

HOWARD JACOBSON

WHILE STILL YOUNG, OVID perceived, with an insight into the viability and flexibility of the genres of poetry that remained characteristic of him throughout his life, that Elegy, as it had been taken over with such brilliance by the Latin poets of the first century B.C., had reached the end of its road or—at the least—that he was not the person to continue its journey down traditional and well-worn paths. And, of course, he was right. But in those last years Ovid led Elegy down roads *nullius ante trita solo* and, if neither Ovid nor his readers could unabashedly claim that at each turn experiment met with success, nevertheless the efforts involved were often distinctly original, a quality Ovid cultivated and considered a virtue in itself, often interesting, and, on those occasions when innovation, insight, and sensitivity felicitously conjoined, strikingly brilliant and poetry of the first rank.

Ille novavit opus. Ovid's propensity for innovation manifested itself early and, though his bold assertion to be father of a new genre of poetry has earned the scorn and disbelief of more than one scholar, we have no sufficient grounds for rejecting his claim. Nor can we forget, if we accept his paternity, that he became thereby the progenitor of a long and often distinguished line of descendants.¹

Moreover, in a rather different fashion, Ovid's own *Metamorphoses* is an offspring of the *Heroides*. For here once again he strove to fuse the wide-ranging resources of ancient myth with the new forms and language of poetry and with personal notions of psychology into a coherent poetic structure that would be new, attractive, and meaningful. Techniques which were utilized in the *Heroides* are sometimes rejected, sometimes retained intact, but most often subjected to a mature revaluation and recasting from which they emerge as the wellsprings and lifeblood of the great epic.

The following works are cited by author's name alone: J. N. Anderson, *On the Sources of Ovid's Heroides I, III, VII, X, XII* (Berlin 1896); B. Döhle, "Die 'Achilleis' des Aischylos in ihrer Auswirkung auf die attische Vasenmalerei des 5. Jahrhunderts," *Klio* 49 (1967) 63-149; H. Fränkel, *Ovid: A Poet Between Two Worlds* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1945); R. Giomini (ed.), *P. Ovidi Nasonis Heroides* 1² (Rome 1963); V. Loers, *P. Ovidii Nasonis Heroides* 1 (Cologne 1829); H. J. Mette, *Der Verlorene Aischylos* (Berlin 1963); A. Palmer, *P. Ovidi Nasonis Heroides* (Hildesheim 1967); J. Tolkiehn, *Quaestionum ad Heroides Ovidianas Spectantium Capita VII* (Leipzig 1888); Z. K. Vysoký, "Aischylova Achilleis," *Listy Filologické* 82 (1959) 8-34; L. P. Wilkinson, *Ovid Recalled* (Cambridge 1955). *ARV*² = J. D. Beazley, *Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters*² (Oxford 1963).

¹See H. Dörrie, *Der Heroische Brief* (Berlin 1968).

Part One

Let us begin with Homer. Two of the first three *epistulae* come from the pens of Homeric heroines, the one illustrious, the other of small repute. It is with the letter of Briseis that I shall here be concerned, a poem which exquisitely exhibits Ovid's purposes and aims, his achievements and failings, while at the same time being free of the burden that too often oppresses the student of both the *Heroides* and the *Metamorphoses*, the problem of lost sources.

There is no arguing that Vergil's familiarity with the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* was extraordinary.² Nevertheless, the role of Homer in the educational curriculum and his great stature as poet would have made his two epics all but second nature to any Roman with an interest in literature. Ovid did not know the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* by heart, but it is difficult to determine, when his imitation is exact and deliberate, whether in fact he had Homer by heart selectively or simply composed with a text at his side. Whichever is the case, it is indisputable that Ovid was drawing heavily and directly on the *Iliad* in this poem. Note the following passages in which Briseis recounts the many gifts Agamemnon has offered Achilles:³

*Auxerunt blanda grandia dona preces,
Viginti fulvos operoso ex aere lebetas
Et tripodas septem pondere et arte pares;
Addita sunt illis auri bis quinque talenta,
Bis sex adsueti vincere semper equi,
Quodque supervacuum est, forma praestante puellae
Lesbides, eversa corpora capta domo,
Cumque tot his (sed non opus est tibi coniuge) coniunx
Ex Agamemnoniis una puella tribus.*

[30-38]

Compare the Homeric account:

ἔπτ' ἀπύρους τρίποδας, δέκα δὲ χρυσοῖο τάλαντα,
αἴθωνας δὲ λέβητας ἐείκοσι, δώδεκα δ' ἵππους
πηγούς ἀθλοφόρους, οἳ ἀέθλια ποσσὶν ἄροντο.
οὐ κεν ἀλῆϊος εἴη ἀνὴρ ᾧ τόσσα γένοιτο,
οὐδέ κεν ἀκτῆμων ἐριτίμοιο χρυσοῖο,
ὅσσα μοι ἠνείκαντο ἀέθλια μώνυχες ἵπποι.
δῶσω δ' ἐπὶ γυναῖκας, ἀμύμονα ἔργ' εἰδυίας,
Λεσβίδας, ἄς, ὅτε Λέσβον εὐκτιμένην ἔλεν αὐτός,
ἐξελόμεν, αἱ κάλλει ἐνίκων φύλα γυναικῶν. [Il. 9.122-130]

ταῦτα μὲν αὐτίκα πάντα παρέσσειται. εἰ δέ κεν αὖτε
ἄστνυ μέγα Πριάμοιο θεοὶ δώσω' ἀλαπάξαι,
νῆα ἄλλης χρυσοῦ καὶ χαλκοῦ νηησάσθω

²Though in the classical age of Greece such expert knowledge may not have been too unusual. See Xen. *Symp.* 3.5-6.

³Tolkien 49-50 has pointed out many of the correspondences between this passage and its Homeric counterpart. I quote throughout from Giomini's text of the *Heroides*.

εἰσελθὼν, ὅτε κεν δατεώμεθα ληϊδ' Ἀχαιοί,
 Τρωϊάδας δὲ γυναικας εἰκόσιν αὐτὸς ἐλέσθω,
 αἶ κε μετ' Ἀργεῖην Ἑλένην κάλλισται ἔωσιν.
 εἰ δέ κεν Ἄργος ἰκοίμεθ' Ἀχαιϊκόν, οὔθαρ ἀρούρης,
 γαμβρός κέν μοι ἔοι. τίσω δέ μιν ἴσον Ὀρέστη,
 ὅς μοι τηλύγετος τρέφεται θαλίῃ ἐνὶ πολλῇ.
 τρεῖς δέ μοι εἰσι θύγατρες ἐνὶ μεγάρῳ εὐπήκτῳ,
 Χρυσόθεμις καὶ Λαοδίκη καὶ Ἰφιάνασσα.
 τᾶων ἦν κ' ἐθέλῃσι φίλην ἀνάεδνον ἀγέσθω
 πρὸς οἶκον Πηληϊός.

[Il. 9.135-147]

Though Ovid has not taken over the description intact and indeed has in places made careful modifications, the influence could hardly be clearer. So too at line 85 where Briseis' plea, *vince animos iramque tuam*, echoes Phoenix' δάμασον θυμὸν μέγαν (9.496)⁴ (the two-edged Greek noun receiving its full equivalence),⁵ and probably at 43, *an miseros tristis fortuna tenaciter urget*, an echo of 19.290, ὥς μοι δέχεται κακὸν ἐκ κακοῦ αἰεί. Ovid's heroine recalls her past in language that derives from Homer:⁶

*Vidi consortes pariter generisque necisque
 Tres cecidisse (tribus, quae mihi, mater erat);
 Vidi, quantus erat, fusum tellure cruenta
 Pectora iactantem sanguinolenta virum.*

[47-50]

ἄνδρα μὲν ᾧ ἔδοσαν με πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ
 εἶδον πρὸ πτόλιος δεδαϊγμένον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ,
 τρεῖς τε κασιγνήτους, τοὺς μοι μία γείνατο μήτηρ,
 κηδείους, οἳ πάντες ὀλέθριον ἡμᾶρ ἐπέσπον.
 οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδὲ μ' ἔασκες, ὅτ' ἄνδρ' ἐμὸν ὤκους Ἀχιλλεὺς
 ἔκτεινεν, πέρσεν δὲ πόλιν θείοιο Μύνητος,

[Il. 19.291-296]

Throughout this poem one hears such Homeric voices, sometimes with sharp clarity, more often dimly.⁷ To these we shall return. For the present one small but perhaps significant point. Again, Ovid's Briseis:

⁴This echo is noted by Anderson 42.

⁵See August. *Ennar. in Ps.* 87 (Migne 37.1113) and *Ennar. in Ps.* 105 (Migne 37.1415), two passages highly instructive on the various ways of translating θυμός into Latin (cited *ThLL s.v. ira*, vol. 7^a col. 361-362).

⁶The similarities are noted by Tolkiehn 54.

