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Editor-in-chief

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Re-Creating Helen of Troy in H.D.'s Imagist Poetry

Lect . Dr. Salih Abdullah Abdulrahman ∗

Abstract

This research paper studies the re-creation of Helen of Troy in the imagist poetry of Hilda Doolittle (H.D.). Helen of Troy is the most popular mythical character in the history of world literature. She is also the most frequently named character in classical mythology. Her name is associated with beauty, love, war, seduction, destruction, and mystery. She is usually depicted as a silent, but observing, figure, the cause of a fatal war that killed men and destroyed cities. She has not been given a voice to defend herself, and no poet or dramatist ever delve deep into that character to understand her motives, desires, agonies, and sufferings. She has been misunderstood as an object rather than a human being.

Hilda Doolittle, feeling that she is suffering from the same oppression and misunderstanding, re-creates this mythical figure in her poetry from a different point of view. She tries to shed some light on the dark aspects of this figure. She gives Helen a voice to express herself as a beloved, woman, wife, daughter, and mother. H.D. sees Helen as a self-image that helps her search for an identity and re-evaluates the choices of her life. In order to do so, H.D. peruses the Greek mythology thoroughly investigating Helen's life from Sparta to Troy and finally the eidolon Helen in Egypt.

Key words: Helen of Troy, Mythology, H.D.

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One of the best known, most frequently named figures of classical mythology is Helen of Troy, the embodiment of "all that is perfect in woman,"(William Carlos Williams, p.140) the female beauty as the world's desire. The popularity of her myth in this century "rivals that of Hercules and Odysseus" (Stanford, p. 34). Yet seldom does a reference to her myth acknowledge the complexity of her legends, or reveal the extent to which modern

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poets and writers have recreated her figure. In literature from Homer's time to ours, Helen's myths have awakened powerful questions: aesthetic and ethical issues, emotional forces, complexities of the imagination, and fierce social conflicts. Certainly the complications and variations of her myth are too vast to catalogue, but given the generative and symbolic power of her figure in modern literature, it is vital to understand and explore the meanings and implications of Helen and her myths, both in ancient versions and major modern revitalizations of her figure in English.

Myth and psychology have had a long interaction. When studying a mythic figure like Helen, it is especially important to offer elucidation of adherent emotional responses and motivations as well as intellectual analysis of texts and poems. Few poets or readers can approach Helen free from intense feelings about this superlatively beautiful and desirable feminine figure, who is simultaneously human and divine.

Kathleen Raine states that "myth is the truth of the fact, not fact the truth of the myth." (p., 5) That pattern, the truth of those facts most persistently represented by Helen's figure, is among the earliest human feelings. Because myth embraces dream and the mind's dark or confused perceptions, it can reveal areas inaccessible to factual language, beyond the realities of material body and society. These structures that appear where no conscious battle is waged, when disbelief is suspended, are, like the structures of dream, unrepeatable and universal, at once false and true. (Lillian Fader, p. 78) myth signifies an unknowable content by its structure; it means more than its symbolic language. In the myths of Helen, conflicting emotion appears at every angle of the narratives; truth and falsehood can be found on all sides, within each character, as the vision and desire of the teller sway the tale's perspectives.

What is true and what is false has no relevance to the magical transformation inherent in the ritual recreation of a myth. The process is analogous to that of writing poetry itself, for example, W.H. Auden writes "in poetry the rite is verbal; it pays homage by naming." (p. 57) what Auden means is that the rite transforms what it names into an equal of the namer. When a poet uses Helen's name to praise, describe, or condemn a certain woman, object, or idea,

several acts of transformation and identification occur: the poet identifies with the one named as Helen; the one named as Helen is transformed for the community, who adopt her figure as a form of absolute desire, extending Helen's name and significance to the named one, the namer, and even to the seductive story.

