

SOTEROULA CONSTANTINIDOU

## HELEN AND PANDORA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY WITH EMPHASIS ON THE *EIDOLON* THEME AS A CONCEPT OF *ERIS*

"In a small-scale society myth tends to be viewed as the encoding of that society's concept of truth; at the same time, from the viewpoint of Western civilization, myth has become the opposite of fact, the antithesis of truth" (Gregory Nagy, Foreword to R.P. Martin, *The Language of Heroes. Speech and Performance in the Iliad*, Ithaca and London 1989, ix) \*.

This work is a comparative study of the myths of Helen and Pandora<sup>1</sup> with emphasis on the *eidolon* theme as a concept of *eris* and on the interaction between *mythos* and *logos*. My aim is to read this theme in a different perspective, i.e. as a device of strife; as such, the *eidolon-eris* concept is personified in Helen's heroic figure and gives heroic saga a stimulating version about the Cause of the Trojan War! Moreover, the idea of the association of Helen and Pandora is put forward here, as both figures acquired the mythical details of an image, of a phantom, although each one with essential discrepancies: for example, Pandora's existence was confined to that of a phantom, a false creation rather than a human being, from the very beginning, whereas Helen's "anti-myth" makes her trespass from the world of the real to that of the *eidola*, of the imitation of the real. Thus, the two mythologi-

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1. Helen and Pandora are notorious figures of early Greek mythology and to see them as a pair is itself quite interesting! However, while Helen continued to be present in ancient Greek mythology and literature after Homer, Pandora, undoubtedly a very important figure of the creation - myth, almost disappeared after Hesiod, survived more in art than in literature: see *LIMC* VII. 1 (1994), 163-6; VII. 2, 100 - 1. Even in Aeschylus' interpretation of the Prometheus myth (*Prom. Vincitus*), there is no mention of Pandora and Sophokles' satyr-play *Pandora* or the *Hammerers* has not survived.

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cal figures are examined here in the various aspects of their destructive nature that ancient Greek literature dealt with, with emphasis on the *eidolon* aspect.

Stesichoros was the first to treat Helen, an established figure of the Homeric saga, at variance with the epic tradition. In the *Palinode* (192 *PMG* = Plato, *Phaedr.* 243a) he declared that Helen never went "on well-benched ships, nor she did come to the citadel of Troy": οὐκ ἔστ' ἔτυμος λόγος οὗτος, / οὐδ' ἔβας ἐν νηυσὶν εὐσέλμοις / οὐδ' ἔκειο πέργαμα Τροίας. Her presence in Troy should then be justified and this purpose was served by the invention of the *eidolon* also ascribed to Stesichoros by Plato as well as by other sources.<sup>2</sup> However, this "anti-myth",<sup>3</sup> the story about Helen's *eidolon*, is treated here in its particular dimension as a concept of *eris*.<sup>4</sup>

The image-aspect of Helen was, however, established by tragedy where the heroine is seriously re-evaluated, especially in the works of Euripides. In general, ancient Greek theatre blames Helen as a maligned woman who caused a great war and brought the catastrophe to the Trojans and the Achaeans.<sup>5</sup> She is already a hostile spirit and a

2. τὸ τῆς Ἑλένης εἰδωλον ὑπὸ τῶν ἐν Τροίᾳ Στεσίχορος φησὶ γενέσθαι περιμάχητον ἀγνοία τοῦ ἀληθοῦς: *Rep.* 586c; see C.M. Bowra, *Greek Lyric Poetry. From Alcman to Simonides*, Oxford 1961, 110f.; A. Skiadas, *Ἀρχαῖος λυρισμός*, Athens 1981, vol. 2, 299; V. Pisani, "Elena e l' εἰδωλον", *RFIC* 56 (1928), 476 - 99.

3. See G. Nagy, Foreword to N. Austin, *Helen of Troy and her shameless phantom*, Ithaca and London 1994, xi: "And there are two kinds of myth here, two kinds of poetics. On one side, we see Helen of Troy herself, whose story of shameless beauty and betrayal was widely known and accepted by ancient Hellenes as a centerpiece of their primary epic tradition, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer. Myth merges here with poetics. On the other side, however, we see —or we think we see — Helen the *Eidolon* or "Phantom", whose story is that there was no such story. What kind of poetics, then can we expect to merge with this anti - myth?"

4. The *eris*-orientated aspect of the *eidolon*-theme, well justified in ancient Greek literature especially in Euripides' plays as will be shown below, as well as the introduction of Pandora in the discussion, differentiates the aim of this essay from N. Austin's admirable work cited above note 3. See also "Stesichorus and the cult of Helen" in S. Constantinidou, *Lakonian Cults: the main sanctuaries of Sparta*, Ph.D. thesis, University of London 1988, ch. IV, 88 - 107.

5. According to O. Skutsch, "Helen, her Name and Nature", *JHS* 107 (1987), 191f., this less favourable picture of Helen most probably reflects the popular view of her; a view, however, which does not correspond to the popularity of her cult in Sparta.



destructive power in Aeschylus.<sup>6</sup> Her role was identified with that of *eris*, of strife (Eur. *IA* 587ff.: ἔθεν ἔρις ἔριν / Ἑλλάδα σὺν δορὶ νασιέ τ' ἄγει / [ἔς] Τροίας πέργαμα),<sup>7</sup> and she was not to be restored unless it

6. *Ag.* 681f.; cf. 1455 - 61: The Chorus: ἰὼ πικρύνους Ἑλένη, / μία τὰς πολλὰς, τὰς πᾶν πολλὰς / ψυχὰς διέσχο' ὑπὸ Τροίᾳ / νῦν δὲ τελείην πολύμνηστον ἐπηθήσω / δι' αἵμ' ἀνιπτον. ἦ τις ἦν τότε' ἐν δόμοις / Ἔρις ἐρίδματος ἀνδρὸς οἰζύς: "Helen the wild maddening Helen, one for the many, the thousand lives you murdered under Troy. Now you are crowned with this consummate wreath, the blood that lives in memory, glistens age to age. Once in the halls she walked and she was war, angel of war, angel of agony, lighting men to death": transl. M. Suzuki, *Metamorphoses of Helen. Authority, Difference, and the Epic*, Ithaca and London 1989, 19. Pierre Judet de La Combe (*L' Agamemnon d'Eschyle: commentaire des dialogues, Seconde partie, Cahiers de Philologie* 18, Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2001, 656-8), argues that in this eulogy of Helen the heroine appears as a mythical form of Eris, in an allegory whose content is directly related to Homer and particularly to the proem of the *Iliad*. Helen takes here the place of Achilles' μῆνις in the beginning of the *Iliad* (cf. *Ag.* 1456f. τὰς πολλὰς, τὰς πᾶν πολλὰς ψυχὰς διέσχο' and *Il.* 1.3f. πολλὰς δ' ἰσθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν ἡρώων); for, in both texts emphasis is given on the immense destruction of human lives and the *eris* (see *Il.* 1.6 ἐρίσταντε), but also themes of epic *kleos* occur in the *Agamemnon* text where Helen's glorification is achieved via *eris* and destruction; she is that who leads to destruction and death substituting in a way the Διὸς . . . βουλῆ of the *Iliad* proem. Alas, her glory derives from the dead warriors fought in Troy, and thus she enters the epic space of *kleos* defined by the adjective πολύμνηστον, "memorable", in line 1459. This epithet signifies the poetic perpetuation of Helen like Achilles' μῆνις (as a substitute of it). Helen's abduction was the origin of the *eris* of the Trojan war. The same motif (ὡς μία πολλῶν ἀνδρῶν ψυχὰς Δαναῶν διέσχο' . . .) occurs in the next strophe (*Ag.* 1462 - 67), repeated by Klytaimestra, who also represents Eris, and whose action also brings death and catastrophe; she is the one who wards off the Chorus speak against Helen or feel angry with her: (ΚΛ): μηδὲν θανάτου μοῖρην ἐπέυχου τοῖσδε βαρυνθείς, μηδ' εἰς Ἑλένην λόγον ἐκτρέψῃς ὡς ἀνδροκέτειρ', ὡς μία πολλῶν ἀνδρῶν ψυχὰς Δαναῶν διέσχο' ἄξυστατον αἴγρος ἐπραξεν (cf. also Eur. *Hel.* 109ff.: ὦ τιῆμον Ἑλένη, διὰ σ' ἀπώλλονται Φρύγες. / καὶ πρὸς γ' Ἀχαιοὶ μεγάλα δ' εἴργασται κακία). See also E. Chatzianestis, *Αἰσχύλος, Ἀγαμέμνων*, Athens 2000, vol. II, 197, comm. at "δι' ἔριν αἱματώεσσαρ": "the accusative structure of the phrase, after the preposition, indicates a causative function, 'with the intention of bloody strife'. According to Fraenkel, the association of Eris with Helen's abduction, which led to the Trojan War, seems to have fascinated Aeschylus; in the *Cypria* Eris was the cause of the gods' quarrel and the initiator of the Judgement for the most beautiful".

7. In *The Judgement of Paris* by Peter Paul Rubens, painted in the early 1630's, the shepherd Paris is awarding the golden apple to Venus, a choice led to the Trojan War, hence the presence of the *Fury of War* in the sky of the painting (The London National Gallery Catalogue; see Hyg. *Fab.* 92; *Mythogr.* Vat. 1, 208, 2, 206: H. Hunger, *Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie: mit Hinweisen auf das Fortwirken antiker Stoffe und Motive in der bildenden Kunst, Literatur und*



was not her real self who left with Paris *but her phantom did* (see Eur. *Hel.* 31-6, 582-8; *El.* 1282-3). A more favourable picture is given by Euripides who follows Stesichoros in creating a "new Helen",<sup>8</sup> a revised version of the traditional epic story. In his *Helen* (l. 582) the heroine declares: οὐκ ἦλθον ἐς γῆν Τρωάδ', ἀλλ' εἰδωλον ἦν: "I did not come to the Trojan plain but my *eidolon* did". The tragedian is thus composing his own *palinode* within a different genre, that of tragedy, for he is treating Helen more favourably in his *Helen* and *Orestes* than in other — earlier — plays like *Hecuba*, *Andromache* or the *Troades*.

Therefore, the motif of the *eidolon* seems to be confined to Stesichoros and Euripides. In the introductory passage to the *Palinode*, Stesichoros' three surviving verses cited by Plato are seen as a *καθαρμός*, as a purification for doing wrong in story-telling (*Phaedr.* 243a: ἔστιν δὲ τοῖς ἀμαρτάνουσι περὶ μυθολογίαν καθαρμός ἀρχαῖος, δὲν Ὅμηρος οὐκ ἤσθετο, Στησίχορος δὲ τῶν γὰρ ὀμμάτων στερηθεὶς διὰ τὴν Ἑλένης κακηγορίαν οὐκ ἠγνόησεν...). Whereas falsehood is what Plato draws attention to in his *critique* of poetry (*Phaedr.* 243a-b; cf. *Rep.* 586c),

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*Musik des Abendlandes bis zur Gegenwart*, Wien: Hollinek, 1988, 155 - 56, 390). The idea, however, of Helen's destructive nature can be traced in Homer, see for example *Il.* 19. 324 - 5: (Achilles) ὁ δ' ἄλλοδαπῷ ἐνὶ δῆμῳ / εἰνεκα βίγεδανῆς Ἑλένης Τρωσὶν πολεμίζω: "while I am in a foreign land for the sake of abhorred Helen I am fighting with the 'Trojans'". The epithet βίγεδανῆς is a Homeric *hapax legomenon* and its sense seems to be "explained by Helen herself" in the sentence πάντες δέ με πεφρίκασιν in *Iliad* 24. 775: M.W. Edwards, *The Iliad: a commentary*, vol. V: books 17 - 20, Cambridge 1991, 273. The causative formula εἰνεκα ... Ἑλένης and its variations, is a *topos* for Helen's responsibility well attested in the *Iliad* as well as in lyric poetry and the Athenian drama: see for example *Il.* 2. 161 - 2: ... Ἀργεῖην Ἑλένην, ἧς εἰνεκα; *Od.* 11.438: Ἑλένης ... εἰνεκα; Alcaeus 42.1 - 3: ... Ὠεν', ... ἐκ σέθεν, 15: ἀμφ' Ἑλένα; 283.14: ἐννεκα κήνας; Pindar *Pyth.* 11.33: ἀμφ' Ἑλένα πυρωθέντων Τρώων; Semonides fr. 7.118: γυναικὸς εἰνεκ'. In this last fragment of Semonides a reference is made to those who descended to Hades because of a woman, obviously Helen (see verses 112 - 8). See also Aesch. *Ag.* 447f.: τὸν δ' ἐν φοναῖς καλῶς πεσόντ', ἄλλοτριαις διατ γυναικός. J.R. Wilson, "Eris in Euripides", *G&R* 26 (1979), 7, points out that Eris, as a goddess, "plays ... an extremely restricted role in Greek literature". It seems then that her appearance in epic poetry (Homer and Hesiod), is an attempt to personify the abstract form of *eris*, strife (see *Il.* 4. 440; 18.535 etc.; Hes. *Th.* 226, *Works and Days*, 28).

8. In Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousai* (850), the Relative suggests that he imitated Euripides' "newfangled" Helen — the word *καινήν* he uses here obviously refers to innovations as far as the myth of Helen is concerned: see D.M. MacDowell, *Aristophanes and Athens: an introduction to the plays*, Oxford 1995, 267; W.G. Arnott, "Euripides' Newfangled Helen", *Antichthon* 24 (1990), 1 - 18.



the first verse of the *Palinode* emphasizes Stesichoros' claim to contradict, to reject the *logos* (or rather the *mythologia*) of a previous poet, obviously of Homer himself whom Plato mentions in his introduction to the poem; thus, οὐκ ἔστ' ἔτυμος λόγος οὗτος, "this telling is not true", can be applied to the epic poet's story (*logos*) as untrue and deceptive.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, by conceiving a fictive *eidolon* in Helen's place Stesichoros declares the original version as a fiction, and thus he utters his poetic *logos* on a great war whose cause he is now revising. The notion of fictionality<sup>10</sup> that both poets, Stesichoros and Euripides, raise as a possible attribute of mythical texts by altering a received tradition, is employed in order to account for their own innovations. However, apart from introducing a new literary genre, the *palinode*, and raising questions on fictionality, on truth and falsehood in ancient poetics, they also, in my opinion, question the fictionality of causes concerning great wars, a major question which is established in every rational thought: "for what this war was made?"<sup>11</sup>.

9. On the question over boundaries between false fiction, or lies/fiction and truth that the ancient Greek poetry is constructed on, see M. Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*, New York 1996 (originally published as *Les Maîtres de vérité dans la Grèce archaïque*, Paris 1967), 69 - 88, 107 - 34 (esp. P. Vidal-Naquet's Foreword, pp. 7 - 14); C. Gill and T.P. Wiseman, eds, *Lies and fiction in the ancient world*, Exeter 1993 (*passim*). On "poets and liars in early Greek poetry" see also L.H. Pratt, *Lying and poetry from Homer to Pindar: falsehood and deception in archaic Greek poetics*, Ann Arbor 1993, 132 - 36; S. Goldhill, *The poet's voice: essays on poetics and Greek literature*, Cambridge 1991, 45 - 68.

10. On this notion see Pratt, *Lying and poetry from Homer to Pindar*, 24 - 42 and *passim*; Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*, 107 - 34; Goldhill, *The Poet's voice*, 56 - 68; G. Nagy, "Early Greek views of poets and poetry" in G.A. Kennedy, ed., *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism, vol. 1: Classical Criticism*, Cambridge 1989, 29 - 35.

11. This question is developed and more clearly defined in fifth-century tragedy, especially in the Euripidean tragedy: see N.T. Croally, *Euripidean Polemic: The Trojan Women and the Function of tragedy*, Cambridge 1994 (*passim*). In *Orestes*, on the other hand, the myth of Helen has become upside down with the paradoxical deification of her in the end of the play, a deification that shares common elements, in my view, with the creation of her *eidolon* and the disappearance of the phantom Helen in the homonymous play: *Or.* 1631 - 2: [ἦδ' ἐστίν, ἦν δρᾶτ' ἐν αἰθέρος πτυχαῖς, / σεσωσμένη τε κού θανοῦσα πρὸς σέθεν]; 1635ff: Ζηνὸς γὰρ ὄσαν ζῆν νιν ἀφθιτον χρεῶν, Κάστορί τε Πολυδεύκει τ' ἐν αἰθέρος πτυχαῖς / σύνθακος ἔσται, ναυτίλοις σωτήριος. / ἄλλην δὲ νύμφην ἐς δόμους κτῆσαι λαβών, / ἐπεὶ θεοὶ τῷ τῆσδε καλλιστεύματι / Ἕλληνας εἰς ἐν καὶ Φρύγας συνήγαγον, / θανάτους τ' ἔθηκαν, ὡς ἀπαντλοῖεν χθονὸς / ὕβρισμα θνητῶν ἀφθόνου πληρώματος; cf. *Or.* 1673 - 4 and *Hel.*



Thus, the above fragment of Stesichoros (192 *PMG*) cited by Plato (these seem to be the actual words of the poet) and the philosopher's elucidating information bring in a new version in Helen's myth: οὐκ ἔστ' ἔτυμος λόγος οὗτος, οὐδ' ἔβας ἐν νηυσὶν εὐσέλμοις οὐδ' ἔκειο πέρραμα Τροίας.<sup>12</sup> According to this and against the epic tradition, Helen never sailed to Troy. The *Palinode* is a kind of apology on behalf of the poet whom ancient sources report to have insulted Helen in his first poem but to have restored her reputation in his *Palinode*. He is said to have retracted his accusation against her ('Ελένης κακηγορία: Pl. *Phaedr.* 243a) because he was blinded by her and was healed after he had recanted by composing the *Palinode*.<sup>13</sup> Stesichoros' blindness and cure is most probably fictional and does not represent a real experience of the poet. One might also suppose that this was a mere invention of him "to explain the inconsistency between the old and the new version of Helen's story...";<sup>14</sup> in this way he could show his disagreement

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31ff.: "Ἦρα δὲ μεμφοθεῖσ' οὐνεκ' οὐ νικᾷ θεάς, / ἔξηνέμωσε τὰμ' Ἀλεξάνδρω λέχη, / διδωσι δ' οὐκ ἔμ', ἀλλ' ὁμοιώσασ' ἔμοι / εἰδωλον ἐμπνουν οὐρανοῦ ξυυθεῖσ' ἄπο, / Πριάμου τυράννου παιδί. See C.W. Willink, *Euripides, Orestes: with introduction and commentary*, Oxford 1986, xxix: "...and for more than fifteen years the paradoxical figure of Helen (and everything connected with the Judgement of Paris) had a special fascination for him. *Orestes* is the play in which E. writes an appropriately paradoxical *finis* to Helen's mortal existence"; see also *ibid.*, xxxi, where it is argued that with *Orestes* Euripides reasserts the epic tradition which places Helen in Troy, a tradition that "was both more convenient (simpler) and mythographically stronger" than the Stesichorean version, but added Helen's joining with Herakles and the Dioscuri in Heaven thus rejecting her peaceful and domestic life thereafter which was depicted in the *Odyssey* (book 4).

12. Pl. *Phaedr.* 243a - b; cf. *Rep.* 586c; Isokr. 10.64; D. Chr. 11.40; Paus. 3.19.11.

13. See previous note. See also: C.M. Bowra, *Greek Lyric Poetry*, 108f.; J.A. Davison, *From Archilochus to Pindar. Papers on Greek Literature of the Archaic period*, London and New York 1968, 204f. On the various views concerning Stesichoros' *Palinode* — or *Palinodes* — and the story about his blindness see Skiadas, *Ἀρχαϊκὸς λυρισμὸς*, vol. 2, 297 - 303; Skutsch, "Helen, her Name and Nature", 188. This, however, may belong to those traditional stories about blind poets whose insight intuition or the power of prophecy and poetic composition is emphasized. Homer's blindness seems to belong to the same tradition and is traced by Thucydides to the *IHomeric Hymn to Apollo* (line 172, Allen); see also Isokrates, *Hel.* 64-5. For Homer see J. Pörtulas, "De vita Homeri" in *La Grèce ancienne et l'anthropologie de l'Antiquité, Métis IX - X* (1994 - 1995), 351 - 57.

14. Skiadas, *op. cit.*, 300.



towards the mythological tradition which underestimated Helen in presenting her as an adulteress—to some extent this was done by the epic. Therefore, a more convincing explanation was needed for Stesichoros' poems concerning Helen. The new version also suggested that since Helen never went to Troy the gods had sent her *eidolon*, her image, in her place (Pl. *Rep.* 586c). Nevertheless, the invention of the *eidolon* was not a "rational" mode of thinking—such was Gorgias' *Encomion of Helen* where *mythos* and *logos*<sup>15</sup> are encountered in equal proportions.<sup>16</sup>

15. While in all periods of ancient Greek literature *mythos* and *logos* co-exist, this does not always happen in the same way, along the same rates. Thus, their interaction creates various forms where now the one predominates and now the other so that the boundaries between them are not strictly fixed; see Burkert's very interesting view in *Pegasus* 41 (1998), 11: "I think 'Myth into logos' is a meaningful question, but it is not a formula that covers the whole of classical *Geistesgeschichte*. It refers just to one pathway in the development of thought and literature. It does not imply that there ever was *mythos* without *logos*, some happy childhood of humanity surrounded by fairy tales without practical intelligence and rational strategies, nor that the use of myths in argumentation ever came to an end, especially in the context of group interests and group identity. By the way, the use of the word *logos* in Ancient Greek is very complicated and does coincide with the modern concept of logic or science". See also M. Detienne, *L'invention de la mythologie*, Paris 1981; R. Buxton, *Imaginary Greece. The contexts of mythology*, Cambridge 1994, 15, and for the *mythos-logos* debate in general the monograph which is the outcome of a Colloquium held in Bristol in the summer of 1996: *From Myth to Reason? Studies in the Development of Greek Thought*, ed. R. Buxton, Oxford 1999 (*passim*). For a review of modern scholarship on the theories of mythology, particularly on the *logos-mythos* debate, see A. Gartzou - Tatti, "Επιστροφή στην αρχαία Ελλάδα", *Ιστορ* 13 (2002), 131ff.

16. In the Homeric epics, each *logos* has its mythological example (for its function see A. Katsouris, "Το μυθολογικό παράδειγμα στον Όμηρο", *Dodone* 31.2 (2002), 167 - 209), background, so that the mythological interpretation of the world prevails. Plato seems to have conduced towards a more clear distinction between them although he, too, in some cases uses the term *logoi* for *mythoi* and "includes the *muthoi* told to children under the general heading of *logoi* ('discourse')"; however, in his works the contrast between the two is usually implied i.e. "that between *muthos* as unverifiable discourse and *logos* as verifiable discourse, and that between *muthos* as story and *logos* as rational argument": Buxton, *Imaginary Greece*, 12-3. But see also P. Murray, "What is a *Muthos* for Plato?" in *From Myth to Reason?*, 261; C. Rowe, "Myth, History, and Dialectic in Plato's Republic and Timaeus-Critias", in the same volume (*From Myth to Reason?*, 263 - 78) explores some aspects of *mythos* and *logos*, and the sense of 'fictional' or 'non-fictional' that is respectively applied to them by the philosopher. It is very interesting that in the introductory passage to the *Palinode* Plato uses the compound term *mythologia*, where *mythos* and *logos* coexist.



Stesichoros, however, does not implicitly refer to the fictionality of Homer's poetry but he places emphasis on the deception regarding the myth of Helen: οὐκ ἔστ' ἔτυμος λόγος οὗτος / οὐδ' ἔβας ἐν νηυσὶν εὐσέλμοις / οὐδ' ἔκειο πέργαμα Τροίας: "this telling is not true; you've never stepped on the well-benched ships, nor you've ever come to the citadel of Troy" (cf. *Iliad* 3.164-5). It seems that it is on ethical issues that the poet bases his version — or accuses his predecessor(s) that his — or their — version conveys the wrong ethical message. We have argued above that the fact that early poets claimed to tell the truth against the untrue version of some other poet was usual in the poetic production of early Greece,<sup>17</sup> and that Stesichoros' claim to truth is expressed by the word ἔτυμος of his *Palinode*<sup>18</sup>: who is to be blamed, then, for a story, a λόγος, that was οὐκ ἔτυμος, "not true"? His allusion is obvious and the answer should be Homer and perhaps Hesiod too (see 193 *PMG*, a much later fragment which could be taken as a sequence, or rather an explanation of the *Palinode*). Was this alternative version intended for a *post mortem* competition with Homer, an *agon* with the great poet? Or perhaps Stesichoros alludes here to Hesiod's view about poetic inspiration and creation and to the relationship between oral poets and their audiences: "ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλά λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα, ἴδμεν δ', εὔτ' ἐθέλωμεν, ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι": "we [the Muses] can tell many falsehoods as if real, and, when we wish, we can sing truths" (*Theogony* 27.8).<sup>19</sup>

17. See also Solon F 21 (Diehl): πολλά ψεύδονται ἀοῖδοι, "aoidoi tell many falsehoods".

18. On the association of archaic poetry with *aletheia*, with truth, Pratt (*Lying and poetry*, 53), argues as follows: "Though individual poets stake claims to truth, there is virtually no evidence for a generic association of poetry with truth, with *aletheia* in particular... The inconsistencies in the picture at least raise the possibility that truth claims in archaic poetry are themselves fictional, part of the narrative game". For Pratt (100f.), the words *aletheia* and *etumos* bear a distinction, although both words seem to be opposed to *pseudos*. See also Sitta von Reden, "Deceptive readings: poetry and its value reconsidered", *CQ* 45 (1995), 30 - 50; R.E. Meagher, *The Meaning of Helen: in search of an ancient icon* (originally published: *Helen*, New York 1995), Illinois USA 1995, 109, for Plato's critical eyes on Homer's and Hesiod's poetry in terms of truth and untruth, reality and fiction.

19. See A. Dalby, "Homer's enemies: lyric and epic in the seventh century" in N. Fisher and H. van Wees, eds, *Archaic Greece: New approaches and new evidence*, London 1998, 206. However, according to Pratt, *op. cit.*, 135 - 6, Plato and Isokrates give more emphasis on the blasphemous and slanderous character of the traditional story, which is harmful for Helen rather than it departs from fact.





This new story that Stesichoros claims to be the true one about Helen, i.e. ἔτυμος λόγος, says that she never went to Troy. And if we accept what fr. 193 (*PMG*) says (see also *Pl. Rep.* 586c) then the war was fought around a phantom, an εἶδωλον, the phantom of Helen.<sup>20</sup> I agree that the *eidolon* motif belongs to the traditional poetic corpus and that “the device of substitution by an εἶδωλον is thoroughly traditional in itself”;<sup>21</sup> however, I shall argue below that it was not “within the Homeric ambit that Stesichoros found the materials for his new story”, as Clarke<sup>22</sup> has argued, but this was done “within the Hesiodic one”. Because the *eidolon-idea* conveys some mythical elements which have particular affinities with another very famous myth, the Hesiodic myth of Pandora.<sup>23</sup> Although, in the Pandora myth there is no substitution of a real person by her *eidolon*, but the creation of somebody from the very beginning who functions as a phantom though she resembles a real person (see Hesiod’s *Theogony* (570-89) and *Works and Days* (70 - 82)). In the case of Helen, however, there is a long epic tradition about the heroine being a real person so that she should be substituted by her phantom in the new story, whereas Pandora is introduced into the mythical world as an *eidolon* together with

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20. Austin’s monograph, *Helen of Troy and her shameless phantom*, *op. cit.*, brings in very interesting and thought-provoking ideas concentrated on Helen’s two conflicting identities: that of the heroine who fled to Troy with Paris and the other of the famous goddess of Sparta, who was worshipped with a variety of rites but mainly as a goddess of beauty — Herodotos’ (6.61) evidence on Helen’s divine aspect is undeniably very important. See also M. Clarke’s review of N. Austin’s book in *JHS* 116 (1996), 191.

21. Clarke’s review, see previous note. The Homeric and Hesiodic examples that Clarke cites here are very convincing; some of them, however, are omitted by Austin, i.e. *Iliad* 5.445 - 53; *Odyssey* 4.795 - 839, 11.601 - 4, as well as Hesiod’s story about Iphimede/Iphigeneia who was substituted by an *eidolon* at Aulis (*Catalogue of Women*, fr. 23a M.-W.). Clarke very rightly argues that Stesichoros used “the motif and story-pattern” of the Homeric phantoms of Aeneas and Herakles so that, “. . . From the first passage comes the image of the warriors raging around an empty phantom, from the second comes the use of an εἶδωλον to reconcile an epic story with a cultic myth”. See also *idem*, *Flesh and Spirit in the songs of Homer: a study of words and myths*, Oxford 1999, s.v. εἶδωλον, 147 - 48, 195 - 205, 223 - 24.

22. *JHS* 116 (1996), 191.

23. J.-P. Vernant was — to my knowledge — the first who pointed out that there is “a symmetry between the theme of Pandora in Hesiod and that of Helen as presented in the *Cypria* and as it later reappears particularly in the tragedians”: *Myth and thought among the Greeks*, London 1983, 66 - 7, esp. note 37.



her creation. It is noticeable that Iphigeneia's story too, according to the Hesiodic tradition, includes her substitution by an *eidolon* (*Catalogue of Women*, fr. 23a M.-W.); this heroine also is very important for the accomplishment of the Trojan war, and it is through this war that she is associated with Helen.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps she, too, had a revised story.

The mythical elements embedded in Helen's revised story, i.e. the blindness of Stesichoros and the restoration of his sight, befit a goddess and Helen was worshipped as such in Sparta.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, it has been argued that the *Palinode* belongs to Stesichoros' "political mythology" which was in the service of Sparta and its religion.<sup>26</sup> What makes this argument stronger, in my view, is the nature of the surviving verses of the *Palinode* and particularly its hymnical character. In fact, we have to do with an apostrophe here, or an invocation similar to the well-known appeals to the Muses or to a god.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, the "apostrophizing" character of *the Palinode* (οὐδ' ἔβας... οὐδ' ἔλεο...) does not function for creating emotional effect or highlighting its theme, as most apostrophes do in Homer according to modern critics,<sup>28</sup> but, by addressing Helen Stesichoros seems to validate and justify his poetry

24. See Jr. G.E. Dimock's introduction in W.S. Merwin and Jr. G.E. Dimock, *Euripides Iphigeneia at Aulis*, New York and Oxford 1978, 11 - 2, for the view that in this play Iphigeneia is identified with Helen, she is becoming equally responsible for the "expedition to Troy, for the fall of the city and for the miserable homecoming of the Achaeans"; her self-accusation as *heleptolis*, "death of the city", adopted by the Chorus too, reminds us of the Chorus' condemnation of Helen in Aesch. *Ag.* 689. For the close association of Iphigeneia's sacrifice with Paris' judgement, Helen's abduction and, consequently, with the fall of Troy see Chr. Elliott Sorum, "Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis*" *AJPh* 113 (1992), 531 - 41. See also Eur. *IT* 439ff., where the Chorus wishes that Helen is punished as a retribution for Iphigeneia's sacrifice: K. Synodinou, "'Η Ἰφιγένεια ἢ ἐν Ταύροις τοῦ Εὐριπίδη. Μία ἐρμηνευτική προσέγγιση", *Dodone* 25.2 (1996), 15.

