Virginia Woolf’s “Greek Notebook” (VS Greek and Latin Studies)
An Annotated Transcription

Theodore Koulouris

Introduction

The following is an annotated transcription of Virginia Woolf’s “Greek Notebook.” I first heard about this manuscript from Angeliki Spiropoulou sometime in the late 1990s, just before I commenced my DPhil research on Woolf and the Greeks at the University of Sussex. Spiropoulou, who was then working on “On Not Knowing Greek” (1925) for an essay exploring Woolf’s critique of authority, told me that there was this “Greek Notebook” in the University library, which contained Woolf’s analyses and translations of several Greek texts. It was then that I decided to capitalize on this rare opportunity and transcribe the notebook for my own work. There was a moment of surprise when I entered “Virginia Woolf’s Greek Notebook” in the library catalogue because the search yielded no results. Surprise turned into confusion and confusion into embarrassment when I asked one of the librarians for the manuscript. Alas, it seemed that the so-called “Greek Notebook” did not exist. “VS, Greek and Latin Studies,” as the “Greek Notebook” is formally known, is one of Virginia Woolf’s reading notebooks. It contains her notes on a number of ancient Greek and Latin texts that she read between 1907 and 1909 (see table of contents below). Until 2013, the manuscript, which forms part of the Monks House Papers, was housed in the Manuscripts Section of the University of Sussex Library. In 2013, most of the Sussex Library special collections were moved to The Keep, a new, state of the art center for archives—a few minutes’ walk from the Sussex University campus. Oblivious at the time to the benign yet rather violent appropriation I was exerting on a document whose author had died sixty-odd years earlier, I kept referring to the manuscript as the “Greek Notebook” despite the appearance in it of Juvenal and Virgil. The purpose of this transcription

1 Angeliki Spiropoulou, “On Not Knowing Greek:’ Virginia Woolf’s Spatial Critique of Authority,” Interdisciplinary Literary Studies, 4.1, Fall 2002, pp. 1-19. Apart from Greek, this notebook contains Woolf’s commentary on three of Juvenal’s Satires and on Virgil’s Georgic IV. Both works, nevertheless, demonstrate an interest in Greek mythology (Virgil) and an interest in the general socio-cultural influence of Greece (Juvenal, Satire VI).
2 The new reference number of this manuscript at The Keep is SxMS-18/A/21.
3 See http://www.thekeep.info/about_us/
is to provide scholars and students of Woolf’s work with a glimpse of, and an insight into, her early engagement with Greek and Latin letters. The first iteration of this transcription was produced during the course of my DPhil research and was appended to my thesis, “Virginia Woolf: Hellenism, Greekness and Loss” (Sussex, 2005). The new, complete transcription will constitute an invaluable resource not only for scholars working on Woolf and the classics, but also for scholars working in the following areas: her intellectual and literary influences at large; the development of her early feminist thinking and the conditions of women’s higher education in Victorian and post-Victorian Britain; Woolf’s narrative style and her modernist textual aesthetics; her relationship with western philosophy and intellectual history; the influences of Greece and Rome on modernism and British letters in general; and, of course, it would be of great help to scholars working on Woolf as a (not so common) reader; for it is an indubitable fact that in this manuscript the reader will not encounter Virginia Woolf, the towering figure of British modernism, but Virginia Stephen, a young female reader of texts at the threshold of her career as a woman of letters.

The “Greek Notebook” (GN), then, is a quarter-leather reading notebook, which bears a marbled hard cover on the front and a soft cover on the back. It is 7 inches wide and 8.7 inches long. On the inside of the front cover, on the top-left hand side, it bears a label which reads “Parkins & Gotto, Oxford Street, London, Wholesale & Retail.” The document bears covering notes by Quentin Bell, Woolf’s nephew, and by his wife, Anne Olivier Bell; also, it contains a small note by Leonard Woolf written on the back of a loose calendar page dated “Sept. 15 1955”; under the date, this page also contains a quotation from John Keats: “I am certain of nothing but of the holiness of the heart’s affection, and the truth of imagination.” The notes by the aforementioned individuals do not constitute part of the notebook itself, but of the packaging when the manuscript—one of the many that comprise the Monks House Papers—was passed to the University of Sussex.

---

4 Parkins and Gotto established a high quality retail outlet at 2 Hanway Street, Oxford Street, in the 1840s. See http://www.hamptonantiques.co.uk/index.pl?id=2900

5 The whole quotation reads, “I am certain of nothing but of the holiness of the Heart’s affections, and the truth of Imagination. What the Imagination seizes as Beauty must be Truth - whether it existed before or not, - for I have the same idea of all our passions as of Love: they are all, in their sublime, creative of essential Beauty” (From a letter to Benjamin Bailey, 22 November 1817). H. Buxton Forman, ed, The Complete Works of John Keats, Vol IV, Glasgow: Gowars & Gray, 1901, 46).

6 Fiona Courage (Sussex University /The Keep) informs me that the collection came to Sussex via the artist Trekkie Parsons (1902-1995), who became Leonard Woolf’s companion after Virginia’s death in 1941. Upon Leonard’s death in 1969, the house and its contents were left to Parsons who in turn presented everything to the University of Sussex. In time, the house was passed to the National Trust, while the papers formed part of the Sussex University Library’s Special Collections.
Woolf’s handwriting in the GN is elegant and free-flowing; it bears witness to her intellectual genealogy and evinces her ancestors’ special relationship with the act of writing. To be sure, Woolf was very serious about all aspects of writing. In another notebook, she writes:

This book has now got to be a kind of testing ground, where I come to test my new pens. I have made the most heroic resolution to change my ideas of calligraphy in conformance with those of my family, which are more generally accepted by the world as the correct ones. (PA 416)

As with the Diary, Woolf prefers to write by means of a dipping-pen and ink. We know that because there are ink-stains on the verso of almost every page of the manuscript. Whenever she runs out of ink or there is a problem—say, with a defective pen—she resorts to using a soft pencil. The table of contents is all written in black ink with a neat hand. Pages 1-10 are numbered in blue ink—pages 8-10 are blank, but pre-numbered. Pages 11-84 are numbered in blue ink—pages 76-84 are completely blank but for page 79, which contains a short note. Page 1 and up until the first half of page 15 are written in black ink; after that, and up until page 21, Woolf is writing in pencil. The first four lines of the second paragraph on page 15 are written in pencil, but written over again in somewhat faint ink, only for Woolf to resume in pencil. When it comes to dating, the entries in the GN are simple and read thus: the first entry, Juvenal’s Satires, is dated “Dec. 1st 1907.” The Odyssey starts “(Feb. 27th [1908])” and finishes “15th May [1908].” Then, A.W. Verrall’s introduction to Ion and Woolf’s own commentary on the play are dated “May 18th [1908],” and p. 50 suggests she finished on “5th June [1908].” The Symposium finishes on 15th July [1908], whereas Virgil’s Georgic IV is dated “28th July [1908].” Ajax begins “Dec 7th [1908],” while The Frogs “Jan. 11th: [1909].” Lastly, Plato’s Phaedrus is dated “25th May [1909].”

Woolf has a very particular way of writing; for instance, her diaries and letters are full of abbreviations, nicknames, euphemisms and other idiosyncrasies, all of which coalesce to make the text decidedly Woolfian. Luckily, similar idiosyncrasies are present in the GN, albeit in a different way. For instance, she tends not to write Greek names in their entirety; she would write “Odysseus” or “Socrates” the first time, but the second and subsequent times she would just write “O” or “So.” However, this tendency is not a standard practice. When it comes to the Symposium for instance, there are a few Greek names such as Aristodemous or Alcibiades—names definitely more complex to the non-Greek eye and ear—which she renders in full. What I can say with certainty is that Woolf is decidedly not consistent in her writing in the GN. Her spelling is good throughout.

The text itself is very intriguing. The reader may notice that she is vacillating between the ancient text and her mother-tongue; between her own attempts at
translation and whatever official translations she might have been using; between the *logos* of the original text and the images created in her head; between the reality of Greek as a language, an intellectual heritage and a culture, and the reality instilled in her by external determinants such as the role of Greek in Victorian and Edwardian Britain; between the “glory that was Greece” in British Victorian and Edwardian imagination and the reality—that is, the ramshackle state of Greece in the 1910s, a reality that Woolf herself experienced during her first trip there in 1906, a year before commencing work in the GN. All this had, to a certain extent, tempered her ability to absorb and render such texts with the objectivity that a strictly scholarly approach in the 1910s would require—and I, for one, am most thankful for that. The commentary she produced, therefore, is neither a strictly philological approach nor a simple, amateurish play at “serious” literature. It is an honest production, a serious, painstaking rendering of several canonical texts that she, I gather, considered central to structuring a grounded life in literature. As we shall see, her text evinces a number of emotions, easily perceived by the reader, emotions generated through identification, alienation, catharsis and mental as well as psychical elevation. This is a central property of the GN. In my view, the aforementioned vacillation gives rise to anomalous syntax and, to a certain extent, grammatical inconsistency. Sometimes she seems to be carried away by the syntax of the original text to the extent that she produces irregular sentence patterns—a form of *glossolalia*, whose constitutive elements are separated only by an ampersand or a dash, thereby preventing the reader from clearly distinguishing, as Olivier Bell remarks, “whether a single mark made at speed is intended as a comma, a full stop, or a dash; or [whether] two marks as a colon or a semi-colon” (*D1 xii*).

Indeed, the element that most hampered my approach was Woolf’s handwriting which, at times, makes the text illegible; scores of colleagues who have also worked in the archives would attest to the veracity of this statement. Mindful of the speed of her writing, it is surprising that she has not crossed out many words or sentences. That said, whenever she has crossed out something I am providing, if possible, both the abandoned and the sustained version. Generally, I have promoted the special dynamic of this notebook by aiming at maintaining Woolf’s esoteric approach to these texts. By esoteric, I mean her insistence on probing deeply into the text whilst seeming to be dismissive; forgetful; at times, even reductive. Another problem I had to cope with whilst working on this text was an insurmountable (at the beginning) desire to draw parallels between the manuscript and Woolf’s life and work. Of course, one could argue that this is the goal of all archival research. However, due to the fact that the GN is hardly an established text in Woolf studies, I initially approached it with certain preconceptions generated by my own reading of other texts, either by or on Woolf. For instance, while I was transcribing the first passages of her commentary on the *Odyssey*, I found myself wondering why Woolf had chosen not to comment on passages that I, as a student of Woolf’s work,
thought that she would have felt compelled to do so. To give an example, keeping in mind Woolf’s lifelong struggle against patriarchy, I found her skipping Calypso’s speech against the Gods rather peculiar.7 In other words, I was pre-empting the manuscript, a text written between 1907 and 1909, of all its potential because I wanted to discover qualities, both personal and textual, that Woolf developed, and became famous for, later on in life. It was not until I succeeded in ridding my approach of all spasmodic glances at her whole life and work that I discovered the wonderfully charming as well as potentially powerful interventions that this manuscript could make in Woolf studies.

Nonetheless, there are a few points that warrant a degree of scrutiny. We may ask, for instance, to what extent did her readings in this notebook influence her own creative work? Also, why did she choose to comment on Juvenal’s Satires over, for instance, a text by Aeschylus? In addition, why did she read texts such as the Symposium when it is certain that the brotherhood of aristocratic, intellectual men glorified by Plato as the most pertinent means towards the crystallization of the “ideal” form of love, would only serve to remind her that she was, at least between 1907 and 1909, a female amateur in a society of men? Before approaching these questions, I should say that Woolf started Greek lessons with Dr. George Warr in the late 1890s.8 By her own admission, Greek was her “daily bread and a keen delight” (L2 35); she found, she adds, that to her “immense pride” she really enjoyed, not only admired, Sophocles (L2 42-43). Greek constituted her intellectual mainstay during the “seven unhappy years” between 1897, when her half-sister Stella Duckworth died, and 1904, when Leslie Stephen died and the Stephen children moved to Gordon Square, Bloomsbury. However, although Woolf generally

7 See Odyssey, V, 129-130.
8 Woolf’s relationship with university education is a much-debated issue and cannot be analysed in any substantial way here. In my Hellenism and Loss in the Work of Virginia Woolf (Ashgate, 2011), I followed received knowledge and worked on the understanding that Woolf had not received any formal higher education. However, the extraordinary revelations by Anna Snaith and Christine Kenyon Jones (2010) suggest that not only was Woolf’s study at King’s College extended, but that it “brought her in direct contact with some of the early reformers of women’s higher education” (Kenyon Jones and Snaith, 1-2). Though it was unfortunate that my book was in press when this very important study was published, Kenyon Jones and Snaith acknowledge that it is very curious indeed that Woolf herself did not draw on her own university experience (ibid., 40). If I were to hazard a guess as to why this was the case, I would say that her silence does not suggest lack of candor, but rather a committed socio-political stance against an educational asymmetry that militated against women. To be sure, and no matter how serious, noble and innovative women’s higher education was in post-1860s ‘Ladies’ Departments,’ it was not recognized as formal—in other words, it did not lead to a degree. Therefore, for the purposes of this introduction, I have maintained the general tenor of my original approach with this qualification: although Woolf did go to university, her understanding of her experience at King’s College was that that it was “informal.”
enjoyed all her readings, it was predominantly her engagement with Greek that, in my view, made her realize the gendered asymmetry between men and women of letters. Leaving aside incidents such as the one involving George Duckworth, Lady Carnarvon, Mrs. Popham of Littlecote and an eighteen-year-old Woolf lecturing them on Platonic values (MOB 174), Woolf found out very early that the study of Greek was a man’s business, a business to which only a select few were invited.

Despite her fascination with Greek, Woolf begins this notebook with Juvenal’s Satires. She translates the first lines of the first satire freely: whereas Juvenal writes “semp er ego auditor tantium” (must I always be the listener?), Woolf translates “He writes—why not I too?” She clearly marks, therefore, her position against the time-honored British philological tradition: for her, neither the text nor the “truths” it contains are sacred any longer. More importantly, though, the choice of words, “He writes—why not I too,” evinces an overflowing desire to partake of a cultural heritage but, at the same time, to exercise her intellectual right to intervene on that heritage with a view to building a personal textual aesthetics. I should note here that she does not translate “They write” or “Everybody writes”; she rather boldly declares “He [a man] writes—why not I [a woman] too,” thereby explicitly gendering the asymmetry of the right to write. I do not read the above as a mere complaint, for that would indicate passivity and submission. Rather, I read it as a serious indictment of British classical education which, still in the early twentieth century, seemed to exist for the exclusive benefit of (aristocratic) men. Be that as it may, and since neither I nor Brenda Silver (in RN) are sure which edition of the Satires Woolf was using, it is really remarkable that she produced such a lengthy summary given Juvenal’s biting social commentary and multiple references to his contemporaries (especially in Satire III). It is also of interest that she reserved her most sustained commentary for Satire III—Juvenal’s most caustic yet pretty xenophobic indictment of Roman reality in the first century AD—and Satire VI—on the surface, probably one of the most overtly misogynistic literary works of classical antiquity. This is surprising especially if we keep in mind how quick Woolf was to indict Homer’s treatment of Penelope in the Odyssey.

By far, Woolf’s most sustained engagement in this manuscript is with Homer’s text. One could argue that this is due to the length of the text itself, but, interestingly, Homer’s narrative devices have not gone unnoticed by Woolf. For instance, the ways in which Homer breaks up the narrative in order to intensify, as and when

---


10 Susanna H. Braund argues that in contrast with earlier works—those of Stobaeus or Semonides of Amorgos—Satire VI maintains a rather favorable view of women; see “Juvenal—Misogynist or Misogamist?” The Journal of Roman Studies, 82, 1992, pp.72-73.

11 Whilst reading Book XVI of the Odyssey, she appears angered by the way in which Penelope is perennially depicted as suspicious just because she is a woman: “They [men] treat her with suspicion always; the blameless woman!” (GN 29).
needed, Odysseus’ story, are singled out by Woolf and commented upon: “[t]his,” she writes in the GN, “seems to me a most ingenious device for you could not have all the story at once, but broken in pieces like this it is more audible; & made more intense by the feeling of the audience”(GN 23). Further, in her short story “The Journal of Mistress Joan Martyn” (CSF 33-62), written in 1906—a year before she commenced work on the GN—there is a willful resurrection of Woolf’s Homeric readings of the 1890s.\(^\text{12}\) By interweaving a story (Miss Rosamond Merridew, the female investigator of old English manuscripts) within a second story (Rosamond Merridew visiting Mr. Martyn whose ancestress’s journal she sets out to review), and from there, the second story within a third (the actual journal of Joan Martyn), Woolf echoes a multi-layered, Homeric narrative which Erich Auerbach discusses at length in “Odysseus’ Scar” (Auerbach 3-23). Homer’s resonance does not stop there. In reviewing the journal, Miss Merridew discovers that Joan Martyn has been reading the story of Helen and of “the fair town of Troy” and, underscoring the importance of the text, she remarks

… for though we none of us know where those places are, we see very well what they must have been like; and we can weep for the sufferings of the soldiers, and picture to ourselves the stately woman herself, who must have been, I think, something like my mother … “It must have been in Cornwall,” said Sir John, “where King Arthur lived with his knights.” (CSF 46-47)

Furthermore, showing that she is entirely aware of the ways in which the Homeric epics survived before being committed to writing, Woolf employs the figure of the roaming bard, Richard, who, in a veritably Homeric fashion, roams England selling his books and telling stories, and who, subsequently, is cordially invited to dinner at Mistress Joan Martyn’s house:

My daughter tells me Sir that you come from foreign parts, and can sing. We are but country people: and therefore I fear very little acquainted with the tales of other parts. But we are ready to listen. Sing us something of your land; and then, if you will, you shall sit down to meat with us, and we will gladly hear news of the country. (CSF 55)

If we juxtapose Woolf’s text with Homer’s own depiction of Odysseus in Alcinous’ palace in which the minstrel, Demodocus, sings of the story of Troy leading to

\(^{12}\) See Susan M. Squier and Louise A. DeSalvo, “Virginia Woolf’s ‘The Journal of Mistress Joan Martyn’,” Twentieth Century Literature, 25 (3/4), 1979, pp. 237-269. Woolf first heard about Homer from Thoby (MOB 125). In M. G. Holleyman’s catalogue of the books Woolf inherited from her father, there are three books on Homer, including the Odyssey in two volumes, and both of Homer’s epics in Greek (see Koulouris 42).
Odysseus’ revealing his identity and the subsequent freeing-up of the narrative towards his eventual return to Ithaca (*Odyssey*, XIII), we may conclude that Homer’s influence on Woolf’s early work was of tremendous importance; not only did it provide Woolf’s early writing with fruitful parallel narrative lines—Richard, the bard in “Joan Martyn,” Demodocus in the *Odyssey*—but also because it highlighted the importance of narrative structure and story-telling.