⁷Thus, at 57-58, *quin etiam fama est, cum crastina fulserit Eos, / te dare nubiferis lintea plena Notis*, Tolkiehn's suggestion (52) that we have an echo of *Il.* 9.682 f. seems supported by the similar sense, the common mention of *Eos*, and by Ovid's strange usage of the present infinitive, possibly modelled on the Homeric construction. E. Merone, *Studi sulle Eroidi di Ovidio* (Naples 1964) 37-38, however, would emphasize its expressive purpose; i.e., Briseis is so certain that Achilles will leave that she sees his departure as virtually taking place already. This seems dubious, both because there is no indication that she is certain and also because *fama est* on the one hand contradicts certainty, and on the other removes the responsibility for the thought from Briseis. It is probably more likely (if we are unwilling to see here Homeric influence, and if the text is correct) that this is simply a colloquialism (present for future seems most common with the verb *dare*;

*nam simul Eurybates me Talhybiusque vocarunt,
Eurybati data sum Talhybioque comes.*

[9-10]

The mission of Talhybius and Eurybates to take Briseis from Achilles is drawn, of course, from the *Iliad*'s first book. It is unlikely that a hand-book would have perpetuated their names in this connection. Most strikingly, there is reason to believe that Ovid might have known the names of Agamemnon's two heralds only from the *Iliad*, or rather of the one, Eurybates, who in contrast to his famous colleague Talhybius appears to have all but vanished after his one brief mission.⁸ Excepting scholia on the relevant Homeric passages (and on Aeschylus, discussed below), the only ancient reference to him appears in Hyginus' catalogue of Homeric personages, *Eurybates et Talhybius internuntii* (*Fab.* 97.15), probably drawn, directly or indirectly, from the Homeric mention in Book One. Further, according to Pausanias, Polygnotus' *Iliupersis* depicted Eurybates, *the herald of Odysseus* (cf. *Il.* 2.184; *Od.* 19.247), performing a mission for Agamemnon (10.25.4, 8), a circumstance which, no matter how we understand it, remains instructive. Either Polygnotus (or his "source," be it artistic or literary) was unaware that Agamemnon had a herald by this name and unwittingly ran the risk of potential confusion (unless he assumed that his audience's ignorance would preclude this possibility) or else, as Frazer believes, Pausanias, notwithstanding his usual familiarity with myth, has gone astray through his ignorance of the existence of an Agamemnonian Eurybates.

A peculiar scholium on Aesch. *PV* 440 reports that ἡ Νιόβη διὰ τὴν ὑπερβάλλουσιν λύπην ἐσιώπα, καὶ οἷον τὸ τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως, ὅταν ἐστάλησαν πρὸς ἐκείνον ὁ Ταλθύβιος καὶ Εὐρυβάτης καλοῦντες εἰς μάχην. What this alludes to is anyone's guess, and confusion and conflation may be likely authors of a worthless statement. So in fact many scholars have judged it. If, however, the scholium is reliable, we may have to think of some scene in a tragedy

see *Met.* 7.739 which, according to Merone, may be the only other instance in Ovid of this construction). *Achaeiadas* (71) also seems a verbal echo of Homer (so Tolkien 52), who uses Ἀχαιίδες in precisely the same context (*Il.* 9.395), the forthcoming (hypothetical) marriage of Achilles in Greece. Ovid seems to have limited his use of Ἀχαιίς to strictly geographical notions, as in *Achaidas urbes* or *Achais* = *Graecia* (e.g., *Met.* 3.511; 5.306, 577; 7.504), though perhaps metrical considerations also had something to do with his choice of Ἀχαιάς here (a Homeric form that does not seem to occur elsewhere in Latin literature). When Briseis refers to herself as *munus* (20, 149), we may wonder whether Ovid plays upon her designation as γέρας (1.185). Finally, we might consider the possibility that the description of Achilles as *immitis matrisque ferocior undis* (133) has as its point of departure *Il.* 16.34 f.

⁸I exclude the possibility that the Eurybates coupled with Odios at *Il.* 9.170 is Agamemnon's herald, but even if he were this would not affect the question of this herald's appearance outside of the *Iliad*. As for Talhybius, he becomes the herald *par excellence*. He is a character in, e.g., Euripides' *Hecuba* and *Trojan Women*, and is mentioned at Eur. *Iph. Aul.* 95, 1563; Plaut. *Stich.* 305. Seneca (*Apocol.* 13) neatly calls Hermes *Talhybius deorum*.

(e.g., Aeschylus' *Myrmidons*) where the Greeks send the two heralds to seek Achilles' return to battle. Even so, the lesser herald (Eurybates) would probably have been a mute and rather inconspicuous.⁹

There seems only one probable conclusion. Ovid would have known Eurybates as Talthybius' comrade from the *Iliad* and nowhere else.¹⁰

It is of little surprise that Ovid made extensive use of the *Iliad* in this letter. But what of the non-Homeric matter that abounds? Ovidian? Perhaps, but can we attain a modicum of certainty? Might Ovid have been drawing on some other Briseis-source as well as the *Iliad*? Such a question can never be finally answered, but the evidence, as far as it goes, suggests that the Greeks never elaborated the brief Homeric episodes concerning Briseis. Mentions of her are rather few, and she seems never to have been made a heroine—or even major character—of any large-scale work. Extant references seem to descend directly from the *Iliad*. Now the number of lost tragedies dealing with Achilles is great—some we know of, e.g., those by Astydamos, Aristarchus of Tegea, Carcinus, Livius, Accius, Ennius; others have undoubtedly passed into oblivion, titles and all—and any one of these might have found Briseis a large and important rôle. But the fact that none of those does with which we have some familiarity renders this doubtful. Beyond this, we have not one secure item of evidence that Briseis ever spoke a word in a tragedy, though she surely must have. An obscure reference to Mynes in Sophocles' *Aichmalotides* may bear witness to her presence in this play, while an unsure reading might—no more—testify to her appearance in Aeschylus' *Phrygians*. That is all.¹¹

⁹This is essentially the view of T. Bergk, "Die Myrmidonen des Aeschylus," *Hermes* 18 (1883) 484 ff.; M. Croiset, "Eschyle Imitateur d'Homère," *REG* 7 (1894) 152–158; V. Di Benedetto, "Il Silenzio di Achille nei *Mirmidoni* di Eschilo," *Maia* 19 (1967) 381; L. Ferrari, *I Drammi Perduti di Eschilo* (Palermo 1968) 95; Döhle 82. Mette 114 also seems inclined to accept it.

¹⁰Ovid could have been familiar with Eurybates from one of the many paintings of the abduction. But it seems much more likely that he drew the actual name from a literary source.

¹¹A. von Blumenthal, "Sophokles," *RE* 3 A (1927) 1052 has suggested that the title *Aichmalotides* refers to Briseis and her fellow captives, and that the tragedy dramatized the opening of the *Iliad*. Sophocles' *Chryses* probably dealt with the beginning of the *Iliad* only tangentially. The view that Briseis' seizure was depicted in Aeschylus' Achilles trilogy (see H. Brunn, "Troische Miscellen: Dritte Abtheilung," *SBMun* 1880, 179) has been abandoned, but it is still possible that Briseis did have a rôle, perhaps in the episode of the reconciliation of Agamemnon and Achilles or in that of Priam's ransom of Hector's body (the latter conceivably receiving its impetus from the mention of Briseis at *Il.* 24.676). Of special note is Aesch. frag. 267N² which may be a direct address to Briseis or at least a reference to her (see H. W. Smyth, *Aeschylus* 2 [Cambridge, Mass. 1963] 472–473; O. Werner, *Aischylos: Tragödien und Fragmente* [Munich 1959] 570–571; L. Ferrari [above, n. 9] 107–108). Vysoký (22, 34) believes that, while there is no direct reference to Briseis here, Aeschylus is playing on the audience's ability to recognize the name of her homeland. Mette (119), however, does not see any reference to Briseis here at all.

The *Cypria* (p.20K), which recounted how Achilles sacked Briseis' land and won her as his prize, probably went into no further detail, while there is no evidence that Briseis appeared in the *Aithiopis*, though probability suggests that she must have.

Two passages, one in Quintus of Smyrna (3.544 ff.), the other in Propertius (2.9.9 ff.), combine to suggest that there may have existed, perhaps of Hellenistic origin, a non-Homeric Briseis episode in which she was seen mourning Achilles. This is a disputed matter, and the critical question—would this have been an isolated scene or was Briseis given a rôle of prominence?—cannot be answered, even if such a poem did exist.¹²

The unusual tales Dictys tells about Briseis we can attribute to his unique mythopoeic style, but one episode should perhaps give us pause. Both Dictys (4.15) and Quintus (7.709–727) describe how Neoptolemus, after Achilles' death, visits his father's tent and there finds Briseis. Unless Quintus is echoing Dictys, both may be utilizing one source,¹³ perhaps the same shared by Quintus and Propertius, which might mean the existence of some poem which treated the death of Achilles, the reaction to it, and the ensuing arrival of Neoptolemus.

But all this remains very tenuous hypothesis. And even if there did exist a small body of poetry which involved Briseis, it was surely insignificant, for Homer's Briseis, small a rôle as she plays in the *Iliad*, seems to have held the day.¹⁴

Briseis did not fare much better among the Romans. In general, she underwent the transformation reserved by the Romans for Greek mythological characters. Isolating out two facets of the Briseis tale which seemed to them essential or most striking, the Romans made Briseis—or rather, the relationship between her and Achilles—their *exemplum* for 1) the power of love and 2) the love of a man for a social inferior.¹⁵

¹²Enk observes on the Propertius passage, *Propertius et Quintus Smyrnaeus meminerunt poetae aetatis Hellenisticae nobis ignoti*. There is, however, no evidence for this, and Enk's own remark, *sed Homerus de Briseide Patroclum lugente narrat similia*, seems to show his own doubt. The view implicit in Enk's latter words, that Quintus adopted the mourning scene for Patroclus and transferred it to Achilles' death, seems to be that of F. Vian, *Quintus de Smyrne* 1 (Paris 1963) *ad loc.* R. Keydell, "Quintus v. Smyrna," *RE* 24.1 (1963) 1278, rejects the theory of a common Hellenistic source. If one is willing to accept Keydell's view that Quintus used Latin sources, it is even possible that his account was influenced by this very letter of Ovid's.