25. J.T. Hooker, *The ancient Spartans*, London 1980, 26-8, 55-8; Constantinidou, *Lakonian Cults*, 28 - 37.

26. See my forthcoming essay "Η πολιτική μυθολογία του Στησίχορου για τη Σπάρτη" in N. Birgalias, K. Bourazelis, P. Cartledge, eds, *The contribution of ancient Sparta to the political thought and practice*.

27. K. Bassi ("Helen and the Discourse of Denial in Stesichorus' *Palinode*", *Arethusa* 26 (1993), 68 and note 39), argues that the *Palinode* includes an "hyperbolic denial" created by the "quickly repeated negatives ... and the direct second person address to Helen...".

28. R.P. Martin, *The Language of Heroes*, 235 - 36.



through her. Thus, as Pratt<sup>29</sup> has argued, “Stesichorus’ *Palinode* rejects as false a traditional account, the story of Helen presented in the *Iliad*, seemingly on the grounds that it presents as blameworthy a figure *who ought to be praised*” (my italics). Briefly, in my view, the *Palinode* seems to be a hymn to the goddess Helen.<sup>30</sup>

In discussing Stesichoros’ story about Helen, K. Bassi<sup>31</sup> plays with the words “revision” and “vision”. The poet’s vision is restored (he was blinded for having slandered Helen) after his “revision, or re-vision” of the Helen story. That means that the recovery of his sight, the fact that he overcomes the visual anomaly was due to the fact that he could see clearly, he could see the truth. In this story the punishment is identified with darkness, the disability of Stesichoros to see and consequently to know, to be a witness of the truth. Stesichoros’ story, however, has more implications: while it is related to a restored truth it is equated to the autopsy of truth, it creates a “visual anomaly”; for it poses the question of the “Helen” who was at Troy since the “real” one was not there. The *eidolon* helps to fill this gap, to answer this question, but it does not represent the actual visual reality which is the “real” Helen. It does, however, contribute to the revision of the past and the process of chastening Helen.

Moreover, by the *eidolon* concept Stesichoros utters his poetic *logos* which refers to a great war whose cause he seems to be revising by seeking the truth for such a catastrophe; thus, it could be taken as an anti-war poem too.<sup>32</sup> So that, while it is personal morality that is accounted for the cause of the Trojan war, i.e. the morality of Helen, on the other hand the fight of the Trojans and the Greeks over a phantom, exonerated from all responsibility for the outbreak of the war

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29. *Lying and poetry from Homer to Pindar*, 132. See also G.L. Huxley, “Herodotos on myth and politics in early Sparta, *Proc.R.Ir.Acad.* vol. 83c (1983), 8 - 10.

30. For the association of the *Palinode* with the divine nature of Helen see my forthcoming essay, “Η πολιτική μυθολογία του Στησίχορου για τη Σπάρτη”.

31. “The Somatics of the Past: Helen and the Body of Tragedy”, in M. Franko and A. Richards, eds, *Acting on the Past. Historical performance across the Disciplines*, Hanover and London 2000, 18 - 9.

32. Cf. Euripides’ *Helen*. See also E. Hall’s introduction in J. Morwood, *Euripides: Medea, Hippolytus, Electra, Helen. Translated with explanatory notes*, Oxford 1997, xii - xiii.



not only Helen but Sparta too.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, there is a debate over the religious significance of the *Palinode*. But even if the story of Stesichoros' blindness is a fictional one — Plato and Isokrates contributing to this idea — this does not deny an actual religious experience and motivation on behalf of the poet. So that Stesichoros' innovation (*ἐκαινοπολίσειν*: 193 *PMG*) against the epic tradition in general, may be the result of a real religious experience. His inspiration seems to have a divine provenance as the sign, i.e. his blindness, had been given by a goddess who had the power to blind people as she had the power to transform young girls from ugly ones into beautiful women according to Herodotos (6.61.2-5; cf. Paus. 3.7.7). Certainly, the whole story transcends human boundaries and enters the sublime sphere. Stesichoros and his audience — the Doric people of his homeland as well as Sparta — must have hoped very much that this version could expel Homer and his poems, a well-established and canonical poetry, as untrue and blasphemous.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, Stesichoros' motive for composing his innovative version seems to be mainly — although not only — religious than anything else.<sup>35</sup> Besides, the phantom-theme that frames the *Palinode* and is attributed to this poet by ancient texts<sup>36</sup> is a religious theme by itself related, as we shall see below, to another fa-

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33. This does not mean, of course, that Euripides "thought that Sparta was responsible for the outbreak of the war" by assigning Helen in his plays the responsibility of the war: W. Poole, "Euripides and Sparta" in A. Powell and S. Hodgkinson, eds, *The Shadow of Sparta*, London - New York 1994, 27. See also C.M. Bowra, "The two Palinodes of Stesichoros", *CR* 13 (1963), 245 - 52, (reprinted in C.M. Bowra, *On Greek Margins*, Oxford 1970, 87 - 98); N. Zagagi, "Helen of Troy: Encomium and Apology", *Wiener Studien* 98 (1985), 65ff.

34. But see also Pratt, *op. cit.*, 135f., who points out that the alternate version of Stesichoros did not supplant the Homeric one.

35. E.L. Bowie (Gill-Wiseman, eds, *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, 25), does not accept that Stesichoros' motive for rejecting the traditional version, "long validated by Homer, Hesiod and their Muses", and suggesting a new one, was to please the Spartans and dissolve the displeasure that was created with his earlier poem, but he suggests that his real motive was artistic. While I agree that the diffusion of the Homeric poems and of their version of Helen's story could not be easily put apart, and that artistic reasons too influenced the creation of a new poem, the hymnical as well as the supernatural elements that are associated with the *Palinode*, make the case of a religious motive very possible.

36. Plato *Rep.* 586c; see M. Davies' edition (*PMGF: Poetarum Melicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, vol. I, Oxford 1991) for ancient testimonia. See also Pratt, *op. cit.*, 135 n. 10.



mous myth, that of Pandora and to Hesiod himself, the “literary father” of Stesichoros.

Four verses from Hesiod’s *Theogony* (25-8), which have received various interpretations (esp. 27-8), should be given particular attention here: Μοῦσαι Ὀλυμπιάδες, κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο / “ποιμένες ἄγραυλοι, κακ’ ἐλέγχεα, γαστέρες οἶον, / ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα, ἴδμεν δ’, εὔτ’ ἐθέλωμεν, ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι”. Hesiod’s wish here seems to guarantee the truth of his poem by referring to his encounter with the Muses and at the same time he puts forward the concept of “fiction” in his poetry, that poetry where “the poet is neither lying nor retailing erroneously held views, but is (or at least is regarded by Hesiod as) telling a story that he has made up to be like reality without claiming that it is reality”.<sup>37</sup> Hesiod behaves like the Muses he is invoking: their statement, “we know how to tell many falsehoods that seem real; but we also know how to speak truth when we wish to”, is his statement, the character of his poetry.<sup>38</sup> It is very likely that Stesichoros borrows the literary frame of his own cantation from Hesiod’s poetry (it is well-known how much familiar he was with this poetry); however, not that frame of telling false things that looked true but that of telling a true story (ἔτυμος λόγος; cf. ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι) of his own<sup>39</sup>. According to Bowie,<sup>40</sup> Stesichoros found good reasons for explaining his depart from the traditional story, from the *canon*, by inventing the story of blindness because of his defamation of Helen (Ἑλένης κακηγορία) — that was also part of his fiction. His sight was restored in a miraculous way after a dream he had seen, most probably Helen herself, a detail passed on by ancient sources like Isokrates (*Helen* 64) and Suda (s.v. Στησίχορος); Plato, too, may have alluded to this dream by saying that Stesichoros when he was “deprived his sight because of his defamation of Helen he did not fail to recognize the reason” (*Phaedr.* 243a).<sup>41</sup>

37. Bowie, in Gill -Wiseman, eds, *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, 21.

38. Gill -Wiseman, xiv. See Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*, 83 - 8; Goldhill, *The Poet’s Voice*, 45, 231.

39. For a whole discussion see Bowie, in Gill -Wiseman, eds, *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, 20 - 8.

40. As note above, 26 - 7.

41. Bowie, 27 - 8. The idea of a dream (*ex oneirow*: Suda; *aneste*: Isokrates) as the cause for composing the *Palinode*, thus rejecting Homer’s and Hesiod’s versions, may refer to a divine intervention, most probably Helen the goddess appea-



*Helen's eidolon: Justification of the Trojan war*

I shall now return to the aforementioned viewpoint of the new version of Helen's story — which might have existed in Stesichoros' mind — the anti-war perspective.<sup>42</sup> An anti-war message in connection with Helen seems to be present in some plays of Euripides like *Hecuba*, *Troades*, *Andromache*, *Helen* and probably *Orestes*. As M. Poole<sup>43</sup> has pointed out, in *Helen* "Menelaos and Helen do not have to be reconciled with Greek public opinion, which sees them as culpably responsible for a war that has resulted in great and prolonged suffering... so perhaps a contemporary gloss can be put on the end of the play, which should then be read as a call to Athens to forget past injuries and to be reconciled with the old foe".

A similar spirit relies, in my opinion, within Herodotos' *Histories* too. In Book 2 (116-17), the historian follows the revisionary account and against Homer, whom he criticizes for not having said the truth about Helen.<sup>44</sup> Herodotos knew the story about Helen's stay in Egypt and

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red to Stesichoros for asking him to call back his defamation of her. Besides, in Isokrates' version (*Hel.* 64), it is obvious that it was Helen who appeared to Stesichoros as well as to Homer.

42. M. Suzuki (*Metamorphoses of Helen. Authority, Difference, and the Epic*, Ithaca and London 1989), reads the epic tradition from a feminist perspective: Helen is the woman that once again, like another Pandora, is blamed by ancient poets, and above all Homer, as the Cause of many troubles to humankind, this time as the Cause of a great war. Because of her own culpability came the Fall of Troy and the destruction of so many warriors; however, she was exonerated of the blame in an alternate story: see esp. 1f., 12 - 3; cf. Meagher, *The Meaning of Helen*, 109f.

43. "Euripides and Sparta", 28f. Hall (introduction in Morwood, *Euripides: Medea, Hippolytus, Electra, Helen*, xxv), argues along the same lines: "*Helen* also confronts ontological paradoxes, especially the problematic notions of subjectivity, the self, and identity: who is the 'true' Helen? If 'Helen of Troy' did not cause the Trojan War, then why is she the subject of a work of literature? ... Against the 'real' backdrop of the Sicilian carnage, Euripides' spectators cannot have failed to draw some connection between their own bereavements and the play's implication that all the losses of the Trojan War had been incurred for no reason at all" (my italics).

44. 2. 116. 1 - 2: 'Ελένης μὲν ταύτην ἀπιξιν παρὰ Πρωτέα ἔλεγον οἱ ἱεῖες γενέσθαι δοκεῖ δέ μοι καὶ Ὅμηρος τὸν λόγον τοῦτον πυθέσθαι· ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ ὁμοίως ἐς τὴν ἐποποιίην εὐπρεπῆς ἦν τῷ ἑτέρῳ τῷ περ ἐχρήσατο, [ἐς δ] μετήκε αὐτόν, δηλώσας ὡς καὶ τοῦτον ἐπίσταιτο τὸν λόγον· δῆλον δέ, κατὰ παρεποίησε ἐν Ἰλιάδι (καὶ οὐδαμῇ ἄλλη ἀνεπόδισε ἑωυτὸν) πλάνην τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου, ὡς ἀπηνείχθη ἄγων Ἑλένην τῇ τε δὴ ἄλλη πλαζόμενος



asserted that Homer too knew about it, although he rejected it as inappropriate for the epic poetry.<sup>45</sup> His view can be explained as one of his attempts to justify the different treatment of a well-known story, as a rational approach to Helen's myth. Thus, the fact that the historian does not say anything about the *eidolon*, i.e. Stesichoros' version, does not mean that he knows nothing about it. He seems to have chosen a critical treatment of the myth, without any supernatural interventions and irrational elements that the *eidolon* theme would presuppose.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, while he originally says that he knows the story about

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καὶ ὡς ἐς Σιδῶνα τῆς Φοινίκης ἀπῆκετο . . . ; cf. 116.6: ἐν τούτοισι τοῖσι ἔπεισι δηλοῖ ὅτι ἠπίστατο τὴν ἐς Αἴγυπτον Ἀλεξάνδρου πλάνην. According to Paul Cartledge and Emily Greenwood, "Herodotus as a critic: truth, fiction, polarity" (in E.J. Bakker, I.J.F. de Jong, H. van Wees, eds, *Brill's Companion to Herodotus*, Leiden, Boston, Köln 2002, 354ff.), Herodotos' account of Helen supplements Homer's narrative about Helen's stay in Egypt with information derived from native priests who claim to possess the true knowledge about the subject; in a way the historian shifts liability to his sources which are also religious authorities. Nevertheless, the historian does not, in my view, limit his reliability on issues of truth and fiction. This essay was sent to the press when came to my notice C. Calame's book, *Poétique des mythes dans la Grèce antique*, Paris 2000, and its chapter on "Hélène et les desseins de l'historiographie", 145 - 61.

45. Hdt. 2.112 - 20; cf. *Il.* 6.289-92; *Od.* 3.299 - 312; 4.81 - 9, 125 - 32, 227 - 32, 351 - 86, 618 - 19. Herodotos' view here is regarded as "the earliest known example of Homeric criticism": A.B. Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II: Commentary 99 - 182*, Leiden 1988, 50. On Herodotos' self-positioning in relation to truth and fiction see Cartledge - Greenwood, *art. cit.*, esp. 360, who argue that his phrase "*pseudesi ikela*" is an evocation of the debate about truth and false in Greek literature but also an echo of the Muses' claim on their capacity to say "*pseudea etumoisin omoia*", in *Theogony* 27.

46. See for example Euripides' version of Helen's *eidolon* (*Helen*). For Herodotos' position in the debate "From Mythos to Logos" see the excellent essays in the volume "From Myth to Reason?" (ed. R. Buxton): F. Hartog, "'Myth into Logos': The Case of Croesus, or the Historian at Work", 183 - 95, esp. 184: "As a man located between two periods, Herodotus is already 'enlightened', an *Aufklärer*, but not yet a complete one: he represents precisely one who cuts the road from Mythos to Logos, but in his work the previous religious *Hintergrund* is still pretty much active. Man's destiny is in the hands of the gods. In their own manner *the Histories* are still the presentation or the verification of the 'ways of gods to man'; and A. Griffiths, "Euenius the Negligent Nightwatchman (*Herodotus* 9. 92 - 6)", 169 - 82, esp. 169, who argues that it is understandable how *mythos* and *logos* "coexist so easily in the text of the *Historiae*" for Herodotos, as a historian but as a literary artist as well, knows very well about the differentiation between mythical and historical. For *mythos* and *logos* in Herodotos see also T. Harrison, *Divinity and History. The Religion of Herodotus*, Oxford 2002, 203 - 7 (and the whole chapter 7: "The limits of Knowledge and Inquiry", 182 - 207).



Helen's stay with Proteus, it is the Egyptian priests' version that he finally presents in a rationalized explanation of what concerned Helen and Menelaos.<sup>47</sup> Thus, the Egyptian priests' version is the basis for Herodotos' argumentation, whose main purpose was to convince how unreasonable it was for the Trojans to carry on a war which would result in Troy's destruction for Helen's sake. The main point in Herodotos' rationalism — perhaps coated with anti-war feelings too — is obvious in his following statement: ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ εἶχον Ἑλένην ἀποδοῦναι οὐδὲ λέγουσι αὐτοῖσι τὴν ἀληθείην ἐπίστευον οἱ Ἕλληνας (2.120.5); cf. 2.120.1ff.: εἰ ἦν Ἑλένη ἐν Ἰλίῳ, ἀποδοθῆναι ἂν αὐτὴν τοῖσι Ἕλλησι ἦτοι ἐχόντος γε ἢ ἀέκοντος Ἀλεξάνδρου. οὐ γὰρ δὴ οὕτω γε φρενοβλαβῆς ἦν ὁ Πρίαμος οὐδὲ οἱ ἄλλοι <οἱ> προσήκοντες αὐτῷ, ὥστε τοῖσι σφετέροισι σώμασι καὶ τοῖσι τέχνουσι καὶ τῇ πόλι κινδυνεύειν ἐβούλοντο, ὅπως Ἀλέξανδρος Ἑλένη συνοικέη.<sup>48</sup>

At the same time Herodotos shows appreciation for the Trojan people, and particularly for their king Priam, for whom he denies the blame of a voluntary self-destruction, and imputes to the Greeks the responsibility for the destruction as a punishment from the gods because of the human beings' (ἄνθρωποισι) unjust deeds (Hdt. 2.120.5: τοῦ δαιμονίου παρασκευάζοντος ὅπως πανωλεθρῆ ἀπολόμενοι καταφανὲς τοῦτο τοῖσι ἀνθρώποισι ποιήσωσι, ὡς τῶν μεγάλων ἀδικημάτων μεγάλαι εἰσὶ καὶ αἱ τιμωραὶ παρὰ τῶν θεῶν).<sup>49</sup> Thus, the historian does not attempt a moral judgement of Helen's behaviour but gives a rational explana-

47. Davison, *From Archilochus to Pindar*, 213f. On the treatment of the myth by Herodotos see G. Lachenaud, *Mythologies, religion et philosophie de l'histoire dans Hérodote*, Lille and Paris 1978 (*passim*); A.B. Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II. Commentary 1 - 98*, Leiden 1976, 201f.; I. Linforth, "Herodotus' avowal of silence in his account of Egypt", *CSCA* 7 (1919 - 24), 269 - 92. See also Cartledge - Greenwood, *art. cit.*

48. See P.E. Easterling and B.M.W. Knox, *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, Vol. I, Part. 2, Cambridge 1989, 438.

49. Harrison, *Divinity and History*, 104 - 5, 108 - 9, argues that this is Herodotos' own interpretation, i.e. that "great injustices meet also with great vengeance from the gods" (2.120.5), that there is divine retribution/vengeance for the crimes committed; therefore, Alexander's unjust deed was punished by the gods, who planned the Trojan war and the destruction of Troy. See also Cartledge - Greenwood, *art. cit.*, 356, for the view that Herodotos concludes this episode with an oracular phrase, γνώμην ἀποφαίνομαι, "I will reveal the rationale", by which he appears "venturing a religious insight"; see also *ibid.*, 369 - 70 ("Gods versus Mortals").





tion of the causes of the Trojan war which he generally applies to a moral and religious sphere.<sup>50</sup>

However, Herodotos' mention of Helen's stay in Egypt with Proteus is not the earliest version of this story. Because, Stesichoros seems

50. N. Zagagi, "Helen of Troy: Encomium and Apology", *Wiener Studien* 98 (1985), 63 - 88, esp. 69. Elsewhere in his *Histories* (1.2f.), Herodotos presents Helen's abduction by Paris as an act of revenge for Medea's abduction by the Greeks, and he includes it in a series of successive abductions of Greek and 'barbarian' women which he regards as the cause of the conflict between the Greeks and the barbarians: see P. Walcot, "Herodotus on Rape", *Arethusa* 11 (1978), 137 - 47. Herodotos' attempt to exonerate Helen from all responsibility for the events which led up to the Trojan War is better seen in the phrase *ξείνου γὰρ τοῦ ἑωυτοῦ ἔξαπατήσας* (2. 114.2), where he emphasizes Paris' offence against the *xenia* of his hosts in Sparta. This was not only a basic social institution of Greek society but it had religious importance too, it was *adikon* as well as *anhosion*: see Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II: Commentary* 99 - 182, 49. However, Herodotos' discussion in 2.112 - 15 is very interesting from various points of view; for one has to follow the story from the very beginning in order to form a view about the overall treatment of Helen by the historian. His story — *logos* — about her begins as an aetiological one; he first refers to the cult of *ξείνη Ἀφροδίτη* at the shrine within the temenos of Proteus in Memphis. Herodotos asserts (*συμβάλλομαι δὲ τοῦτο τὸ ἱρὸν εἶναι Ἑλένης τῆς Τυνδάρεω . . .*: 2.112.2), that the shrine belongs to Helen, the daughter of Tyndareos for he had heard the story (*τὸν λόγον ἀκηκοώς*) that Helen had stayed with Proteus and that *ξείνης Ἀφροδίτης* is an *ἐπώνυμον*, because in none of her shrines (i.e. cults) Aphrodite is worshipped as a *ξείνη* (see J. Enoch Powell, *A lexicon to Herodotus*, Cambridge 1938, s.v. *ἐπώνυμος*: "'called after': (*ξείνης Ἀφροδίτης* 2.112) . . ."). What follows mainly concerns Paris' behaviour and his offence against *xenia* that Menelaos offered him in his palace. In my view, Herodotos' *λόγος* presents Paris as totally responsible for the abduction of Helen (*Ἀλέξανδρον ἀρπάσαντα Ἑλένην ἐκ Σπάρτης ἀποπλέειν ἐς τὴν ἑωυτοῦ*: 2.113.1; *περὶ τὴν Ἑλένην τε καὶ τὴν ἐς Μενέλεων ἀδικίην*: 2. 113.3; *ἔργον δὲ ἀνόσιον ἐν τῇ Ἑλλάδι ἐξεργασμένος· ξείνου γὰρ τοῦ ἑωυτοῦ ἔξαπατήσας τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτὴν τε ταύτην ἄγων ἤκει καὶ πολλὰ κάρτα χρήματα*: 2.114.2). The offence against *xenia*, where Helen's abduction together with much of the wealth were involved (*πολλὰ κάρτα χρήματα*), consisted Paris' crime, who did not tell the truth during Proteus' interrogation so that "decept of acts" went along "decept of words": *πλανωμένου δὲ τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἐν τῷ λόγῳ καὶ οὐ λέγοντος τὴν ἀληθειν . . . πάντα λόγον τοῦ ἀδικήματος* (2.115.3). Cf. Aesch. *Ag.* 534: *ἀρπαγῆς τε καὶ κλοπῆς*: P. Judet de La Combe (*L' Agamemnon d'Eschyle: commentaire des dialogues*, Première partie, *Cahiers de Philologie* 18, 182 - 3), argues that the two terms in Aeschylus' text, *ἀρπαγῆς τε καὶ κλοπῆς* differ in meaning so as to refer to the traditional crimes of Paris: the first (*ἀρπαγῆς*) refers to the abduction of Helen and the second (*κλοπῆς*) to the stealing of Menelaos' riches together with Helen. Therefore, the Iliadic theme according to which Helen was transferred to Troy with her *κτήματα* (wealth), is employed here, in *Agamemnon*, by the herald who defines the particular nature of her abduction in accordance to the epic world and its social justice, where the



to precede not only in referring to Helen's presence there but, moreover, in presenting her substitution by an image at the same place.<sup>51</sup> Such a version provides a more convincing cause for the Trojan war, as the statement that simply "Helen never went to Troy" was not satisfactory. That there were in the Stesichorean version some other details about Helen's stay in Egypt with Proteus is supported by a surviving verse in Tzetzes' *scholia* (*ad Antehom.* 149), ascribed to Stesichoros. This verse refers to the Trojans' departure from Egypt carrying Helen's *eidolon*:

ἀλλ' ἄρα Πρωτῆος· καὶ τοῦτο Λυκόφρων φησὶν ἐκ Στησιχόρου λαβῶν·  
γράφει γὰρ ὁ Στησίχορος·

Τρώεσσ' οἱ τότ' ἴσαν Φελένας εἰδῶλον ἔχοντες.

The verse is cited in a varied form in the *scholia* at Lykophron's *Ale-*

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theft of Helen and her fortune are two different kinds of theft; see esp. *Iliad* 3.91: ἀμφ' Ἑλένη καὶ κτήμασι πᾶσι μάχεσθαι; 3.69 - 72: αὐτὰρ ἔμ' ἐν μέσσω καὶ ἀρηΐφιλον Μενέλαον / συμβάλετ' ἀμφ' Ἑλένη καὶ κτήμασι πᾶσι μάχεσθαι / ὀπότερος δέ κε νικήσῃ κρείσσων τε γένηται, / κτήμαθ' ἑλών εὖ πάντα γυναῖκά τε οἴκαδ' ἀγέσθω; cf. also *Iliad* 7.362-4, where Paris refuses to return Helen but instead he is giving back the treasure brought from Menelaos' palace. On Paris' offence against friendship and *xenia* see A. Gartzou - Tatti, "Pâris - Alexandre dans l'*Illiade*", in A. Moreau, ed., *L'initiation. Actes du colloque international de Montpellier 11 - 14 Avril 1991*, Montpellier 1992, 73 - 92; R. Seaford, *Reciprocity and Ritual: Homer and Tragedy in the Developing City - State*, Oxford 1994, 17. On guest - friendship in Homer see also J.T. Hooker, "Gifts in Homer", *BICS* 36 (1989), 79 - 90; Sitta von Reden, *Exchange in Ancient Greece*, London 1995, 46, 51 - 2, 151; J.F. Nagy, "The deceptive gift in Greek mythology", *Arethusa* 14 (1981), 191 - 204; J.D. Mikalson, "Religion in Herodotus" in *Brill's Companion to Herodotus*, 193, for Alexander's violation of *xenia* as an act of impiety.

51. Dio Chrys. *Or.* xi 40; Aristeid. *Or.* xlv 54, xiii 131, where *schol.* Στησίχορος . . . τὸ εἰδῶλον αὐτῆς γεγραμμένον. Stephanie West (*Demythologisation in Herodotus, Xenia Toruniensia*, VI, Torun 2002, 34 - 5), argues that Herodotos' version, based heavily on the account of the Egyptian clergy of Memphis, does not confirm or supplement the Stesichorean one but he "gives the story a further twist, cancelling the exculpatory force of Stesichorus' treatment" and also "calls into question the historicity of the Trojan War". However, while I agree with West's view on the rationalization —or, to use her term, the "demythologisation" — of Helen's story, there is still a serious gap in the historian's account, i.e. an explanation for all that is known as 'the Trojan War'. On the other hand the removal of the phantom from Herodotos' story about Helen, along a rationalizing process, does not come in contrast with the "theologically satisfactory conclusion" that the historian reaches (2.120.5) which, according to S. West (p. 35), also explains the overreaction to Paris' offence against the guest-friendship which was divinely protected.



*xandra* 113 (λέγουσιν ὅτι διερχομένῳ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ δι' Αἰγύπτου ὁ Πρωτεύς Ἑλένην ἀφελόμενος εἶδωλον Ἑλένης αὐτῷ δέδωκεν καὶ οὕτως ἐπλευσεν εἰς Τροίαν, ὡς φησι Σπησίχορος. Τρῶες γάρ, οἱ τότε ἦσαν Ἑλένης εἶδωλον ἔσχον) and is believed to belong to the *Palinode* for Helen.<sup>52</sup> In my view it also supports and completes the content of the *Palinode* whose last two verses are susceptible to another interpretation: "Helen never embarked for Troy, she never came to its acropolis" (οὐδ' ἔβασ... οὐδ' ἔλασ: 192 *PMG*), because after their stop in Egypt the Trojan ships that sailed to Troy "brought with them not real Helen but her phantom" (Τρῶεσσ' οἱ τότε ἴσαν Φελένας εἶδωλον ἔχοντες). Nevertheless, the above evidence in Tzetzes' *scholia* was not given much attention by modern scholarship, despite its importance and its possible association with the three verses of the *Palinode* which, on the contrary, has provoked much scholarly interest.

The rationalization of Herodotos' version, contrasted to Homer's story<sup>53</sup> that was more pleasant though perhaps less believable, was probably based on a local tradition, an Egyptian one, about Helen's stay in Egypt under Proteus' protection. It seems that in Herodotos' time stories about Helen were told in Egypt. Even if the historian had adapted them to his narrative, Sparta might be the place of their origin, in a more simple version about Helen and Menelaos' wanderings.<sup>54</sup> This makes a link to Stesichoros' version, although Herodotos mentions neither Stesichoros nor the *eidolon*, for he did not probably consider

52. See M. Papathomopoulos, *Nouveaux fragments d' auteurs anciens* (édités et commentés), Ioannina 1980, 29 - 31.

53. For Helen's voluntary abduction see *Iliad* 2.356, 590; 3.173f.; 24.762f.; and *Odyssey* 4.261 - 3, where it is quite clear that she abandoned her home for Paris; cf. *Cypria* (Procl. *Chr.* 11); Apollod. *Epit.* 3.3. On her guiltlessness for having been the Cause of the war see Stesichoros *fr.* 10 - 16 (*PMG*); Plato, *Phaedr.* 243a; Isokr. 10.64; Eur. *Helen* (passim). See also I. Th. Kakridis, *Ὀμηρικὰ θέματα*, Athens 1954, 3 - 21, esp. 5: "...the epic and later the lyric poetry and the drama would ask to shape this woman, who is a mere object of some other will, and sometimes a whole person with her own will and wishes... to transform her into a person with her own free will". In tragedy Helen's figure is shifted between innocence and guilt, between the positive responsibility and the involuntary guilt, during a time when traditional ethics and Homer's explanations do no longer satisfy the needs of the *polis*' life and behaviour; S. Goldhill, *Reading Greek tragedy*, Cambridge 1986, 234f.; Zagagi, "Helen of Troy: Encomium and Apology", 63 - 88.

