

“Helen of Troy: A Poem” by Gorgias of Leontini (translated by J. K. Gayle)

¹Tis Cosmos Fine, makes well-manned states,
Those well-built bods, those wise souls great,
Their Virtue’s acts, their True words’ weight.
Dis-Order breeds bad inverse traits.

A man, his wife, a word, its deed,
A well-manned city state to lead,
Best practices, a noble breed,
To each right praise, we all must cede.

A praiser wrong brings praisers shame;
For “sin” and “stupid” are the same
When praise on blamed ones is cast
While blame on praised ones stands fast.

²So states this man composing here;
His true word stated must be clear:
The once-praised Helen’s wrongly blamed,
That one-man woman, oh, that wife’s

Accus’d by same-song sounding types,
By same-same-soulsh tribes of men,
Of poets making so-called proofs,
Whose only make up’s ill repute.

I hereby wish to state her Truth,
To give my word, if mine be smooth,
To try her trial, if I soothe,
To make accusing men accus’d.

³For Nature and her pedigree
Her high-class breeding, this all see,
The perfect specimen, this case,
Is what not just a few must face.

Dame Lydia’s her mother sure,
Tyndareus her father pure,
Or Zeus begot her, he endures.
Such Patriarchy does inure

⁴Her master parents, divine race,
Unequaled beauty, godsome grace,
Which she received, with full embrace
From men whose bodies gave hers chase:

Men noble by their royal births,
Men brilliant from their amassed wealths,
Men wise, men dull, men swift, men stealth,
Men lusting, risking all their worth.

⁵ Which man of lust won her? we ask,
And how? Why him? Tis not our task,
To ask for jollies, since we know.
She left for Troy; ask Why she'd go:

⁶ Did gods, did Fate, give her applause?
Did man assail, with words, with claws?
Was sampled lust, or Love, the cause?
To question gods gives us first pause:

For Nature ranks them strong and high,
And humans weak below the sky;
We them must follow when they're nigh.
Weak Helen followed gods nearby.

⁷ If force assailed her, to be clear,
Then claws of rape did domineer
And Law that rapist commandeered
Though him Law nails with savage jeers,

While words assail and strip her of
The Fatherland, her family's love;
This orphan what's she guilty of?
Barbarous rape and forcing words?

⁸ If by such words, such Logic, she
Was snookered with such force, Then we
May too be swayed dynamically,
By mechanistic ghosts in me

⁹ And you, and you, my audience,
May feel some frightful metered dance
That taps your tears, that makes toes prance,
To cadencing religious chants,

¹⁰ That puts us list'ners in its trance
Spellbinding words not meant for chance
For one a charm, for two a stance,
For others yet grave sins, or shams,

¹¹ True fakery, fake truth, real fraud,
Or stuff of chosen hist'ry past,
In present views of those who've passed.
We learn, such Logic, such words laud.

Our mem'ry serves us well, we say,
For yesterday is like today,
Tomorrow's equal the same way,
Our souls opine in time this way.

This same soul all the time recalls
The summers, winters, springs, the falls
Like rolls of dice, like roulette balls.
The same, opinion sure, appalls.

¹² So in this case, which cause, which riff,
Which same old youthful songlike tiff
'bout Helen gone, can stand now If
She so was forced Then changed her mind?

The stated word persuades the soul,
The one persuading forces whole,
His suasions in the ear, a hole;
Injustice, then, achieves its goal.

¹³ The suasive one, with stated word,
Does move three sorts of souls who've heard.
For one: star watchers do get stirred
By calling night stars clear, then blurred.

For two: debaters get as riled
As crowds hear verbal contests wild
Composed of writ-speech, spoken style.
For three: philosophers revile.

¹⁴ Their worded statements, their souls' drugs
That heal some bodies, others kill,
Intoxicating hearers still,
Bemuse, bewitch, make warm, make chill.

¹⁵ "Under the influence" was she;
If so, then difference we see,
The word, the inference, the hint.
Our fourth case now, Love's Argument:

¹⁶ Examples lie in men of war
Whose decorations are our Corps
Bedecked in brass, steel from the store,
For defense and for offense more,

Who look so brave, until one gawks
With eye afraid, and then he balks,
And so his army does give way,
Our vict'ry had is giv'n away.