This ritual has roots in the infant's psyche. Myth grows from our world not only as we perceive it, but as we love and hate it; as we receive the world before we can choose, distinguish, judge, as we hear it spoken before we can answer. This, in fact, is carried on by Melanie Klein in a study in which she describes the "process of introjection, in which the infant in his phantasy, takes into himself everything which he perceives in the outside world,"(p. 292) through his mouth and the senses and functions of his entire body. Every pleasant stimulus is related to the gratifying breast; every unpleasant one to a "hostile or denying breast."(p. 293) Further, aggressive and erotic feelings focus on the breast as well, producing greedy and destructive fantasies of plunder and revenge.

Klein's theories of introjection and projection help to explain the genesis of the dialectic between beauty and rape, as well as to show how the same figure can be viewed as passive and active, good and evil. Klein adopts Freud's theories of the death instinct to her own research. She theorizes that introjection combats the death instinct, because it takes in life-giving objects (first of all food). "During the infant's first three months of life, the mother's breast provides both the idealized good object taken in by the child, imagined as part of the child, and the frustrating bad object, imagined as withholding and denying the gratification and comfort the child desires." (p. 237) The child projects onto the breast the grateful and positive emotions felt when satisfied, as well as the angry, negative feelings when hunger or greed prevent full satisfaction. Thus, the breast is seen as good or as destructive, as giving or withholding. When the good mother is not present, the child imagines she is lost, injured, or prevented from returning by the bad, envious, greedy mother who wishes to keep her benefits all to herself.

Helen's figure can be read in light of these theories. As the most beautiful woman, she remains a supremely idealized good object. Such idealization, as well as the jealous anger that has its roots in infancy, make it possible for her loss to be imagined as

rape; yet the agency of that rape is ambiguous. She steals herself as much as she is stolen by her lovers. This very absence gives rise to the vision of Helen as evil. Greed for her benefits, beauty, love, sovereignty, further complicates this vision. Greedy for the good object, the mother's nourishing breast, the child's desires to ravish or devour it completely. But fantasies then project this oral greediness onto the breast, and a fear is born that the mother will in turn want to incorporate or destroy the child. So the thousands of dead warriors at Troy seem as if devoured by a selfishly sexual queen. The Trojan Horse provides an image of another idea from Klein, that of the introjected bad object, as the idol pregnant with warriors invades a besieged city. Are Troy and Helen contiguous as victims in this episode, or is she actively calling forth the city's doom?

Myth and psychology have had a long interaction. When studying a mythic figure such as Helen, it is especially important to offer elucidation of adherent emotional responses and motivations as well as an intellectual analysis of poems. Few poets or readers can approach Helen free from intense feelings about this superlatively beautiful and desirable feminine figure, who is simultaneously human and divine.

H.D. uses Helen as a poetic figure, recreating her myth through a net of relations. She recreates her as a woman, poet, daughter, mother, sister, and wife. What H.D. is looking for, in fact, is her self-image as seen in Helen and in order to come to terms with the complexities of her own life, she projected her life on that of Helen, identifying with her and following her story as it resembles her story: both are loved and desired, and both are used and misread by their communities.

Helen appears in various guises throughout H.D.'s works, as the poet searches within herself and her past for a lost or elusive identity, for humanity and immortality. In this personal and spiritual quest, H.D. reevaluates in particular the myths of women and their processes of psychic growth and survival. In her chief classical sources—Homer, Sappho, and Euripides—Helen's figure bears as much unresolved conflict as H.D.'s life did. H.D.'s versions of Helen's myths are among the most detailed and responsive in

modern poetry because of her attempt to integrate and understand the details of her own history. H.D.'s difficult search for this interiorized muse or exteriorized self is documented in *Tribute to Freud* (1956) and *End To Torment* (1979), where the poet associate her mother with an inspirational Helen. Again, the theories of Kristeva offer ideas explaining H.D.'s identification of mother and muse. Although Kristeva cites only male writers, H.D.'s Swinburnian model places her firmly in the list of mother-focused poets.