54. Cf. A.M. Dale, *Euripides Helen: edited with Introduction and Commentary*, Oxford 1967, xix.



the single invention of a reformed Helen as important for a rationalistic approach to the story of the Trojan War. Therefore, the tradition about the visit, or the stay, of Helen and Menelaos in Egypt, or even Paris too, which is found in Homer assumes in Herodotos new elements — these might have existed in Stesichoros as well — according to which “the Trojans did not have Helen so as to give her back to the Greeks” (Hdt. 2.120). Thus, the historian contributes to the myth of Helen his own version which is a step ahead to a more rational account of her, to a *logos* or, I would say, to a “logical myth”.<sup>55</sup> It seems to me, however, that in his account of Helen Herodotos arrays against Homer, and particularly against book 7 of the *Iliad* where, on the proposal of Antenor to give Helen and all her treasure back, Paris refuses to do so as far as Helen is concerned (7.362-4: “ἀντικρὺ δ' ἀπέφημι, γυναῖκα μὲν οὐκ ἀποδώσω / κτήματα δ' ὅσσ' ἀγρόμην ἐξ Ἄργεος ἡμέτερον δῶ / πάντ' ἐθέλω δόμεναι καὶ οἴκοθεν ἄλλ' ἐπιθεῖναι”).<sup>56</sup>

All the above, however, do not refute M.L. West's<sup>57</sup> view that “the Egypt story existed earlier, before Helen's attachment to the

55. With “logical myth” I reverse the phrase “mythical logic” employed by R. Buxton in his Introduction to *From Myth to reason?*, 8ff., and applied to famous scholars' approach to Greek Religion like Angelo Brelich, Marcel Detienne, Walter Burkert, Claude Calame et al., whose detailed studies of Greek myth and religion have shown that mythical narratives have their own logics, a narrative logic, which in some cases can be very complex. But see also R. Thomas' interesting view in *Herodotus in Context. Ethnography, Science and the Art of Persuasion*, Cambridge 2000, 270 - 1, that Herodotos' shaping of narrative on Helen's presence in Egypt, and thus absence from Troy during the Trojan war, thus demolishing the Homeric picture of her, reminds us of the sophistic arguments about Helen, especially those of Gorgias (see *Helen*).

56. See J.W. Neville's essay (“Herodotus on the Trojan War”, *G&R* 24 (1977), 3 - 12), where emphasis is given on the originality of Herodotos' version of the Trojan war and Helen's involvement as its cause. Herodotos attempts the first criticism of Homer as a historian, whereas his version of Helen is logical and rational as well as his treatment of the Trojan war. At the same time the historian seems to have no interest in the treatment of Helen by other poets like the poet of the *Cypria*, Alkman, Ibykos, Semonides, Sappho. As for him, it seems that he came to his entirely original version through scepticism and careful historical research. But see also G. Nagy's concluding view (“Herodotus the *Logios*” in *Arethusa* 20. 1,2 (1987), 24): “From the standpoint of the prooemia of the *Iliad* and of the *Histories*, Herodotus is in effect implying that the events narrated by the *Iliad* are part of a larger scheme of events as narrated by himself. The history of Herodotus the *logios* is in effect subsuming, not just continuing, the epic of Homer the *aoidos*”.

57. *Immortal Helen*, Inaugural Lecture, University of London, 1975, 6 - 7: it seems that the core to understanding the epic theme is to be found in the abduc-



Trojan war... it was in fact simply another version of the myth of the Disappearing Goddess... The Egypt story, then, was the goddess' version; and since it was principally in Sparta that the goddess flourished, it may have been a Spartan version". This may be the mythological background on which Stesichoros based his *eidolon* story closely associated with Sparta.<sup>58</sup> As far as the historical background is concerned, from the seventh century onwards the connections between Greece and Egypt are renewed as a result of a greater demand for luxury products from the East. The colonization, the development of commercial relations and the presence of Greek mercenaries — together with other foreigners — in the Egyptian army, but above all the opening of the country to foreigners, mainly to the Greeks and the Phoenicians during the reign of Psammetichus I (664-10 B.C.), were some other reasons which could explain the above connections. It is thus very probable that Helen's story prevailed in Egypt during this period, nearly two centuries before Herodotos' visit there.<sup>59</sup> It is more prob-

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tion myth, or rather in the possibility of the existence of a certain local cult-myth in Sparta and its association with the local goddess of Therapne, probably a myth of the disappearing goddess which was adapted to the Trojan War.

58. The context of another interpretation of the abduction myth somehow agrees with Herodotos' view about the responsibility and the participation of the abducted woman in the abduction process: 1.4: δῆλα γὰρ δὴ ὅτι, εἰ μὴ αὐταὶ ἐβούλοντο οὐκ' ἂν ἠρπάζοντο; see Walcot, "Herodotus on rape", 137 - 47. P. Cartledge, *The Spartans. An epic History, Channel Four Books*, London and Oxford 2002, 28, argues that here Herodotos "adopts a robust, not to say male chauvinist, view of the matter". As far as Helen is concerned, the various versions of her myth follow an evolutionary process which ends up with her entire release from the adultery accusation, and even from the responsibility of the War misfortunes, by the invention of the *eidolon*. This last version of Helen's myth is the most appropriate for the restoration of the goddess of Sparta probably at a time when the Spartans wanted to exonerate their local goddess from the above accusations. However, even in this version the abduction myth is the core of the story: Helen's *eidolon* was abducted and transferred to Troy while the real Helen was abducted by Hermes and was brought to Egypt: Constantinidou, *Lakonian Cults*, 56.

59. Herodotos' version does not necessarily presuppose the existence of an established cult of Helen and Menelaos in Egypt since such is attested much later. The shrine of Aphrodite *Ξείνη* ("Ἀφροδίτης Ξείνης"), which he had visited, was probably dedicated to Astarte or Aphrodite — both goddesses bear the above epithet — and not to Helen. The identification of the Memphis sanctuary with that of Helen of Tyndareus ("Ἑλένης τῆς Τυνδάρεω") seems an invention of Herodotos most probably based on the local tradition concerning Helen's association with Egypt. A joint cult of Astarte and Aphrodite is also known from Cyprus, in the sanctua-



able, however, that Proteus' association with Helen was added to the Egyptian version of her story and was adapted to the Egyptian historical reality after the renewal of the Greek contacts with the Near East during the Dark Age, or even after the composition of the *Odyssey* and the diffusion of the Homeric poems. The latter must have been known to the Egyptian priests as their long contact with the Greeks presupposes a relative knowledge of the Greek language itself.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, the *eidolon's* story might have influenced the formation of the above version and it seems that it is Herodotos who avoids mentioning its existence and not the Egyptian priests.

However, elsewhere in his *Histories* Herodotos refers once more to Helen's divine nature in a story where the supernatural, this time, intervention is involved. He refers to Helen's worship in ancient Therapne, at the Menelaion, as a goddess of Beauty and the transformation of an ugly child, who later became the wife of king Ariston and mother of Damaratos, into the most beautiful woman of Sparta (Hdt. 6.61 2-5; cf. Paus. 3.7.7). Herodotos' narrative is concentrated on the miracle of Helen. But here, the manifestation of Helen's divine aspect cannot be separated from her epic one, mainly demonstrated by her outstanding beauty in *Iliad* book 3 (156-8: "οὐ νέμεσις Τρῶας καὶ ἑυκνήμιδας Ἀχαιοὺς / τοιγῆδ' ἀμφὶ γυναικὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἄλγεα πάσχειν / αἰνῶς

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ries of Kition and Paphos; similarities in the cults of the two deities are observed in their cult representations and in some cult practices. Astarte was worshipped together with her son Melkart at Kition, a cult corresponding to that of Aphrodite and Herakles: see R. Rebuffat, "Hélène en Égypte et le Roman égaré", *REA* 68 (1966), 245 - 63; W.W. How - J. Wells, *A Commentary on Herodotus, with Introduction and Appendixes*, Oxford 1912 (repr. 1964), vol. I, 223; Constantinidou, *Lakonian Cults*, 102f.

60. Various stories about Egypt were probably introduced into the Greek oral tradition and took their definite form from Homer onwards, from the eighth century, especially in the *Odyssey*; see Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II. Commentary* 99 - 182, 44 - 7, 116 - 18. On contacts between Greece and Egypt from the Bronze Age down to Herodotos' time see J.T. Hooker, *Mycenaean Greece*, London 1976 (repr. 1980), esp. 67 - 9, 115; J. Boardman, *The Greeks overseas. Their early colonies and trade*, London 1980 (new and enlarged third edition), esp. 111 - 53 (ch. "The Greeks in Egypt"); M.M. Austin, *Greece and Egypt in the Archaic Age*, *PCPhs* Suppl. 2 (1970); A.B. Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II. Introduction*, Leiden 1975, 1ff. See also S. Hornblower, "Epic and Epiphanies: Herodotus and the 'New Simonides'", in D. Boedeker and D. Sider, eds, *The New Simonides: contexts of Praise and Desire*, Oxford 2001, 138, and Stephanie West's recent book, *Demythologisation in Herodotus*, 34ff.



ἀθανάτησι θεῆς εἰς ὅσα ἔοικεν”), and through the goddess she was so closely associated with in the epic, Aphrodite; this may also explain Herodotos’ confuse — or rather conscious identification — of the cult of Ἀφροδίτης ξείνης in Egypt with that of Helen. The fact that Herodotos “does not expressly identify the epiphany of the woman with Helen but leaves the matter open”,<sup>61</sup> should not be explained as an avoidance to refer directly to Helen’s divinity and her divine cult in Therapne. By using the phrase τῆν θεόν, “the goddess”, he certainly means Helen, even if he avoids repeating her name since he had mentioned it a few lines before in referring to her shrine. Besides, as we have seen earlier, Helen’s divine nature is elsewhere alluded to by the historian (2.112.2), namely the discussion about her presence in Egypt and the existence there of a cult of hers associated to that of Aphrodite.<sup>62</sup>

Thus, Herodotos’ story according to which in the sixth century, and most probably in his time, Helen was worshipped in Therapne for the possession of powers of attributing beauty to ugly human beings, especially to young girls, nearly coincides with the period when tradition said that with similar powers she inflicted Stesichoros with blindness because he had accused her for running away to Troy.<sup>63</sup> It seems,

61. Huxley, “Herodotos on myth and politics in early Sparta”, 9 n. 59. On Helen’s divine epiphany in Herodotos see L.F. Fitzhardinge, *The Spartans*, London 1980, 143; Hooker, *The ancient Spartans*, 56 - 8; P.A. Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia. A regional history c. 1300 - 362 B.C.*, London and Boston 1979, 120 - 21; idem, *The Spartans. An epic History*, 29 - 31. See also M. Dillon, *Girls and women in classical Greek religion*, London - New York 2002, 212, who argues that evidently Herodotos’ evidence refers to a pre-marital (pre-nuptial rite) cult of Helen in ancient Therapne, implied by the emphasis on the girl’s original ugliness and her transformation by a magic way — the woman, obviously the goddess Helen, touched the girl’s head — into beauty.

62. See Harrison, *Divinity and History*, 214: “Only in this case — the identification of Aphrodite Xeinie as Helen, on the grounds that Helen had spent time with the Egyptian Proteus, and that the epithet Xeinie for Aphrodite was unique (2.112.2) — does Herodotus present an equation overtly as his own innovation”.

63. Huxley, “Herodotos on myth and politics”, 9. A few centuries later, on behalf of an Egyptian this time, Theokritos, Helen’s cult in Sparta was reminded by a group of Spartan girls who performed her *Epithalamion* song: see Dillon, *op. cit.*, 212. See also D. Boedeker, “The Two Faces of Demaratus”, *Arethusa* 20.1,2 (1987), 188 - 9, who argues that “Herodotus is hesitant to accept that the rape of Helen really caused the Trojan war (1.5.3 and 2.120)”, although the “Helen pattern”, i.e. “the rape motif” — obviously with mythological roots — as an *aition* with historical consequences, is used in the stories about Demaratus in Herodotos’ Spartan *logos* where the goddess - Helen is also involved.



therefore, that Herodotos is not far off the Stesichorian version of Helen's story in his account in the sixth, but especially in the second book of his *Histories*. According to this version Helen, who is reconsidered in a new moral scheme, never went to Troy (cf. Stes. 192.3: οὐδ' ἔλεο πέργαμα Τροίας), "for the Trojans would never deny to give her back to the Greeks if she had been with them" (Hdt. 2.120.5). The same idea of the morally restored Helen may be found in the first book of his *Histories*, where she is among those women whose abduction had been the cause of the conflict between the Greeks and the barbarians. In this last case wealth and economic factors found in the engagement with commerce are as well important causes for women's abductions.<sup>64</sup>

As the discussion above has shown there is sufficient evidence for the prevailing tradition, since the antiquity, that it was Stesichoros who connected the *eidolon* with Egypt and Proteus. The rational approach of Herodotos and the poetic invention of Euripides state precisely the distinction in accepting the main point of this tradition, which is the *eidolon* theme.<sup>65</sup> In my view there is no contradiction in Stesi-

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64. For Huxley, "Herodotos and the epic" (a lecture given in the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Athens 1989, 6 - 7, 18 - 9), Herodotos' mention of these famous abductions (1.1.1f.) shows women's political importance in the East and in East Greece, while his reference to Helen in Egypt and his insistence that the Trojans would not be self-destroyed for her, shows the historian's insight into human character and psychology; his work could be called a "Psychology of History". As far as Herodotos' interest in epic heroes and heroines is concerned, this emphasizes the heroic past for which a prevailing political propaganda was taking place during his time. On the economic motives for women's abductions mentioned in Herodotos' book one see I.N. Porysinakis, *Η έννοια του πλούτου στην Ιστορίη του Ηροδότου*, *Dodone Suppl.* 31, Ioannina 1987, 64 - 5; see also 92 - 3, 102, for Herodotos' allusion to the social reality according to which the wealthy must be beautiful too.

65. In my view the statue in the shrine at Therapne seems to be the central cult-object depicting the divine figure of Helen, her lifeless image. In Herodotos' story, however, Helen is manifested to the Spartan nurse in two aspects: that of her statue (τῶγαλμα) and that of a woman, in a humanized form but not in a full self-revelation with the glory and the magnitude of a goddess, that is in a real epiphany. But we may see in these two manifestations the two *eidola* of Helen, the divine and the mortal; Herodotos creates the divine *eidolon* of the Spartan queen and the Homeric heroine, which I regard as one more way of exonerating her so that his version about the divine Helen — an idealised aspect of her — is not far from that of Stesichoros or Isokrates; whereas Euripides' (with the exception of the end of *Helen* and *Orestes* where the *apotheosis* of Helen takes place) as well





choros' version about Helen's reconsidered moral attitude. The surviving verses from the *Palinode* are such a reliable source, as Plato is, where it is stated that Helen had never gone aboard the ship nor had she ever reached Troy. This does not revoke the other possibility in Stesichoros' version that she did go to Egypt. Such a supposition does make sense as since Helen did not go to Troy with Paris her reputation was saved. The re-examination of Helen's moral behaviour by Stesichoros, in the *Palinode*, was probably associated with the Spartans' wish to restore their local goddess, for the diffusion of the *eidolon's* story coincides with the flourishing of Helen's cult in Sparta. The composition of the first poem where Helen was treated more strictly than by Homer,<sup>66</sup> should have offended the Spartans, or some of their colonies in Italy,<sup>67</sup> so that her restoration was necessary. Thus, the composition of a new poem, probably in the form of a hymn, would be the most appropriate for the goddess of Sparta. Not only the *Palinode* but also the emphasis on Helen's divinity,<sup>68</sup> which is implied by the various stories about Stesichoros' blindness and the restoration of his

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as Gorgias' versions follow the heroic aspect of Helen. Cf. also the interesting parallelism between ἀγαλμα in Hdt. 6.61.3: ὅπως δὲ ἐνείκεε ἡ τροφός, πρὸς τε τῷ ἀγαλμα ἴστα καὶ ἐλίσσετο τὴν θεὸν ἀπαλλάξαι τῆς δυσμορφίης τὸ παιδίον, and Eur. *Helen* 705: νεφέλης ἀγαλμ' ἔχοντες. Harrison, *Divinity and History*, 160 - 1, very rightly points out that there is a confusion over Helen's status, which is not exclusive to Herodotus but is found in other sources as well, although the historian is inclined to a divine classification as a result of his own "revisionist version of the Trojan war"; "If Herodotus had made a mental connection between these two passages", i.e. 6.61 and 2. 112.2, Harrison argues, "it is likely that he would have made it explicit, however". On the various meanings of ἀγαλμα see also F. Frontisi - Ducroux *Dédale. Mythologie de l'artisan en Grèce ancienne*, Paris 1975, 95 - 117 ("Statues vivantes").

66. The Homeric poems were known in Sparta at least by Tyrtaeos' time. These must have been known at the end of the seventh century and were probably recited during the ceremonies or some other celebrations or gatherings; cf. Hooker *The Ancient Spartans*, 109, for the influence of the epic on Tyrtaeos' poetry.

67. For the *Palinode* being associated with Locri and the cult of Helen and the Dioskouri there, see Chr. Sourvinou - Inwood, "Persephone and Aphrodite at Locri: A model for personality definitions in Greek Religion", *JHS* 98 (1978), 106 and A.J. Podlecki, *The Early Greek Poets and their Times*, Vancouver 1984, 152 - 73.

68. If in general Homeric Helen does not surpass normal human characteristics apart from some special powers she possesses, many later sources refer to her as a goddess at Sparta, Therapne, Rhodes and Egypt; her evolutionary process was not of one aspect, so that: "Whether as one who committed her crime with Paris in her pro-



sight, would be such. In these, the goddess Helen manifests her power by punishing those who had accused her and restoring them when they rectify. It also explains the radical version of Stesichoros' story about her wanderings and assists to appease the anger of those who may have been offended by the impious tone of the previous version, the Spartans themselves.<sup>69</sup> According to his, as well as to the Herodotean version, it should be found some other *casus belli*, not real Helen, for justifying the Trojan War.<sup>70</sup>

### *Helen's eidolon and the Hesiodic Catalogue of Women*

Helen's worship as a divine figure was certainly a peculiarity in the Spartan cult as, for most of the Greek world she was the Homeric heroine who was abducted by Paris and lived many years in Troy far away from her homeland. As M.L. West<sup>71</sup> has put it: "In Greece generally Helen belonged to mythology as an early queen of Sparta. But at Sparta itself she belonged to religion". As such she should be released from the accusation that she had caused a great war.<sup>72</sup> However, Homer's depiction of Helen in the *Iliad*, and thus in Troy, is that of a real and not of a fictional figure, i.e. of a phantom.<sup>73</sup> But, already in

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per person, or as one who lent her name to an εἶδωλον designed to carry the burden of the sin, in either case Helen . . . acts as an intermediary between gods and men she hovers between the divine world and the mundane, to find her salvation in due course as a goddess": Zagagi, "Helen of Troy: Encomium and Apology", 88; see also Constantinidou, *Lakonian Cults*, 61.

69. See Davison, *From Archilochus to Pindar*, 196 - 225; Bowra, "The two Palinodes of Stesichorus", 245 - 52; Zagagi, "Helen of Troy: Encomium and Apology", 65f.

70. Cf. Suzuki, *Metamorphoses of Helen*, 15.

71. *Immortal Helen*, 5. But see also M.L. West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women*, Oxford 1985, 157 for the view that the goddess of Therapne, whose abduction and return must have been an old cult myth, was later fixed in the setting of the Trojan War by the canonical story and by making Mycenae and Sparta close allies.

72. I do not agree with Suzuki, *Metamorphoses of Helen*, 14f., that "Herodotus' account in Book 2 of Helen's sojourn in Egypt, was not meant to exonerate her"; at least his account about her declares that she never went to Troy and even more the historian suggests that there was a cult of Helen in Egypt, an indication that she had stayed in this country together with Proteus as the stories about her were telling.

73. See L.L. Clader, *Helen. The evolution from divine to heroic in Greek epic tradition*, *Mnemosyne* Suppl. 42, Leiden 1976, 5 - 62. But see also J. Lindsay, *Helen of Troy*, London 1974, 122, who does not deny the possibility that epic Helen was a phantom at Troy although Homer's treatment is rather realistic.



the *Iliad* we can grasp the germ of that revisionary Helen, the culpable and the innocent; although she appears as a pretext of the war at the same time she is treated as an emblem by the warriors, a beautiful phantom for which they fight.<sup>74</sup> She is the female Other, like the archetypal woman of Greek mythology, Pandora, and all their successors, all women, who bring war and evil to men. This Otherness that the two female figures, Helen and Pandora, share in Greek mythology will be discussed below.

A dubious fragment suggests that Helen's *eidolon* was introduced by Hesiod (358 M.-W.),<sup>75</sup> and this is the only evidence we have which associates the phantom of Helen with the above poet. The other sources remain silent; Hesiod himself does not seem particularly interested in this heroine. And the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* is a much later work than Hesiod—West<sup>76</sup> dates the *Catalogue* in the middle of the sixth century—in which *Catalogue* the references to Helen are quite interesting and cover various stages of her life: e.g. her birth was probably recorded in F 23.40, the Wooing of Helen in F 196-204 (in book 5 of the *Catalogue*), and F 176 refers to the marriage of the three daughters of Tyndareos, Timandra, Klytaimestra and Helen (see M.-W.).

The Hesiodic fragment 23a (M.-W.) is very important from our point of view as it seems that there is a mention of Helen in line 40. The previous verses refer to the daughters of Leda by Tyndareos, to Timandra, Klytaimestra and Phylonoe, to the *apotheosis* of Phylonoe, the marriages of Klytaimestra and Timandra and then, in lines 38-40, the Children of Leda by Zeus should be mentioned. However, only the name of Polydeukes appears (l. 39: ἀε]θλοφόρο[ν Πολυδεύκεα), but

74. Suzuki, *Metamorphoses of Helen*, 16.

75. See R. Merkelbach and M.L. West, *Fragmenta Hesiodica*, Oxford 1967. But even if there was the slightest allusion in Hesiod's poems, it will be shown below that it was Stesichoros who developed the theme of the *eidolon* into Helen's *eidolon*. The *eidolon* theme, that of an image or a ghost, appears elsewhere in Hesiod (F 23a.21f. M.-W.), and Homer, although not without doubt about the authenticity of the verses it occurs: in the *Iliad* (5.449-53) for example, the battle is carried on around Aeneias' phantom while the hero himself is rescued by Aphrodite; and in the *Odyssey* (11.601-4), it is the *eidolon* of Herakles that Odysseus meets in Hades whereas the real hero is with the gods. In both cases the *eidolon* motif assumes the meaning of a phantom which substitutes a real person. However, West (*The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women*, 134 - 5) finds all the references to phantoms substituting real persons in Homer doubtful, for almost all of them are later interpolations.

76. *Catalogue of Women*, 134.



in l. 40 one should expect to find the name of the other divine offspring of Leda, Helen,<sup>77</sup> although the text here is badly damaged and its restoration is not an easy task.<sup>78</sup> It is, however, very remarkable that in this fragment the εἶδωλον of Iphimede (23a.21) is associated with the *eidolon* motif — a motif also found in Stesichoros — and even more in a context which presupposes that Helen too was probably mentioned a few lines below. It is also interesting that, here too, the εἶδωλον is associated with the Trojan war as a payment for penalty to Artemis: see 23a.17-21: Ἴφιμέδην μὲν σφάξαν ἑυκνή[μ]ιδες Ἀχαιοὶ / βωμῶ[ι ἐπ' Ἀρτέμιδος χρυσηλακ]άτ[ου] κελαδεινῆς, / ἤματ[ι τῶι ὅτε νηυσὶν ἀνέπλ]εον Ἴλιον εἴσω / ποινῆ[ν τεισόμενοι καλλισ]φύρου Ἀργειώ[νης] εἶδωλον.<sup>79</sup> Thus Helen seems to be mentioned as a daughter of Leda and Zeus in the Hesiodic fragment 23a.<sup>80</sup>

There are, therefore, certain points of contact between the Hesiodic *Catalogue* and Stesichoros.<sup>81</sup> One has already been mentioned and this "is the motif of the simulacrum or phantom (εἶδωλον) substituted for a real person at a critical time",<sup>82</sup> which applies to both Helen and

77. See Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.10.7: Διὸς δὲ Λήδα συνελθόντος ὁμοιωθέντος κύκνω, καὶ κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν νύκτα Τυνδάρω, ἐκ Διὸς μὲν ἐγεννήθη Πολυδεύκης καὶ Ἑλένη, Τυνδάρω δὲ Κάστωρ; cf. *frs.* 24 and 176.

78. According to West (*The Hesiodic Catalogue*, 43), Helen's birth in F 23a must have been mentioned in connection with Leda in book I, where it seems there was no room for the lengthy episode of the Wooing of Helen which is treated in F 196 - 204.

79. There is a parallel story for Helen according to which Tyndareos should sacrifice a παρθένος ἡβῶσα — that was Apollon's wish — when a natural disaster happened in Sparta; Helen was, however, substituted, by divine intervention in this case too, with an animal: see P. Bonnechere, *Le sacrifice humain en Grèce ancienne*, *Kernos Suppl.* 3, Athènes - Liège 1994, 127 - 8.

80. According to F 23a.7ff., Leda had borne Tyndareos three daughters: Timandra, Klytaimestra and Phylonoe while [Kastor], Polydeukes and [Helen] were children of Zeus (F. 23a.38ff.). F 176 has similarities with Stesichoros' fr. 223 (PMG) in treating the above daughters of Leda and Tyndareos as a group, who suffered from their father's neglect in sacrificing to Aphrodite. For the inconsistency in Helen's parentage in *fragmenta Hesiodica* see West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women*, 96, 123.

81. See West, 134, for the possibility that Stesichoros' second *Palinode*, in which he criticized Hesiod according to Chamaileon (PMG 193), referred to a story about Helen included in the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, although this would not "exclude a dating of the *Catalogue* as late as the middle of the sixth century".

82. West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue*, 134; cf. 135: "The idea of the Greeks and Trojans fighting about a phantom is particularly close to Stesichoros' story of the



Iphigeneia — or Iphimede. Another point of contact is Helen's wedding (see *Catalogue* F 176 and Stesichoros 223 *PMG*). The great list of Helen's suitors with more than 200 lines is in the beginning of book 5 of the *Catalogue* (1-200). The story seems to be well-planned by the poet of the *Catalogue*, so that he remained consistent with the Homeric tradition whose central event was the Trojan war. The long catalogue of the suitors, which is compared to the catalogue of the combatants in *Iliad* book 2, was needed for giving the greatness and the importance of a great war, since all the suitors gave an oath that they would fight against anyone who would abduct Helen after her choice and marriage. There is obviously a Homeric influence in the selection of the heroes/suitors and in the general idea of defending the *timē* of somebody that an oath was given for. Thus, the poet of the *Catalogue* remains loyal to the Homeric tradition by composing the elements of his own narrative in such a way that the greatness of the war, as well as the destruction of so many heroes who contested for a marriage to Helen but also gave an oath to defend the winner in case of an offence against his marriage, was understood.<sup>83</sup>

Let us examine the suitors' list which seems very interesting. Among them is Agamemnon who, already married to Klytimestra, helped his brother Menelaos win the bride by contributing gifts on behalf of him (F 197. 1-5). The beauty of Helen had become very famous and the *Catalogue* gives an emphasis on that in various places of the narration: F 196. 4-6: ... ε[ὶ]νεκα κούρης / ἡ εἶ[δος] ἔχε χρυσῆς Ἀφ[ροδί]της / ]ν Χαρίτων ἀμαρ[ύγμ]ατ' ἔχουσιν; F 199. 2-3: ἰμείρων Ἐλένης πόσις ἔμμεναι ἠυκόμοιο, εἶδος οὐ τι ἰδών, ἀλλ' ἄλλων μῦθον ἀκούων; F 204. 42-3: μάλα δ' ἤθελε δν κατὰ θυμόν / Ἀργείης Ἐλένης πόσις ἔμμεναι ἠυκόμοιο; cf. 54-5; 204. 61-3: ... ὄφρα ἰδοίτο / Ἀ[ργείην] Ἐλένην, μηδ' ἄλλων οἶον ἀκούοι / μῦθον, ... etc.; κυανῶπις in line 8 (F 196) must refer to Helen too — probably making a pun on the Homeric κυνῶπις (see *Il.* 3.180; *Od.* 4.145)? Obviously, the Homeric tradition about Helen's famous beauty (*Iliad* 3.158) is respected by the poet of the *Catalogue*.<sup>84</sup>

phantom Helen, and the likelihood is that *Il.* 5.449 - 53 (or perhaps 447 - 53) is a post-Stesichorean interpolation. If so, then Stesichorus and the *Catalogue* poet are left with the priority in using the motif".

83. Cf. West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue*, 114 - 15.

84. Homeric formulae are adopted here like Ἐλένης... ἠυκόμοιο (on Helen's famous hair see *Iliad*, 3.329, 7.355, 8.82, 9.339, 11.369 etc.; see also Eur. *Hel.* 1188 and *Or.* 128). Helen's beauty is literally established not only by the phrase γυναῖξ' εὐεῖδέ' in *Iliad* 3.48, but is also alluded in the phrase Ἀχαιῖδα καλλιγύναικα shortly



The *Catalogue* also explains that Achilles was still very young to be a suitor of Helen. So, Menelaos won the bride, married Helen and had a child called Hermione (F 204.94). But at that moment of Hermione's birth the narration is shifted to the gods and to Zeus' plan to stir up a war and destroy men; the divine world too was characterized by dissension. As for men, conditions of their life changed fundamentally and they did no more enjoy the paradise conditions of the past.<sup>85</sup> The poet goes on by describing how Zeus' plan was carried out so that great changes would occur in conditions of human life. West<sup>86</sup> suggests that F 204. 176-8 (cf. F 1. 1-14 M.-W.), may deal with the subject "of the blissful life that men once enjoyed", as in *WD* 90-2:

F 204. 176-8: *Works and Days*, 90-2:

ζώε[σκ-	πρὶν μὲν γὰρ ζώεσκον ἐπὶ χθονὶ φῦλ' ἀνθρώπων
νοσφ[	νόσφιν ἄτερ τε κακῶν καὶ ἄτερ χαλεποῦ πόνου
κηρ[	νοῦσων τ' ἀργαλέων αἶ τ' ἀνδράσι κῆρας ἔδωκαν.

