# Ovid's and Ariosto's Abandoned Women

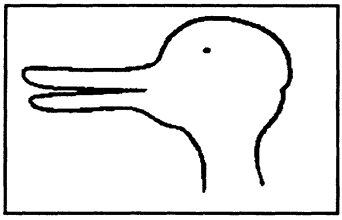
Nancy Ciccone

> Deceiver, did you even hope to hide so harsh a crime, to leave this land of mine without a word? (Mandelbaum trans. 4.41-12)[1]

When Vergil's Dido begins her invective against the departing Aeneas, she enters the western literary tradition as the prima donna of *donne abbandonate*. But unlike many of her predecessors (Homer's Penelope, Euripides's Medea, and Catullus's Ariadne (64) to mention only a few), Vergil's Dido articulates disappointed love at an irreparable moment of tragic self-realization. She carries the weight of historical necessity. And no sooner does Vergil's version reify her than Ovid exploits her (Fyler 3; Anderson 52). Ovid presents a domesticated Dido. He frames her without a context. As others have noted, *Heroides* 7 exemplifies Ovid's reworking of genre and of mythology (Brownlee, "Transgressions" 96). Altogether the *Heroides* reflect an artistic invention that avoids direct confrontation of its models. Yet in that very evasion, *Heroides* 7, especially, interrogates the values of the "heroic" Roman empire and its literary monuments (Brownlee, "Transgressions" 100-1).

In a universe parallel to epic heroic values (Anderson 64), the *Heroides*'s complaint (*queror*) displaces practical reasoning. That is, instead of deciding a course of action as heroes do when they consider what to do, the *Heroides*'s speakers make no decision to change their respective worlds. Unable to rescue themselves, they write. They voice only their own arguments. They fail to alter the course of events already recorded in the broader cultural narratives from which their complaints derive. They write letters, not history. Their very voices sidestep dominant traditions and foster a minority discourse with its own literary heritage.

To varying degrees, Ovid organizes the letters of his *donne abbandonate* to effect a double perspective. On the one hand, the female speaks of her grief in first person, direct discourse. On the other hand, the master artisan formally articulates by means of rhetorical figures and metrical dexterity a literary artifact. As a result, the female speaker's internal emotional state is staged from the external vantage point of artistry separate from a controlling, imperial narrative. One perspective never quite lets go of the other.



Reading Ovid, therefore, entails the same kind of play encountered in Wittgenstein's duck/rabbit (164).[2] On one level, the duck represents the speaker's sincere viewpoint. The rabbit reflects the master artificer who undercuts that sincerity. At another remove, the duck reflects the particular subject of the letter. And the rabbit becomes the literary background within which the speaker's viewpoint is partial, at best. To conceive of both the duck and rabbit simultaneously perhaps defies human capability. But being 'in the know' forever alters the limitation of seeing only a duck or only a rabbit. One contextualizes the other. Ovid plays a game of contextualization and decontextualization, on the one hand, by means of playing matter against manner and, on the other hand, by limiting his speakers to a particular moment in an expansive literary landscape. The game offers yet another angle on Lanham's observation: "Ovid writes poems that have holes in the middle" (59). Whether this hole refers to gender or suicide, Dido's body inscribes her missive.[3] She literalizes Ovid's response to his heritage: his poetic hole subverts and, in doing so, draws attention to a poetic whole.

The topos of the *donna abbandonata* reflects one of Ariosto's many borrowings from Ovid.[4] Ariosto turns not to the domesticated Dido but to Ovid's outrageous depiction of Ariadne in *Heroides* 10 for his portrayal of the abandoned Olimpia in *Orlando Furioso* 10 (18-35). In so doing, he echoes details and techniques that contribute to the poets' amorphous similarities of style, a similarity surprising since they work in such different genres. For Ovid, the epistle contributes to the humor of Ariadne's incredible position. Although all of the *Heroides*'s circumstances test credulity, Ariadne calls attention to her very fictitiousness with the practical question, "What am I to do?" ("quid faciam?" 59). She emphasizes the incongruity of a woman stranded on an uninhabited island who would have the means and inclination to write a letter to the lover who has just betrayed her. She asks a heroic question and further undermines her position by outlining her inability to do anything at all (60-4; Jacobson 217; Verducci 248 ff.). As Verducci notes,

> the fiction of the epistolary form is nowhere else in Ovid's *Heroides* so transparently absurd as in this letter, and Ovid's picture of

> Ariadne's mode of composition is a mercilessly comic attack upon generic proprieties, including those of his own *genus ignotum*. (243)

In short, *Heroides* 10, like Ariadne's famous string, unravels itself.

