (1992: 50-1).

[436] See, for example, the exhortation to teach children about god in the *Epistle of Barnabas* 19:5.

[437] Bakke (2005: 263) mentions Perpetua, Felicitas and Agathonice who suffered martyrdom despite being mothers.

[438] For this argument see Gilka (2014: 18) and, independently, Morales (2016: 70 n. 20).

Chapter 9

The Return Journey

1. Detours

Many sources know of stopovers in several places during Paris' and Helen's return journey. As we have already mentioned in chapter 6.3, Homer knows of the couple's stay on the island of Cranae where they first consummated their union (*Il*. 3.443-6). The *Iliad* also tells us that they went to Sidon, whence Paris brought women to work as weavers in Troy (*Il*. 6.289-92). A concurrent story in the *Cypria*, possibly inspired by the Homeric detail, explains further how these women were enslaved: Proclus' synopsis tells us that when the lovers put out to sea from Sparta, Hera — no doubt still angry about her defeat at the Judgement of Paris — stirred up a storm against them, which carried them to Sidon. The summarist remarks in passing that Paris took the city. However, in the full-length poem the incident could not have been such a casual affair, but must have rather constituted a threat to the main characters and the plot alike. It would be very desirable to know more about the reason for the hostilities. One can imagine that after Hera was unsuccessful in killing Alexander in a shipwreck, she (and/or Athena?) somehow pulled the strings, so that he should die at the hands of the Sidonians, but this attempt also fails. After that Paris goes directly to Troy to celebrate his marriage with Helen. Herodotus, however, says that the content of the *Cypria* was in conflict with Homer, as it told that the couple reached Troy from Sparta within three days and enjoying fair winds and a smooth sea (Hdt. 2.117). It is conceivable that it was in fact the outbound part of the voyage that was short and pleasant, propelled by the power of Aphrodite, and that the historian misremembered and mixed up the two journeys. However, given Herodotus' seniority and general reliability, it is more probable that he is referring to an older, more independent version of the cyclic poem. By the time of Proclus' summary the storm episode may have been interpolated, perhaps in order to align the *Cypria* with the *Iliad*.[439] Apollodorus echoes Proclus with regard to the storm, but does not mention any fight with the Sidonians. Instead, he adds that Paris feared lest he should be pursued and decided to tarry in Phoenicia and Cyprus for a considerable amount of time, before declaring the coast clear and continuing to Troy (*Epit*. 3.4).

Dictys expands and tweaks the tradition reported by the *Cypria*-summary and Apollorodus and offers a full account of the Sidon episode. In his version Alexander is really pursued by the Greeks who arrive at Troy before him and do not find him there (1.4). His luck is, however, not due to his own shrewd calculations, but rather the opposite: in his haste, he does not pay attention to the weather when leaving Sparta and

[439] For a discussion of how the difference could have come about see also Sammons (2017: 189 n.42, 236-8).

is driven off-course by heavy winds (the divine intervention is removed). He lands in Cyprus, where he obtains some ships, and sails on to Phoenicia. He is received kindly by the Sidonian king, but continues to be a bad guest and treacherously murders his host and pillages the city. In particular, he orders his men to carry off anything that glorifies the royal power. But some Sidonians manage to save themselves and launch an attack to avenge their king and recover the booty. In a fierce battle, two Trojan ships are set on fire, but Paris manages to escape with the rest.

Another detail appears in the rendition of Dares, in which they land on Tenedos, an island very close to Troy, and Paris tries to comfort Helen who is having regrets about joining him; he also sends news of his success to Priam (10). Nothing more is said about the episode and its function within the narrative is questionable. Certainly Paris' enthusiastic message to his father does not exactly chime with the reality of a nostalgic Helen. It is not made clear whether the sojourn is due to Helen's state of mind, either at her own request or because Paris does not want to bring home a distressed bride, or whether the stopover has another reason and Helen just happens to be overcome by doubts in that very moment. Tenedos is elsewhere known as a stopover of the Greek army, made famous by Philoctetes who is bitten by a snake and abandoned on the island because of the stench of the wound (cf. *Cypria* synopsis).

The final mention of Sidon within the period under consideration is at the same time the most compelling. Malalas writes that after collecting Helen, Paris went over to Sidon and then to Proteus, ruler of Egypt (5.5) and that some time later he returned from Egypt with Helen and all her wealth (5.6). As we are about to see, this is remarkable on two fronts: first, in previous tradition, narratives involving Egypt and Proteus are always presented as *alternative* to the mainstream story which most often contains a reference to Sidon (cf. Apollod. *Epit*. 3.4-5). Second, the common factor of these Egyptian variants is that Paris does not come back to Troy accompanied by Helen, but at best with a look-alike phantom which the gods have substituted for her. Malalas combines the two versions and in so doing explicitly thwarts the distinction between them, without even expanding on what the couple's business was in the two places.

2. Phantom Helen

As has been indicated above, Homer follows the original tradition regarding Helen at Troy, however he also offers us some hints suggesting that the other version was already in circulation.[440] In the *Iliad* Helen ominously asks herself whether her past with Menelaus as her husband and Agamemnon as brother-in-law ever happened (*Il*. 3.180). While this does not mean that this Helen figure is not the real one, it shows the author's awareness of various conflicting truths. The *Odyssey* presents a more glaring statement, as throughout Book 4 there are multiple references to the fact that after the Sack of Troy

[440] Already Herodotus was of the same opinion (Hdt. 2.116).

Helen and Menelaus spent some time in Egypt where the crew was held by the gods; Menelaus obtained the help of Proteus, who here is the Old Man of the Sea rather than the Egyptian king.

According to a paraphrase of Lycoph. 822, Helen's phantom is said to have been first mentioned by Hesiod (fr. 298). This is, however, deemed a glitch by a number of scholars, on good grounds:[441] Hesiod did indeed use the εἴδωλον-motif, but in conjunction with Iphigenia's (or Iphimede's) escape from immolation (fr. 19), and possibly invented it, however Stesichorus was supposedly the first to apply it to the abduction of Helen.[442] We have already dealt with Stesichorus' alleged loss of sight caused by Helen's anger about one of his poems, which had to be assuaged with a recantation.[443] The view exists that the piece commonly referred to as the *Helen* and its counterpart, the *Palinode,* were in fact two parts of the same poem which also covered the imaginary encounter of the 'Lyrical I' with a superhuman Helen.[444] Without delving into the exact peritextual arrangement, I am inclined to think that both narratives were indeed conceived by the poet as a diptych and linked by the elaborate autobiographical tale from the outset. Whether the background story about his blindness originated with Stesichorus himself, possibly based on a grain of truth, and was mentioned in his work, or whether it was only invented later on, at least two conflicting Stesichorean notions about Helen apparently used to be extant. A third one may be added, since one commentator, the 4th/3rd-century-BC Peripatetic Chamaeleon, is reported to have spoken of *two* palinodes which respectively found fault with Homer and Hesiod and quoted the opening of each.

The contents of the *Helen* are not well-known, but both those fragments explicitly attributed to the work and those which can reasonably be assigned to it yield a coherent picture: the poem dealt with the youth of its main protagonist, including her rape by Theseus, which produced Iphigenia (who was then adopted by Clytaemnestra and Agamemnon), as well as her courting and marriage to Menelaus, as we have seen in chapter 2.3-4. It also must have featured the abduction by Paris. The limit of the poem's scope is not clear. Given the introduction of Iphigenia, it would make sense if her sacrifice was told also. Thus the plot may have corresponded roughly to that of the *Cypria*, as summarised by Proclus, or it could have narrated events up until the Sack of Troy, or even Helen's entire life from birth to death. Perhaps this was done in an episodic format suited to lyric, concentrating on stories particularly relevant to the eponymous heroine. In any case, in order to warrant a recantation, the poem must have maligned her in some way. Apart from the usual allegations, i.e. being a bad wife and

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[441] Kannicht (1969 vol. i: 24-5 n.5), Davies & Finglass (2014: 302-3).

[442] *Contra* Griffith (2015 :60-4) who does not reject the statement outright, as he reasons that Stesichorus' treatment of Helen's phantom may have been the most famous, but not necessarily the very first.

[443] See chapter 2.5.

[444] Kelly (2007).

causing the deaths of many warriors, Stesichorus would have made Helen's adultery even more shocking because it leads directly to the murder of her own daughter.[445]

As to the *Palinode*, we know from Plato's quotation that it denied the fact that Helen joined Paris' ship bound for Troy (Plat. *Phaedrus* 243a). Elsewhere, Plato remarks that according to Stesichorus, those at Troy fought over an image of Helen, out of ignorance for the truth (Plat. *Rep*. 9.586c). The papyrus fragment provides more context: the recantation that contradicted Homer mainly blamed him for maintaining that it was Helen who was at Troy, rather than the phantom. Stesichorus himself, the fragment continues, wrote that the εἴδωλον went to Troy, while Helen was staying with Proteus (fr. 90). Thus Helen's mirage allowed her to have two mutually exclusive stories — even parallel lives — running at the same time. In the case of Stesichorus, one author has even negotiated a way of telling both. It is unfortunate that we do not hear how the Stesichorean phantom came into existence and why. This aspect is, however, illuminated in drama.

Euripides first mentions the events in his *Electra*, within the final *ex machina* speech by the Dioscuri. They remark that after the Sack of Troy Helen has come back from the house of Proteus in Egypt; she never went to Troy, but rather Zeus had sent her simulacrum to Ilium to stir up strife and slaughter among the mortals (*Electra* 1280-3). This clearly connects Zeus' actions to his great plan to decimate the world's population (cf. chapter 1.1) with the εἴδωλον functioning as a minion. Shortly after the *Electra,* Euripides produces his *Helen,* the entire plot of which is based on the premise of Helen being in Egypt. The circumstances are described in some detail: just as in the *Cypria* Hera takes revenge for the judgement by troubling Paris with a storm, here she punishes him by giving him a *Doppelgänger* of Helen which she has conjured up from thin air; the phantom will later dissolve back into the sky after its mission has been completed (*Hel*. 31-6, 586, 605-15). Meanwhile, at Zeus' behest, Hermes sweeps the real Helen up into the sky, hidden in a cloud, drops her off in Egypt and entrusts Proteus with guarding her (*Hel*. 44-8, 666-83). The same details are given by Apollodorus (*Epit*. 3.5).

A few decades before these Euripidean plays, a different version is found in Herodotus, which he claims he has heard directly from Egyptian priests. Here Helen does board Paris' ship — though unwillingly — but only travels part of the way. As in the *Cypria*, they get caught up in violent winds, but we hear of no divine agency. They are driven to Egypt, where Alexander's servants rebel against him: claiming asylum at a temple of Heracles, they divulge Paris' misdeeds to the priests. Proteus is informed and interrogates the stranger. Alexander tries lying, but is exposed by the servants. Proteus is unwilling to kill him, but decides to keep Helen and her possessions safe for Menelaus and urges Paris to go back to his country empty-handed (Hdt. 2.113-6). Up to this point Herodotus' Egypt-story is more lucid than other accounts, but since he does not employ the device of the phantom, the Trojan War is instead attributed to an epic misunderstanding; this information, the historian says, the priests gained on the authority of Menelaus himself. The Greeks come to the Troad and send messengers to

[445] For a reconstruction of the *Helen* poem, see Finglass (2015: 93-6).

Ilium, demanding back Helen and the riches. The truthful reply is that both the woman and the goods are in Egypt, but the Greeks think that they are being mocked by the Trojans and proceed to besiege the city. Only after they have sacked it do they discover that Helen is really not there (Hdt. 2.118). While the overall outcome is virtually the same as in any version featuring the phantom, the perception of the war is very different, especially for the Trojans: they are being punished for a misdeed that was intended, but not followed through. From this point of view this is a fable which concludes with the lesson that an attempted crime always carries repercussions, whether carried out successfully or not. It is comprehensible that the Greeks should not have believed the Trojans straightaway, but the fact that the Trojans could not find a peaceful way of proving their innocence (e.g. by sending for someone from Egypt to clarify the situation) is much less credible.[446] Furthermore, the moral judgement is later complicated by an innovative twist which unmasks Menelaus, too, as an ungrateful guest.[447]

Herodotus' story is reworked in a number of texts of the Second Sophistic. In his treatise concerning the falsehood of Homer's poetry, Dio Chrysostom says that he, too, consulted an Egyptian priest who repudiated the Greek tales and instead told him the truth. Here the roles of wrongdoer and wronged are reversed: when Helen was being wooed, Paris actually came as a suitor and was chosen to become her groom by Tyndareus and the Dioscuri, and accordingly took her to Troy with permission to marry her lawfully. Menelaus had been rejected, because the family alliance was already given via Clytaemnestra and Agamemnon, plus his lineage and wealth were inferior to Alexander's. The Atreids were outraged that they had been thus slighted and incited all the other unsuccessful suitors to launch an attack on Troy (*Or.* 11.37-70). Philostratus writes that Apollonius of Tyana interviewed the ghost of Achilles about matters at Troy. When asked whether Helen really came to Troy, Achilles replies that the Greeks wrongly believed that she was in Ilium for a long time; in fact, she had been brought to Egypt by Paris and was living there with Proteus. But even after the Greeks had finally ascertained the truth, they did not want to disgrace themselves by retreating and so continued to fight nevertheless to sack the city itself (*Life of Apollonius* 4.16). Elsewhere, Philostratus also says that, according to Protesilaus, Homer lied in the *Iliad*, although he knew full well that Helen spent the wartime in Egypt, after a storm had carried her there with Paris (*Her.* 25.10).

The scholiast on Aelius Aristides *Or.* 3.150 also maintains that Paris and Helen only made it as far as Pharos, where she was stopped by Proteus, but adds a unique detail. The passage refers to Stesichorus as its authority, but this cannot be right, if only because it contradicts the direct citation given by Plato. According to the

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[446] As Fornara (1971: 20) puts it, '[t]he paradoxical flavour and wit of the story is perspicuous.'

[447] At 2.119 Menelaus goes to Egypt to recover Helen, where he is treated very kindly; but when the weather prevents him from setting sail to leave, he sacrifices two local children, is then pursued and flees to Libya. This is a kind of doubling of the sacrifice of Iphigenia and at the same time reminds of Paris' offence in Sidon.

scholium, Proteus not only takes Helen away from Paris, but also gives him an image of her drawn on a tablet, so that he may assuage his desire by looking at it (ἵνα ὁρῶν παραμυθοῖτο τὸν αὐτοῦ ἔρωτα). This has aptly been called an instance of pornography.[448] The short account preserves the Herodotean narrative in its overall sense, but reintroduces the εἴδωλον, albeit as a man-made thing, rather than a god-made supernatural phenomenon. If Paris' picture of Helen is the equivalent of an erotic magazine, another mythical story from the ancient world features a sex doll: Laodameia, the widow of Protesilaus, is supposed to have had a life-size effigy of her late husband which she would take to bed with her. According to one late source, Tzetzes, the mannequin tale was a fabrication based on the fact that Protesilaus' εἴδωλον appeared to Laodameia in her sleep.[449] Thus both works of art are rationalisations of phantoms. Servius seems to imply that the phantom was created through some kind of magic, perhaps by Proteus himself (*nescio quibus disciplinis phantasma in similitudinem Helenae formatum*: Serv. *ad* Verg. *Aen*. 1.651).

3. Arrival

The event of Helen's coming to Troy is first evaluated by Aeschylus' chorus, who contrast the happy occasion of a wedding with the horrors that will follow it. Helen is said to have brought destruction to her new country as ἀντίφερνος, i.e. 'instead of a dowry' or 'as opposed to a dowry', and she went through the city gates lightly (*Ag*. 406-8): this small step for a woman shall have a great impact on multiple nations. Later in the same tragedy, the marriage of Paris and Helen is called a veritable κῆδος (*Ag*. 700): the playwright created a pun with this word which can mean both a 'connection by marriage' and 'mourning'. While at the time the Trojan family was singing a bridal song, it soon turned into a lamentation (*Ag*. 702-16).

A detailed, idealised scenario of Helen's arrival is imagined by the Ovidian Paris: he promises her that she will be received by the towns of Dardania as a queen or even as a goddess with sacrifices. She will receive gifts from Paris' family and everyone in Troy (Ov. *Her.* 16.333-9). In her response, Helen shows herself more realistically-minded. She wonders what Priam, Hecuba and her new brothers- and sisters-in-law will think of her and is worried that their elopement might cause Paris to suspect her of faithlessness in the future (Ov. *Her.* 17.210-14). Oenone in her own letter in the series says that she was the first to espy Paris' ship as it drew closer, but then, to her dismay, she also saw the other woman clinging to him (*Her.* 5 61-74).

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[448] Austin (1994: 99).

[449] See Ogden (2001: 186-7) who thinks that the legend may go back to Euripides' lost *Protesilaus*. The extant sources are: Ov. *Her*. 13.151-66, Hyg. *Fab*. 103-4, Apollod. *Epit*. 3.30, Tzetzes *Chiliades* 2.52 (lines 762-87).