(Cf. *Cypria* 1 Allen: ἦν δτε μυρία φῦλα κατὰ χθόνα πλαζόμεν' ἀνδρῶν / . . . . βαθυστέρνου πλάτος αἴης. / Ζεὺς δὲ ἰδὼν ἐλέησε καὶ ἐν πυκιναιῖς πραπίδεσσι / σύνθετο κουφίλοι ἀνθρώπων παμβώτορα σύνθετο γαῖαν, / ῥιπίσσας πολέμου ἔριν Ἰλιακοῦ, / ἕφρα κενώσειεν θανάτῳ βάρους· οἱ δ' ἐνὶ Τροίῃ / ἥρωες κτείνοντο. Διὸς δ' ἔτελείετο βουλή).

below in the same book of the *Iliad* (line 75), as well as in lines 139 - 40 and 281 - 2 of book 9 where Helen's beauty is a measure of comparison to the Trojan women: Τρωιάδας δὲ γυναῖκας εἰκόσιν αὐτὸς ἐλέσθω, / αἶ κε μετ' Ἀργεῖην Ἑλένην κάλλισται ἔωσιν. The fame of Helen's beauty seems to be reflected in a seventh century Delphic oracle according to which a reference is made "to the women of Sparta, hailing them as the most beautiful in all Greece": Cartledge, *The Spartans. An epic History*, 31. See also above, note 23.

85. West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue*, 119. On Zeus' plan(s) to relieve the earth from the excess population which "form a structural ring around the Kypria", as well as for Zeus' plan in the *Iliad*, see J. Marks, "The junction between the *Kypria* and the *Iliad*", *Phoenix* 56. 1-2 (2002), 1 - 24, esp. p. 9. A similar plan by the divine (τοῦ δαιμονίου, a nameless reference) is according to Herodotos (2.120.5) the cause of people's great sufferings during the Trojan War; this War is justified here by the human beings' unjust behaviour: see above, pp. 181-2.

86. *The Hesiodic Catalogue*, 121: "... (There was mention of νοῦσοι in 158). Or if we read ζώε[ι in 176, the subject might be ἡμιθέων γένος ἀνδρῶν". Cf. Andromache's accusation of Helen in Euripides' *Troades* 766ff.: ὦ Τυνδάρειον ἔρνος, οὐ ποτ' εἰ Διὸς, / πολλῶν δὲ πατέρων φημί σ' ἐκπεφυκέναι, / Ἀλάστορος μὲν πρῶτον, εἶτα δὲ Φθόνου / Φθόνου τε Θανάτου θ' ὅσα τε γῆ τρέφει κακὰ. οὐ γὰρ ποτ' αὐχῶ Ζῆνά γ' ἐκφῶσαι σ' ἐγώ, / πολλοῖσι κῆρα βαρβάρους Ἑλλήσι τε. / ὄλοιο· καλλίστων γὰρ ὀμμάτων ἀπο / αἰσχυρῶς τὰ κλεινὰ πεδί' ἀπώλεσας Φρυγῶν: "You scion of Tyndareus' house, you were



To sum up: in F 204. 1-94 we have the marriage of Helen and the birth of Hermione and from verse 95-? Zeus plans the Trojan war (cf. F 204. 118-9 M.-W.: π]ολλάς Ἀϊδῆ κεφαλὰς ἀπὸ χαλκὸν ἰάψ[ει]ν / ἀν]-δρῶν ἡρώων ἐν δηϊοτῆτι πεσόντων, with *Iliad* 1. 3-4: πολλάς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἀϊδὶ προΐαψεν / ἡρώων; 11. 53-5: Κρονίδης . . . πολλάς ἰφθίμους κεφαλὰς Ἀϊδὶ προΐαψειν, where there is a resemblance in Zeus' plan of the Trojan War). It is in book 5 that these stories are narrated, i.e. Helen's marriage and the great catastrophe that destroyed the age of the heroes.<sup>87</sup>

never born from Zeus, but I declare you are the child of many fathers, of the Avenging Curse, of Envy, of Murder and Death and all the plagues the Earth breeds! Zeus never begot you, I am certain, you who are a pestilence to countless Greeks and barbarians alike. May you die! With your lovely eyes you have brought ugly death to the famed plains of Troy" (: S.A. Barlow, *Euripides, Trojan Women. With translation and commentary*, Warminster 1986, 113 - 15). Helen is presented by Andromache as a contrast to her, as the traditional symbol of evil and danger, as being responsible for the war and its effects. A Hesiodic echo occurs here related to Pandora: ἀλλὰ γυνὴ χεῖρεσσι πίθου μέγα πῆμ' ἀφελούσα / ἐσκέδασ' ἀνθρώποισι δ' ἐμήσατο κήδεα λυγρὰ (*WD* 94f.); cf. ἄλλα δὲ μυρία λυγρὰ κατ' ἀνθρώπους ἀλάληται· πλείη μὲν γὰρ γαῖα κακῶν, πλείη δὲ θάλασσα (*WD* 100 - 1). Thus, the common element between Helen and Pandora as sources of evil — first registered in the Hesiodic *Works and Days* — is also found in the *Cypria* but in Greek tragedy as well. Both myths serve to justify the presence of evil in various forms in human life. Helen is the "grief that never heals" (see G. Holst-Warhaft, *Dangerous Voices: Women's laments in Greek literature*, London and New York 1992, 137) for, as the Chorus in *Agamemnon* reminds us, the war was fought because of her loss: Aesch. *Ag.* 813 - 24: "For hearkening to no pleadings by word of mouth, without dissentient voice, they [the gods] cast into the urn of blood their ballots for the murderous destroying of Ilium; but to the urn of acquittal that no hand filled, Hope alone drew nigh. The smoke still even now declares the city's fall. Destruction's blast live, and the embers as they die, breathe forth rich reek of wealth. For this success it behoves us to render to the gods a return in ever - mindful gratitude, seeing that we have thrown round the city the toils of vengeance, and in a woman's cause [γυναικὸς οὐνεκα] it hath been laid by the fierce Argive beast. . .": transl. H. Weir Smyth, Loeb. According to P. Judet de la Combe, *L' Agamemnon d'Eschyle. Commentaire des dialogues*, première partie, 278, this allegory in the *Agamemnon* reminds us of the description of the two jars in *Iliad* 24.527ff., and is also foretold in the *Works and Days* 96 - 9 as well as in the *Theogony* 607 - 12. In *Agamemnon* and the Hesiodic examples the divine choice of sending evils to mankind was associated with a woman, Helen (γυναικὸς οὐνεκα), or Pandora (*Th.* 585 - 90; *WD* 94 - 100).

87. According to West (*The Hesiodic Catalogue*, 121) the poet of the *Catalogue*, after narrating Helen's suitors, her marriage and the birth of her child, as well as the stirring up of the war, he should have returned to Helen and her abduction by Paris as the cause of the conflict, as well as to more details about the couple



R. Scodel<sup>88</sup> argues that the Trojan War marks the end of the Golden Age in the myth of destruction motif, where the will of Zeus plays an important role as in the *Iliad*, the *Cypria* and the *Catalogue*. The Trojan War thus seems, in all these versions, as the dividing point as "a myth of destruction, in which Zeus brings about the catastrophe in order to remove the demigods from the world and separate men from gods, to relieve the earth of the burden caused by overpopulation, or to punish impiety".<sup>89</sup> It may be inferred, therefore, that all these versions draw off a common traditional source by adapting some of its themes to their own stories.

### *The Catalogue, Helen and Pandora*

As has already been mentioned West<sup>90</sup> dates the *Catalogue* in the mid-sixth century. One of the arguments that point to this dating is the "Stesichorean phantom-motif" which, according to the above discussion, establishes connections between the Stesichorean poetry and the poetry belonging to the Hesiodic tradition. Therefore, whatever derives from the study of the *Catalogue of Women* is quite interesting in relation to Stesichoros' poetry. They have in common the *eidolon-motif*, although in the *Catalogue* this motif is associated with Iphigeneia who is related to Helen and the Trojan war. Helen, on the other hand, is a prominent figure of the *Catalogue*: her birth?, her marriage, her suitors and their oath whence derives their participation in the Trojan war. She is a prominent figure in Stesichoros' poetry too.

Therefore, the *Catalogue* is a very important source for the parallelism of Helen and Pandora on which we will focus our discussion

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like the birth of their child Nikostratos. See also J. Marks' (*art.cit.*), interesting suggestion that Cyprian themes, among them Zeus' plan, were "proto Panhellenic" in scope, while the *Iliad* ones, which had a wider diffusion, were "Panhellenic" and that the junction between the two could be dated by the classical period. It seems that there is a literary substratum on which the destruction of the age of the heroes is based on, strongly dependent on Διός βουλή; the *Cypria* (1 Allen = a *scholion* to *Iliad* 1.5), the proem of the *Iliad* (esp. 1.5) but also Hesiod's *WD* (90ff.) and the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* (F 204), reflect this idea of the will of the supreme power, Zeus, imposed over mortals. See particularly *Iliad* 1.8: Τὸ τ' ἄρ' σπῶε θεῶν ἔριδι ξυνέτηκε μάχεσθαι;, which points to the epic principle that a god is always involved in human affairs.

88. "The Achaean Wall and the Myth of Destruction", *HSCP* 86 (1982), 46-9.

89. Scodel, as note above, 40; cf. 48 - 9.

90. *The Hesiodic Catalogue*, 136 and *passim*.





below. The two female mythological figures are placed together, they seem to fulfil in a way the same appointed end, destructive though it is. Pandora, in Hesiod's works (*Theogony* and *Works and Days*), is the cause of man's misfortunes. Similarly, in the *Catalogue*, Helen represents the cause of the great change in the human race and that of the heroes.<sup>91</sup> Pandora is the cause of the destruction of the iron *genos* in the Hesiodic myth of Ages, Helen of the heroic one in Hesiod too (*WD* 159-65), but in Homer as well where lots of heroes are destroyed because of her.<sup>92</sup> In both cases *the preceding generations* had a much better life, a blissful one. It is very interesting that in the *Catalogue* there is mention of *eris* who divided the gods and brought catastrophe to the human beings: see F 204. 95-7: πάντες δὲ θεοὶ δίχῃ θυμὸν ἔθεντο / ἔξ ἔριδος· δὴ γὰρ τότε μήδετο θέσσελα ἔργα / Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης...<sup>93</sup> Nevertheless, there is an essential difference the poet of the *Catalogue* does not overtly implicate Helen for the catastrophe that succeeded her marriage, as Hesiod does with Pandora (see *Works and Days*). On the other hand, he adopts the scheme according to which Zeus decided to separate demigods from the rest and remove them to the Isles of the Blest (F 204. 95-104 M.-W.). As a result of this decision was the Trojan war and a stronger separation between gods and men. We find here too, as in the *WD*, the Golden Age motif (see proem, F 1. 1-14 M.-W.) disturbed by weather phenomena as part of a general disturbance in nature (cf. *Cypria* fr. 1 Allen).<sup>94</sup>

The fragment which suggests that Helen's *eidolon* was introduced by Hesiod (πρῶτος Ἡσίοδος περὶ τῆς Ἑλένης τὸ εἶδωλον παρήγαγε: 358 M.-W.), is rather a late evidence. The *Catalogue* itself is a post-Hesiodic composition although, as has been argued, "it is evident that F1 was designed from the start as a continuation from the *Theogony*, and that *Th.* 1019f. were designed from the start as a transition to the *Cata-*

91. See above, pp. 191-94.

92. See note 6, above. However, some of the heroes were granted a happy life in the Isles of the Blest.

93. See *WD* 11 - 46, for Hesiod's doctrine of the two *Erides* in the beginning of his poem: the one which is also included in his theogonic genealogies in *Th.* 225f., is bad, who likes "pain and grief, battles, quarrels, lies, and lawlessness", and the different Eris, the good one: see M.L. West, *Hesiod, Works and Days. Edited with Prolegomena and Commentary*, Oxford 1978, comm. on 11 - 46 (pp. 142ff.).

94. See Scodel, "The Achaean Wall", 37 - 9.



logue".<sup>95</sup> West<sup>96</sup> suggests that the last hundred lines of the *Theogony*, i.e. its end, either was lost so that the poet of the *Catalogue* completed the poem, or he recomposed the whole end in his own style, and that "it is possible that the *Catalogue* too took the place of something genuinely Hesiodic". Therefore, the possible connections between the *Catalogue* and Stesichoros, as well as the evident connections of the *Catalogue* with the *Theogony* — the poet of the *Catalogue* must have known well Hesiod's *Erga* and the *Theogony*<sup>97</sup> — place the three poets within the same tradition, the Hesiodic influence predominating. It is also possible, in my view, that Stesichoros as well as the poet of the *Catalogue* took over the *eidolon* idea from the Hesiodic myth of Pandora and adapted it to their own narrative: Stesichoros to Helen's story and the poet of the *Catalogue* to the story of Iphigeneia which is also associated with the Trojan war. Thus, it will be argued below that the conception of this idea is closely associated with particular elements found in the myth of Pandora,<sup>98</sup> and that in this myth we can trace the original elements of Helen's phantom.

Pandora is the model of a false woman, a creation of the gods (*Th.* 511-14: . . . 'Επιμηθεά, / δς κακὸν ἐξ ἀρχῆς γένετ' ἀνδράσιν ἀλφεισῆσι / πρῶτος γάρ ῥα Διδς πλαστὴν ὑπέδεκτο γυναικα / παρθένον; cf. 570 ff.; *WD* 70ff.). Helen's *eidolon* is a creation of the gods too, though in the shape of a particular person, that of the Spartan queen (see Eur. *Helen* 582-88). The myth of Pandora is linked to that of Prometheus; it explains how man cannot live without working and hardship and how he was designed to an intolerable life which presupposes necessity of work, several evils and misfortunes,<sup>99</sup> a man's unavoidable

95. West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue*, 126.

96. *The Hesiodic Catalogue*, 127 - 28.

97. See West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue*, 128.

98. See Hes. *Th.* 507f., 570f.; *WD* 60f. For the myth of Pandora see M.L. West, *Hesiod, Theogony*, Oxford 1966, 304 - 12 and 325 - 36 where also relevant bibliography; *idem*, *Hesiod, Works and Days*, 155 - 72; Vernant, *Myth and Thought among the Greeks*, 239 - 40; *idem*, "Le mythe prométhéen chez Hésiode", in *Mythe et société en Grèce ancienne*, Paris 1974, 177 - 94; P. Vidal - Naquet, *Le chasseur noir. Formes de pensée et formes de société dans le monde grec*, Paris 1981, 39 - 42; A. Casanova, *La famiglia di Pandora: Analisi filologica dei miti di Pandora e Prometeo nella tradizione Esiodea*, Florence 1979 (*passim*), etc.

99. Vernant, *Myth and Thought among the Greeks*, 18 - 9. For a review of the various interpretations of the myth of Pandora in gender terms see L.E. Doherty, *Gender and the Interpretation of Classical Myth*, London 2001, 133 - 7.



destiny. This myth functions as aetiological for the theft of the fire by Prometheus and the overthrow of the divine order which in the past had established a peaceful co-existence between men and gods, and assured for men an easy life, without trouble. Pandora, the first woman, the symbol of various contradictions, “καλὸν κακὸν ἄντ’ ἀγαθοῖο” (Hes. *Th.* 585)<sup>100</sup> is the cause for the loss of human happiness and the beginning of man’s decline and misfortunes which in Hesiod’s “myth of Ages”, in the *Works and Days*, is represented by the Iron Age (see *Th.* 565ff., 585ff., 600ff.; *WD* 541ff., 79ff., 90ff., 173ff.).<sup>101</sup> The myths of Prometheus and Pandora are thus followed by the famous myth of Ages whose structure and interpretation has been a matter of a long and controversial discussion.<sup>102</sup>

100. Cf. *Th.* 600ff.: ὡς δ’ αὐτως ἄνδρεςσι κακὸν θνητοῖσι γυναῖκας / Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης θῆκε, ξυνήοντας ἔργων / ἀργαλέων. ἕτερον δὲ πόρεν κακὸν ἄντ’ ἀγαθοῖο; see also *WD* 57-8, 82. On the opposite, in Aesch. *Prometheus Vincetus* 445ff., Prometheus enumerates the benefits that he gave to human beings: before that, men could not see or hear clearly even though they had these senses (there is a metaphorical use here), they did not build houses or use timber in everyday life but they did live in sunless caves like μύρμηκες. They did not have clear signs of the winter, or the spring, or the summer (i.e. of the change of the Seasons), they did everything without knowledge until he showed them the sunrise of the stars and the sunsets and invented for them the letters and the numbers, which is the best invention, and the composing of the letters (i.e. into words): 445 - 61. See also A. Gartzou - Tatti, “Ὁ Σίσυφος: ἡ ἀνακάλυψη τῶν νόμων καὶ τῶν θεῶν”, in E. Patrikiou, ed., *Ὀκτὼ δοκίμια γιὰ τὸ ἀρχαῖο δράμα*, Athens 2003, 99 - 129, for the discussion of a fifth century fragment, probably from Euripides’ lost satyr-play *Sisyphos*, on the evolution of mankind from a wild to a civilized life with the introduction of laws and the discovery of gods; there are more instances in ancient Greek drama of this motif (see *ibid.*, 111ff.) which, however, follows a reverse process to the idea behind the Hesiodic Myth of Ages, i.e. that of progress than decline.

101. See West, *Hesiod, Works and Days*, 172 - 77; Vernant, “Hesiod’s myth of the races: an essay in structural analysis”, in *Myth and Thought among the Greeks*, 1 - 32; J. Fontenrose, “Work, Justice, and Hesiod’s five ages”, *CPh* 69.1 (1974), 1-16. See also C.W. Querbach, “Hesiod’s Myth of the *Four Races*”, *CJ* 81.1 (1985), 1-12, esp. 5f. For the view that “Hesiod’s classification is not technological or even cultural, it is based on an hierarchy of the value of metals and a theory of degeneration” see J. Pinsent, “History, Myth and Epic: a Study on Genres” in *Ιλιάδα καὶ Οδύσσεια, Μῦθος καὶ Ἱστορία. Από τα πρακτικά του Δ’ Συνεδρίου για την Οδύσσεια* (9-15 Σεπτ. 1984), Ithaca 1986, 38-9. For a review of the various interpretations of these myths see also S. Constantinidou, “The importance of bronze in early Greek religion”, *Dodone* 21.2 (1992), 137-41.

102. The “degenerative interpretation”, as it is called, is adopted by many scholars who see in Hesiod’s myth of the successive ages a progressive decline of human life (and culture) and the “passage from an original paradise-state” (West,



But let us concentrate on Helen and Pandora. S. Blundell<sup>103</sup> discusses the creation of the world according to the Hesiodic narration in the *Theogony*; the origins of the *cosmos* and the gods are described, she argues, in connection to a male-dominated perception where links between “the evolution of patriarchal divine power and of an orderly *cosmos* are seen inextricably linked”. In Hesiod’s cosmogony woman comes last, after man, she is moulded from the earth, she is given as a punishment, as a penalty for the stealing of fire by Prometheus (*Th.* 570: αὐτίκα δ’ ἀντὶ πυρὸς τεῦξεν κακὸν ἄνθρωποισι; cf. *ibid.*, 511-14).<sup>104</sup> She is extremely beautiful and nicely dressed by Athena, a θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι, “a marvel to see” (*Th.* 575, 580) but she is also a κακόν, a δόλος (*Th.* 588-89: θαῦμα δ’ ἔχ’ ἀθανάτους τε θεοὺς θνητούς τ’ ἄνθρώπους, / ὡς εἶδον δόλον αἰπύν, ἀμήχανον ἄνθρωποισιν). “From her comes all the race of womankind, the deadly female race and tribe of wives who live with mortal men and bring them harm”<sup>105</sup>: *Th.* 590-92: ἐκ τῆς γὰρ γένος ἐστὶ γυναικῶν θηλυτεράων, /

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*Hesiod, Works and Days*, 172) to a state of misery and hard work. And the “non degenerative interpretation”, that which sees the successive ages in a synchronic as well as a diachronic dimension, not a decline of any sort but a different state of existence; thus the succession of the one race by the other should not be seen as a sequence of inferiority for, in some respects, a successive *genos* could be superior to the preceding one (cf. the silver and bronze races): Constantinidou, “The importance of bronze”, 137-8.

103. *Women in ancient Greece*, London 1995, 21ff. On the creation of Pandora see also: D. Ogden, “What was in Pandora’s box?”, in N. Fisher and Hans van Wees, eds, *Archaic Greece: New approaches and new evidence*, London 1998, 213, 217-8, etc.; J. Boardman, “Pandora in the Parthenon: a grace to mortals”, in A. Alexandri and I. Leventi, eds, *Καλλιστευμα: Μελέτες προς τιμήν της Όλγας Τζάχου - Αλεξανδρή*, Athens 2001, 233-44; A.H. Smith, “The making of Pandora”, *JHS* 11 (1890), 278-83; J.E. Harrison, “Pandora’s box”, *JHS* 20 (1900), 99-114.

104. See Blundell, *op. cit.*, 21. Meagher, *The Meaning of Helen*, 109-10, points out that Helen’s creation by Hermes is very similar to Pandora’s phantom, both figures of imagination characterized by likeness to real beings (*ikelon*) although they are only images or ideas.

105. Transl. Blundell, 22. See also S. Goldhill’s article “The Seductions of the Gaze: Socrates and His Girlfriends” in P. Cartledge, P. Millet, and S. von Reden, eds, *Kosmos: Essays in Order, Conflict and Community in Classical Athens*, Cambridge 1998, 114: “The Gorgonic dangers of looking at the female form are seen from Hesiod onwards: the figure of Pandora — the καλὸν κακόν — fabricated to deceive by appearance, is rewritten in Greek male writings’ often vitriolic horror of female make-up-cosmetics and false schemata. What is the acceptable limit of the gaze? The acceptable limit of display of the female body?” For a re-examination of Pandora as a deceptive gift see Doherty, *Gender and the Interpretation of Classical Myth*, 134-7. The same impression, that of a deceptive gift-prize,



[τῆς γὰρ ὀλοίϊόν ἐστι γένος καὶ φῦλα γυναικῶν,] / πῆμα μέγα θνητοῖσι, σὺν ἀνδράσι ναιετάουσαι. Here, in the *Theogony*, Pandora is presented to the immortals and the mortals as a θαῦμα but also she — whence the female race comes — is a πῆμα, a misfortune to the mortal men and to the human race consequently (cf. *Th.* 601-2: ὡς δ' αὐτως ἄνδρεςσι κακὸν θνητοῖσι γυναῖκας / Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης θῆκε). But in the process of her creation Pandora was above all an object of admiration (*Th.* 588-89).<sup>106</sup> Helen, too, appears on the Walls of Troy, where Priam and the δημογέροντες are, in *Iliad* book 3 (153ff.). She is a bright presence, an astonishing female figure similar to the immortal goddesses in beauty (αἰνῶς ἀθανάτησι θεῆς εἰς ὧπα ἔοικεν: line 158); but she is also a πῆμα, a harm for the warriors (Trojans and Achaeans) and their families (*Iliad* 3.159-60): ἀλλὰ καὶ ὧς τοίη περ ἐοῦσ' ἐν νηυσὶ νεέσθω, / μηδ' ἡμῖν τεκέεσσι τ' ὀπίσσω πῆμα λίποιτο). Evidently, *Iliad* 3.157 (τοιῆδ' ἀμφὶ γυναικὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἄλγεα πάσχειν) and *Th.* 590-92 (ἐκ τῆς γὰρ γένος ἐστὶ γυναικῶν θηλυτεράων, [τῆς γὰρ ὀλοίϊόν ἐστι γένος καὶ φῦλα γυναικῶν,] πῆμα μέγα θνητοῖσι, σὺν ἀνδράσι ναιετάουσαι) are very adjacent in meaning, for they present both, Helen and Pandora, as the Cause for the misfortunes of the human race.<sup>107</sup> The word πῆμα recurs in Pandora's story in the *Works and Days* 55-8: “χαίρεις πῦρ κλέψας καὶ ἐμὰς φρένας ἠπεροπεύσας, / σοὶ τ' αὐτῷ μέγα πῆμα καὶ ἀνδράσιν ἐσσομένοισιν. / τοῖς δ' ἐγὼ ἀντὶ πυρὸς δῶσω κακόν, ὧ κεν ἅπαντες / τέρπωνται κατὰ θυμόν, ἐὸν κακόν ἀμφαγαπῶντες”; 80-2: ὀνόμηγε δὲ τῆδε γυναῖκα / Πανδώρη, ὅτι πάντες

gives Helen in *Iliad* 3, in the duel scene: the heroine is promised to the winner but the outcome of the duel between Menelaos and Paris remains unclear due to Aphrodite's *dolos* for saving Paris. Here, Helen is a pretext so that the divine plan is fulfilled.

106. There is a Homeric parallel to the creation of Pandora related to Odysseus' appearance in *Odyssey* 6.224.-37. But see also similarities in Hera's adornment, she arrays herself in all her beauty so that she can seduce Zeus, in *Iliad* 14.170-86: R. Janko, *The Iliad: a commentary*, vol. IV: books 13-16, Cambridge 1992, 173-9.

107. For an early association of beauty with *eris* see also *Iliad* 9.388: κούρη δ' οὐ γαμέω Ἀγαμέμνονος Ἀτρεΐδαο, / οὐδ' εἰ χρυσεῖη Ἀφροδίτη κάλλος ἐρίζοι, ἔργα δ' Ἀθηναίη γλαυκῶπιδι ἰσοφαρίζοι: “I will not wed the girl of Agamemnon son of Atreus, no, not if she vied with golden Aphrodite in beauty, or rivalled grey-eyed Athena in works.” On the other hand Helen's beauty saved her from death: Ibycus 296; Stes. 201; cf. Eur. *Or.* 1287; Ar. *Lys.* 155f. On “the apple of discord” and the involvement of Eris in Paris' Judgement see T.C.W. Stinton, *Euripides and the Judgement of Paris*, *JHS Suppl.* 8, London 1965, 7ff. On πῆμα see F. Mawet, *Recherches sur les oppositions fonctionnelles dans le vocabulaire homérique de la douleur (autour de πῆμα-ἄλγος)*, Bruxelles 1977, 92ff., 116ff.



‘Ολύμπια δώματ’ ἔχοντες / δῶρον ἐδώρησαν, πῆμ’ ἀνδράσιν ἀλφηστῆσιν. Πῆμα, δόλον (*WD* 83; *Th.* 589), κακόν (*WD* 57, 58, 88, 89; *Th.* 570, 585) are terms that are applied to Pandora in the *Works and Days* as well as in the *Theogony*.

We should also point out that in Hesiod’s *Theogony* the woman who is created has no name, whereas in the *Works and Days* she is called Pandora, interpreted by the poet himself as the woman whom the Olympian gods “gave her a gift” or “gave her as a gift”<sup>108</sup> but also as a πῆμα to men (δῶρον ἐδώρησαν πῆμ’ ἀνδράσιν ἀλφηστῆσιν; cf. *Iliad* 3. 48-51: . . . γυναῖκ’ εὐειδέ’ [sc. Helen]. . . / πατρί τε σῶ μέγα πῆμα πόλητ τε παντί τε δήμῳ, / δυσμενέσιν μὲν χάρμα, κατηφείην δὲ σοὶ αὐτῶ;).

Thus, in the *Works and Days* the myth of Pandora presents some discrepancies from the *Theogony* one: first she has a name, she is called Pandora. More deities are involved in her ornaments and her formation as a person but obviously here, as in the *Theogony*, the way of her creation gives the impression of a false figure, a fictitious one, she is manufactured, made of clay like a pot (*WD*, 70: αὐτίκα δ’ ἐκ γαίης πλάσσε κλυτὸς Ἀμφιγυήεις; cf. *Th.* 513-4: . . . πλαστήν ὑπέδεκτο γυναῖκα παρθένον, 571: γαίης γὰρ σύμπλασσε). Her description is rather fierce: “she is given the morals of a bitch” (67: ἐν δὲ θέμεν κύνεόν τε νόον καὶ ἐπίκοπον ἦθος), she is a δόλος, αἰπὺς ἀμήχανος (83).<sup>109</sup> Moreover, she is given the

108. See Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 80-2: ὀνόμηνε δὲ τήνδε γυναῖκα / Πανδώρην, ὅτι πάντες Ὀλύμπια δώματ’ ἔχοντες / δῶρον ἐδώρησαν, πῆμ’ ἀνδράσιν ἀλφηστῆσιν; lines 94-5: ἀλλὰ γυνὴ χεῖρεσσι πίθου μέγα πῶμ’ ἀφελοῦσα / ἐσκέδασ’ ἀνθρώποισι δ’ ἐμήσατο κήδεα λυγρὰ. The ambiguity of the phrase δῶρον ἐδώρησαν is noted by the *scholia* as well as by modern commentaries: see West, *Hesiod, Works and Days*, 166-7.

109. See Blundell, 23. For the two versions of Pandora’s myth, in the *Theogony* and the *Works and Days* respectively, see J.M. Hurwit, “Pandora and the Athena Parthenos: Myth, Gender, and Patriarchy on the Classical Acropolis” in *The Athenian Acropolis: History, Mythology, and Archaeology from the Neolithic era to the Present*, Cambridge 1999, 236-8. Cf. Aesch. *Ag.* 1228, where Klytaimnestra is like a dog (κυνός) as Helen is in the *Iliad* (6.356: εἶνεκ’ ἐμεῖο κυνὸς καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἔνεκ’ ἄτης); cf. κυνώπις for Helen again in *Il.* 3.180, *Od.* 4.145, an epithet which shares with Agamemnon (*Il.* 1.159, 225,). “Dog-eyed” or “dog-faced”, the fawning gaze, is an expression of shamelessness but also of lust and sexuality. See also N. Worman, “The Voice Which Is Not One: Helen’s Verbal Guises in Homeric Epic”, in A. Lardinois and L. McClure, eds, *Making Silence Speak: Women’s Voices in Greek Literature and Society*, Princeton and Oxford 2001, 21, 31, for the function of the epithet as a “signal of [Helen’s] fateful connections”, for dogs are associated with Hades and thus with the fate of the heroes who fight for Helen, i.e. it belongs



ability, or the moral feature, to tell lies and use αἰμυλίους τε λόγους, “wheedling/wily words”, and “cunning ways”: ἐν δ’ ἄρα οἱ στήθεσσι διάκτορος Ἀργειφόντης / ψεύδεά θ’ αἰμυλίους τε λόγους καὶ ἐπικλοπον ἦθος τεύξε . . . (*WD* 77-9). The phrase αἰμυλίους τε λόγους is particularly interesting because the speech is used here as a deceptive way of persuasion applied to a woman, and is one of the early references to the deceptive persuasion of speech (cf. Gorgias’ *Encomion of Helen*, §12: ὁ μὲν οὖν πείσας ὡς ἀναγκάσας ἀδικεῖ, ἡ δὲ πεισθεῖσα ὡς ἀναγκασθεῖσα τῷ λόγῳ μάτην ἀκούει κακῶς: “Guilty is, therefore, the persuader because he compelled her, but she, the persuaded, is unjustly reproached because she was compelled by the speech”;<sup>110</sup> compare Helen’s *mythoi*, or stories, which can provide pleasure to the audience in the *Odyssey* (4.238: μύθοις τέρπεσθαι): they can be εἰκότα, “fitting, easily believable”, but can also be deceptive when she imitates the voices of the Achaean heroes who were in the Trojan horse (*Od.* 4.277-9)).<sup>111</sup> Besides, Pandora

to the “blame tradition” and language that Helen as well as other epic heroes employ, especially in the *Iliad*; see also M. Graver, “Dog-Helen and Homeric Insult”, *CA* 14 (1995), 41-61.