¹³Such indeed is Vian's view, *Quintus de Smyrne* 2 (Paris 1966) 50–51.

¹⁴See Dion. Hal. *Rhet.* 9.13; Lucian, *Imag.* 8, *Pr. Imag.* 24; Strab. 13.584. For a discussion of the conflicting reports on Briseis' homeland, which could conceivably reflect different Briseis traditions, see F. Vian, *Recherches sur les Posthomericas de Quintus de Smyrne* (Paris 1959) 125–126.

¹⁵The latter interpretation may be a Roman innovation. The actual relation of Briseis to Achilles in the *Iliad* is ambiguous. Since she is a captive, one expects her to be a slave, or at least an inferior (witness the position of Eumaeus in the *Odyssey*). However, the

Thus, Propertius finds consolation for his own sufferings in love in the example of Achilles who let his arms grow idle, saw his fellow Greeks routed, and his closest friend slain

*omnia formosam propter Briseida passus.
tantus in erepto saevit amore dolor.*

[2.8.35–36]

And Ovid observes that even great heroes were susceptible to love and points to Achilles, *ardet in abducta Briseide maestus Achilles* (*Am.*1.9.33).

The other common motif is the love of an inferior. Thus, Horace advises not to be ashamed of loving a servant, and looks toward Achilles, *prius insolentem serva Briseis niveo colore movit Achillem* (*Carm.* 2.4.2–4), and in similar fashion Ovid excuses his own love of a slave, *Thessalus ancillae facie Briseidos arsit* (*Am.*2.8.11). One can well see that the emphasis in all these passages is on the rôle played in the relationship by Achilles,⁵ and that Briseis is but a secondary and colourless, though necessary, partner.

This of course goes nowhere. If anything, it is regression, in typical Roman fashion—a concession to the death of myth and the *coup de grâce* for the terminal patient.

At any rate, these and the few other allusions to Briseis in Latin poetry are all either derivative from the *Iliad* (e.g., Prop. 2.8.29 f.; Ov. *Rem. Am.* 475 ff.) or clearly original with the particular poet (e.g., *Rem. Am.* 777 ff.).¹⁶

The iconographic evidence is still harder to interpret. Drawing lines between tradition and individual creativity is often impossible, and it is equally difficult to ascertain where representational and literary traditions coincide. But in certain areas we can see clearly. Briseis is most often shown in scenes of the abduction, the Homeric source being apparent, though individual styles account for a variety of portrayal.¹⁷ A natural extension can be discerned in paintings depicting Briseis brought to Agamemnon, an event implicit, though not described, in the *Iliad*.¹⁸

statement that Briseis could become Achilles' wife points to her equal status (*Il.* 19.297–299), although one might object that this remark, made by Briseis and in the name of Patroclus, has little objective validity. We may, however, compare Sophocles' Tecmessa, who seems to be both captive slave and respected wife at one and the same time. For discussions of this problem see J. W. Jones, *The Law and Legal Theory of the Greeks* (Oxford 1956) 186, and n. 2, and A. R. W. Harrison, *The Law of Athens* (Oxford 1968) 13.

¹⁶*Ars Am.* 3.189–190, however, is a little puzzling. Is the description of Briseis' habit drawn from a painting? There was evidently some kind of tradition of the "fair-skinned" Briseis. See Hor. *Carm.* 2.4.3; Prop. 2.9.10; Dares 13. Does this go back to the epithet *καλλιπάρης* that is usually attached to Briseis' name by Homer?

¹⁷The most notable deviation from the "standard" abduction scene occurs in Macron's painting (*ARV*² 458.2), which shows Agamemnon himself leading Briseis away from Achilles. There is probably no reason to postulate a literary source, but we should note the possibility that *αὐτὸς ἀπούρας* (*Il.* 1.356) may imply an alternative version of the tale.

¹⁸E.g., *ARV*² 406.1.

In rejecting the traditional interpretation that the *bouclier de Scipion* depicts the restoration of Briseis to Achilles, Bulas rests his case partially on the "fact" that such a scene is never depicted in extant ancient art.¹⁹ Such an argument, not terribly compelling under any circumstances, proves self-fulfilling when every possible instance is rejected on these grounds. While it may be true that we know of no work of art which unquestionably shows Briseis' return to Achilles, there are a few possibilities which suggest that such a scene was not unheard of in the ancient iconographic repertoire.²⁰ Does this attest a tradition other than the *Iliad*, since the latter does not actually describe the delivery of Briseis to Achilles? Perhaps, but it is much more likely that we have here another artistic elaboration of the elliptical scene in Homer.²¹

There is one scene that does not seem explicable in terms of expansion on the Homeric text: Briseis serving wine to Phoenix.²² One could explain this solely within the Iliadic context since Phoenix, who remains with Achilles after the failure of the embassy in Book Nine, is presumably in his tent when Briseis returns there in Book Nineteen. But this stretches credulity, and one might with some reason think here of an episode from a lost tragedy.

I pass over in silence a few paintings in which Briseis appears only peripherally or as the sole character, for these offer us no help.²³ Indeed, the artistic evidence must point us in the same direction as the literary. Briseis undoubtedly had a secure place in representations of the Achilles myth even outside the immediate Homeric context, but evidently never achieved

¹⁹K. Bulas, *Les Illustrations Antiques de L'Iliade* (Lwow 1929) 82-84.

²⁰C. Robert, *Archaeologische Hermeneutik* (Berlin 1919) 358-359, interprets a scene on a black-figure sherd as the restoration of Briseis; see B. Graef, *Die antiken Vasen von der Akropolis zu Athen* 1 (Berlin 1909) nr. 1174; 2 (Berlin 1911) pl. 67. Most likely is *ARV*² 1030. 33, a painting by Polygnotus often taken simply as a mourning scene but just as easily understood as the returning of Briseis to Achilles by Talthybius, as indeed Vysoký 27-28 and 34 and Döhle 128 and 131-132 have recently interpreted it. K. Schauenburg, *BonnJbb* 161 (1961) 221, thinks that *CVA* Lecce 1.4. D r 1 may represent Agamemnon handing over Briseis to Achilles.

²¹Döhle (*ibid.*), to be sure, thinks the scene may derive from Aeschylus' *Nereides*. Even were this true, she would have been merely a mute character.

²²*ARV*² 369.1, 4 according to Beazley. Actually, only 369.1 is inscribed with the names of Briseis and Phoenix. Beazley understands 369.4, a similar scene, as also depicting Briseis and Phoenix, but tentatively interprets 386.3 as Hebe serving Zeus. R. Hampe, in *Corolla L. Curtius* ed. H. Bulle (Stuttgart 1937) 142 ff., thinks the characters in 369.4 more likely to be Priam and Helen.

²³E.g., *ARV*² 183.8; Polygnotus' Iliupersis (see Paus. 10.25.4). As for the scene on black-figure vases which represents a woman receiving Ajax as he returns with the body of Achilles, there seems no reason to think here of Briseis. See M. Robertson, *CQ* n.s. 19 (1969) 217.

any independent significance in the mythic tradition aside from her rôle in the *Iliad*.²⁴

After much examination we may therefore conclude, with good reason and some confidence, what others have asserted on the basis of little more than intuition and faith in the authority of Homer, that Ovid had no other source than the *Iliad* and that material which does not derive from the epic originates with Ovid himself.

Part Two

Though the characters and myths of the *Heroides* are in the main those of tragedy and epic, the language, metre, themes, and motifs are *grosso modo* those of erotic elegy. Though it is in part true that often the success of a particular poem varies in direct proportion to the facility with which Ovid finds a balance between these disparate styles or fuses them into a coherent and blended unity, nevertheless this is a judgement which must not be exaggerated, since many times Ovid deliberately plays off the two styles against each other and the wit, the sense of remove that are found at times in the *Heroides*—though with not nearly the same frequency as in some of his other works—are partially produced by the incompatible juxtaposition of the tragic crisis and the elegiac viewpoint.

The poetic conception of the Briseis letter is among the best in the corpus. Whether execution completely matches conception may be doubted and, if it does not, we shall not go far astray in attributing the failure to the way the erotic element obtrudes upon the tragic, not vice-versa. Yet, to observe this and therefore dismiss the poem in abrupt terms, as d'Elia does,²⁵ is to miss what Ovid *has* accomplished; in fact, it is to ignore what Ovid was trying to achieve.

Echoes from erotic elegy are numerous. Some grate on our sensibilities, others do not. What we ought not to miss is how Ovid tries to adapt them to the non-elegiac matter. For the moment a brief survey of the more obvious elegiac elements will suffice.

The tear-stained letter recalls the lovers in Catullus and Propertius (3–4).²⁶ *Mora* (13) must make the ear attuned to the elegiac vocabulary hear the lover who would stay longer but is unable.²⁷ At 17 Ovid has wittily

²⁴The suggestion of R. Bianchi-Bandinelli, *Hellenistic-Byzantine Miniatures of the Iliad* (Olten 1955) 117–118, that there may have been a “romance of Briseis” in existence in late antiquity goes beyond the evidence. The iconography of Briseis is so limited in its variety that we have reason to believe that she was almost always depicted in connection with the conflict between Achilles and Agamemnon.

²⁵S. d'Elia, *Ovidio* (Naples 1959) 134.

²⁶See Prop. 4.3.3–4; Catull. 68.2; Ov. *Tr.* 1.1.13–14.