Dictys offers an interesting spin on the episode which shows the royal house of Troy as tyrannical. The people of Troy do not approve of the unlawful union between Paris and Helen. They are so angry that they start a revolt. In an assembly of Priam and his sons, the vote is to keep Helen because of the treasures and the other beautiful women that have come with her. Priam takes the matter to the council of the elders for approval, but before anyone can voice their opinion, the princes burst in and threaten the members of the council not to oppose their will. As the crowds are still demonstrating against Paris' deed, he and his brothers attack them, fearing that they might harm him in turn. After some casualties, the fighting is dispelled by nobles led by Antenor. Helen is greeted kindly by Priam and Hecuba and begs them not to return her, on the grounds that she is a distant relation, which she explains comprehensively. As the pressure from the people and also the Greek envoys increases, Hecuba pleads with the men and sides with her new daughter-in-law (note her fundamentally different attitude in Euripides' *Troades*). Thanks to the intercession Helen is given a choice. She explains that she wishes to stay in Troy, because she consciously left a marriage which did not please her (Dict.1.7-10, cf. Malalas 5.6 for a derivative account). The Trojans' friendliness towards Helen from the start and the fact that Antenor alone was against her is also iterated in the paraphrase of a speech by Priam later on (Dict. 3.26). In Dares' account Priam is delighted at seeing Helen, but for slightly different reasons, imagining her as a bargaining chip in recovering Hesione.[450] But before giving her to Alexander to marry, Priam first consoles Helen, who has yet another moment of regret after the first one on Tenedos, as discussed above (Dares 11).

Colluthus gives a very brief glimpse of the end of the journey in the last six lines of his epyllion. As they reach the harbour, Paris and Helen are characterised as a bridal couple (ὁ νυμφίος ἤγαγε νύμφην: Coll. 388). The scene then briefly shifts to Cassandra who is watching from the acropolis. When she sees the newcomer, she tears her hair and her *golden* veil (Coll. 389-90).[451] This is strongly reminiscent of Iliadic Cassandra who stands on the citadel and raises a lament when she sees Hector's corpse being brought into the city by Priam; there she is compared with *golden* Aphrodite (*Il.* 24.696-706). While in other texts, such as the *Cypria*, Lycophrons' and Ennius' *Alexandra* and Dracontius' *De Raptu,* Cassandra makes an appearance at the beginning of Paris' journey, Colluthus shifts this to the end of the voyage in order to make a segue from his narrative to that of Homeric epic. As the poem closes, the gates of Troy open up (Coll. 391-2), hinting at a continuation.[452] They welcome back their 'evil-starting citizen' (τὸν ἀρχέκακον πολιήτην), as they will later receive Hector's body and the Greek army hidden in a horse.

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[450] See chapter 1.3.

[451] For resonances with Hermione's veil, see chapter 8.3. For links between Cassandra and Ovidian Oenone, see chapter 3.2.

[452] For the recurring motif of unbarring bolts and opening gates throughout the *Abduction*, see Paschalis (2008: 142-3).

Dracontius uses the moment in the myth to hark back to issues he has introduced previously, thus giving his composition a sense of unity. With a small addition to the story earlier on, Dracontius has created an element of suspense. As discussed in chapter 5.1, a storm has separated Paris from his companions and driven him to Cyprus, into Helen's arms. Meanwhile, Antenor, Polydamas and Aeneas return to Ilium first and tell Priam what has happened, concluding that Alexander is most probably dead (*Rom.* 8.586-96). After Priam and Hecuba have only just received back their lost son, it now seems that they have lost him again forever. The city becomes enveloped in public mourning, yet the people of Troy bewail Paris only because he is the king's son, not because of his own popularity. In fact, we are told that those who remembered Helenus' prophecies actually rejoiced at heart, and only feigned grief (*Rom.* 8.597-609). In an aside, the poet remarks that as long as Hector was the hero of Troy, the crowds would never love Paris as much, even if he rivalled the greatest men in strength. The examples adduced are Hercules, Meleager and Theseus, each of whom compares interestingly with Paris. Importantly, all three are famous Greeks from the previous heroic generation of Argonauts and — if we are to assume that the Trojans are the focalisers of the passage — their positive characterisation points to the fact that at this point the Trojan people were not hostile to them, but rather admired their qualities. This is particularly noteworthy in Hercules' case, since it was he who led the first sack of Troy which then necessitated the recovery of Hesione (cf. chapter 1.3). The Trojans' glorification of Hercules may suggest a reconciliation with the past through an understanding that Hercules was in the right as well as the discovery that Hesione is being honoured as a queen in Salamis. But precisely at the point at which this problem has been solved, Paris has prepared an even greater conflict. The obvious connection between Paris and Meleager is the fact that a prophecy at birth linked the persons to a firebrand and a burning log, respectively. The difference is, however, that Meleager is himself killed by the log, while Paris the firebrand causes destruction to others. As to Theseus, this may be an allusion to the first abduction of Helen by him (see chapter 2.3), which is not previously acknowledged by Dracontius. The comparison would thus serve as a precedent and a warning that Helen will be recovered again, since even an abductor superior to Alexander was unable to keep her.

A quasi-funeral is held for Paris, but just as Priam is preparing to perform libations at the cenotaph, Paris' ship, decorated to suit a wedding, appears on the horizon. The pair is greeted by everyone (*Rom.* 8.610-37). The scene clearly reduplicates the previous reunion of Paris with his family, also told at length by Dracontius. As before, the royal parents show their boundless, unconditional love for Alexander, while Hector, Troilus and Polites are troubled, but bear the situation stoically. We are told that bloodthirsty Death is already waiting to widow numerous Trojan women, whereby the tone of the apocalyptic prologue of the *De Raptu* is continued in its ending. Next, the inauspicious nuptials are described and the stages of the wedding procession are mentioned one by one, sealing the fate of Troy: the couple reaches the city wall, then the palace, then the inner halls, and now the bride is sitting on the marriage bed, prepared for the wedding night. As in Aeschylus the wedding

hymns turn into dirges, so here the music and dancing are interrupted by the sound of a war trumpet (*Rom*. 8.638-47). At last, the narrator addresses Paris and Helen, blaming them for kindling the torch of Hecuba's dream with their love. Again, similarly to Aeschylus, Dracontius points out an alternative dowry for the marriage, saying that it shall be paid in Trojan blood (*Rom*. 8.652). At the end he refers again to the cosmic extent of the calamity that will ensue, which will have an effect not just on humans, but also on the gods and nature (*Rom*. 8.654-5).[453]

Dracontius is the only author to capture Trojan sensibilities at Paris' and Helen's arrival in detail. While in Aeschylus the citizens are ignorant and careless about the future during the wedding celebrations, in Dracontius they have been persuaded by the prophecies of doom. The theme introduced by Dictys of an opposition between the interest of the masses and of the monarchy is thus continued by Dracontius, but the public outcry is suppressed, ultimately leading to dire consequences. It is possible that, in line with our interpretation of the poem's aims in chapter 3.3-4, this scenario, too, constitutes a reflection by Dracontius on a real political situation in Carthage or elsewhere.

[453] Cf. the Neronian tone of the poem, as outlined in chapter 3.4.

Conclusions from Part III

The main purpose of the third and final part was to capture the perspectives of the parties affected by Helen's elopement. The reactions of Helen's closest family, her husband Menelaus and her child Hermione, are the subject of chapter 8. The distress of the deserted man is emphasised already in the earliest sources. Ovid, however, views Menelaus' plight with a portion of cynicism, which is somewhat echoed by Colluthus. He is treated with sympathy once more by Dracontius, the only author who makes him a witness of Paris' and Helen's escape and imagines him chasing after them to no avail. The next sections of the eighth chapter were inspired solely by the amazing scene of Hermione's lamentation towards the end of Colluthus' epyllion. Despite the fact that Helen was well-known to have a little daughter since the archaic period, this is the first literary work to give attention to Hermione's emotions directly at the time of being abandoned by her mother. I consider the verses at length, as they provide crucial points for our understanding of the entire poem. Furthermore, I also compare and contrast it with other ancient representations of the adult Hermione. Not only is Colluthus innovative with regard to portraying Hermione as a girl, but this is the first time ever (in our extant tradition) that an extended text passage gives a voice to a female mortal child. This could be attributed to a growing regard for childhood, informed by Christian values.

Our last chapter, chapter 10, shifts the focus back to Paris and Helen, the completion of the abduction and the viewpoints of the Trojans. I first discuss the accounts of any detours on their way back to Troy, culminating in the heterodox tradition which maintains that Helen never actually went to Ilium, but was instead living chastely in Egypt, as well as the related stories about a phantom which was substituted for her. Finally, I present some renditions of the moment of Paris' and Helen's arrival and reception at Troy. A sense of foreboding and sometimes conflicting interests amongst the classes or the Trojan royals can be discerned from the sources. The most complex version of events comes again from the pen of Dracontius.

Stylistic Epilogue and Conclusions

This has been a systematic exploration of episodes relating to the abduction-of-Helen theme from its very beginning with Homer up to c. 500 AD (and very occasionally beyond). Most studies relating to the myths and the figure of Helen do not look very far beyond the literature of Classical Greece. I have shown that the story of Helen's abduction continued to be subject to innovation within various genres and thrived into the early Byzantine period. The approaches are sometimes humorous, moralising at other times, but they all have in common the reworking of existing material in order both to connect with predecessors and to show independence at the same time. Our main focus has been on two late-antique receptions of the Abduction of Helen in the form of epyllia by Colluthus and Dracontius.

Their very existence shows that 5th-6th-century poets in both the East and the West continued to engage with the mythical tradition around the Trojan War at a high level, which is in itself remarkable. While there is some overlap between the two versions and very rarely it even seems as though one epyllion could be responding to the other, I do not think that this is enough to firmly ascertain an interdependence.[454] If there was, this would allow us to construct an exciting argument about the circulation of literature and/or artists between the two empires and to be sure that at least one of the two authors knew both Latin and Greek. But if there was not, then the state of affairs is in some ways even more exciting, since it would mean that two individuals who were active in Late Antiquity under very different circumstances each chose at around the same time to define their work through the same ancient legend, using the same epic metre and keeping it brief. Different as their products may be, this would still testify that the literary cultures of Carthage under the Vandals and Egypt under Anastasius I were both firmly based on a shared knowledge of classical *paideia*.

Between them, the *Harpage* and the *De Raptu* exhaust almost every traditional angle of the Abduction of Helen. However, they emphasise different aspects and thus complement each other: Dracontius includes Paris' childhood story, Hesione and Menelaus, all of which are ignored by Colluthus. Colluthus, in turn, makes a bigger spectacle of the judgement, prefaces it with the wedding of Thetis, and introduces Hermione, whom Dracontius does not even mention. For this reason, the focus of the discussion has naturally vacillated between one and the other. However, on balance, they each dominate the analysis to a similar extent. I shall briefly recapitulate the main points pertaining to the two authors in the foregoing chapters.

In the first two sections of chapter 1 we saw that Colluthus harks back to the *Cypria* and subtly engages in debates surrounding the relationships between mythical

[454] The suggestion by De Prisco (1977: 298) that Dracontius has used Colluthus as a model is not based on solid arguments and has rightly been refuted by Simons (2005: 283 n. 200). Most recently, an aspect of the two poems has been compared by Stoehr-Monjou (2014: 97-8), who acknowledges the possibility that one writer may have known the other's work, but does not push the issue.

events and characters. Both Dracontius and Colluthus use the first sack of Troy by Heracles as a prerequisite to their narratives, but with a difference, as the third section has revealed: Dracontius resumes the story of Hesione's abduction as a vital part of his plot and an important point of reference and comparison with Helen. Meanwhile, Colluthus takes the related theme of the Trojan walls and casually weaves it into the dialogue between Paris and Helen in order to complicate its interpretation and perhaps challenge his readers.

The two late-antique poets do not figure very much in chapter 2 on Helen's birth and maidenhood. Neither of them explicitly refers either to Helen's siblings or to her abduction by Theseus, although the traditions thrive elsewhere. They do, however, have something to add on the topic of Helen's looks: Dracontius puts a vague laudatory description into Paris' mouth, while Colluthus, conspicuously, says nothing precise about her beauty and instead presents her as the one gazing at Paris.

Chapter 3 revolves mainly around the *De Raptu*, since it contains an extended episode of Paris' youth and homecoming after his exposure as a baby. However, we also investigated some instances in which Colluthus may have covertly alluded to Paris' relationship with Oenone. In this context, we have considered Dracontius' prologue which delineates the author's intentions and his self-definition in the light of Homer's and Vergil's grand epics. While at first it comes across as deferential towards the two predecessors, an examination through notions provided by ancient fables reveals that the contrary interpretation is also tenable. This would tie in neatly with the fact that Dracontius later undermines the *Aeneid* by presenting us with an Apollo whose words — directly reporting the words of Vergil's Jupiter — are deliberate lies. This triggers the idea that the poet was using myth to comment on contemporary developments, such as the recent Fall of Rome, and that he wanted to promote his native Carthage.

In chapter 4 Colluthus is foregrounded again. I introduced the different representations of the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. These are perpetuated by Colluthus, who carefully changes minor details, so as to generate contrasts with his predecessors. He also picks up the well-established, but sketchy, tradition of Eris and enriches it with an extended narrative. He further connects her golden apple with the golden apples from the garden of the Hesperides. Next, we witness Aphrodite's preparations for the judgement. For this scene Colluthus draws mainly on early material. The scene of the Judgement of Paris itself follows a familiar pattern, but introduces a variation on the theme of Aphrodite's nakedness. Colluthus also adds a victory speech at the end, in which the winning goddess mocks Hera and Athena.

Chapter 5 first deals with the possible pretexts for Paris' journey to Greece, in scenarios where he does not directly seek out Helen. The most prominent one is the recovery of his aunt Hesione, which also features in Dracontius, but we also examine more closely a series of alternatives offered by Ovid. Colluthus includes the stock element of the construction of Paris' ships by Phereclus, but Dracontius joins in the conversation concerning his comrades for the journey and integrates them into the narrative more skilfully than any previous writers.

In chapter 7 we first review the tradition of Menelaus' sojourn in Crete at the crucial moment of abduction. This is accepted by both of our epyllia, but not developed further. Instead, each of the poets has carefully crafted the occasion of Paris and Helen's first meeting. In interpreting the respective scenes, I have found that both appear to have been inspired by Ovid. Moreover, Colluthus' version functions as a prequel to Book 3 of the *Iliad* and possibly engages with Cratinus' *Dionysalexandros*, while that of the *De Raptu* has conspicuous similarities with Apollonius Rhodius' telling of the love story between Jason and Medea. In both, Helen emerges as an agent, rather than a victim, and is not so much abducted as seduced.

Chapter 8 is interested in the perspectives of Helen's husband and child after the Abduction has taken place. After a chain of texts that show Menelaus as pitiful, angered or blamed, Dracontius once again shows his sorrow, but also relates it to wider matrimonial issues, such as that of offspring. Conversely, Colluthus has given a voice to Helen's and Menelaus' little daughter Hermione, who also stands in for her absent father. The scene is a highlight both of the *Harpage* itself and of the history of literary portrayals of children. It may be a symptom of the *Zeitgeist* that surrounded Colluthus.

The Abduction is rounded off in chapter 9. I first introduce different accounts about Helen's and Paris' journey, as well as the famous alternative tradition of a phantom that stood in for Helen. Colluthus and Dracontius each close their epyllia with the couple's arrival at Troy, and both describe it in gloomy terms. Colluthus hints at the horrors that are about to occur and builds a bridge to the *Iliad*. Dracontius elucidates the views of the Trojans and echoes the morbid tone which he had adopted towards the start of the poem.

Let us now turn to some impressions of style and narrative technique. Colluthus and Dracontius wrote during what has been called a ‘resurgence of poetry after centuries of hibernation’,[455] wherefore some changes are to be expected. As to the predecessors they are indebted to, Homer jumps out as a common one. In Late Antiquity Homer's sacred text is still revered and creatively reused, in Christianizing and Classicizing works alike, in centos and oracular poetry or allegorical readings.[456] As we have seen, Colluthus' response to Homer is very obvious in a number of places. It is not as straightforward on Dracontius' part: although in the prologue he explicitly names Homer as his Muse, scholars have repeatedly raised the question of the African's knowledge of Greek. The vote now usually comes out in favour of his ability to at least read Homer.[457] I go a step further still and propose that Dracontius also knew Apollonius' *Argonautica*, as did

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[455] Cameron (2004b: 328).

[456] See Agosti (2005).

[457] While older scholarship maintained that the Greek language and Hellenic culture was not popular with Africans during the Vandal reign (Bouchier 1913: 39-40, Courcelle 1943: 206-9), this is no longer the predominant view (De Prisco 1977: 293-5, De Gaetano 2009: 27, n.3). Dracontius' engagement with Homer is investigated in detail by Stoehr-Monjou (2015).

Colluthus. In addition, I believe that both poets gathered inspiration for their subject matter from Ovid's *Heroides*.

Stylistically and metrically, Colluthus' main model is of course Nonnus, although one can also detect a Homeric flair. Dracontius, in turn, often imitates Silver Latin. Furthermore, both authors were influenced by rhetoric: Colluthus would have composed *progymnasmata* at school,[458] while Dracontius the advocate had an affinity with declamation[459] and legal language. This particularly shows through in narrative themes pertaining to law, such as weddings, adultery, inheritance and, naturally, Paris' Judgement.[460] I would describe Dracontius' Latin as much closer to the spoken word than that of earlier poets, more immediate and somewhat *staccato*.