The influence of *Heroides* 10 on *Orlando Furioso* 10 was recognized early on (Javitch, *Proclaiming* 63). But for the past thirty years or so, scholars have treated Ovid's *Heroides* and Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* in relatively new ways: they've begun to recognize Ovid's jokes and Ariosto's politics. Formerly, scholars focused on Ovid's politics and Ariosto's humor. The topos of the *donna abbandonata* reflects these qualities. That is, Ariadne influences Olimpia beyond the circumstantial. As Javitch has pointed out,

> Ariosto reinstates one of the most characteristic aspects of Ovid's narrative art: its mixture of style and tone, particularly the wit and playfulness which infuse and so often undermine the momentous events described. ("Rescuing Ovid" 94)

For both poets, however, the *donna abbandonata* also drives an interrogation into literary and political decorum and authority.

Ariosto evokes an artistic self-consciousness similar to that in *Heroides* 10 but by different means. Ariosto's duck/rabbit works in a continuous narrative, closer in form to the *Metamorphoses* than to the *Heroides*. The narration switches between first and third person so that the narrator's description of Olimpia, in addition to her own words, instantiates her. Furthermore, unlike Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Ariosto's continuous narrative demands a degree of consistency in character. Olimpia has spoken prior to her abandonment and will face additional dire challenges. Yet the superficial dissimilarities remain just that in part due to Ovid's expertise at manipulating language so that Ariadne's first person narrative might as well be in the third person.

Ovid muddies the grammatical discretion of first and third person speakers by presenting Ariadne as a subject and an object simultaneously (Jacobson 224; Verducci 249). With the same stroke of the pen, he evokes the nearly contradictory impressions of empathy for and distance from her. She is incredibly self-conscious. For example, after realizing that Theseus has gone, she not only beats her palms against her breasts but tears her hair, "all disarrayed as it was from sleep" ("urques erat e somno turbide, rapta coma est," 15-6). Her voyeuristic awareness of her own disarrayed appearance undercuts the passionate feelings that presumably lead to her tearing her hair (Verducci 284-9). Interrogating Catullus 64, Ovid filters her overflowing passion through rational thought and apt comparisons; she even casts herself as a bacchante (47-50), that is, as a devotee of the very god who will rescue

her, at least in the *Ars Amatoria* (1.529 ff.).[5] In other words, Ariadne's first person monologue strikes a pose that creates herself striking a pose.

Referring to Olimpia's ever wind-swept hair, Ariosto disregards its association with bed (22). He emphasizes her seductiveness by other means and relies on different echoes to effect Olimpia's self-consciousness. For example, Ovid's Ariadne climbs up onto a cliff since "her spirit gave her strength" ("vires animus dabat," 27). Olimpia similarly climbs up a cliff "because her spirit gives her strength" ("così la facea l'animo possente," 23.6). In the first example, Ariadne self-consciously rationalizes her own actions. But the narrator seemingly speaks the same phrase in the *Orlando*. He previously describes Olimpia's appearance and evaluates her psychological state, so that the remark seems to derive logically and parenthetically from him rather than from her.[6] With the Ovidian source at hand, however, the remark becomes a translated quotation. Consequently, Olimpia as speaker self-consciously reveals a strength of will obscured by her speech. Not only do Olimpia's self-presentation and the narrator's description create a double-perspective, but the confusion between who's talking collapses the first and the third person distinction of speakers just as occurs in *Heroides* 10.

No matter the speaker, the remark draws attention to the fictional and does so by attempting to defictionalize it.