Through her many years of active poetic activity, H.D. evolved the figure of Helen from a sacrificial maiden, to a symbol of threatened but indestructible beauty, to an adult woman armed with knowledge and occult powers, to a rejuvenated Virgo. A freedom transcending the limitations of sexual roles, family positions, and personal isolation is created by the psychic metamorphoses and journeys of H.D.'s Helen, as myth blends with myth, child with lover, muse with poet, self with beloved. Helen achieves her most moving human form as well as a renewed and deepened divinity by the strength of H.D.'s identification with her figure.

H.D. allows Helen a voice with which to know herself. She has finally made of Helen not an object but a persona, creating one of the most extensive identifications by a modern poet with a single mythical character. This choice of Helen was strongly determined: H.D.'s mother's name was Helen, and people often remarked H.D.'s beauty. "Other poets' appropriation of her as a muse threatened to undermine her vocation; nevertheless, she desired to be a poet herself, experiencing rather than inspiring."(Christodoulides, p. 134) Her themes became not only the danger to beauty presented by the world that perceives, desires, and destroys the beautiful thing, but also the problems of being and accepting beauty, "a curse, a blessing, a responsibility"(H.D. p. 132). In Helen, she develops a complex but congruous character whose self-conception, self-value, and self-motivation make the myth utterly new in meaning while maintaining the detailed structures of its ancient forms. In her early lyrics, Helen is a pale Kore, a scapegoat hated by both warring nations. Later, the symbolic, autobiographical lyrics of *Winter Love* (1972) insist that "there was a Helen before there was a war, but

who remembers her" (p. 5) as if to remove the stain of guilt and return her to a self defined before the world's assessment.

As her mother's given name, Helen is foremost among the mythic names H.D. heard in her childhood. H.D. chose for herself the name of Helen's daughter, Hermione, in her novel dealing with her early family life. Helen Wolle had been an artist in her youth: in the frontispiece of *The Gift* (1982)*,* she stands before an easel holding paintbrushes, above a dedication drawn from Poe: "To Helen / who has / brought me home." The multitalented Helen was not given a chance to develop her "gift", although her brother Francis became a dedicated musician. She became instead the wife of a gifted professor. Several anecdotes illustrate her life, which she spent running the Doolittle household and smoothing her husband's path. She favored H.D.'s brother Gilbert above the other children, and H.D. relives in *Tribute to Freud* her despair at this maternal separation and inaccessibility:

> *If I stay with my brother, become part almost of my brother,*
> *perhaps I can get nearer to <u>her</u>. But one can never get near*
> *enough, or if one gets near, it is because one has measles or*
> *scarlet fever. If one could stay near her always, there would*
> *be no break in consciousness.* (p., 33)

Many word-games surround Helen as the name of the mother in H.D.'s poetry and   prose. The associations are positive and negative, exacting and contradictory: "Helen? Helen, Hellas, Helle, Helios, you are too bright, too fair, you are sitting in the darkened parlor, because you feel the heat, you who are rival to Helios, … you are the sun and the sun is too hot for Mama… we must go further than Helen, than Helle, than Helios, than light, we must go to the darkness" (The Gift, p. 58).

Not bright enough a flame for her poet-daughter, Helen Wolle Doolittle would nevertheless remain at the center of H.D.'s search to resurrect a lost beloved woman.

Helen's name first occurred in H.D.'s work among her versions from Euripides. There, the allusions were the familiar condemnations, rumors of shame and blame for the cause of the war. After H.D.'s frightening war experiences, she began to consider classical myths of women, in poems that give voice to

Eurydice, Kalypso, Demeter, Evadne, Penelope and others. Inevitably, she returned to Helen as analogue for both herself and her muse, becoming a rescuing Demeter (Earth Mother) for a lost beauty that belonged to herself, the text, and the world.

Further, she dramatized classical poets as well, extending the skeletal fragments of Sappho and others. She had always used shorter lyrics, or short lyrics linked into sequences. She preferred the metrical perfections and passionate emotions of Sappho for her classical mythic masks. But later, inspired by Pound's and others' efforts at epic, she too attempted the longer poem. Yet even there, her voice remains essentially private. She writes a kind of personal epic in linked lyric, providing its own community of commentators and critics even as it populates a world with the mythic shadows of H. D.'s personal history.