Meanwhile, in the *Harpage* it is not the language, but the mode of narration that is disjointed at times. This can be observed both between and within episodes. In the former case, the frequent switching between time, place and characters should be attributed to a large extent to the story Colluthus is telling. The *Cypria's* many parts, apparent from Proclus' synopsis, were contrasted by Aristotle with the uniformity of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (*Poetics* 1459a-b). It is therefore not surprising that Colluthus' work on (mostly) the same topic should have a similar structure. Moreover, given the shortness of the narrative, the frequent shifts are even more noticeable than would have been the case with a long epic. At the same time, the familiarity of the scenes means that they do not actually need to be introduced. As to unexpected narrative leaps within given episodes, I see this as part of Colluthus' preference for encouraging reader-response and not settling for a single interpretive route. Whereas Colluthus largely favours a linear build-up, Dracontius seems to have developed a more complex path. A thought or action is often conceived or introduced at one point, but only reaches its culmination at a later stage. Despite much action and variation, his plot-motifs and extended authorial remarks work together at all times, and every loose thread is picked up systematically.

Finally, the main insight we have gained in the course of our discussions is into the ways in which our two poets treat myth. Colluthus' stamp is at first glance rather subtle. He takes the lead from prevalent traditions, adding his own embellishments and expands episodes and issues which others only briefly touch upon. He delights in changing minor details, the significance of which would only be understood by a well-trained reader with intertextual command. He enriches the plot with a multitude of seemingly passing references and para-narratives, but those, too, can be important for our interpretation. He emulates Hellenistic writers not only literally,[461] but also in his penchant for playfulness. The text is allowed to speak for itself, while the audience is encouraged to pursue allusions and unlock hidden meanings.

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[458] See Browning (1992: 22-5), Miguélez-Cavero (2008: 264-66).

[459] On the influence of Declamation on Dracontius' poetry, see Provana (1912: 34-56).

[460] See Santini (2006) on legal situations across Dracontius' Christian and Classical works.

[461] See Karavas (2014: 3).

In comparison, Dracontius' treatment of the same subject is a rebellion against everything that came before. His telling of the myth is unlike that of any predecessor in that it involves many unprecedented, but carefully crafted, plot twists throughout. Dracontius changes characters' motivations, adapts obscure traditions and adds his own inventions.[462] His relationship with previous material is quite overtly antagonistic, or even aggressive. We also hear a strong moralising narratorial voice. These two elements — the story and the 'commentary' — reinforce one another to get the poet's message across. Thus Colluthus and Dracontius assimilate classical legends into a new worldview, each in their own way, and ultimately achieve similar goals through very different means. By considering the outputs of these two not only against their own contemporary context, but as a step in the evolution of ancient mythical traditions, this work has made a contribution towards enhancing the standing of late-antique literature within the discipline of classical philology.

[462] This practice of slight modifications to familiar stories as well as the foregrounding of unusual elements therein can also be observed in Dracontius' other mythological poems; cf. Weber (1995: 215-222).

Appendix I: Colluthus, *Harpage Helenes.* Text and Translation

The following text has been collated from editions by Weinberger (1896a), Mair (1928), Livrea (1968), Orsini (1972) and Schönberger (1993). Alternative readings and their sources are given as an apparatus.

Νύμφαι Τρωιάδες, ποταμοῦ Ξάνθοιο γενέθλη, 1
αἳ πλοκάμων κρήδεμνα καὶ ἱερὰ παίγνια χειρῶν
πολλάκι πατρῴῃσιν ἐπὶ ψαμάθοισι λιποῦσαι
ἐς χορὸν Ἰδαίῃσιν ἐπεντύνεσθε[463] χορείαις,
δεῦτε, θεμιστοπόλοιο νοήματα μηλοβοτῆρος 5
ἔσπετε[464] μοι, κελάδοντος ἀπορνύμεναι ποταμοῖο,
ἐξ ὀρέων πόθεν ἦλθεν ἀήθεα πόντον ἐλαύνων
ἀγνώσσων ἁλὸς ἔργα; τί δὲ χρέος ἔπλετο νηῶν
ἀρχεκάκων, ἵνα πόντον ὁμοῦ καὶ γαῖαν ὀρίνῃ
βουκόλος; ὠγυγίη[465] δὲ τίς ἔπλετο νείκεος ἀρχή, 10
ὄφρα καὶ ἀθανάτοισι θεμιστεύσωσι νομῆες;
τίς δὲ δικασπολίη; πόθεν ἔκλυεν οὔνομα νύμφης
Ἀργείης; αὐταὶ γὰρ ἐθηήσασθε μολοῦσαι
Ἰδαίης τρικάρηνον ὑπὸ πρηῶνα Φαλάκρης
καὶ Πάριν οἰοπόλοισιν ἐφεδριόωντα θοώκοις 15
καὶ Χαρίτων βασίλειαν ἀγαλλομένην Ἀφροδίτην.
ὣς ὁ μὲν ὑψιλόφοισιν ἐν οὔρεσιν Αἱμονιήων
νυμφιδίων Πηλῆος ἀειδομένων ὑμεναίων
Ζηνὸς ἐφημοσύνῃσιν ἐῳνοχόει Γανυμήδης·
πᾶσα δὲ κυδαίνουσα θεῶν ἔσπευσε γενέθλη 20
αὐτοκασιγνήτην λευκώλενον Ἀμφιτρίτης,
Ζεὺς μὲν ἀπ' Οὐλύμποιο, Ποσειδάων δὲ θαλάσσης·
ἐκ δὲ Μελισσήεντος ἀπ' εὐόδμου Ἑλικῶνος
Μουσάων λιγύφωνον[466] ἄγων χορὸν ἦλθεν Ἀπόλλων· 24
χρυσείοις δ' ἑκάτερθε τινασσόμενος πλοκάμοισι 39
βότρυς ἀκερσεκόμης ζεφύρῳ στυφελίζετο χαίτης. 40
τὸν δὲ μεθ' ὡμάρτησε κασιγνήτη Διὸς Ἥρη. 25
οὐδ' αὐτὴ βασίλεια καὶ ἁρμονίης Ἀφροδίτη[467]

[463] 4 ἐπεντύνασθε WM

[464] 6 εἴπατέ WM

[465] 10 ὠκυπέτης L

[466] 24 λιγύφωνος MLO

[467] 25-6: L τὸν δὲ μεθ' ὡμάρτησε καὶ ἁρμονίη Ἀφροδίτης.
οὐδ' αὐτὴ βασίλεια κασιγνήτη Διὸς Ἥρη

Nymphs of Troy, offspring of the river Xanthos,
who often drop the headbands from your locks
and the sacred toys from your hands on your father's sands,
and prepare for the dance to Idaean tunes,
hither, tell me, having come forth from the roaring river,
the judgement of the justice-ministering shepherd, 5
whence from the hills he came, sailing the unaccustomed sea,
though ignorant of the works of the brine? And what was the purpose
of the evil-starting ships, so that an oxherd should stir heaven and earth
at once? And what was the primeval[468] beginning of the feud 10
that herdsmen should judge even immortals?
What was the judgement? Whence did he learn the name of the Argive
bride? For you yourselves came and saw
beneath the three-headed promontory of Idaean Phalacra
both Paris seated upon his sheep-tending chair 15
and the queen of the Graces Aphrodite exulting.

So while among the high-crested peaks of the Haemonians
Peleus' bridal hymen-songs were being sung,
at Zeus' command Ganymede was pouring the wine.
And the entire clan of the gods hastened to honour 20
the own white-armed sister of Amphitrite,
Zeus from Olympus, and Poseidon from the sea.
And out of Bee-Land, from fragrant Helicon,
leading the choir of the Muses, came clear-voiced Apollo[469]: 24
he shook his golden locks on each side 39
and the unshorn cluster of his hair was buffeted by Zephyrus. 40
And after him arrived Zeus' own sister Hera[470]. 25
Nor was Aphrodite, the queen of harmony herself[471],

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[468] swift-flying L

[469] clear-voiced choir M

[470] also the harmony of Aphrodite L

[471] the queen herself, Zeus' own sister Hera L

ἐρχομένη δήθυνεν ἐς ἄλσεα Κενταύροιο.
καὶ στέφος ἀσκήσασα γαμήλιον ἤλυθε Πειθώ,
τοξευτῆρος Ἔρωτος ἐλαφρίζουσα φαρέτρην.
καὶ βριαρὴν τρυφάλειαν ἀπὸ κροτάφοιο μεθεῖσα 30
ἐς γάμον ὡμάρτησε γάμων ἀδίδακτος Ἀθήνη.
οὐδὲ κασιγνήτη Λητωιὰς Ἀπόλλωνος
Ἄρτεμις ἠτίμησε καὶ ἀγροτέρη περ ἐοῦσα.
οἶος δ' οὐ κυνέην, οὐ δήιον ἔγχος ἀείρων
ἐς δόμον Ἡφαίστοιο σιδήρεος ἔρχεται Ἄρης, 35
τοῖος ἄτερ θώρηκος, ἄτερ θηκτοῖο σιδήρου
μειδιόων ἐχόρευεν. Ἔριν δ' ἀγέραστον ἐάσας
οὐ Χείρων ἀλέγιζε καὶ οὐκ ἐμπάζετο Πηλεύς. 38
ἡ δ' ἅτε βησσήεντος ἀποπλαγχθεῖσα νομοῖο 41
πόρτις ἐρημαίῃσιν ἐνὶ ξυλόχοισιν ἀλᾶται
φοινήεντι μύωπι, βοῶν ἐλατῆρι, τυπεῖσα·
τοῖα βαρυζήλοισιν Ἔρις πληγῇσι δαμεῖσα
πλάζετο μαστεύουσα, θεῶν πῶς δαῖτας ὀρίνοι. 45
πολλάκι δ' εὐλάιγγος ἀπὸ κλισμοῖο θοροῦσα
ἵστατο καὶ παλίνορσος ἐφέζετο· χειρὶ δὲ γαίης
οὔδεϊ κόλπον ἄραξε καὶ οὐκ ἐφράσσατο πέτρην·
ἤθελεν ὀρφναίων γυάλων κληῖδας ἀνεῖσα,
ἐκ χθονίων Τιτῆνας ἀναστήσασα βερέθρων 50
οὐρανὸν ὑψιμέδοντος ἀιστῶσαι Διὸς ἕδρην.
ἤθελεν ἠχήεντα πυρὸς πρηστῆρα τινάσσειν,
Ἡφαίστῳ δ' ὑπόεικεν ἀμαιμακέτη[472] περ ἐοῦσα,
καὶ[473] πυρὸς ἀσβέστοιο καὶ ὀπτευτῆρι[474] σιδήρου.
καὶ σακέων βαρύδουπον ἐμήσατο κόμπον ἀράσσειν, 55
εἴ ποτε δειμαίνοντες ἀναθρῴσκοιεν ἰωήν·
ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁπλοτέρης δολίης ἀνεχάσσατο βουλῆς
Ἄρεα δειμαίνουσα, σιδήρεον ἀσπιδιώτην.
ἤδη δ' Ἑσπερίδων χρυσέων ἐμνήσατο μήλων·
ἔνθεν Ἔρις, πολέμοιο προάγγελον ἔρνος ἑλοῦσα 60
μῆλον, ἀριζήλων ἐφράσσατο δήνεα μόχθων.
χειρὶ δὲ δινήσασα μόθου πρωτόσπορον ἀρχὴν
ἐς θαλίην ἔρριψε, χορὸν δ' ὤρινε θεάων.
Ἥρη μὲν παράκοιτις ἀγαλλομένη Διὸς εὐνῇ
ἵστατο θαμβήσασα καὶ ἤθελε ληίζεσθαι· 65
πασάων δ' ἅτε Κύπρις ἀρειοτέρη γεγαυῖα

[472] 53 ἀτυζομένη S

[473] 54 κὰπ O following Vian

[474] 54 ὀπωπητῆρι L κατοπτευτῆρι O

slow to also come to the groves of the Centaur.
And, having designed a nuptial garland, came Persuasion,
carrying the quiver of the archer Eros.
And, having laid down her stout helmet from her temple, 30
Athene, untaught of wedlock, attended the wedding.
Nor did Apollo's own sister, born of Leto,
Artemis spurn it, despite also being a huntress.
And with no helmet nor bearing a destructive spear,
such as he goes to the house of the smith Hephaistos, such Ares, 35
without a breastplate, without whetted iron,
danced, smiling. But Strife Cheiron left unhonoured
and did not heed her, neither did Peleus take care. 38

But she, just as a heifer that has wandered from the woody 41
pasture roams about in the lonely thicket,
stung by the bloody gadfly, the driver of cattle —
thus Eris, overcome by blows of heavy jealousy,
was deliberating, planning how to stir up the banquets of the gods. 45
And often would she leap up from the chair of fair stones
and stand and sit down again. And with her hand she smote
the bosom of the earth on the ground and did not consider the rock.
She wanted to unfasten the bolts of the dark caverns,
raise the Titans from their underworld pits, and thus 50
destroy heaven, the seat of Zeus who rules on high.
She wanted to brandish a roaring hurricane of fire,
but, despite being unyielding,[475] she gave way to Hephaistos
keeper of both unquenchable fire and iron.
And she contrived to strike the loud-roaring din of shields, 55
if perhaps they would spring up fearing the clang.
But from the latter crafty plan too she withdrew,
afraid of Ares, the iron shield-bearer.

But now she remembered the golden apples of the Hesperides:
thence Strife took the fruit that foretells war, 60
the apple, and devised the counsels for considerable troubles.
And swinging back with her arm she hurled the first-sown cause
of battle into the celebration, and stirred the choir of goddesses.
Hera, the glorified fellow of Zeus' marriage-bed,
rose up astonished and wanted to seize it for herself. 65
But Cypris, as she was born superior to all,

[475] all terrified S

μῆλον ἔχειν ἐπόθησεν, ὅτι κτέρας ἐστὶν Ἐρώτων· 67
Ἥρη δ' οὐ μεθέηκε καὶ οὐχ ὑπόεικεν Ἀθήνη. 67b[476]
Ζεὺς δὲ θεῶν καὶ νεῖκος ἰδὼν[477] καὶ παῖδα καλέσσας
τοῖον ἐφεδρήσσοντα[478] προσέννεπεν Ἑρμάωνα·
'εἴ τινά που Ξάνθοιο παρ' Ἰδαίοιο ῥεέθροις 70
παῖδα Πάριν Πριάμοιο, τὸν ἀγλαὸν ἡβητῆρα,
Τροίης βουκολέοντα κατ' οὔρεα, τέκνον, ἀκούεις,
κείνῳ μῆλον ὄπαζε· διακρίνειν δὲ θεάων
κέκλεο καὶ βλεφάρων ξυνοχὴν καὶ κύκλα προσώπων.
ἡ δὲ διακρινθεῖσα φέρειν περίπυστον ὀπώρην[479] 75[480]
κάρτος ἀρειοτέρης ἐχέτω καὶ κόσμον Ἐρώτων.'
ὣς ὁ μὲν Ἑρμάωνι πατὴρ ἐπέτελλε Κρονίων·
αὐτὰρ ὁ πατρῴῃσιν ἐφημοσύνῃσι πιθήσας
εἰς ὁδὸν ἡγεμόνευε καὶ οὐκ ἀμέλησε θεάων.
πᾶσα δὲ λωιτέρην καὶ ἀμείνονα δίζετο μορφήν. 80
Κύπρις μὲν δολόμητις ἀναπτύξασα καλύπτρην
καὶ περόνην θυόεντα διαστήσασα κομάων
χρυσῷ μὲν πλοκάμους, χρυσῷ δ' ἐστέψατο χαίτην.
τοῖα δὲ παῖδας Ἔρωτας ἀνηΰτησεν ἰδοῦσα·
'ἐγγὺς ἀγών, φίλα τέκνα· περιπτύξασθε τιθήνην. 85
σήμερον ἀγλαΐαι με διακρίνουσι προσώπων·
δειμαίνω, τίνι μῆλον ὁ βουκόλος οὗτος ὀπάσσει.
Ἥρην μὲν Χαρίτων ἱερὴν ἐνέπουσι τιθήνην,
φασὶ δὲ κοιρανίην μεθέπειν καὶ σκῆπτρα φυλάσσειν·
καὶ πολέμων βασίλειαν ἀεὶ καλέουσιν[481] Ἀθήνην· 90
μούνη Κύπρις ἄναλκις ἔην[482] θεός. οὐ βασιλήων
κοιρανίην, οὐκ[483] ἔγχος ἀρήιον, οὐ βέλος ἕλκω.
ἀλλὰ τί δειμαίνω περιώσιον ἀντὶ μὲν αἰχμῆς
ὡς θοὸν ἔγχος ἔχουσα μελίφρονα δεσμὸν Ἐρώτων;

[476] 67b L puts this verse after v. 65.