That is, in both poems, the explanations as to the protagonists' abilities to climb their respective cliffs interrupts the narrative so that it draws attention to itself. It undercuts the fiction by rationalizing it as non-fictional. The poets cast the heroines' actions as if they faced actual practical and physical limitations. They draw attention to mimetic conventions. As Verducci has pointed out in respect to Ariadne: her "ruin" results from a "comic gigantomachia of literary, rhetorical and pictorial proprieties, each in turn exposed as artificial and arbitrary" (253). Likewise, the emphasis in both versions on physical gestures, on repeated calls for their respective lovers (*OF* 22.24-5; *Her.* 21-2, 35-6), suggests a kind of slapstick. The emphasis on the physical undermines *gravitas*. In effect, it conflates the issue of abandonment with that of frustrated eros.

Anguillara's translation of the *Metamorfosi* further supports Ovid's and Ariosto's focus on the *donne abbandonate* as the topos for articulating sexual frustration. Roughly contemporary with Ariosto (1474-1533), Anguillara (1512-70) expands the episode of Ariadne's abandonment from the five lines in the *Metamorphoses* (8.175-9) to thirty-six octaves in

his *Metamorfosi* (8.106-142). *Heroides* 10 and *Furioso* 10 infect it. Anguillara belabors Arianna's lament, and in effect, incorporates into his *Metamorfosi* that which Ovid delegated to the *Heroides*. That is, Ovid reserves inner debates in the *Metamorphoses* for the awakening of eros rather than for the complaint of abandonment. Medea (*Met.* 7.9 ff.) and Myrrah (*Met.* 10.312 ff.), for example, directly discourse on the pangs of love. Ovid emphasizes their psychological struggles. Eros wins, of course; and the outcome, usually disastrous, fades into the next tale of transformation. But like Ariadne, the *Heroides*'s speakers present their cases. Their psychological struggle in the literary form of inner debate belongs elsewhere because the generic decorum of the *Heroides* precludes a decision to act.

Ariosto echoes two of the kinds of inner debates found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Bradamante (33.62-3) and Fiordispina (25.34-7) parrot respectively Byblis (9.453 ff.) and Iphis (9.668 ff.). In respect to the first pair, Byblis dreams of being in her brother's arms. She wakes to the realization that she's in love with him. Bradamante likewise dreams of Ruggiero, but her dream allays her fears. Both women prefer the night of their dreams to the reality of their days; and both call on death, but for totally different reasons (*Met.* 9.403-4; *OF* 33.64). Byblis's dream wakes her to a self-realization that undermines her identity. Bradamante's disappointment upon waking stems not from an illicit love; she grieves but without psychic confusion.

Although Byblis argues that her love derives from Venus, not from lust (9.624-5), passion works upon her just as the Latin elegists (Ovid included) have described it. But Ovid's brutal portrayal of Byblis does not translate to Bradamante because she is not divided against herself. Ariosto's interpolation of the Byblis episode, instead, emphasizes frustrated sexuality in his warrior-maiden. Although both passages covertly address issues concerning the relationship between literature and life, the unsatisfied Bradamante pulls herself together to go on to the next episode. Byblis, forever weeping, becomes a stationary, if inspirational, fountain.

Coming to the Byblis episode in the *Metamorphoses*, Anguillara embellishes it (9.248 ff.). He borrows from Bradamante's lines and Ariosto's tone. As a result, Anguillara's Byblis evokes sympathy because of his overriding emphasis on sexual frustration rather than on incest. In effect, Byblis's lament seems closer to a sonnet by Vittoria Colonna than to the original.

Mistaken sexual identity connects the stories of Iphis and Fiordispina. In the *Orlando*, Fiordispina, falling in love with

Bradamante whom she mistakes for a man, echoes Iphis's lament. In the *Metamorphoses*, Iphis, mistaken for a male and betrothed to a female, prays to Isis to change her sex. Iphis's and Fiordispina's arguments follow three stages: the first appeals to the natural world; the second appeals to legend, particularly to the story of Pasiphae and the bull; and the third recounts the complete impossibility of the situation in terms of Daedalus who, as the greatest craftsman, could yet not effect sex changes. Iphis finally pleas "num te mutabit Ianthe?"; that is, if Daedalus can't change her then perhaps he can change the beloved Ianthe. Whereas Isis transforms Iphis at the last moment so as to enable him to consummate his marriage, Fiordispina's identical plea is realized in the exchange of Bradamante for her look-alike brother.