²⁷See Tib. 1.3.16, 1.8.74; Prop. 1.13.6.

turned the hostile *custos* of elegy into a flesh-and-blood soldier who is not quite as easy to deceive (*decepto*) as the traditional *ianitor*.²⁸ Time viewed as the passage of nights (21) possesses, as Loers has observed, erotic innuendo. Line 26 jars, no matter how often we tell ourselves that this is, after all, elegy. As if Achilles would want *cupidi nomen amantis*! (Are we to think of that one brief section in the *Iliad* where Achilles professes his ability to love a woman, 9.340–343?) Verse 42, at least, is more in keeping with the general circumstances. Again, at 111 ff., Briseis accuses Achilles, *inter alia*, of being faithless to her. The fact is indeed imbedded in the *Iliad* (9.186 ff., 664 f.), but the evaluation, perspective, and judgement are elegiac. The phraseology, vocabulary, and sense of 138, *nec miseram lenta ferreus ure mora*, are elegiac, and fortunately not unsuited to the situation.

Granted that this elegiac matter is substantial, it remains true that most of the poem cannot, strictly speaking, be designated simply as erotic elegy. To be sure, had Ovid wanted to reshape the Achilles-Briseis tale, psychologically and poetically, as elegy, he could have done so easily—the basic plan of the rejection of one lover by the other was accessible in the myth—but the end product would not have been this poem.

In spite of her pivotal role in the *Iliad*, as a character Briseis remains vague and undeveloped. Since Greek poets seem to have ignored her potential for fuller realization and their Roman counterpoints by and large saw her as a paradigm, Ovid had virgin soil to sow, little standing between him and Homer. He may well have seen himself as the creator of Briseis by virtue of his endowing her with a complete and psychologically suitable character that she lacks in the *Iliad*. In so doing it is remarkable how he utilizes (one might say, exhausts) every event, every remark in the *Iliad* which bears, even indirectly, on Briseis.

Quam legis a rapta Briseide littera venit (1). We become immediately aware of the personal involvement of the writer and realize that the perspective from which the Homeric events will unfold is far different from that of the *Iliad*.²⁹ We will be viewing those familiar events of the epic not through the eyes of the objective poet but through those of one intimately, though in a sense tangentially, involved. As Fränkel well remarks,³⁰ "The perspective is changed by causing the glorious events to be seen from the point of view of a mere accessory, a person who in the ancient epic played only a minor and passive part; in the *Iliad*, Briseis had nothing to say and was no more than an object of transactions between the great kings."³¹

²⁸See Plaut. *Mil.* 146; Tib. 1.2.15, 1.6.9–10; Prop. 2.6.37; Ov. *Ars Am.* 2.635.

²⁹Note *rapta*. Briseis is usually *abducta* (Prop. 2.20.1; Ov. *Rem. Am.* 777, *Am.* 1.9.33; but cf. *Ars Am.* 3.190), a description more suitable for the Homeric scene.

³⁰Fränkel 43.

³¹This artistic device is characteristic of most of the *Heroides*, wherein famous events

It is in their tone that the opening verses are remarkable, for the anger that one anticipates—Briseis is after all *raptā*—is lacking, and in its stead we sense rather a defensive posture. Apologies dominate. *Vix bene barbarica Graeca notata manu* (2), “My Greek is none too good; I am after all a foreigner” (writing a Greek letter in Latin and calling attention to the fact is typical of Ovid’s wit. If we recall Plautus’ use of *barbarus*, this may even be a slap against himself—humorous, of course—on Ovid’s part). The juxtaposition of *barbarica Graeca* reveals her consciousness of the gap between herself and Achilles. Her inability to write well in his language because she is a non-Greek is a manifestation of the difference between them. He is a Greek and a ruler, she a barbarian and a slave.

Quascumque aspicias lacrimae fecere lituras (3), “excuse me if anything is blotted; I’ve been crying.” Such a paraphrase seems to represent the force of this line. More follows. Complaint is tempered by reservation. *Si mihi ... fas est* (5–6), “if you don’t mind, I’d like to complain”—but only a bit (*pauca*). She knows her place; Achilles is addressed as *dominoque viroque* (5, 6). He is first and foremost her *dominus*, only secondarily her *vir*.³² The substance of her complaint is revealing in its contorted phraseology:

*non ego poscenti quod sum cito tradita regi
culpa tua est, quamvis haec quoque culpa tua est.* [7–8]

She again wavers between her desire to condemn Achilles and her realization that her status does not allow her to do so. This inner confusion and conflict is reflected in her confused expression. What she wants to say is clear: “it is not your fault for turning me over to Agamemnon, but you should not have done it so quickly.” Thus, we might have expected something like (unmetrically) *non culpa tua est quod sum tradita regi, sed quod cito tradita sum*. But she is perplexed and upset and so lets slip too early what disturbs her most, *cito*. Thus, she has in fact stated what she does not mean, that she does not think it Achilles’ fault for giving her up so readily. She is then compelled to backtrack, and this she does by adding *quamvis haec quoque culpa tua est*. But the complexity goes further. Why does *ego* anticipate its clause and, indeed, what is the emphatic pronoun doing here at all? The answer is that *ego* “goes with” *sum tradita* only to satisfy rules

are perceived not through the familiar eyes of some notable hero but from the perspective of a lesser (and female) personage. This strategy has recently been adopted with success by Tom Stoppard in his *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, and by James Saunders in his *Travails of Sancho Panza*.

³²We ought to note how purposeful is the epanalepsis (5–10), for which Lachmann condemned the epistle. The verbatim repetition of the *si* clause in the apodosis displays her meekness: if she is allowed, she will do *this*, *precisely this*, and no more; repetition reflects in line 8 her hesitant change of mind and in lines 9–10 the immediacy of the event, without interruption or wavering on Achilles’ part.

of syntax.³³ In point of fact, we should not consider *ego* the subject of the subordinate clause. We have here an anacoluthon. *Ego* begins as the subject of the main clause, which Briseis intends as a strong statement, e.g., (unmetrically) *non ego te culpo, quamquam alii te culpant*, but she feels the pressures and tones down her remarks to the mild *non ... /culpa tua est, quamvis haec quoque culpa tua est*.

In such a way is the tone of the letter and the character of Briseis set early. Although the apologetic disposition is softened in the rest of the letter, it is still present, especially in the concessions Briseis constantly makes in her complaints and pleas. "If you go, take me with you," she cries (67–68), but immediately qualifies this, *victorem captiva sequar, non nupta maritum* (69), "I'll even go as a captive slave." Another demand, *exagitet ne me tantum tua deprecor uxor* (77) is again retracted, *vel patiari licet*. Later, a plea for Achilles to heed her as his wife (91–92, 97–98) is followed by her admission that she is not his *coniunx*, only his *serva* (99–100). Her oath of fidelity (103–110) again shows Briseis on the defensive, for it is clearly on Agamemnon that guilt must fall, and it is on his shoulders that the burden of an oath must rest (as it does in the *Iliad*). The self-deprecating *hoc animae* (142) is also characteristic. Finally, the last line sounds familiar notes with its threefold emphasis: *domini iure ... iube*. She remains no more than a helpless and utterly dependent slave, her very life at the whim of her master's legitimate command.

Ovid manipulates the Homeric material, adding, eliminating, and modifying as he sees fit. Eight lines embrace the departure scene, and viewed through Briseis' eyes it is rather different from that of the *Iliad*:

*Nam simul Eurybates me Talhybiusque vocarunt,
Eurybati data sum Talhybioque comes;
Alter in alterius iactantes lumina vultum
Quaerebant taciti noster ubi esset amor.
Differri potui: poenae mora grata fuisset.
Ei mihi! discedens oscula nulla dedi!
At lacrimas sine fine dedi rupique capillos:
Infelix iterum sum mihi visa capi.*

[9–16]

Verses 11–12 are among the best known in the *Heroides*. Wilkinson calls the couplet a "good and characteristic touch," and Tolkiehn has perceptively understood the Ovidian technique here operative.³⁴ Homer describes

³³It is surprising that no one has observed the strange and meaningful position of *ego*. A similar placement of the pronoun is found at 7.31, *aut ego quem coepi (neque enim dedignor) amare, /materiam curae praebeat ille meae*, on which Dörrie, *Untersuchungen zur Überlieferungsgeschichte von Ovids Epistulae Heroidum* (Göttingen 1960) 137 has appropriately commented, "man müsste erwarten, dass *ego* Subject im folgenden Hauptsatze wäre," has (*inter alia*) caused that eminent scholar to consider the verse corrupt.