110. It is clear that the subjects here are Helen and Paris, she, the persuaded by speech, and he, the persuader by speech. In this antithetically structured sentence (ὁ μὲν . . . ἡ δέ) Gorgias utters his verdict on the famous case of Helen’s responsibility; on Gorgias’ *Encomion of Helen* see D.M. MacDowell, *Gorgias’ Encomium of Helen*, edited with Introduction, Notes and Translation, Bristol 1982; C.P. Segal, “Gorgias and the Psychology of the Logos”, *HSCP* 66 (1962), 99-155; G. Bona, “Λόγος ε ἀλήθεια nell’ *Encomio di Elena di Gorgia*”, *RFIC* 102 (1974), 5-33; N.M. Skouteropoulos, *Η αρχαία σοφιστική. Τα σωζόμενα αποσπάσματα, Φιλοσοφική και Πολιτική Βιβλιοθήκη*, Athens 1991 (2nd edn), 216-29, 256-9; J. de Romilly, *Les grands sophistes dans l’Athènes de Périclès*, Paris 1988, 94-110; W.J. Verdenius, “Gorgias’ doctrine of deception” in *The Sophists and their Legacy*, ed. by G.B. Kerferd, *Hermes Einzelschriften* 44 (1981), 116-28; J. de Romilly, *Magic and Rhetoric in Ancient Greece*, Cambridge, Mass., 1975; H. Pelliccia, “Sappho 16, Gorgias’ *Helen* and the preface to Herodotus’ *Histories*”, *YCS* 29 (1992), 63-84; I. Worthington, ed., *Persuasion: Greek Rhetoric in Action*, London and New York 1994, 63-4, 180, 202; S. Goldhill, *The Invention of Prose, Greece and Rome: New surveys in the Classics*, no 32, Oxford 2002, esp. 51-66, 75-8, 94, 115. However, there is a combination of “hearing” and “seeing” (*logos* and *opsis*) in Gorgias’ work on persuasive factors for people’s deeds. On Helen’s *mythoi* see Goldhill, *The Poet’s Voice*, 61-4; Buxton, *Imaginary Greece*, 123: “Homer’s Helen speaks silently through the imagery of her web, but at least she has an audible voice too”. For the multiple speech types that Helen employs in the Homeric poems, related to the multiple versions of her story/myth see Worman, “Helen’s verbal guises in Homeric epic”, 19-37.

111. Bassi, “The Somatics of the Past”, 22-3, sees in Helen’s stories, *mythoi*, in the *Odyssey* another meaning, that of plausibility, a plausibility, however, which “is necessary if *muthoi* or stories are to provide pleasure (*muthois terpesthai*, 4.238)”.



is a deceptive gift in general for deception predominates in her creation, her personality and character, her morals, even in the way she appears to the gods and the mortals and especially in her marriage; she is made as a bride to deceit Epimetheus who had forgotten his brother's warning; but all was done according to Zeus' will. Helen's theft by Paris, on the other hand, is suggested to belong to the same pattern where the wooden horse does, which was given as an exchange but also as a fatal gift.<sup>112</sup>

### *Eris in the Hesiodic Corpus*

But how *eris* is related to the above? *Eris* is the introductory theme in Hesiod's *Works and Days* (11-6): Οὐκ ἄρα μοῦνον ἔην Ἐρίδων γένος,

She argues that Aristotle applies "plausibility" to the *mythoi* of tragedy in contrast to historical narratives; *kata to eikos* in the *Poetics* 1451a 37-38 is paralleled to *coikota* in the *Odyssey* 4. 238-39 ("Listen to me and take delight. For I will tell you things that are plausible (or likely)": ἤ τοι νῦν δαίτυσθε καθήμενοι ἐν μεγάροισι / καὶ μύθοις τέρπεσθε· εἰκότα γὰρ καταλέξω (cf. *Il.* 6.343: μύθοισι... μελιχίοισι, the "sweet words" of Helen, a gently seductive and persuasive address to Hektor). Thus Helen's *mythoi*, stories, in the *Odyssey* will create pleasure in opposition to fact, to historical narrative, to whatever "one has seen with one's own eyes". They are plausible, or deceptive, but pleasant too and seem to have the same effect — or a reinforcing effect — to that of the φάρμακον, of the drug, that Helen put into the wine of Menelaos and Telemachos in the same book of the *Odyssey*. The drastic function of Helen's drug is paralleled to that of her *mythoi*, of her stories, and act as a *catharsis*, which is the effect of tragic *mimesis* according to Aristotle (*Poetics*). The process seems to be similar and corresponds with Aristotle's definition of tragic *mimesis* whose effect is "the *catharsis* or purgation of pity and fear" (δι' ἔλκου καὶ φόβου). If this is an evidence for *catharsis* in the *Odyssey* it sounds very interesting. However, the emphasis given here on Helen's persuasive, and pleasant, but also plausible, *mythoi* — or *logoi* — is worth noting from our point of view; see also A.L.T. Bergren, "Language and the female in early Greek thought", *Arethusa* 16 (1983), 69-95; K. Synodinou, "Εἰκοτα - εἰκός καὶ συγγενικά ἀπὸ τὸν Ὅμηρον ὡς τὸν Ἀριστοφάνη: σημασιολογικὴ μελέτη, Ioannina 1981, 26-7, for a special case here of the use of *εἰκοτα* with the meaning 'proper' or 'appropriate'. On *coikota* of Helen's speech, i.e. in a "deeply appropriate and authoritative manner" see Worman, "Helen's verbal guises", 34.

112. Blundell, 23-4. For a comparison of Pandora to the hetaera in later literature (as great evils, greedy, deceiving by their attractiveness although they bring misfortunes to men) see the *Discourse on Hetaeras* in book 13 of Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* (esp. 567e-569c); Helen, too, is attributed the hetaera's characteristics in a comic inversion of her abduction in Aristophanes' *Acharnians* (524-29), where the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war is attributed to a quarrel over hetaeras: L.K. McClure, *Courtesans at table: gender and Greek literary culture in Athenaeus*, London and New York 2003, 48.





ἀλλ' ἐπὶ γαῖαν / εἰσὶ δὺω· τὴν μὲν κεν ἐπαινῆσειε νοήσας, / ἡ δ' ἐπιμωμητή·  
 διὰ δ' ἀνδιχα θυμὸν ἔχουσιν. / ἡ μὲν γὰρ πόλεμόν τε κακὸν καὶ δῆριν ὀφέλλει,  
 σχετλίη· οὐ τις τὴν γε φιλεῖ βροτός, ἀλλ' ὑπ' ἀνάγκης / ἀθανάτων βουλῆσιν  
 Ἔριν τιμῶσι βαρεῖαν: "I see there is not only one Strife-brood on earth,  
 there are two. One would be commended when perceived, the other  
 is responsible, and their tempers are distinct. The one promotes ugly  
 fighting and conflict, the brute: no mortal is fond of her, but they are  
 forced by the gods' designs to do homage to Strife the burdensome";<sup>113</sup>  
 lines 17-26 refer to the other Eris, the good one.

Hesiod's discourse on the two Strifes in his *Works and Days* (11-26) — the one is a benefit to mankind the other is destructive<sup>114</sup> — is addressed to his brother Perses whom the bad *Eris* keeps from work for he tends hanging around the marketplace, listening to disputes in the law courts; Hesiod wishes the good *Eris* will spur Perses to work and make him not to neglect it. On the other hand the bad *Eris* is described in terms of *νείκεα*, quarrels and disputes in relation to Perses, and much less in terms of the *πόλεμος* (*WD* 14), of war; emphasis is given on its differentiation from the good *Eris*. Hesiod brings in various issues in his train of thought: the two Strifes and their influences on men, Perses' neglect of work for the reasons cited above, his quarrel with Hesiod over paternal fortune. Values come into discussion too: justice, the honesty, the respect of work etc.<sup>115</sup>

Nevertheless, in my view, it is clear from the very beginning that in his doctrine about the two *Erides* Hesiod conceived the idea of the various aspects of the *bad Eris*, that of quarrels/disputes and that of *πόλεμος*. For in his myth of Ages both, disputes/quarrels and war, characterize some of the races and their lives — as well as their death — (see below my discussion of the bronze and the heroic races). Thus, the *bad Eris* as the cause of war and fighting (*ἡ μὲν γὰρ πόλεμόν τε κακὸν καὶ δῆριν ὀφέλλει*: *WD* 14) is very important in Hesiod's mind and is

113. M.L. West, *Hesiod Theogony and Works and Days. Translated with an Introduction and Notes*, Oxford and New York 1988 (*The World's Classics*), 37. On the two *Erides* in Hesiod's *Works and Days* see also West, *Hesiod, Works and Days*, 36-7, 142-9.

114. R. Lambertson, *Hesiod*, New Haven and London 1988, 112-13. On *Eros* and *Eris* in Hesiod, "Amour qui rapproche les êtres et Lutte qui les divise, s'opposent l'un à l'autre mais portent presque le même nom...", see A. Bonnafé, *Eros et Eris: mariages divins et mythe de succession chez Hésiode*, Lyon 1985.

115. See I.N. Perysinakis, "Hesiod's treatment of wealth", *Métis* I. 1 (1986), 97-119.



very relevant to what follows, especially to the famous myths of Prometheus and Pandora.<sup>116</sup> This *Eris* is the same with the *Theogonian* one, “the “*Ἔρις καρτερόθυμος, στυγερή*, who was mother to pain and grief, battles, quarrels, lies, and lawlessness”;<sup>117</sup> the other *Eris* is a new-found in Hesiod’s genealogies. However, the fact that Hesiod refers to the bad *Eris* first is because he will later focus on the good one. He urges his brother not to be absorbed, far from his work, by the bad *Eris* — here *Eris* is specified as *κακόχαρτος* (l.28). i.e. the *Eris* that “delights in evil” — and not to frequent law courts and be a spectator and participant in judicial disputes under the influence of that (*WD* 28-9: *μηδέ σ’ Ἔρις κακόχαρτος ἀπ’ ἔργου θυμὸν ἐρύκοι / νείκε’ ὀπιπεύοντ’ ἀγορῆς ἐπακουδὸν ἔόντα*).<sup>118</sup>

And in the myth of Ages *eris*, conflict, is one of the causes that destroy the human races: the silver race is covered by earth “for they could not restrain themselves from crimes against each other, and they would not serve the immortals or sacrifice on the sacred altars of the blessed ones, as is laid down for men in their various homelands. They were put away by Zeus son of Kronos, angry because they did not offer honour to the blessed gods who occupy Olympus” (*WD* 134-39). Then, the bronze race is even more terrible and fierce, war and violence occupied their lives and they died because of strife between them (lines 143ff.): “Then Zeus the father made yet a third race, occupied with the woeful works of Ares and with acts of violence, . . . they had bronze armour, bronze houses, and with bronze they laboured as dark iron was not available. They were laid low by their own hands. . . .”<sup>119</sup>

In the *Works and Days* the bronze race was created by Zeus: *Ζεὺς δὲ πατὴρ τρίτον ἄλλο γένος μερόπων ἀνθρώπων / χάλκειον ποίησ’* (lines 143-

116. See West, *Hesiod, Works and Days*, 36-7 and 142-9; Perysinakis, “Hesiod’s treatment of wealth”, 100ff.

117. West, *Hesiod, Works and Days*, 142. This *Eris* is very similar to the Homeric one: see *Iliad* 4. 439-45; ὄρσε δὲ τοὺς μὲν Ἄρης, τοὺς δὲ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη / Δεῖμός τ’ ἠδὲ Φόβος καὶ Ἔρις ἄμοτον μεμαυῖα, / Ἄρεος ἀνδροφόνιοι κασιγνήτη ἑτάρη τε, / ἢ τ’ ὀλίγη μὲν πρῶτα κορύσσεται, αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα / οὐρανῶ ἐστήριζε κάρη καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ βαίνει / ἢ σφιν καὶ τότε νεῖκος ὁμοῖον ἐμβαλε μέσσω / ἐρχομένη καθ’ ὀμίλον, ὀφέλλουσα στόνον ἀνδρῶν.

118. See West, *Hesiod, Works and Days*, 148-9; Lambertson, *Hesiod*, 114.

119. West, *Hesiod Theogony and Works and Days*, 40-1. For the Myth of Ages as an incompatible to the Prometheus-Pandora myth see West, *Hesiod, Works and Days*, 172-3; see also 187ff.



44; cf. 158). They were hard like the wood of ash-trees (ἐκ μελιᾶν),<sup>120</sup> that was usually used for making spears and other weapons (cf. *Od.* 22.259: ἄλλου δ' ἐν τοίχῳ μελίη πέσε χαλκοβάρεια). They were a terrible and fierce race; acts of violence (ὕβριες) and warlike deeds (ἄρηος ἔργα) are the main characteristics of the bronze race (*WD* 145ff.).<sup>121</sup> Although not inferior, the bronze men were quite different from the silver ones (οὐκ ἀργυρέῳ οὐδὲν ὁμοῖον) and they ate no bread, which means that they were not involved in cultivation and agriculture which are regarded as basic features of civilization. War was their main occupation and they only had to do with bronze as μέλας δ' οὐκ ἔσκε σίδηρος, as "there was no dark iron". But this *genos* too were destroyed by their own deeds and descended to Hades' cold house, nameless (νώνυμοι).

The next race, the race of the heroes, was not more fortunate at all. Again, war and strife destroyed them too: *WD* 156ff.: αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ καὶ τοῦτο γένος κατὰ γαῖα κάλυψεν, / αὐτίς ἔτ' ἄλλο τέταρτον ἐπὶ χθονὶ πουλυβοτείρῃ / Ζεὺς Κρονίδης ποίησε, δικαιότερον καὶ ἄρειον, / ἀνδρῶν ἡρώων θεῖον γένος, οἳ καλέονται / ἡμίθεοι, προτέρῃ γενεῇ κατ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν. / καὶ τοὺς μὲν πόλεμός τε καχὸς καὶ φύλοπις αἰνὴ / τοὺς μὲν ὑφ' ἐπταπύλῳ Θήβῃ . . . / τοὺς δὲ καὶ ἐν νήεσσιν ὑπὲρ μέγα λαῖτμα θαλάσσης / ἐς Τροίην ἀγαγῶν Ἑλένης ἕνεκ' ἠυκόμοιο: "After the earth covered up this race too, Zeus son of Kronos made yet a fourth one upon the rich-pastured earth, a more righteous and noble one, the godly race of the heroes who are called demigods, our predecessors on the boundless earth. And as for them, ugly war and fearful fighting destroyed them, some below sevensated Thebes, the Cadmean country, as they battled for Oedipus' flocks, and others it led in ships over the great abyss of the sea to Troy on account of lovely-haired Helen".<sup>122</sup> It has been argued

120. West, *Hesiod, Works and Days*, comm. on 145-46 (pp. 187-8); cf. *idem*, *Hesiod, Theogony*, comm. on 187; C.J. Rowe, *Essential Hesiod*, Bristol 1978, 125; W.J. Verdenius, *A Commentary on Hesiod Works and Days*, vv. 1-382, *Mnemosyne Suppl.* 86, Leiden 1985, comm. on 145 (pp. 94-5). See also T.A. Sinclair, *Hesiod Works and Days*, London 1932, 20, who argues that a "divine origin is quite inappropriate" and that ἐκ μελιᾶν in *WD* 145 "has nothing to do with *Theog.* 187, where Νύμφαι μελίαι are simply nymphs of ash-trees": Constantinidou, "The importance of bronze in early Greek religion", 138-9.

121. See Verdenius, as note above; see also Vernant, *Myth and Thought among the Greeks*, 12ff; Constantinidou, "The importance of bronze", 139.

122. West's translation (*Hesiod Theogony and Works and Days*), 41. For the position of the heroes in Hesiod's sequence of races see West, *Hesiod, Works and Days*, 174; see also 190-2.



that this race does not correspond to the picture of the metallic races, most probably based on a traditional tale, but it is adapted (or interpolated) so that the heroes of Thebes and Troy could be included. There is also an inconsistency with the *Theogony* for there the Cronos age is not at all on a paradisaal stage as the corresponding race in the *Works and Days* suggests.<sup>123</sup>

However, part of this race, the heroic, which follows the bronze in Hesiod's classification had a different fate. They went to the Isles of the Blest where they live in paradisaal conditions comparable to those of the golden race (*WD* 170-3; cf. 117-8).<sup>124</sup> This fourth race's features do, indeed, associate it with the preceding one in Hesiod's story and give another very plausible reason for its "interpolation in Hesiod's scheme, in the sense both that it breaks the sequence of the metals, and that it interrupts the general decline marked by that sequence".<sup>125</sup> However, it is not the "contrast" between the two races rather that provides a good reason for fitting the heroes after the bronze men as C.J. Rowe<sup>126</sup> has argued, but in my view both races' special connection with war. They, too, were warriors; and they were famous warriors since they fought in Thebes and Troy.

Thus Hesiod's bronze and heroic races are defined in relation to each other for they belong to the same sphere of action, that of War. However, though a pair, there are differences between them on the moral level. Each one represents different aspects of military power: the bronze men act with physical violence and cruelty, like other

123. See P.E. Easterling - B.M.W. Knox, eds, *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, vol. I: *Greek Literature: early Greek poetry*, Cambridge 1989, 56-7.

124. See Scodel, "The Achaean Wall and the myth of Destruction", 34ff., for a discussion of the *ἡμιθέων γένος ἀνδρῶν* of *Iliad* 12.23; although *ἡμιθεός* is often a synonym for *ἥρωας*, the *ἡμιθεοί* of the Trojan War are distinguished from the later generations of mortals, the catastrophic War itself becoming the boundary between them.

125. Rowe, *op. cit.*, on verses 154-55. For other reasons for the interruption of the sequence by the heroic race of Hesiod's myth of ages see Verdonius, *op. cit.*, on verse 158. On the historical meaning of the myth, i.e. the races representing historical world-periods, see Fontenrose, *art. cit.*, esp. 9, who believes that the bronze and the heroic races "were really two representations of a single period", i.e. of the Late Bronze Age: Constantinidou, "The importance of bronze", 139-40.

126. See as note above. It is obvious, according to Hesiod, that the heroic race are better in many respects: for they are 'superior' (*ἀρείον*) and 'more orderly' (*δικαιότερον*), descendants of gods (*θεῶν γένος*; cf. *ἡμιθεοί*).



mythological and supernatural figures as the giants (such elements are obviously seen in Hesiod's description of this race in lines 147-9 (*WD*): ... ἄλλ' ἀδάμαντος ἔχον κρατερόφρονα θυμόν / ἄπλαστοι· μεγάλη δὲ βίη καὶ χεῖρες ἄαπτοι / ἔξ ὤμων ἐπέφυκον ἐπὶ στιβαροῖσι μέλεσσιν), they are committed to *hybris*. The heroes embody a different military power; though warriors, their acts have to do with superior orders like *dike* and *sophrosyne*.<sup>127</sup> Nevertheless, on the functional level both belong to the sphere of War, the bronze men, as well as the heroes, are great warriors — they were also both created by Zeus (*WD* 143, 157); both belong to the world of weapons, to the world of bronze. *And this is, in my view, perhaps another possible explanation why the fourth race is the only race in Hesiod's Myth of Ages that is not named after a metal.*

But let us focus on the race of the heroes. Some of them, Hesiod says, obviously the *genos* of the epic era, were perished because of Helen; they got into the ships for Troy “over the great abyss of the sea... on account of lovely - haired Helen” (*WD* 164-5: τοὺς δὲ καὶ ἐν νήεσσιν ὑπὲρ μέγα λαῖτμα θαλάσσης / ἐς Τροίην ἀγαγὼν Ἑλένης ἔνεκ' ἠυκόμοιο). It is significant that this is the only case in Hesiod's extant and authentic works that Helen is mentioned — we do not include the dubious fragment 358 as well as the post-Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* and she is mentioned in connection with war and “fearful fighting”, φύλοπις αἰνή,<sup>128</sup> especially with the Trojan War. Thus, in Hesiod too, Helen is the cause of the Trojan War and the destruction of so many warriors, of the godly race of the heroes. She is an *eris* (*WD* 161, 165), like Pandora in the poet's famous myth in the beginning of the *Works and Days*. All derives from Pandora, all evils to mankind; and within all this literature of catastrophe and of a state of decadence, Hesiod

127. Vernant, *Myth and Thought among the Greeks*, 16-7, 45f. See also Querschbach, *art. cit.*, 5-6. For the view that the two races represent the clear contrast between communities of men where *dike* (heroes) or *hybris* (bronze men) prevails, see Scodel, *art. cit.*, 36, who also argues that the bronze weapons of the bronze race ranks them in the epic warriors, where the heroes of the following race in fact belong.

128. Obviously a Homeric formula, cf. *Il.* 4.82. It is clear that line 161 (*WD*) refers to all the heroic *genos*, those who fought in Thebes and Troy, who died by killing each other off, a fate that resembles that of the bronze race. But anyway, “the whole age is represented by its famous warriors, the wars fought by these men are reduced to the two which dominated epic tradition, the Theban and the Trojan”: West, *Hesiod, Works and Days*, commentary on 162 (p. 191); cf. commentary on 161.



refers to Helen as she is known by the Homeric epic tradition: i.e. as the Cause of the Trojan War and the death of so many heroes, as an evil, an *eris* herself. In Achilles' words Homer gives the same cause for the destruction of the Trojans and the Achaeans in *Iliad* 9. 337-9: τί δὲ δεῖ πολεμιζέμεναι Τρώεσσιν / Ἀργείους; τί δὲ λαὸν ἀνήγαγεν ἐνθάδ' ἀγέρας / Ἀτρεΐδης; ἢ οὐχ' Ἑλένης ἔνεκ' ἠϋκόμοιο;<sup>129</sup> It is also worth noting that in this only certain reference to Helen in Hesiod's works the heroine is attached to her formulaic epithet ἠϋκόμοιο — in genitive — which is an emblem of her beauty in Homer (*Il.* 9.339) as well as in the poet of the *Catalogue*, in the suitors' list (see F 199.2; F 200.2, 11; F 204. 55 etc.). Conclusively, in the Hesiodic myth of Ages the theme of the "warlike *eris*" prevails and is attributed to both races, the bronze and the heroic, part of the latter said to be perished because of Helen.

Therefore, in the *Works and Days* —as well as in the chronologically later *Catalogue of Women* — Helen is involved, in the first along with Pandora, and appears to have some kind of responsibility as one among other causes for the decline and the destruction of mankind. As a mythical figure closely associated with the Trojan War and the heroic epos, as well as from the gender's point of view, she is included within the scheme of the declining man because of his own deeds, i.e. of *eris*, civil war, impiety to the gods, deception by a woman (see the Myth of Ages and the causes of their destruction/decline). In the *Catalogue* too (F 204. 99ff.), Zeus wanted to destroy most of mankind but in his plan the ἡμίθεοι are removed to a happier place. Thus, in both texts the heroic age comes to an end although some were entitled a privileged life (*WD* 167ff., *Catalogue* 204. 99ff.).<sup>130</sup>

129. Cf. ἀγαγὼν *WD* 165 and ἀνήγαγεν *Il.* 9.338. Cf. also: τοῦ [Ἄλεξάνδροιο] εἵνεκα νεῖκος ὄρωρε: *Iliad* 7.374 (=7.388), which is the formula for the cause of the war on behalf of the Trojans whereas the Achaeans are using formulas related to Helen's causality: see above, note 7; see also Gartzou - Tatti, "Paris - Alexandre dans l'Illiade", 75ff.

130. See West, *Hesiod, Works and Days* 192-94 and mainly his discussion on δῖχ' ἀνθρώπων βλοτον καὶ ἦθε' ὀπάσσας (. 167) and ἐν μακάρων νήσοισι (l. 171). See *WD* 165ff.: ἐς Τροίην ἀγαγὼν Ἑλένης ἔνεκ' ἠϋκόμοιο / ἐνθ' ἦ τοι τοὺς μὲν θανάτου τέλος ἀμπεκάλυψεν, / τοῖς δὲ δῖχ' ἀνθρώπων βλοτον καὶ ἦθε' ὀπάσσας / Ζεὺς Κρονίδης κατένασσε πτήρ ἐν πείρασι γαίης, / καὶ τοὶ μὲν ναλοῦσιν ἀκτιδέα θυμὸν ἔχοντες / ἐν μακάρων νήσοισι παρ' Ὀκεανὸν βαθυδίνην / ἐλβιοὶ ἦρωες, τοῖσιν μελιθήδεα καρπὸν / τρεῖς ἔτεος θάλλοντα φέρει ζεῖδωρος ἄρουρα. / 173a: τηλοῦ ἀπ' ἀθαλίτων τοῖσιν Κρόνος ἐμβασιλεύει; cf. *Catalogue* F 204.99ff.



Let us come to Helen's counterpart, Pandora. R. Lamberton<sup>131</sup> argues that in the myth of Pandora, in "the *Theogony*" — I would add *The Works and Days* as well — a realm is constructed which excludes women from the world of discourse, of the *logos* and the *agora*, to which they have no access. However, this does not seem to be exactly the case. Because Pandora was given voice, she was given speech and, moreover, she was given the ability to tell ψεύδεά θ' αἰμυλίους τε λόγους, to tell "lies and persuasive words", i.e. she was given the speech of a sophist in terms of the sophistic practice. Her ability extends to that of *logos*, of a plain speech (*WD* 79ff.: ἐν δ' ἄρα φωνήν θῆκε θεῶν κῆρυξ, ὀνόμηνε δὲ τήνδε γυναῖκα Πανδώρην), but also falls into the realm of persuasive speech (*WD* 78). Like she, who is a "deceptive gift"<sup>132</sup> herself, her words will be deceptive and persuasive too. Besides, Πότνια Πειθῶ, the Persuasion goddess, together with the Χάριτες, offer Pandora golden necklaces: . . . καὶ Πότνια Πειθῶ / ὄρμους χρυσείους ἔθεσαν χρῶτ (*WD* 73-4).

There is another dimension in Pandora's characteristics as they are described above, the erotic one, i.e. the power of *eros* and the persuasion of the attractive appearance: οὐδ' Ἐπιμηθεὺς / ἐφράσαθ', ὥς οἱ ἔειπε Προμηθεὺς μή ποτε δῶρον / δέξασθαι παρ Ζηνὸς Ὀλυμπίου, ἀλλ' ἀποπέμπειν / ἔξοπίσω, μή πού τι κακὸν θνητοῖσι γένηται (*WD* 85-8). This may be paralleled to the accusation of Hecuba in the *Troades*, who is warning Menelaos against Helen's persuasive and deceptive beauty (890-4): "Menelaus, I approve of your intention to kill your wife. But avoid setting eyes on her, in case you are seized with desire for her. For she captures the eyes of men, she ruins cities and she burns homes. Such is the power of her bewitchment. You and I have had experience and we have suffered, as have others". Similarly, the Chorus warns Hecuba about Helen's deceptive way of speaking (lines 966-68): "My queen, defend your children and your country and destroy the effect of her persuasion, for she speaks well for all that she is guilty. And this is a

131. *Hesiod*, 102. In the anthropologically influenced tradition of classical scholarship belong the works of Nicole Loraux ("Sur la race des femmes et quelques-unes de ses tribus", *Arethusa* 11 (1978), 43-87), and Mairilyn B. Arthur ("Cultural strategies in Hesiod's *Theogony*: law, family and society", *Arethusa* 15 (1982), 63-82).

132. See Nagy, "The deceptive gift in Greek mythology", 191-204. On Helen's speeches, their suitability and persuasiveness in the *Odyssey* see Worman, "Helen's verbal guises", 30-6.



terrible thing".<sup>133</sup> Helen's sight appears here as dangerous and promiscuous — her *logos* too seems to have a similar effect — and there is a long tradition over the power of her look (Stesichoros 201 *PMG* =schol. *Eur. Or.* 1287; see also *Andr.* 629-31 and schol. *Andr.* 631). The above warnings against Pandora and Helen are related to the physical aspect of love, to the power of sight imposed over human beings.<sup>134</sup>

In Hesiod's poem *Perses* needs to work because the gods have withheld natural commodities from man (κρύψαντες γὰρ ἔχουσι θεοὶ βίον ἀνθρώποισιν: *WD*, 42). The explanation of the cause of this situation, i.e. the *aition*, is the myth of Prometheus that Hesiod narrates together with the myth of Pandora, in a more developed and elaborated form than in the *Theogony*; because, the deception of Prometheus is more clear here and Pandora is given a name as well as characteristics in great detail. The fashioning of her leads to various hardships for men, among them more labour, for women "gobble up the fruits of man's labour and make him poorer (*Th.* 593-9, 605)".<sup>135</sup> The theme is given a focus in what follows but in the end Hesiod returns to a well-known theme, that of the release of evils from a container caused by a woman, a motif common in various myths dealing with the general idea of men's transition from a paradisaic state to misery and hardship: τὰ δὲ λείψεται ἄλγεα λυγρὰ / θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποισι, κακοῦ δ' οὐκ ἔσσειται ἀλκή: "What will be left for mortal men will be bitter pain. There will be no defense against evil" (*WD* 200-201).<sup>136</sup> Thus, in Prometheus/Pandora myth there are various levels of deception: Prometheus' deception, Zeus' deception

133. Transl. Barlow, *Euripides. Trojan Women* 123-27. See also D.J. Conacher, *Euripides and the Sophists: some dramatic treatments of philosophical ideas*, London 1998, 57. On the *agon* in the *Troades* see also A. Gartzou - Tatti, "Χορός και τελετουργία στις Τρωάδες του Εὐριπίδη", *Dodone* 26.2 (1997), 329-30.