In both cases, Ovid and Ariosto pit their art against Daedalus, prove him ineffectual, and then proceed to outdo the master craftsman by means of a sex change in the *Metamorphoses* and of a convenient twin in the *Orlando*. Their conclusions, however, differ. Both love relations have "happy" endings. In the *Orlando*, Fiordispina's sexual desire is finally satisfied. But in the *Metamorphoses*, the episode concludes with a votive tablet, inscribed by Iphis to Isis, that emphasizes the ability of language to surpass other arts. The focus shifts. Satisfaction, here, reflects the triumph of Ovid's art over nature and over Daedalus's craftsmanship.

Anguillara, in his turn, interpolates Ariosto's tale of Fiordispina (25.34-7) into the Iphis episode (9.342 ff.). He follows the three points of development in Ovid's and Ariosto's models but excludes the reference to Daedalus. That is, Anguillara avoids Ariosto's and Ovid's interrogation of their own medium. Although having a different relation to the material than Ovid and Ariosto do, Anguillara chooses sentimentality and nostalgia for the *Orlando* instead of closely following the *Metamorphoses* in his rendering of the same episode. Altogether Anguillara consistently avoids those literary techniques producing paradox. He either excludes or downplays any uncomfortable details. He opts instead to emphasize the erotic aspects he finds in the *Orlando* and to metamorphosize Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In effect, he aligns it with medieval romance, which coopted the very debates he belabors.

However differently the three authors realize these poems, Anguillara's "translation" reinforces the association of sexual frustration with women, in general, and with *donne abbandonate*, in particular. In emphasizing the body, Olimpia subverts Ariadne's medieval allegorical representation. Just as the "comedy at the end of the Canto 10 is achieved at the [allegorizer's] expense," so Olimpia's comedy de-

flates other-worldly meanings and does so by emphasizing her physical needs (Javitch, "Rescuing" 98). As Javitch has pointed out in respect to stylistic similarities, Ovid and Ariosto both "violate decorum by emphasizing the normal, banal and often erotic impulses of characters engaged in solemn and larger-than-life exploits" ("Rescuing" 95).

Other similarities between the passages depicting Ariadne and Olimpia include the details of the sunrise (*OF* 10.22; *Her.* 10.17) and of the island landscape (*OF* 10.25; *Her.* 10.25-30), the signals with their garments (*OF* 10.25; *Her.* 10.41), and their lengthy laments addressed to their beds (*OF* 10.27-33; *Her.* 10.55 ff.). Both narratives move from the realization of abandonment to an incredulous panic, and finally to a kind of resignation and regret that lists the costs and problems of their present predicaments. The two passages seem most similar when the women, speaking in the first person, report their fears of wild beasts and of being kidnapped despite their claims of utter isolation (Jacobson 217). Olimpia regrets that she has betrayed her male heritage (31-2). Ariadne expresses the same regret (64 ff). Their self-realizations derive from the same circumstances, and yet their respective cultural inheritances differentiate the two speakers.

Like Ariadne, Olimpia's previous choices resulted in the deaths of her father and brothers. They die because Olimpia insists on keeping her promise to her beloved. She can't marry Arbante in spite of her previous consent because love demands otherwise (9.22 ff). Ostensibly in the name of justice, Orlando takes up her cause. The idealist stance of Olimpia and Orlando harkens to a not-so-distant medieval romance wherein "right" values, often associated with love, motivate right actions. Yet as Peter DeSa Wiggins cogently argues, Olimpia's explanation very likely misrepresents her intentions (217-128). According to Wiggins, Olimpia demonstrates

> a certain ruthless determination to accomplish her will, ruthless to the extent that she was prepared, after the demise of her father and brothers, to sacrifice the lives of all her subjects rather than submit to the marriage with Arbante. (119)

In short, Olimpia pretends to act morally. She pretends to act from an anachronistic, internalized medieval standard in order to appeal to Orlando's idealism, which Ariosto, in turn, undermines in his description of Olimpia's luscious appearance.