[477] 68 ἴδεν L

[478] 69 ὑφεδρήσσοντα WM ὑποδρήσσοντα L

[479] 75 ὀπωπὴν O after Vian

[480] 75-76 ἡ δὲ διακρινθεῖσα φέρειν καὶ κόσμον ὀπωπῆς
κάρτος ἀρειοτέρης ἐχέτω, περίπυστον ὀπώρην L

[481] 90 ἐπικλείουσιν L

[482] 90 ἀεὶ L

[483] 92 οὐδ' S

desired to have the apple, since it is the possession of the Loves. 67
But Hera did not give up nor did Athene give way. 67b
And Zeus saw the goddesses' quarrel and called his son
Hermaon who was sitting close by and addressed him thus:
'If you have heard somewhere by the streams of Idaean Xanthos 70
about a certain Paris, child of Priam, the splendid youth,
who tends cattle on the hills of Troy — my son,
to that one give the apple: urge him to examine both
the wink of the goddesses' eyelids and the curves of their faces.
And let her who is distinguished have the widely renowned fruit[484] 75[485]
to carry away as a prize of the superior and ornament of the Loves.'
Thus his father, the son of Cronos, ordered Hermaon.
But he obeyed the father's command and
led the way and did not neglect the goddesses.
And each sought a lovelier and better form. 80
Cypris of crafty counsel unfolded her veil
and unfastened the fragrant pin from her tresses,
then with gold she wreathed her locks, with gold her hair.
And thus she called to her children the Loves when she saw them:
'The contest is near, dear children: embrace your nurse. 85
Today the splendors of my face distinguish me.
I am anxious to whom this herdsman will award the apple.
Hera they name as the holy nurse of the Graces,
and they say that she wields sovereignty and holds the sceptre.
And the queen of wars they always call Athena: 90
I, Cypris, alone am [486] a powerless deity. No sovereignty
of kings, no warlike spear, no arrow I draw.
But why am I so immensely anxious, when instead of a lance
I have – just as a swift spear – the charm of the Loves, sweet to the mind?

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[484] and let her who is judged to bear a widely renowned appearance
have the prize O

[485] and let her who is judged to also bear the comeliness of appearance
have the prize of the superior, the widely renowned fruit L

[486] <always> L

κεστὸν ἔχω[487] καὶ κέντρον ἄγω καὶ τόξον ἀείρω, 95
κεστόν, ὅθεν φιλότητος ἐμῆς ἐμὸν οἶστρον ἑλοῦσαι
πολλάκις ὠδίνουσι καὶ οὐ θνῄσκουσι γυναῖκες.
τοῖον ἐφεσπομένη ῥοδοδάκτυλος ἔννεπε Κύπρις.
οἱ δ' ἄρα μητρῴης ἐρατῆς ἀίοντες ἐφετμῆς
φοιτητῆρες Ἔρωτες ἐπερρώοντο τιθήνῃ. 100
ἄρτι μὲν Ἰδαίην ὑπερέδραμον οὔρεος ἄκρην,
ἔνθα λιθοκρήδεμνον ὑπὸ πρηῶνος ἐρίπνην
κουρίζων ἐνόμευε Πάρις πατρώια μῆλα.
ποιμαίνων δ'[488] ἑκάτερθεν ἐπὶ προχοῇσιν ἀναύρου
νόσφι μὲν ἀγρομένων ἀγέλην πεμπάζετο ταύρων, 105
νόσφι δὲ βοσκομένων διεμέτρεε πώεα μήλων·
καί τις ὀρεσσαύλοιο δορὴ μετόπισθε χιμαίρης
ἐκκρεμὲς ᾐώρητο καὶ αὐτῶν ἅπτετο[489] μηρῶν,
ποιμενίη δ' ὑπέκειτο[490], βοῶν ἐλάτειρα, καλαῦροψ,
τοῖος ἐπεὶ[491] σύριγγος, ἐς ἤθεα βαιὸν ὁδεύων, 110
ἀγροτέρην[492] καλάμων λιγυρὴν ἐδίωκεν ἀοιδήν·
πολλάκι δ' οἰοπόλοισιν ἐνὶ σταθμοῖσιν ἀείδων
καὶ ταύρων ἀμέλησε καὶ οὐκ ἐμπάζετο μήλων·
ἔνθεν ἔχων σύριγγα κατ'[493] ἤθεα καλὰ νομήων
Πανὶ καὶ Ἑρμάωνι φίλην ἀνεβάλλετο μολπήν· 115
οὐ κύνες ὠρύοντο καὶ οὐ μυκήσατο ταῦρος,
μούνη δ' ἠνεμόεσσα, βοῆς ἀδίδακτος ἐοῦσα,
Ἰδαίων ὀρέων ἀντίθροος ἴαχεν Ἠχώ.
ταῦροι δὲ χλοερῆς κεκορηότες ὑψόθι ποίης,
κεκλιμένοι βαρύγουνον ἐπ' ἰσχίον εὐνάζοντο. 120
ὣς ὁ μὲν ὑψορόφοιο[494] φυτῶν ὑπένερθε καλύπτρης
τηλόθεν Ἑρμάωνα διάκτορον εἶδε λιγαίνων.
δειμαίνων δ' ἀνόρουσε, θεῶν δ' ἀλέεινεν ὀπωπήν·
καὶ χορὸν εὐκελάδων[495] δονάκων ἐπὶ φηγὸν ἐρείσας

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[487] 95 ἐγὼ LO

[488] 104 θ' S

[489] 108 ἥπτετο WMLO

[490] 109 ἀπέκειτο WMLO

[491] 110 ἐὼν S

[492] 111 ἀγροτέρων WMLO

[493] 114 καὶ S

[494] 121 ὑψιλόφοιο L

[495] 124 εὐχελάδων L

I have a girdle and plant the prickle of desire and raise the bow, 95
the girdle from which women catch my own love sting
and often travail and don't die from it.'
This, while she followed, spoke Cypris of the rosy fingers.
But the roaming Loves heard the beloved behest
of their mother and streamed to their nurse. 100

They had just passed beyond the Idaean top of the mountain,
where under the rock-crowned cliff of the promontory
youthful Paris was tending his father's sheep.
[496]Herding on both sides of the outflows of the mountain torrent,
separately he counted the herd of gathered bulls,
separately he measured the flocks of grazing sheep: 105
And some hide of a mountain goat was hanging
suspended on his back and reached to his thighs.
But his shepherd staff, driver of oxen, lay thereunder ,[497]
since in this way, walking a little in his accustomed paths, 110
he pursued the rustic shrill song of the[498] pipe's reeds.[499]
And often, playing in his shepherd-dwellings,
he both neglected the bulls and did not care for the sheep.
There, with his pipe, in[500] the good manner of herdsmen,
he would strike up a melody dear to Pan and Hermaon. 115
The dogs would not howl and the bull would not low,
and only airy Echo, being untaught of sound,
would cry back resounding from the Idaean hills.
But the bulls, having had their fill of the verdant grass,
would lay down upon it, heavy-kneed, and sleep on their flanks. 120

Thus making clear music beneath the high-roofed[501] canopy
of trees he saw from afar Hermaon the messenger.
And frightened he rose up and shunned the sight of the gods:
and he propped up his choir of melodious reeds against an oak,

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[496] <And> S

[497] was laid aside WMLO

[498] his S

[499] 110-11: {since} S
he pursued the shrill song of the pipe's rustic reeds. WMLO

[500] and S

[501] high-crested

μήπω πολλὰ καμοῦσαν ἑὴν ἀνέκοπτεν ἀοιδήν. 125
τοῖα δὲ δειμαίνοντα προσέννεπε θέσκελος Ἑρμῆς·
'γαυλὸν[502] ἀπορρίψας καὶ πώεα καλὰ μεθήσας
δεῦρο θεμιστεύσειας ἐπουρανίῃσι δικάζων·
δεῦρο διακρίνων προφερέστερον εἶδος ὀπωπῆς
φαιδροτέρῃ τόδε μῆλον, ἐπήρατον ἔρνος, ὀπάσσαις.'[503] 130
τοῖον ἀνηΰτησεν· ὁ δ' ἤπιον ὄμμα τανύσσας
ἦκα διακρίνειν πειρήσατο κάλλος ἑκάστης.
δέρκετο μὲν γλαυκῶν βλεφάρων σέλας, ἔδρακε δειρὴν
χρυσῷ δαιδαλέην, ἐφράσσατο κόσμον ἑκάστης
καὶ πτέρνης μετόπισθε καὶ αὐτῶν ἴχνια ταρσῶν. 135
χειρῶν μειδιόωντα δίκης προπάροιθεν ἑλοῦσα
τοῖον Ἀλεξάνδρῳ μυθήσατο μῦθον Ἀθήνη·
'δεῦρο, τέκος Πριάμοιο, Διὸς παράκοιτιν ἐάσας
καὶ θαλάμων βασίλειαν ἀτιμήσας Ἀφροδίτην
ἠνορέης ἐπίκουρον ἐπαινήσειας Ἀθήνην. 140
φασί σε κοιρανέειν καὶ Τρώιον ἄστυ φυλάσσειν·
δεῦρό σε τειρομένοισι σαόπτολιν ἀνδράσι θήσω,
μή ποτέ σοι βαρύμηνις ἐπιβρίσειεν Ἐνυώ.
πείθεο, καὶ πολέμους[504] τε καὶ ἠνορέην σε διδάξω.'
ὣς ἡ μὲν πολύμητις ἀνηΰτησεν Ἀθήνη. 145
τοῖα δ' ὑποβλήδην λευκώλενος ἔννεπεν Ἥρη·
'εἴ με διακρίνων προφερέστερον ἔρνος ὀπάσσῃς,
πάσης ἡμετέρης Ἀσίης ἡγήτορα θήσω.
ἔργα μόθων ἀθέριζε· τί γὰρ πολέμων βασιλῆι;
κοίρανος ἰφθίμοισι καὶ ἀπτολέμοισι[505] κελεύει. 150
οὐκ αἰεὶ θεράποντες ἀριστεύουσιν Ἀθήνης·
ὠκύμοροι θνῄσκουσιν ὑποδρηστῆρες Ἐνυοῦς.'
τοίην κοιρανίην πρωτόθρονος ὤπασεν Ἥρη.
ἡ δ' ἑανὸν βαθύκολπον, ἐς ἠέρα γυμνώσασα
κόλπον, ἀνῃώρησε καὶ οὐκ ᾐδέσσατο Κύπρις. 155
χειρὶ δ' ἐλαφρίζουσα μελίφρονα δεσμὸν Ἐρώτων
στῆθος ἅπαν γύμνωσε καὶ οὐκ ἐμνήσατο μαζῶν.
τοῖα δὲ μειδιόωσα προσέννεπε μηλοβοτῆρα·
'δέξο με καὶ πολέμων ἐπιλήθεο, δέχνυσο μορφὴν
ἡμετέρην καὶ σκῆπτρα καὶ Ἀσίδα κάλλιπε γαῖαν. 160
ἔργα μόθων οὐκ οἶδα· τί γὰρ σακέων Ἀφροδίτῃ;

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[502] 127 γαῦλον WM

[503] 130 ὀπάσσεις S

[504] 144 πτολέμους S

[505] 150 ἐυπτολέμοισι L

and cut off his song which had not yet worn out. 125
And thus wondrous Hermes addressed the frightened man:
'Throw away the milk-pail and leave behind your nice flocks,
hither, may you judge heavenly creatures and give a decision.
Hither, considering the most excellent beauty of appearance
and to the more radiant one may you grant[506] this apple, a lovely fruit.' 130
Thus he called to him: but the other lay a kind pair of eyes upon them,
and tried to consider quietly the beauty of each.
He was looking at the flash of the grey eyes, he looked at the neck
adorned with gold, he pointed out the comeliness of each,
even behind the heel and the footprint of the very soles. 135

Before his judgement Athene took the smiling Alexander
by the hands and spoke such a speech:
'Hither, offspring of Priam, leave alone Zeus' bedfellow
and disdain the queen of bedchambers Aphrodite
and praise Athene, the assistant of manliness. 140
They say that you rule and keep the Trojan city:
Hither, I shall make you saviour of the city for the oppressed men,
lest ever Enyo, heavy in wrath, should press you hard.
Listen to me, and I shall teach you war and manliness.'
Thus Athene of many counsels called out. 145

And white-armed Hera in turn spoke thus:
'If you distinguish me and award me the excelling fruit,
I shall make you the leader of all our Asia.
Scorn the business of battle: for what is warfare to a king?
A ruler commands the strong and the unwarlike[507]. 150
The henchmen of Athene are not always the bravest.
The servants of Enyo die swift-fated.'
Such sovereignty foremost-throned Hera offered.

But Cypris lifted up her fine deep-folding robe to the air,
baring her bosom and and was not ashamed. 155
And with her hands she took off the charm of the Loves, sweet to the mind,
and bared the whole chest and did not heed her breasts.
And thus she addressed the shepherd, smiling:
'Choose me and forget wars, choose our appearance
and forsake the sceptres and the Asian land. 160
I do not know the business of battle: for what are shields to Aphrodite?

[506] you will grant S

[507] the skilled in war

ἀγλαΐῃ πολὺ μᾶλλον ἀριστεύουσι γυναῖκες.
ἀντὶ μὲν ἠνορέης ἐρατὴν παράκοιτιν ὀπάσσω,
ἀντὶ δὲ κοιρανίης Ἑλένης ἐπιβήσεο λέκτρων·
νυμφίον ἀθρήσει σε μετὰ Τροίην Λακεδαίμων.' 165
οὔπω μῦθος ἔληγεν, ὁ δ' ἀγλαὸν ὤπασε μῆλον,
ἀγλαΐης ἀνάθημα, μέγα κτέρας Ἀφρογενείῃ,
φυταλιὴν πολέμοιο, κακὴν πολέμοιο γενέθλην.
χειρὶ δὲ μῆλον ἔχουσα τόσην ἀνενείκατο φωνὴν
Ἥρην κερτομέουσα καὶ ἀντιάνειραν Ἀθήνην· 170
'εἴξατέ μοι πολέμοιο, συνήθεος[508] εἴξατε νίκης.
ἀγλαΐην ἐφίλησα, καὶ ἀγλαΐη με διώκει.
φασί σε, μῆτερ Ἄρηος, ὑπ' ὠδίνεσσιν ἀέξειν
ἠυκόμων Χαρίτων ἱερὸν χορόν· ἀλλά σε πᾶσαι
σήμερον ἠρνήσαντο, καὶ οὐ μίαν εὗρες ἀρωγόν. 175
οὐ σακέων βασίλεια καὶ οὐ πυρός ἐσσι τιθήνη·
οὔ σοι Ἄρης ἐπάρηξε, καὶ εἰ δορὶ μαίνεται Ἄρης,
οὐ φλόγες Ἡφαίστοιο, καὶ εἰ φλογὸς ἆσθμα λοχεύει.
οἷα δὲ[509] κυδιάεις ἀνεμώλιος, Ἀτρυτώνη,
ἣν γάμος οὐκ ἔσπειρε καὶ οὐ μαιώσατο μήτηρ, 180
ἀλλὰ σιδηρείη σε τομὴ καὶ ῥίζα σιδήρου
πατρῴων ἀλόχευτον ἀνεβλάστησε καρήνων.
οἷα δὲ χαλκείοισι καλυψαμένη χρόα πέπλοις
καὶ φεύγεις φιλότητα καὶ Ἄρεος ἔργα διώκεις,
ἁρμονίης ἀδίδακτος, ὁμοφροσύνης ἀδαήμων. 185
ἀγνώσσεις, ὅτι μᾶλλον ἀνάλκιδές εἰσιν Ἀθῆναι
τοῖαι, κυδαλίμοισιν ἀγαλλόμεναι πολέμοισι,
κεκριμένων μελέων οὔτ' ἄρσενες οὔτε γυναῖκες;'
τοῖον ἐφυβρίζουσα προσέννεπε Κύπρις Ἀθήνην.
ὣς ἡ μὲν πτολίπορθον ἀέθλιον ἔλλαχε μορφῆς 190
Ἥρην ἐξελάσασα καὶ ἀσχαλόωσαν Ἀθήνην·
ἱμείρων δ' ὑπ' ἔρωτι καὶ ἣν οὐκ εἶδε διώκων,
Δύσπαρις ἀθροίσας ἐπὶ δάσκιον ἤγαγεν ὕλην
ἀνέρας ἐργοπόνοιο δαήμονας Ἀτρυτώνης.
ἔνθα πολυπρέμνοιο δαϊζόμεναι δρύες Ἴδης 195
ἤριπον ἀρχεκάκοιο περιφροσύνῃσι Φερέκλου,
ὃς τότε[510] μαργαίνοντι χαριζόμενος βασιλῆι
νῆας Ἀλεξάνδρῳ δρυτόμῳ τεκτήνατο χαλκῷ.
αὐτῆμαρ προβέβουλε καὶ αὐτῆμαρ κάμε νῆας,

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[508] 171 συνήθεες M

[509] 179 τε S

[510] 197 ποτε S

Women are much better with beauty.
Instead of manliness I will give you a lovely wife,
instead of sovereignty, enter the bed of Helen.
After Troy Lacedaimon shall see you a bridegroom.' 165
Not yet did she finish her speech, and he awarded her the splendid apple,
an offering of beauty, a great possession for Aphrogeneia,
a plant of war, an evil origin of war.

And holding the apple in her hand, she raised her voice so much,
sneering at Hera and Athene who matches men: 170
'Yield to me in the war, yield your accustomed[511] victory.
Beauty I have loved, and beauty follows me.
They say, mother of Ares, that under travail you produced
the choir of lovely-haired Graces. But they have all
denied you today, and not one did you find a helper. 175
You are queen not of shields and nurse not of fire:
Ares did not come to your aid, even if Ares rages with the spear,
not the flames of Hephaistos, even if he brings forth the blast of flame.
And you pride yourself on such things in vain, Atrytone,
whom not a marriage begot and not a mother bore, 180
but a cut of iron and and iron root shot you up
from your father's head without birth-pangs.
And such, concealing your body with bronze robes,
you also flee from love and follow the business of Ares,
untaught of harmony, unknowing of likemindedness. 185
Don't you know that such Athenes are rather impotent,
though they exult in glorious wars,
and when their limbs are judged they are neither men nor women?'
Thus Cypris called Athene, insulting her.
So she obtained the city-sacking prize of beauty, 190
beating Hera and vexed Athene.