134. Chatzianestis, *Αισχύλος Ἀγαμέμνων*, vol. II, 127: "Ag. 418-9: δμμάτων δ' ἐν ἀχνηλαίς / ἔρρει πᾶσ' Ἀφροδίτα... Since Menelaos is not seeing Helen's eyes his desire fades out. Eyes are regarded as the real conductor of desire, *himeros*; besides, according to Empedokles (*fr.* 86, Diels - Kranz) Aphrodite was believed to be the creator of eyes and sight: ἐξ ὧν δμματ' ἐπηξεν ἀτειρεὰ δι' Ἀφροδίτη".

135. See West, *Hesiod, Works and Days*, 153-55, for the association with Eve in terms of the changing in the existing situation, the loss of immortality and suffering for women: "Accursed shall be the ground on your account. With labour you shall win your food from it all the days of your life" (*Gen.* 3:17); Lamberton, *Hesiod*, 115-16.

136. Transl. Lamberton, *Hesiod*, 120; see also Perysinakis, "Hesiod's treatment of wealth", 102-4.





by Prometheus, men's deception by Zeus, Epimetheus' deception by accepting Pandora, being herself a deceptive gift;<sup>137</sup> a pattern which could also be applied to Helen.

Froma Zeitlin<sup>138</sup> has put forward very interesting ideas in interpreting Pandora's myth from the gender's point of view. Like Vernant, she<sup>139</sup> too, has emphasized the role of evil in Pandora's myth, as well as the significance of *eris*, of Strife in this myth. *Eris* functions on various levels both in the *Theogony* and — mainly — in the *Works and Days*, on the divine as well as on the mortal level: first comes the strife between Zeus and Prometheus (which functions on the divine and the mortal level) and is the *aition* for the creation of Pandora, then follows the *eris*/dispute between Perses and Hesiod which is the central theme in the *Works and Days*; and then come all the other *erides* which derive from the creation of Pandora, of this Other, the alien being who is the progenitor of the female *genos* that came to disturb men's world.<sup>140</sup> Zeitlin's most important contribution is the economic dimension that she introduces in her interpretation of the above myth, i.e. its significance in economic terms.<sup>141</sup>

Pandora's birth is also represented on the base of the colossal statue of Athena Parthenos on the Acropolis at eye level, a representation which deserves more attention than it has received.<sup>142</sup> J.M. Hur-

137. See Blundell, *Women in ancient Greece*, 24. See also von Reden, *Exchange in Ancient Greece*, 18-24, 46-7, 51-2.

138. See "The Economics of Hesiod's Pandora" in E.D. Reeder, ed., *Pandora. Women in Classical Greece*, Princeton, New Jersey 1995, 49-56; see esp. 49, where Zeitlin argues that both in the *Theogony* and the *Works and Days* Pandora "figures as the outcome of a game of wits between Prometheus and Zeus that revolves around a series of deceptions and counterdeceptions in connection with an exchange of gifts. Zeus wins, of course, and in return for the theft of fire, he has Hephaistos, the artisan god, fabricate the first woman as a molded creature, who astounds men by her god-given beauty and ruins them by her thievish nature." Cf. F. Zeitlin "Signifying Difference: The case of Hesiod's Pandora" in R. Hawley and B. Levick eds, *Women in Antiquity. New assessments*, London - New York 1995, 59.

139. Zeitlin, "The Economics of Hesiod's Pandora", 49-50.

140. Zeitlin, "The Economics of Hesiod's Pandora", 52, however, points out that Pandora's presence contributes to the definition of gender categories "but also stands at the intersection of relations between gods and mortals".

141. Hence the title of her article "The Economics of Hesiod's Pandora", 54-5.

142. J.M. Hurwit, "Beautiful Evil: Pandora and the Athena Promachos", *AJA* 99 (1995), 171-86; his article is re-published in a revised version entitled "Pandora and the Athena Parthenos: Myth, Gender, and Patriarchy on the Classical Acropolis", in *The Athenian Acropolis, op. cit.*, 235-45 (and notes, 254-5).



wit<sup>143</sup> argues that, it seemed a surprising choice for the base of the statue of Athena Parthenos that the *genesis* of Pandora attended by twenty gods was represented, a scene that was seen by Pausanias and described by Pliny. The whole discussion<sup>144</sup> is based on the theory, and of course on the practice, of polarities or oppositions (antitheses) that the fifth century Athenian world and the Greek world in general was constructed on: those of culture and nature, human and animal, rational and irrational, Greek and barbarian, male and female; the last one was perhaps the strongest "cultural antithesis"<sup>145</sup> in fifth century Athens. The sculptural imagery of the Parthenon seems to have addressed many of these polarities, among them that of male and female, and this is how the presence of Pandora is explained, how she is accommodated within this sculptural program and its mythology and ideology, as well as within the mythology and the ideology of the *polis* and its social structure.

Hurwit's inquiry why Pandora was there, on the base of the famous statue of Athena, could be identified with any contemporary Athenian's inquiry on the same issue; the connections with the Hesiodic myth and its details are, in my view, unavoidable and decisive for such an interpretation and agree with our approach to the myths

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143. "Beautiful Evil: Pandora and the Athena Promachos", 173: "But on the base of the colossal statue, right at eye level, carved in marble relief... was a story of another sort: the creation of Pandora, the clay statue that was according to the Greek myth the first mortal woman, the beautiful progenitor of all women and the cause of evil in the world"; cf. Hurwit, "Pandora and the Athena Parthenos", 236. In the revised version of his article in *The Athenian Acropolis*, Hurwit presents the myth of Pandora in its two versions, the *Theogony* version which is the earlier and the *Works and Days* one, and makes a comparison of the similarities and differences.

144. Hurwit, "Pandora and the Athena Parthenos", 239. See also R. Osborne, "The viewing and obscuring of the Parthenon frieze", *JHS* 107 (1987), 101-2, who argues that the scenes of the *genesis* of Athena in the east pediment of the Parthenon and of Pandora on the base of the cult statue of Athena Parthenos, both observed by the assemblies of the gods, must have posed serious questions to Athenian viewers over their position towards their gods but also over their own creation and their "individual and collective identity".

145. Hurwit, "Pandora and the Athena Parthenos", 242. In Hurwit's paper an attempt is also made to associate the position of women in ancient Athens with the sculptural program of the Parthenon and particularly with the scene under discussion, the birth of Pandora. On the representation of women on the Parthenon frieze see Dillou, *Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion*, 42-50.



of Helen and Pandora centred on gender characteristics and polarities (i.e. "woman as the cause of *eris*"). It seems that the literary gap in the myth of Pandora from Hesiod's time down to the fifth century is sculpturally /iconographically filled by this monumental representation, which possibly follows the Hesiodic tradition although it does not mean that "Pheidias faithfully 'illustrated' Hesiod: the twenty divinities on the base noted by Pliny are far more than even the *Works and Days* allows".<sup>146</sup> As has been pointed out,<sup>147</sup> there seem to be many associations of Pandora, as we know her from the Hesiodic myth, with the mythological program of the Parthenon and especially with the mythological tradition related to Athena. Even the gods' reaction to Athena's birth described in the Homeric hymn (Allen 6-7: σέβας δ' ἔχε πάντας ὀρῶντας / ἀθανάτους) is paralleled to their reaction to the creation of Pandora described in the *Theogony* (588-89: θαῦμα δ' ἔχ' ἀθανάτους τε θεοὺς θνητούς τ' ἀνθρώπους: "both, immortal gods and mortal men marvelled at Pandora's birth"); the gods attended Athena's birth in the Parthenon's east pediment, they did the same for Pandora on the base of Athena's statue. Therefore, whatever interpretation is given of this last scene this should not overlook the common elements in Pandora's myth and that of Athena: namely, the extraordinary way of their birth, the unnatural way that sealed the coming of the two female mythological figures.<sup>148</sup> And this, in my view, is one — if not the most important — reason that Pandora was chosen for accom-

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146. Hurwit, "Pandora and the Athena Parthenos", 238-9, esp. 238, points out that the choice of the myth of Pandora for the base of the statue of Athena Parthenos is strange, because this myth seems not to be popular after Hesiod, i.e. in Archaic and Classical Greek poetry or literature in general. Nevertheless, Pandora's story was not popular in art either, it was seldom represented in ancient iconography (see Smith, "The making of Pandora", 279 and *LIMC* VII.2 (1994), 100-1, where Pandora covers two pages only), in contrast to Helen's story which became very popular in literature as well as in art. For the creation of Pandora depicted on the sculptural drum of the later Temple of Artemis at Ephesos see Smith, *art. cit.*, 278-83.

147. Cf. Hurwit, "Pandora and the Athena Parthenos", 242.

148. N. Loraux, *Les enfants d'athéna: idées athéniennes sur la citoyenneté et la division des sexes*, Paris 1981, 83ff., emphasizes the association of Athena and Pandora in the way of their birth; this was artificial for both, not from a woman, a mother. But both were also created by Zeus with the assistance of Hephaestus who acted as a god of metallurgy in the case of Athena and as a god of potters in the case of Pandora.



panying Athena on the same sculptural synthesis of [the Parthenon. However, there are other reasons as well that will be discussed below:

The way of Pandora's creation resembles that of a statue, she is made of earth and water, of clay.<sup>149</sup> This special association of Pandora with earth and clay, and consequently with potters and the art of pottery, of artistry and craft in general, whose divine protectors were Hephaistos and Athena, also make her a good choice for decorating the base of the statue of Athena. Besides, the two gods who sit together on the Parthenon's east frieze and whose functions are related, presided over Pandora's creation; Hephaistos made her, he formed her as a figure, as an artifact, and Athena adorned her and taught her various works. In the *Theogony* (570-80) only these two gods were involved in her creation whereas in the *Works and Days*' version of the myth other gods participated too (lines 60-82). Therefore, the participation of Athena in the process of the creation of Pandora, in my view, concurred to the choice of her to appear below her statue — where also the goddess is present at the birth of Pandora — perhaps more than any other relation to her, as parthenos for example or as a child of the earth, an autochthon.<sup>150</sup> Professor J. Boardman,<sup>151</sup> on the other hand,

149. Hurwit, "Pandora and the Athena Parthenos", 243.

150. See Hurwit, as note above. On Athenian autochthony see N. Loraux, *L' invention d' Athènes. Histoire de l'oraison funèbre dans la "cité classique"*, Paris - New York 1981, esp. 147-56, 333-53 (and *passim*); *idem*, *Les enfants d'athéna* (ch. 1: "L'autochthonie: une topique athénienne", 35-73; ch. 2: "Sur la race des femmes et quelques-unes de ses tribus", 75-117).

151. "Pandora in the Parthenon: A Grace to Mortals", in *Καλλιστευμα: Μελέτες προς τιμήν της Όλγας Τζάχου - Αλεξανδρή*, 233-44; see esp. 243: "On the Parthenon, a building designed and decorated to glorify Athens, her past, and her leadership of Greece, a role could be found for Pandora. By placing her on the base of the Parthenos, her role for mankind was explicitly related to Athens' role as saviour of Greece, leader of Greece — the school of Greece, as Thucydides makes Pericles describe the city in a speech which must fairly convey the mood of the day"; see also 243 note 28, for a brief review of works related to the Pandora myth. For a different role of classical Pandora see E.H. Loeb, *Die Geburt der Götter in der griechischen Kunst*, Jerusalem 1979, 144-49. For Pandora as an earth-goddess see also Harrison, "Pandora's box", 105ff. See also A. Kosmopoulou, *The Iconography of Sculptured Statue Bases in the Archaic and Classical Periods*, Wisconsin-London 2002, 112-17, for a review of the various interpretations of the Pandora myth on the base of the statue of Athena Parthenos which in the author's view operates at various semantic levels, and 130-5 for a parallelism of the Pandora scene with the Helen-scene on the base of Nemesis at Phamnous (there is an ambivalence between good and evil inherent in both female figures).



argues that this sculptural scene of the birth of Pandora represents the fifth century view of her role which is Athenian in emphasis, with no Hesiodic implications, and suggests that Pandora was worshipped on the Acropolis as "an earth-goddess and as a first woman all-giver with divine gifts for mankind", and not as a malign figure, a source of all evils, according to Hesiod's story.

There is another interpretation put forward of Pandora's participation in the Parthenon complex of figures which is based on details of the Hesiodic myth, especially on the ambiguity that her figure expresses as well as on other characteristics of her mythical persona: e.g. she is beautiful but dangerous and evil too, she is the object used by Zeus as a revenge for Prometheus' deceit and the theft of fire, she is deceitful herself. She is an "anti-Athena",<sup>152</sup> a goddess closer to men and favouring their dominance. According to this interpretation the message that the Pandora - scene conveys is very close to that of the Hesiodic text: i.e. the creation of a beautiful but dread woman (*καλὸν κακόν*), beautiful but treacherous, for whom there is no remedy (*ἀμήχανον*: "helpless"), a female who was given many gifts by the gods but she has given all evils to humankind by letting them free from her famous jar — "Pandora's box" has become a proverbial reference. She

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152. The phrase "anti-Athena" as well as the above interpretation belongs to Hurwit, "Beautiful Evil: Pandora and the Athena Promachos", 171; cf. *idem*, "Pandora and the Athena Parthenos", 244, who points out Pandora's differences to Athena. According to him, it seems that the intention of those who inspired the Acropolis program was not to show the prosperity of Athens yielded by the gods—in the same way that they gave gifts to Pandora — not to elevate the status of women as a gesture of the Periklean policy. On the contrary, the reality of the male-centered Athenian society seems to be reflected here as well, a reality that must have informed the Acropolis complex of myths, cults and images about one of the most strong polarities in the Athenian society: that of male-female. And this antithesis exactly reflected the Athena Parthenos sculptural complex: as the very opposite of Athena, the motherless male-oriented and armed goddess (she symbolizes the male ideal), and the benefactor and protector of the city of Athens there came a woman who represented the existence of evil and the possibility of moving from a paradise condition to a catastrophic misery. On the other hand Boardman's interpretation (see above) gives emphasis on the divine nature of Pandora, as a purveyor of gifts of peaceful and domestic character, some of them shared with Athena; according to him she is a "proto-Athena" and not an "anti-Athena" that Hurwit suggests. On Pandora's jar or box see: Harrison, "Pandora's box", 99-114; D. Ogden, "What was in Pandora's box?" in N. Fisher and H. van Wees, eds, *Archaic Greece, op. cit.*, 213-30; S. Byrne, "Ἐλπίς in *Works and Days* 90-105", *Syllecta Classica* 9 (1998), 37-46.



is the opposite of Athena and on this polarity focuses Pandora's selection.<sup>153</sup> However, whether the one or the other interpretation is accepted the main source should, in my view, remain the Hesiodic myth, as far as Pandora's creation is concerned, although an emphasis on the creative and beneficent power of the great goddess of Athens, Athena, seems to me more plausible than a policy of reminding that evil derived from the first woman. This becomes more evident as other parts of the Parthenon sculptural program projected women's participation in the cultural life of Athens, in the Panathenaia procession for example (the prominent place of women in the Parthenon frieze is very remarkable indeed).<sup>154</sup> It seems, therefore, that the meaning of the above iconographical presence of Pandora is socio-political as much as mythological.<sup>155</sup>

Let me a few more remarks on certain characteristics of Pandora connected with Helen, i.e. on the way the gods marvelled at her creation and their looking at her beauty associated with her as a conveyor of evil and deception that is not possible to overcome, "without remedy", ἀμήχανον: *Th.* 588-89: θαῦμα δ' ἔχ' ἀθανάτους τε θεοὺς θνητούς τ' ἀνθρώπους, / ὡς εἶδον δόλον αἰπὺν, ἀμήχανον ἀνθρώποισιν: "Both immortal gods and mortal men were seized with wonder when they saw that precipitous trap, more than mankind can manage" (cf. *Cypria* 7 (Allen), where

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153. Hurwit, "Pandora and the Athena Parthenos", 244-45, esp. 245: "In a sense, the antithesis is not merely between Pandora and the Parthenos, but also between Woman and the City...".

154. On the Parthenon-frieze "question" there is a huge bibliography but see from our point of view: F. Brommer, *Die Parthenonsculpturen*, Mainz am Rhein 1979; J. Boardman, *Greek Sculpture. The Classical period*, London 1985, 106ff.; J.B. Connolly, "Parthenon and Parthenoi: A Mythological interpretation of the Parthenon Frieze", *AJA* 100 (1996), 53-80; H.W. Parke, *Festivals of the Athenians*, London 1977, 23, 37-50; F. Brommer, *Die Parthenonsculpturen*, Mainz am Rhein 1979, 25-38; Osborne, "The viewing and obscuring of the Parthenon frieze", 98-105.

155. Cf. Boardman, "Pandora in the Parthenon", 234, for a new role of Pandora in fifth-century Athens, however preserving much of the original image. This view is reinforced by the contemporary art-type of Pandora which presents characteristics of an earth-goddess, as well as by fifth-century literary evidence like Aristophanes' *Birds* (line 971 refers to a ram sacrifice to Pandora) but mainly Sophokles' lost satyr play *Πανδώρα* or *Σφυροκόποι*; the second title may refer to a ritual of smiting the earth, probably by the satyrs, who are present at the art representations of Pandora's birth as well as to the Anodos of the goddess from the earth: Harrison, "Pandora's box", 99, 105-7.



Helen is a θαῦμα: τοὺς δὲ μετὰ τριτάτην Ἑλένην τέκε θαῦμα βροτοῖσι...<sup>156</sup> The epithet ἀμήχανον, "helpless", is very intreresting and recalls in my opinion the adverb αἰνῶς of the description of Helen's beauty in the scene of the *Teichoskopia* (*Iliad* 3.158: αἰνῶς ἀθανάτησι θεῆς εἰς ὧπα ἔοικεν).<sup>157</sup> Αἰνῶς and ἀμήχανον have the meaning of "beyond human capacities", and are applied to Helen and Pandora respectively: mortals can do nothing in presence of such a beauty which is at the same time an evil too (see *Iliad* 3.160: πῆμα, *WD* 82: πῆμ' ἀνδράσιν ἀλφηστῆσιν; cf. *Theogony* 592, *Iliad* 3.158). In brief, visual pleasure comes along with visual distortion as it poses a threat to men's happiness.<sup>158</sup>

There are more points of correspondence between Pandora and Helen in ancient Greek literature, as for example the wedding ritual associated with their description in Hesiod and Homer respectively. In the creation of Pandora Athena draws down over Pandora's head a veil. The expression employed by Hesiod is κατὰ κρῆθεν δὲ καλύπτρην...κατέσχεθε (*Th.* 573-75: ζῶσε δὲ καὶ κόσμησε θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη / ἀργυφῆ ἐσθῆτι· κατὰ κρῆθεν δὲ καλύπτρην / δαιδαλέην χεῖρεσσι κατέσχεθε, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι: "The pale-eyed goddess Athene dressed and adorned her in a gleaming white garment; down over her head drew an embroidered veil, a wonder to behold").<sup>159</sup> All this adornment, however, is

156. West, *Hesiod Theogony and Works and Days* (transl.), 20; *idem: Hesiod, Theogony*, comm. on lines 507-616; *Hesiod, Works and Days*, comm. on lines 47-105 (pp. 155-77). On the birth of Pandora see O. Lendle, *Die Pandora-Sage bei Hesiod*, Würzburg 1957, 90ff.

157. *Works and Days*, 62: ἀθανάτης δὲ θεῆς εἰς ὧπα εἰσκειν [sc. Pandora]. See also παρθένῳ αἰδοίῃ ἱκελον: *WD* 71, a creature alike a modest parthenos, a copy of a woman though in her problematic age, that of adolescence. ἱκελον, means simulacrum, but, according to Loraux, "a simulacrum of a copy without the original": Loraux, *Les enfants d'athéna*, 86f; see also Synodinou, "Εοικα-εἰκός, 12, who includes *WD* 71 in the category of the "similitude εοικα" and particularly in the category of the "identical image" or "image similarity", which presupposes visual perception. In the same category also belong the golden female assistants of Hephaestus in *Iliad* 18.418 (ζωῆσι νεήνισιν ελοικυῖαι) "who in fact are *eidola* whom gods had given human features"; cf. Sappho 23.5: ξάνθα δ' Ἑλένα σ' εἰσ[χ]ην, addressed to Helen's daughter Hermione an example which, in my view, does not merely refer to a family reminiscence but it is a comparison to Helen's ideal beauty as equal to divine beauty.

158. For the *oxymoron καλὸν κακὸν* and equivalent phrases concerning Helen and Pandora see Loraux, *Les enfants d'athéna*, 84.

159. West, *Hesiod Theogony and Works and Days* (transl.), 20. Boardman, "Pandora in the Parthenon", 235, parallels Pandora's dressing up by the gods to the dressing up of the bones offered to Zeus by Prometheus, as analogous kinds



deceptive for the first woman looks like a statue with its peplos, *διάδημα*, all much decorated (*καλύπτρην δαιδαλέην* (574), *δαίδαλα πολλά* (581)), with the whole creation looking like a living *δαίδαλον*.<sup>160</sup> A similar expression is also used by Homer in describing Helen's gesture as she is departing from the Walls of Troy, where she met Priam and the *δημογέροντες* (the famous *Teichoskopia* scene), to meet Paris in their chamber after Aphrodite's interference. She is veiling herself, *βῆ δὲ κατασχομένη ἔανῶ ἀργῆτι φαεινῶ* (*Iliad* 3.419), and in silence (*σιγῆ*: line 420) she went to his *domos* where their erotic union took place. This scene has been interpreted as one of the stages of a wedding ritual, of Helen's wedding which is re-enacted in the end of *Iliad* 3.<sup>161</sup> Pandora too, is married to Epimetheus, and as has been pointed out her presence on the base of Athena's statue could be related to the marriage theme too, as did other parts of the Parthenon sculptures like the Centauro-machy, or the scene on the north metopes related to Helen's and Menelaos' broken marriage, and the unveiling wedding ritual of Hera before Zeus on the east frieze.<sup>162</sup> In my view, however, in the above Hesiodic scene Pandora is adorned as a bride, but also as a statue of a goddess which is dressed and adorned within a festival ritual.

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of deception. See also Frontisi-Ducroux, *Dédale*, 66-8, 102; cf. Loraux, *Les enfants d'athéna*, 85-7, who remarks that the whole creation is a trap of adornments, of an immensely beautiful appearance, a trap camouflaged by the *καλύπτρη*.

160. Frontisi-Ducroux, *Dédale*, 74-7, 102.

161. It seems that certain features shaped after the pattern of abduction and marriage are adapted in the above *Iliad* 3 scenes so that Helen's abduction/marriage can be re-enacted: the reluctance of the bride, overcome when Paris leads Helen to bed (line 447), the praise of the beauty of the bridegroom (lines 391-94) which follows that of the bride many lines above (156-60), Helen's gesture of veiling/*aidos*, her silence, the avoidance of eye contact, the presence of a bridal attendant, i.e. Aphrodite. In the case of Pandora it is the goddess Athena who "draws down" (*κατέσχεθε*) the maiden's veil with her own hands; Pandora is the bride, she is sent to Epimetheus for marriage. So is Helen, although in her case it is Aphrodite who escorts her, or rather leads her to Paris. Although hers is a re-marriage: S. Constantinidou, "Evidence for marriage ritual in *Iliad* 3", *Dodone* 19.2 (1990), 53, 57.

162. See also Hurwit, "Pandora and the Athena Parthenos", 243. In Hesiod's description Pandora is dressed and endowed by the goddesses like a bride; she is bestowed gifts and talents like girdle, a shining garment and decorated veil, garlands and crown of gold, gold necklaces, wreath of flowers but also grace and desire ability etc.





There is a sequence of narrative in Hesiod's *Works and Days*, which goes as follows: first the Prometheus/Pandora myth, then comes the myth of the races with the race of the heroes, and then the myth of Helen and her connection with the heroic race and the Trojan War. In this sequence of narrative, which is determining in the production of meaning, Pandora and Helen take up their appropriate positions with Pandora predominating. The "non-natural" way of the creation is emphasized by the Hesiodic myth — as well as by modern scholarship: she is made, manufactured in a way, and not born, she has no natural parents or any antecedents and inheritors, she does not belong to any generation. In brief, she is not real but an "imitation of the real",<sup>163</sup> of "a parthenos" as the *Works and Days* clearly defines (70-1: αὐτίκα δ' ἐκ γαίης πλάσσει κλυτὸς Ἀμφιγυήεις/ παρθένω αἰδοίῃ ἔκειλον Κρονίδεω διὰ βουλάς). Her creation belongs to the divine realm, to the gods' capacity of "making forged figures" which look like real persons in just the same way as Helen's *eidolon* is a divine manufacture in Euripides' *Helen* (704-8). There is another reference to Pandora's fictitious nature earlier in the *Theogony*, that was not given much attention. Namely verses 513-14: πρῶτος γάρ ῥα Διὸς πλαστὴν ὑπέδεκτο γυναῖκα/ παρθένον, which refer to Epimetheus as responsible for bringing the evil (κακόν: line 512) to men by accepting a fictitious woman. The meaning of the word πλαστὴν is obvious: she is manufactured, an image of a woman parthenos. She is a realistic replica and at the same time a living imitation.<sup>164</sup> She is beyond the natural process of the *genesis* of a human being and does not seem to have any genealogical connections either to the past or the future.<sup>165</sup> To quote Zeitlin's words: "Fashioned by

163. F. Zeitlin, "Signifying difference", 64, 69.

164. See Loraux, *Les enfants d'athéna*, 86ff. See also Zeitlin, "Signifying difference", 67-71, whose interpretation focuses on the "exchange of gifts theme" between Zeus and Prometheus; Pandora is a substitute for fire (ἀντι πυρός: *Th.* 570), another case of reciprocity in ancient Greek literature, she is also "the outcome of a game of wits" between Zeus and Prometheus.

165. Zeitlin, "Signifying difference", 68. In Pindar's version of the myth of Ixion (*Pyth.* 2) Zeus deceived him by fashioning a phantom-Hera out of air, which was in form like the daughter of Kronos; so that Ixion lay with a cloud, with a sweet illusion, a device of Zeus, a beautiful bane. The idea as well as the verbal parallels recall Pandora's story (*Pyth.* 2.36ff.: ... ἐπεὶ νεφέλα παρελέξατο/ ψεῦδος γλυκὺ μεθέπων αἰδρις ἀνήρ'/ εἶδος γὰρ ὑπεροχωτάτα πρέπεν Οὐρανιαῖν/ θυγατέρι Κρόνου· ἄντε δόλον αὐτῷ θέσαν/ Ζηνὸς παλάμαι, καλὸν πῆμα; cf. here ψεῦδος γλυκὺ (37), δόλον (39), καλὸν πῆμα (40), with the Hesiodic καλὸν κακόν (*Th.* 585), ... κακόν, ῥ



the gods to resemble them in the beauty of her allure, she is both an imitation and an original production, both a copy and a model. How to tell the difference? Once she is invented, the story has just begun".<sup>166</sup> "How to tell the difference?"; this is exactly the idea of any *eidolon*, the artificial which is made to resemble the real so that it may deceive, it may become believable. Helen's *eidolon* was made in response to the offense of Paris and the unlawful abduction of Helen; there is an exchange process in this case too because 'real Helen' was exchanged for her *eidolon*. Thus, Helen's *eidolon* has a similar function, a similar semiology to Pandora's fictitious being. To this semiology I shall now turn.

*Opsis and the visual mimesis: 'Real' Helen, Helen's eidolon and the creation of eris*

The *eidolon's* perceived relationship to the 'real', as an imitation of it, in ancient Greek literature has a special reference to Helen's *eidolon*. In what K. Bassi<sup>167</sup> calls "Euripides' Revision of the past" the various Helens are met in one figure so that in this figure "...the question of the relationship between visual perception and historical truth is persistently 'revised' in the figure of Helen of Troy". The terminology that K. Bassi uses defines the main points of discussion about

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κεν ἅπαντες τέρωπονται (WD 57-8). Ixion takes here the place of Epimetheus in the myth of Pandora, he is the victim of deceit for he lay with the cloud-Hera, a fool man (ἄιδρις ἀνὴρ), a deceiver himself, or rather a "deviant lust", an attempt to rape a goddess against nature and his mortal status: see C. Carey, *A commentary on five odes of Pindar: Pythian 2, Pythian 9, Nemean 1, Nemean 7, Isthmian 8*, USA 1981 (*Monographs in Classical Studies*). Ixion's story is narrated by his son Peirithous in a fragment ascribed, among others, to Euripides' lost play *Peirithous*: see F 5. 7-10: Θεὸς δὲ μάνι[ / ἔπεμψεν ἄτη[ν/νεφέλην γυναίκα[ / ἔσπειρεν εἰς τοὺς θ[. (B. Snell, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta I*, Göttingen 1971). The fragment refers to the fashioning of the phantom Hera out of air, by Zeus, and as D.F. Sutton points out (*Two lost plays of Euripides*, New York 1987, 49): "Euripides seems fond of the narrative device of the air-wrought εἰδωλον: it occurs in the *Bacchae* as well as the *Helen*"; see also 19, 48ff.

166. "Signifying difference", 71; cf. 69. See also the very interesting book of Dora and Erwin Panofsky, *Pandora's Box. The Changing Aspects of a Mythical Symbol*, Bollingen Series LII, New York 1962 (2nd revised edn, first edn in 1956), which examines the history of the myth of Pandora and its influence on art and literature where it becomes a symbol acquiring various forms through iconographic and other attempts for its interpretation: see esp. 3. On the great familiarity of the myth of Pandora and the proverbial meaning of "Pandora's box" see Harrison, "Pandora's Box", 99ff.

167. "The Somatics of the Past", 21.



the various versions of Helen's myth (the Homeric, the Stesichorean-Herodotean version, as she calls it, the Euripidean one, even the Aristophanic version of the "new Helen" in the *Thesmophoriazousai*), her various faces or Bodies; even the title of her article, "The Somatics of the Past", includes the word Somatics (*soma* is the *opsis*, the visible spectacle from our point of view).<sup>168</sup>

Euripides' play, on the other hand, poses questions over 'real' Helen and 'fake' Helen and over the persuasiveness of the tragic theater. In fact, on the stage steps only the 'real' Helen whereas her *eidolon* is not visible by anyone nor has any role on the tragic stage; it belongs to the plot or the myths of the play while 'real' Helen is the spectacle, the *opsis*.<sup>169</sup> In *Helen* Helen's *onoma* is distinguished from Helen's *soma* since the one can exist without the other (*Helen* 588: τοῦνομα γένοιτ' ἄν πολλαχοῦ, τὸ σῶμα δ' οὐ: "A name can be anywhere, but not the body"). It is obvious that there is an ambiguous relationship between them.<sup>170</sup> As a mythical persona Helen's name can be in many places, even more because of the invention of the *eidolon*, but her body only in one place at the same time. Thus, the *eidolon* story not only introduces a new version in Helen's myth but it also touches upon

168. "The Somatics of the Past", 21-2; see also 20-1 on Aristotle's definition of tragic performance where the *mythos* or plot is the *psyche* of tragedy whereas the *opsis* is disavowed. According to Aristotle's views (*Poetics* 1453b 3-20) about the visual effect of tragedy, *opsis* or the visual part of a tragic performance is not necessary, as a tragedy can be "reduced to a verbal account of events", without the part of "seeing" but by "hearing the events"; it thus becomes obvious that the tragic *logos* is the most powerful element of a tragic play.