Medieval commentaries on Ovid's *Heroides* script Olimpia's self-presentation. They seemingly served a two-fold pedagogical purpose. Not only were these passages paradigmatic Latin for epistolary effectiveness and dialectical argumentation, but they also modeled the kind of

inner debate that comprises practical reasoning. In effect, the list of conflicts and possible solutions result in the act of writing the letter itself. Additionally, the letters were contextualized. That is, a narrative was devised, sometimes inconsistent with classical authority, as to motivation, and that motivation fell under the influence of romance heroes and heroines. The commentators, furthermore, associate the experience of love with either ameliorative or pejorative exemplarity; the writers were accorded either praise or blame.

The claim of a kind of medieval morality out of sync with her time undermines Olimpia's stated motives. Her desires cause deaths that contaminate the rightness of her choice. Olimpia's willfulness echoes that of Ariadne—eros victimizes both of them. They choose to act against father and homeland. The claim Jacobson makes in his interpretation of Ovid's Ariadne fits Olimpia: their authors present them playing at, rather than being the abandoned woman (224). The discontinuity between matter and manner conceals as it reveals the difference between their intentions and claims. In effect, their pleas for justice undermine the justice of their pleas.

Ariosto's subversion of romance parallels that of allegory. It is evidenced stylistically and thematically. In reinventing an Ariadne/Olimpia distinct from Medieval renditions, Ariosto achieves the same kind of "dialogic" discourse that Brownlee finds in Ovid's *Heroides* (*Severed Word* 4). Like the *cancionero*, the *donne abbandonate* present:

> an unanswered expression of lament, and as such, [a representation of] a type of performative inefficacy that is quite alien to romance. In effect, such poetry represents the novelistically rooted discourse of affective failure. (Brownlee, *Severed Word* 6-7)

The description applies to Ariadne and Olimpia simply because of their situations. With the romance over, plot and discourse merge. The category of utterance coincides with that of subject. They speak themselves, and the coincidence distinguishes this topos from others.

Olimpia's and Ariadne's self-betrayals derive precisely from their self-portrayals. Ariadne compares herself to a bacchante, as she wanders with loose hair (47-8) and to a stone, as she sits and gazes out to sea (49-50). Ariosto echoes the similes, not before his protagonist's lament as Ovid does, but as a transition from Olimpia's to Ruggiero's tale. That is, unlike most of the borrowings, the similes are nonsequential. Olimpia too wanders crazed with loose hair and is stunned as a stone (34.7-8). But in mid-canto, Ariosto adds a third element to the extended simile: Olimpia is "just like Hecuba turned to frenzy after

seeing her murdered Polydore" (34.5-6: "qual Ecuba, sia conversa in rabbia,/ vistosi morto Polidoro al fine").

Ariosto's source changes from *Heroides* 10 to *Metamorphoses* 13. After discovering Polydorus' body, Ovid's Hecuba, engulfed by grief, turns to stone: "Like a hard rock, immovable she stood, now held her gaze fixed upon the ground" (8.540-1: " . . . duroque simillima saxo/torpet et adversa figit modo lumina terra"). Shortly thereafter, wrath ("ira") overtakes her (544, 549, 559). She turns mad, wrecking her vengeance on Polymestor until, finally, she metamorphosizes into a dog. Formerly compared to a stone, she now bites at them (567-8). The tragic queen becomes a pathetic mongrel.[7] Her fixedness, her stone-likeness recalls Catullus's as well as Ovid's depiction of Ariadne.