³⁴Wilkinson 90; Tolkiehn 54.

no such occurrence, but Ovid's invention is nevertheless firmly founded in the Iliadic text, where Achilles does not object (1.298 f.), and the heralds are perhaps surprised, for they must be urged on (329 ff.). We ought to note in passing that, although this surely is, as Wilkinson says, "a characteristic touch," the pictorial element may be significant, for it appears that there were artists who in much the same way invested the heralds with more life than Homer had given them.³⁵ But what is truly interesting here is that this remark, Briseis' interpretation of the non-verbal behaviour of others, represents in fact her own feelings. As a psychologist would say, she projects. More, Ovid's Briseis does not appear as the stolid, impassive, and resigned heroine who goes from Achilles *ἀέκουσα*, but she graphically and physically displays her feelings of helplessness, loss, and insecurity.³⁶

These verses begin to point up Briseis' personality and her relationship to Achilles. We get a glimpse of the depths of her helplessness and her need for him. She dreads life without Achilles. Ovid has with subtlety and insight moulded Briseis' character in accord with her personal history.³⁷ Her homeland has been destroyed and sacked, her family, including brothers and husband, wiped out, she herself taken captive. Her one comfort and solace was Achilles' kindness and support (51-54). But Ovid is well aware that such an experience must have been a traumatic one, with permanent scars left on Briseis' heart and in her memory. Indeed, he portrays her throughout as a ghost-haunted and past-obsessed personality. The ways she talks, feels, thinks, and acts are all determined by certain ineradicable events of her past. She conceives of her very existence as an offshoot of that horrible experience, *nostram tua munera vitam* (149). Her dead kin recur in dissimilar contexts (47 ff., 103 ff., 143). In fact, the extraordinary frequency of occurrence of nouns denoting one form of kinship or another may be attributable to *ethopoeia*. The loss of her kin makes Briseis especially sensitive to familial relationships and their value. A brief glance will reveal, among others, the nouns *natus*, *satus*, *coniunx*, *mater*, *vir*, *maritus*, *socer*, *nepos*, *prosocer* (only here in Ovid), *uxor*, *frater*, *parens*, *pater*, some more than once. Noteworthy too is the emphatic *parens* (94), where stress is gained both by position and by the apparent superfluity of the noun.

³⁵The famous Pompeian wall-painting of the abduction scene (see E. Pfuhl, *Malerei und Zeichnung der Griechen* 3 [Munich 1923] pl. 655; Engl. tr. [London 1926] fig. 122) shows the heralds, in Pfuhl's words, "looking ... with puzzled expression" (Engl. tr. 102).

³⁶At *Il.* 1.348 Briseis goes *ἀέκουσα*, while Achilles is described as weeping after she leaves. Homer is basically interested in Achilles, Ovid however in Briseis. Thus, when Achilles cries, Thetis comes to comfort him and asks, *τί κλαίεις*; (362). In Ovid it is Briseis who needs solace, and so Patroclus comes and consoles her, beginning *quid fles*? (24).

³⁷One might call it psychoanalysis in reverse: the analyst begins with the present, the personality of the patient, and from this recreates the past history. Ovid begins with the past history and builds the present character on it.

Here our attention is focussed at beginning, middle and end of the scene on the act as a perverted relationship, *fratribus ... nati ... parens*. Earlier, the legates were described in strange terms,

*Telamone et Amyntore nati,
ille gradu propior sanguinis, ille comes,
Laertiaque satus.* [27–29]

None are named, all are designated “children of,” with the added exposition of Ajax’ kinship to Achilles. In Book Nine of the *Iliad* both Odysseus and Ajax are referred to by their patronymics and Phoenix mentions his father Amyntor,³⁸ but this will not do to explain Ovid’s phrasing, for were he simply echoing or imitating the epic he would surely have used the patronymics (as he does elsewhere).³⁹ We should, I venture to suggest, understand the explicit terms *nati* and *satus* as a manner of speaking characteristic of Briseis, who tends to see people in their rôles as kin.⁴⁰

To return: When Briseis is taken from Achilles she sees her past repeating itself, *infelix iterum sum mihi visa capi* (16). Just as she had once lost everything that had significance for her in the destruction of her city and the murder of her family, so now she is again deprived of all that has meaning for her by her abduction from Achilles. Even her physical response, *at lacrimas sine fine dedi rupique capillos* (15), is appropriate to the tragedy of loss of home and family.⁴¹ For a second time she is cut off from the people and places which lend her life meaning and security. Her largest feeling is that of fear, fear that she will again be deserted, and she appeals to Achilles as one on whom she can be dependent, one who, she feels, has a real interest in her. In some sense her anger toward Achilles for giving her up so casually is a corollary of this: she feels betrayed (53–54).

³⁸*Il.* 9.308, 448, 623, 644.

³⁹*Amyntorides* (*Ars Am.* 1.337), *Telamoniades* (*Met.* 13.231), *Telamonius* (*Ars Am.* 2.737), *Laertiades* (*Met.* 13.48).

⁴⁰*Satus*, indeed, is found only here in the *Heroides*. However, in the *armorum iudicium* episode of the *Metamorphoses* Ajax and Odysseus are introduced with these words: *solis Telamone creato/Laertiaque fuit tantae fiducia laudis* (12.624–625), and a little later Ajax is referred to as *Telamone satus* (13.123) and *Telamone creatus* (13.346). These examples suffice to demonstrate that there may be no ethopoeic significance in these three verses, and if they were isolated instances I would hesitate to build upon them. But given the “extraneous” *ille gradu propior sanguinis* (28) and the numerous kinship nouns throughout the poem we are perhaps entitled to see in these verses something more than a stylistic habit of Ovid’s.

⁴¹See, e.g., *Il.* 22.405–411; Eur. *Tro.* 793 ff. Briseis’ perception of her life as tragic history repeating itself may account for the non-Homeric scene at 23–24 where Patroclus, on Briseis’ abduction, tries to comfort and cheer her. In the *Iliad* he does indeed do so, but on the occasion of her capture by Achilles. Since, however, Patroclus’ words of comfort have become indelibly etched in Briseis’ mind as an integral part of that event, so here, when tragedy repeats itself, Patroclus is again present to offer words of consolation.

Briseis' disposition to visualize the events of her life in terms of her original captivity accounts for the manner of expression—often misunderstood—in verses 17–20. Naylor has observed that *custode* refers to her Greek guard, *hostis* to a Greek soldier, and *caperer* to capture by a Trojan.⁴² True, but what is crucial here and determines Briseis' choice of words is her continuing fear of once again undergoing that—for her—archetypal trauma, capture (*prenderet, caperer*). And so, in this self-contained world, Briseis sees even the Greeks as her enemy. These verses have been condemned by Palmer as feeble, and his objection has some merit. But the feebleness is Briseis', not Ovid's. For these remarks on her frustrated desire to escape are fitting, almost necessary, products of her character. Her weakness compels her to see a potential, if ridiculous, objection to her position: "If you are so interested in being with me, why haven't you escaped and returned to me?" In defense, she claims that she has intended to escape, but cannot do so.

Let us return to the enumeration of gifts (31–38 and *Il.* 9.122 ff.). In Briseis' mouth it rings of her character. *Operoso ex aere* and *pondere et arte pares* reflect her feminine awe and wonder at the quality of these items, while *quodque supervacuum est* and *sed non opus est tibi coniuge* represent a reaction which is partly jealous anger and partly earnest pleading. Her confusion is strikingly present in the juxtaposition of *quodque supervacuum est* and *forma praestante puellae*, the former phrase necessitated by her rôle as rival, the latter by her rôle as advocate. On 35–38 Amar's remarks (quoted by Loers) are worth repeating:

muliebriter, nec sine invidia: terrent enim Lesbides puellae, quae *forma praestant*, terret magis *ex Agamemnoniis una puella tribus*, quae *coniux* Achilli ab Atrida offertur; quia non opus est illi *coniuge*, qui habeat Briseida. Omnia haec ingeniose et vere atque e natura loquentis.

Finally, the description of the Lesbian girls in Homer⁴³ is accompanied by a straightforward and perfectly factual description of their capture by Achilles: *Λεσβίδας, ἄς, ὅτε Δέσβον εὐκτιμένην ἔλεν αὐτός, / ἐξελόμεν, (Il.* 9.129–130). In Briseis' mouth this becomes a pathetic and tragic observation, filled with emotional overtones: *eversa corpora capta domo* (36). The homes and families of these girls have been destroyed, they are no longer people, just bodies. As Burmann rightly remarks, "In servitutem enim redacti vix hominum nomine digni, *corpora* tantum vocabantur" (quoted by Loers). Although these girls are her potential rivals, Briseis can regard them with such broad sympathy and understanding because she feels herself at one with them. Both she and they have undergone the same tragedy at

⁴²H. D. Naylor, "The Alleged Hyperbaton of *Heroides* 3.19," *CR* 25 (1911) 42.

⁴³A familiar passage in antiquity. Witness Pherecrates' parody (Kock, *Com. Att. Frag.* 1.192, fr. 149) and Philostratus' reminiscence (*Imag.* 2.2).

Achilles' hands—loss of home, captivity, and treatment as pawns in the affairs of kings.⁴⁴

Briseis' autobiographical remarks, also adapted from the *Iliad*, are preceded by a series of questions, or rather accusations cloaked in question form, for again she hesitates to attack Achilles directly. The final question,

*an miseros tristis fortuna tenaciter urget
nec venit inceptis mollior hora meis?*

[43–44]

serving as transition from her present to her past misfortune, comes from *Il.* 19.290, ὥς μοι δέχεται κακὸν ἐκ κακοῦ αἰεὶ, where it also immediately precedes Briseis' account of her past. The verbal imitations are notable: εἶδον (292)/*vidi* (45, 47, 49), the last two, like their Greek model, at the beginning of the verse; τρεῖς τε κασιγνήτους, τοὺς μοι μῆλα γέινατο μήτηρ (293)/*tres cecidisse* (*tribus, quae mihi, mater erat*) (48). Yet Ovid, again concerned with the characterization of Briseis, has reshaped the Homeric verses. In this account of the destruction of her city and the slaying of her family the emphasis throughout is on her direct and personal experience of the catastrophe: *vidi* (45), *fuera*m (46), *vidi* (47), *vidi* (49). That she saw all this occur right before her eyes greatly increased her suffering,⁴⁵ and in *Marte tuo* (45) she casts the blame on Achilles, and thereby suggests his great obligation to her. Though the note of pride in line 46, *et fuera*m *patriae pars ego magna meae*, does not seem to suit the tone of the letter, its purpose is clear. By emphasizing her close relationship to her country, she magnifies her pain and suffering at its fall. Further, the line is, as has often been noted,⁴⁶ an imitation of Verg. *Aen.* 2.5 f., *quaeque ipse miserrima vidi/et quorum pars magna fui*. Briseis (anachronistically) is aligned with Aeneas, for they both lose spouse, home, and country at the hands of the Greeks.