¹⁷ For in that moment, brief and done,
The whole of courage is fast gone
Doused quick by fear, which now has won
The battle for the ration'l one,

With terrors, manias, and dread,
All tossing 'round his once-bold head
That looked with frighten'd eye then fled.
Still look, love's argument's not dead:

¹⁸ Examples lie another way
When a man's eye knows how to weigh
The good, the beautiful, he's made,
His art, his figurine, his play.

His full obsession, in this case,
Is what he loves, not fears, to face.
There may be pains in his desires
But of these pains he never tires.

¹⁹ If Helen's eye did look upon
The body of that man, the brawn
Of Alexander, armor on,
Then why our shock? Why carry on

As if love's battle has been lost
As if gods' looking eyes were crossed
As if mere mortals paid their cost
As if luck's fortune has been tossed?

²⁰ Does Helen Justice get or No?
She left for Troy; ask Why she'd go.
Did love win there? Did Trick words flow?
Did man, did gods, move her? You know,

²¹ This absolution, of just words,
Of woman, wife, who will not stay.
This is for Helen Cosmos, praise,
And as for me 'tis Order'd play.

Translator's Note

The genre of the work that we all know as “The Encomium of Helen” by Gorgias has been much disputed. Nobody has called it poetry. Some call it a written treatise of philosophy. More call it a text of rhetoric and then argue over whether it is an “encomium,” a speech of praise; or “epideictic rhetoric,” a speech to show off one’s subject; or a “parody,” a speech as a way to make fun of; or an “apology,” a speech to mount a defense.

The translators of the nine English translations of the *Helen* - published from 1913 to 2007 - have all treated the work only as one of these genres of prose. The best the translators have been willing to concede that “the challenges of translating Gorgias’ *Helen*” are “overwhelming” given all the “unique features” in this particular Greek text. They have recognized how the author has added his own “metaphor and paradox” and “*schemata*” including “equally balanced clauses (*isocolon*), the joining of contrasting ideas (*antithesis*), the parallel structure of successive clauses (*parison*), and the rhyming of word endings (*homoeoteleuton*).” But these translators, especially the rhetoric scholars, have as much paid attention primarily to his “arrangement of topics . . . remarkably orderly and well-signposted”; and they punctuate “Gorgias’ interest in argumentation [as] he makes his point by systematically refuting a series of possible alternatives” (page 317, *Readings from Classical Rhetoric*, edited by Patricia P. Matsen, Philip B. Rollinson, and Marion Sousa 1990). Never mind that the translators do notice how the Hellene of Gorgias in the *Helen* poetically borrows from multiple genres, “from Greek tragedy and poetry.”

What my translation does is to read what Gorgias writes of Helen as poetry. The ancient Greek writer certainly refers to poets (i.e., in paragraph 2 - τε τῶν ποιητῶν) and to poetry (i.e., in paragraph 8 - τὴν ποίησιν ἅπασαν καὶ νομίζω καὶ ὀνομάζω λόγον ἔχοντα μέτρον). This is not just a nod. Rather, the writer is poet. He starts in with rhyme, and so I’ve looked to English rhythm and rhyme to render the work as a poem:

(1) Κόσμος πόλει μὲν εὐανδρία,
σώματι δὲ κάλλος, ψυχῇ δὲ σοφία,
πράγματι δὲ ἀρετῇ, λόγοι δὲ ἀλήθεια·
τὰ δὲ ἐναντία τούτων ἄκοσμία.

ἄνδρα δὲ καὶ γυναῖκα καὶ λόγον
καὶ ἔργον καὶ πόλιν
καὶ πρᾶγμα χρὴ τὸ μὲν
ἄξιον ἐπαίνου ἐπαίνωι τιμᾶν,

τῷ δὲ ἀναξίωι μῶμον ἐπιτιθέναι·
ἴσε γὰρ ἁμαρτία καὶ ἁμαθία μέμφεσθαί
τε τὰ ἐπαινετὰ
καὶ ἐπαινεῖν τὰ μωμητὰ.

¹Tis Cosmos Fine, makes well-manned states,
Those well-built bods, those wise souls great,
Their Virtue’s acts, their True words’ weight.
Dis-Order breeds bad inverse traits.

A man, his wife, a word, its deed,
A well-manned city state to lead,
Best practices, a noble breed,
To each right praise, we all must cede.

