

Aphrodite and helen

[Literature](#), [Mythology](#)



The most notable telling of their similarities is found in Apollodorus' library epitome 3. 5 which ones more tells of the infamous quarrel at Olympus.

For one of these reasons Strife threw an apple as a prize of beauty to be contented for by Hera, Athena and Aphrodite; and Zeus commanded Hermes to lead them to Alexander on Ida in order to be judged by him. And they promised to give Alexander gifts. Hera said that she if she were preferred to all women, she would give him the kingdom of all men; and Athena promised him victory in war, and Aphrodite the hand of Helen. And he decided in favour of Aphrodite; and sailed away to Sparta with ships built by Phereclus.

This story is briefly mentioned in the Iliad under the name of the Judgement of Paris nonetheless it is essential to the narrative. On the contrary, Apollodorus' iteration suggests that Miss Aphrodite and Mrs Helen is already acquainted. Or at least know of each other's existence.

The giving of Helen is something Paris simply cannot not resist since Aphrodite offer way more than just a beautiful young maiden. it seems that the offer of said young maiden goes hand in hand with desire, lust and the like. In short, she does what women does best manipulate men and uses desire as a weapon or at least a means to get their way. In the Iliad, the Judgement is the episode that drives the whole since it is believed to be reason for war.

To tell the truth, Helen seem to often be associated with her divine sister in Homer which leads the audience to believe that she may possess some of Aphrodite's talent for manipulation. This supposed knack for manipulation may imply that she uses the danger of beauty to her advantage. In other

words, she uses it to get what she desires which may be freedom or at least some excitement.

In the beginning of this discussion of Helen fate, one saw that the Trojan elders argue that the man of honour fighting this war could easily be excused because of the prize they could win in the end. The argument of Helen's beauty as a cause of way suggests that she is merely a puppet of Aphrodite instead of being the puppeteer herself.

As a counterargument to this one may say she is a master manipulator by using the tool of allure and thus has had the men in the palm of her hand the whole time. This interpretation of the elders' comment say that she is purely to blame for her own circumstances. And, her association with the mistress of allure herself does not help the case of her being simply a puppet but rather taken on the role as puppeteer as well.

Moreover, this shows her to be a complex character with her own mind and desires. And, in her case she may have followed her desires all the way to Sparta, but she also shows that women are sexual beings as well. One may even go so far as to argue that Helen's ' choice' to go with Paris may be out of vanity rather than desire since he as well as her is described as being quite a stunner. So, who is the truly the vain one? Her vanity shows in other ways as well, for example, in her wish to be immortalised in song.

Many an ancient writer seem to paint Helen as the villain of story, yet there seems to be one who admires her for her decision, namely Sappho. In his

fragment 16 he tells a compelling story about desire colluding with the notion of right and wrong.

Some say an army of horsemen, / some of foot soldiers, some of ships / is the fairest thing on the black earth / but I say it is what one loves / It's very easy to make this clear / to everyone, for Helen / by far surpassing mortals in beauty, / left the best of all husbands and sailed to Troy, / mindful of neither her child nor her dear parents.

Here, one gets the story of Helen running away with her beloved Paris to Sparta. If one does not take the last two lines of the poem into account, one can easily see it as simply a warning against reverting back to our animalistic ways. This interpretation also shines through in Homer's iteration, where both the Trojan elders and the aging king seem to be fine with blaming either the gods or the soldiers for the war rather than.

Thus, the blame is shifted from Helen herself to merely the desire to be with the reincarnation of Aphrodite. Therefore, one can easily claim that desire is the sole cause of war. Yet, it is not only the desire for her, but also glory, honour, fame or even retribution. Hence, every mortal man in the Iliad has a desire to engage in the fighting and this desire eventually leads to the downfall of Troy.

If Sappho is warning humanity about following their desire, even if it leads to abandoning one's responsibilities, will lead to disaster for your loved ones. Then again, what is it Helen truly desires, was it really Paris or something completely different. In Homer's version of events, it does seem like Helen

wishes for something more and Sappho's comparing her desire to military excellence may be accurate.

When the reader first encounter Helen she is working on this elaborate tapestry which exactly glorifies the victories Sappho is referring to in the poem's intro. Additionally, in the Iliad one also hears of Helen wish to be immortalised in song. At times, it seems as if Helen wishes to get the same recognition as her male counterparts, and thus achieving heroic glory. Her need for heroic glory can easily be compared to the achievements Sappho mentions in the beginning.

In book 6 she even tries to convince Hector that one can get something out of war and suffering. If there is any truth to this, she was seeking importance in the same manner as the males surrounding her, namely through the immortalisation of war. Thus, she did not go with Paris because there was any sexual gain but rather because the only way, she could gain glory was by playing the victim of war.

And, by doing so she was immortalised not only in song but in many other media as well. Despite this, she is nothing more than a minor character who will only be remembered through the men who fought the because of her and subsequently the city that fell because of her.

No matter, what Helen's deepest desire may be, Sappho discussion of the relationship between love and war is interesting. This commentary may also be telling of the inner conflict Aphrodite has since she was an ancient war

goddess before taking the title of goddess of love. And, in the time of Homer she was married to Ares the god of war.

When it comes to Helen, Sappho argues that she should be admired for her willingness to follow her heart instead of supposedly stay in a loveless marriage back in Greece. Thus, clearly seeing Helen going willingly to Troy with Paris or at least as an individual driven by desire. Or it could simply be Sappho's complaining about not following her own heart and thus follow in the footsteps of the young maiden who 'launched a thousand ships.'