In her description (45–51), marked by a series of first-person verbs to stress her own involvement, there is an emotional progression: she moves from the destruction of her city (45–46) to the slaying of her brothers (47–48) to the murder of her husband (49–50). Though the scope of the catastrophe narrows with each succeeding distich, the personal horror for Briseis correspondingly increases.

An explicit declaration of her feelings reveals Briseis' conception of her relationship to Achilles (51–52). Till now it had only been implicit. Achilles is a substitute for all her losses, he is the only person or thing she can depend

⁴⁴Verses 39–40 have, strangely, been misunderstood by Wilkinson 91, who writes, "Could he not have accepted the other gifts and used them to ransom her?" The meaning is rather that Achilles should even have been willing to give all these gifts to Agamemnon to recover her.

⁴⁵The idea of visual experience as intensifying suffering occurs again at line 66: *et videam puppes ire relictas tuas*.

⁴⁶See Palmer *ad loc.*

on, he keeps her from feeling totally alone and abandoned. Further, if in line 46 Briseis finds a connection between herself and Aeneas, in lines 51–52 she finds one between herself and Andromache, and with good reasons, though with ironic differences. The verbal reminiscence is clear and deliberate.⁴⁷ Both Briseis and Andromache can make this kind of declaration because they have both lost their families in war; indeed, they have both had their families destroyed by Achilles. But the irony in Briseis' adopting Andromache's position is all too evident, for whereas Andromache finds consolation in Hector, Briseis must find solace in the very man who has caused all her sorrows. Moreover, Andromache is afraid of losing her husband and tries to draw him away from the fighting, while Briseis fears being deserted by Achilles, and tries to persuade him to return to the battle.

The influence of the Iliadic restoration scene is yet more extensive. In the *Iliad* it is Briseis' big, virtually only, scene, and Ovid takes care to utilize it to maximum effect. We mentioned earlier Briseis' agony and self-mutilation on being torn from Achilles, a scene which has no parallel in Homer. Actually, this is the way Briseis acts upon viewing Patroclus' corpse, and Ovid has transferred this behaviour of hers to a different context. In that Homeric mourning episode Briseis concludes by describing Patroclus' kindness to her at the time of her city's fall. He comforted her, told her not to cry, and promised to make her Achilles' wife (*Il.* 19.295–299). Ovid has taken this occurrence also and made it part of the abduction scene (24), representing Patroclus as comforting her, telling her not to cry, and assuring her that she will soon be back with Achilles. Ovid echoes Homer's οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδὲ μ' ἔασκες ... κλάειν (*Il.* 19.295–297) in direct speech, *quid fles?* (24). Furthermore, by moving this scene of consolation from the time of her city's destruction to the moment of her abduction from Achilles, Ovid has left open the conclusion of the former episode. He then gives it a different ending. Briseis, after seeing her family destroyed, is indeed consoled, but it is by Achilles himself, not by Patroclus: *utile dicebas ipse fuisse capi* (54). Ovid—or Briseis—has deliberately given this act of kindness to Achilles because it emphasizes, by contrast, the baseness of his present behaviour. It stresses his responsibility to her as established by his own actions and words.

For perhaps the most striking and artful manipulation of Homer we return to the embassy episode. Briseis identifies and empathizes with the ambassadors because she and they are striving toward the same end, the persuasion of Achilles. Like Phoenix, she tells the Meleager story to convince him. It is with good and insightful reason that Ovid has Briseis align herself most closely with Phoenix, of the three men. For he is closest to Achilles (cf. *Il.* 9.438–443 and *Her.* 3.28, *comes*, which is echoed by

⁴⁷*Il.* 6.429–430. The echo is noted by, among others, Loers *ad loc.*

comitata at 3.29). He will accomplish what Briseis wants, should Achilles resolve to return to Greece. *Si tibi iam reditusque placent patriique penates,/ non ego sum classi sarcina magna tuae* (67–68) echoes the sentiments of Phoenix, who, when Achilles declares his intentions of going home, says that he desires to go with him (*Il.* 9.434–438). But, perhaps most important, Phoenix, like Briseis, has experienced deep tragedy within the confines of his own family (*Il.* 9.447–457), and for Phoenix, as for Briseis, Achilles represents a surrogate kin (cf. *Il.* 9.494–495; *Her.* 3.52).⁴⁸

Before beginning the Meleager narrative, Phoenix urges Achilles: *δάμασον θυμὸν μέγαν* (*Il.* 9.496). Briseis, in imitation, also anticipates the Meleager tale with the words: *vince animos iramque tuam* (85). On the Meleager section Wilkinson well remarks,⁴⁹ “Ovid has an advantage, for the tale is doubly effective in the mouth of a ‘wife’ herself.” But one can go further. Ovid has not simply taken the same tale and put it in Briseis’ mouth. He has changed the point, the essence, the whole purpose of the narrative of the Meleager story. Phoenix’ “moral” of the story is that Achilles should learn from the example and not act as Meleager did, for Meleager delayed too long and lost all the gifts he could have received. Phoenix thinks Achilles should allow himself to be persuaded by the prospect of great material benefits (602–605). Briseis takes the same story and makes a completely different point. In effect, she proclaims that Achilles *should* follow the example of Meleager, and she strengthens her advice by focussing on aspects of the story which for Phoenix were secondary, and by ignoring the parts of the story which are irrelevant to her purpose. Thus, she does not mention that Meleager forfeited his gifts by the long delay, and strongly emphasizes the fact that it was his wife who finally persuaded him to fight (*sola*, 97), even though in Phoenix’ tale it is clear that the extreme circumstances (the burning of the city) influenced Meleager to return to the battle as much as did his wife’s pleas. Moreover, Briseis, though magnifying the rôle of Meleager’s wife, must avoid mentioning the latter’s arguments, for they are calculated to spur on the defense of one’s own city, while she desires Achilles to adopt the part of aggressor. Also, whereas Phoenix points to potential advantage, Briseis must remind Achilles that there is no disgrace involved in heeding her

⁴⁸I so interpret in spite of the fact that Ovid only alludes to Phoenix’ past in the reference to Amyntor. Ovid’s reading of the embassy episode is clearly close and careful, and Phoenix’ autobiographical narrative would not have been without its effect on him. Further, Phoenix’ family tragedy was so well known, both through the *Iliad* and through many plays written on this subject (by Sophocles, Astydamas, Ion, Euripides, and Ennius; witness the echo of Euripides’ debate scene between Phoenix and Amyntor in Menander’s *Samia*. See T. B. L. Webster, *The Tragedies of Euripides* [London 1967] 85 and C. Dedoussi, *The Samia of Menander* [Athens 1965] 48–49) that Ovid may have virtually taken the reader’s response for granted.

⁴⁹Page 92.

(*nec tibi turpe puta*, 91). There are still other variations in the Ovidian version, these stemming from differences in characterization. Phoenix' description of Althaea is lengthy and perhaps a bit harsh (566–572), while Briseis' is more sympathetic, as can be seen by the solitary descriptive phrase *fratribus orba* (93). Briseis can sympathize with Althaea, since she knows what it means to lose one's brothers. Meleager, on the other hand, whom she identifies with Achilles, is described much more harshly than in Phoenix' speech (e.g., *ferox, rigida mente, patriae ... negavit opem*, 95–96).

We should not see these alterations of fact and emphasis purely as persuasive devices. We shall be closer to the truth if, rather than asserting that Briseis changes the tale to suit her purposes, we realize that in a sense Briseis' version represents how she hears the story, how it impresses itself upon the mind of a person in her circumstances.

The oath which Agamemnon is prepared to take, that he has not slept with Briseis, also forms part of the embassy episode (*Il.* 9.274–276). It is rather straightforward and direct.⁵⁰ In Briseis' mouth it becomes elaborate, and symbolizes the paradox and tragedy of her life. She is the mistress of the very man who murdered her husband and brothers. She swears to him by their bones and souls, but they are dead only because of him. Moreover, their bones by which she swears have not even received a proper burial, again because of Achilles. She reveres her husband's bones, but she lives with his murderer. Her brothers *bene pro patria cum patriaque iacent* (106) at the hands of a man who refuses to fight on behalf of his people. She swears by his sword, the very sword with which he destroyed her family. One can scarcely refrain from thinking that Briseis is here identified with another victim of Achilles, Priam, who in pleading with Achilles finds himself compelled to kiss the hands which slew his son (*Il.* 24.505 f.).⁵¹

The same pathos is present in her plea to Achilles (135–138), qualified by a conditional prayer, *sic omnes Peleus pater impleat annos, / sic eat auspiciis Pyrrhus ad arma tuis*. She prays for the welfare of his closest relatives, for she, having lost hers, fully appreciates their import.⁵²

⁵⁰The actual oath is more involved (*Il.* 19.258 ff.).