A praiser wrong brings praisers shame;
For “sin” and “stupid” are the same
When praise on blamed ones is cast
While blame on praised ones stands fast.

With superscripted numbers, my translation marks the traditional paragraph enumerations. The original Greek text is in the public domain (and can be found in *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, compiled by Hermann Diels in 1922, a work also uncopyrighted in the public domain). It is reproduced below.

(1) Κόσμος πόλει μὲν εὐανδρία, σώματι δὲ κάλλος, ψυχῇ δὲ σοφία, πράγματι δὲ ἀρετή, λόγοι δὲ ἀλήθεια· τὰ δὲ ἐναντία τούτων ἀκοσμία. ἄνδρα δὲ καὶ γυναῖκα καὶ λόγον καὶ ἔργον καὶ πόλιν καὶ πρᾶγμα χρῆ τὸ μὲν ἄξιον ἐπαινῶν ἐπαινῶν τιμᾶν, τῶι δὲ ἀναξίω μῶμον ἐπιτιθένα· ἴσε γὰρ ἁμαρτία καὶ ἁμαθία μέμφεσθαι τε τὰ ἐπαινετὰ καὶ ἐπαινῶν τὰ μομητὰ. (2) τοῦ δ' αὐτοῦ ἀνδρὸς λέξει τε τὸ δέον ὀρθῶς καὶ ἐλέγξει ... τοὺς μεμφομένους Ἑλένην, γυναῖκα περὶ ἧς ὁμόφωνος καὶ ὁμόψυχος γέγονεν ἢ τε τῶν ποιητῶν ἴακουσάντων πίστις ἢ τε τοῦ ὀνόματος φήμη, ὃ τῶν συμφυρῶν μνήμη γέγονεν. ἐγὼ δὲ βούλομαι λογισμὸν τινα τῶι λόγῳ δοῦς τὴν μὲν κακῶς ἀκούουσαν παῦσαι τῆς αἰτίας, τοὺς δὲ μεμφομένους ἐπιδείξας καὶ δείξας τάληθες [ἦ] παῦσαι τῆς ἁμαθίας. (3) ὅτι μὲν οὖν φύσει καὶ γένει τὰ πρῶτα τῶν πρῶτων ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικῶν ἢ γυνὴ περὶ ἧς ὁδε ὁ λόγος, οὐκ ἄδηλον οὐδὲ ὀλίγοις. δῆλον γὰρ ὡς μητρὸς μὲν Λήδας, πατρὸς δὲ τοῦ μὲν γενομένου θεοῦ, λεγομένου δὲ θηητοῦ, Τυνδάρεω καὶ Διός, ὧν ὁ μὲν διὰ τὸ εἶναι ἔδοξεν, ὁ δὲ διὰ τὸ φάναί ἠλέγχθη, καὶ ἦν ὁ μὲν ἀνδρῶν κράτιστος, ὁ δὲ πάντων τύραννος. (4) ἐκ τοιούτων δὲ γενομένη ἔσχε τὸ ἰσόθεον κάλλος, ὃ λαβοῦσα καὶ οὐ λαθοῦσα ἔσχε· πλείστας δὲ πλείστοις ἐπιθυμίας ἔρωτος ἐνεργάσατο, ἐνὶ δὲ σώματι πολλὰ σώματα συνήγαγεν ἀνδρῶν ἐπὶ μεγάλοις μέγα φρονούντων, ὧν οἱ μὲν πλούτου μεγέθη, οἱ δὲ εὐγενείας παλαιὰς εὐδοξίαν, οἱ δὲ ἀλκῆς ἰδίᾳς εὐεξίαν, οἱ δὲ σοφίας ἐπικτήτου δυνάμειν ἔσχον· καὶ ἦκον ἅπαντες ὑπ' ἔρωτος τε φιλονίκου φιλοτιμίας τε ἀνικητοῦ. (5) ὅστις μὲν οὖν καὶ δι' ὅτι καὶ ὅπως ἀπέπλησε τὸν ἔρωτα τὴν Ἑλένην λαβῶν, οὐ λέξω· τὸ γὰρ τοῖς εἰδόσιν ἂ ἴσασι λέγειν πίστιν μὲν ἔχει, τέρπιν δὲ οὐ φέρει. τὸν χρόνον δὲ τῶι λόγῳ τὸν τότε νῦν ὑπερβάς ἐπὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ μέλλοντος λόγου προβήσομαι, καὶ προθήσομαι τὰς αἰτίας, δι' ἃς εἰκὸς ἦν γενέσθαι τὸν τῆς Ἑλένης εἰς τὴν Τροίαν στόλον. (6) ἢ γὰρ τύχης βουλήμασι καὶ θεῶν βουλευμασι καὶ ἀνάγκης ψηφισμασιν ἔπραξεν ἢ ἐπραξεν, ἢ βίαι ἀρπασθεῖσα, ἢ λόγῳ πεισθεῖσα, [ἢ ἔρωτι ἀλοῦσα]. εἰ μὲν οὖν διὰ τὸ πρῶτον, ἄξιος αἰτιώσθαι ὁ αἰτιώμενος· θεοῦ γὰρ προθυμίαν ἀνθρωπίνην προμηθία ἀδύνατον κολύειν. πέφυκε γὰρ οὐ τὸ κρεῖσσον ὑπὸ τοῦ ἥσσονος κολύεσθαι, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἥσσον ὑπὸ τοῦ κρεῖσσονος ἄρχεσθαι καὶ ἄγεσθαι, καὶ τὸ μὲν κρεῖσσον ἡγεῖσθαι, τὸ δὲ ἥσσον ἔπεισθαι. θεὸς δ' ἀνθρώπου κρεῖσσον καὶ βίαι καὶ σοφία καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις. εἰ οὖν τῇ τύχῃ καὶ τῶι θεῷ τὴν αἰτίαν ἀναθετόν, [ἢ] τὴν Ἑλένην τῆς δυσκλείας ἀπολυτέον. (7) εἰ δὲ βίαι ἠρπάσθη καὶ ἀνόμως ἐβιάσθη καὶ ἀδικῶς ὑβρίσθη, δῆλον ὅτι ὁ [μὲν] ἀρπάσας ὡς ὑβρίσας ἠδίκησεν, ἢ δὲ ἀρπασθεῖσα ὡς ὑβρισθεῖσα ἐδυστύχησεν. ἄξιος οὖν ὁ μὲν ἐπιχειρήσας βάρβαρος βάρβαρον ἐπιχείρημα καὶ λόγοι καὶ νόμοι καὶ ἔργοι λόγοι μὲν αἰτίας, νόμοι δὲ ἀτιμίας, ἔργῳ δὲ ζημίας τυχεῖν· ἢ δὲ βιασθεῖσα καὶ τῆς πατρίδος στερηθεῖσα καὶ τῶν φίλων ὀφρανησθεῖσα πῶς οὐκ ἂν εἰκότως ἐλεηθεῖ μᾶλλον ἢ κακολογηθεῖ; ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἔδρασε δεινὰ, ἢ δὲ ἔπαθε· δίκαιον οὖν τὴν μὲν οἰκτιρεῖν, τὸν δὲ μισῆσαι. (8) εἰ δὲ λόγος ὁ πείσας καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀπατήσας, οὐδὲ πρὸς τοῦτο χαλεπὸν ἀπολογησασθαι καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν ἀπολύσασθαι ὧδε. λόγος δυνάστης μέγας ἐστίν, ὃς σμικροτάτοι σώματι καὶ ἀφανιστάτοι θεϊοτάτα ἔργα ἀποτελεῖ· δύναται γὰρ καὶ φόβον παῦσαι καὶ λύπην ἀφελεῖν καὶ χαρὰν ἐνεργάσασθαι καὶ ἔλεον ἐπαυξῆσαι. ταῦτα δὲ ὡς οὕτως ἔχει δεῖξω· (9) δεῖ δὲ καὶ δόξῃ δεῖξαι τοῖς ἀκούουσι· τὴν ποίησιν ἅπασαν καὶ νομίζω καὶ ὀνομάζω λόγον ἔχοντα μέτρον· ἢς τοὺς ἀκούοντας εἰσῆλθε καὶ φρίκη περιφοβος καὶ ἔλεος πολυδάκρυς καὶ πόθος φιλοπενθήσας, ἐπ' ἄλλοτριῶν τε πραγμάτων καὶ σωμάτων εὐτυχίας καὶ δυσπραγίας ἴδιον τι πάθημα διὰ τῶν λόγων ἔπαθεν ἢ ψυχῇ. φέρε δὴ πρὸς ἄλλον ἀπ' ἄλλου μεταστῶ λόγον. (10) αἱ γὰρ ἔνθεοι διὰ λόγων ἐπωδαῖ ἐπαγωγῶι ἠδονῆς, ἀπαγωγῶι λύπης γίνονται· συγγινωμένη γὰρ τῇ δόξῃ τῆς ψυχῆς ἢ δύναμις τῆς ἐπιοδῆς ἐθέλησε καὶ ἔπεισε καὶ μετέστησεν αὐτὴν γοητεία. γοητείας δὲ καὶ μαγείας δισσαι τέχνη εὐρηναί, αἱ εἰσι ψυχῆς ἁμαρτήματα καὶ δόξης ἀπατήματα. (11) ὅσοι δὲ ὅσους περὶ ὅσων καὶ ἔπεισαν καὶ πείθουσι δὲ ψευδῆ λόγον πλάσαντες. εἰ μὲν γὰρ πάντες περὶ πάντων εἶχον τῶν [τε] παροικιόμενων μνήμην τῶν τε παρόντων [ἐννοίαν] τῶν τε μελλόντων πρόνοιαν, οὐκ ἂν ὁμοίως ὁμοίως ἦν ὁ λόγος, οἷς τὰ νῦν γε οὔτε μνησθῆναι τὸ παροικιόμενον οὔτε σκέψασθαι τὸ παρὸν οὔτε μαντεύσασθαι τὸ μέλλον εὐπόρως ἔχει· ὥστε περὶ τῶν πλείστων οἱ πλείστοι τὴν δόξαν σύμβουλον τῇ ψυχῇ παρέχονται. ἢ δὲ δόξα σφαλера καὶ ἀβεβαίος οὖσα σφαλераῖς καὶ ἀβεβαίους εὐτυχίας περιβάλλει τοὺς αὐτῇ χρωμένους. (12) ἴτις οὖν αἰτία κολύει καὶ τὴν Ἑλένην ὕμνος ἦλθεν ὁμοίως ἂν οὐ νέαν οὖσαν ὥσπερ εἰ βιατήριον βία ἠρπάσθη. τὸ γὰρ τῆς πειθοῦς ἐξῆν ὁ δὲ νοῦς καίτοι εἰ ἀνάγκη ὁ εἰδὼς ἔξει μὲν οὖν, τὴν δὲ δύναμιν τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχει. λόγος γὰρ ψυχῆν ὁ πείσας, ἦν ἔπεισεν, ἠνάγκασε καὶ πῆθεσθαι τοῖς λεγομένοις καὶ συναινέσαι τοῖς ποιουμένοις. ὁ μὲν οὖν πείσας ὡς ἀναγκάσας ἀδικεῖ, ἢ δὲ πεισθεῖσα ὡς ἀναγκασθεῖσα τῶι λόγῳ μάτην ἀκούει κακῶς. (13) ὅτι δ' ἢ πειθῶ προσιοῦσα τῶι λόγῳ καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐτυπώσατο ὅπως ἐβούλετο, χρῆ μαθεῖν πρῶτον μὲν τοὺς τῶν μεταφορολόγων λόγους, οἵτινες δόξαν ἀντὶ δόξης τὴν μὲν ἀφελόμενοι τὴν δ' ἐνεργασάμενοι τὰ ἄπιστα καὶ ἄδηλα φαίνεσθαι τοῖς τῆς δόξης ὄμμασιν ἐποίησαν· δεύτερον δὲ τοὺς ἀναγκάσιους διὰ λόγων ἀγῶνας, ἐν οἷς εἷς λόγος πολὺν ὄχλον ἔτερψε καὶ ἔπεισε τέχνη γραφεῖς, οὐκ ἀληθείαι λεχθεῖς· τρίτον [δὲ] φιλοσόφων λόγων ἀμίλλας, ἐν αἷς δεικνύται καὶ γνώμης τάχος ὡς ἐυμετάβολον ποιοῦν τὴν τῆς δόξης πίστιν. (14) τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ λόγον ἔχει ἢ τε τοῦ λόγου δύναμις