

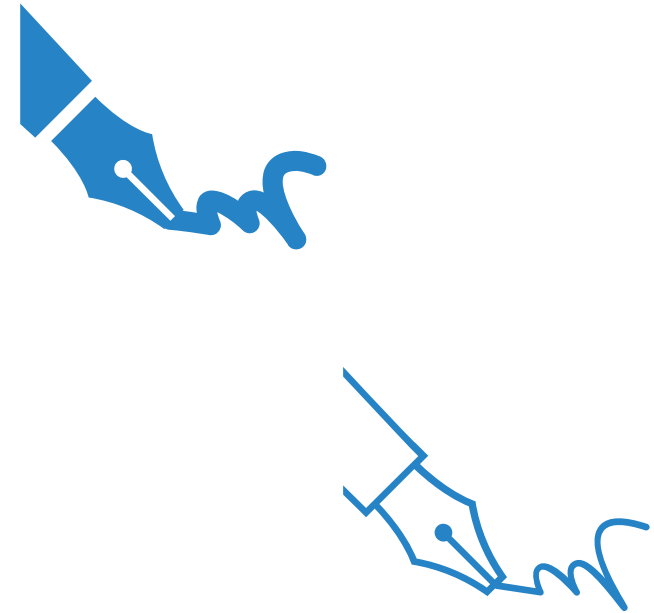


# HELEN IN OVID AND EURIPIDES: AN ANALYSIS OF TEXTUAL PHANTOMS

Allison Jodoin, University of  
Kansas  
ajodoin@ku.edu

# OUTLINE

- The Importance of Reputation
- Visual Language and Deception
- Intentional Ambiguity with the Dioscouroi



# HELEN'S REPUTATION

quid de me poterit Sparte, quid Achaia tota,  
quid gentes Asiae, quid tua Troia loqui?

quid Priamus de me, Priami quid sentiet uxor  
totque tui fratres Dardanidesque nurus?

What would be said about me in Sparta,  
what in all Achaia, what would the  
people of Asia say, what about your  
Trojans? How would Priam, Priam's wife,  
your great many brothers, and the  
Dardanian women feel about me?\*

*Heroides* 17.209-212

# REPUTATION IN THE *ILIAD* AND IN THE *HELEN*

Τρῳαὶ δέ μ' ὀπίσσω  
— πᾶσαι μωμήσονται·

And all the Trojan women will hate me  
forever

*Iliad* 3.411-12

μισεῖ γὰρ Ἑλλάς πᾶσα τὴν Διὸς κόρην.

For all Hellas hates the daughter of Zeus

*Helen* 81

# REPUTATION IN *HEROIDES* 17

quid de me poterit Sparte, quid Achaia tota,  
quid gentes Asiae, quid tua Troia loqui?

quid Priamus de me, Priami quid sentiet uxor  
totque tui fratres Dardanidesque nurus?

What would be said about me in Sparta,  
what in all Achaia, what would the  
people of Asia say, what about your  
Trojans? How would Priam, Priam's wife,  
your great many brothers, and the  
Dardanian women feel about me?

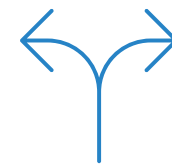
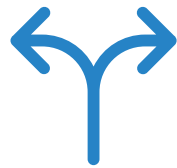
*Heroides* 17.209-212

# HELEN'S FUTURE OPTIONS

aut ego perpetuo famam sine labe tenebo  
aut ego te potius quam tua dona sequar.

Either I will retain my reputation without  
perpetual ruin, or I will follow you rather  
than your gifts.

*Heroides 17.69-70*



# THE PHANTOM HELEN

Euripides' Phantom

Εἶδωλον

Δόκησις



Corresponding Latin

*Video*

*Imago*

*Simulacrum*

*Umbra*



# PHRASES OF DECEPTION IN OVID

non rescribendi gloria **visa** levis

The glory of not writing **seems** little  
(17.2)

nam mea quod **visa est** tibi mater

For because my mother **seemed** worthy  
to you (17.43)

idonea... me **visam** praemia summa tibi

I **seemed** like a great prize to you  
(17.132)

falsa sub **imagine**

Under a false **appearance** (17.45)

nec ullus/ error qui facti crimen  
**obumbret** erit

That mistake (going with Paris) will not  
be one where the agent **conceals** the  
crime (as it was with Leda) (17.47-8)



# HELEN'S BROTHERS

## *Heroides 17.227-8*

*quis mihi, si laedar, Phrygiis succurret in oris?  
unde petam fratres, unde parentis opem?*

Who might help me on Phrygian shores if I am hurt? Where will I find my brothers, where will I find the help of a parent?

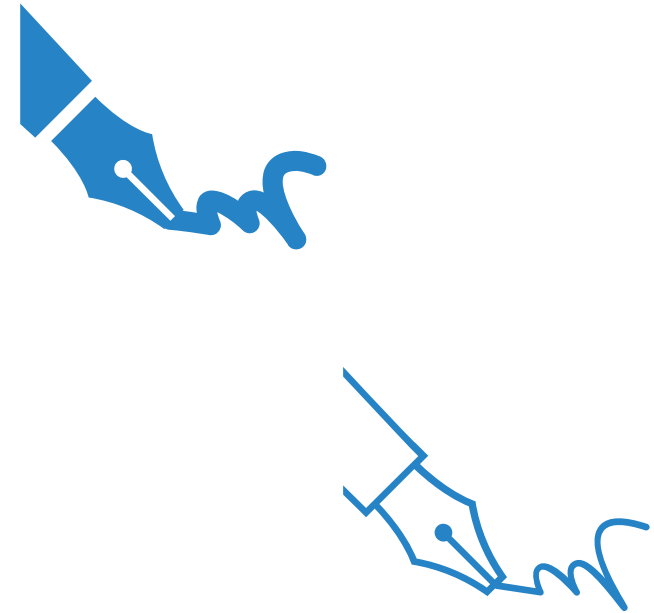
## *Helen 1659-60*

Castor: πάλαι δ' ἀδελφὴν κᾶν πρὶν  
ἔξεσώσαμεν/ ἐπίπερ ἡμᾶς Ζεὺς ἐποίησεν  
θεούς.

And we saved our sister just now because Zeus made us gods before.

# OUTLINE

- The Importance of Reputation
- Visual Language and Deception
- Intentional Ambiguity with the Dioscouroi



# SELECTED REFERENCES

Allan, William. (2008). *Helen*. Cambridge University Press.

Austin, Norman. (1994). *Helen of Troy and Her Shameless Phantom*. Cornell University Press.

Blondell, Ruby. (2013). *Helen of Troy: Beauty, myth, devastation*. Oxford University Press.

Flaherty, Sheila M. (1994). *The Rhetoric of Female Self-Destruction: A study in Homer, Euripides, and Ovid*. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

Lindheim, Sara H. (2003). *Mail and Female: Epistolary narrative and desire in Ovid's Heroides*. University of Wisconsin Press.

Ovid (1914). *Heroides. Amores*. Translated by Grant Showerman. Revised by G. P. Goold. Harvard University Press.

Spentzou, Effie. (1996). Helen of Troy and the Poetics of Innocence: From Ancient Fiction to Modern Metafiction, *Classical and Modern Literature*, 16(1), 301-24.