But Paris the Unhappy, yearning under love constraint and pursuing
one whom he had not seen, gathered and led into a shady wood
men who were experienced in hard-working Atrytone.
There the trees of many-trunked Ida were cut 195
and fell down by the cunning of evil-originating Phereclos,
who at that time[512], delighting the maddened prince,
built ships for Alexander with the wood-cutting bronze.
On the same day he designed and on the same day finished the ships,

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[511] you who are accustomed to war S

[512] once S

νῆας ἅς[513] οὐκ ἐνόησε καὶ οὐκ ἤσκησεν Ἀθήνη. 200

ἄρτι μὲν Ἰδαίων ὀρέων ἠλλάξατο πόντον
καὶ λεχέων ἐπίκουρον ἐφεσπομένην Ἀφροδίτην
πολλάκις ἀκταίοισιν ἱλασσάμενος[514] θυέεσσιν
ἔπλεεν Ἑλλήσποντον ἐπ' εὐρέα νῶτα τιθήνης,[515]
τῷ δὲ πολυτλήτων σημήια φαίνετο μόχθων. 205
κυανέη μὲν ὕπερθεν ἀναθρῴσκουσα θάλασσα[516]
οὐρανὸν ὀρφναίων ἑλίκων ἐζώσατο δεσμῷ
εἶθαρ[517] ἀμιχθαλόεντος ἀπ' ἠέρος ὄμβρον ἱεῖσα,[518]
ἐκλύσθη δέ τε[519] πόντος ἐρεσσομένων ἐρετάων.
τόφρα δὲ Δαρδανίην καὶ Τρώιον οὖδας ἀμείψας 210
Ἰσμαρίδος μεθέηκε παραπλώων στόμα λίμνης,
αἶψα δὲ Θρηικίοιο μετ' μετὰ ῥία[520] Παγγαίοιο
Φυλλίδος ἀντέλλοντα φιλήνορος ἔδρακε τύμβον
καὶ δρόμον ἐννεάκυκλον ἀλήμονος εἶδε κελεύθου,
ἔνθα διαστείχουσα κινύρεο, Φυλλίς, ἀκοίτην 215
δεχνυμένη παλίνορσον ἀπήμονα Δημοφόωντα,
ὁππότε νοστήσειεν Ἀθηναίης ἀπὸ δήμων.
τῷ δὲ βαθυκλήροιο διὰ[521] χθονὸς Αἱμονιήων
ἐξαπίνης ἀνέτελλεν Ἀχαιίδος ἄνθεα γαίης,
Φθίη βωτιάνειρα[522] καὶ εὐρυάγυια Μυκήνη. 220

ἔνθεν ἀνερχομένοιο παρ' εἰαμενὰς Ἐρυμάνθου
Σπάρτην καλλιγύναικα, φίλην πόλιν Ἀτρείωνος,
κεκλιμένην ἐνόησεν ἐπ' Εὐρώταο ῥεέθροις.
ἄγχι δὲ ναιομένην ὑπὸ δάσκιον οὔρεος ὕλην
γείτονα παπταίνων ἐρατὴν θηεῖτο Θεράπνην. 225
οὔπω κεῖθεν ἔην δολιχὸς πλόος, οὐδὲ γαλήνης
δηρὸν ἐρεσσομένων ἠκούετο δοῦπος ἐρετμῶν,

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[513] 200 δ' WMLO

[514] 203 ἱλασκόμενος S

[515] 204 θαλάσσης WM

[516] 206 καλύπτρη L

[517] 208 ὑγρόν L ἤ δ' ἄρ S

[518] ἀεῖσα L

[519] 209 δ' ὕπο L

[520] 212 οὔρεα WM

[521] 218 διέκ O

[522] 220 L *suspects lacuna*.

ships which Athene neither planned nor furnished. 200

When he had just left the Idaean hills for the sea
and after beseeching Aphrodite who attended him as a helper
to his marriage-bed many times with sacrifices on the shores,
he was sailing the Hellespont on the broad back of her nurse[523],
there appeared to him the portents of miserable hardships. 205
The blue ocean sprung up high above
and coiled around heaven with a bond of dark spirals,
and at once spouted forth rain from the misty air,[524]
and the sea surged up as[525] the rowers rowed.
Meanwhile he had passed Dardania and the Trojan ground 210
and sailing past left behind the mouth of the Ismarian lake,
quickly after the peaks[526] of Thracian Pangaeon
he espied the tomb of Phyllis, who loved her husband, rising
and saw the nine-circled course of the wandering path,
where you, Phyllis, walked and bewailed your bedfellow, 215
waiting for Demophon to be back again unharmed,
when he should return from the countries of Athena.
And across the very rich land of the Haemonians
on a sudden rose the bloom of the Achaean earth,
man-feeding Phthia and Mykene with wide streets. 220

There, beyond the pastures of flooding Erymanthos he
perceived Sparta of beautiful women, dear city of
Atreus' son, lying on the beds of the Eurotas.
And nearby, situated under a hill's shady wood,
he looked around and beheld the neighbouring lovely Therapne. 225
From there the voyage was not long nor was the noise
of the oars rowing in the calm water heard for too long,

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[523] the ocean WM

[524] 208 and blew moist rain from the misty air L

[525] from underneath L

[526] mountains WM

καὶ χθονὸς εὐκόλποισιν ἐπ' ἠιόνεσσι βαλόντες
πείσματα νηὸς ἔδησαν, ὅσοις ἁλὸς ἔργα μεμήλει.
αὐτὰρ ὁ χιονέοιο λοεσσάμενος ποταμοῖο 230
ᾤχετο φειδομένοισιν ἐπ' ἴχνεσιν ἴχνος ἐρείδων,
μὴ πόδες ἱμερόεντες ὑποχραίνοιντο[527] κονίης[528],
μὴ πλοκάμων κυνέῃσιν ἐπιβρίσαντες ἐθείρας[529]
ὀξύτερον σπεύδοντος ἀναστέλλοιεν ἀῆται.
ἄρτι μὲν αἰπύδμητα φιλοξείνων ναετήρων 235
δώματα παπταίνων καὶ γείτονας ἐγγύθι νηοὺς
ἄστεος ἀγλαΐην διεμέτρεεν, ἔνθα μὲν αὐτῆς
χρύσεον ἐνδαπίης θηεύμενος εἶδος Ἀθήνης,
ἔνθα δὲ Καρνείοιο φίλον κτέρας Ἀπόλλωνος 239
οἶκον Ἀμυκλαίοιο παραγνάμψας Ὑακίνθου, 239b
ὅν ποτε κουρίζοντα σὺν Ἀπόλλωνι νοήσας 240
δῆμος Ἀμυκλαίων ἠγάσσατο, μὴ Διὶ Λητὼ
σκυζομένη[530] καὶ τοῦτον ἀνήγαγεν· αὐτὰρ Ἀπόλλων
οὐκ ἐδάη Ζεφύρῳ ζηλήμονι παῖδα φυλάσσων.
γαῖα δὲ δακρύσαντι χαριζομένη βασιλῆι
ἄνθος ἀνηέξησε, παραίφασιν Ἀπόλλωνι[531], 245
ἄνθος ἀριζήλοιο φερώνυμον ἡβητῆρος.
ἤδη δ' ἀγχιδόμοισιν ἐπ' Ἀτρείδαο μελάθροις
ἵστατο θεσπεσίῃσιν ἀγαλλόμενος χαρίτεσσιν.
οὐ Διὶ τοῖον ἔτικτεν ἐπήρατον υἷα Θυώνη·
ἱλήκοις, Διόνυσε· καὶ εἰ Διός ἐσσι γενέθλης, 250
καλὸς ἔην καὶ κεῖνος[532] ἐπ' ἀγλαΐῃσι προσώπων.
ἡ δὲ φιλοξείνων θαλάμων κληῖδας ἀνεῖσα
ἐξαπίνης Ἑλένη μετεκίαθε δώματος αὐλὴν
καὶ θαλερόν[533] προπάροιθεν ὀπιπεύουσα θυράων
ὡς ἴδεν, ὣς ἐκάλεσσε καὶ ἐς μυχὸν ἤγαγεν αὐλῆς[534] 255
καί μιν ἐφεδρήσσειν νεοπηγέος ὑψόθεν ἕδρης
ἀργυρέης ἐπέτελλε· κόρον δ' οὐκ εἶχεν ὀπωπῆς

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[527] 232 ὑπ' ἀχράντοιο W

[528] 232 κονίῃς O after Vian

[529] 233 this and previous line very doubtful in W

[530] 242 κυσαμένη WMLO

[531] 245 Ἀπόλλωνος WM

[532] 251 κἀκεῖνος O

[533] 254 θαλερῶν WM

[534] 255 οἴκου WM

and they cast the cables of the ship onto the beautifully-bayed
shores of the land and tied them, they whose care was the business of the sea.
But he, after washing himself in the snowy river, 230
went off, planting his step with considerate steps,
lest his desirable feet should be defiled [535] with dust,
lest the breezes, blowing upon his helmet,
should stir up his hair in locks, if he rushed too keenly.
He was just looking around the high-built houses of the 235
hospitable inhabitants and the neighbouring temples nearby
and scanned the splendour of the city, here beholding
the golden image of native Athene herself,
there the dear possessions of Carneian Apollo, 239
having passed the shrine of Amyclaian Hyacinthus, 239b
whom once, when he was growing up with Apollo, the people 240
of Amyclae perceived and wondered whether Leto had not also
born him to Zeus in anger[536]: but Apollo
did not know that he was keeping the boy for envious Zephyrus.
And to please the weeping king, earth
brought forth a flower as consolation for Apollo, 245
a flower bearing the name of the conspicuous youth.
Now he stopped by the near-dwelling palace of
Atreus' son and exulted in his divine graces.
Thyone did not bear such a lovely son to Zeus:
Forgive, Dionysus: even though you are an offspring of Zeus, 250
that one, too, was beautiful with the splendour of his face.
And she, Helen, unbarred the bolts of her hospitable
bedchambers and of a sudden came to the court of the house
and watching the blooming man in front of the doors,[537]
just as she saw him, she called him and led him to the inmost part of the hall[538] 255
and told him to sit down on a newly-made chair
of silver: and she would have no surfeit of the sight,

[535] beneath undefiled dust W

[536] born and conceived him to Zeus {in anger} WMLO

[537] and watching in front of the sturdy doors WM

[538] house WM

ἄλλοτε δὴ χρύσειον ὀισαμένη[539] Κυθερείης
κοῦρον ὀπιπεύειν θαλαμηπόλον—ὀψὲ δ' ἀνέγνω,
ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν Ἔρως· βελέων δ' οὐκ εἶδε φαρέτρην— 260
πολλάκι δ' ἀγλαΐῃσιν ἐυγλήνοιο[540] προσώπου[541]
παπταίνειν ἐδόκευε τὸν ἡμερίδων βασιλῆα·
ἀλλ' οὐχ ἡμερίδων θαλερὴν ἐδόκευεν ὀπώρην
πεπταμένην χαρίεντος ἐνὶ[542] ξυνοχῇσι καρήνου.
ὀψὲ δὲ θαμβήσασα τόσην ἀνενείκατο φωνήν· 265
'ξεῖνε, πόθεν τελέθεις; ἐρατὸν γένος εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν.
ἀγλαΐην μὲν ἔοικας ἀριζήλῳ βασιλῆι,
ἀλλὰ τεὴν οὐκ οἶδα παρ' Ἀργείοισι γενέθλην.
πᾶσαν Δευκαλίωνος ἀμύμονος οἶδα γενέθλην·
οὐ Πύλον ἠμαθόεσσαν ἔχεις, Νηλήιον οὖδας, 270
—Ἀντίλοχον δεδάηκα, τεὴν δ' οὐκ εἶδον ὀπωπὴν –
οὐ Φθίην χαρίεσσαν, ἀριστήων τροφὸν ἀνδρῶν·
οἶδα περικλήιστον ὅλον γένος Αἰακιδάων,
ἀγλαΐην Πηλῆος, ἐυκλείην Τελαμῶνος,
ἤθεα Πατρόκλοιο καὶ ἠνορέην Ἀχιλῆος.' 275
τοῖα Πάριν[543] ποθέουσα λιγύθροος ἔννεπε νύμφη·
αὐτὰρ ὁ μειλιχίην ἠμείβετο γῆρυν ἀνοίξας·
'εἴ τινά που Φρυγίης ἐνὶ πείρασι γαῖαν ἀκούεις,
Ἴλιον, ἣν πύργωσε Ποσειδάων καὶ Ἀπόλλων·
εἴ τινά που πολύολβον ἐνὶ Τροίῃ βασιλῆα 280
ἔκλυες εὐώδινος ἀπὸ Κρονίδαο γενέθλης·
ἔνθεν ἀριστεύων ἐμφύλια πάντα διώκω.
εἰμί, γύναι, Πριάμοιο πολυχρύσου φίλος υἱός,
εἰμὶ δὲ Δαρδανίδης· ὁ δὲ Δάρδανος ἐκ Διὸς ἦεν,
ᾧ καὶ ἀπ' Οὐλύμποιο θεοὶ ξυνήονες ἀνδρῶν[544] 285
πολλάκι θητεύουσι καὶ ἀθάνατοί περ ἐόντες·
ὧν ὁ μὲν ἡμετέρης δωμήσατο τείχεα πάτρης,
τείχεα μὴ πίπτοντα[545], Ποσειδάων καὶ Ἀπόλλων.
αὐτὰρ ἐγώ, βασίλεια, δικασπόλος εἰμὶ θεάων·

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[539] 258 ὀισσαμένη L

[540] 261 ἐυγλήνοισι WML

[541] προσώπων WM

[542] 264 ἐπὶ WML

[543] 276 πόθῳ L

[544] 285 ἄμφω WLOS

[545] 288 μαρμαίροντα WM

at one point she supposed that she was looking at the golden
youth who attends Cypris' bedchamber — and late she realized
that it was not Eros: she saw no quiver of arrows — 260
and often in the splendours of his bright-eyed face[546]
she expected to look at the king of vines:
But she did not observe the blooming fruit of vines
looking upon the parting of his graceful head.

But after marvelling for a long time, she uttered such a voice: 265
'Stranger, where do you come from? Tell me your lovely lineage as well.
In beauty you look like a magnificent king,
but I do not know your family among the Argives.
I know the entire family of blameless Deucalion.
You don't dwell in sandy Pylos, Neleian ground, 270
I have met Antilochus, but I have not seen your appearance —
not in graceful Phthia, the rearer of chief men.
I know the whole all-famous race of Aeacus' sons,
the splendour of Peleus, the good reputation of Telamon,
the manners of Patroclus and the manliness of Achilles.' 275
Such things the clear-voiced young woman said, longing for Paris.[547]

But he opened honeyed speech and answered:
'If you have perhaps heard of a land on the bounds of Phrygia,
Ilios, which Poseidon and Apollo fenced with towers:
If you have perhaps learned about a certain very wealthy king 280
in Troy, from the well-born family of the son of Cronos:
from there I am the bravest and I follow my kinsfolk in everything.
I, woman, am the dear son of Priam, rich in gold,
I am a Dardanid. And Dardanus was from Zeus,
and him even the gods who are partners of men[548] from Olympus 285
often served, even though they are immortals.
Of them Poseidon and Apollo built our
father's walls, walls that do not fall[549].
But I, queen, am the judge of goddesses.

[546] bright-eyed splendours of his face WML

[547] longing with longing L

[548] the two gods {who are partners of men} WLOS

[549] gleaming walls WM

καὶ γὰρ ἀκηχεμένῃσιν ἐπουρανίῃσι δικάζων 290
Κύπριδος ἀγλαΐην καὶ ἐπήρατον ᾔνεσα μορφήν,
ἡ δὲ περικλήιστον, ἐμῶν ἀντάξιον ἔργων,
νύμφην ἱμερόεσσαν ἐμοὶ κατένευσεν ὀπάσσαι,
ἣν Ἑλένην ἐνέπουσι, κασιγνήτην Ἀφροδίτης,
ἧς ἕνεκεν τέτληκα καὶ οἴδματα τόσσα περῆσαι. 295
δεῦρο γάμον κεράσωμεν, ἐπεὶ Κυθέρεια κελεύει·
μή με καταισχύνειας, ἐμὴν καὶ[550] Κύπριν ἐλέγξῃς.
οὐκ ἐρέω· τί δὲ τόσσον ἐπισταμένην σε διδάξω;
οἶσθα γάρ, ὡς Μενέλαος ἀνάλκιδός ἐστι γενέθλης
εἰ[551] τοῖαι γεγάασιν ἐν Ἀργείοισι γυναῖκες. 300
καὶ γὰρ ἀκιδνοτέροισιν ἀεξόμεναι μελέεσσιν
ἀνδρῶν εἶδος ἔχουσι, νόθοι δ' ἐγένοντο γυναῖκες.'

ἔννεπεν· ἡ δ' ἐρόεσσαν ἐπὶ χθονὶ πῆξεν ὀπωπὴν
δηρὸν ἀμηχανέουσα καὶ οὐκ ἠμείβετο νύμφη.
ὀψὲ δὲ θαρσήσασα[552] τόσην ἀνενείκατο φωνήν· 305
'ἀτρεκέως, ὦ ξεῖνε, τεῆς ποτε πυθμένα πάτρης
τὸ πρὶν ἐδωμήσαντο Ποσειδάων καὶ Ἀπόλλων;
ἤθελον ἀθανάτων δαιδάλματα κεῖνα νοῆσαι
καὶ νομὸν[553] οἰοπόλοιο[554] λιγύπνοον Ἀπόλλωνος,
ἔνθα θεοδμήτοισι παρὰ προμολῇσι[555] πυλάων 310
πολλάκις εἰλιπόδεσσιν ἐφέσπετο βουσὶν Ἀπόλλων.
ἀγρέο νῦν Σπάρτηθεν ἐπὶ Τροίην με κομίζων.
ἕψομαι, ὡς Κυθέρεια γάμων βασίλεια κελεύει.
οὐ τρομέω Μενέλαον, ὅταν[556] Τροίη με νοήσῃ.'
τοίην συνθείην καλλίσφυρος ἔννεπε νύμφη. 315

[557]νὺξ δέ, πόνων ἄμπαυμα μετ' ἠελίοιο κελεύθους,
ὕπνον ἐλαφρίζουσα, παρήορον ὤπασεν ἠῶ

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[550] 297 μὴ WMLO

[551] 300 οὐκ W οὐ M

[552] 305 θαμβήσασα WMS

[553] 309 νόμον O

[554] οἰονόμοιο WLO

[555] 310 προθύροισι WM

[556] 314 ὅτ' ἐν Τροίῃ O

[557] 316 L, after Abel, transposes 316-321 after 368
316-318 νῦν δέ, πόνων ἄμπαυμα μετήορον ὤπασεν ἠὼς
ὕπνον ἐλαφρίζουσα, μετ' ἠελίοιο κελεύθοις
ἀρχομένη. L

For even judging the annoyed heavenly ones 290
I praised Cypris' beauty and lovely appearance,
and she promised that as a recompense for my labours
she would give me a far-renowned charming bride,
whom they call Helen, the sister of Aphrodite,
for whose sake I have endured even to traverse such waves. 295
Come, let us mingle in marriage, since Cythereia orders.
Don't put me to shame and[558] question my Cypris.
I won't say — why should I teach you who has knowledge of so much? —
For you know that Menelaus is of a powerless family,
if[559] such women are born among the Argives. 300
For even growing with weaker limbs
they have the physique of men, and are bastard women.'

He spoke. But she fixed her lovely eyes on the ground,
perplexed for a long time, and the young woman did not reply.
But after plucking up her courage[560] for a long time, she uttered such a voice: 305
'Really, stranger, did Poseidon and Apollo once
upon a time build the foundations of your fatherland?
I would like to perceive those artworks of the immortals
and the shrill-blowing pasture of the shepherd Apollo,
where by the divine-built porches of the gates 310
Apollo often pursued the oxen, rolling in their gait.
Take me now and bring me from Sparta to Troy.
I will follow, as Cythereia, queen of marriage, commands.
I do not tremble before Menelaus when Troy should see me.'
Such an agreement spoke the beautiful-ankled young woman. 315

[561]But night, repose from toil after the journeys of the sun,
lightened sleep and made the first dawn follow

[558] don't WMLO

[559] Not such women are born among the Argives. WM

[560] marvelling WMS

[561] 316-318 But now dawn gave an inconstant repose from toil,
lightening sleep, rising with the journeys of the sun, L

ἀρχομένην[562]· δοιὰς δὲ πύλας ᾤιξεν ὀνείρων,
τὴν μὲν ἀληθείης—κεράων ἀπελάμπετο κόσμος—
ἔνθεν ἀναθρῴσκουσι θεῶν νημερτέες ὀμφαί, 320
τὴν δὲ δολοφροσύνης, κενεῶν θρέπτειραν ὀνείρων.
αὐτὰρ ὁ ποντοπόρων Ἑλένην ἐπὶ σέλματα νηῶν
ἐκ θαλάμων ἐκόμισε φιλοξείνου[563] Μενελάου,
κυδιόων δ' ὑπέροπλον ὑποσχεσίῃ Κυθερείης
φόρτον ἄγων ἔσπευδεν ἐς Ἴλιον ἰωχμοῖο. 325

Ἑρμιόνη δ' ἀνέμοισιν ἀπορρίψασα καλύπτρην
ἱσταμένης πολύδακρυς ἀνέστενεν ἠριγενείης,
πολλάκι δ' ἀμφιπόλους θαλάμων ἔκτοσθε[564] λαβοῦσα,
ὀξύτατον βοόωσα τόσην ἀνενείκατο φωνήν·
'παῖδες, πῆ με λιποῦσα πολύστονον ᾤχετο μήτηρ, 330
ἢ χθιζὸν σὺν ἐμοὶ θαλάμων κληῖδας ἑλοῦσα
ἔδραθεν ὑπνώουσα καὶ ἐς μίαν ἤλυθεν εὐνήν;'
ἔννεπε δακρυχέουσα, συνωδύροντο δὲ παῖδες.

ἀγρόμεναι δ' ἑκάτερθεν ἐπὶ προθύροισιν ἐρύκειν
Ἑρμιόνην στενάχουσαν ἐπειρήσαντο γυναῖκες· 335
'τέκνον ὀδυρομένη, γόον εὔνασον. ᾤχετο μήτηρ,
νοστήσει παλίνορσος·[565] ἔτι κλαίουσα νοήσεις.
οὐχ ὁράᾳς; γοεραὶ μὲν ὑπημύουσι[566]παρειαί,[567]
πυκνὰ δὲ μυρομένης θαλεραὶ μινύθουσι ὀπωπαί.[568]
ἢ[569] τάχα νυμφάων ἐς ὁμήγυριν ἀγρομενάων 340
ἤλυθεν, ἰθείης δὲ παραπλάζουσα κελεύθου
ἵσταται ἀσχαλόωσα, καὶ ἐς λειμῶνα μολοῦσα
Ὡράων δροσόεντος ὑπὲρ πεδίοιο θαάσσει,
ἢ χρόα πατρῴοιο λοεσσαμένη[570] ποταμοῖο
ᾤχετο καὶ δήθυνεν ὑπ'[571] Εὐρώταο ῥεέθροις.' 345

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[562] 318 ἀρχομένη L ἐρχομένη O

[563] 323 φιλοξείνων S

[564] 328 ἔντοσθε L

[565] 337 · παλίνορσον LS

[566] 338 ἐπιμύουσιν WM; ὑπημύουσιν O

[567] 338 ὀπωπαί WMO

[568] 339 παρειαί WMO

[569] 340 ἢ WMLO

[570] 344 λοεσσομένη WML

[571] 345 ἐπ' WML

beside[572]. And she opened two gates of dreams,
that of truth – it shone with the ornament of horns –
whence spring forth the unerring oracles of the gods; 320
and that of deceit, the rearer of empty dreams.
But he carried Helen on the decks of the seafaring
ships from the bedchambers of hospitable Menelaus[573],
and exulting presumptuously in the promise of Cytherea
he hastened to Ilios, carrying his freight of battle. 325

But Hermione cast off her veil to the winds
and, as the child of morn rose, wailed aloud with many tears,
and often taking her handmaidens from outside[574] the bedchambers,
crying most piercingly she uttered such a voice:
'Girls, where has my mother gone, having left me with many sighs, 330
she who yesterday took the keys of the bedchambers and while putting me
to sleep slumbered and entered one bed with me?'
She spoke, shedding tears, and the girls lamented with her.

And the women gathered on each side by the porches
and tried to restrain the groaning Hermione: 335
'Lamenting child, calm your wailing. Your mother went away,
she will come back again. Still crying you will perceive her.[575]
Don't you see? Your mournful cheeks[576] are sunken,
and in your excessive tears your blooming eyes[577] become small.
Perhaps she went to a meeting of young women that 340
gathered, but she strayed from the straight path
and is standing distressed, and she went to the meadows
of the Hours and is sitting upon the dewy plain,
or she washed her body in the river of her fathers and
walked along and tarried by the streams of Eurotas.' 345

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[572] and made dawn follow beside when she came. O

[573] the hospitable bedchambers of Menelaus S

[574] from within L

[575] she will return. Still crying you will perceive her back. LS

[576] eyes WMO

[577] cheeks WMO

τοῖα δὲ δακρύσασα πολύστονος ἔννεπε κούρη·
‘οἶδεν ὄρος, ποταμῶν ἐδάη ῥόον, οἶδε κελεύθους
ἐς ῥόδον[578], ἐς λειμῶνα· τί μοι φθέγγεσθε, γυναῖκες;
ἀστέρες ὑπνώουσι, καὶ ἐν σκοπέλοισιν ἰαύει·
ἀστέρες ἀντέλλουσι, καὶ οὐ παλίνορσος ἱκάνει. 350
μῆτερ ἐμή, τίνα χῶρον ἔχεις; τίνα δ’ οὔρεα ναίεις;
πλαζομένην θῆρές σε κατέκτανον; ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτοὶ
θῆρες ἀριζήλοιο Διὸς τρομέουσι γενέθλην.
ἤριπες ἐξ ὀρέων[579] χθαμαλῆς ἐπὶ νῶτα κονίης
σὸν δέμας οἰοπόλοισιν ἐνὶ δρυμοῖσι λιποῦσα; 355
ἀλλὰ πολυπρέμνων ξυλόχων ὑπὸ δάσκιον ὕλην
δένδρεα παπτήνασα καὶ αὐτῶν μέχρι πετήλων
σὸν δέμας οὐκ ἐνόησα· καὶ οὐ νεμεσίζομαι ὕλην[580].
μὴ μὴ δ’ ἱερῶν[581] γονόεντος[582] ἐπ’[583] Εὐρώταο ῥεέθρων[584]
νηχομένην ἐκάλυψεν ὑποβρυχίην σε γαλήνη; 360
ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν ποταμοῖσι καὶ ἐν πελάγεσσι θαλάσσης
Νηιάδες ζώουσι καὶ οὐ κτείνουσι γυναῖκας.’
ὣς ἡ μὲν στενάχεσκεν[585], ἀνακλίνουσα[586] δὲ δειρὴν.
ὕπνος ἐπεὶ[587], θανάτοιο συνέμπορος[588], ἧ[589] γὰρ ἐτύχθη
ἄμφω ἀναγκαίη[590] ξυνήια πάντα λαχόντε[591] 365
ἔργα παλαιοτέροιο κασιγνήτοιο διώκειν.
ἔνθεν ἀκηχεμένοισι βαρυνόμεναι βλεφάροισι
πολλάκις ὑπνώουσιν, ὅτε κλαίουσι, γυναῖκες.

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[578] 348 δρόμον O

[579] 354 ὀχέων WML

[580] 358 ὕλῃ WMLO

[581] 359 διεροῖς WMLO

[582] 359 στονόεντος WMLO

[583] 359 ἐν O ὑπ’ WL

[584] 359 ῥεέθροις WMLO

[585] 363 στενάχιζεν WML στονάχιζεν O

[586] 363 ἀνακλίνασα L

[587] 364 ὕπνον ἔπνει M

[588] 364 συνέμπορον M

[589] 364 εἰ S

[590] 365 ἀναγκαίῃ OS

[591] 365 λαχόντων O

But the girl shed tears with many sighs and spoke thus:
‘She knows the hill, has knowledge of the rivers' flow, knows the paths
to the rose-garden[592], to the meadows: what are you talking to me women?
The stars sleep, and she rests among the rocks:
the stars rise, and she does not come back. 350
My mother, in what land are you staying? In what mountains are you dwelling?
Did you get lost and have beasts killed you? But even the very
beasts tremble before the family of conspicuous Zeus.
Did you fall from the mountain[593] on the surface of the dusty ground
and left your body in the lonely thickets? 355
But I have looked around the trees of the many-trunked copses
under the shady wood, and even up to the very leaves,
and did not perceive your body: and I do not dread the wood.[594]
When you were swimming in the holy[595] streams of fruitful[596] Eurotas,
has the calm water not covered you in the depth? 360
But both in the rivers and on the shores of the ocean
the Naiads live and don't kill women.’
Thus she groaned again and again, and leaned back her neck.
Sleep came upon her[597], the companion of death, for it was ordained
a necessity that, drawing all lots in common, 365
both follow the works of the elder brother.
Hence, weighed down with sorrowing eyelids
when they cry, women often fall asleep.

[592] the Dromos O

[593] chariot WML

[594] and I am not angry with the wood. WMLO

[595] wet WMLO

[596] moaning WMLO

[597] she breathed sleep M

ἡ μὲν ἀλητεύουσα δολοφροσύνῃσιν ὀνείρων
μητέρα παπταίνειν ᾠίσατο, τοῖα δὲ κούρη 370
ἴαχε θαμβήσασα καὶ ἀχνυμένη περ ἐοῦσα·
'χθιζὸν ὀδυρομένην με δόμων ἔκτοσθε φυγοῦσα
κάλλιπες ὑπνώουσαν ὑπὲρ λεχέων γενετῆρος.
ποῖον ὄρος προλέλοιπα[598]; τίνας μεθέηκα[599] κολώνας; 374
οὕτω καλλικόμοιο μεθ' ἁρμονίην Ἀφροδίτης;' 375[600]
τοῖα δὲ φωνήσασα προσέννεπε Τυνδαρεώνη·
'τέκνον ἀκηχεμένη, μὴ μέμφεο δεινὰ[601] παθούσῃ·
ὁ χθιζόν[602] με μολὼν ἀπατήλιος ἥρπασεν ἀνήρ.'
ἔννεπεν. ἡ δ' ἀνόρουσε καὶ οὐχ ὁρόωσα τιθήνην
ὀξυτέρῃ πολὺ μᾶλλον ἀνεβρυχήσατο φωνῇ· 380
'ἠερίης, ὄρνιθες, ἐύπτερα τέκνα γενέθλης,
ἔσπετε[603] νοστήσαντες ἐπὶ Κρήτην Μενελάῳ·
χθιζὸν ἐπὶ Σπάρτην τις ἀνὴρ ἀθεμίστιος ἐλθὼν
ἀγλαΐην ξύμπασαν ἐμῶν[604] ἀλάπαξε μελάθρων.'
Ὣς ἡ μὲν πολύδακρυς ἐς ἠέρα φωνήσασα, 385
μητέρα μαστεύουσα, μάτην ἐπλάζετο κούρη.
καὶ Κικόνων πτολίεθρα καὶ Αἰολίδος πόρον Ἕλλης
Δαρδανίης λιμένεσσιν ὁ νυμφίος ἤγαγε νύμφην.
πυκνὰ δὲ τίλλε κόμην, χρυσέην δ' ἔρρηξε[605] καλύπτρην
Κασσάνδρη νεόφοιτον ἐπ'[606] ἀκροπόληος ἰδοῦσα. 390
Τροίη δ' ὑψιδόμων πυλέων κληῖδας ἀνεῖσα
δέξατο νοστήσαντα τὸν ἀρχέκακον πολιήτην.

[598] 374 μεθέηκα WMO

[599] 374 προλέλοιπα WMO

[600] 375 L has this line after 377, WO after 378

[601] 377 τοῖα S

[602] 378 χθιζός M

[603] 382 εἴπατε WM

[604] 384 ἑῶν WML

[605] 389 ἔρριψε WM

[606] 390 ἀπ' WMLO

And wandering among the deceits of dreams
she thought she looked at her mother, and this the girl 370
cried, amazed and in sorrow though she was:
'Yesterday you fled from within the house and left
me lamenting, sleeping in my father's bed.
Which mountain have I left out? What hills did I neglect?[607]
Is this in accordance with the harmony of beautiful-haired Aphrodite?' 375
And the daughter of Tyndareus spoke thus and addressed her:
'Sorrowing child, do not blame me who has suffered terrible things.
The guileful man who came yesterday has abducted me.'

She spoke. And the girl started up and, as she did not see her nurse,
she roared much more loudly, in a most piercing voice: 380
'Birds, well-winged children of the airy family,
go to Crete and tell Menelaus:
yesterday some lawless man came to Sparta
and destroyed the entire splendour of my[608] palace.'
Thus she spoke with many tears to the air, 385
and searching after her mother, the girl wandered in vain.

And to the cities of the Kikones and the strait of Aeolian Helle,
into Dardanian harbours the groom brought his bride.
But Cassandra tore many a hair, and rent[609] her golden
veil when she saw the newcomer from the acropolis. 390
But Troy unbarred the bolts of the high-built gates
and welcomed back the evil-starting citizen.