⁵¹This comparison is made by L. P. Wilkinson, "Greek Influence on the Poetry of Ovid," *L'influence Grecque sur la Poésie Latine de Catulle à Ovide* (Fond. Hardt, *Entretiens* 2 [1953]) 230. It is instructive to compare Sophocles' Tecmessa, another captive who identifies with Andromache and dreads the future without her master/husband (see esp. *Aj.* 485–524). But Ovid sees the heart of Briseis' tragedy in her living with the very man who has slain her family, while Sophocles seems to go out of his way to represent Ajax as innocent of the murder of Tecmessa's kin (see Jebb on 516–517 and Stanford on 515–516). Consider, too, Eur. *Andr.* 170–173, where Hermione rebukes Andromache for living with the son of her husband's murderer.

⁵²Strikingly, at *Il.* 19.321 ff., Achilles laments that the loss of Patroclus afflicts him more than the death of his father or son would. I think it likely Ovid had these lines in his head when writing lines 135–136, especially since they follow hard upon the mourning scene of Briseis which he utilized so fully in this poem.

Part Three

Although Briseis is not depicted as thoroughly weak and inept, still her attempts at assertiveness and her expressions of anger are few and usually reserved, as we have seen, for example, at verses 5 ff. In verses 21–42 she comes closest to outright anger, though even here it is tempered. *Pugnas ne reddar, Achille* (25) is beautifully and bitterly sarcastic, since this would then appear to be the only fighting Achilles does. The catalogue of gifts serves as an integral part of her condemnation of Achilles, who now, it seems, cares so little for her that he refuses such a wealth of gifts and Briseis as well. This is another interesting twist given to Homeric material; in the *Iliad* the recounting of gifts is part of an attempt to persuade Achilles. Here, in Briseis' mouth and following on Achilles' rejection, they serve to intensify his guilt.

At mea pro nullo pondere verba cadunt (98). In these words is summed up Briseis' sense of utter helplessness. Nor can she even become angry (*nec tamen indignor*); after all, she is but a slave (*serva*), a point hammered home by the ironic juxtaposition of *dominam captiva* (101).

In verses 111 ff. Briseis seems to wax bolder and to accuse Achilles. But Fränkel's remarks get to the heart of the matter: "Seizing upon his immense pride, she tries to rouse him to action by taunts of which she does not mean one word seriously."⁵³ These are not accusations arising from jealousy. They are reprobations designed to shame Achilles into returning to the war. The language renders this perfectly clear. Note the sarcastic *fortissime* (111), a bitter and ironic contrast to the *fortes animas* of 105, *pugnare recuses* (115), *pugna nocet* (116), *tutius est* (117), *placebant* (121) and *dulcis erat* (122), both bitter past tenses, *laus tua victa iacet* (124). All this is a stratagem in Briseis' attempt to persuade Achilles.

There is no real feeling of affection or concern in this letter, in spite of references to *amor* (42, 139) and superficially jealous accusations (111 ff.).⁵⁴ The key to the relationship between Achilles and Briseis must be sought in such language as *miseram cui me violente relinques* (61), *quis mihi desertae mite levamen erit?* (62), in *relicta* (66) and the whole section 67–76. Briseis fears abandonment; she needs a *levamen*,⁵⁵ someone to furnish her with a

⁵³Page 44.

⁵⁴Fränkel's observation (44) on lines 57 ff., "Her genuine devotion comes into the open in a passage where she tells of the cruel shock she received when she learned that Achilles had threatened to sail the next morning," is surely a misinterpretation. Briseis has very little devotion to Achilles. Her interest is mostly self-interest, and her concern is for herself. It is not love or devotion to Achilles which causes her shock on hearing that he intends to leave, but rather her fear that she will be deserted.

⁵⁵*Levamen* is instructive. It is not part of the erotic-elegiac vocabulary, but is rather associated with serious loss and suffering. In elegy it is found only at Catull. 68.61 (in a simile) and at Prop. 4.11.63, where it is used of the comfort the dead Cornelia finds in her children.

sense of security and attachment, someone tied to her in a bond of warmth and concern. Though she would prefer Achilles as husband or lover, she views him as essentially a support, and so is willing to go as a household slave.⁵⁶ But she has one reservation: neither Achilles nor his wife may mock her (77–80). Line 78, *quae mihi nescio quo non erit aequa modo*, with its brilliant, almost paranoid, *nescio quo modo*, subtly reveals Briseis' feeling that she is always mistreated. But this added sense of pride and desire for recognition as a person gives way in line 81 to her primary concern, not to be deserted. Thus fear, not jealousy or anger, is her predominant emotion.⁵⁷

Her final attempts at persuasion are founded on threats (139 ff.). If he fails to reclaim her, he will be responsible for her death. She will fade away and die (141–142), or will commit suicide (143–144), or will bid him to kill her (145–148). This last is important. Why does Briseis call upon Achilles to kill her? Suicide will do well enough. The motivation is that which governs all her hopes, wishes, and actions, her desire not to feel alone and meaningless. Even the act of killing her would show that he does have some feelings toward her. Line 146, *est mihi qui fosso pectore sanguis eat*, demonstrates her fear that Achilles no longer knows or cares that she is "alive." It is an assertion of the existence of her person, of her reality. The emphatic placing of *me* (147) is to the same end, as is also the description of Achilles' sword as the one which threatened Agamemnon, for to be slain by that famous sword (note *ille*, 147) which almost killed the leader of the Greeks would be a strong affirmation of her existence and significance as a human being.⁵⁸

Perhaps the most vivid indication of how Ovid has avoided an essentially amatory relationship within an erotic-elegiac context comes in lines 113–122, a passage which has in fact many erotic elements. In these lines Briseis tries to shame Achilles into returning to the battle by accusing him of unseemly behaviour—playing the lyre, enjoying himself with his mistress, and in sum preferring these activities because they are safer than warfare, for whose glory and honour he no longer cares. Could one get farther from the world of love elegy? It is, quite naturally, one of the most common and important motifs of this genre that war is the antithesis of love, and that the lover scorns the fame of war for the safety and joy of a

⁵⁶What seems like a topos or mere rhetoric (cf. Catull. 64.158 ff.; Eur. fr. 132N²; *Il.* 3.409; *Ciris* 443 ff.—the latter references from Kroll *ad* Catull. 64.158–163) abruptly comes to life when we pause and realize that this is of course a statement of fact. Briseis is *captiva* to Achilles' victor.

⁵⁷Note *timidam* (18), *timebam* (19), *pavidas* (59), *metus* (82), *sollicitam* (137).

⁵⁸Since I have been at pains to show how well Ovid knew his Homer and how carefully and purposefully he utilized him, I deem it only fair to point out in line 147 what may be a slip on Ovid's part: *si dea passa fuisset*. In the *Iliad* (1.198) only Achilles sees Athene; no one else, including Briseis, is aware of her intervention. A small point, and Ovid seems to have forgotten it. Unless, of course, this is Ovid's witty way of informing us that Achilles told Briseis about the goddess' intervention.

quiet life at home with his girl and other amusements.⁵⁹ A true *puella* of elegy would never want her lover to go off to war and fight. Briseis, however, must call upon war, the enemy of love, to re-establish her relationship with Achilles.

As noted earlier, the letter ends with a return to Briseis' prime concern. It matters little whether Achilles stays or goes, or whether he restores Briseis to her position as mistress and again loves her. Her single abiding concern is not to be abandoned: *domini iure venire iube* (154). Palmer translates, "by an owner's right." She will gladly go as a slave. Her only wish is that he take her with him.

In so characterizing Briseis Ovid has remained within the limits, and built upon the foundation, of the *Iliad*. Achilles has been her solace and comfort, her one source of security since her family and home were destroyed, so it is natural for her to feel dependent on him. But what kind of love could she feel for the man who ravaged her land, murdered her closest kin, and turned her into a slave? Little, and certainly not unalloyed.

We ought not to miss the possibility that Briseis' defensiveness, her obsession with kin, and her "death-wish" at the poem's end are all indications of a sense of guilt, understandable in one who has survived when all her family has been slain, and who has then served and loved the man responsible for the tragedy.⁶⁰

Part Four

As so often in Ovid, formal elements of the poetry contribute to the overall purpose, here the characterization of Briseis. Briseis strongly feels that she never acts, but is constantly acted upon, that she is not treated as a person, but as a tool, a pawn in the affairs of others. This is brought out by the frequent use of passive verb forms, which repeatedly suggest that she is invariably an object acted upon. Note, e.g., *tradita* (7), *visa capi* (16), *data*, *danda* (21), *repetor* (22), *tradebar* (23), *reddar* (25), *redimenda* (39), *feri* (41), *scindi* (79), *relinquar* (81). When in lines 129–134 she waxes bolder for

⁵⁹See, e.g., Tib. 1.1.53–58, 1.10.25–32; Prop. 1.6.29–30, 3.5.1–2. That Ovid here effectively inverts the elegiac motif to underscore the necessary abnormality of a "love" relationship between Achilles and Briseis can best be seen by comparing 117–118 with *Am.* 2.11.31–32, *tutius est fuisse torum, legisse libellos, / Threiciam digitis increpuisse lyram*. The lines are virtually the same, but they make points that are diametrically opposed. In the *Amores* the sentiment is direct and means what it says, whereas in Briseis' mouth the sarcasm reverses the natural sense of the words. For the general incompatibility of love and war see *Am.* 3.8.9–22.