Following both ancient Greek and Petrarchan conventions, H. D. at first uses only certain elements of the woman's body in description: feet and sandals, white breast, eyes, and garments. One of the early erotic images of woman in her work appears in "Hippolytus Temporizes" (CP, p. 121) a chaste imagined vision of the woman's body as landscape:

> … her bones,
> Under the sand are white,
> As sand which along a beach
> Covers but keeps the print
> Of the crescent shape beneath:
> I thought:
> Beneath cloth and fleece
> So her body lies.

The description here is typical of H. D.'s sense of beauty: hieratic, clear, cinematic, its passionate intensity heightened by the restraint of diction and eminent mortality. "She usually invokes nature imagery: flower names, beaches, mountains, gardens and their fruits, to decorate, describe, or depict the human spirit and form. But a Swinburnian sensibility keeps the imagery from becoming simple realism while the clean poetic line and diction prevents the language from cloying."(Christodoulides, p.34)

Such intense and unusual contrasts embody for H. D. the paradoxes of beauty and emotional ambivalence. She longs to escape a "sheltered garden" for "a new beauty/ in some terrible/ wind tortured place" (CP, P.132). Even the hideous modern cities are capable of lifting a new people "through slow growth/ to a beauty unraveled yet" since in earlier cities "men could not grasp beauty/ beauty was over them/ through them, about them/ no crevice unpacked with the honey" (CP, P. 133). This vision of beauty is certainly divine, but also a hedonic, austere, and ascetic.

Given H.D.'s exceptional vision of beauty, we can expect a most unusual approach to the figure of Helen. For this poet, Helen represents at once an aspect of the self, a power to be created and preserved and uncontrollable phenomenon outside the self, discovered and exploited by others. H. D. opposes the popular idea of beauty as pleasure frozen into an object. Making instead a beauty beyond both sensory pleasure and objective form. She attempted the most difficult accession of a self-conscious spiritual beauty which, although modeled upon the expectations of the men whom she never ceased to need and adore, was at the same time set against their attempts to appropriate and control the women who fulfilled those expectations. Her Helen is a seeker and wanderer like Odysseus, but the landscape of her quest lies behind her problematically beautiful face.

H.D.'s first references to Helen are drawn from her own translation of Euripides' "Iphigenia" (CP, pp. 75-78) at the beginning of the First World War. Euripides draws negative images of Helen. She is either a passive object, "Aphrodite's gift", or her choices, as reported by abandoned husband or outsiders to her drama, are deeply qualified by the speakers. A notable example is the "barbaric finery" of Paris, rich golden ornaments that Agamemnon claims are used to seduce Helen to elope. The same seduction, however, seems to have inspired the Greeks to sack so rich a city. Helen is not present to express herself. In H. D.'s versions, the real action is taken by the goddess's appointed seducer or by the aroused warriors:

> Helen, possessed,
> Followed a stranger

> From the Greek courtyard,
> They would avenge this.

And

> Paris came to Ida.
> He grew to slim height
> Among the silver-hoofed beasts. …
> While his great beasts.
> Cropped the grass,
> The goddesses held the contest
> Which sent him among the Greeks.
> He came before Helen's house.
> He stood on the ivory steps.
> He looked upon Helen and brought
> Desire to the eyes
> That looked back---
> The Greeks have snatched up their spears.
> They have pointed the helms of their ships
> Toward the bulwark of Troy.   (CP, P. 75)

A single dash causes the tale to jump from Helen's glance to the violent retaliation of the Greeks. H. D.'s slant on the story makes us forever uncomfortable with such long-repeated questions as "Was this the face that launched a thousand ships?"

Yet Helen's blame is unavoidable, as H. D. revises Euripides's chorus to predict not only the outcome of the war, but the creation of the myth itself. Although "Helen, child of Zeus/ Will cry aloud for the mate/ She has left in that Phrygian town" (CP, P. 78) she will be held responsible for the actions of avaricious and vengeful men throughout the ages:

> Helen has brought this.
> They will tarnish our bright hair.
> They will take us as captives
> For Helen—born of Zeus
> When he sought Leda with bird-wing
> And touched her with bird-throat--
> If men speak truth.   (CP, p. 79)

The chorus of Chalkian women, in H.D.'s version, wish not that their children may be spared the pain of singing songs of exile and slavery, but that they might never "fashion such a tale" blaming Helen as the Phrygians will do.