169. Bassi, "The Somatics of the Past", 25-6.

170. "The Somatics of the Past", 26-7, esp. 26: "As an *eidolon* "Helen" is a name without a substantial body. But the *eidolon* necessarily assumes the existence of the real or authentic body of which it is a copy"; see also C. Segal, "The two worlds of Euripides' *Helen*" *TAPA* 102 (1971), 553-614. The name of Helen itself means, according to Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, disaster (ἑλένας ἑλανδρος ἐλέπτολις: 688f.); in the relevant passages, from lines 681ff., the Chorus turns to the source of all sufferings, Helen. Their accusation against the heroine, already expressed in lines 403ff., becomes more fierce here and presupposes the Chorus' conviction that her abduction took place with her consent (cf. *Hdt.* 1.4.). Terms like *δορίγαμβρον*, ἀμφινεικῆ θ' Ἑλέναν, which follow, must be associated with ὀνομαζεν of line 681, and the attempt by the Chorus to explain Helen's ὄνομα via Helen's φύσις; *δορίγαμβρος* (*hapax legomenon*), means she whose marriage caused a war and ἀμφινεικῆς is she who creates νεῖκος, strife, between two sides, here between Paris and Menelaos. In their verdict on Helen and the etymology of her name, the Chorus seek for a divine approvement of their saying by wondering whether an invisible



ontological and epistemological issues which are a central theme in Euripides' play although not in Stesichoros' poem.<sup>171</sup>

In Euripides' *Helen* there is an intellectual play between Helen's 'real' presence on the stage, as a suppliant at an Egyptian tomb, and her name which was given to the two Helens, the 'real' one and her image; a play between truth and falsehood, real and fictional, between 'real' Helen and her *eidolon*. The heroine makes clear in her opening speech that she is going to tell the truth concerning her story/life (lines 22-3: ἀ δὲ πεπόνθαμεν κακὰ λέγοιμ' ἔν), which she actually does in lines 31-6 where she refers to the creation of her *eidolon* by Hera and its dispatch to Paris.<sup>172</sup> Helen's description of the image is related to our discussion for it poses questions on ontological and epistemological issues: the term ἐξηνέμωσε and the phrase εἶδωλον ἐμπνουν οὐρανοῦ ξυνοθεῖσ' ἄπο refer to the supernatural way of this creation and may allude to presocratic theories for the origins of the world and the way of the creation of human beings. In Helen's words Hera made an *eidolon*, a fake but living copy of Helen, which she gave to Priam's son; Paris thought he had her but in fact what he had was an "empty thought", κενὴν δόκησιν (*Helen* 33-6: δίδωσι δ' οὐκ ἐμ', ἀλλ' ὁμοιώσασ' ἐμοί / εἶδωλον

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power (i.e. a god), leads the tongue to the *onomatopoesis* according to a person's character and his/her future action. In what follows Helen's name is associated with the stem ελ- of the verb αἰρῶ and its meaning "occupy" and "destroy": ἑλένας (or ἑλέναυς), ἑλκνδρος, ἑλέπτολις, i.e. she who destroys ships, men, and cities (cf. the pun with ἑλών (Eur. *Tro.* 1117) and εἶλε (*Tro.* 891, *Hec.* 44)). Below, in lines 737ff., in the third strophe of the second stasimon, Helen is accused by the Chorus that by going astray she gave a bitter end to her marriage as she became for Priam and his children a bad comrade and a bad partner (δύσεδρος καὶ δυσόμιλος) but above all a personification of Erinys, a bride of evil (or "an evil who brings tears to brides") a νομόφλαυτος Ἐρινός (cf. Aesch. *Ag.* 408: ἄτλητα τλάσα, "she who cared inadmissible things"). In my view, in this *stasimon* Aeschylos hurls against Helen such accusations that occur nowhere in Greek tragedy and can be summarized in a single phrase: she is an evil spirit; cf. Chatzianestis, *Αἰσχύλος Ἀγαμέμνων*, II, 194-203.

171. It seems that there is a hint of this ontological question in Herodotos' work too which, however, does not become very clear; in his saying "they [sc. the Trojans] did not have Helen so as to give her to the Greeks" (ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ εἶχον Ἑλένην ἀποδοῦναι: 2.120.5) I see the core of such an idea of the body as visible evidence; see also Thomas, *Herodotus in context*, (ch. "The visible and the invisible: analogy to the unseen", 200-12), for Herodotos' use of evidence.

172. "The Somatics of the Past", 26-7. See also above, note 164, for Hera's *eidolon* in the Pindaric version of the myth of Ixion.



ἔμπνουν κύρανοῦ ξυνθεῖς' ἄπο, / Πριάμου τυράννου παιδί' καὶ δοκεῖ μ' ἔχειν- /  
 κενὴν δόκησιν, οὐκ ἔγων).<sup>173</sup>

This witty verbal play between 'real' Helen and her image is carried on in Helen's encounter with Teuker first and Menelaos later, where visual deception is emphasized (*Helen* 72ff., 115ff.).<sup>174</sup> The stichomythia between Teuker and Helen is especially interesting. Teuker is an eye-witness of Helen's *eidolon*; his words confirm the *eidolon*'s deceptive power as he insists that this looked so much like Helen and that not only his eyes saw "her" but his mind too (line 122: αὐτὸς γὰρ ὄσσοις εἰδόμεν' καὶ νοῦς ὄρα).<sup>175</sup> He probably means that it was not an

173. "The Somatics of the Past", 23-4: "As an effect of Helen's opening speech or monologue, the audience's visual attention oscillates between the 'real' body of Helen and Helen as a *dramatis persona*, and between her place in Egypt and the place occupied by the actor on the Athenian stage." See also N. Worman, "The Body as Argument: Helen in Four Greek Texts", *Classical Antiquity* 16.1. (1997), 151-203.

174. "Oh, gods! What do I see?! I see the most hated, deadly image of that woman, she who destroyed me and all the Greeks. May the gods spit you away, for looking so much like Helen!" (*Helen* 72ff.). Teuker carries on: εἰ δὲ μὴ'ν ξένη γαῖα πῶδ' εἶχον, τῶδ' ἂν εὐστόχῳ πτερῶ ἀπόλαυσιν εἰκοῦς ἔθινες ἂν Διὸς κόρης: "If I weren't a stranger standing on foreign soil, using my sure-hitting arrows, death would have been your reward for looking like the daughter of Zeus" (lines 75ff.): transl. by B. Zweig in *Women on the edge: Four plays by Euripides: Alcestis, Medea, Helen, Iphigenia at Aulis*, translated and edited by R. Blondell, M.-K. Gamel, N. Sorkin Rabinowitz, B. Zweig, New York and London 1999, 240. Teuker is facing a very difficult situation: the woman before him looks so much like Helen but it could not be her since "he had seen Menelaos in Troy dragging her from the hair and he had seen this scene with his own eyes; when the eyes see so does the mind": *Helen* 115ff.: ἡ καὶ γυναῖκα Σπαρτιατῖν εἶλετε; / Μενέλαος αὐτήν ἦγ' ἐπισπάσας κόμης. / εἶδες σὺ τὴν δύστηνον; ἡ κλύων λέγεις; / ὥσπερ γε σέ, οὐδὲν ἴσσον, ὀφθαλμοῖς ὄρω; line 122: αὐτὸς γὰρ ὄσσοις εἰδόμεν' καὶ νοῦς ὄρα: Helen: So, did you capture the Spartan woman? / Teuker: Menelaos got her and dragged her off by her hair / Helen: Did you yourself see the poor woman, or are you speaking from hearsay? Teu: I saw her with my own eyes, no less than I'm seeing you now / Helen: Did you ever think it was an image from the gods? / Teu: Mention another story, no more about her. / Helen: Well, do you think the image is so infallible? / Teu: I'm telling you, I myself saw her with my own eyes... and "my mind saw" too: transl. by Zweig, *Women on the edge*, 242.

175. "This echo of a saying by the pre-Socratic philosopher Epicharmus — "the mind sees and the mind hears; all else is deaf and blind" — prepares for the extensive play upon the sensory basis of epistemology in the scene between Helen and Menelaos": *Women on the edge*, p. 436. On the "trustworthiness of visual perception and the world of appearances in the extreme case of Helen and her *eidolon*" see Zeitlin, "The artful eye", 142.



optical illusion what he saw, but an optical as well as a mental experience, therefore stronger and more certain; both his sense of vision and his mind received the stimulation. However, according to Euripides' story, Teuker is in fact occupied by an illusion, because he thinks that the 'false' Helen he had seen in Troy was the 'real' one; to his mind, 'false' and 'real' are reversed, autopsy appears as a medium not to the true state of things, to real situations, but to false ones. In a way Teuker rejects the evidence of his present sense of vision, of his autopsy.

Teuker's comment on Helen's φρένας in line 160 is another very interesting point related to our discussion (160-4: 'Ελένη δ' ὁμοιον σώμ' ἔχουσ' οὐ τὰς φρένας / ἔχεις ὁμοίας, ἀλλὰ διαφόρους πολὺ. / κακῶς δ' ὄλοϊτο μηδ' ἔπ' Εὐρώτα ῥοὰς / ἔλθοι. σὺ δ' εἴης εὐτυχῆς ἀεί, γύναι).<sup>176</sup> Probably an attempt is made here by Euripides to show through Teuker that 'real' Helen, the one he sees in front of his eyes, has not the wits of the 'fake' one, of the *eidolon* he had seen in Troy; that Helen was folly whereas this Helen is quite different from the one the Homeric tradition had inherited to his generation. This Helen — Euripides' one — did not act foolishly, she did not give in to her abduction, therefore she was not responsible for the Trojan war. Obviously her body and *phrenes* (mind or heart) are in the centre of the "recognition scene". Helen's famous beauty, that mainly her body conveys as a trade-mark of her, is the most important feature of her persona, having always been associated with her mind and her behaviour in general. It is this beauty that she later refuses in her address to the Chorus by wishing that it disappeared, be rubbed out like an *agalma* and become ugly instead of beautiful, so that the Greeks forget her misfortunes and her bad fate and remember all the good things about her only: τέρας γὰρ ὁ βίος καὶ τὰ πράγματ' ἐστὶ μου, τὰ μὲν δι' Ἥραν, τὰ δὲ τὸ κάλλος αἴτιον. / εἶθ' ἐξαλειφθεῖσ' ὡς ἄγαλμ' αὐθις πάλιν / αἰσχίον εἶδος ἔλαβον ἀντὶ τοῦ καλοῦ, / καὶ τὰς τύχας μὲν τὰς κακὰς ἄς νῦν ἔχω / Ἕλληνες ἐπελάθοντο, τὰς δὲ μὴ

176. "Though you look just like Helen physically, your heart and mind are not alike, but completely different. May she be wickedly destroyed and may she never reach Eurotas' streams. But you, Lady, may you be fortunate always!": transl. Zweig, *Women on the edge*, 436. N. Nikolaou (*Μυθολογία Γ. Σεφέρη: Ἀπὸ τὸν Ὀδυσσεύα στὸν Τεῦκρο*, Athens 1992, 108, 126, 147ff.), argues that with Teukros' short presence on the tragic stage Euripides introduces a game between deception and truth and that the hero remains in this tragic illusion between the *eidolon* and real Helen, an illusion which functions on the level of the visible world.



κακάς / ἔσφζον ὡσπερ τὰς κακάς σφζουσί μου (*Helen* 260-66).<sup>177</sup> The mention of the *agalma*<sup>178</sup> in the above speech of Helen may be an allusion to the *eidolon*, the image that can be created from the very

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177. For translation see *Women on the edge*, 247: "For my life and all its events have been monstrous, / some because of Hera, some due to my beauty. / I wish I could have been wiped clean, like a statue, and / painted again, / getting an uglier face instead of my beautiful one. / The Greeks would then forget the evil fortunes I now have; / and they would hold better thoughts of me, / just as they now cling to the bad ones." The tragic irony about Helen's words is that it is because of her beauty that her fame existed, the same fame that so explicitly refuses here (see also *Iliad* 6.355-8; cf. 9.337-9). In *Iliad* 3.173-6 and 6.345-8, Helen's speech is structured upon similar ideas but slightly differentiated: she wishes that death reached her after she had followed Paris leaving her family back in Sparta, or on the day she was born a wind should take her and transfer her either to the mountains or to the waves of the sea and be drowned there. A brief wish for her destruction is uttered in Helen's *threnos* for Hektor in *Iliad* 24.764: ὡς πρὶν ὄφελον δλέσθαι. Worman ("Helen's verbal guises", 24-8) argues that the *ophelon* phrase which Helen uses more times than any other character in the *Iliad*, is consistent with her apologetic as well as the self-abuse attitude in this poem which is possibly related to a defamatory tradition not uttered by the poet himself. See Stinton, *Euripides and the Judgement of Paris*, 7f. See also F.I. Zeitlin, "The artful eye: vision, ephrasis and spectacle in Euripidean theatre" in S. Goldhill and R. Osborne, eds, *Art and Text in Ancient Greek Culture*, Cambridge 1994, 142 and 162-6, for the influence of visual arts and especially the experience of viewing paintings for the recollection, via memory, of images or *eikones*, and esp. 191.

178. Dale, *Euripides, Helen*, 83-4, translates ἄγαλμα as "painting" because of ἐξωλείφω which means "must obliterate, not wipe clean": "Oh if only I could be expunged like a painted picture and start again with a plainer appearance in place of this beauty, and then the Greeks could have forgotten the ill fate which now is mine and remembered what was not ill as well as they now remember what is ill". However, I do not agree that ἄγαλμα means painting here; we would rather accept its actual meaning, that of a statue or rather a painted statue. See also Vernant (*Myth and Thought among the Greeks*, ch. 13: "The Representation of the invisible and the Psychological Category of the Double: the Colossos", 305ff.), who examines the three types of doubles found in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* 410-26, as the three ways by which Helen appears to Menelaos after her depart from their palace — or rather Menelaos' desire creates various images of his absent wife: as a ghost (φάσμα), as statues (κολοσσοί), and as dream figures (ὄνειρόφαντοι δόξαι). In my view the content of the above verses is relevant to the theme of the *eidolon* although the above forms of Helen's doubles have an essential difference from that as they are inanimate, and not touchable (apart from the *colossoi* which are touchable but have no life as the *eidolon* has). But see also Chatzianestis, *Αἰσχύλος, Ἀγαμέμνων*, vol. II, comm. on 410-26: it is not clear whether in line 415 the word φάσμα, "Phantom", applies to Helen or Menelaos. However, I prefer the first interpretation connecting φάσμα with Helen which is what Menelaos' desire creates,



beginning. Elsewhere in the play the word *agalma* is used for Helen's *eidolon*, the recreation of herself in the way she describes it in lines 263-5 though clear off her beauty. Moreover, the reference to Hera in line 261 seems to allude to the creation of the *eidolon* but it is also associated with Helen's wish for self-recreation, for which the above goddess is the most suitable.<sup>179</sup>

for in his phantasy he sees Helen everywhere in the palace. The reference to κολοσσοί in the next line (εὐμόρφων δὲ κολοσσῶν), most probably applies to Helen's statues here and there in the palace, as well as the phrase δειρόφαντοι . . . δόξαι (lines 420-1), are most probably images of Helen which appear in Menelaos' dreams and bring happiness to him, a joy which is ματαία, "vacant" (δειρόφαντοι δὲ πενθήμονες πάρεισι δόξαι φέρουσαι χάριν ματαίαν), since the dream images/phantoms slip away (παραλλάξασα διὰ χερῶν βέβακεν ὄψις) following the sleep's paths: πτεροῖς ὀπαδοῦσ' ὕπνου κελεύθοις. Therefore, in *Ag.* 410-26, Menelaos suffers from Helen's absence and his longing makes her appear as a ghost, which reigns the palace, or as beautiful *colossoi* which, however, have not the grace of the living Helen; since Menelaos cannot see Helen's eyes his desire fades; and in his dream persuasive images appear, i.e. of Helen, that bring a vacant joy; for, whereas the dream image looks as real, it slips away and disappears in the paths of the sleep: Chatzianestis, vol. II, 124-30, esp. 127, s.v. δυμάτων. This view of the various phantoms of Helen, an image-prevailing idea, seems to be the *prodromos* of the Euripidean version of her *eidolon*. See also N. Loraux, "Le fantôme de la sexualité", *Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse* 29 (1984), 11-33; Frontisi - Ducroux, *Dédale*, 95-117.

179. Ἐξηγέμωσε in *Helen* 32 deserves particular attention. It means "she [sc. Hera] turned [Helen] into air", (cf. *Helen* 584 where the εἰδῶλον of Helen is said to be made of αἰθήρ). It is a storm-wind again that Helen wishes it had borne her away, on the day of her birth, to some mountain or to the waves of the sea, which might have swept her away (*Iliad* 6.346-8). Although this Homeric evidence does not allude to any *eidolon* of Helen, even more as she connects her gone with the wind with death, it is however remarkable that in both cases, the *eidolon* made of air in Eur. *Helen* (ἔξηγέμωσε), as well as Helen's snatch by the air, even as a wish in the *Iliad*, refer to the same idea of the ἐξηγέμωσις of her real-self into an ethereal, but innocent, not responsible existence. See Zeitlin's discussion ("The artful eye", 188ff.) for the various meanings that the term *eidolon* is ascribed in Euripidean tragedy, with an emphasis on Oedipus' *eidolon* in the *Phoenissae* and Helen's one in the homonymous play. In epic poetry and early Greek thought the term refers to all those supernatural apparitions that can be distinguished into three categories: those of *phasma*, *psyche*, or *onar*. In all these cases the *eidolon* is a 'double' rather than an image (the term 'double' is introduced by Vernant: see previous note). In the case of Helen, however, her *eidolon* although made of air (*Helen* 32-4: ἔξηγέμωσε . . . εἰδῶλον ἐμπνοῦν οὐρανοῦ ξυνοθεῖσ' ἄπο; 705: νεφέλης ἀγαλμ' ἔχοντες), has a different ontological status, between illusion and reality: see Zeitlin, "The artful eye", 193-4: "The *eidolon* in the *Helen* participates as a theatrical presence in this growing debate, particularly among the sophists. Rouveret reminds us that 'the sophists, like Gorgias, were the first to emphasize the relations





The interplay between body and name, 'real' and 'false' Helen, is repeated in the encounter of Helen and Menelaos. The situation is very complicated, because that Helen who is on the stage of the tragic theater cannot be faced by Menelaos — may be by the audience too — as the 'real' one, for there is another Helen on the background, an *eidolon*, hidden in a cave (*Helen* 581; cf. 575). How is it possible to exist two Helens? The epic story is also present and still very strong, rather in a conflict with the 'new story' and the 'new Helen', with the new literary ideas. This, in my view, is seen by the fact that *Helen-eidolon* does not appear in any scene of the play.<sup>180</sup> It remains a verbal *eidolon* among the play's characters, not played by any actor or projected to the stage and reality, but it stays to the world of the imagination and the 'unreal', in fact in an unseen cave where it actually belongs. Thus the actual discussion on the *eidolon* takes place in this part of the play. There is a play again between Helen's name and her body, her physical existence in place and time, between the two aspects of Helen, the two wives of Menelaos. At certain points the discussion touches ontological issues and thus appears very interesting, as for example *Helen* 557-63:

- M. τίς εἶ; τίς ὄψιν σήν, γύναι, προσδέρκομαι;  
 E. σὺ δ' εἶ τίς; αὐτὸς γὰρ σέ κάμ' ἔχει λόγος.  
 M. οὐπόποτ' εἶδον προσφερέστερον δέμας.  
 E. ὦ θεοί· θεὸς γὰρ καὶ τὸ γιγνώσκειν φίλους.  
 < M. Ἑλληνίς εἶ τις ἢ ἐπιχωρία γυνή; >  
 E. Ἑλληνίς· ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ σὸν θέλω μαθεῖν.  
 M. Ἑλένη σ' ὁμοίαν δὴ μάλιστ' εἶδον, γύναι.<sup>181</sup>

between their practice of discourse and the painting of their period — this intimate bond', as she continues, 'materializes in the figure of Helen, subject of the "poetic art" of Gorgias, the emblem of the painting of Zeuxis but also the quintessence of the theater and its illusions in Euripides". For Helen's *eidolon* and her comparison to Iphigeneia see also D. Lyons, *Gender and immortality: heroines in ancient Greek myth and cult*, Princeton 1997 (cf. five: "The goddess and her doubles": *Eidolon* and *apotheosis*: revisionist strategies), 157-62.

180. Cf. Bassi, "The Somatics of the Past", 26.

181. "M. Who are you? Whose face, Lady, am I looking at? / H. But who are you? For I'm gripped by the same question. / M. I have never seen a more remarkable likeness! / H. Oh gods! For surely it's the work of the gods to recognize one's loved ones! / M. Are you a Hellenic woman or native to this land? / H. Hellenic! But I want to know your country too. / M. So like Helen! You look so much like her, Lady!": transl. Zweig, *Women on the edge*, 258.



The 'recognition scene' has various stages. The similarity of the woman Menelaos looks at, Helen, is amazing, "a remarkable likeness"; both are shocked by what they see, they see each other, husband and wife and they can't believe in their own eyes. Visual illusion and real visual sense are confounded as well as Helen's origin, or rather nationality, which makes here a point of recognition as well as an intellectual and linguistic play (*Helen* 557-63); 'Ελληνίς and 'Ελένη are interesting from the acoustic point of view even if they cannot be related linguistically.<sup>182</sup>

The visual likeness, however, is the most strong step from the recognition point of view and is taken as a divine sign (line 560: 'Ε. ὦ θεοί: θεός γάρ καὶ τὸ γινώσκειν φίλους). A ghostly vision is also suggested by Menelaos' invocation to Hekate (lines 569f.), therefore three issues are on debate here: the 'real' Helen, her *eidolon* (i.e. the two Helens) and a third one, Helen's ghostly vision that now comes like a dream to Menelaos who is invoking Hekate to ward it off. His argument that he can't be the husband of two women at the same time (571. οὐ μὴν γυναικῶν γ' εἷς δυοῖν ἔφυν πόσις) makes so that the discussion theme advances towards clarification and recognition. In lines 572-74 the two Helens are brought into question: who is Menelaos' wife, the one he sees in front of his eyes or the one he regained from the Trojans and brought with him to Egypt? Line 574 is conclusive and decisive from Helen's side: "You have no other wife besides me". And Menelaos' answer, or rather wonder, on Helen's claim is that if his senses are ill so must be his mind: οὐ που φρονῶ μὲν εὖ, τὸ δ' ὄμμα μου νοσεῖ; "can it be that though I am in my right mind my eyes are at fault?" (l.575).<sup>183</sup> The above lines, as well as the following ones (576ff.), are dealing with themes like the visual sense (ἔοικας in line

182. See *Women on the edge*, 441 (commentary on lines 561-63), where it is argued that, although Helen's name and that of the "Hellenes" are not from the same linguistic root according to modern etymologies, Euripides makes an intellectual play upon these sound similarities between the two names, a play that "associates Helen with language and knowledge".

183. I prefer Dale's translation of this line: *op. cit.*, 102. See also Thomas, *Herodotus in Context*, 200ff. (esp. ch. 6: "Argument and the language of proof": "The visible and the invisible: analogy to the unseen"), for Herodotos' emphasis upon the 'visible' and the 'invisible' which is in a way relevant to our discussion: see for example the *aphanes* in *Helen* 126 but also the word *δόκησιν* in line 119 as well as in 121: οὐτῶ δοκεῖτε τὴν δόκησιν ἀσφαλῆ; For "an emphasis on the uncertainty of relying on sense perceptions" see Conacher, *Euripides and the Sophists*, 77ff.



579 has a special power: “you look”) and the deceptive visual perception, the real and the fascimile; with visual deception in general but also with philosophical subjects and issues on gnoseology, like the acquiring of knowledge through visual perception as the most safe and non-deceptive autopsy of knowledge, a view here represented by Helen (see line 580: τίς οὖν διδάξει σ’ ἄλλος ἢ τὰ σ’ ὄμματα;).<sup>184</sup>

The climax of the stichomythia is in line 582: οὐκ ἦλθον ἐς γῆν Τρωάδ’, ἀλλ’ εἶδωλον ἦν: “But I never went to the Trojan land; it was an image of me”, which sounds a Stesichorean echo.<sup>185</sup> The truth has been revealed, the truth is there! This statement, this unique claim of Helen, is revolutionary in her myth because the *eidolon*-idea is a revelation, a radical idea in the history of ancient Greek thought. This is how a rational mind can be confused: Me: “who can fabricate living bodies?” (583). Helen answers that the αἰθήρ can and that the image he is calling his wife is made of αἰθήρ. On Menelaos’ question who of the gods had made it, Helen’s answer is that it was Hera’s creation, as a substitute, so that Paris could never have her — she means “the real Helen” the “real body” — (584-6). It is remarkable that here the participle πλάσαντος in the phrase τίνος πλάσαντος θεῶν; in line 585, recalls Pandora’s way of creation, although with different materials (*Th.* 571: γαίης γὰρ σύμπλασε περικλυτὸς Ἀμφιγυήεις; *WD* 70: αὐτίκα δ’ ἐκ γαίης πλάσε κλυτὸς Ἀμφιγυήεις).

Menelaos is not convinced. What Helen is saying is unbelievable (585: ἄελπτα γὰρ λέγεις) and, even more, “how is it possible for the

184. See *Women on the edge*, 231-3, 433 note 5, 441 esp. note 54, where it is argued that the figure of Helen is involved into philosophical debates on the association of sight and knowledge and the “idea that knowledge is mental vision”, on the nature of knowledge and on the reliability of the senses in the process of acquiring knowledge. On *εἰκας* of line 579 see Synodinou, “*Εοικα - εἰκός*”, 80, who classifies this in the category of the “similitude *εἰκας*”. On the association of knowledge with vision and eyes as a source of information — as knowledge comes through them to the mind for the eyes are the media where intelligence is reflected as brightness — in the Homeric poems, see S. Constantinidou, “Homeric eyes in a ritual context”, *Dodone* 23.2 (1994), 59-60; *idem*, “The Vision of Homer: The Eyes of Heroes and Gods”, *Antichthon* 28 (1994), 1-5. Conacher, *op. cit.*, 77, believes that the “appearance and reality” theme in *Helen* parodies sophistic teachings on these matters; see also 80ff. for the second half of Euripides’ play where “speech words” replace “words of seeming”, both, however, in a context of deception associated with Teuker and Menelaos.

185. See Stesichoros’ *Palinode*, 1-3: οὐκ ἔστ’ ἔτομος λόγος οὗτος, / οὐδ’ ἔβας ἐν νηυσὶν εὐσέλμοις / οὐδ’ ἴκειο πέργαμα Τροίας (192 *PMG*).



same person to be in two places at the same time?" (587), i.e. in Egypt and Troy? Helen's answer, *τοῦνομα γένοιτ' ἂν πολλαχοῦ, τὸ σῶμα δ' οὐ* (588), "that a name could exist in many places but not a body", touches upon the philosophical idea about the difference between *onoma* and *physis*. Such debates would have been extremely interesting for Euripides' audience already familiar with the teaching of the sophists and the current philosophical ideas in late fifth century Athens.<sup>186</sup> However, Helen is trying in vain to tell Menelaos that by leaving her he will go after a phantom wife; there is so much pain for what he had suffered in Troy that this pain and suffering are more able to convince him than Helen herself. Nevertheless, he wishes her well for she looks so much like Helen (589-91). Obviously, what Menelaos means here is that it is not possible to have suffered so much for nothing, i.e. for an *eidolon*, for a 'false Helen', to be so much deceived. His reaction calls into question not only Helen, the woman before him, whether she is his wife or not but also "the arguments that question the basis of knowledge and that overwhelm his thinking".<sup>187</sup> However, he does not question the *eidolon* itself because to his mind this cannot be the reality; for him there is only one reality, the reality of the Trojan war and the so many and big sufferings in Troy (593).<sup>188</sup>

From line 597 the play's plot advances with the recognition scene. A messenger appears, Menelaos' servant, and announces the disappearance of Helen: *βέβηκεν ἄλοχος σὴ πρὸς αἰθέρος πτυχᾶς / ἄρθεῖσ' ἄφαντος· οὐρανῶ δὲ κρύπτεται. . .*: "Your wife's gone, pooh! caught up into valleys of thin air, hidden in the sky! She left that sacred cave where we were guarding her. But first she said this: 'Oh, you miserable Trojans,

186. See Hall's introduction in Morwood, *Euripides: Medea, Hippolytus, Electra, Helen*, xxii-xxv; Zweig, *Women on the edge*, 17ff., 219-21; Conacher, *Euripides and the Sophists*, 70-83; *idem*, "Rhetoric and relevance in Euripidean drama" in J. Mossman, *Oxford readings in classical studies: Euripides*, Oxford 2003, 81-101. Note especially the messenger's interpretation in line 601 (*θαῦμα' ἔστ', ἔλασσον τοῦνομα' ἢ τὸ πρᾶγμα' ἔχον*), where *δνομα* and *πρᾶγμα* which refer to *θαῦμα*, "miracle", may be also associated with Helen's *δνομα* and *σῶμα* a few lines above (l. 588).

187. *Women on the edge*, 441, note 55.

