

Gendered and Ethnic Inversions in Horace, *Ode 1.15*

I. *Ode 1.15: Nereus to Paris*

Pastor cum traheret per freta navibus
Idaeis Helenen perfidus hospitam,
ingrato celeris obruit otio
ventos ut caneret **fera**

When that perfidious shepherd was carrying off his
hostess Helen over the seas in Idaean ships, Nereus
stilled the swift winds with cruel calm so that he
could sing their dreadful doom:

Nereus **fata**: 'Mala ducis avi domum
quam multo repetet Graecia milite,
coniurata tuas rumpere nuptias
et regnum Priami vetus.

5

"You carry this woman homeward under an ill
omen: Greece will demand her back with a vast
army sworn to break up your marriage and break
down the ancient kingdom of Priam.

Heu, heu, quantus equis, quantus adest viris
sudor! Quanta moves funera Dardanae
genti! Iam galeam Pallas et aegida
currusque et rabiem parat.

10

Alas, alas, how much sweat there is on the horses!
How much sweat on the men! How many deaths
you are causing for the Dardan people! Already Pal-
las is marshaling her helmet and her aegis and her
chariot and her rage.

Nequicquam Veneris praesidio **ferox**
pectes caesariem grataque feminis
inbelli cithara carmina divides;
nequicquam thalamo gravis

15

Vainly **fierce** in the protection of Venus, you'll comb
your hair and pluck out songs to entertain the ladies
on your unwarlike lyre. Vainly you'll cower in your
bedroom, hiding

hastas et calami spicula Cnosii
vitabis strepitumque et celerem sequi
Aiacem: tamen, heu serus, adulteros
crines pulvere collines.

from the heavy spears and the barbs of Cretan ar-
rows and from Ajax's swift pursuit. At last—too late,
alas—you'll smear your adulterous locks in the dust.

Non Laertiaden, **exitium tuae**
gentis, non Pylum Nestora respicis?
Urgent inpavidi te Salaminius
Teucer, te Sthenelus sciens

20

Do you not see Ulysses, **destroyer of your race**; do
you not see Pylian Nestor? **Fearlessly they stalk you**,
Salaminian Teucer and battle-ready Sthenelus,

pugnae, sive opus est imperitare equis,
non auriga piger; Merionen quoque
nosces. Ecce furit te reperire atrox
Tydides melior patre,

25

no slouch when it's time to master the warhorses as
charioteer. You will also know Meriones. Look, fierce
Tydides—a better man than his father—rages to find
you;

quem tu, cervus uti vallis in altera
visum parte lupum graminis inmemor,
sublimi **fugies mollis** anhelitu,
non hoc pollicitus tuae.

30

while, like a stag who spots a wolf in the valley and
flees, forgetful of his grazing, **you too will flee, soft**
with gasping breath—this is not what you promised
to your lady!

Iracunda diem proferet **Ilio**
matronisque Phrygum classis Achillei;
post certas hiemes uret Achaicus
ignis **Iliacas domos**.'

35

Achilles' wrathful fleet will delay the fateful day **for**
Ilium and the Phrygian matrons, but after the or-
dained seasons, Achaean fire will burn **Ilian homes**.
(*all translations mine*)

II. Ode 1.37: Cleopatra

Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero
pulsanda tellus, nunc Saliaribus
ornare pulvinar deorum
tempus erat dapibus, sodales.

Now's the time to drink and dance, beating the earth with
joyful feet; now's the time to decorate the gods' couches
for a Salian feast, comrades.

Antehac nefas depromere Caecubum
cellis avitis, dum Capitolio
regina dementis ruinas
funus et imperio parabat

5

Previously, it was not right to broach the Caecuban from
our fathers' cellars, as long as the queen was plotting mad
ruin for our Capitol and destruction for our empire

contaminato cum grege turpium
morbo virorum, quidlibet impotens
sperare fortunaque dulci
ebria. Sed minuit furorem

10

with her polluted hoard of half-men, mad enough to hope
for anything, punch-drunk on her former good fortune.
But it dampened her fury

vix una sospes navis ab ignibus,
mentemque lymphatam Mareotico
redegit **in veros timores**
Caesar, ab Italia volantem