The *Symposium*, one of Plato’s most famous dialogues, was also central to the development of Woolf’s thinking in the first decade of the twentieth century. Leaving aside the nature of the “dinner-party”—a habitual occurrence at 46 Gordon Square and a central mode of philosophical investigation that strengthened the ties of friendship among the members of the Bloomsbury Group—the structure of the *Symposium*—the carving out of the theme of conversation, the pluralism and diversity of its treatises, the syncretism with which the treatises contribute to the crystallization of a certain concept (here, love)—contains elements mirrored in Woolf’s own narrative properties in later life. In *The Waves*, for instance, she renders the dramatic soliloquies of six different people in order to reveal the way in which their minds work—to discover, as fully as it may be possible, some notion of existence or identity. It is important to note that with the *Symposium* we have perhaps the beginning of the Western philosophical canon in so far as this dialogue establishes principles of investigation and methodology that have since punctuated the intellectual development of the so-called West. We have the choice of a set topic; the necessary plurality of approaches to that topic; the required clarity with which these approaches (should) succeed one another; the exposition of ideas based on reason (*logos*), and we also have the intervention of the metaphysical, or intuitive, element as exemplified by Aristophanes in his use of mythology (*muthos*). Woolf is aware of these principles; she, nevertheless, challenges their currency and expands their value in her own work. Plato’s elusive idealities are mirrored in Woolf’s own committed textual search for an idea of “self” which, nevertheless, remains continually deferred. This is a sustained characteristic of Woolf’s textual poetics. And although attributing her lifelong struggle against patriarchy only to her Greek study would be facile and inaccurate, the fact that in the GN she underscores Homer’s unfair treatment of Penelope and highlights the general prejudice against Creusa in Euripides’ *Ion*, bears testament to the importance of her Greek readings in the formation of her early feminist thinking. There is no doubt that the GN was a serious engagement for Woolf between 1907 and 1909. One has but to read her commentary on the *Ion* and Sophocles’ *Ajax* to understand her determination to produce a good piece of work. In the *Ajax*, for instance, she has produced a close, almost line-by-line, translation in addition to her overall analysis of the play and of R. C. Jebb’s introduction (GN 67-70). It is this tremendous amount of dogged devotion to reading these texts that enabled her to conclude on the *Ajax*: “In these
choruses I can see now & then, the inimitable style, a music of words—transcending meaning” (GN 72).

However, the GN should not be thought of as a first-class piece of scholarly work; then again, it was never meant as one. In my view, it ought to be thought of as a private affair intended to remain private for ever. Woolf’s own note on page 79—“Read over again, Jan. 1917; an interval of nearly ten years”—suggests (though it does not prove) that Woolf must have had but one look at it after she finished it in 1909.13 Perhaps the GN was used as a commonplace book, in which Woolf had jotted down a few ideas on the classics ready for use either in the company of her Bloomsbury friends, or in her novels and essays, festooned as they are with Greek references. After all, its contents are neither straightforward translations nor straightforward analyses or summaries; rather—as perhaps is the case with the entirety of Woolf’s output—the answer lies somewhere in the middle, in the interstices of philology and social commentary, and/or of literature and philosophy. Perhaps, and this is how I choose to look at it, this notebook constituted a memento mori, poignant reminder of her brother Thoby, who died immediately after their first trip to Greece in 1906. It was, after all, from him that she first heard about the Greeks.14 Indeed, we should keep in mind that by the time Woolf started this notebook in 1907 she had already lost four members of her immediate family. If we consider the enthusiasm with which she renders Odysseus’ descent to Hades in Book XI of the Odyssey (GN 19), or her rendering in Latin of a similar passage in Virgil’s Georgic (GN 60, verso), we can understand one way in which her deep, multi-faceted as well as lifelong interest in loss, memory and mourning has, to a considerable extent, its textual roots in this document. In particular, her longing to crystallize a poetics of loss is evident in the closing paragraph to her commentary on the Odyssey, worth quoting in full:

This is a characteristic ending; as though the voice, simply, had finished speaking, the sun having set, & it being time for bed. But there is also a great sense of that the drama is completed; we are relieved of all anxiety about the future by the knowledge of what must happen to Odysseus—that he is to travel, & meet death, the easiest way, by sea. The scene dies out, as a landscape in the evening. (GN 41)

13 Brenda Silver writes that “[p]ages 9-10 are blank, indicating perhaps that Woolf meant to go on with her notes on Juvenal” (Virginia Woolf’s Reading Notebooks, New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1983, 166).
14 MOB, 125. Woolf started this notebook in December 1907, thirteen months after Thoby’s death. The Stephen children and Violet Dickinson, a close family friend, travelled to Greece in September 1906; they had visited a number of places and had been there for about a month before Thoby had to return to England on October 14. When the rest returned on November 1, they found him seriously ill with high fever and diarrhoea. Thoby Stephen died on November 20, 1906.
The relief Woolf underlines here—the one provided by the realization that the drama has come to an appropriate conclusion—tempers the significatory currency of the words “ending,” “finished” and “set,” and operates to elucidate mourning as an ethical stance of a life that is thought of, after all, also as a drama in need of completion. In adopting a textual poetics of loss undergirded by mourning not as a linear, therapeutic process to be rid of but as an indivisible part of life, Woolf sets the foundations of a lifelong textual experimentation with loss and memory.

**Note on the Text**

I have already mentioned that Woolf’s handwriting was, at times, very hard to read. Lacunae are denoted by means of three-dot ellipses [...]. Whenever I have not been able to decipher more than one word, I mark this by brackets and a number—for instance, [3]—to indicate the number of illegible words. Lacunae of one or more sentences are marked with a four-dot ellipsis in bold type. When I have been uncertain of a particular word or phrase, I render this by inserting a question mark—[?]—or I opt for a potential alternative. In the event of anomalous syntax obscuring meaning, I provide clarification in brackets or in a footnote. It should be understood that everything appearing in brackets [ ___ ] is my intervention, but everything in parentheses ( ___ ) is Woolf’s. When Woolf seems to be quoting from the original I give a bibliographic reference in a footnote, whenever possible; in such instances, I maintain the standard bibliographic classification of ancient texts—for instance (*Symposium*, 197c) or (*Odyssey*, XXIII, 123). This is because it has not been possible to locate every reference text or translation that Woolf was using. Therefore, using the standard bibliographic referencing for ancient texts will enable the reader to locate a passage of interest more easily. At times, Woolf seems to have written a phrase or passage in bold; as I cannot be sure whether this was intentional or whether it was merely a case of having freshly dipped her pen in ink, I only render in bold those parts that I think were important. This is done either by using italics or a footnote. In some cases, Woolf uses “wd,” “shd” and “cd” instead of “would,” “should” and “could”; I have maintained this in my transcription. However, whenever she uses just “wh” for “which” I have given the whole word in brackets to aid readability: “wh.[ich].” Greek names are mostly rendered phonetically or directly transliterated; for instance, she would write “Lestrygonia” instead of “Laestrygonia,” or “Menelaos” instead of “Menelaus.” Another famous feature of Woolf’s personal writing, the use of ampersand as her predominant conjunction instead of “and,” is also maintained in my transcription. I have also maintained Woolf’s famous (if not notorious) tendency to omit apostrophes in contractions and possessives. These features do not hinder the reader’s ability to follow the text.
in all its complex qualities as a referential work. It is a rather easy piece to follow, but only once the reader has grown accustomed to its idiosyncrasies.

I have maintained Woolf’s pagination throughout. The page numbers of the manuscript are given in bold type followed by the text they contain: for instance, GN1, GN2 and so on. Whenever Woolf has written on the verso of a page, this is rendered thus: GN22 Verso. In order to provide the reader with a feel of the notebook I have, as much as possible, rendered a diplomatic transcription of the manuscript. Finally, as far as my overall interventions are concerned, the reader should understand that I am not a professional classicist; therefore, my annotations, translations, or comments on Woolf’s own translations are those of a native speaker of Greek and, as far as the classics are concerned, an amateur who has, nevertheless, received formal instruction in ancient Greek and Latin as part of his schooling. Lastly, given my background and interests, my annotations on the Greek texts are more substantial than on the texts by Juvenal and Virgil.

I would like to thank the following individuals for their help and support; first, members of the faculty at Sussex when I was researching my DPhil (2000-2004): Alistair Davies, my supervisor, guided me expertly and supported me through scholarly and personal problems, while Laura Marcus, Norman Vance, Lindsay Smith, and Elena Gualtieri offered me advice at the early stages of this project. I would also like to express my deep gratitude to Elizabeth (Bet) Inglis, the then head-librarian at Special Collections, University of Sussex, who prepared a copy of the manuscript for me, many years ago, thereby saving me innumerable trips to the library; also, my thanks to Rose Lock and Fiona Courage (University of Sussex /The Keep) for their help whenever I visited the archives. My thanks also to Adèle Cassigneul and Simon Goldhill for promptly helping me whenever I asked, and to Angeliki Spiropoulou, from whom, to paraphrase Woolf, I first heard about the “Greek Notebook.” I should also thank the Society of Authors, representatives of the Literary Estate of Virginia Woolf, for granting me permission to transcribe and reproduce pictures of the manuscript. I would also like to thank Karen Humble, not only for her help with the transcription but also for her support and encouragement. Finally, I would like to thank Beth Daugherty, who suggested I consider publishing this transcription, and Mark Hussey and the editorial board for accommodating this important resource in Woolf Studies Annual.

Works Cited


Translation, analyses & notes on Juvenal, Plato, Virgil [...].

The golden June rising from dirt, from dried earth, & the midges staining the sky, making a net, a veil, slowly, dreamily: gilding shop windows staining faces, & turning the pavement to beaten brass.

The Satires of Juvenal

Satire I. Page I. The reason for writing satire.
Satire 3 __"__ 2. Why a man may not live in Rome.
Satire 6 __"__ 7. On Woman.

The Odyssey of Homer 11

---

15 Quentin Bell’s note.
16 Anne Olivier Bell’s note.
17 Olivier Bell’s note; my thanks to Elizabeth Inglis for this information.
18 This is the note by Leonard Woolf. It is written on the verso of a loose wall-calendar page. There is another sign after this that looks like an ampersand followed by “others.” Unfortunately, the sign, whether it is an abbreviation or a mere scribble, is not clear.
19 This is a note by Woolf on a blue piece of paper laid in loose between pages 78 and 79. I give the transcription of the note here as I do not think that its having been placed between those pages was intentional or significant.
20 There is no indication of which edition of Juvenal’s satires Woolf was using.
21 Again, there is no indication of which edition of the Iliad Woolf used here.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5, 6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6, 7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7, 8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ion of Euripides</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symposium [Plato]</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Georgic [Virgil]</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frogs of Aristophanes</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ajax: Sophocles</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Frogs [Aristophanes]</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Phaedrus [Plato]</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22 According to Brenda Silver (168), Woolf was using the 1890 edition with a translation and notes by A. W. Verrall, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1890).
23 No indication as to which edition Woolf was using.
24 As above.
26 Woolf was using Aristophanes, The Frogs, “Greek text revised with a Translation, Introduction and Commentary by Benjamin Bickley Rogers. Bell, 1902” (Silver, 169).
27 Uncertain edition.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reason for writing 261:
why a man may not live in Rome.
On Women.

In my hand:

Symposium,
To Hyacinthus.
He writes—why not I too? I have reasons for choosing Satire. Vices flaunt themselves everywhere. They bark in a medley. Noble & lowly crowd alike for the scanty dole distributed by the rich; Wealth [3] no temple, though it is the divinity [that is, wealth] most worshipped in our age. After trudging [?] all day after their dole the poor clients are refused dinner at the table of the patron, who feasts on a whole boar [by] himself or takes a whole peacock to the bath—and often suffers for it. For the rich die suddenly, without wills, & such deaths are applauded not mourned. My friends however, bid me beware of the enmity of the living, & advise me to write once more about the old mythologies which cannot possibly interest anyone now. So I will see what entertainment the noble dead of the past generation have to offer.

I must commend, though I regret, the decision of my friend to move from Rome to Cumae. No place can be so desolate, but that it is not preferable to the dread of fires, of falling roofs and reciting poets. But while his move went on we went together to those groves where the Jews encamp, & descended into the valley & artificial caves of Egeria. How much more vivid would be “the spirit of the stream” if only there were grass banks & no marble sides!

Then Umbricius spoke: There is no place in Rome for honesty, or reward for labour. Day by day that little goes. So let us depart, while we may to Cumae. Let only those live, & in Rome, who are capable of all contracts, of their banter of men. The old trumpeters, even, of the swollen cheeks, have become millionaires, & all is in their power—What should I do in Rome? I neither lie, nor star tell, nor act [as a] procurer. No one shall be a thief at my behest. I am no better than a cripple. Presents given or taken, make secret compacts. He will be dear to Verres, when he has reason to fear [2] all the gold that the Tagus washes over with the sand will [retract?] you for loss of sleep, for the [3] of your friends.

III cont.

How I will speak of that [...] that [...] in prime favour with us. I cannot endure a Rome turned Greek. Still, there others, Asiatic scum, who are worse. You hear their music & meet their prostitutes. [...] They worm themselves into great families, swift, daring, glib of speech, eloquent. They are infinitely versatile. [They] know all the [...] of grammarian[s], [...] & so on. Yet, I fly their purple cloaks. Why should he always have precedence of me, who was born here by the wind that brings [2] & cotton. I was nourished on hard Sabine nut. They flatter, & it goes down; we are not believed. So, [is] there any better actor than a Greek? Comedy is in their bones. They laugh with you, & cry with you -but [they] do not grieve. Ah, he is beyond us in his sympathies and his perceptions, as swift and as true. And as we have for when true Greeks [...] to some of their crime. How the “stoic” killed Bareas, his pupil. The old man killed the young. Rome is no place for me; Protogenes & his friends live there, & [...] their friends alone. For directly [2] the poison dropped into his ear by some such friend, then I have the word to move on, the times of my long servitude (Juvenal was a poor man & writes from the point of view of a client) are gone for working. There is working simpler than to drop a client.

Yet I wont lay the blame entirely on all the Greeks. What service do the poor render, and what do they deserve, who run through the streets early [or only?] to snatch the dole of some rich widow? A rich slave takes the wall (work? walk?) of a free born man. Suppose some great man of old were to return & ask—what does he pay his slaves—how does he live, would not the answer be—he is honoured in proportion to his money bags. A poor man has cause to think that he can ignore the gods who ignore him. The cruelest part of poverty is that it makes men ridiculous. If the beggar take his seat by the bastard, or the young fencing master, nor push for a chair with the knights! What son in law can succeed who cannot equal his brides dowry? How soon will those [who] succeed in life whose means are narrow. At Rome the struggle is worst. They will not dine off earthenware there, though that is good enough for the Marsix [Marsos] & Sabella. There is a

29 Denoting a Greek or someone from Asia.
30 Lines 53-60. Peter Green translates this as follows: “‘You! Get out of those front-row seats ... You ought to be ashamed – your incomes are far too meagre, ... Make way for some pander’s son and heir, spawned in an unknown brothel; yield your place to the offspring of that natty auctioneer with the trainer’s son and the ring-fighter’s brat applauding beside him’” (18).
31 Would we be justified in arguing that the emergence of Woolf’s materialist thought, especially concerning women’s professional prospects in AROO, may be located somewhere here?
large part of Italy in which people only wear a white toga at death. There is […] at the […] play & the orchestra & the people […] wear[s] the same clothes. Why is it in Rome then—where everything costs money. You must pay for a free mans smile[s] while he valishes benefits on his slaves.