πρὸς τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς τάξιν ἢ τε τῶν φαρμάκων τάξιν πρὸς τὴν τῶν σωμάτων φύσιν. ὥσπερ γὰρ τῶν φαρμάκων ἄλλους ἄλλα χυμοὺς ἐκ τοῦ σώματος ἐξάγει, καὶ τὰ μὲν νόσου τὰ δὲ βίου παύει, οὕτω καὶ τῶν λόγων οἱ μὲν ἐλύπησαν, οἱ δὲ ἔτερψαν, οἱ δὲ ἐφόβησαν, οἱ δὲ εἰς θάρσος κατέστησαν τοὺς ἀκούοντας, οἱ δὲ πειθοῖ τινι κακῇ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐφαρμάκευσαν καὶ ἐξεγοήτευσαν. (15) καὶ ὅτι μὲν, εἰ λόγῳ ἐπεισθη, οὐκ ἠδίκησεν ἀλλ' ἠτύχησεν, εἴρηται· τὴν δὲ τετάρτην αἰτίαν τῶι τετάρτῳ λόγῳ διέξομαι. εἰ γὰρ ἔρωτος ἦν ὁ ταῦτα πάντα πράξας, οὐ χαλεπῶς διαφεύξεται τὴν τῆς λεγομένης γεγενῆσθαι ἁμαρτίας αἰτίαν. ἂ γὰρ ὀρώμεν, ἔχει φύσιν οὐχ ἦν ἡμεῖς θέλομεν, ἀλλ' ἦν ἕκαστον ἔτυχε· διὰ δὲ τῆς ὀψεως ἢ ψυχῆ κὰν τοῖς τρόποις τυποῦται. (16) αὐτίκα γὰρ ὅταν πολέμια σώματα [καὶ] πολέμιον ἐπὶ πολεμίας ἀπεργάσσονται, τέρπουσι τὴν ὄψιν· ἢ δὲ τῶν ἀνδριάντων ποιήσις καὶ ἢ τῶν ἀγαλμάτων ἐργασία θέαν ἠδεῖαν παρέσχετο τοῖς ὄμμασιν. οὕτω τὰ μὲν λυπεῖν τὰ δὲ ποθεῖν πέφυκε τὴν ὄψιν. πολλὰ δὲ πολλοῖς πολλῶν ἔρωτα καὶ πόθον ἐνεργάζεται πραγμάτων καὶ σωμάτων. (19) εἰ οὖν τῶι τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου σώματι τὸ τῆς Ἑλένης ὄμμα ἠσθὲν προθυμίαν καὶ ἀμίλλαν ἔρωτος τῇ ψυχῇ παρέδωκε, τί θαυμαστόν; ὅς εἰ μὲν θεὸς [ἂν ἔχει] θεῶν θεῖαν δύναμιν, πῶς ἂν ὁ ἥσσων εἴη τοῦτον ἀπάσασθαι καὶ ἀμύνασθαι δυνατός; εἰ δ' ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπινον νόσημα καὶ ψυχῆς ἀγνόημα, οὐχ ὡς ἁμαρτήματα μεμπτέον ἀλλ' ὡς ἀτύχημα νομιστέον· ἦλθε γὰρ, ὡς ἦλθε, τύχης ἀγρεύμασιν, οὐ γνώμης βουλεύμασι, καὶ ἔρωτος ἀνάγκαις, οὐ τέχνης παρασκευαῖς. (20) πῶς οὖν χρῆ δικαίον ἠγήσασθαι τὸν τῆς Ἑλένης μῶμον, ἦτις εἴτ' ἐρασθεῖσα εἶτε λόγοι πεισθεῖσα εἶτε βίαι ἀρπασθεῖσα εἶτε ὑπὸ θείας ἀνάγκης ἀναγκασθεῖσα ἔπραξεν ἢ ἐπραξε, πάντως διαφεύγει τὴν αἰτίαν; (21) ἀφελὸν τῶι λόγῳ δύσκειαν γυναικῶς, ἐνέμεινα τῶι νόμῳ ὃν ἐθέμην ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ λόγου, ἐπειράθην καταλύσαι μῶμου ἀδικίαν καὶ δόξης ἁμαθίαν, ἐβουλήθην γράψαι τὸν λόγον Ἑλένης μὲν ἐγκώμιον, ἐμὸν δὲ παῖγνιον.