In the *Orlando*, the change in contextual echo shifts the milieu away from the abandoned female and her sexual frustration. Ostensibly, Hecuba's momentary liminality on a shore, without a homeland, without relation, without social status mirrors Olimpia's and Ariadne's situations. But Ovid's Hecuba exemplifies total human devastation: loss of children, homeland, status, dignity and finally, humanity. Juno's pity for Hecuba's undeserving fate merely reaffirms the sense of cosmic and, therefore, somewhat comic injustice (474-5).[8] The connection between the three women seemingly results from Medieval allegorizers. Ariosto inherits an Ariadne who, among other things, stands for friendship unjustly betrayed (*Ovide moralisé* 8.1395 ff.). Her realization of abandonment, then, parallels Hecuba's discovery of Polydorus who had been sent to the safety of trustworthy friends.

Yet by interpolating Hecuba from *Metamorphoses* 13 into his borrowings from *Heroides*'s 10, Ariosto exploits the tragic until it's comic. Equivalent to Ovid's gigantomachia, Hecuba in the same context as Ariadne marks Olimpia's outrageousness as someone beyond the boundaries of decorum—literary and human. In other words, Ariosto plays echo against echo in order to achieve the paradox indicative of an Ovidian effect. In so doing, he enables the very "hole in the middle" that Ovid masters. The echoes contextualize Olimpia and undermine any straightforward reading based on the narrative's superficial claims.

As often occurs in the *Orlando*, the appropriateness of the Hecubean echo emerges once its difference is noted. Olimpia will become the queen Hecuba was.[9] Although Ariosto quotes only the moment Hecuba's last hope disintegrates, not the events leading up to it, Hecuba's previous political victimization and Olimpia's subsequent social exultation lack justice not as a result of cosmic forces, but as a result of working their own wills out in a world where men act. Hecuba

murders Polymester and becomes a dog; Olimpia claims a cad as a husband and becomes a queen. As a result of these interwoven references, Ariosto's duck/rabbit follows the Ovidian model. The duck becomes Olimpia's serious claim of victimization, and the rabbit, reflecting another aspect, reveals her self-deception. At another remove, however, the duck depicts the momentary Olimpia bereft of her context and left at the end of the world. The rabbit then reflects the narrative context wherein she asserts herself and recreates herself to take advantage of the next opportunity the plot offers.

The conflation of Hecuba's "ira" and Olimpia's "rabbia" seemingly politicizes the *donna abbandonata*. But of course it was always that way. Ovid rewrites the sensual voyeurism of Catullus's Ariadne until she becomes a monster. Like Dido, she functions outside of first-century heroic values but not political ones. She has after all indulged herself, sold her father, her brother, her homeland, and in the Ovidian snapshot, herself. Olimpia too indulged herself; her brother and father pay for it with their lives; refusing to comply with the wishes of her people, she betrays her fatherland. They respond to demands different from the heroes of their respective narratives. In effect, the logic seems to be that the women are abandoned because they've abandoned Classical heroic and Renaissance political idealism, the way things ought to work. Worse than that, they put personal before communal desires.

As Jacobson points out in respect to *Heroides* 10, Ovid's "overblown rhetoric and obvious artifice" issues "to some degree" from "Ovid's compulsion to prove superior to Catullus" (220). Ariosto, in turn, challenges Ovid's authority in outrageous parody. He modernizes it so as to fit the upheaval of the early Cinquencento wherein crises invade political institutions as well as humanistic self-perceptions (Ascoli 3-42). No matter the motivation, however, it is the literary models that end up being abandoned in order to be updated. That is, both poets appropriate a rhetoric that exploits and abandons their previous masters (for Ovid, Catullus; for Ariosto, Ovid) in order to establish new mastery, a mastery that magnifies the cracks or crises in their respective political and literary climates.[10] The same claim that Patricia Parker makes for Vergilian echoes in respect to the *Orlando* apply to Catullan echoes in respect to *Heroides* 10 and to Ovidian echoes in respect to *Orlando* 10: all of the echoes

> reveal an awareness of such 'error' [wandering, rereading, and rewriting] as the dynamic of literary history, the way in which poems could be said to challenge the authority, or priority, of earlier poetic models. (41)

Ariosto and Ovid following Catullus, however, literalize this idea: they represent the abandoned women in their stone-likeness as fixed as texts, waiting to be rewritten.