GN5

190
What fear is there in the country of the tall of roof or wall? The mayors of Rome are always at work. & there is a fire & the cry is for water. The poor who own nothing lose that nothing. “In time, poor Cordus nothing had to boast, & yet poor Cordus all that nothing lost.”32 But when a noble house is burnt Rex is mourning, & all his friends bring contribution[s] to repair his loss—till some say that he set fire to his house on purpose. If you could only leave Rome you could have a plot of your own ground in the country, your […] sole property. Some die in Rome for lack of sleep and others from indigestion. Drovers stand cursing in the streets. Rich men of course pass through the city quickly, upborne in their litters; where they can read or draw the curtains—sleep; the poor clients […] struggle along in the crowd, doles are given, & slaves […] work. “Drunk […] kitchener” & fire.33 The free are carried on wagons, & if the wheel breaks some wretch is crushed beneath. And the slaves at home make ready while their master crosses the sticks nor has a farthing to pay his fare. (if it is the master would he not have more? & if the slave why prepare for him?) But […] again the dangers of her […] night— Every open window may be your death.34 Ruffians

GN6

abroad who will not sleep without their brawl. Time [2] to get clear of the rich man with his guard of footmen—but they will stop you, bully you, beat you till your ribs crack. Then bail you to the bar for beating them. And some of you stay at home & lock the doors, & all the shops are barred, soldiers come into some and sack the place. All our iron is spent in making fetters and shackles; no ploughs or hoes are made. Happy were our ancestors who could contain all their prisoners in one gaol. Well these are all causes why I should leave Rome; & the muleteer beckons. Remember me when you in despair too retire to Aquinam. I will come & listen to your satires.

32 Line 208.
33 Lines 245-250.
34 Line 270.
Modesty still dwelled on Earth when Saturn reigned; & a cave did for house, or man made himself a bed with the beasts of the mountains. That is [?] strange to you, Cynthia, or Lesbia, whose tender eyes are moistened by a sparrow’s death. Their woman gave such to hefty babies, & fed on acorns. Men lived otherwise then, when sun & earth were new;\textsuperscript{35} born of oak they were, & had no human parents. Some few of traces of Chastity remained [...], when Jove was young. But Astraea and Chastity fled the earth together. The crime [?] of the marriage bed is of ancient birth. The age of silver beheld it. And yet your marriage settlements [?] are making ready; Are you mad to take a wife? What fury has bitten you? Can you not why marry when there are ropes to hang yourself with, high windows open, & a bridge [that] stretches on before you?\textsuperscript{36} How ridiculous to observe the Julian law, & beget an heir.\textsuperscript{37} You will lose the sweet gifts of legacy [...]. If you seek the ancient virtue of Chastity in a wife, you are mistaken [?]. Where will you find such a wife [?]. Look at Heppia, who followed the gladiator

\textbf{GN8}

across the seas, spreading there rumours of Romes vice, & left her husband, & sis, & all her comfortable luxury.

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{35} Having been dethroned by Jupiter (Zeus), Saturn (Cronos) returned to earth escorted by Pudicitia (Chastity) and Astraea (Justice). Jupiter’s coming ushered in a complex way of life, and men and women became spoilt by vice and luxuries. Juvenal describes Rome’s gradual decay, a decay in which the Greek influence played a major role. According to the satirist, Greece was instrumental in emasculating Rome’s men and, especially in this satire, in corrupting its women. Woolf has not extended her commentary that far.

\textsuperscript{36} Juvenal means that it is far better to kill oneself than marry a woman. Judging from Woolf’s rendition, I believe that she captured this quite adequately.

\textsuperscript{37} 	extit{Lex Iulia}, passed by Augustus in 18 BC, was replaced by \textit{Lex Papia Poppaea} in AD 9. This law favoured large families by limiting the inheritance that unmarried citizens could hand down.
Odyssey

“[Begun in Greece, 1906- and the first four books were read there - so I only give a summary of them].”

Book 1

Council of Gods. Poseidon absent. Pallas demands, successfully, the return of Odysseus. She appears to Telemachus & advises him to complain to the wooers, & then goes in search of his father to Pylos & Sparta.

Book 2

Telemachus complains in vain, & goes to Pylos by night; & his reception there.

38 It should be noted that Woolf read, and kept notes on, the Odyssey at least twice in her life (the other time was in preparation for her essay “On Not Knowing Greek,” which she included in The Common Reader (1925); she did not, however, demonstrate the same preference for the Iliad. This may be due to a variety of reasons, a fair number of which are explored, albeit not directly in relation to Woolf, in Vanda Zajko’s “Homer and Ulysses” (Robert Fowler ed, The Cambridge Companion to Homer, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004, 311-323). Discussing the reception of the Homeric epics by Victorian and modernist intellectuals and artists, Zajko argues that the Odyssey was much more of a modernist text than the Iliad (311). Particularly in relation to Woolf in 1908, it would be pertinent to suggest that the masculine heroics and the gore of the Iliad might not have been entirely to her liking: “and Pallas Athena guided the spear to the nose next to the eye, and it cut on through the white teeth …through the tongue’s base … underneath the jawbone” (Iliad, V, 290-293).

39 During Woolf’s first trip to Greece in 1906. In preparation for The Common Reader (see note 30), Woolf reread Books I-VI. These notes are in the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library (Reel 13).

40 God of the sea.

41 Athena [or Athene] Pallas, Goddess of wisdom.

42 Telemachus, son to Odysseus and Penelope, grandson to Laertes, Odysseus’ father.

43 The kingdoms of Nestor and Menelaus respectively were situated around the southernmost point of the Peloponnese peninsula and still retain the same names. As many youths now know since the release of the feature film 300 (2006), Sparta was also known as Lacedaemon, hence the Greek letter /Λ/ on their shields.
(Feb. 27 of)

Odyssey.

[Begin a scene, 1906—the first few lines were read over, so I have only a summary]

Book I. Palace demands.

Comal and Phoen are about to return to Tyre, so they speak to Telemachus to accompany them to Tyre, but he goes to Sparta:

Book 2.

Telemachus arrives in the palace, and is welcomed by the suitors and his reception there.

Book 3.

He is introduced to Telemachus at Pylos, and tells him how he speaks of Troy, and sends him to Sparta.

Book 4.

His introduction at Sparta, and how he finds the suitors, and how Telemachus speaks of Calypso in Olympia.
Book 3

Nestor\(^{44}\) entertains Telemachus at Pylos, & tells him how the Greeks left Troy, & sends him on to Sparta.

Book 4

His entertainment [Telemachus’] at Sparta. Menelaus\(^{45}\) tells him the futures of the Greeks; how Odysseus is with Calypso in Ogygia.\(^{46}\)

GN12

Book 5

Gods in council command Calypso by Hermes\(^{47}\) to send away O. on a raft of trees & Poseidon scatters his raft off the coast of Pheacia; Ino\(^{48}\) helps him ashore, & he sleeps on dry leaves till day light. There is a beautiful description here of the cave of Calypso. All romance in this poem; as bright as day, & yet remote, & moving with freedom of state.

Book 6

O. is woken by the voices of Nausicæa & the maidens, who have washed their clothes by the river brink, & are playing at ball.\(^{49}\) He starts out naked, N[ausicaæa] speaks to him as the Gods gave her courage. She takes him back to the city of the Pheacians to ask her father’s help. This is perhaps the most beautiful book, so far: N[ausicaæa]: exquisite truth & modesty, & the wondrous setting of the scene.

Also you see very clearly the look of the town, with its shipbuilding yard, & the Temple of Poseidon in the midst, & the palace with the great hall, in which the mistress sat,

\(^{44}\) King of Pylos, the wisest and most respected of the Greeks at Troy.

\(^{45}\) King of Sparta, Agamemnon’s brother and Helen’s husband.

\(^{46}\) Demi-Goddess who lived on the island of Ogygia. Holding Odysseus in a state of captivity, she was ordered by the Gods to send him back to Ithaca.

\(^{47}\) The messenger of the Gods, protector of travellers and tradesmen.

\(^{48}\) Ino, a sub-deity.

\(^{49}\) Nausicæa, daughter to Alcinous and Arete, Princess of Phæacia. Phæacia is thought to be modern-day Corfu.
spinning her purple yarn, in the firelight. Also, there is a meadow & a fountain sacred to Athene where O. sits. 183-185 Ideal of Marriage- “There is nothing better or nobler than this, when a man & [a] woman possess a house & are of one mind. Much pain Disastrous are they to their foes & a joy to their well-wishers, but their own hearts know it best [”].

Book7

Athene in disguise leads O. to the palace. The honour done to Arete, wife of Alcinous, how she is honoured by the men, & [is] allowed to comfort their quarrels, honoured too of her husband & children. A long (58-88) description of the palace—golden hounds, a blue frieze, tapestries; golden figures holding torches; women “restless as the leaves of the poplar tree” weaving. The vineyard 124, a beautiful description. O. goes in to pray; they seat him in a silver chair, & decide how they meet next day & [2] his escort. He explains to Arete how he comes, her clothes & tells part of the story. [Alcinous]: “It was not right of my daughter not to bring you with her.”

GN14

Would that I had you for a son in law. [He] offers to take him to any part he may wish, even as far as Euboea; which is the furthest island our people have ever seen; yet they rowed there & back in one day without distress. They make him a bed there & he sleeps.

Book 8

O. goes down among the Pheacians, & is invited to join their contest, & one [Euryalus] taunts him, upon which he hurls a coit [discus] further than every other, & offers to meet them in any sport but wrestling, for which his fast has afflicted him. A boastful, muscular creature, like a great schoolboy; and yet shrewd; he will not fight, for instance, with his host for that would be foolish. Alcinous

50 The second largest island in Greece, north-east of Athens.
51 Woolf has clearly written “coit,” but in the Greek text it is clearly stated that Odysseus hurled a discus—“diskon” (Odyssey, VIII, 186).
52 Woolf does not condone Odysseus’ boastfulness.
bids him take note of all their excellences\textsuperscript{53} that he may tell of them at home,\textsuperscript{54} & calls the blind singer Demodocus.\textsuperscript{55} This story of the games is not as beautiful as the other,\textsuperscript{56} but probably a true picture of what happened. As Demodocus was blind, may it not be that his office of singer was his, as by right; & so the blindness marked bards became,

\textbf{GN15}

transferred to […] himself. The story of Ares & Aphrodite, & how they were found out by Hephestus in bed together. And Aphrodite went to Cyprus, & was anointed with immortal oils, & was ornamented by the Graces.\textsuperscript{57} The end of the song. 414 “May you never miss the sword”—\textit{a regular form of acceptance}\textsuperscript{58}

Nausicaa, dowered with beauty by the Gods beholds him coming from the bath in his splendour, & bids him have memory of her in far lands; for she saved his life. 480 For the Muse\textsuperscript{59} loves singers, & asks men to honour [their] poem. Democclus sings the story of Troy, & O. weeps, & Alcinous bids the singing stop, for the stranger is at bother. Metaphor of the woman who weeps over her husband slain defending his city & children, & she is taken prisoner, & wastes her cheeks in wailing/weeping[?]. Even so, O. weeps—a noble, but large image. Then Alcinous bids O. reveal himself, his travels, & the habits of the peoples he has seen. A real fresh sense of the new […] ambient world. Why does he weep when the tale of Troy is told? Did he lose a father, or a friend, loved as a brother?

\textsuperscript{53} Alcinous prides himself on the athletic and naval prowess of the Phaeacians (236-255) after Odysseus’ boastful exposition of his own physical and mental superiority.
\textsuperscript{54} Meaning when he (Odysseus) goes back to Ithaca.
\textsuperscript{55} Demodocus, the minstrel, sang the torments of the Greeks at Troy.
\textsuperscript{56} Meaning Homer’s description of Alcinous’ palace in Book VII.
\textsuperscript{57} “Graces” (\textit{Gratiae}) is the Latin name for the Greek \textit{Χαριτες} (\textit{Charites}): deities, daughters of Zeus and Eurynome or Hera; they were three: Euphrosyne, Thalia, and Aglaea.
\textsuperscript{58} Woolf is clearly not impressed by Odysseus’ behaviour in this Book.
\textsuperscript{59} The nine Muses were Goddesses, daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, the Goddess of memory. More than likely, the one implied here must be Calliope, the Muse of epic poetry. Depictions of her often involve her holding a parchment scroll or a tablet. The rest of them were: Clio, Muse of history; Erato, Muse of love poetry; Euterpe, Muse of music and lyric poetry; Melpomene, Muse of tragedy; Polyhymnia (or Polymnia), Muse of hymns; Terpsichore, Muse of dance; Thalia, Muse of comedy; and Urania (the Heavenly One), Muse of astronomy.
Odysseus tells the story of his adventures. How he came to the land of the Lotus eaters- 95. how a man forgets all, who tastes of the Lotus -110. The painless [?] land of the Cyclop[e]s—This is precisely like an Elizabethan voyager writing of his travels. Then they go to an island near by—where are these clouds- where they see Polyphemous, by his cave with his herds. They go in & await his return. He comes back, & milks his flocks, & then, getting guileful answers [by Odysseus], kills some of the men for his supper. And they cannot kill him, for fear of being left imprisoned in the great cave with the door closed “as a quiver with the lid on” (313) what is the lid of a quiver? A wonderful description (371-402) of the blinding of the Cyclops with a green olive stake, burnt & sharpened, which they turn in his eye socket. There are certain simple metaphors, drawn from the processes of life, as for instance “the boring of a ship’s beam with a drill,” which are more effective than any others. At the same time, the technical words are many. The eye hissed like hot steel plunged in water to temper it. Immense vividness & strength of description. Probably this was what the audience loved. Like the Bible only more sinuous. Then they hid themselves under the flock, & fan (?) out of the cave in the morning. This is precisely like a traditional fairy tale of a man’s great cunning in emergency. Imagine how the children wd have liked the dreadful plight Odysseus was in, with the giant sitting in the doorway, & no possible way of escape it seems! But then the hero sees the withies, in which P.[olyphemous] sleeps, & uses them to bind himself to the ram. Also, there is the childish game of the Cyclopes, who come as Po[lyphemous] summons, & when they hear that he is tormented by Noman, leave him to Zeus, who alone can suffer disease. I don’t care so much for these ingenuities myself—spirited as they are.

60 Polyphemous was the strongest and most malicious of all the Cyclopes.
61 The door was a large rock that only Polyphemous could move.
62 At the beginning of this incident, Polyphemous asked Odysseus what his name was, to which the latter answered “No-man.” Following his blinding then, when the other Cyclopes asked Polyphemous who had hurt him, he answered that, in effect, “No-man” had hurt him.
63 We cannot be sure why this did not please Woolf. We may be justified in surmising, however, that perhaps it reminded her of the early Bloomsbury gatherings at 46 Gordon Square. In a letter to Violet Dickinson (1 October 1905), she expresses her dislike of her brother’s university friends, the “Cambridge youths,” who “occasionally escape to a corner and chuckle over a Latin joke” (L1 208). Perhaps this specific pun reminded Woolf of her position vis-à-vis the Cambridge “double-firsts.”
And they come to the Aeolian Isle, where lives the man with the charge of all the winds. He entertains them, & gives them winds securely fastened by a silver thong in a wallet to blow them home. They are actually in sight of their own land, when Odysseus lies down to sleep; & while he sleeps his men murmur, & complain that he has brought home booty for himself. And they look to see what it is that he has in the wallet, & the winds burst out, & drive them back again to the Aeolian Isle. But they meet no kind men there, & make their way again in melancholy. Then they come to LystrYGONIA, where the way of day 7 nights are so close together that a sleepless man may earn a double wage as keeper of sheep & kine. But they are destroyed here by the gigantic race, & fly once more. They reach the island of AYA, & O. from a high top, sees smoke among the oakwoods. He kills a stag & carries him back to his company; & after they have been fed he tells them how they must adventure, & discover who it is there among the trees. A company is charged to [4] of the palace, Circe, who sits singing a sweet song, & weaving at her loom while great lions & wolves, enchanted by her, roam [...] & come fawning about the strangers as a dog, who expects food from his master’s [...]. Odysseus goes himself to rescue his companions, & he is met by Hermes, in the likeness of a man, who warns him, & gives him a drug, & tells him how he may make favour with the Goddess. There is a plant, black of root but milk white of bloom, which men cannot pluck, but the Gods can who can do all things, can give it them. This was [a] charm against Circe’s tools. He has [a] speech with her, & they lie together. But he will not eat till his comrades are free. Then he brings others his comrades to the feasting & they stay there at ease for a year. At last the men murmur, & he bids Circe let them go. Go to Hades & dread Persephone & ask of them your way, she says. And they depart readily. Elpenor, waking & hearing them go, falls from the roof, & dies. But they set sail. This is a perfect, romantic narrative. A swift succession of events, all beautiful in themselves. [2] no incident is over elaborated. The flower plucked. All [...] with perfect order. Leaves [...] with [...] a broken ending.

64 Where Aeolus, God of the Winds, lived; probably one of the Aeolian islands in the Tyrrhenian Sea north of Sicily.
65 It should be “Laestrygonia.”
66 It should be “Aeaea.”
67 Circe was a sorceress, who beguiled Odysseus’ comrades and turned them into pigs. Woolf has omitted this here. This is what Hermes sought to protect Odysseus from.
They sail to the bounds of [the] ocean, where the Cimmerian (sic) live in perpetual darkness. They come to the appointed land. Here they do as Circe bid them. O. cuts a trench, & they slaughter cattle. [...] souls alike “weak races of the dead” cluster around, but O. will not let them touch the blood, until Teiresias has spoken. "Beautiful, beautiful!"