[607] Which mountain did I neglect? What hills have I left out? WMO

[608] his WML

[609] cast away WM

Appendix II: Dracontius, *De Raptu Helenae*. Translation

The Trojan robber's voyage and the abduction of the Spartan woman
and the pastoral recklessness of a vicious heart
I shall approach via a better path. For I reveal the enemy
of his host and one who loots the rights of the marriage-bed,
the treaties of wedlock, the charming unions of decency, 5
the substance of family, the hope of offspring, the pledge of progeny:
for everything comes from the mother, from the mother the human
is born, once furnished with limbs; the father is source, cause, origin,
but <without> the mother the father is nothing: what proportion of the father
does every human consist of? The mother is the entire stock. 10
Thus, so that, instructed, I may tell the crime committed by
Paris, the adulterous abductor, you, great Homer,
polish the pleasant words with your smooth-flowing palate;
Every poet who dips himself in the Aonian fountain
wants you to be his divinity; nor do I say 'come!' to the Camena 15
when you are present: for me will suffice the reason of Homer
who is alive after death, who led the Pelasgians to arms,
the avenger, shaking the Dardanids' Pergamum in wars;
and the other poet who invaded the Trojans by night
when he shut armed men in a horse, who destroyed the walls 20
of Troy and killed Priam with a blow from Pyrrhus:
calling upon your divinity, I, this base bard, fasten together
whatever either of the two Muse-begotten ones has disdained to write.
Foxes have fame in waiting for the leftovers of the
lions' prey, they exult when they have gained food which 25
the satiated guts refuse, which the rage, no longer hungry,
has given up, and they think it a prey, carrying off bare bones.
You the Attic speech cherishes, venerable one, – the Latin tongue, in turn,
values you.[610] Divulge, I pray, what motive made baneful
Alexander pillage Amyclae with the abduction. 30
The judge from Ida had now sat down as a magistrate to the heavenly ones,
now the field was the committee, now the grassy ground rose up
and stood, and the grass-green places had been an ethereal tribunal.
The Ilian shepherd had released the court-obligation of heaven
and himself made the dispute his own.[611] Venus departed 35
praised, with Juno disgraced. Then the maiden defeated
in beauty was aggrieved, for she went away saddened: ah, the mind is ignorant

[610] Homer and Vergil, respectively

[611] I.e. through bribery; cf. *LS s.v. lis* II. 2.

what evils surround one who dares to impart judgment on Minerva.
As a punishment a sentence was pronounced on the Idaean judge
and Paris was convicted; nor was the shepherd alone made 40
guilty from this dispute: condemned to death were his parents,
condemned his brothers, and whosoever in the city was a neighbour
or relative — one death undid them all.
And if only the unhappy city alone would perish in death!
Races were condemned, ingenious Greece was condemned, 45
alas, to be widowed of great men; Dawn was bereaved
of warlike Memnon, condemned was the Thessalian hero
and the seed of Telamon, two thunderbolts of war perished.
For his mother's bed Achilles paid compensation
(whence this dispute arose), perhaps Telamonian Ajax 50
the invincible was laid low, because his mother Hesione had not
been returned to Priam.; thus a motive for the abduction had been given,
for which races fell simultaneously, while either sex
was crushed, no-one spared the infant after the war.
Thus the gods' pain arose, thus the anger of the firmament 55
raged and such vengeance encompassed the wanderers?[612]
The fates drive a man to be bold, impious fates
which at any time refuse to be turned, which never any thing
attacks, for which no path is held fast
when they attack, for which everything shut opens up. 60

Now his flock was shuddered at, fountains, cottage, woods,
rivers, country were a nuisance, nor was the sweet pipe loved;
Oenone did not please, but now she seemed almost ugly,
since on Ida beauteous Venus promised him one just like
she herself was when naked: such a woman the shepherd now sighed for. 65
The fields were foul to the man after such strifes of goddesses,
only Pergamum pleased and mind and fate bid him
seek out the walls of Troy. Paris had been instructed when as a boy
he had cajoled his nurse and he knew all, what blood he was sprung from,
what his stock was, from which house; and seizing his baby-rattle the shepherd 70
made his way to Troy. Weary, he had scarcely seen the
citadel and the tower's tops leant forward untouched,
the ground also groaned, a fixed part of the wall suddenly
collapsed and the thresholds of the Scaean gates[613] were in ruins;
Then the Simois dried up its waters, the crystal wave 75
of the river Xanthus reddened, with the shepherd close by, the Palladium
was sweating and of their own accord the images of Minerva fell down.

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[612] The stars: for *erro* used of stars and heavenly bodies, see *LS ad loc*. I A b.

[613] Western gate of Troy

It chanced to be a festive day, on which its unhappy chief
Priam had renovated Pergamum after Hercules' weapons:
paying the annual tribute to the ungrateful gods 80
the son of Laomedon would visit the lofty citadel
to present Jove with offerings, in order to bring Minerva worship.
To his father's right was most valiant Hector,
Troilus to the left, in the company of timid Polites.
The rest of his sons followed as a thronging crowd. 85
Meanwhile the crowd of daughters crowned the queen
and she, accompanied by her daughters-in-law, came pouring the pious offerings.
The king followed Helenus, the mother kept close to Cassandra.
While they marched and made for the temples, the shepherd burst into
the procession and as they were bewildered, he greeted them in a haughty voice: 90
'Be happy, sovereign, greetings all you companions,
or rather brothers, that I may tell the truth: you, more valiant Hector,
crown and summit of the city, and you Troilus, kind by virtue of
your disposition: I am your brother, recognize your brother.
I am your full brother and offspring of Priam, 95
Hecuba is mother to me, I am disowned though I have committed no crime.
Little Alexander is brought up as a shepherd on Ida.
Nor let the shepherd be despicable, Phrygians: I have settled the disputes
of deities, for with me as judge heaven is free from quarrel.
If you believe me, troop of my own brothers (nor besides does the king's 100
guilty heart deny me and mother does not abhor her dear child),
acknowledge for sure the trustworthy rattle of one exposed, brothers.'
He spoke, and held out the proof of his descent on the citadel.
His words, credibility, loyalty soon moved the parents' hearts,
and, owing to their noble conscience, a blush spread out on their 105
faces and confessed the committed crime. The father soon twined his arms around
Paris' neck and flooded his son with the weeping of a rejoicing
man and, overcome, he would refuse forgiveness from the offspring.
Everyone was struck dumb. The joyful mother hastened back
(affection gave her the fast steps which her age denied), 110
soon she was holding the youth in an embrace: over his neck, over his face
the parents scattered kisses and continued to emulously
fondle the youth's limbs, but the affectionate ardour
distributes the love, spurring on both alternately
and they delight in turns in Paris' face and neck. 115
Meanwhile, the news had filled the entire city.
The rumour flew through the temples of the gods that a shepherd from Ida
wanted to show himself born from the royal family.
Then Helenus the seer abandoned the temple and the altar
and cried out from afar: 'Impious father, worst of mothers 120

what is your cruel affection causing, why are you ruining the city?
This is that torch, mother, that was disclosed by your dream,
which at the same time will set Troy on fire and that daughter-in-law
will turn the kingdom of our fathers over to its destiny. All Greece, afflicted,
unites in arms to avenge the abduction of the Lacedaimonian woman, 125
the Danaans will make for our shores with a thousand ships,
the Doric camp growls, now Achilles torments Pergamum,
now the Danaans are fighting, now we see Hector being dragged,
Troilus, now you are raging through the war, now you rash man are overthrown
before your time, spirited boy, impudent with your bravery. 130
But why do I protest against fate, why do I try to prevent fixed misfortunes,
now that foresight is of no use in the face of adverse omens?
Powerful fate awaits me and enormous Pyrrhus.'
While he was speaking, the priestess Cassandra came in frenzy
and, embracing her mother, she chanted: 'Why, unjust mother, 135
why, unhappy father, are you preparing our funerals?
Ah, devotion is unmindful: you are regarded as a good mother for one
and you favour the shepherd, but you are certainly irreverent against many
kings, you who will ransom Hector's corpse as a suppliant,
after it has been abandoned in the mountains, in the rocks; nor is Hector bought 140
untouched and instead of your dear child you hold a mangled body
redeemed for a very high price for the funeral of Hector.
Me rape awaits in a temple, me vicious Ajax
violates with the house in ruin. Now Troy is consumed by fire,
but yourself, king, you are free from flames; and now Hecuba barks, 145
Astyanax is hurled from a high wall by the Danaans.
Thus Bellona presents you with a daughter-in-law, the Idean shepherd will thus
be the Thunderer's son-in-law himself and he will seize triumph,
but after that he will himself fall. Soon Pyrrhus will take up arms,
who will break walls apart, who will doom Pergamum to the flames, 150
who, inflamed, will slaughter Priam on the altar with the sword.
But why do I foretell empty words? The sire already wants to be fellow father-in-law
with the Thunderer and oppresses our fatherland and the heinous man hates
his children and seeks to widow Andromache of her husband.
Troilus, why are you idle? Why do you spare him, more valiant Hector? 155
You the deaths demand, against you evil fates are driven,
you the son of Aeacus pursues, you the fierce thunderbolt Achilles
mutilates, being guiltless, you bear the abductor's penalty.
I who foresee am not believed. You rise at least, citizens,
break open the clasp which the parents put around the neck 160
of the ill-omened youth, cast my brother down from the walls.
This is the enemy that the fates predict, who will pile the city high
with deaths and ensure that Priam will not to be buried.

Let the grievous child be snatched from the breast of Cisseus' daughter
and let the crime be punished and let our Pergamum be cleansed, 165
let Juno be appeased, let the virgin Minerva be appeased,
with the death of the sacrilegious man appease the Thunderer,
whose love he disregarded and praised that of Vulcanus.[614]
In many cities it is custom to bestow Deliverance
through the deaths of the guiltless, but you immolate one culpable, 170
so that it may be possible to save the good. Medicine is wont to
increase the pains in order to stop them and it will give the limbs
health from part of the limbs. For the loss of diseased
flesh becomes health and suffering provides strength
which it is wont to take. Adopt this, you, my brothers, 175
hear this, my citizens, praise the parents:
Tell them that the shepherd dies from the sword of devotion,
he may fall at the brotherly sword-point. If perchance anyone
profane strikes the culprit, let him be a priest in the city:
I withdraw; If perchance he refuses to be pious on my behalf, 180
the pontiffs Helenus and Laocoon, the sacred authority,
will give in to my prayers and certainly one of the two shows himself a mystic.'
While unhappy Cassandra chanted the future lamentations,
Thymbraean Apollo appeared present before all Phrygians,
who, though deprived of a reward, had enclosed Pergamum with a wall 185
and wished that the ungrateful race should pay the penalty for the
greedy one.[615] The Phrygians were astounded, the priest himself was silent.
He spoke out: 'What is the virgin chanting? Why is the other envious one
crying aloud? Is Helenus deterring Pergamum with his words?
To expel the shepherd from his paternal dwelling the fates 190
ever forbid, who are preparing great things. The gods' orders stand firm:
he alone will overthrow Achilles, son of Aeacus.
It is determined that the Trojans should rule where the reins of the sun
reveal and remove the day, where the cold pole
is turned and the zone is inflamed by the flashing sun. 195
To the Trojans the whole world will be given as a possession,
and the lineage of the Trojans will not rule for a short time.
The fates remain, once the Thunderer's words have been written down,
'an empire without end' will he give. Curb your anger.
By which mortal judge will the judge of gods perish? 200
Nor do the fates allow this. It is a disgrace to have wanted to do harm
but still not being able to. You should be ashamed of yourselves, no no-one is to be
threatened whom Clotho, whom Lachesis, whom enormous Atropos protect.

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[614] I.e. he preferred Aphrodite to Hera

[615] Laomedon

Tear off the garments of skins from his snowy chest,
let purple, reddish from the Serranian murex, cover him. 205
Nor should it shame him that he tended sheep: I myself, Apollo
was a shepherd and, singing, I gathered all the cattle in the house,
when I saw smoking roofs far off from the farmhouse;
before daybreak, fearing Alcestis, I, a god, was squeezing udders,
Admetus would count the kids and lambs, as they entered.' 210
He spoke, and submissive Priam worshipped Phoebus
and, unconcerned, gave thanks; excellent Hector was silent.

Now he[616] was not dissimilar from the royalty, but the sceptre, the tiara
the sovereignty, the kingly robe, all he deemed worthless now
after the heavenly tribunal, he only desired to add fame 215
to the glory of his ancestors, to seek lasting praises,
so that he might conceal that he used to be a shepherd. Scarcely had he seen
the king's halls, and looked for the Ilian ships on the shores;
he now was intending in his mind to plough the Aegean sea.
Thus his father addressed the youth with a venerable speech: 220
'Son, the love of our devotion who has returned, good arbiter of Ida,
tell me, for where do you want to equip vessels, for where do you spread the canvas?
I am not starting wars anywhere, I govern the kingdom in peace.
But if idle sluggishness is a disgrace and you think it unseemly
to be unoccupied, Alexander, indeed assist me as a legate 225
and visit the chief Telamon and request from him soon
my sister Hesione, son: my sister is held captive
while I rule. While you traverse the Doric kingdoms,
Venus gives you a wife, Juno will make you a husband.'
Then the delighted youth said: 'We will get ready with joy, 230
best of the Trojan-born, there is nothing I would reject when ordered.'
The elder was glad about such self-control in his son;
he spoke: 'May the gods, Paris, favour your just prayers;
only this, son, your father the king humbly asks:
grant to my power at least that three Ilian nobles 235
go with you: venerable old age
reins in rash youth in everything with admonitions.
I will provide outstanding companions, three lights of the race
with Hector placed in front, to whom all might yields:
They will be Antenor, Polydamas and young Aeneas, relative 240
of Dione, stands by.' Thus he spoke and the king
himself commanded through a hastening servant that all come.
The attendant himself returned with the chiefs, speeding to the royal
quarters; the nobles learnt for where the sails were made ready.

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[616] Paris

And no delay, they boarded the ships and abandoned the shores. 245

The Dardanian fleet now passed by Tenedos, left behind
Abydos and Sestos on the waters and curvy Malea;
now they saw Salamis, when aiming at the Telamonian kingdom.
As the vessels reached the harbour, soon the anchor bit
the shore and the iron bored through the sands it met with; 250
after the ships had been secured, the Trojan youth and the nobles made
for the land together, but soon they went to the
king's palace, leaving the shore. Them the hero Telamon
received with hospitality. As they carried branches of leafy
olive to the quarters of the chief, under the appearance of peace 255
they brought not peace, but wars; for they had things to say
that could arm a man, unless the rights of hospitality,
which no-one honest intends to violate, forbade it.
Having greeted the king, after the embassy from Troy
had sat down, Antenor also spoke out thus, in a calm voice: 260
'What reason urged the Troy-born nobles and the king's
child to have come to your court, king Telamon,
it is fit to make known; and if you have desired it yourself, my companions
and the royal offspring will speak through my mouth.
Priam, son of Dardanus, the restorer of the people and the city 265
— which we acknowledge we remember your hands have plundered —
commanded legates to travel from the Ilian kingdom
to your kingdoms, mighty one, so that in peace you may return
the king's sister, hero, whom you keep by right of war:
Hesione is demanded from you. Immense Troy lies in ashes, 270
oppressed by your demolition, nor does the leader think
that Pergamum will rise, unless now, great king, you will have given back
his sister to the king, who at present is held captive.
It is deemed unseemly that the chief's family is enslaved, and a crime,
if wars will not give the king what wars have taken away. 275
If desired peace denies this, you are asked on behalf of the king:
imagine that it was you who claimed back a sister when Priam keeps her back:
would the pain not arm you, if he did not give her when asked?
The reason this is demanded from you, Telamon, is wickedness and infamy of decency;
a grudge has been born, that although Priam rules, his sister 280
is slave to the Greek-born, an evil spite is made credible
from this: 'He could restore the Ilian ruins',
will be the murmur from the Phrygians, 'but the only one sharing his blood',
they will say, 'the ruler did not have the power to obtain from the king.'
He said. But Telamon began to brace his mind against rages; 285
for loyalty, devotion, love, harmony, his offspring,
kindled the agitation of bitter bile in his chest.

The wedlock of the kingdom, the fellowship of a chaste marriage bed
they demanded to tear apart, and, what no mind would bear,
this was Ajax's mother. Thus the son of Aeacus began, 290
with a confused expression, inflamed by a justified rage:
‘If there was shame in the Ilians and an honourable character in their minds,
if the defeated breasts suffered from the destruction of Troy,
the race of Priam, the prey of the Pelasgians, would not dare
to provoke the Greeks, companions of Hercules, into wars any further, 295
after the wars of semi-divine chiefs, by whom vast Ilios
lies defeated. Did it please you to pay for the perjury of the Phrygian
race for a second time? Have you thus served small punishments
before? To Priam, Trojans, repeat my words:
Which defeated man says to the victor: ‘With you waging war 300
may the honour of virtue remain for me, may the booty follow me,
may the profits of glory, and all the profits of the triumph
await me, may the victor go in possession of fruitless
glory and hungry’? Who dares to say to a king and
who to a husband, even an unhappy one, with a shameless voice: 305
‘Tear apart your wedlock, let the house joined with a respectable
alliance be ruptured, let the lovers' marriage bed be condemned,
quench the festive torches’? Who has won, that the son of Aeacus
who ruined the enemy's land would hear suchlike?
When is a victor still restrained by the law of the defeated? 310
If the house of the tyrant Priam stands rebuilt,
restored after my fires, if the king himself
values the love of his sister, may at least a fair
share of the kingdom be given as the sister's dowry, lest Ajax should claim
what his grandfather would have bestowed on his mother, if Troy remained. 315
If the Greek youth of the time of my father-in-law, whom you, Phrygians,
have become acquainted with through wars, has grown old, the warlike progeny,
desired by all the chiefs, has succeeded them in arms.
I have warlike Ajax who is of no small promise:
he stands out and seeks over what race he could now triumph; 320
my brother's Thessalian Achilles, reared in Emathia,
shines out and troubles the grim two-formed creatures in battle
while Patroclus at the same time ravages the dens of the Centaurs;
Tydeus' son and Sthenelus growl, and the second Ajax;
Nestor's Antilochus, Palamedes, Teucer, Ulysses 325
are overjoyed that Troy is returning, that Pergamum is rising.’
Then Polydamas said, speaking in a submissive tone:

‘Belligerent, mighty in arms, heir of the judge of souls,[617]
king to whom there is highest glory from our downfall,
may your grudge moderate, your indignation shatter, your wrath abate. 330
He claims her back a captive, the brother honours her as a queen,
we too adore her. Not thus, if Troy remained,
would Hesione marry: the captive is entitled to a kingdom,
may she become happy from her evil fate, may the prey become sovereignty,
may she wield power out of her misfortune, the man who took 335
her tiara himself gave her a diadem. Learn from this, I pray, what the Dardanian
race is like, ruler: it knows not to be enslaved when subdued,
for it befits it better to rule: it masters the Argives,
through whose defeat it perished; the exulting conquerer Greece has found
a mistress for herself, not a slave. To be admired throughout the world 340
is the generous mind of the chief which does not want to burden the kingdom
after it collapsed by your virtue! You order to lift up
the ones who are laid low and kings to rule and to create kings,
as long as they can serve you. The void lot of combat
is empty, because you restrain it, nor can wars do harm. 345
When you win, mighty one, which one defeated in arms does not want
to have the fate of being captured by you after a war? The enemy[618] who has won
will have respect, and the defeated rule better with you as superior.’
This the legate said. Now the king's heart, which had been
exceedingly aflame, grew warm. Thus a lion's great 350
wrath growls, when, as he perceives the hunting-spears brought from afar
swinging in the hunters' hand, straightaway he brandishes his tail's
whip against his legs and with his neck raised he ruffles up
his mane around the nape, around the shoulders, straightaway he stretches himself high,
gnashing his teeth, and the huge chest roars 355
(then the rivers resound, the mountains and woods echo);
but when the prudent hunter, with his lance cast away,
falls down of his own accord and lies prone, the lion's wrath vanishes,
deeming it unseemly if the prey will not lie by his tooth;
the predator scorns the food which he has not himself made a carcass, 360
pardoning him with a kind fierceness, if the hunter, begging
for pardon, remains motionless: thus the Achaean ruler
was broken and himself ordered that joyous entertainment be prepared
for the Phrygians for seven days. The Cytherean[619] and Ajax

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[617] After his death, Telamon's father Aeacus became one of the three judges in Hades, along with Rhadamanthus and Minos.