⁶⁰For a brief summary of the concept of survival-guilt as evidenced in the survivors of Hiroshima and the concentration camps see R. J. Lifton, *Death in Life* (New York 1967) 56. As for guilt attaching itself to a person who forms ties with an enemy of the family, see again Eur. *Andr.* 170–173.

a moment, it is Achilles' verb that is in the passive (*comminuere*, 134). But we end, as we began, in the earlier vein: *destituor* (143), *iussa* (144).⁶¹

The unusual frequency with which *me* and *mihi* recur in this epistle also points up her existence as an object acted upon, rather than as an acting person. This sense of being a thing, not a person, is illustrated at line 152, where Briseis implicitly refers to herself as *materia*, and best of all at line 68, where she designates herself mere *sarcina*. Finally, the many questions that are posed in the poem manifest the fear, insecurity, and helplessness which characterize her.

We have yet to touch on an important theme of the letter, one which is complex and varied. This is the conflict or discrepancy between words and action, speech and behaviour, the verbal and the concrete. It is largely concerned with the futility and deceitfulness of verbal expression and the truth and power of actions and deeds. One can readily understand why this is of such relevance and importance to Briseis. The most significant events of her life have been uniquely and totally embodiments of actions devoid of reason and impervious to persuasion: her home destroyed, her family murdered, she herself captured and taken prisoner. Further, she has seen how little efficacy and truth words have. The embassy could not persuade Achilles, though their arguments seemed good. She had received a promise from Achilles that she would enjoy life with him (53–54), but he turned her over to Agamemnon. Patroclus told her that she would soon return to Achilles' tent (23–24), but this has not come true. She knows from experience the great difference between word and deed.

The opening paragraph (1–4) makes the point clearly, vividly, and effectively. She apologizes for her inability to write well, but notes *lacrimae pondera vocis habent*. Her words, she knows, will be ineffectual, but her tears, the concrete result of a physical act which discloses her inner emotions, do have weight, and she hopes they will have effect. At lines 11–12, the heralds do not say a word, but their thoughts and feelings are clear (*quaerebant taciti noster ubi esset amor*) because of their behaviour (*alter in alterius iactantes lumina vultum*). Words are unnecessary to convey truth.

In lines 91 ff. it seems, at first glance, that the Meleager tale introduced by Briseis points to the power of words. But this is not so. The real power in the Meleager story resides in the relationship between husband and wife. This is brought out by the juxtaposition *virum coniunx* (97) and by lines 97–100, in which Briseis concedes that she is not actually in the same position as Meleager's wife, because she is not really Achilles' wife. Words will avail her nothing: *at mea pro nullo pondere verba cadunt* (98).

⁶¹In two places (*tradebar*, 23; *repellar*, 55) this characteristic makes clear that the MSS readings, which have come under attack (at 23 Palmer thinks *tradebat* may be right, at 55 both he and Giomini read *repellas*), are perfectly sound.

But Briseis does know the power of the concrete, and this gives her one hope. The embassy failed with their pleas,⁶² but she can call upon her tears and the fact that she knows physical contact with Achilles (131–134). This will mean something. Once again, words are unnecessary: *ut taceam, lacrimis comminuere meis* (134).

Part Five

A few words on the poem's structure. Obvious as it is that the Iliadic embassy episode constitutes a very important source, we should notice how Ovid reshapes what is a single, unified, and coherent action in Homer into several separate and individually pointed segments.

The first (27–38) consists mainly of the list of gifts the ambassadors proffer. It highlights Achilles' lack of concern for Briseis, and is broken off at line 39 by her emotional response. At lines 57–58 the embassy scene returns in Achilles' threat to leave Troy, here designed to show how far he has gone in his base behaviour. This, too, is followed by Briseis' emotional comments (59 ff.). At lines 92 ff. we meet Phoenix' Meleager narrative, utilized by Briseis to persuade Achilles. Again, her reaction interrupts (97–98). Finally, she returns to the embassy at lines 129–130, noting its failure and claiming that she herself could be more readily successful. Thus, Ovid has divided the one episode into various parts and given each portion its own purpose and effect in terms of the emotional and dramatic development of the letter.

In the structure of the letter Ovid has cleverly dovetailed chronology and rhetoric. The argument builds in seriousness and intensity while at the same time preserving the chronological sequence of the *Iliad*, thus giving us, as it were, a step-by-step documentation of the feelings and reactions of Briseis to the events as they take place in the *Iliad*.

The letter opens as if the embassy had not yet taken place, as if Briseis were writing immediately after her abduction (*rapta*, 1). There is no indication of a lapse of time, and she is completely involved with Achilles' lack of resistance in giving her up. On reading through line 16, one could scarcely think that an even more insulting and injurious event had come upon Briseis since her abduction. The poem then moves forward in dramatic fashion. Time passes in lines 17–20, and in lines 21–22 a new accusation consonant with the chronological movement is put forth: why has Achilles made no attempt to recover her? This cry comes at a specific moment in time, the moment before the arrival of the embassy, for if Achilles had

⁶²Compare also the two legations, which Ovid may be tying together by his echoing of final *comes* (10) in 28. The one comes to Achilles, says nothing, but accomplishes its mission; the other speaks at length, and elaborately, but gets nowhere.

already rejected an opportunity to get her back she would not simply be complaining of his unwillingness to reclaim her. Finally, at line 25, we reach the time when the embassy has already come and gone, and Briseis now complains of his rejection of their terms. It is only at lines 57–58 that we come to the dramatic and rhetorical high point at which Achilles not only scorns the gifts but also threatens to leave Troy. And it is at this temporal point that Briseis focusses her pleas and arguments, ultimately moving from the present into the future via a series of threats, hopes, wishes, and imaginative constructions of the future (69 ff., 125 ff.).

In sum, Ovid has seen the chronological sequence of the *Iliad* as an emotional crescendo for Briseis, and conceives it in the poem as a rhetorical movement toward a climax.

As is his custom in the *Heroides*, Ovid has depicted his heroine at the moment of highest crisis. Like Ariadne, who wakes and finds herself abandoned, like Phyllis, who finally understands that Demophoon will not return, Briseis begins to suspect the worst, that Achilles has no intention of seeking her back and is preparing to return home. By locking this letter into that critical moment Ovid would seem to have cut himself off from the chronologically later material which bears most directly on Briseis. But, as we have noticed time and again, this is not so. For it is characteristic of these poems that though, strictly speaking, they exist at only a very specific and brief moment in time they constantly partake of the entire myth, present, past, and even future. In this poem past, present and future merge at one point in time, and Briseis' tragedy, from the moment of the first capture till the time of the final restoration, comes vividly to life, shaped by her own words and psyche.⁶³

If I have emphasized the poem's virtues this is largely to counter the superficial criticism, such as d'Elia's, which it has suffered. It is, however, true that, in spite of Ovid's frequent attempts to weave the erotic elements into the texture of the epic, he is not always successful, and that at times even his successes must be deemed artificial. In addition, that sense of remove, of distance, which so often informs Ovid's poetry, lurks here sometimes as well, and this we can only regret. Ovid and his audience were undoubtedly delighted and amused to hear the words of the great Homeric heroes in the mouth of a mere girl, in an elegiac format and a partially amatory context, and, to top it all, with a very different sense and put to quite distinct purposes, but this delight and amusement is one thing the poem could well do without, especially since it invests the character of

⁶³When Ovid involves Patroclus in the life of Briseis (anachronistically, as far as the Homeric account is concerned) he is in a sense calling to the reader's mind that Briseis will undergo yet another catastrophe of the same order (Patroclus' death), and that indeed her miseries do not and will not end.

Briseis with an element of unconscious self-parody. Unfortunately, even when Ovid fully sympathizes, he is incapable of fully empathizing, though this is perhaps more a function of his art than of his character.

We should also observe that, in a manner typical of his narrative elegy, Ovid sometimes flounders with the distich's second half; his pentameters are at times weak, tending to obstruct the fluidity of movement, and are elsewhere repetitious, almost "fillers," generated by his usual reluctance to begin a coherent sense-unit with the pentameter.

In spite of this, the poem is a notable achievement. In its brilliant command of the epic material and its transformation of it into "subjective" elegy it impressively breaks new ground for Latin elegy. But it is most striking for its full-blown and insightful development of the character of Briseis out of a few isolated hints in the *Iliad*, and in its Euripidean understanding of and sympathy for the female victim of war, bereft of home and family.⁶⁴ Simone Weil, in her perceptive essay on war which utilizes—sometimes, granted, very loosely—the *Iliad* as a starting point, describes Homer's Briseis in words that would probably do better for Ovid's:

*If, by some miracle, in the slave's breast a hope is born, the hope of becoming, some day, through somebody's influence, someone once again, how far won't these captives go to show love and thankfulness, even though these emotions are addressed to the very men who should, considering the very recent past, still reek with horror for them. ... [The slave] loses his whole inner life.*⁶⁵

For Ovid, living in a time of relative calm, prosperity, and peace, to have perceived the inner spiritual plight of the captive of war which Weil learned from her own unspeakable experiences and Euripides appreciated from living in another war-torn age is no small feat of insight and sensitivity. Insofar as erotic elegy could bear the weight of tragedy and pathos, it has done so here, molded by the skilful, if sometimes erratic, hands of the last great Latin elegist.

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⁶⁴Documentation is unnecessary, but I should like to point out two places in the letter where the sense of tragedy and the insight into it could virtually have been modelled on Euripides. At lines 45 ff. the horrors of death and devastation are magnified by the direct visual experience (*vidi ... vidi ... vidi*), as at *Tro.* 479 ff.; and at line 46 the tragedy is heightened by the awareness of the gulf between one's present status (slave, captive) and one's former greatness, as is the case at *Tro.* 489 ff.

⁶⁵*The Iliad or the Poem of Force* (Penna. 1967) 9–10.