188. *Women on the edge*, 441: "...The human, perhaps tragic, irony, is that on some level we sympathize with Menelaos, for in the same position, we too would "hardly believe our own eyes!" Menelaos seems not to be convinced by terms that Helen uses for the phantom like *διάλλαγμα* ("substitute") in line 586 and *κέν' ... λέχη* ("phantom wife") in line 590.



and all you Hellenes too, because of Hera's schemes, you all died by the banks of the Scamander because of me, thinking that Paris had Helen when he did not. But as for me, since I have stayed for the time allotted, I am going back to my father sky. And all the terrible rumors the wretched daughter of Tyndareos heard about herself, she wasn't even guilty!" (605-15).<sup>189</sup> The messenger's announcement focuses on Helen's *eidolon*: it clearly defines its nature, its capacities as an ethereal mass, its supernatural behaviour. The phantom ended up to the ether where it came from.<sup>190</sup> However, the messenger's report is then enveloped into a mist of confusion and irony as he discovers the visual identity between real Helen and her phantom (ὦ χαῖρε, Λήδας θύγατερ, ἐνθάδ' ἦσθ' ἄρα; / ἐγὼ δέ σ' ἄστρων ὡς βεβηκυῖαν μυχούς / ἤγγελλον εἰδῶς οὐδὲν ὡς ὑπόπτερον / δέμας φοροῆς), where ὑπόπτερον δέμας, "winged body" is perhaps ironically given ("how could I know that you had a winged body?"). Thus the whole scene becomes extremely interesting from many points of view.

But once more, Helen's image does not appear on the stage; it remains the "absent body"<sup>191</sup> of this play pertaining more to the "world of imagination" than to "the world of reality", at least from the point of view of the ancient audience (for the readers of the play this may have a role in their reading). However, while vanishing, the phantom gives emphasis on all that labour that the Trojans and the Achaeans got into for nothing; Menelaos himself into thousands of sufferings for nothing, in vain (603: λέγω πόνους σε μυρίους τλῆναι μάτην), the Trojans and the Achaeans were dying on the banks of Scamander because of Hera's device, believing that Paris had Helen not having her (608ff.): ὦ ταλαίπωροι Φρύγες / πάντες τ' Ἀχαιοί, δι' ἐμ' ἐπὶ Σκαμανδρίοις / ἀκταῖσιν Ἥρας μηχαναῖς ἐθνήσατε, / δοκοῦντες Ἑλένην οὐκ ἔχοντ'

189. Transl. Zweig, *Women on the edge*, 260. See also Dale's (*Euripides, Helen*, 103-4) commentary on the above verses.

190. Dale, *Euripides, Helen*, 103, points out that αἰθήρ, which in *Hel.* 34 is called οὐρανός, "is the material which phantoms are made of by a god (θεοπόνητα)". This is a scene of ascension to the sky whose coherence to the Christian belief of Christ's Ascension into heavens is remarkable: *Helen* 605-6: βέβηκεν ἄλοχος σὴ πρὸς αἰθέρος πτυχὰς ἀρθεῖσ' ἀφαντος; 612-14: ἐγὼ δ', ἐπειδὴ χρόνον ἔμειν' ὅσον με χρῆν, / τὸ μόρσιμον σάσασα, πατέρ' ἐς οὐρανὸν / ἄπειμι: "But as for me, since I have stayed for the time allotted, I am going back to my father sky". Obviously, Helen's phantom is treated here as a divine entity; the epithet σεμνόν, "hallowed", used for the cave where the phantom was hidden, reinforces this meaning.

191. See Bassi, "The Somatics of the Past", 29.



ἔχειν Πάριν: "Oh, you miserable Trojans, and all you Hellenes too, because of Hera's schemes, you all died by the banks of the Scamander because of me, thinking that Paris had Helen when he did not" (cf. *Hel.* 33-6: δίδωσι δ' οὐκ ἔμ', ἀλλ' ὁμοιώσασ' ἐμοί / εἶδωλον ἔμπνου οὐρανοῦ ξυνθεῖσ' ἄπο, / Πριάμου τυράννου παιδί· καὶ δοκεῖ μ' ἔχειν- / κενὴν δόκησιν, οὐκ ἔχων; *Hdt.* 2.120: ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ εἶχον Ἑλένην ἀποδοῦναι οὐδὲ λέγουσι αὐτοῖσι τὴν ἀληθεῖν ἐπίστευον οἱ Ἕλληνες, and *Hes. WD* 164-5: τοὺς δὲ καὶ ἐν νήεσσιν ὑπὲρ μέγα λαῖτμα θαλάσσης / ἐς Τροίην ἀγαγῶν Ἑλένης ἔνεκ' ἠυκόμοιο). Via her *eidolon* Helen undertakes her defense, or rather Helen's defense is shifted from her 'real' self to her *eidolon*. It seems that there is a Stesichorean sounding in the *eidolon's* final statement: φήμας δ' ἡ τάλαινα Τυνδαρις / ἄλλως κακὰς ἤκουσεν οὐδὲν αἰτία: "And all the terrible rumors the wretched daughter of Tyndareos heard about herself, she wasn't even guilty!" (614-5; cf. *Palinode* 1.1: οὐκ ἔστ' ἔτυμος λόγος οὗτος).<sup>192</sup>

Obviously, Euripides knows Stesichoros' poetry on Helen. The discussion that follows focuses on the fame of Helen; the word φάτις used in this tragedy (*Helen*) seems replacing Stesichoros' *logos* mentioned in the first surviving line of the *Palinode* (οὐκ ἔστ' ἔτυμος λόγος οὗτος; *Helen* 658ff.: Μ. κάγώ σε τὴν δοκοῦσαν Ἰδαίαν πόλιν / μολεῖν Ἰλίου τε μελέους πύργους. πρὸς θεῶν, δόμων πῶς τῶν ἐμῶν ἐπεστάλης; Ε. ἔ ἔ· πικρὰς ἐς ἀρχὰς βαίνεις, / ἔ ἔ· πικρὰν δ' ἐρευνᾶς φάτιν). Φάτις is the fame of Helen, that fame that Stesichoros attempted to refute, as did Herodotos in his own version, and Euripides third in line although more faithful to the Stesichorean version. However, λόγος also occurs elsewhere in *Helen* with the meaning of κακηγορία, of casting aspersions; in line 717 λόγοισιν (716-17: σὺ γὰρ πόσις τε σὸς, πόνων μετέσχετε, / σὺ μὲν λόγοισιν, δὲ δὲ δορὸς προθυμία) refers to the λόγοι, the stories about Helen, the accusations which according to the messenger were the cause of Helen's sufferings. The association of this word and of the whole meaning of λόγος as slander, malicious rumour, with Stesichoros' *Palinode* (οὐκ ἔστ' ἔτυμος λόγος οὗτος), as well as with Plato's use of

192. According to Zweig (*Women on the edge*, 442) an echo of the *Palinode* is also found some fifty lines below in the play, lines 666ff., see esp. *Helen* 658-68: Με. κάγώ σε τὴν δοκοῦσαν Ἰδαίαν πόλιν μολεῖν Ἰλίου τε μελέους πύργους. πρὸς θεῶν, δόμων πῶς τῶν ἐμῶν ἀπεστάλης; Ἑλ. ἔ ἔ· πικρὰς ἐς ἀρχὰς βαίνεις, ἔ ἔ· πικρὰν δ' ἐρευνᾶς φάτιν. Με. λέγ' ὡς ἀκουστὰ πάντα δῶρα δαιμόνων. Ἑλ. ἀπέπτυσσα μὲν λόγον, οἶον οἶον ἐσοίσσμαι. Με. ὁμως δὲ λέξον ἠδὲ τοι μόχθων κλύειν. Ἑλ. οὐκ ἐπὶ βαρβάρου λείτρα νεανία πετομένας κώπας, πετομένου δ' ἔρωτος ἀδίκων γάμων. . . : "Me. And I hold you, when



κατηγορία in the introductory passage to the *Palinode*, is obvious and this is most probably what Euripides means here<sup>193</sup>. Thus, Helen's *mythos* becomes λόγος<sup>194</sup> — or φάτις — in Stesichoros and Euripides who follow a similar version by emphasizing 'falsehood' and 'untrue fame' in Helen's story, a version which upsets the Homeric tradition. As we have shown above there are parallels in the two poems associated with Helen's *eidolon*, i.e. in *Helen* and the *Palinode*.

We shall now come to another signifying point of the myth of Helen, which occurs in Euripides' *Helen* and is closely related to the main theme of our work, i.e. the *eris*' function in the mythical process concerning Helen. This is the *krisis* of Paris which was the beginning of all strife. Lines 673ff. concentrate on this theme by reminding us of the original cause of all problems (see esp. *Helen* 678-79: E. ἔνθεν ἔμολεν κρίσις. / M. τὰ δ' ἐς κρίσιν σοι τῶνδ' ἔθηχ' Ἥρα κακῶν...). Menelaos asks Helen how she was found outside her country and who of the gods, or any fate, was responsible for that. Thus Helen is narrating the story of the judgement, the κρίσις, of the three goddesses and Hera's revenge so that Paris would never have her despite Aphrodite's promise; instead, Hera gave him Helen's *eidolon* in her place (683: M. εἴτ'

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I thought you had gone to the city by mount Ida, to the unhappy towers of Troy. By the gods, how did you leave my house? Hel. Oh no, you are stepping into a bitter beginning. You are inquiring into a bitter tale. Me. Tell me; I've got to hear it. All things are a gift from the divinities. Hel. I spit the story away, such a tale I have to bring out! Me. In any case, tell it. You know it's sweet to hear of hardships. Hel. *I did not enter the marriage-bed of the barbarian youth, I was not carried away by his winged oars, nor by a lust winging for an illicit love*" (my italics): transl. Zweig, *Women on the edge*, 262. But see Alcaeus 42. 1-4 : ὡς λόγος, κάκων ἄχος, ὦλεν, ἔργων / Περράμω καὶ παῖσι φύοισ' ἐπηλθεν / ἐκ σέθεν πίκρον, πύρι δ' ὤλεσε Ζεὺς / Ὀδίων ἱραν; see also *ibid.*, 15-16: οἱ δ' ἀπώλοντ' ἀμφ' Ἐλένας Φρύγες τε / καὶ πόλις αὐτῶν. The phrase ὡς λόγος seems to be an opposing to Stesichoros' argument in the debate about Helen's culpability, in the sense: "this is the true λόγος" against the οὐκ ἔστ' ἔτυμος λόγος οὗτος of the *Palinode* (l.1). For the accusations against Helen see also Alcaeus 283.3-17: ... κάλένας ἐν στήθεσιν [ἐ]πιτόμισε / θῦμον Ἀργείας, Τροίω δ' [ὕ]π' ἀνδρος / ἐκμάνεισα [ἐ]ναπάτα ... κασιγνήτων πόλεας μ[έ]λαινα / γὰρ ἔχει Τρώων πεδίω δά[μ]εντας / ἐννεκα κήνας, / πόλ[λ]α δ' ἄρματ' ἐν κονίαισι [ / ].εν, πό[λ]λοι δ' ἐλίκωπε[ς] οἱ σ[τ]ε[ί]βοντο, φόνω δ. [...].

193. Another echo of the *Palinode* is also found in the beginning of the play, in lines 58-9: γνόντος ὡς ἐς Ὀδίων οὐκ ἦλθον; cf. οὐδ' ἴκεο πέργαμα Τροίας (*Palinode*, l.3).

194. Notice the adjacent meaning of the two words in ancient Greek as *mythos* means also "words, speech", while λόγος means "story"; the two words are, however, combined in one (μυθολογία) in Plato's introduction to the *Palinode* (*Phaedr.* 243a).



ἀντέδωκ' εἶδωλον, ὡς σέθεν κλύω).<sup>195</sup> Therefore, out of the beauty contest between the three goddesses came the creation of the *eidolon* by Hera. Here, as in the following lines, Euripides focuses on Helen's innocence and this becomes more obvious in lines 702-8: M: ἀλλ', ὦ γεραιέ, καὶ σὺ κοινῶναι λόγων. Αγγ. οὐχ ἦδε μόχθων τῶν ἐν Ἰλίῳ βραβεύς; M. οὐχ ἦδε, πρὸς θεῶν δ' ἤμεν ἠπατημένοι, νεφέλης ἄγαλμ' ἔχοντες ἐν χεροῖν [λυγρόν]. Αγγ. τί φῆς; νεφέλης ἄρ' ἄλλως εἶχομεν πόνους πέρι; M. "Ἡρας τάδ' ἔργα καὶ θεῶν τρισσοῶν ἔρις.<sup>196</sup>

Thus, from line 676 Helen's story is presented from the very beginning; besides, she has told the same story before, in her opening monologue (23ff.). The past revives as she refers to the judgement of Paris, the cause of all sufferings: the three goddesses bathed so as to become beautiful for it was basically a beauty contest, a judgement for beauty — first on the divine level — whose details are presented here. Menelaos is wondering why in this κρίσις Hera became the cause of Helen's sufferings (line 679) to receive the answer that the goddess's wish was to deprive Paris from Helen, whom Aphrodite had promised him (680f.); so she brought Helen to Egypt and gave Paris the phantom as a substitute. At last Menelaos seems to believe this story; in lines 704-10 he confesses that he was deceived by the gods and that, he and the Achaeans had in their hands not Helen but a statue made of cloud, a cloud image: Αγγ. οὐχ ἦδε μόχθων τῶν ἐν Ἰλίῳ βραβεύς; M. οὐχ ἦδε, πρὸς θεῶν δ' ἤμεν ἠπατημένοι, νεφέλης ἄγαλμ' ἔχοντες ἐν χεροῖν [λυγρόν]. Again, the negative statement of the messenger, οὐχ ἦδε, which is repeated by Menelaos, is in my view recalling the *Palinode's* multi denial

195. Transl. Zweig, *Women on the edge*, 263 (ines 694ff.): "A god cast me, ill fated and cursed, out of my fatherland, away from my city and away from you, when I left my home and marriage bed, but not for a shameless marriage". ὅτε μέλαθρα λέχεά τ' ἔλιπον—οὐ λιποῦσ' / ἐπ' ἀλοχροῖς γάμους (696-97) recalls once more the *Palinode*, it follows its idea. A few lines above Helen talks about her daughter Hermione who also suffered from her mother's marriage that in reality was not a marriage: καταστένει γάμον ἄγαμον <έμόν>, "grieving for my marriage that is no marriage "(689-90).

196. Transl. Zweig, *Women on the edge*, 264: "Me. Of course, old man, you too must share in these tales. 1st Messenger: Isn't this the woman who presided over our trials at Troy? Me. She is not the one. We were duped by the gods; *we had only the withering image of a cloud in our hands*. 1st Messenger: What are you saying? *That all our sufferings were merely over a cloud?* Me. This is Hera's doing, and *the strife of the three goddesses*". Cf. also here οὐχ ἦδε μόχθων τῶν ἐν Ἰλίῳ βραβεύς; and νεφέλης ἄρ' ἄλλως εἶχομεν πόνους πέρι; with *Iliad* 3.157: τοιῆδε ἀμφὶ γυναίκε ... ἄλγεα πάσχειν.





of Helen's responsibility: οὐκ ἔστ' ἔτυμος λόγος οὕτος, οὐδ' ἔβας... , οὐδ' ἔλεο... (192.1-3).<sup>197</sup> The messenger goes on wondering how is it possible to suffer so much because of a cloud-image, a statue (706-7), to receive Menelaos' explanation that this was because of Hera's bad deeds as well as of the *eris*, the strife between the three goddesses, which was the initial cause of all woes: "Ἡρας τὰδ' ἔργα καὶ θεῶν τρισσῶν ἔρις (cf. 1117-21).

Thus, the *eris* between the three goddesses and the κρίσις of Paris became the cause of the *eidolon-eris* (see 1134: γέρας, οὐ γέρας ἀλλ' ἔριν). This is already made explicit in Helen's opening speech where she refers to the goddesses' strife because of beauty: ἦλθον τρεῖς θεαὶ κάλλους πέρι... μορφῆς θέλουσαι διαπεράνασθαι κρίσιν (23-6). See lines 22ff.: "But I'm called Helen. Let me tell you the evils I have endured: Three goddesses, arguing over their beauty, came to Alexander in his cave on Mount Ida: Hera, Kypris, and Zeus' maiden daughter, wanting a decision to their contention over beauty. By offering my beauty in marriage as a lure to Alexander... Meanwhile, Hera, upset that she didn't defeat the goddesses, blew my marriage to Alexander away into thin air, by giving to the son of king Priam, not me, *but a living breathing image looking just like me she had made out of the air*. So he thinks that he has me — *an empty thought!* — he doesn't. Then Zeus devised other evils to add to these. For he brought war to the land of the Greeks and the unfortunate Trojans in order to lighten Mother Earth's load from an abundance of human beings, and in order to make Achilles famous as the greatest hero of Greece. *And yet I was not the Cause of the Trojan War, a prize for Greek spears, but my name was*".<sup>198</sup> This last statement of Helen is decisive<sup>199</sup> for the plot of the play.

There are key words and phrases in the above passage: κρίσιν (26), εἶδωλον ἔμπνουν (34), κενὴν δόκησιν (36), τοῖσδε... κακοῖς (37), πόλεμον (38), λαβῶν δέ μ' Ἑρμῆς ἐν πτυχαῖσιν αἰθέρος νεφέλη καλύψας (44-5). The cause of *eris*, of *polemos*, the *eidolon* itself, "a living,

197. Bassi ("Helen and the Discourse of Denial in Stesichorus' *Palinode*", 68 and note 39), argues that the *Palinode* includes "a hyperbolic denial" strengthened by the second person address to Helen.

198. Transl. Zweig, *Women on the edge*, 239. See also Dale's commentary on lines 23ff. (p. 70): "The Judgement of Paris, as the beginning of all the troubles, is accepted as literal truth in this play, with no hint of scepticism or rationalizing interpretation. It is the starting-point of the εἶδωλον-legend on which the play is based".

199. See Zweig, *Women on the edge*, 435 (commentary).



breathing image", made of air, the air of heaven (εἶδωλον ἔμπνουν οὐρανοῦ ζυνοθεῖσ' ἄπο: 34; cf. 584), looked so much like Helen. Deceit or illusion characterizes the *eidolon* because the way of its creation was deceptive — a cloud image — like the way of the abduction of real Helen by Hermes was deceptive too: λαβὼν δέ μ' Ἑρμῆς ἐν πτυχαῖσιν αἰθέρος νεφέλη καλύψας: "But Hermes took me up in folds of ether, hiding me in a cloud" (44-5).<sup>200</sup> This is exactly what Paris and the Trojans had: "a breathing image", the symbol of a great war and the cause of *eris*, of the war that burst out between the Achaeans and the Trojans according to Zeus' will "in order to lighten Earth's load from an abundance of human beings, and in order to make Achilles famous as the greatest hero of Greece" (36-41);<sup>201</sup> γνωτὸν τε θεῖη τὸν κράτιστον Ἑλλάδος (41), so that he was glorified.

The use of the term *δόκησιν* ("a seeming") in line 36 is particularly interesting especially in the phrase *κενὴν δόκησιν*, "an empty thought". It refers to the *eidolon* and the impression one has of it as a person, which Helen applies to the gods. Related to the question on illusion/imagination and reality, *Helen* 121 has obviously philosophical implications (οὕτω δοκεῖτε τὴν δόκησιν ἀσφαλῆ;: δόκησιν - δοκεῖτε). Not only the woman Paris had was an empty figure, a false figure, but his thought was also empty, his belief that he had Helen was not based on reality but on illusion. The interplay with the *ὄνομα*, the name of Helen, and the deceptive capacity that it may convey, that very name applied to an image to be the Cause of a great war, the Trojan War, is very interesting (42-3: Φρυγῶν δ' ἐς ἀλκὴν περυτέθην ἐγὼ μὲν οὐ, τὸ δ' ὄνομα τοῦμόν, ἄθλον Ἑλλήσιν δορός).<sup>202</sup> Sush may be the deceptive power of a name that can be in many places, anywhere, far from the person it is associated with. An emphasis on the name, on Helen's fame or reputation, is also seen in lines 22: Ἑλένη δ' ἐκλήθην and 66-7: ὤς, εἰ καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ὄνομα δυσκλεές φέρω, μή μοι τὸ σῶμά γ' ἐνθάδ' αἰσχύνην ὄφλη:

200. Transl. Zweig, *Women on the edge*, 239. On the use of the *eidolon* by Euripides and its semeiology see Nikolaou, *Μυθολογία Γ. Σεφέρη*, 149ff.

201. Transl. Zweig, *Women on the edge*, 239. According to Dale (*Euripides, Helen*, 71) the glorification of Achilles, as one of the motives for the outbreak of the Trojan War, was probably taken from the *Iliad* or other epic source.

202. The metaphorical use of *ὄνομα* here as a prize (ἄθλον) for the winner of the war, instead of real Helen, recalls *Iliad's* treatment of her as the award for the winners of the war (4.174; 7.401; 11.125; 22.114), or even for the winner of the duel in *Iliad* 3 (253-5, 281-5).



“so that, even though I bear a name of ill repute throughout Greece, my body at least will not incur any shame here”.<sup>203</sup> Here, the *soma* seems to acquire an almost equivalent value to the *onoma* (ὄνομα-σῶμα),<sup>204</sup> which is confirmed a few lines below (72ff.) where Helen’s ὄψις or εἰκῶν is the theme of Teuker’s speech: ὦ θεοί, τίν’ εἶδον ὄψιν; ἐχθίστην ὀρώ / γυναικὸς εἰκῶ φόνιον, ἧ μ’ ἀπόλεσεν / πάντας τ’ Ἀχαιοῦς. θεοί σ’, ὅσον μίμημ’ ἔχεις Ἑλένης ἀποπτύσειαν. Obviously, Teuker refers here to Helen’s body or generally to her appearance which can be equally hateful and contemptible to her name.<sup>205</sup>

Let us now concentrate — and conclude — on our main theme: *eidolon* and *eris* or *eidolon* as *eris*.<sup>206</sup> In a very stimulating article Wilson<sup>207</sup> puts forward this function of Helen’s *eidolon* as a cause of *eris* although he did not develop this idea further. In my view, in Euripides’ mind there are two *erides* closely associated with each other: first, is the *eris* between the three goddesses whose outcome was Helen’s abduction and the cause of “innumerable woes to Greeks and Trojans alike”;<sup>208</sup> and the second *eris*, the *eidolon* itself, both in its creation and in the transference of real Helen by Hermes to Egypt so that Helen’s double could be effective (cf. Eur. *Electra* 1282-3: Ζεὺς δ’, ὡς ἔρις γένοιτο καὶ φόνος βροτῶν, εἶδωλον Ἑλένης ἐξέπεμψ’ ἐς Ἴλιον). Euripidean verses are very clear as far as the function of the *eidolon* is concerned: ὅς... ἀναρπάσας δι’ αἰθέρος τάνδε γαῖαν εἰς ἀνολβον ἔριν ἔριν τάλαιναν ἔθετο Πριαμίδαισιν Ἑλλάδος (*Hel.* 243ff.); γέρας, οὐ γέρας ἄλλ’ ἔριν, Δαναῶν νεφέλαν ἐπὶ ναυσὶν ἄγων, εἶδωλον ἱερὸν Ἥρας, “... a prize that is no

203. Transl. Zweig, *Women on the edge*, 240.

204. But see Nikolaou, *op. cit.*, 164, for the view that in Eur. *Helen* ὄνομα-σῶμα are antithetical notions and the main means leading to δόξα.

205. On the “ambiguous relationship between Helen’s name (*onoma*) and her body (*soma*...)”, see Bassi, “The Somatics of the Past”, 26-8.

206. See also Eur. *El.* 1280ff. which lines, according to Arnott (“Euripides’ Newfangled Helen”, 3), “have traditionally been interpreted as a trailer for the *Helen* at the following year’s Dionysia”.

207. “Eris in Euripides”, G&R 26 (1979), 7-20, esp. 11ff.

208. See esp. Wilson, “Eris in Euripides”, 11 (on Euripides’ *Helen* 1117-21). Conacher, *Euripides and the Sophists*, 82-3, points out that in *Helen* there are two versions of Helen’s rape (lines 1117-21; 1132-6), the actual and the illusory; in the second, described in very different terms, the *eidolon* is involved presented as a divine image made by Hera (1136). The two versions, however, converge in what is said in lines 1150-60, that if men end their disputes with blood then *eris* will never leave the cities.

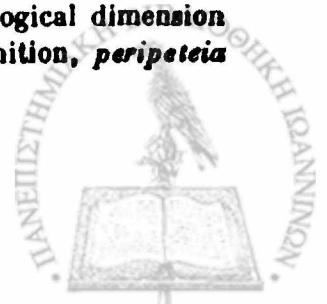


prize but an *eris*... the sacred image made by Hera" (*Hel.* 1134-6).<sup>209</sup> It is obvious that Euripides attempts an association of the image with the cause and the effects of the war between the Greeks and the Trojans ("ὦ ταλαίπωροι Φρύγες... ἀκταῖσιν Ἡρας μηχαναῖς ἐθήσκατε, / δοχοῦντες Ἐλένην οὐκ ἔχοντ' ἔχειν Πάριν (*Hel.* 608-11); here *μηχαναῖς* substitutes the *eidolon*), which becomes more clear in Menelaos' explanation to the Old Servant that "it was Helen's image that 'refereed' the war".<sup>210</sup> As Wilson<sup>211</sup> has put it: "*Reflections on the image or eidolon as a cause*

209. Wilson, "Eris in Euripides", 11. See also Andromache's charge against Menelaos that "eris, strife over a woman", *διὰ γυναικεῖαν ἔριν* (*Eur. Andr.* 362) brought her destruction as well as that of Troy. And for the Chorus in the *Iphigeneia at Aulis* Helen is the gift offered to Paris by Aphrodite, as the outcome of the *eris* for beauty she was involved in against Hera and Pallas Athena: ... ἐπὶ τὴν Ἐλέναν, ... / Πάρις ὁ βουκόλος ἐν ἔλαβε / δῶρον τᾶς Ἀφροδίτας, / ὅτ' ἐπὶ κρηναίαισι δρόσοις / Ἡρᾶ Παλλάδι τ' ἔριν ἔριν / μορφᾶς ἅ Κύπρις ἔσχεν: *IA* 178-84; cf. *IA* 1304ff.: ἃ μὲν ἐπὶ πόθῳ τρυφῶσα Κύπρις, ἃ δὲ δορὶ Παλλάς, / Ἡρᾶ τε Διὸς ἀνακτος / εὐναῖσι βασιλείων, / κρίσιν ἐπὶ στυγρὰν ἔριν τε / καλλονᾶς ... ("...the hateful judgement and *eris* over beauty"). In *Iphigeneia at Aulis* the themes of *eris*, attested in other plays, are summarized with the addition of *eros*. However, in this play the divine *eris* (in the Judgement story) is transferred to the human level, through the *eros*, and to the Trojan War: Wilson, *art. cit.*, 16-8, esp. 17: "In singing of this transference of *eris* through the medium of *eros* the chorus suggest a verbal as well as a logical connection. Each word is heavily stressed, *eros* by *anaphora* and *eris* by *anadiplosis*, to bring out the syllable *er-* that is common to both (585-9): *Eros* you imparted, by *eros* you were overwhelmed. Hence Eris, Eris brings Greece with men and ships to the citadel of Troy."

210. Wilson, "Eris in Euripides", 11: "*As an insubstantial eris, the image or ghost of Helen receives philosophical development*". For Conacher (*op. cit.*, 83), the association of Helen's *eidolon* with *eris* in Euripides' play (see *Hel.* 1134-6; cf. 1160), which makes the cause of the Trojan War an illusion, may be taken "to symbolize... all the illusions which the poet believes to be the causes of wars". Along the same stream of thought *Electra*'s end is structured too: *eris* and bloodshed were caused by the image of Helen sent to Troy, whereas real Helen fled to Egypt (1282-3). And all this was according to Zeus' plan so that Mother Earth be relieved of surplus human population.

211. Wilson, "Eris in Euripides", 12. But see Nikolaou (*Μυθολογία Γ. Σειρήνη*, 103), who argues that we should not accept the simplistic interpretation of the myth of the "double Helen" as an anti-war myth, but we should see it within the framework — that Euripides himself established — of the *eidolon* as a false cause of a war, whose participants had a negative goal (since this war was conducted for nothing). See also D. Iakov, *Ἡ ποιητικὴ τῆς ἀρχαίας ἑλληνικῆς τραγωδίας*, 63-6 (ch. "Μύθος, τραγωδία καὶ ἀλήθεια") for a discussion "of the anthropological dimension of the truth according to the Aristotelian doctrine where recognition, *peripeteia*



of war reach their climax in the final stanza of the first stasimon...”, where is declared that if men end their disputes with blood then *eris* will never leave their cities, as happened in the land of Priam: εἰ γὰρ ἄμιλλα κρινεῖ νιν / αἵματος, οὐποτ’ ἔρις / λείψει κατ’ ἀνθρώπων πόλεις. / ἔ Πριαμίδος γᾶς ἔλαχον θαλάμους, / ἔξὸν διορθῶσαι λόγοις / σὰν ἔριν, ὧ Ἑλένα (1155-60).<sup>212</sup> The example of Helen seems to confirm this because “strife over her” (σὰν ἔριν, ὧ Ἑλένα) brought the destruction of Troy and of the Greek warriors. The Chorus, however, gives emphasis on the negotiating, and thus peaceful, settlement of disputes between men: ἔξὸν διορθῶσαι λόγοις σὰν ἔριν, ὧ Ἑλένα: “when they could have settled with words the *eris* about you Helen”, which is in my view a very important *thesis* on the war/peace issue.

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or *amartia* have as common the transition from ignorance to knowledge, from deceptive expectation to the painful truth...”; in the case of *Helen*, however, recognition has other implications, for it proved that the heroine was not an adulteress but, moreover, the Greeks were suffering for so many years for nothing, for an “empty thought”, which ironically confirms that great wars could break out because of the inadequate knowledge about the real nature of the events. In *Helen*, Helen and Menelaos were entrapped by the alleged truth and an unsecure knowledge; Euripides thus underlies the limitations of knowledge “for a mortal can be for ever, or for a long time imprisoned in his own illusory truth or beliefs”.

212. In Euripides, in general, there is a tendency for defending Helen’s reputation by shifting her responsibility, either to Zeus’ plan to destroy mankind by the invention of the *eidolon* over which Greeks and Trojans were fighting for a long time (see *Electra* 1282-3 and *Helen*), or to the *eris* of the three goddesses (*Hel.* 708) — responsibility is again shifted to the divine sphere and the story of the judgement, although the idea of the image becomes the basis of the whole play. An idea, however, which may also be referring to the absurdity and the irrationality of the Trojan War, or any war: see Wilson, “Eris in Euripides”, 10-2. Cf. also Aesch. *Ag.* 1455-61 and the proem of the *Iliad*; in the first Helen substitutes Achilles’ μῆνις, she, too, is the cause of the destruction of so many heroes: see P. Judet de La Combe, *L’ Agamemnon d’ Eschyle*, seconde partie, 603.