   In her poem "Helen", one of the best known of H. D.'s imagist poems, the poem appears in her collection *Heliodora* in 1924, H. D. moves to a still more dramatic depiction of her victimization. Helen here is depicted as the object of hatred and despise of the Greeks to the extent that she is being hated not only by the people of Greece, but even the land and everything on it:

       All Greece hates
       The still eyes in the white face,
       The luster as of olives
       Where she stands
       And the white hands.   (ll. 1-5)

This Helen is a sacrificial victim, treelike in her silence and appearance, confronting alone all the hatred of Greece and its representatives. Here, also, Helen is described as white, beauty despised by Greece, but probably guilt-free, at least for H. D. for although she is the destination of their hatred, but still she is the victim of a fate she was not aware of. The poem concludes with the idea of sacrifice as the only way Greece may love Helen:

       Greece sees unmoved,
       God's daughter, born of love,
       The beauty of cool feet
       And slenderest knees,
       Could love indeed the maid,
       Only if she were laid,
       White ash amid funeral cypresses.   (ll. 6-
13)

Greece's hatred, then, can only be removed once the sacrifice is accomplished. There can be no rescue; Helen's sacrifice is inevitable, brought on by the very beauty of the victim. But beauty is not to be destroyed this way. As in the myth of Helen of Tyre, an eternal rebirth, a decanting from vessel to vessel, will preserve

beauty on earth. H.D. had dealt with this theme in earlier poems, in particular, "The Tribute" from her second collection *The God* (1917), in which she describes the sacrifice of beauty in earth:

> Could beauty be done to death,
> They had struck her dead,
> In ages and ages past,
> Could beauty be withered from earth,
> They had cast her forth,
> Root and stalk,
> Scattered and flailed.   (ll. 1-7)

One of the most important poems in which H. D. re-creates the figure of Helen is her most ambitious and extended poem Helen in Egypt. This poem was written from 1952 to 1956 and was not published until 1961. It reflects many contemporary poetic extensions of classical myths and heroes. But its terrain is unusual, since H.D. makes no attempt to situate Helen in modern time; instead the modern woman enters the character's timelessness. Helen in Egypt is a complex poem, intimately related to H.D.'s lifelong concerns: the woman as poet, love and loss, the self-reclaimed through love and poetry. H.D.'s characterization of her heroine is true revolutionary; she becomes simultaneously a symbol or archetype, and a self-conscious, verbal, active, and often solitary woman. At the same time, H.D. preserves and develops resonant ancient aspects of Helen's myths: like the Egyptian Helen and the eidolon, "she is both phantom and reality"(p. 3) at once, she is metatextual, weaving her own story like the Iliad's Helen, like Helen of Tyre, she is lover, mother, and daughter of the men she loves.

Helen's activities in Helen in Egypt reflect H.D.'s continuous self-evaluations through psychological and occult disciplines. Like H.D., Helen is the poet creating a poem, creating herself. The identification of mother and daughter extends into many of the classical associations: Helen becomes Thetis, mother of Achilles; with Achilles she becomes the mother of her own lover Paris; she becomes Aphrodite, the demonic spirit she chases yet obeys. Moreover, Helen, continually, at every turn and with each new encounter, becomes H.D. her author.

Helen in Egypt invites its readers to move with the decorous step of a measured dance; or, to come closer to H.D.'s vision, to enter an ancient temple, a precinct set out with fragmented but regular patterns, in which voices and ancient signs still resonate. Discovering the immortality of her story, Helen examines mystic hieroglyphs on the temple's walls (p. 66):

> So the pictures will never fade,
> While one neophyte is left
> To wonder again at the boat,
> To relate the graven line
> To a fact, graven in memory.