Brides & unwedded boys, & toil worn old men, & joyous girls freshly acquainted with grief come to him—(this is Virgil’s famous passage. I suppose not here so elaborate). And Elpenor who fell from the roof and killed himself begs burial of his body. Will they lay his oar on the tomb. After O.’s mother finally Teiresias speaks. He bids O. go on his way only take care when they come to the flocks of the sun not to molest them or their return will be toilsome. Then, when he has greeted his wife & child, he may go on adventuring further till he comes to a land where the men do not know the sea. And he must carry his oar with him. And when he meets one who says “what is that winnowing fan you have with you.” Then he must make sacrifice. And he will die in old age very peacefully. “All this lies on the knees of the Gods,” says O. & begs to speak with his mother. She tells him that all is well at home; but his father, for sorrow at his absence, lies in dirt by the chimney corner in the winter, & in summer makes him a bed from the leaves in the garden. She died of longing for her son. Then all the wives & daughters

---

68 Teiresias (or Tiresias), the seer, is a very prominent figure in Greek mythology, especially in the Theban circle.

69 My emphasis. Woolf appears to be fascinated by the kingdom of Hades.


71 Probably Virgil’s Aeneid, (VI, 221-322). In that specific passage Aeneas, very much like Odysseus, sees many of the souls or ghosts of the Greco-Roman world ascend from Hades at his summons. However, Woolf may also be referring to Virgil’s Georgic IV, which she analyses a bit later in this manuscript (see GN 60 Verso). See Book X (GN, 18).

72 Elpenor, a figure of sloth in the Odyssey, had fallen asleep on Circe’s roof; he died after waking up suddenly and falling from it.

73 It should have been Helios Hyperion. Helios is the Greek word for ‘sun.”

74 Penelope and Telemachus in Ithaca.
of heroes approach & speak to him. A long bit follows with some brief genealogy & mythology. “If I were to tell you all, the night would pass.”75 Here then there is a break very skilfully interrupting the monotonous piece of the story.76

They listen spellbound in the shadowy (σκιοεντα)77 halls & Arete promises gifts. So he would stay for a full year, & gain consideration from the people of Ithaca.” Is this a kind of traditional psychology?78

He begins again—how the ghost of Agamemnon comes, & tells him his story; how Clytaemnestra killed him without giving him time to see his son.79 Trust not your wife with all your mind, or she will betray you—Lo—your wife, good Penelope, is discreet & true. But Clytaemnestra would not even close my eyes or shut my mouth. Women, C[lytaemnestra] & Helen, have been fatal to the sons of Atreus.80

Then, Achilles, a prince even among the dead, addresses him. But he would rather serve a poor man & hind81 on earth than rule all the nation of the dead. They all ask news, then O. in fear lest Persephone should send him the Gorgons head (what is that myth?)82 goes back to his ships. Achilles asks news of Peleus83, & Odysseus tells him of the valiant deeds of his son, Neoptolemus,84 so that he went with great strides across the meadow, pleased at heart. Then he saw Ajax, still grieving & wrathful for the

75 Murray translates this as “there is a time for many words and there is time for sleep” (Murray, I, 413).
76 Indeed, if not for this break Odysseus’ narration in this Book would have gone uninterrupted for 335 lines.
77 Woolf’s parenthesis; σκιοεντα is “shadowy” in ancient Greek.
78 Woolf’s emphasis.
79 Clytaemnestra (or Clytemnestra) was Agamennon’s wife and Iphigenia’s mother; with the help of her lover, Aegisthus, she killed the Achaean chieftain straight after his return from Troy (see Aeschylus’s famous tragedy Agamemnon, the first play of the Oresteia trilogy).
80 Mythical king, father of Agamennon and Menelaurus.
81 Here, Woolf translates the Greek “βουλομην κ’ επαροουρος επειν θιτευεμεν αλλω, ανδρι παρ” (I would rather live a poor man / peasant who has little in the service of another); she uses the archaic English word “hind”: a farm steward or a peasant.
82 From the myth of Perseus, son of Zeus and Danae. His step-father dared him go and fetch Medusa’s (or Gorgon’s) head which, once looked at, turned one into stone.
83 Peleus, a mortal, was Achilles’ father; his mother was Thetis, a demi-Goddess.
84 Neoptolemus, Achilles’ son, had excelled in battle against the Trojans.
loss of arms. And he would not even now speak to Odysseus, & great is the pity. Then he came back, & would have spoken, but O. saw many others—a curious touch. He saw Minos, Orion, chasing wild beasts, & Tantalus standing in water, & whenever he made to drink it, it was sucked up, & the earth parched. & there were fruity trees all round him with [?] taunted / taunting [?] pears & olives at his feet, & a wind whirled them out of his hands; & Sisyphos for ever rolling his stone. & there was Hercules faffing alone among the dead. His hand was at his bow, always on alert as though to shoot. & he wore a wondrous golden girdle [...]

He had been sent to bring back the Hound of Hell. But, at last, Odysseus turned, & went in fear that Persephone should send him the Gorgons head.

They set sail from the river Oceanus, & reach the isle of Circe. She comes to them at once, fairly dressed, with food, & they eat. Then, she takes O. aside with her & questions him; & tells him of his future. He will come to two great rocks—one so steep that the birds of Zeus cannot [1] ambrosia & all ships are destroyed. The sirens come before he comes to the rocks. On the other side there are two pin-

---

85 Ajax, the celebrated king of Salamis, was second only to Achilles in courage and somatic might. Odysseus had a feud with him over Achilles’ armour in the Iliad—see Sophocles’ Ajax in this manuscript.
86 Minos and Orion were judges of the underworld and second only to Pluto.
87 Tantalus and Sisyphus were mythical figures punished by the Gods. Tantalus’s torment in Hades was to be eternally hungry and thirsty; exquisite foods hung over his head only to disappear every time he tried to reach them, while the river in which he stood would dry up whenever he tried to drink its water—hence the English verb “to tantalize.” Sisyphus’ torment, on the other hand, was to roll a rock to an unreachable summit for all eternity.
88 The illegible word looks like “charred” or “carved,” but I cannot be certain. The meaning is that Hercules was wearing a golden belt, on which wild animals were depicted or, indeed, carved.
89 Cerberus was a three-headed dog/monster guarding Hades. One of Hercules’ labors was to descend to Hades and bring back Cerberus.
90 Demeter’s daughter, abducted by Pluto/Hades in order to become his wife. The Gods took pity on Demeter, the Goddess of harvest and vegetation, and decided that Persephone would be spending six months with her mother and six months with her husband, Pluto/Hades.
91 I have highlighted this sentence because Woolf has written it on the side as a note.
nacles, one lofty, & the other low. In the lofty one there is a great cave, in which Scylla dwells, up to her middle in water. But some of her 12 heads crane out of the chasm, & sweep the water for dolphins & dog fish, & she will pluck men from their ships & devour them. In the other cave rock there is Charybdis, who sucks out water & in again.

And here the sirens live & sing. If you hear them you are destroyed. They sail on, & put wax in their ears, all but O. who listens bound tight to a mast. Lovely are the voices, reaching out to him, “Come hither, Come hither”—but to that he would gain? Pain; but his comrades row on. There is exquisite romance in this, & in all the small properties of the scene: the bright calm when the waters flow white beneath the oars. The honey sweet wax, broken from great cakes, & warmed in the hands.

Then they come to the island where there are the immortal sheep of the God of Sun.

After this follow their adventures in due order.

**GN22 Verso**

“Dancing ground of Dawn! Dancing ground of Nymphs!”

**GN23**

Charybdis

First they come to Scylla, a great monster who sucks in bitter sea & belches it forth; & then there is Scylla with the many heads foraging. She plucks two several men out of the boat as a fisher letting down his bait with the ox horn at the end of it, draws up fish and casts them on the rock. This was the bitterest sight of all. Then there is the island where the Sun pastures his fat flocks. Here they are stated by the winds; & the men who are always grumbling against O. kill the oxen in his absence in defiance of the Gods. They make a great sacrifice of flesh to appease them carting bright oak leaves in the flames in default of barley, and water for wine; Next they set sail and are destroyed; for the Sun has asked vengeance—so says O. with great regard for likelihood, Calypso told me, who heard it from Hermes. He alone survives astride the keel. He is washed back to Scylla, but manages to

---

92 It appears that Woolf in this instance gives an overview of this particular book and then decides to describe each scene/adventure.
93 Woolf has mistaken the identities of the monsters in this sentence; it was Charybdis who sucked the sea-water.
94 The island of Thrinacia where Helios kept his sheep and oxen.
95 Meaning Helios Hyperion.
96 Odysseus’ narration at this point switches back to his audience on the isle of Alcinous. Woolf, most interestingly, notices the shift in temporality from past to present.
escape in the evening when the lawgiver comes back to supper.97 Dancing After this he comes to the island of Calypso—but I have not to repeat a plain story! This seems to me a most ingenious device for you could not have all the story at once, but broken in pieces like this it is more audible; & made more intense by the feeling of the audience in the shadowy halls.

**GN 23Verso**

A beautiful image of the ships going, like four [?] male horses leaping over the plain.99

Book 14100

**GN24**

Book 13

The Pheacians send him on his way, in a boat rowed by their men, & laden with gold & precious staffs. He is fast asleep, in a sleep most like to death, in the stern. They land him, still sleeping, on the coast of Ithaca, & leave him there with his wealth piled beside him. On their way back they are confounded to the depths of the sea by a great rock,101 & the Pheacians watching in the harbour see them disappear. The Sun threatened, else, to shine among the dead. O. wakes, nor knows where he is, for Athena has changed the land. She appears [to him] like a boy, & he questions her & tells her a long story of feigned wanderings—at which, changing her disguise, she smiles. Odysseus, you are crafty as ever. She bids him slay the suitors & makes him like a worn old man. He recognises the land & the cave where of old he did sacrifice to the nymphs—promises years of offerings if they will befriend him.

**Book 14**

Athena goes, & O. makes his way to the swineherds hut. He has built, with his own hands, a courtyard unknown to Penelope. He has driven stakes round it &

---

97 Woolf’s translation here is rather free; she translates πατηρ ανδρων τε Θεων (“the father of Gods and men”) simply as “the lawgiver.”
98 GN 22 Verso.
99 Perhaps Woolf means Odyssey, XII, 405-425.
100 Woolf has confused which Book comes next; she has rendered Book XIII and XIV under the same header.
101 In the original text, Poseidon turned the ship into a great rock and rooted it in the bottom of the sea.
made a number of [pig]sties. He has trained several big dogs who fly at O. The swineherd\textsuperscript{102} sends them off, & makes O. come inside. All strangers & beggars are from Zeus. They lunch, & the swineherd tells him his sorrows, how he has to herd swine for the suitors, who eat his fatted swine, & his master is away “with nothing to eat”\textsuperscript{103} He tells over all his masters possessions in the temper of one loyal & boastful old retainer. O. asks of his master; at wh.[ich] Eumaeus [the swineherd] breaks out, shrewd & angry—"No you dont.”\textsuperscript{104} Beggars come here with tales of him, & make my proud mistress cry—and earn a clothing by their lies. You are at the same game. He loves his master more than [his] mother & father. Even though he is away. Yes, he is dead, a dry skeleton, a food for fishes, or beneath the sand. Odysseus then tells him a long ingenious fiction about his wanderings—how he was son of a rich man and a slave woman—had been at Troy—& wandered in Egypt—where he was taken prisoner, & almost sold for a slave. But fate rescued him, & threw him on the shore of Ithaca. In his wanderings he had come about a man who had entertained Odysseus, & O. had left there a vast treasure though for ten benefactions, & had gone to ask the counsel of the oak at Dodona.\textsuperscript{105} He [Odysseus] was about to set off home. But the swineherd wont believe this, & bids him leave off his lying. O. offers to wager, but the swineherd […] by his oath, & […] to say [?] the rich [?] of treating as stranger ill. “What sort of home showed I love among men?” The swine are driven in, & they kill [a boar] & make sacrifice. O. has the long back as his is guests portion.

Then it comes on to rain with the South wind & O. wishes to know whether the swineherd will give him his own cloak. He tells therefore a little story about himself & Odysseus under the walls of Troy. They lay out in a thicket one cold night & the snow [?] froze on their shields, & he alone had no cloak. So he went to Odysseus, who sent a man with a message to Agamemnon. O.: ‘so I took his purple cloak & lay happy.” The good swineherd says for this night Odysseus shall have a cloak though

\textsuperscript{102}Eumaeus.

\textsuperscript{103}What Woolf does not clarify here is that Eumaeus has not realized that the stranger was, in fact, Odysseus, his master.

\textsuperscript{104}Odysseus asked whether he knew his master.

\textsuperscript{105}After Delphi, the most important oracle in Greek mythology.
they have but one apiece. And he gives him one, & O. lies before the fire on a bed made of goat skins. The rest of the men lie by him, but the swineherd is not happy far from his swine, so he takes a great a great cloak & a spear to defend him from dogs & men & his […] by the hens in a cave so that he is sheltered from the wind. This is a very careful study of the old mans character, & his surliness, & shrewdness, & his foolish & obstinate, but beautiful loyalty to his master. It is the nearest approach to drawing on individual character yet; but [it] is, I suppose, a typical picture too. These were the characteristics of the old family servant. His hospitality is perpetually insisted upon.

End of B. 14

GN27

Book 15

Athena goes to Telemachus who is with Menelaus in Lacedaemon; & finds him awake sorrowing for his father. She bids him home, for his mother is courted and may yield. Her heart is the heart of a woman, all her thought will be for her husband & his welfare she will not remember the dead husband. Is this good psychology or only a dramatic phrase brought in to heighten the effect of Penelope’s loyalty? Menelaos makes the young men feast, & loads them with gifts in the usual way, and then they start. All this gold, stored in treasure houses, remind me of Mycenae. Helen brings out a [em]brodered robe, shining like a star, and gives [it] him (Telemachus) as fruit of her hands to give to his wife one day. As they start an eagle swoops across the chariot chasing a tame goose—omen of the descent of Odysseus upon the suitors. Helen interprets it. An old man tries to stray / scare [?] him. They put to sea. A descendant of Melampus, the seer, begs to be taken on his way—here is told the story of Melampus as there is some lack of incident. Then we visit the swineherd again. He Odysseus asks him news of the father & mother of O.: one is dead [Odysseus’ mother], & one [his father] lives in grief. Indeed I

106 Here is the most direct link between this notebook and Woolf’s first visit to Greece in September 1906. She wrote in her journal about Mycenae: “… Mycenae, my next attempt, I might leave a blank page. Where does the place begin—where stop—where does it not gather on its way? There was never a sight, I think less manageable; it travels through the chambers of the brain, wakes old memories & imaginations; forecasts a remote future; retells a remote past … The imagination does assert again & again, as you walk, that the place is crowded & compact … But the tremendous stones are not to be ignored, & the two lions, which guard the gate, do still admit you to something august which is beyond. I tremble to write of the classics … but the taste of Homer was in my mouth” (PA 331). The lions mentioned above were made out of stone and still exist at the front of the so-called Agamemnon’s tomb at Mycenae.
would hear the gentle words of my mistress now. ‘she is beset by suitors.’ My old mistress treated me very nobly. ‘What was your stay then.’ And as there nights are very long, & sleep is burdensome, the swineherd stretches his legs, & tells O. He was the son of a king; but the Phoenicians came to the island, with boats full of trinkets. How there was a Phoenician woman in the house, & one of the sailors seduced her, & offered to take her home with them. She consented & promised to carry off her masters son, that they might sell him & requite themselves. So the child, (that is E.) was caught up as he played in the courtyard, & a Phoenician sailor kept his mother busy with a golden necklace, strung with amber beads. She fingered it, & gazed at it. Well, they vagabond away to Phoenicia & suddenly Artemis struck the woman, who fell like a seagull in the hold, & was dropped overboard to feed the seals—Is this the just punishment? And Eumaeus was sold to Odysseus. Then they slept. Meanwhile, Telemachus landed, & was once more shown a torment: an eagle with a dove.

Charming story of the Phoenician woman.

Telemachus goes to the door, & the dogs fawn in him, & do not bark. Eumaeus knows him, & falls on his neck. Odysseus makes way for him; but T. is gentle & lordly, & a seat is strewn for him on the floor. The herdsman tells him of Penelope. They treat her with suspicion always; the blameless woman! Then Eumaeus goes to tell her of her sons arrival & goes to Laertes too. And Athena stands in the doorway like a beautiful woman invisible to T. She changes his [that is, Odysseus’] shape, & he returns to the hut like a god. “Are you a god?” asks T & cries for help. “No god, but your father” & O. weeps, who had before entertained his fears. But T. like a crafty Greek will not be convinced, for no mortal man could change so from age to youth in a minute. But he is convinced; & they kiss & weep, & take counsel for the killing of the suitors. O. is for falling on them at once; T. reminds him that they are many; but the Gods will help. Meanwhile, none is to know that O.

107 Artemis, Apollo’s sister, was the Goddess of the forests and hunting.
108 That is, to Odysseus’ parents.
109 Woolf is exasperated by this affront to Penelope’s loyalty.
is returned, but T. is to hide all the arms in a corner of the house, under the pretext that they may hurt each other. At a signal the fight is to begin. How the suitors saw the ship of T. brought up to the town—a boat carried on men’s shoulders, & took counsel. Should they kill him? One said no.

**GN30**

And Penelope stepped down from her gleaming main [?] chamber, & reproached them with their evil thoughts. And one stood up & denied them [the accusations] utterly. He had been helped by Odysseus, but yet he lied. The swineherd came back in the evening having given his message to Penelope, & O. was once more changed to an old man. They eat together. T. did not dare […] at the swineherd, but smiled at his father. These books have nothing so beautiful as the earlier ones; but still there is always some beautiful detail, as the picture of the goddess standing at the door.