Ariadne and Olimpia ask themselves what to do and find that nothing is to be done. Their complaints articulate the unofficial story. Their stories point to the "hole" in the middle of history and derail the heroic image. Their pleas express the power of words to persuade and move to action and the failure of words to do anything for those lacking an avenue for effective action. As a result, they expose the ineptitude and elitism of practical reasoning. Thus Ovid rewrites Catullus 64 to depict an Ariadne who refuses guilt (Jacobson 225-60); her rhetoric comments on rhetoric, not on Theseus. Ariosto follows suit with an Olimpia absorbed in her own representation.

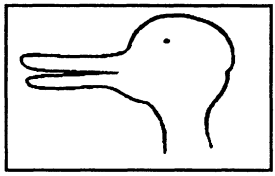
Yet Orlando helps her; Olimpia plays at being Ariadne, and the plot rewards her for it. Ariadne also plays at being Ariadne and is rewarded: her rescue, although left for a different narrative, depends precisely on the self-conscious pose she strikes in *Heroides* 10. Even though Olimpia and Ariadne ultimately fulfill their cultural paradigms, their representations at the moment of abandonment completely subvert ethical categories prescribed for decision making. The events that ameliorate their respective predicaments simply happen. Ariosto and Ovid present by means of the complaints women paralyzed and excluded from choosing their own course of action for even when they do opt for love and act upon it, they give up choice and fall victim to someone else's story.

The *donne abbandonate* come to stand for rhetoric itself, not as a tool in the hands of a particular ideology but in the hands of any one speaker trying to get what he or she wants in a culture professing different values and, therefore, ignoring the speaker's claims. Their complaints encapsulate the personal anecdote that lacks institutional validation. Their stories inadvertently witness that which one knows empirically to be the case but that which has no authoritative voice. The *donna abbandonata* escapes philosophical categories. She, therefore, provides the opportunity, which Ariosto seemingly recognizes in Ovid and Ovid in Catullus, to display the shortcomings of literary conventions as a means for interrogating a politicized world.

## Notes

1. "dissimulare etiam spersti, perfide, tantum/posse nefas tacitusque mea decedere terra?" (Vergil 4.305-6)

2. As derived from Jastrow:



3. Brownlee makes a similar but less literal point: "Writing figures the body in the sense that the sender wishes she could substitute herself for the missive, imagining herself in its stead, at the desired destination, being touched by the beloved" ("Transgressions" 103).

4. I focus on this inheritance not to privilege the influence of Ovid over Vergil in Ariosto's *Orlando* nor the influence of Catullus over other mythographers in Ovid's *Heroides*, but to explore the endurance and translation of the topos from the ancient to the modern world.

5. As Verducci points out, *Heroides* 10 is "Ovid's purest parody." "It ruins Ariadne" (246); for parodic genres, see 253.

6. Although the narrative itself changes little as a result of this distinction, editors follow different formats:
Turchi and Sanguineti: "Olimpia in cima vi salì a gran passo/ (così la facea l'animo possente),"
Rose, trans.: "Olimpia (MIND such vigour did bestow)/ sprang up the frowning crest impetuously,"
Reynolds, trans.: "Olimpia to the very summit goes,/By anguish rendered strong for such a thing,"

7. Schiesari treats Ariosto's representation of Manto (43) as transformation itself and interprets her dog-shape as a domesticated fetish. Schiesari's observations pertain to Canto 10in that Hecuba is domesticated to the *Orlando*. Her story is co-opted in a tone of playfulness (141-2).

8. At another remove, Hecuba's victimization contradicts Ariadne and Olimpia's self-made predicaments. Conversely, the echo enables a heroic Olimpia. She too has lost her family and her homeland, and her only sin seems to be that she "but loved too much" (30, 11.5-8; 31; 32).

9. Ariadne's crown, in turn, is immortalized as Bacchus sets it among the stars (*Met.* 8.175).

10. Relying on Lacanian and feminist interpretations, Schiesari points out the descriptions of heroic war by the masculine speakers and the domestication of that rhetoric attributed to female speakers. Also see W. S. Anderson's argument on Ovid's relation to the heroic values of Ancient Rome.

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