H.D. preserves the memory of her youthful beauty and power, assures herself of her own immortality, and conquers her threatened mortal self, by creating a Helen whose voice and history are her own, a twentieth century woman in war and love.

Helen in Egypt is a modern poetic sequence carefully arranged into books of eight poems each, and the books are divided into three sections: seven make up the first movement, Pallinode; seven make up Leuke; and six, with a final italicized lyric, comprise Eidolon. The 161 lyrics are composed of three-line stanzas that pay homage to the three-lined fragment of Stesichorus' Palinode. The lyrics are spoken by one or more voices, with Helen's voice predominant. Speakers repeat or paraphrase themselves and one another, returning to haunting themes and images – a burning star or brazier, a wheel of stars, a ghost-ship or caravel, the figurehead or idol of a goddess, Helen's veil glimpsed from the ramparts of Troy. Such recurrence itself is a larger theme of the work, as if the echoes were a promise of immortality.

H.D. begins Helen in Egypt with her own Pallinode, a series of deep mysteries. The heroine is in Egypt, the realm of life-in-death, in a temple dedicated to Ammon-Zeus, alphaomega, beginning and end. "Here there is peace/ for Helena, Helen hated of all Greece" (p.2). It is pictured as a dreamlike otherworld, an afterlife that is also another chance to live. Helen's first speech equates the armies of Troy and Greece with the ghostly Eidolon, and both with her

presumably fleshly self. The fall of Troy acquires a biblical overtone: (pp. 1-2)

>Do not despair, the hosts
>Surging beneath the walls,
>(no more than I) are ghosts;
>Do not bewail the Fall,
>The scene is empty and I am alone,
>Yet in this Amen-temple,
>I hear their voices,
>There is no veil between us, …
>Amen (or Zeus we call him)
>Brought me here;
>Fear nothing of the future or the past.

When Achilles arrives on her shore, he is limping, his epic glory dead, but his mortal life just beginning. He does not recognize his mother or Helen and almost killed them in vengeful anger. But she names Thetis again and saves herself, as his murderous attack turns into lovemaking. Everything seems to be ruined around her and in order to understand this, she must read the writings on the walls: writings that is her story, that is herself. She must recognize her identity with this powerful hidden goddess as well as with the sacrificed daughters Iphigenia and Polyxena. She must learn the extent and limitation of her power in order to break the cycle of male as well as of female sacrifice. Although she can claim all the fallen soldiers at Troy as her own, "the thousand and one, mine" if, like Achilles she will "shed her glory", she will find mortality, duality, multiplicity, and so a magical humanity.

   In the second book, Leuke, Thetis, Achilles' mother, calls Helen to "come home" to these secretes of power and identity. To do so she must relive her history: "the dream is over. Remembrance is taking her place." So she is transported to the "eternal white island" Leuke. H.D. revises classical myth by situating a resurrected Paris on Leuke, where precedent had placed Helen and Achilles, immortal and wed, with their child Euphorion. But that marriage was in after-time, and Helen is reliving a previous life:

>*Helen had lived here before. … she would re-assess that experience. It is true that love 'let fly the dart' that had send*

> *Achilles to her, but it was Paris who was the agent, medium*
> *and intermediary of love and of Troy's great patron, Apollo,*
> *the god of song.* (p. 23)

Helen's return to Paris is is simultaneously a return to the memory of Troy's destruction. Although he admits that "the harpers/ never touched their strings/ to name Helena and death", he insists that she did indeed die in Troy, at Achilles' hands and by her own wish:

> I am the first in all history
> To say she died, died, died
> When the Walls fell …
> You drew Achilles to Egypt;
> I watched you upon the ramparts, (P. 30)
> …
> You courted annihilation,
> But he could not vanquish you,
> Nor could Helen destroy Helen,
> You say you did not die on the stairs,
> That the love of Achilles sustained you;
> I say he never loved you. (P. 46)

Unwilling to believe Paris, Helen leaves him and finds her oldest lover Theseus, the "god-father" based on Freud. Freud-Theseus becomes both father and mother to Helen; he provides a haven which is yet full of sexual power. Theseus the magician is a twin of the fatal hero Achilles; he assists Helen by giving her a balance in the paradoxes of love and death that permits her to accept ambivalence and contradiction as natural. "As day, night, / as wrong, right, / as dark, light".