**GN31**

Book 17

In the morning T. goes off to the town to see his mother; & tells Eumaeus to take O. to the fields & finally to the town, where he may beg for bread & water. T. finally reaches his home, & stands his spear against the doorway. His old nurse [Euryclea] is laying the seats in the hall with skins: she falls on his neck, & other serving women come running. Then Penelope herself descends, like[ened?] to Aphrodite, & holds him in her arms—and questions him. But he bids her wash & make herself fair, & offer hecatombs to the gods; then he goes to the market place where the suitors are plotting disaster in their hearts, though so fair of speech. He sits apart from them, & talks to the stranger, the seer, who had come with him. They return to the hall, & wash & feast, & Penelope sits beside them, plying her fine threads, & asks T. of his adventures. He tells her briefly. The suitors outside are carting weight & otherwise enjoying themselves, until the herald bids them sup. One metaphor here is good: how a stag lays his fawns to sleep in a lions den in the thicket, & the lions returns & slaughters them—so Odysseus re: [omission]. Curious metaphor; large & conventional. Meanwhile O, bent like an old man,

110 The pretext is that the suitors may hurt themselves in their drunken brawls.
111 The insolent suitor is Antinous or Antinoos (Odyssey, XVI, 417-425).
112 Public sacrifices for the Gods.
is led up to the door to beg. He meets Argos, who lays back his ears & wags his tail but is too old to move. O. wipes away a tear. Then Argos dies. A curious little story. A dog was, of course, a valuable beast in those days—personified. O. goes in & feeds. Antinous rebukes him, & flings a stool at him. T. ‘sneezes’: P. saw the sneeze & […] on her words[?], predicting [the] downfall of [the] suitors.

Book 18

O. gets into [a] quarrel with another old beggar, a privileged kind of messenger, who asks him to fight. And O. throws off his cloak, & shows strong limbs, & maltreats the old ruffian while the suitors laugh. This is the usual kind of humour. Penelope […] she will come among the suitors—Athena sends her to sleep & beautifies her, until she is white as sawn ivory. “Oh would that I might die now easily & suffer no longer.” She then has [a] talk with Telemachus, & reminds him of his father’s injunction to her—to stay at home till he [Telemachus] was a grown man, & then to marry whom she wished. Now the time is come, & she will marry the suitor who brings the richest gifts. Odysseus smiles overhearing this, for he knows that his wife has other councils in her mind, & yet has the wit to profit. The suitors bring their gifts. P. withdraws to her chamber, & O. bade her maidens follow her, & he would [give] light the suitors in the hall. The women laughed at him, but he threatened [them], & they obeyed. Athena, however, [is] determined that O. should suffer fully, & […] bitter words against him. Eurymachus taunts him. Finally, the wooers depart, & T. & O. are left in the hall.

113 On embarking on the war against Troy, Odysseus left his dog, Argos, behind.
114 Antinous was the most notable of the suitors; he was also the cruelest and the most impudent.
115 Since Telemachus sneezed while she spoke, Penelope took this as an omen and predicted the downfall of the suitors.
116 Odyssey, XVIII, 201-205.
117 So that his wrath would be greater.
118 Eurymachus was one of the suitors.
T. is bidden to hide the arms in another [?] chamber “to be out of the smoke.”

119 P. comes down, & sits in the hall to question O. of her husband. She tells him how she has beguiled the suitors with her weaving which she wrought by day & undid by night. But how she had to finish it. O. tells his fate. He describes O. exactly. He answers her that O. is near at hand. P. welcomes his words & bids her women wash & anoint him. He will only supper & the old nurse to approach him. She uncovers his scar & knows him. [The] story of the scar is told between her seeing it, & exclaiming. [He] got it when visiting Autolycous, his mother’s father, & hunting boars. 121 Autolycous outdid all men in thievery & swearing. O. signs to her not to reveal him. P. then talks to him & asks tells him a dream she has had of geese & an eagle. She likens herself, in a beautiful passage, to the brown [?] bright nightingale, always mourning. 122 The Gates of dreams; of horn & ivory. The ivory dreams are untrue; the horn [dreams] are true. 123 She is to set the contest of shooting to the wooers; will marry the one who shoots best. They sleep.

GN35

Book 20

Odysseus sleeps in the forecourt on [a] fleece, […] & hides. Penelope wakes & makes prayer to Artemis either to slay her, or that the winds may sweep her away as they swept the daughter of Pandareus. A beautiful little passage. O. hears her, & wakes. He prays to Zeus for a sign. And a woman who is grinding at the mill prays that the suitors may have eaten their last feast. Then Euryclea wakes, & sets all the servants stirring. They sweep, & wipe all the tables with sponges. T. rises & gradually the whole place is at astir. Herds are driven in. The herdsman speaks, & O. answers him with a prophecy of his own return. Then a great feast is made on the shady hill of Apollo. O. feasts with the rest. He is reviled by the suitors. One

119 The smoke from the fireplace.
120 Penelope cannot recognize her husband as he, helped by Athena, has assumed the guise of an old man.
121 This is one of the most famous passages in the Odyssey, XIX, 384-505.
122 Penelope recounts the myth of Philomela who had been turned into a nightingale (Odyssey, XIX, 518).
123 Odyssey, XIX, 562-565: Analyzing her own dream, Penelope here says that there are two kinds of dreams: dreams that pass through the gates of sawn ivory tend to prove to be lies whereas those that pass through the gates of horn tend to come true.
flings an oxen leg at him, but it misses him. The stranger\textsuperscript{124} rises & prophesies that doom is on them. The court is full of ghosts travelling to the underworld. This is in the spirit of a malediction in the Old Testament. They laugh at him. P. listens. Meanwhile the Goddess & the man\textsuperscript{125} are making ready a bitterer feast.

\textbf{GN36}

Book 21

P: beheld [?] her of the great bow of O. laid by in an upper chamber with his treasures. She fetches it & declares that she will marry the man who can shoot with it through a hole in an iron wedge. They try. T fails. Wax is brought out & they anoint themselves.\textsuperscript{126} All fail. O. meets the herdsman & the swineherd & asks them if they would protect O. should he come. He asks for the bow, which is finally at the command of P., & T. gives [it to] him. The suitors revile him. He strings it as easily as a flute player fits another chord to his instrument, and its sings in his ears like a swallow. He shoots, & hits every mark. Then bids Telemachus make ready the feast.\textsuperscript{127}

\textbf{GN37}

Book 22

“Now in this trial, ended at last.”\textsuperscript{128} The slaughter of the wooers begins. They recognise their fate, but try to make terms [?]. One finds the way to the room where the arms are stored; but is caught there, & [is] slung up to the door to die miserably. Athene turned all the arms of the wooers away, & O. was unscathed. Two were spared, who had been enforced by the wooers. The […] were slain. Then O. stood & lay like a fish taken from the sea & laid in the sunlight.\textsuperscript{129} Then O. stood over them like a lion, all bloodstained with the blood of an ox. The old nurse is sent for, & would cry out with joy when she sees the [slain] suitors, but O. tells her (a fine touch, if the old woman would be reticent) not to boast in the presence of the dead. He bids her send for the women who have been insolent & faithless, 12 out

\textsuperscript{124} Meaning Odysseus.
\textsuperscript{125} Meaning Odysseus again.
\textsuperscript{126} In fact, they use wax to loosen the stiffness of the bow.
\textsuperscript{127} “The feast”; probably used sarcastically.
\textsuperscript{128} \textit{Odyssey}, XXII, 5-8.
\textsuperscript{129} \textit{Odyssey}, XII, 384-385. The slain suitors were lying like fish pulled out of the sea by the fisherman.
of 50; they are made to heap the dead in the courtyard - & then O. & Telemachus kill them [the insolent maids], with no clean death for their sin was foul. They are strung up in a row like thrushes in a snare. This is one of the most vivid of the pictures. They wiggled their feet for a while “οὐ τι μαλα δῆν.”

The old nurse goes to Penelope & wakes her with news that her husband has returned. She will not believe it at first, but at length she bestirs herself, in order to see the dead & the man who killed them. Does she pretend? She cannot make up her mind how to welcome him: she finds him standing by a pillar with his eyes downcast for he wonders what his wife will say to him. She knows him not in his rage. Then he speaks and calls her hand. And Telemachus upbraids her; (for P:Penelope] never meets with very generous treatment in spite of her suffering and loyalty). But she is grown sceptical of happiness & will not believe. Then O. dresses and is [...] with beauty. Still she hesitates. Then he asks to sleep, & she [Penelope] bids the old nurse bring out a couch. At this, as she had planned, he bursts forth & tells her how he [had] made himself a bedchamber building it from [?] a stout olive tree; & the tree became the bedpart; & he made a bed & inlaid it & it cannot be moved. Then P[enelope] knows him & falls on his neck. They go off to their chamber, & Athene stays the dawn while they talk. He tells her how he must travel till he comes to a people who know not the sea, in fulfilment of the prophecy. At dawn, he & Telemachus set forth to the home of Laertes, the dark covering them.

The 23rd Book of the

---

130 “But not for very long” (Odyssey, XXII, 473).
131 The dawn having broken, Athena cast darkness over them. Woolf stops her translation here quite abruptly.
Hermes takes the souls of the wooers to the underworld. They gibber like bats awakened in a vast cave by the fall of one of them which distracts them, & they fly in a chain cling each to each. They pass through the land of drams to the field of Asphodel. There Achilles & Agamemnon hold speech together. Why is this thought in again? Achilles asks how Agamemnon came by his end seeing that the gods protected him through the war. Agamemnon tells Achilles how after his death [Achilles’ death] he was honoured. His mother [Achilles’ mother, Thetis], rose from the sea, & the muses raised a deathless strain & no man could keep from tears. Then they burnt him, & took his bones & set them in a golden jar with the bones of Patroclus; & they were buried beneath a great mound over the Hellespont, which men may see when they are out at sea. Games are held there always, far [?] greater than those at which you have [… ] been, at the death of some great king. But my fate was more harsh—” (sic) Then they see the souls of the suitors draw near, & question them. And Automedon tells their story. After which Agamemnon exclaims, Blessed is Penelope who waited for her lord faithfully. How unlike Clytaemnystra whose story shall be sung among men, & shall be a reproach to women for ever, even to the upright.

While the ghosts talk thus, O. & T[elemachus] go across the fields to the house of Laertes. They find that all his servants are out in the vineyard planting a new hedge, & they discover him with his head bent digging out the root of a tree. O. wonders whether to greet him directly or to make trial of him—a device [?], as usual, to prolong the scene. He tells him that he is a stranger seeking Ithaca, about Odysseus, who was his friend over the years. Laertes makes lament; & O. then pry [?] [tries?] him no more but embraces him. “A sign!” asks L[aertes], & O. gives him the usual one of the scar, but not in detail, which would lead to too much repetition. This time he tells over certain trees which L[aertes] had given him when he was a boy. L[aertes] is convinced, & they embrace, & they make ready a feast. All this is very beautiful, as the descriptions always are. The old man in his farm, with his vineyards all around him, bent & faltered, but like a king. Love that the Greeks must have had of recognition scenes! They are always long drawn out.

Woolf seems surprised by this repetition—see Book XI. Agamemnon recounts some incidents after Achilles’ death.
They feast with Laertes and his servants; then, but meanwhile the rumour of the death of the suitors has gone abroad, & the people make lament & go unto the halls & carry out the dead. Some they bury and some they send in fishing boats to their own lands. Eupeithes makes lament for his son, Antinous, the first to die, & incites the people to kill Odysseus. He tells them all the waste of men & ships that Odysseus had caused; others try to dissuade; but they will not listen, but take arms, & go out to the house of Laertes. O. hears them coming & goes out with the servants, armed, to meet them. Athena has word from Zeus to let Odysseus rule & to compose peace between them. First they fight. O. urging on his son to preserve the honour of his house, & the old father exclaiming “How am I happy—when son & Grandson contend in valour!.” Suddenly a bolt falls before the feet of Athena who stay[s] [the battle, & sends the men back into the city. She lays her oaths upon the combatants, & with sacrifice, “like to Mentor in shape & voice.”

End of Odyssey

15th May. [19]08

This is a characteristic ending; as though the voice, simply, had finished speaking, the sun having set, & it being time for bed. But there is also a great sense of that the drama is completed; we are relieved of all anxiety about the future by the knowledge of what must happen to Odysseus—that he is to travel, & meet death, the easiest way, by sea. The scene dies out, as a landscape in the evening.

133 “Μεντορί ειδομενη ημεν δημος ηδε και αυθην”—“Like Mentor in sight and voice” (Odyssey, XXIV, 548).
Prologue spoken by Hermes. He tells how Creusa once was ravished by Apollo, & hid the son born to her in a cradle with snakes, as in the tradition in her family. Hermes was sent by his brother [Apollo] to take the child & place it in the Temple of Apollo at Delphi. A priestess found it, & had pity in it. The child grew up, & served in the temple as keeper of the treasure, without knowledge of his parents. But now, Creusa having married a man, Xuthos, & they having no children, the two are coming in pilgrimage to the shrine of Apollo to pray for offspring. This has been contrived by the God, who plans to present Ion to them, without telling them his parentage. Then the boy will recognise his mother, & receive his due. This is spoken as prologue:

Ion comes out of the temple with a band of Delphians, who are occupied about the shrine. Ion sings, while he brushes the portals with laurel twigs, & washes them clean. A lovely strain, beautiful in its suggestion of the sight. May [?] welcomed by the untrodden heights of Parnassus,
Ion, who has neither father nor mother, is occupied always in tending the altars from which he draws his life; cleaning them, garlanding them, & scaring away the impious birds. Chorus sings, consisting of the handmaidens of Creusa. They walk round the Temple, & admire the scenes painted on the walls; various myths are represented. Ion comes out, & asks their business. They may not enter unless they bring rich offering of sheep. Is this sarcasm? Creusa appears, alone, & Ion remarks that she has the look of a well born person. She tells him that she comes from Athens, & her father was Erechtheus. Then Ion puts her through a very inquisitive examination, like a curious child. Is the myth true, which says that her father was born of the earth [Gaea]—& so on. She grows impatient. She tells him her errand—that she comes on behalf of a childless mother; to pray to Apollo for children. Ion then tells his story, how he is fatherless & motherless; & he has no clue to help him in his search. Creusa says that she knows a woman who is in the same condition, seeking her child. She does not give her own name, but, by speaking of the husband who lags behind, implies that she is the woman herself. The story is too disgraceful to be owned [up to]. But a woman married with Phoebus—Ion cries aloud—who left her, with her son. She spared him, & has heard nothing of him since. Perhaps wild beasts devoured him. Or perhaps, says Ion, the God has him under his own protection. The weakness of her cause is, as Ion points out, that Phoebus will scarcely reveal his own sin. Nobody, he says, can possibly ask the God such a question—he [Phoebus] would at once wreak vengeance on him. Xuthus arrives. Creusa begs [Ion] that nothing of what she says may be repeated to him; since good & bad women are equally disliked. Xuthus has brought word from

135 Woolf’s emphasis in bold type.
136 Given that this addition (“like a curious child”) is Woolf’s, we can surmise that she foreshadows the revelation that Ion is indeed Creusa’s son.
137 This is also in bold type (Ion, 399-400).
Trophonius, that they shall not return home childless. Then he enters to make sacrifice. Ion is left to himself, & tries to think no move of Creusa & her story. What is she to him? Yet, the God must be warned. A God to betray a girl, & leave her with his child, & let the child perish! An unjust man is punished—How can those who set the law sin against it? Apollo, or Poseidon or Zeus, should pay the penalty & that would leave their Temples empty. Man then only imitates the doings of his superiors, & it is not fair to blame him (435-450). This is very remarkable, & much is outspoken here in the plainest way that the commentators hint at. Is this the whole motive of the play—to test some crude old myth nationally?  

The chorus sings a hymn of invocation to Athena & Artemis to be present at the shrine of Apollo, & pray [to] him that a child may be born to the House of Erechtheus. The blessing of children—how it is incomparably greater than wealth—O Athens what thy cliff hath seen! First, it has seen maidens dancing to the pipe of Pan: it has also seen the ravishment of a girl by a God, & the desertion of the child, there on those very steps, as in bitterness against her marriage.

Xuthus comes out of the temple & straight away embraces Ion, as his son. The boy demands reasons for this outburst. The God had told X[uthus] that the first man he met would be his son. But how is it possible? He had had no intercourse with women since his marriage. But before in his youth—still how should the child have come here? (for X[uthus] was a stranger). Then he confesses that he did come once to the Bacchic rites at Delphi, & was introduced to certain women, who gave him their favours; & in that moment, no doubt, Ion was begotten. So he is as the son

---

138 Woolf’s emphasis in bold type.
139 Again, Woolf’s emphasis.
140 These (437-450) are Ion’s thoughts. Verrall translates this (437-450) as follows: “To force a maid and then abandon! … what justice then that ye, who set the law to mortal man, should sin against the law? … Thou Poseidon, or the king of heaven [Zeus]…To quit the fines would leave your temples empty … then just it is to blame not imitative man, but them whose taste instructs our admiration what to ape” (Verrall 41).
141 According to the legend, Erectheus was the first king of Athens.
142 Probably Ion, 494.
143 Pan was a goat-like deity, famous for playing the pipes and notorious for his lusting after nymphs.
144 “Bitterness” is used here to render the “πικρων γὰμων τυρτῶν” (Ion, 505-506).
145 According to the prophecy received by Xuthus, his son was the first man he would lay eyes on after exiting the temple; hence “straight away.”
146 This also seems to be in bold type.
of a God—is that because Bacchus was supposed to be the inspirer of the amour? Ion wishes that he knew his mother—His father joins him, but in his joy is optimistic about everything. Anyhow Ion shall come back to with him to Athens, & there he will be treated with respect because he is rich, which will make men forget the stain of his birth. At this Ion winces—a sensitive, fare (sic) minded, & clear-sighted boy. He says that to begin with his presence will be a constant sting to his stepmother, who will see herself slighted in every attention paid to him by his father; & then if he attempts to enter public life, poor men will revile him. The silent-wise who take no part in government (& correspond, according to V[errall], to our “the cultured”) will wonder at his efforts to rise, & the other men, who do practise, will envy him if he gets any place.147 Give me ease, mediocrity, such as I have enjoyed here, in my innocence, a faithful servant of the God. This throws a curious light upon the cultured class, who despise action; & is a subtle consideration of the domestic situation, unexpected in an ancient book.