15

that barely one ship survived the flames, and her mind—
overthrown by Egyptian wine—**Caesar redirected to cer-
tain dread** as she flew back from Italy and he

remis **adurgens**, accipiter velut
mollis columbas aut leporem citus
venator in campis nivalis
Haemoniae, daret ut catenis

20

in pursuit, urged on the oars like a hawk after **soft doves**
or when on snowy-white Haemonian plains the swift
hunter pursues the hare—he followed in order

fatale monstrum. Quae generosius
perire quaerens **nec muliebriter**
expavit ensem nec latentis
classe cita reparavit oras,

to ensnare that **deadly monster** in his chains. But she,
seeking to die more gallantly, **showed no womanly fear**
of the sword and did not retreat to hidden shores in her
speedy fleet.

ausa et iacentem visere regiam
vultu sereno, fortis et asperas
tractare serpentes, ut atrum
corpore conbiberet venenum,

25

Instead she **calmly** dared to face her fallen kingdom;
boldly dared to grasp the deadly snakes and drink their
black venom into her body.

deliberata morte **ferocior**:
saevis Liburnis scilicet invidens
privata deduci superbo,
non humilis **mulier**, triumpho.

30

Fiercer in the death she chose, refusing to be carried off in
the cruel Liburnians as a triumphal prize—no longer a
queen, but not a **woman** humbled.

III. Troy and Rome: *Odes* 3.3

...gratum elocuta consiliantibus
Ionone divis: 'Ilion, Ilion
**fatalis incestusque iudex
et mulier peregrina vertit** 20

in pulverem, ex quo destituit deos
mercede pacta Laomedon, mihi
castaeque damnatum Mineruae
cum populo et **duce fraudulentō.**

Iam nec **Lacaenae** splendet **adulterae** 25
famosus hospes nec Priami **domus**
periura pugnaces Achivos
Hectoreis opibus refringit

nostrisque ductum seditionibus
bellum resedit. Protinus et gravis 30
iraes et invisum nepotem,
Troica quem peperit sacerdos,

Marti redonabo; illum ego lucidas
inire sedes, discere nectaris
sucos et adscribi quietis
ordinibus patiar deorum. 35

Dum longus inter saeviat Ilion
Romamque pontus, qualibet exules
in parte regnato beati;
dum Priami Paridisque busto 40

insultet armentum et catulos ferae
celent inultae, stet Capitolium
fulgens **triumphatisque** possit
Roma ferox dare iura **Medis.**

(...)

Sed bellicosis fata Quiritibus
hac lege dico, ne nimium pii
rebusque fidentes avitae
tectae velint reparare Troiae. 60

**Troiae renascens alite lugubri
fortuna tristi clade iterabitur,**
ducente victrices catervas
coniuge me Iovis et sorore.

"...Juno gave a speech that was pleasing to the council of the gods: 'Ilion, Ilion: **the deadly and unchaste judge and the foreign woman have cast it down**

into the dust—beginning from when Laomedon cheated the gods with his promised price—Ilium, damned by me and chaste Minerva along with its people and its **lying dux.**

No longer does the infamous guest glory in his **Spartan mistress**, nor does the **perjured house** of Priam battle down the warlike Greeks with Hector's wealth

and the war—extended by our divide squabbles—comes to an end. From now on, I yield my heavy anger and hated grandson, whom the Trojan priestess bore,

to Mars—him I will allow to enter our shining kingdom, to enjoy the nectar's juice, and to be enrolled in our peaceful ranks.

As long as the wide sea rages between Rome and Ilium, the exiles may reign with good fortune in any territory—**as long as** cattle

trample the tomb of Priam and Paris and wild beasts shelter their cubs there unavenged, the gleaming Capitol may stand and **fierce Rome** may lay down the law for **conquered Medes.**

(...)

But I pronounce *fata* to the warlike Quirites under this law, lest from excessive *pietas* and over-confident in their empire they should wish to rebuild ancestral Troy:

If Troy's ill-starred fortune revives, it will be doomed again to repeat its wretched fall, and I—Jove's wife and sister—will lead the victorious army."

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