Helen's power is that of a muse, the power of music and birth. But the same power proved to be fatal to Achilles, who unconsciously identified his mother Thetis in Helen, as a power other than Helen's legendary beauty. It was in the instant of this recognition that Achilles, Paris and Helen met their doom in troy. "She realizes the 'death' of Achilles and his 'ecstasy of desolation, a desire to return to the old thunder and roar of the sea'" (P. 255)

H.D.'s Helen is as rich as Thetis in her ability to alter and discard identities. She changes from transcendental dreamer, to

intellectually inspired figure, to a woman "numb with a memory, thoughts too deep to remember / that break through the legend/ the fame of Achilles,/ the beauty of Helen" (p. 258). Yet H.D. never resolves her many conflicts between love and passion, between Troy and Greece as holy spirit and profane flesh, and conversely as marriage and artistic freedom, the conflicts are ultimately as irreconcilable as the myths of Helen herself. At the conclusion of her epic they remain open questions addressed to a power beyond the human or mythologized self: "one greater than Helen must answer" (p. 303).

H.D. manages, throughout her poetic journey, to come to terms with herself, to realize the conflicts and confusions about her life as a poet, woman, and beloved. She manages to do so by re-creating a mythical figure that she believes most resembles her. Helen of Troy is one of the most popular characters in Greek mythology. Her name is generally associated with beauty, seduction, love, and destruction. But she is more than a character for H.D., she is her fate and destiny. Believing that, like Helen, she is misunderstood, unappreciated, and deceived by her community and its members, H.D. makes herself a voice for self-expression and for self-identification as much as she makes Helen. Helen of Troy becomes the self-image of H.D. through her she can find her identity as a poet, woman, daughter, and beloved and through her also she comes to realize that the world cannot be fair to everyone.

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صياغة جديدة لهيلين طروادة في الشعر الصوري للشاعرة أج. دي

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المستخلص

يركز هذا البحث على دراسة الصياغة الجديدة لهيلين طروادة في الشعر الصوري للشاعرة هيلدا دوليتل (اج. دي.)، وتعدّ هيلين طروادة من أكثر الشخصيات الأُسطورية شعبية في تاريخ الأَدب العالمي، وهي من أكثر الشخصيات ذكرًا في علم الأَساطير القديمة، ويرتبط اسمها مع مفاهيم الجمال، والحب، والحرب، والإغواء، والدمار، والغموض، وتصور عادة بوصفها شخصية صامتة ولكنها مراقبة لمحيطها، وهي المسبب الرئيس لحرب ضروس فتكت بالرجال ودمرت المدن. ولم يكن لهيلين صوت تدافع به عن نفسها، ولم يعمد أي شاعر أو كاتب مسرحي على سبر أغوار هذه الشخصية للوقوف على دوافعها وغرائزها وآلامها ومعاناتها إلى الحد الذي اعتبرت فيه شيء اكثر من كونها إنسانة.

وأمّا هيلدا دوليتل ولشعورها أنَّها تعاني من الظلم والإهمال عينه، فقد أعادت صياغة هذه الشخصية الأُسطورية في شعرها ولكن من منظور مختلف، وحاولت الشاعرة أن تسلط الضوء على الجوانب الغامضة لهذه الشخصية. وأعطتها صوتًا تعبر به عن نفسها كعشيقة، وامرأة ، وزوجة، وابنة وأم. وتنظر الشاعرة إلى هيلين على أنَّها صورة من نفسها تحاول من خلالها أن تجد هويتها وتعيد تقييم قراراتها المصيرية. ومن أجل ذلك، قامت الشاعرة بدراسة الأَساطير الإغريقية باحثة عن حياة هيلين من أسبارطة إلى طروادة وأخيرًا إلى هيلين في مصر .

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