GN46

650. Xuthus says that he is going to have a feast here, to which all Ions friends are to come, & he is to say good bye to them. The plan now is that Ion shall be taken to Athens, as a guest to whom Xuthus would show the sights of the town. By degrees, Creusa will accept him as the heir. Ion agrees, with strangely little difficulty, remembering his long argument, just spoken. He says that he may discover his mother, the one flaw in his happiness, & that she may prove to be an Athenian, for no stranger can ever have the right of free speech. The Chorus sing; doubting this curious oracle, which brings sorrow on their mistress. They invoke the heights of Parnassus where Bacchus dances with flaming vine branches at night, to prevent Ion from ever reaching Athens. For he would bring destruction on the city. Creusa comes out, with an old servant, who was as a son to her father, & is therefore as a father to herself. She asks the chorus what news Xuthus has brought from the God. They have been forbidden on pain of death to tell her the truth. The chorus, after a moment of hesitation, tell her how her husband has been blessed with a son, wh.[ile] she is left childless. She wails. The chorus blame Xuthus, for he should have asked her wish. Then they unravel/reiterate [?] the plot—Xuthus has

147 Quoting from the same note as Woolf: “598 … σοφοί σιγώσι : ‘are in their wisdom silent,’σοφία (culture) being the watch-word and mark of that educated class, averse from politics and devoted to self-improvement, which was just beginning to be important” (Verrall 54). I believe that Woolf here agrees, as I do, with Verrall, in so far that “culture” is more appropriate in this context than “wisdom.”
had an intrigue with a slave woman, & they have sent the child to live at Delphi, & now that he [the son] is old enough to share in his fathers property, they claim him. The old slave the bursts out with a wild plan to

**GN 46 Verso**

Then Creusa tells them of the disgraceful conduct of the God. They say nothing in blame of him—at once they take practical steps against Xuthus & Ion.

**GN 47**

840.

enter the Temple while Xuthus is feasting with his son, & to kill them both. Creusa must act a womans part—that is, she must poison or kill the husband & child. He [the old slave], in gratitude bound, will help. For the shame of being a slave is in the name; a slave in all other vestments, if he is worthy, may be as good as any man. Another characteristic phrase for from Euripides. Creusa bursts out, addressing herself to the (sic) Zeus—Athena—The time has come. “O soul; how shall I keep silence any longer?”148 She turns to Apollo, the singer of sweet melodies, & denounces him, beneath the open sky. She tells the story of her ravishment, turning away from the chorus, to the Temple. He came to her, with gold in his hair, as she was picking flowers to wear, & ravished her in the cave. “A false[,] false ravisher thou art!” At the end of this outburst the old slave questions her, not having heard all aright. She tells him the story in detail again; dwelling on each point of it. How she brought forth the child quite alone, & left it there [in the cave], for its father [Apollo] to care for it. But the birds snatched it, & it has grown up in Hades. The slave is amazed, & says how could you have [left] you son?—& it is even stranger that the god should have endured it—“Ah “If thou hadst seen the child stretching out his hands to me!”149 This is a lovely exclamation. She will not argue his charge of cruelty. One line shows how unutterably she had felt it. Nothing abides. The slave exhorts her to kill either Xuthus or his son. She has an old tenderness for her husband, but will gladly kill Ion. She then tells how she comes

---

148 Verrall translates this (859) as “Tell me, my heart, how can I hold my peace?” (Verrall 73).
149 Verrall 81.
possessed of two magic drops of blood, one that kills—one that cures. She will give the slave the fatal drop. He shall mix it in Ion’s wine, as he sits at the feast; she is careful to insist that one else shall take it. All her anger seems to be with Ion, not with her husband. [The] Slave says that scruples of right are all very well if you are prosperous, but they stand in the way of ones enemies.\textsuperscript{150}

The chorus sing to Einodia, mistress of Hell.\textsuperscript{151} One of Creusa’s servants dashes in, in a state of agitation. She [Creusa] has been sentenced to death by stoning. He tells the story, at length, in the way of messengers. Ion framed a wondrous tent for the feast, with embroideries on the walls, statues at the entrance (the [?] purpose of this description of the pomp of Delphi). They sit at meat, & the old slave appears & makes them laugh by his officious desire to serve them. At last the time for drinking is come, & he serves Ion. But, just as Ion is to taste, a slave speaks ill-omened words, & Ion, skilled in rites, pours his bowl on the ground, & bids the others too. The doves [from the temple] come & sip the remains. All the doves are unharmed, save only the dove who sips from Ion’s cup. She [the bird] reels & flutters, & finally “her rosy feet” stiffen. Ion attacks the old man, & bids him reveal the name of the poisoner. At length he confesses. She [Creusa] is condemned unanimously to die by being thrown from a rock.

Creusa (where has she been?) comes in, in flight, & casts herself upon the altar, by the advice of the chorus. She is pursued by Ion who reaches her; they then enter into a curious dispute, each upbraiding the other, hints at meaning. Very dark & tense—but expounded by E:\[ripides\] perhaps with too great ingenuity: difficult point of psychology:

\textbf{GN48 Verso}

Ion still cannot believe the story against the God—[he] goes back to their old story point again—how there must be some mistake. Even when she assures him of the truth of it, he is not convinced. The Athena has to appear in order to silence, & [as?] by violence, all his doubt.

\textsuperscript{150} Verrall translates this (1045-1047) as follows: “scruples of right look well, and prosperous folk may prize them: but at war, and when you need to wound a foe, there is no rule against” (87).

\textsuperscript{151} Verrall explains that Einodia is another name of Hekate, “identified with Kore, daughter of Demeter” (86).
Xuthus, she says, has no right to give what is not his, for as an alien he cannot inherit. Then, if ambition such as Xuthus,” may not meet with reward, what cause have you to fear mine? says Ion. She hints darkly that she clings to the altar, so that the wrong doer may suffer wrong. The god wd be defiled if her blood were spilt there. Ion exclaims that there should be two altars, one for the pure, and another for the impure.

The Pythian priestess comes out, carrying the cradle in which she found Ion & gives it to him, as he is going away. He proposes to offer it up at the altar (to the delight of the priests! Says V[errall]) Creusa looks at it, & bursts out “Oh my Ion” She then describes the clothes & ornaments inside accurately so that Ion is convinced at last, & they embrace.152 Then she tells how Apollo is his father. They sing short songs [?] of joy.

Then he [Ion] has a doubt, & takes his mother aside. Perhaps this story of the god is only invented to save his name & her reputation: she answers him that it is not so, & gives him an explanation by Apollo’s late conduct in giving him to Xuthus as a son. Ion says the answer does not satisfy him. At this moment Athena appears. She says she has been sent by Apollo to explain matters. He will not come himself, for fear of reproaches. He had planned this scheme for the benefit of Ion. He had meant to reveal the truth after a time. She then goes on to desc recount the future of Ion, & of Creusa & the husband.

When Ion says he believes her, as he believed the story before, it may merely be a polite way of saying that he still finds it incredible. Otherwise he must contradict himself.

They are all to found great families, & to colonise new lands, which will carry their names to remote ages. “Well hath Apollo done in all.”153 How [to] keep this secret, so that Xuthus may be at ease, & you [that is, Creusa] are happy in your possessions. Ion answers that he believes her. Indeed, he believed the story when he

152 Woolf’s emphasis: she has written this excerpt in bold type.
153 This is exactly the same translation as Verrall’s (129). We cannot help but assume that Woolf is being sarcastic here.
heard it before. Creusa blames Apollo, for giving her back her child.\footnote{In fact, Creusa retracts her initial outburst against Apollo. Perhaps Woolf wants to make a point here.} Athena says the Gods are always strong in the end. She leads them to Athens. To [?] seat Creusa in her ancient honour. The chorus meanwhile: “Let him whose house is disputed worship Heaven; virtue is rewarded; evil damned; Justice cometh in the end.”\footnote{Ion, 1619-1622.} 5th June [19]08.

**GN51**

The chief puzzle in the play, of course, is—what view did Euripides take of the conduct of Apollo? It is fairly obvious that he saw all the objections that any rationalist could now urge; he puts them into Ions mouth, when he says that the gods are judged by one law & men by another (c 300) 435. During the first part of the play it seems clear that Euripides has taken a gross old myth, & is treating it as though it were a fine story to be examined critically. Towards the end though [when] the action continues to be repulsive, the comment is silent. All Ion says is that he cannot believe it; &, if we like, we may imagine that he is still in the end, incredible that a god should act so, and be so leniently judged. All judgement of Apollo is implied; he says he will not come himself, for fear of reproach; but no comment is made on this; Athena sumps up the situation.—”Apollo has done well in all things.” Was it impossible for Euripides to carry the play to its natural end? Which would have been, surely, to confront Apollo with Creusa, & to make some one, say Xuthus, judge of their share of guilt? Athena is merely a compromise. No one will be satisfied with the arrangement. But to have written the obvious end would have been a bolder act than any—his [Euripides’] boldness is very marked in various passages already. The outburst of Ion, against the gods; the slaves remark that a slave is as good as a free man, except in name, & the sentence about women “how women, both good & bad, are lumped together by men & condemned.”\footnote{Ion, 399-400.} But all this is very crude commentary, upon an unsatisfactory play. There are some beautiful lines and choruses; but on the whole you have the impression that the play was written to give shape to these strange situations—not to indulge in poetry. He was interested in the question; he puts it
in the most pertinent way; he refrains from a definite answer. But he shows the working of his mind, plainly, & a tremendous problem. In order perhaps to leave the outline of the questions clear, he has stated them very plainly, almost prosaically, as a lawyer putting a case.

GN52 Verso

εραστος = beloved
εραστης = a lover
ερασω = to love
η ερωμενη = the beloved woman
εραστος = beloved
προβαλλω = put forward

[The above appears on the verso of p. 52 and refers to the Symposium that follows].

GN53

Plato. Symposium

Socrates & Aristodemus walk to Agathon’s. Their talk is very colloquial, as per Euripides; with all the half contradictions & repetitions, which the ordinary person uses in talk; & they are not happily rendered by Jowett; who must smooth them into capacious lines, in the 18th Century model. Plato is often abrupt. This is a charming opening; in spite of the awkwardness of the form—a repetition after some years, of what someone else had told the speaker. But it is very natural &

157 All these words have their root in the verb ερασω/ερω—to be in love, to desire someone. Woolf has probably jotted these words in ancient Greek on the verso of page 52 to remind herself of their meaning whilst reading the Symposium.

158 The protagonists in the Symposium are as follows: Apollodorus and an unnamed friend to whom the former narrates what had been narrated to him in the first place by Aristodemus. Thus, Apollodorus was not present at the dinner-party. Those present were: Aristodemus, a disciple of Socrates; Agathon, a dramatist; Socrates; Phaedrus, a dinner-party habitué and literary man; Pausanias, historian and Agathon’s lover; Eryximachus, a doctor; Aristophanes, the comedian; and Alcibiades, Athenian General, famous for his good looks and rather wanton lifestyle.

159 That is, in a colloquial, everyday language, not the exalted poetry of, say, Aeschylus (177a).

160 Benjamin Jowett (1817-1893), British educator and Greek scholar; I cannot be sure which edition Woolf was using.
easy; the politest & best society in the world. Agathon makes his servants treat us as “though we were your guests”; they have no orders. Pleasant relationship.

Eryximachus Phaedrus began, & sang the traits of love, loudly, but indiscriminately. He traced its mythology, & discovered it to the first of gods, but for some reason the least praised. Then he went on to name some of its triumphs. How it makes men suffer more than any other passion; for a man would rather die a thousand times than appear disgraced in the eyes of the loved one. Women also are inspired by the god: Alcestis showed greater love for her husband than his own parents did; Achilles was even more heroic, for he killed Hector knowing that he must die himself as he did so. And this was after the death of the man for whom he did it. Love, then, would make a perfect state, for men, under its influence, would be heroes.

Then Pausanias spoke. The substance of his arguments was that Love should discriminate. There are different kinds of love. In the manner of Plato he sketches a myth; that there are two kinds of Eros & two Aphrodites; one is pure Heavenly, the other “πανδημος,” public—common.

The heavenly one was born without any female strain in its parentage; & is thus the love of men for men, which is a higher & more intellectual love than the love for women or for boys. But the love of young boys has brought the practice into discredit, & it is thought disgraceful in many states. In barbarous places especially, it is censored; for the strength of such friendship is dangerous to tyrannies. In some countries, like Boeotia, the people let it flourish because they are too stupid & lazy to express any argument against it. In Athens the custom is difficult to understand: the utmost honour—licence is given to a lover; but at the same time, parents begin to discredit the practice, & male loves are periled. The only thing to decide whether such a love is good or bad lies in the nature of the love itself.

In Athens, we discriminate, rightly, between swift attachments, which are physical, or adulterate, in some way, & the lasting love, which is purely good. When love & lovers meet together with the same object of profiting & conferring profit, of the highest kind, the union is impeccable. A Deception, if it comes in, are (sic)

---

161 According to the legend, Alcestis offered to die in her husband’s stead.
162 She means Achilles’ companion, Patroclus.
163 This is in bold type.
164 Παν meaning “whole,” and δημος “public.”
165 Woolf’s emphasis.
166 “Brief” would be a bit more accurate here.
who is nobly fruitful, is no blame.167

Eryximachus, who was a doctor, agrees with Pausanias that there are two loves; he finds them in the bodies of all creatures. It is the doctors art to unite them harmoniously, or to suppress one, & incite the other.168 It is the same in music; you take notes, which disagreed once, & reconcile them. But in theory this is simple, for love has no double nature; it cares no more for a high note than for a low one. But in practice, in education, which is the correct performance of airs already compared is difficult. All science & art, even the art of divination have to do with the discrimination between good & bad loves, their marriage, a proper composition.

GN55

Aristophanes speaks & invents a myth of the human race. There were 3 sexes, man, born of the sun, woman of the earth, & man woman, of the moon, a mixture of both. (They tried to destroy the gods, &)169 They were round, & whirled about, double the size of men. They tried to destroy the gods, & were in consequence cut in half; & went seeking their halves. The man who was good man seeks men, & so does the pure woman; the man-woman seeks women, & the woman-man seeks men. They would have died had not Zeus made it possible for the man to beget children on the woman. They are always desiring to find the whole, & desire always something more than they can ever get, unless indeed they were melted into one.170 As things are, it is happiest to be able to indulge poor love; therefore, let none flout him, or he will quarter them.

Agathon speaks; so far the gifts of love have been praised, but not the god himself. I will praise love—First he is delicate, for he lives only in the tenderest places, the souls of men, & will never stay when he finds them hard. Then he is the most beautiful, for he lives on flowers in flowery places, & directly they wither & fade he is gone. Then he is courageous, for he mastered Ares himself, & honoured him with love. Then he is temperate, for he is master of all the pleasures, their superior & conqueror. Then he is wise, for he is himself the fount of all poetry, the maker

167 Unfortunately, it is hard to convey any meaning out of this sentence, but I gather it constitutes Woolf’s opinion on the immediately preceding sentence by Pausanias.
168 Eryximachus, a doctor, holds that in curing diseases and whatever is unsound in a lover’s body, the doctor ultimately gratifies and exalts the duality apropos of love since he restores the body’s natural balance.
169 Woolf’s parenthesis; according to Aristophanes, Zeus thought that hermaphrodites, owing to their double nature, constituted a threat.
170 Aristophanes here elaborates his viewpoint with mythical hyperbole; he claims that in the perpetual longing for wholeness the two halves would not refuse Hephaestus’s suggestion to melt and weld them into one.
of poetry. Every lover, be he never so faultless, becomes a poet. All craftsmen & artists, so long as they know not love, are impotent. He is the youngest & fairest of the Gods, who loves the young, & will never consort with the aged. He is the source of all knowledge of fair things in the Gods, for before he was born they were constrained by necessity. But the hideous creatures of whom Aristophanes has spoken were born before his day. He [Love] can have no intercourse with what is ugly, so that his love always produces beautiful things.

GN55 Verso

Socrates: Love is the desire for something we have not got. It is, as A[gon] has said, the desire for beauty & good. Therefore it [Love] cannot be good & beautiful in itself. This was shown me by Diotima. I will repeat what she told me. I was mistaken to say that if Love was without good therefore it was worthless. For there is always a mean. “A learned man is between a wise man & an ignorant man.” She told me a myth to account for the nature of Love. Porus lay drunk asleep, as one of the gods, & Penia came & lay with him. Their child was Eros who has the inventiveness & fecundity of his father, the neediness & nakedness of his mother. [Love is] Interpreted between gods & men.

All artists are touched by him.
What good does Love do to men?
Love the love of what?
[The] Love of particular people.
Love cannot be for ugliness.
Must be for beauty.