[618] I.e. Telamon

[619] Aeneas

were holding a conversation, two thunderbolts of war; 365
the queen of the Pelasgians, Hesione, his parent's sister,
embraced and caressed the king's youth Alexander;
the likeness of Priam in Paris' face received praise.
When the eighth day approached, while already Phoebus was covering
the stars with his rising horses, already everything started to redden 370
while the ocean uncovered the wheels[620] from the hissing waves;
then the son of Anchises declared in a lofty voice:
'King unconquered in arms, grow old happy in peace,
though no-one of the leaders ever challenges you in battle,
since Troy perished, nor had your Ajax grown up. 375
But in a moment, king, thrice conquering everything and thrice despoiling everything,
your Ajax, majesty, will be a wall for his allies, a ram
to be feared among the enemies! We will relate your words to Priam.'
Thus he spoke. They said 'goodbye' and bade the king farewell.
Then they directed their course towards the haven and reached the shores. 380
They boarded the ship, the biting anchor was weighed,
the sailors raised the sails, they turned the prows away from the shore;
the wind pushed the poops, soon the canvas spread out,
while the floods parted and the fair gales grew stronger.
Meanwhile, rising accompanied by a storm, the vehement 385
Africus rushed upon them, soon it scattered the fleet on the surface of the sea.
The Liburnian galleys were dragged to the stars by a curved whirlpool
and the sailor, suspended in the waters, ran through the clouds,
the sea carrying the vessel. While they thought that the highest
stars had been reached by the ropes and granted that nothing surpassed 390
the ocean-mountains, there surged a wave higher than the mast
and hovering over the vessels for a long time it threatened with shipwreck,
directing ruin from above through the descending sea.
Now the wind lifted up the waters, the keel drove off the
sand as it was pushed in the ground; the wave stood, a lofty wall, 395
surrounding the vessel, a tower of vast waters
was hanging in the air and the raised floods smote the canvas.
Paris grew stiff in his limbs, he prepared to cross over
from his own ship to the keels of the legates.
But when he saw the Trojans scattered around the remote surface of the sea, 400
he burst into bitter lamentation of tearful voice
and began speaking thus: 'With a happy lot
shepherds are born, whom the earth holds, whom no storm
shakes. They do not fear the floods above the surface of the sea
and they scorn the raving ocean with its roaring waves, 405

[620] of the chariot of the sun

but from a high mountain, as though sitting on a fortress, they see
rural pastures, groves, fountains, and rivers, meadows,
the cattle leaping about the fields, the she-goats hanging from
a steep rock, chasing the thorn-bushes at a distance:
how they mow the green grass with wanton teeth! 410
The suckling lambs squeeze the udders with their foreheads,
while they wag their tail and tremble and with the soft palate
they revel in drinking food and eating drink.
What a delight to milk the udders of the bleating ones
with teats weighed down when the day departs and night's 415
shades rise, when from the fresh milk now the white cheese
is made and with his hands the shepherd shapes the milk into a circle!
The white heifer [subdues] the heated bulls
and sets the young leaders with armed foreheads against each other.
For ruling is a heavy toil, an immense fear shakes 420
the chiefs' hearts, lest wars befall, lest weapons threaten
with cruel destruction: a dread of every kind of death is everywhere.
For they are afraid of swords on land and on the sea they are frightened
of storms nor is a whole hour of rest granted to the chief.'
While he spoke, a heavy wave arose and echoed with a crash 425
and thrust the stern into the waters: the keel was lifted up
and carried and sat down in Cyprus, after the fleet had been cast off.
After a signal, the boats arrived, as the storm subsided,
and they reached Cyprus at the same time. The embassy alone
was absent; one ship, driven by the straits and floods 430
into the Ionian Sea, was declared missing, struck by furious storms;
for it was pushed far from the Aegean. Soon the Dardanian shepherd
leapt to his feet that were trembling from the ocean onto the sand
and with his companions he revived after touching the ground.

On Cyprus it chanced to be the festive birthday of 435
Dione on that day. They came to the sanctuary of Cytherea
to offer sacrifice to the goddess: whatsoever the island Cyprus held,
whatever the Idalian wood, whatever lofty Cythera contained,
whatever adorned Paphos, whatever lit up silent Amyclae.
In addition, winged Jove's offspring Helen 440
came, while Crete kept her absent husband.
Rumour, the messenger of the chief, filled up the entire city
that Paris sprung from Trojan blood had arrived.
When the Spartan heard of the arrival of the handsome youth,
soon she gave orders and the slaves came at the Lacedaimonian's command: 445
he should proceed expecting hospitality, for it seemed disgraceful
that while the queen was present Paris should live on the sandy
shore like a mean sailor. Then the guest hurried to

the court of Atreus' son in the company of his fellow throng.
When he set out in haste for the ordered journey to the city 450
he looked back on the temple of Venus in which was a crowd of
suppliants or a meeting; soon he turned around to go to the altar.

Meanwhile snowy swans were fluttering over the shores
despising the stream, whence thereafter they all turned their attention
towards the gentle doves strolling delicately through the air; 455
those a raving bird of prey pursued and quick in its chasing
flight it tormented all the harmless ones with its cry,
above whom the hawk was hovering and threatening, an oppressive bird.
Then a wise augur sprung from the people of Melampus
whom chance had brought to Cyprus for the festive days, 460
………………
and thus he rose up and broke into speech with a shrewd voice:
'At you are aimed the freely given oracles of the flying birds:
the Idalian birds warrant a shining marriage
of a graceful face, the swans promise a woman born
from the race of the Thunderer, but the bird of prey harsh fates; 465
for it is distinguished as the bird of Zeus, it is permitted that when the third hour
is up, with Phoebus shining, he may allow the rapacious
bird to carry true prophecies through the vastness:
the hawk of Mars threatens the dowry with fierce wars.'
Then Paris, stretching out his palms with his eyesight towards heaven, 470
called upon the great divinities, the boy and the mother Dione:
'Golden Venus, kind offspring of the shining Thunderer,
who holds a thousand shrines, to whom the father gives a thousand
means to show favour and your son supplies them at the same time, confirm the omens
which your begetter's swan has brought, which your dove 475
has revealed. It is necessary to hinder the unpropitious flights:
augur, avert the hooked birds of Mars and the
underworld-snatcher[621] with rites over which presides its founder,
that Trojan boy Ganymede, the initiator of the art,
and Polles to whom the talking flight granted knowledge of the future.' 480

With few words he prayed as a suppliant and entered the temple
clad in Tyrian garments and with the royal murex
was dyed the mantle itself which a gleaming purple
reddened, spread around the shoulders; a biting brooch fastened
it, and more adornment for the youth added gold 485
with which the elegant clothing sparkled, flashing through its threads.
The rest of the crowd, the Phrygian's companions, glittered, furnished
with comeliness. The shepherd made for the sanctuary and entered

[621] Pluto

at the altar and turned everyone's eyes on himself:
the adorned Lacedaimonian spotted him, as her gaze wandered, 490
she scanned the man entirely, with what clothing adorned
he was approaching, or with what down he had his cheeks
covered and what little flower burst forth on his rosy face.
The Lacedaimonian praises the man, in love, admiring, kindled
by Idalian fires; for shortly before a flaming winged 495
boy had, at his mother's orders, scorched with the glowing missile
the marrow of the one born from Leda, secretly shooting
love. But the shepherd, after the rite for Dione, returned to his
lodging. The queen came with a pale blush,
for she went with her cheeks imbued with pale flames. 500
Either charm, spread out, divulged her evident love.
Bashful, she approached the shepherd, with fear holding her back,
and, glowing, she encouraged the man to declare from what stock
he was born, and by what tormenting storm he was now
driven to Cyprus. In the middle of the sentence the Lacedaimonian 505
at once fell silent and sought with what utterance of words she, burning,
might engage the youth. But as the shepherd, a treacherous guest,
sensed the delicate emotions in the woman's breast,
began not to tell where and of what blood the Ilian
was born nor by what winds shaken he had 510
come to Cyprus; anxious now in a gentle voice
he praised the queen, in love, and began to blame
the absent husband, that now a most beautiful wife,
neglected by a lukewarm man, was alone,
and approached the holy temples of the mother Dione, 515
adding; ‘If such she will be, the wife I deserve
by chance, so alluring with her cheeks, of such a gentle face,
so adorned by her eyes, so beautiful with splendour,
thus imbuing her white limbs with a rosy blush,
so adorned with blond hair, and such a tall joint 520
guiding the elongated limbs in a graceful knee;
If I was deemed worthy by such a woman, always happy,
I would not stay away: I would be her humble slave and when ordered adore her,
I would come to wedlock as a servant under the law of a husband,
afraid night and day of what she might wish to command 525
who sparkles with her shining form. Menelaus errs
in disdaining — I will not say a divinity — a beautiful wife,
though she is present as a divinity who comes from the stock of the Thunderer,
whence I have my origin.’ He had just spoken these words,
and sighs shook the willing senses of Tyndareus' daughter 530
and she rose up and replied: ‘What your origin is, handsome man,

we have all learnt a very short while ago, although you keep silent.
It is our joint race: let us make for your kingdom together,
may you be husband to me, and may I be to you a more fitting wife.
For the fates order this and even Jupiter urges us towards this: 535
he has ordered me to live under the share of a twofold husband.
Whichever lover takes me, he will inflict upon the son of Atreus
that I may leave my husband alive, not yet dying,
I to whom after the first man's marriage-bed the fates have granted another man.'
She spoke and they went out and sought out vessels and shores. 540
While they made for the harbour and the fleet, the shepherd looked back
onto the city and saw a huge cloud of whirled up
dust rising, which was stirred by a crowd of pursuers.
Then Paris addressed his companion, a robber his booty:
'We die, queen, together, the Greek youth is following 545
us; every attendant of your husband the son of Atreus
is approaching on course in our footsteps to seize us
with pursuing sword, supported also by a hospitable troop,
soon dragging cohorts of armed men to the fight:
and you shall perhaps fall with me, if the weapons chase us.' 550
Then the Spartan replied: 'Young man, why are you delaying our
breast with conversations? Dear king, command the Phrygians
nevertheless to take to arms, force your servants to quicken
their pace with your authority: we are hastening towards the sea,
and the flocking crowd of servants is idle through orders.' 555
Thus she spoke and the daughter-in-law was willingly carried off on his neck,
already with calamity for the tyrant Priam; thus the back of the young
god had carried Europa, when Jupiter himself
as a bull grew Olympic horns on his forehead;
with the waves serving him, the lightning-bearer rejoiced in 560
the offspring of Agenor weighing down his heavenly neck,
while the kinsman of Cadmus cut through the waters, the great straits.
So when the abductor, confused, reached the sea,
and admittedly exhausted from the march and weary under the weight,
he who was bearing the welcome burden still did not himself set down 565
the Lacedaimonian on the shore, but placed her in the middle of the stern;
the sailors lifted the sails and with the oars the camp was moved.
The assembled throng arrived while the fleet had already moved far
and all were striking their foreheads with their palms on the shore,
now they cast away the helmets, now the arms and at the same time the thundering 570
shields; then the husband himself came hastening through the countryside,
carried by a sweating horse. The horrible news had shattered
him as he came to Cyprus to dedicate sacrifices.
As soon as he saw, out of his mind, the ships ploughing the waves

and carrying his marriage-bed, he broke down in the sands, 575
he groaned and tore out the blond hair from his parting.
Thus the Hyrcanian tigresses in unfrequented places are often wont to
get carried away by stirring affection when the mother loses her
children and as love has been cheated, savagery chases
the course of the baneful abductor, shrewd, it follows 580
the footsteps of the robber's horse, of the panting rider;
but when the wild parent observes that the children, after traversing
the river, are separated from her by waters, she comes back bereft in pain
and, gnashing her teeth, groans for the lost noble litter:
thus the son of Atreus was sorrowful for his abducted wife. 585

Meanwhile Aeneas, the legation returning to Troy,
had come and related Telamon's words to Priam.
But after the father did not see his beloved Paris,
he lamented and soiled his white hair with dust.
Antenor began to tell Priam the toils of 590
the sea, the tears now trickling from his cheeks, and a thousand
dangers; not knowing what the storm had made of the
shepherd and ignorant whether the wave had drowned the young man's
fleet, he reported from his mouth; this at least he confessed to know,
that the sea's rage had upset a whirlpool in the ocean 595
and had scattered the Ilian vessels in the storm.
When this was said the chief's court groaned under gloomy mourning:
the walls were marred by public lamentation and there was wailing in the city,
both sexes groaned, not for the honour of his virtue
or because he was such that he could enter wars 600
or endure what was inflicted on him or crash the enemy with the highest
strength and kill sword-bearing cohorts on the battle-line
(even if Alexander had been Hercules' rival
in strength or certainly equalled mighty men Meleager or
Theseus, powerful in his courage, still with great Hector 605
as saviour nobody would have bewailed Paris with an aching heart),
but because he was the king's son he was lamented in the city.
For whosoever of good memory soon remembered Helenus' words
happily rejoiced and only sorrowed in speech.
Then his father was building such a cenotaph for the missing one, 610
that you would think that death was present and the corpse lay within.
While the father was preparing sacrifices to honour the tomb
wherein was no body and even to sate the nothingness with blood,
they espied from the shore a familiar fleet on the ocean.
First the ship of the young man appeared, endowed with the royal 615
emblem and surrounded with garlands; the white gowns
adorned with beds of roses fluttered about and silk adorned the linen,

and high on the mast the myrtle of Venus was seen
which the exulting groom had mounted. Hecuba ran up
to the waves with Priam, as the mob of people attended, 620
they noticed the bride, the shepherd gave kisses to all
as he strode up to his father Priam and greeted his mother;
they clung to his soft neck and planted kisses on his face.
Mighty Hector was present, not unwilling, nor did he rejoice,
him followed Troilus not unwilling, suffering nevertheless, 625
troubled not by his limbs but by his mind; forebodings were shattering
the senses and the spirit within the man: Death with a bloodthirsty mouth
was roaming among the Trojans, a savage troop,
ah, how many men she would snatch away, what calamities she would bring
and how many daughters-in-law she was ready to widow through wars! 630
Troilus, in your footsteps followed Polites.
Thus the pursuing shadow is wont to follow a man as a ghostly
dumb likeness and would not move its limbs unless the one it follows
has moved; if the man stops, the likeness will stop
or if he sits down moving however much, it will sit down 635
imitating real shapes with feigned movements,
doing nothing as though doing everything: thus also Polites.
The shepherd had brought home his wife under adverse fortune;
now they made for the walls, now for the house, now they entered the king's
halls and her bridal veil covered the beautiful bride, 640
now prepared she sat on the marriage bed; there was dancing in the city,
now they beat the drums, now the rustic pipe was playing
a country song. The clarion bellowed nothing sweet in answer,
the Fescennine chants fell silent and the horn threatened war;
nor did the rough war-trumpet make pleasant sounds, with its melodious bronze 645
it uttered arms, chiefs, shields and a thousand ships;
you would have thought that the war-cornets of Tydeus' son[622] were waging war.
Go, married couple, already you have proved the mother's hideous
dreams, and equipped with wretched love you have kindled
the torch that appeared at night, through which Troy would burn, 650
through which the Phrygians would rush to their ruin without a capital crime.
The dowry will be given in Trojan blood, let the offspring of Leda,
fleeing through the camp, be enriched with the disaster of the Pelasgians,
let the gods be widowed, let heaven groan and the sea lament:
let such a vengeance follow the crime of adultery. 655

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[622] Diomedes

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