171 This is in bold type although this might have been entirely accidental.
172 Here Socrates deconstructs the panegyric speeches of his fellow revelers. He commences his own speech by arguing that to the extent that people are in need of what they do not possess, Love, being in constant need of beauty and goodness, cannot be beautiful or good in itself. Woolf here has grasped this argument.
173 Elaborating on his argument, Socrates uses a conversation he supposedly had with Diotima, a woman from Mantinea, a town north of Sparta in Peloponnesus (Symposium, 202a). Diotima was thought to be a prophetess.
174 Symposium, 202a.
175 Symposium, 203b. Poros or Porus (lit. “way” or “resource”—hence, a-порia, which means impasse) was the son of Metis (cunning). The myth is that when Aphrodite was born, the Gods had a feast, after which Poros fell in a drunken stupor. Then Penia (Poverty)—here, Woolf has Greekified the term by using the Greek /n/ (v)—lay with him and had a child. Therefore, Love is linked with Aphrodite—because he was conceived on the day of her divine birth (203b-c).
176 These are several maxims that Socrates underscores as central in Diotima’s treatise on Love.
Love is for the possession by oneself of beauty eternally. Love is the name given to a whole class of things. Love is for beauty both of body & soul. It is the passion to create, wh[ich] can only be done when you [?] find beauty.\footnote{This sentence is scribbled on the side of the main text on the same page.}

A truly instructed lover will go on, from better bodies [?], loving bodies. Then love till he gets finally a glimpse of absolute beauty, which is more beautiful than any other vessel in which it takes lodging.\footnote{Woolf has grasped here the gist of Plato’s theory regarding the ideal form of love in that it is separate from the individual lover (\textit{Symposium}, 198d-212c, especially 211a).}

Socrates speaks, & first drives Agathon to admit that, as love is the desire for something which we have not, it cannot be itself either beauty or good; but is the desire for the eternal possession of them. He quotes Diotima, the prophetess, who had accounted for the diverse nature of love, by his origin [?]—the child of Penia & Porus (Plenty).\footnote{Woolf translates “resource” as “plenty.”}

What is the use of such love? asks Socrates. What does a man get by his love of beauty? Let us at present talk of “good” for it is easier: he [the lover] gets happiness. The desire of good is common to all men; but not the desire of love. One part of love is separated from the rest & receives the name of the whole. Only some creators are called poets; yet all creators are poets.\footnote{Woolf here follows Socrates’ argument in relation to the differentiation of love from its objects of affection or from lovers; to illustrate this, he makes use of the Greek noun ποιησίς (\textit{poesis}) from the verb ποιέω—\textit{poieo}, which literally means “to create,” hence the name for the poet—that is, the “creator.” Furthermore, he argues that while many men “create” few may be called “poets” (\textit{Symposium}, 205e).} Only one class of people are is called lovers. What are they seeking? Some say they seek their missing half; but this is not true, because a man will cut off his hand if he is better without it. There is nothing that men love but the good. Love is the everlasting possession of the good. What is the manner of their pursuit? Love is only birth in beauty, whether of body or soul. All mature people desire to bring forth in beauty. When they see beauty,
they which is harmonious with the divine & immortality, they, desiring immortality, produce beauty when they see ugliness they are contained [?]. Birth is the only form of immortality we have, & we have said that men desire eternal beauty. What is the reason of this love in animals, who do not reason? as in men? The mortal nature is seeking immortality[.] The body is always changing; a new birth is no more than the change & continuation of the old body. This is true also of the soul. Knowledge is recollection; re-birth.

The love of children, then, is the love of immortality. All these noble actions of Alcestis, Achilles & so on, have been done with a view to fame, immortality. Those whose bodies alone are creative, take women, & beget children. Some men have creative souls. They create wisdom & virtue. Such a man wanders about till he can find a beautiful soul with whom to produce the beauty with which his soul is laden. Who would not leave Homers children & Hesiods children rather than mortal children? 183

The way of the highest love is something like this: He [the lover] should learn to have the beauty in one form first; then he will perceive that all beauty is related, & he will love the beauty in all forms equally. Then he will love the beauty of the mind above all others. Personal beauty is only a trifle. Then he will love the beauty of the sciences—he will contemplate the whole sea of beauty, until at last the vision is revealed to him of a single science, which is the science of beauty everywhere. At last he will gaze on [at?] pure beauty, which underlies all the forms of beauty, & is stable, & immortal. He must use the beauties of earth as steps with which to mount to the supreme beauty. This is the life which it most befits a man to live, in the contemplation of absolute beauty. He will bring forth not images of beauty, but the realities. He will be immortal, if any man may.

Diotima spoke; I believed her, & always teach that to affirm this end there is no better helper than Love. Wherefore I praise love always. Socrates stops, & a noise is heard outside. Alcibiades comes in, drunk. He sits down, & suddenly sees Socrates.

183 It is not entirely clear in Woolf’s text, but Socrates here argues that the intellectual progeny of Homer and Hesiod is immortal.
You pursue me everywhere, he [Socrates] says, & are jealous if I praise anyone else. You always draw all the beauty in the company to you. Socrates explains that since Alcibiades has been in love with him, his conduct is impossible, so exacting is he. “Protect me Eryximachus!” This is a strange little scene, rather wild, & held in earnest. Alcibiades who is [in?] love is [?] passionate, few [?] are to feel. Then when told to praise love, he says he can only praise one person, Socrates. He takes a great gulp of wine & begins. Socrates is like one of those images of Silenus, which are always grotesque, open them, & you find the figure of a god inside. So Socrates will always speak in rude language, often repeating himself. But, like Marsyas, the flute player, he is a great charmer. Your words bring tears to my eyes. You are like a Syren (sic); when I hear you I repent of my past, & implore to stay with you; I tear myself away, lured by the applause of the people. I found such beauty in him [Socrates], that I resolved to trade up [?] all [?] my youth & lovers [?] & make him reveal himself to me, as to his beloved. One night I offered him all that I had, if he would be my lover. My beauty was great, but his virtue was greater. He laughed his odd laugh, & said, “Then I shall be the lover!” I said no more, but crept under his cloak. There I lay, with this wonderful master in my arms all night long, & would you believe me?—I left him in the morning, as though I had slept with a father or an elder brother. Then I will tell you how he went with me on the expedition to Potidaea. He could go in [?] bare […], when we all shivered. He stood once all day & all night in thought—we watched him—when the dawn broke, he went away. I met him walking with another unarmed, on foot, in the […] of […]

the battle of Delium. But he was calm, & unavailable as ever; as he is in the street of Athens.

184 Silenus was part of Dionysus’ entourage and was depicted as a figure of uncouth exterior; he could, nevertheless, be wise in his drunkenness.
185 Marsyas, a Satyr, was also part of Dionysus’ entourage; according to the legend, he challenged Apollo to a flute-playing contest; not only did he lose the contest, but Apollo flayed him as a punishment.
186 432-430 BC.
187 Here, Alcibiades praises Socrates by saying that during the expedition on Potidaea he proved himself valiant. He also suffered hunger and thirst and braved the bitter cold (219e-220d).
188 424 BC.
Such is Socrates—unlike any other. But this is the way he has treated me, & I bid you, Agathon, “be on your guard.”

All this story of yours, said Socrates, is only to hide the end of it: you want to separate me from Agathon. Come here Agathon, & let me praise you.

“Ah, its the usual way—said Alcibiades—Socrates always puts the young & beautiful to his side.

Revellers broke in here; [...] them all to drink, & Aristodemous slept. When he woke at cock crow, he saw Socrates, Aristophanes & Agathon still awake; Socrates was telling them that the genius of comedy was the same as the genius of tragedy. They were so sleepy, that they could not to argue with him. Socrates put them all to sleep, & went, followed by Aristodemus. At the Lyceum he took a bath, & passed the day as usual. At night he went to his own home.

The speech of Socrates is one of the most beautiful I have read. This is an entire expression of something often hinted at in the dialogue. He raises you more swiftly and simply than usual—with his logic clothing—to the utmost heights—good that it should ever have been written!

Alcibiades makes the most curious speech of any, in character, as though on a stage. He is half brutal, half in fear, a moving sight. He depends, like some unruly sea, on the potency of the moon, which is Socrates. He feels all Socrates’ grandeur. He wishes the man dead sometimes—such is the conflict he raises in the bodies of his followers.

The end is almost tragic, for Socrates is alone in all, not to be moved, & acts with a kind of delicate chill irony, which must have maddened. There is an excellent phrase or two at the end, to finish off the picture, of the Athenian supper party, sleeping after their divine discourse, while the voice of Socrates goes on.

But it is impossibly deep—Should be read again & again. This is only an outline.

15th July [19]08

---

189 Symposium, 222c.
190 Woolf’s handwriting becomes increasingly illegible from this point until the end of her commentary on the Symposium. I have therefore rendered only the completely legible parts.
191 This could also be “He carries you.”
192 This could also be “chopping,” but I cannot be sure.
193 This could also be “imperfectly.”
There is also the beautiful story of the old man, & his life in harmony with nature.\textsuperscript{194}

\textbf{GNN60}

28\textsuperscript{th} July [1908]

Virgil. 4\textsuperscript{th} Georgic

Close account of way to keep bees. Their hive should be by a stream, with stones in it, where they can sun themselves in spring. Far from beasts & noises. The Kings fight, & you must choose their superior & kill the others. The different kinds have different markings. Some are spotted with gold scales. In this description, words, clearly, are used with such accuracy, but [yet?] twisted out of their ordinary relations that an unacademic [?] scholar must miss half.\textsuperscript{195} There is something in the exquisite delicacy & brightness of the description of inanimate things; have wh.[ich] puts one/me in mind of Popes Rape of the Lock.\textsuperscript{196} & the same kind of play upon meaning. The bees signify a state & its wars. Habits of bees. Loyalty to kings. How they kill themselves when worn out.

220. Bees [are] thought by some to have a divine spirit in them on account of their instincts. Some think there is a god in side[?] of beasts & a man, all that has in short; so that they never die, but are recalled to the stars & live there. This is something like the Buddhist view. The diseases of bees. How to tell when they are ill. Remedy—kill a calf, & bees will breed from its blood. Aristaeus taught this method. He was a son of Apollo turned shepherd on earth, & he lost his bees, & complained to his mother—she sat beneath the flood, singing among her maidens (this is like Sabrina, in Roman). Most exquisite myth of Aristaeus. He \textit{had} is asked [?] sent [?] by his mother to [catch?] Proteus, to ask why his bees are dead.\textsuperscript{197} Proteus has to

\textsuperscript{194} This extract refers to Virgil’s 4\textsuperscript{th} \textit{Georgic}.
\textsuperscript{195} Unfortunately, this sentence is not entirely clear.
\textsuperscript{196} Alexander Pope’s \textit{The Rape of the Lock} (1712, 1714, 1717).
\textsuperscript{197} According to Virgil, Aristaeus was the son of Apollo and Cyrene, a Nymph. Feeling ruined after having lost his bees, he complains that his mother has forsaken him. On hearing his cries, Cyrene, who had been sitting in a cave along with other Nymphs, invites him over and tells him that he should catch Proteus, the crafty sea-deity famous for his prophetic powers, and ask him why his bees are dead.
At cantu commotae Erebi de sedibus imis,
umbrae ibant tenues simulacraque luce carentum,
quam multa in foliis avium se milia condunt,
vesper ubi aut hibernus agit de montibus imber:
matres atque viri defunctaque corpora vita
magnanimum heroum, pueri innuptaeque puellae,
impositique rogis iuvenes ante ora parentum –198

be seized. He tells Aristaeus how Orpheus is his enemy because A. had frightened
Eurydice, [2] & a snake seized her. Orpheus goes to seek her in the shades.199 Souls
like flocks of startled birds. He sang, & charmed them—but looked once on Eury-
dice & she sank back forever.200 He mourns her all day long, as the sad nightingale
among the poplars. The matrons tore him asunder for slighting them, & his dead
head went down stream, crying Eurydice. A:[ristaeus] is told how to kill bulls, &
bees breed from them.

This is the song I, Virgil made, while Caesar was conquering &
making laws.

Lovely!201

198 This is another indication of Woolf’s fascination with the kingdom of Hades. In this pas-
sage, Proteus is describing to Aristaeus Orpheus’s trip to Hades: “From the crannies of Erebus
they flocked about him like birds that hide in the leaves when dusk or breaking weather
drives them from the hills—grown men and women, the strengthless forms of heroes drained
of their brimming life, young boys and girls, young men set on the pyre while their parents
watched” (Georgic IV, 471-477; The Georgics, trans. Robert Wells, Manchester: Carcanet,
1982, 93). See also Woolf’s engagement with Book XI of the Odyssey in this manuscript.

199 Meaning the underworld.

200 According to the legend, Orpheus successfully negotiated Eurydice’s return to the world
of the living with Persephone, Pluto’s wife. The condition was that under no circumstances
should he turn around to look at Eurydice while she was walking behind him on their way
back up to the land of the living. Unfortunately, just as Orpheus saw the first glimpses of
daylight, he turned around to see whether Eurydice was still with him. In doing so, he
violated Persephone’s condition and Eurydice was sent back to Hades forever. Orpheus’s
lamentations were cut short by a group of maenads who tore his body from limb to limb.
His severed head echoed Eurydice’s name until he eventually died.

201 We cannot be certain as to whether Woolf is being sarcastic here. By writing “Lovely!”
she may be referring to the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice; it could also be, however, that
she is externalizing anti-war feelings, or expressing squeamishness at Orpheus’s severed
head bobbing down the river calling out Eurydice’s name.
Odysseus outside the tent of Ajax. Athena stands over him. He does not want to see Ajax in his madness. There is something far more gentle to him as a man in the sight than to Athena, a goddess. She insists—for to laugh at ones enemy is good.” Ajax comes out. She gibes—displays [?] him in all his insanity. ‘see how great the gods are Odysseus.’ "I pity him—I pity in him his fate as my own. Shadows we are.” This is profound; the meditation of a reflective man, like Hamlet. The individual makes him think [?] of all men.

The Chorus of Salaminian sailors.
They reflect that the great are easily subdued [?] by scandal: no one believes ill of an insignificant man. Yet both great & small are necessary to each other. Ajax is great-minded. His enemies chatter like a flock of birds when he is absent; they fly & fall silent when he emerges. Let him [Ajax] come forth then & do away with the rumours.

Tecmessa comes in & tells the story of the madness & slaughter. They hear Ajax shouting within. He had been wont to take sorrow silently. He [Ajax] is calling for his son Eurysakes & Teucer. Are they never going to stop hunting? I am perturbed. The irritability of a sick & unhappy person.

After the death of Achilles, it was Ajax who fought bravely to protect the body of the dead hero. However, the Greek generals, Agamemnon and Menelaus, decided that his armor, made by Hephaestus himself, should go to Odysseus. Incensed at their decision, Ajax decided to avenge his honor, but was overwhelmed by divine madness sent by Athena. He ended up slaughtering the cattle thinking the animals to be Agamemnon, Menelaus and the Greek army. Having realized what he had done, he decided to take his life by falling on his own sword.

Athena here insists that Odysseus should see Ajax.
Athena is talking to Ajax.
Maybe Woolf is quoting to demonstrate Athena’s partiality.
Odysseus’ reply; perhaps we should pay some attention to Woolf’s quotation here inasmuch as it denotes some degree of pessimism and subservience before the divine.
This could also be “easily subject to scandal.”
The chorus does not believe that their leader is guilty of such ignominy.
Teucer, Ajax’s half-brother.
This could also be “I am destroyed.”
He [Ajax] comes out, and asks the sailors to kill him—asks for one more sight of Odysseus. Ajax laments his son [Eurysakes] & the […]—questions how he is to meet his father. Shall he go to Troy & dies there alone. [2] to the heights—seas that have known him & shall know him no longer. Tecmessa implores him to think of her. He took her country, her parents are dead; she [will] not stay but [with] him. Tecmessa dwells upon herself as a slave woman would, whose affection must always be partly selfish—like a servants.

Difficult for us to understand the story of Ajax. Seems such a trifling matter about a prize—but that his honour is aimed at; mixture of vanity & a sense […] that he has made himself ridiculous. Enough ruling […] of any vote [or role?] to be a tragic figure—partly because there is something impulsive in his glory over sheep & his bloody hand. Ajax [is] thinking of his life with its unspoken sadness, wonders what the use of living can be—each day advancing him to the limit of death & drawing him back again. Tecmessa has hidden Eurysakes, the son, during his fathers madness. He [Ajax] sends for him—& says that he wont be frightened of blood being, his fathers son. “O son, may you be happier than your father—in all else like him.” The days of ignorance are best, until we [one?] learn [learns?] to joy or sorrow. When you come to them, prove yourself my son. He commends him to Teucer. Tells Tecmessa to go within & lock the doors. A woman is a pitiable thing. But a doctor has no charms when a wound calls for the knife.

Ajax has a long speech. How we must obey those in power. Lovely conclusion: night gives way to day, the storms are hushed. “Must not men obey?” Ends up with “I go where I must go—[…] shall hear that […] of my unhappiness I have found peace.” I have found peace “seswsmenov” comes down on it assiduously […]. They [the chorus of Salaminian sailors] interpret it innocently. He goes off. They sing a song of joy to Pan. Tecmessa comes from Teucer. Calchas has proph-

---

211 There is no page 63.
212 Ajax implies that nothing can be gained from trying to heal a wound that can only be cured by “the knife”—that is, suicide.
213 Line 675.
214 Lines 685-692.
215 The implication is that Ajax is trying to allay his comrades’ suspicions that he is about to kill himself, and has succeeded.
esied that unless they keep Ajax indoors today he will die. He was guilty of hard words to Athena, saying that he did not want her help. Flouted the gods.

**GN65 Verso**

[Sketch of the chorus of the Greek camp, the Salaminian sailors, or Ajax’ tent and of the ships].

Chorus of Salaminian Sailors
tent of Ajax
Odysseus & Athena
Ships & sea

**GN67**

48. Athena—do you know how great the gods are?

125.Ὁρὼ γὰρ, ἡμᾶς οὐδὲν ὄντας ἀλλὰν πλὴν εἰδώλιαν, οὐσοὶ ροὶ ζωμέν, η ἱκουφὴν σκιάν.

190. Take this to heart & never rebel [?] against the Gods.

First chorus: The great are more easily attacked than the small. Both great & small do help [?] in alliance.

Perhaps the Gods had been insulted, & therefore sent this madness.

Vigorous description Ajax [?] of madness.

Ajax howled at these words of weakness.

T.[ecmessa] asks them [the chorus] to help her.
She complains that she has had a double woe—grudging cries heard.

The fretfulness of Ajax. T. fears that he called for her son. Ajax greets the sailor with emotion as his only friend.

Horror of hubris [?]—slaughter of sheep by such a man

---

216 On the back of p. 65, there exists a sketch by Woolf of a potential setting of the first scene of the tragedy, depicting Ajax’s tent, the Greek ships, and Odysseus with Athena.

217 Woolf has drawn a sketch depicting the above.

218 Woolf is here attempting a line-by-line translation.

219 Rendering this in English verse, Jebb writes: “For I see that we are but phantoms, all we who live, or fleeting shadows” (Jebb, 31). An exact translation would perhaps be: “For I see that in life we are nothing but ghosts living in darkness.”

220 Lines 160-161.

221 In fact, Tecmessa’s account of Ajax’s madness is given in lines 295-310.
380. Dread of being laughed at.\footnote{Line 380 gives Ajax’s impression of Odysseus as a “tool of evil” (κακὸν ὀργανόν).}
391 Search [?] of T:ecmessa sustained. Wish to die with him. Peevish & submissive—vaguely bewildered by the greatness of her fate.
410. A.—addresses beautiful place that will see him no more.
430. A.’s lament for Telamon [?] lost: his father.

460. Questions [?] what he is […]—conventional heroic figure—disgraced at home—therefore cant go back; to die at Troy wd please the Greeks.
470. Ultimate death is to die honourably,\footnote{I am not certain of this sentence, but it would definitely reflect Ajax’s objectives.} wh.ich will do him credit in the eyes of his father.\footnote{These comments are mostly illegible; in the original, Ajax is wondering how he could return to his father, Telamon, in honor; since he has been deprived of Achilles’ armor, he cannot go back empty-handed; if, however, he were to kill as many Trojans as possible that would only please Agamemnon, Menelaus and Odysseus; and given what they did to him, he is not inclined to do so; therefore, the only option is to die honourably by taking his own life (430-480).}
475. What joy is there is day following day, pushing us forward, now drawing us back, from the verge—of death (γε κατανείν) – only death of the [4].
476. Empty hopes are undignified.
485. Prayer of Tecmessa—I too have suffered—have no mother, father or home. She has [?] the words [?] [2] mother & father, but returns to herself [?]\footnote{Tecmessa here addresses Ajax and pleads with him to remember that she too was a free and wealthy man’s daughter, a daughter he took on as a wife. If he were to perish she would be turned into a slave taunted by the rest of the Greeks, and so would his son (485 -520).}
540. Ajax asks for his son—see not to be able to see impatience.
545. Address to his son—time—what is the meaning of “Life is sweeter when you know not feeling—until one learns to know joy or pain”?\footnote{Addressing his son, Ajax says that life is sweeter when one has no sense (when one is a child), but when one is older one gets to know joy and suffering (554-556).}
590. Ajax no longer owes service to the Gods.

That wd mean simply knowledge is best when—then he supposes an intermediate stage between knowing & ignorance—worse than either—
Tecmessa presents her entreaties.

A.[jax] is shut into his tent.

595. Chorus—they have a beauty

650. A fine speech. Ajax amazed at the way the Gods [...] do things. He has [...] truly—explains his change of mood & his anxiety to go to [...] Tecmessa.

**GN69**

670. Is he [Ajax] speaking his own thoughts; revealed to him by calm reflection; is he deluding the chorus; or does Sophocles speak here?

Here then comes one of the most beautiful passages in the play; it is romantic, rather than Greek (if that has meaning). All things give way [...] shall not we too be discreet?

To most men the harbour of [...] is [...] that is.

790. Ajax had insulted the gods. & Athena [by saying that] he didn’t need their help. Long speech of messenger—rather dull.

815. Ajax fixes the sword given him Hector in the hostile land of Troy—and falls on it?

His only message to request of Zeus is that a messenger shall come and bury bid Teucer bury him.

The Furies Erinyes to watch how he was killed by Greeks. No excuse. [Says] No word of abuse against the Gods, or asks for mercy. He says farewell to Salamis, his country, his father[,] mother & Athens. Says farewell to hoes [...] & rivers,

865. Jumps & falls on his sword.

925. Stubborn heart “fated to work ταλας [...] evil doom.”

---

227 Here, Woolf has crossed out “Gods” and written something in tiny letters; unfortunately, the new word is illegible.

228 Line 668; “they are leaders/rulers, so we must comply” (my translation).

229 Line 677.

230 The line (692) is “κελν νυν δυστυχων, σεσωμενον” (even though I am now suffering, I will be saved)

231 Woolf’s handwriting is not clear at all here; Ajax invokes the sacred soil of Salamis, Athens, the springs and rivers of his land, and the plains of Troy, before falling on his sword (855-865).

232 “ταλας”: wretch; long-suffering person. The line is “εμελλεξ ,ταλας” (you were fated, poor man) (928).
940. You can speculate—I feel.\(^\text{233}\)

960. Fine speech by T: I have greater pain than they [the Greeks] joy. & he [Ajax] has what he wanted—why shd they mock then?

1016. Telamon didnt laugh even when he was happy.\(^\text{234}\)

1035. I wd believe that all things are planned by the Gods, [says] Teucer—seeing the coincidences in Hector’s fate & Ajax’s.

**GN70**

1075: Menelaus upon government. Fear & shame are necessary for the rule of a state.

We cant do as we like: & we may pay for it.

1200. Chorus—[…] of the man who first invented war. Kept them from love. Longing for Athens.

**GN71**

Ajax

The story of the Ajax is as follows: the flocks of the Greek army have been slaughtered. A spy has seen Ajax slinking into his tent along by [the] shore. Odysseus has tracked him [Ajax] to his tent. He is about to enter when Athena appears & tells him that Ajax has killed the cattle, thinking them the Greek fort. She [Athena] had made him mad. When his madness leaves him, & he sees what he has done, he is overwhelmed. His wife & the chorus attempt comfort. He pretends to listen; but indeed go (sic) out to a solitary place not to ask pardon but to kill himself.

He is discovered by Tecmessa; & Menelaus & Agamemnon refuse him burial. Teucer insists; but Odysseus persuades the generals to give way. Ajax had been insulted by the decision of the Atreidae to award the arms of Achilles to Odysseus.\(^\text{235}\)

The impression left by the story is complex of course. I should say that the points which Sophocles had in view were to represent an heroic human being in conflict

\(^{233}\) This is in fact line 942; Tecmessa is addressing the chorus.

\(^{234}\) There is a fine piece of sarcasm here: in his speech, Teucer is wondering how Telamon—Ajax’s father—will receive him now that the latter is dead; “Yes, Telamon will receive me with a smile, a man who wouldn’t smile even when he was happy” (lines, 1008-111).

\(^{235}\) “Atreidae” refers to Agamemnon and Menelaus, the sons of Atreus.
with law. & the first part of the play is the best. The opening is horrid. There is something grotesque in the great fighter dubbed in the blood of sheep. As for the character of Ajax: that seemed to me the finest thing in the play. He is insolent & vain, cruel probably; but still, majestic in his overflow. When you realise what an opinion he had of himself, you can sympathise with his despair—wh[ich] otherwise has something absurd about it. He is very vain; a great deal of conventional stuff about “honour,” & what people will say, like a great schoolboy. It does give one this notion of a great man of action—a Napoleon or a Kitchener, only half-human, with these great emotions, which is [in?] small fry don’t see [?]; save as things looming on top of one.

GN72

He [Ajax] impresses Odysseus; moves him to a profound sigh. What shadows we are! All who see him are understandable [?]. The character of Tecmessa is subtle also. She is a slave & selfish as a slave; her 2nd thought for herself, which is pathetic. She is not large enough to tell the truth about […] worries him; & yet she is faithful as a dog: like an animal […] too of inexplicable alarms.

It is difficult of course to pull the whole play sufficiently together to judge it as comprised of different parts leading to a crisis. Probably. If I could read quickly, I shd not find the end so scattered. Besides the characters, there seems to be a concerted wish to bring out the strength of necessity. Menelaos talks of fear & law being necessary in a state: he wants to show that there is something which must be obeyed, although it is unpleasant. I think S.[ophocles] meant this himself. This I suppose is what makes him, compared to the rest, a contented poet; not a revolutionary. But then, the view seems to me fine, though sterile; & expressed by arid people, like M[enelaos] & Agamemnon.

Ajax fails because he has a stubborn heart, & must break himself against fate. Ajax never seems conscious of anything unseen. Even when he says farewell, it is

236 Lord Kitchener (Horatio Herbert Kitchener, 1850-1916), of the Second Boer War (1899-1902).
237 I cannot be sure whether Woolf’s branding of Tecmessa as “selfish” here is the upshot of her Victorian/British-Imperial upbringing. To be sure, Tecmessa says nothing that, given the circumstances, an ordinary wife would not say, so I suggest that Woolf’s treatment of Tecmessa here is rather unfair—especially if we consider her overall sympathy for Ajax (GN 71); he may be insolent and vain, but also “majestic.”
238 Given that Woolf had already read the Ion in this notebook, we may be justified in thinking that she refers to Euripides here.
to places, & never to his father or mother. Death he treats as an important person; one will have time enough to talk to him. An entirely material mind; but also he sees the finest side of [the] matter. He has noble speeches, much hatred in them, & no submission, save when it is (presumably) feigned. The choruses, sung by sailors, have a rough kind of beauty and pathos: they long for home & love, [but are] kept out there [in Troy] on the shore, wet with sea mists. In these choruses I can see now & then, the inimitable style, a music of words—transcending meaning—such as people claim for S.[ophocles].

Jebbs (sic) introduction [to Ajax]

He says that modern readers complain that the last part is dull, not understanding the unity of the play. The fact is that the play does not end with the suicide of Ajax; but that the climax is really the questions whether A[jax] shall be buried or not. His intention to kill the Greeks deserved punishment; that was made clear by the messengers account of Teucers reaction to before Ajax died; & the punishment is whether he [Ajax] shall be buried, & thus [be] counted a hero or not. He is buried because, in his last speech to the chorus, he made it clear (to us) that he repented; thus Athena made Odysseus the instrument of herself, & he obtained the burial rites. The difficult point is to decide how one reads Ajax’s speech—the splendid one with the lines about winter & day & men learning discretion in it. Some think that he [Ajax] did not attempt to deceive the chorus; some that all his speeches were purely ironical. Jebb traces a change of mood, but not a change of purpose. He thinks that A[jax] had been softened by the appeal of his wife, & that he had returned to the ordinary human standard, & had seen his folly. At the same time he wished to deceive the chorus; there is also some irony in his speech. He says (what I think fine) that he could not have used such polemic imagery had he wished merely to veil his satire. I think one may believe that he realised some for a superior to his own; & saw the folly of strife; at the same time, I think he never respected the Atreidae, looking upon them merely as a temporary & rather a quite accidental & part of the machine.
Jan: 11\textsuperscript{th}: 09 Frogs. [of Aristophanes]

The first hundred of lines I found easy—they go with such speed & the jokes aren’t hard. Then it became much more difficult than a Sophocles. For one thing there are allusions which I don’t follow, & so go hopelessly astray; then the words are impossible—so that I made heavy going. What I perceive duly is an immense vitality—ideas springing up, on all sides—some lyric beauty in the choruses—& a rude boisterous kind of joking, mainly about parts of the body are cruelly\textsuperscript{239} mentioned. This seems to be the groundwork of the play. I see more clearly the wit of the contest between Euripides and Sophocles\textsuperscript{240}—the truth of the criticism. It has great vitality too, one imagines the enthusiasm of the audience at the [1], and the political jokes & advise (sic). A man of genius giving the likeness of his age—it must have been exciting.

I feel however that I have had read so roughly—deeply to further the sense—that I have missed an infinite number of meanings and beauties. I think however that it must be a vigorous play still because with all the hindrance I read with interest; one imagines that A:[ristophanes] has great range—must be have tremendous pathos & true beauty.

\textsuperscript{239} This could be “crudely.”

\textsuperscript{240} This must be a mistake. The dramatic contest in the \textit{Frogs} is between Aeschylus, the dramatist of heroes, and Euripides, the sceptic. I am not sure why Woolf mentions Sophocles here.
The play was produced in 405! Two months after [the] death of Euripides—4 of the deaths [3] after the victory at Arginusae! ... The structure of the play is very queer; as though tacked incongruous pieces were tacked together. Dionysus goes to fetch Euripides; & suddenly, without reason its (sic) said that a contest is going forward between Euripides and Aeschylus for the right to the poetic throne. Then the contest follows, & at the end of it Pluto speaks for the first time & reminds D:[ionysus] of what he came for. D:[ionysus] then says (in contrast to his early meaning) that he will take the best counsellor (not poet) back to the world with him. He There are many things to be noted about the contest. When Euripides quotes says that A’s [Aeschylus”] lines are always homeric, he quotes a Homeric line each to show the likeness. It is always in the same metre. Then, giving this up, he quotes lines at random, adding the sound of the lyre: they are faulty, & make no sense in themselves. A:[eschylus], in criticising Euripides, adds [“]lost his oil jar[“] to the end of the lines. It is a pure joke, for no one suggests that the break in the line is a bad thing. He also strings together different lines, & shows that they each have a defect, imperceptible to us. He invents a monody in the Euripidean manner satirising the way in which Eu:-:[ripides] made servant girls talk in the traditional tragic strain about lost cocks. We have a work about the antipathy between Euripides and Aristophanes. The old

241 While Woolf is using the 1902 translation by Benjamin Bickley Rogers (RN 69), my notes below are taken from the second edition (1919).
242 Naval battle at Arginusae (405 BCE) between the Spartans and the Athenians.
243 Here, we have the famous ληκυθίων (phial, jar) test. Rogers explains that “Euripides was fond of commencing his plays … with an historical narrative, which was occasionally prefaced by some philosophical apophthegms; and Aeschylus proposes to show that as a rule, within the first three lines, the words ληκυθίων κεφαλέων (s/he lost his/her [oil] jar) … can be so tacked on as to complete the metre and complete the sense” (Rogers, xxiv; emphasis maintained).
244 According to Rogers, while Euripides criticizes Aeschylus for over-using the Homeric hexameter, the latter attacks the former on the grounds of trivialising the monody—a standard feature of Euripidean drama—by turning what in fact ought to be a vehicle for narrating heroic acts into stories about “spinning-girls” who lost their domestic cocks (Rogers xxxiv). While it is not clear, based on these few lines, that Woolf really understood the jokes either by Aeschylus or Euripides, she appears to be aware of the fact that they were indeed jokes.
comedy was akin to tragedy: [it] depended on the recognition of Dionysus & the mysteries wh.[ich] he represents. No [?] the tragedy seemed [?] to believe in this any longer, then the old Comedy\textsuperscript{245} came to an end.

\begin{tabular}{ccc}
86 & 16 & 18 \\
26 & & 14 \\
\_ & & 32 \\
60 & & \\
4.10 & & 52 \\
\_ & & 56 \\
\end{tabular}

\textsuperscript{245} In the manuscript, the word “comedy” is written thus: “Comεδη;” also, the /o/ looks more like the Greek /ο/, and the /X/ like an /I/. Simon Goldhill insightfully suggested to me that the word was in fact a Greekified form of “comedy.”

\textsuperscript{246} Woolf has done a couple of sums here. It is not known to what these refer.
25\textsuperscript{th} May

Lysias has been talking on Love. Phaedrus has the volume with him. S. [tells] a myth. Are they [myths] true or not?\textsuperscript{248} What a labour to explain them all! Meanwhile, people knew better of the strange monster […]. Let us know the nature of that heart first.

Lysias’ argument that one ought to yield to non-lovers rather than to lovers. It is more enjoyable, more secure, jealousy of lovers. Love a physical passion that proves [?] Lovers have had judgment.

Argument begins by So.[crates] telling [a/the] story of a boy youth & lover. His lover tried to persuade him that he did not love him: & argued that that So:[crates] was right to […] love, to find out if it were good or bad. There are 2 ruling principles—one of desire in pleasure, one of good. That wh.[ich] leads us to pleasure is called υβρις\textsuperscript{249}—has many shapes. But the owner of this desire is called of [by?] the name of the predominant shape. If the desire The irrational desire wh.[ich] is led away by his engulfment [?] in beauty to vanquish all the rest of them [?] is called love.

They have a friend […] & definitely [?] & low [?].

Taken wh[?] argument that as a lover is selfish & wd wish to keep his lover subservient, his influence must be worse than that of a non-lover.

\textsuperscript{247} Brenda Silver suggests that Woolf might have been working from an edition that used to belong to her brother Thoby, by W. W. Thompson (RN 169). However, given that there is no such indication and, what is more, that the commentary is rather perfunctory, I would speculate that Woolf wrote this from memory.

\textsuperscript{248} While it is clear in the manuscript that Woolf has written “nor,” it does not make any sense. Perhaps she meant to write “not.”

\textsuperscript{249} Greek for “hubris.”