

ABSTRACT

Due Friday of week 6 by 5PM. Late submissions won't receive full credit.

Here's a real call for papers that I pulled down from a website: (and edited slightly)

Abstracts should indicate:

- the precise topic to be treated,
- the author's contribution (=solution) to the problem,
- the relationship of the work to previous scholarship on the topic,
- a summary of the argumentation
- some examples to be used in the argumentation
- the author's specific conclusions and their relevance for the field of Homeric Studies

Word-limit: 600 words, not including the Works Cited.

The Works Cited should be in MLA style.

Here's how to write the abstract:

1. Start with your PROBLEM (this allows you to introduce your topic as well).
2. Mention previous SCHOLARSHIP (secondary sources).
3. Propose your SOLUTION.
4. Summarize your ARGUMENT and mention some sample passages (primary sources) that you will use.
5. Suggest the SIGNIFICANCE of your solution.

SAMPLE ABSTRACT (this is shorter than it could be):

- **PROBLEM (text-based):** In *Iliad* III (161-244), King Priam asks Helen to name for him the leaders of the Achaeans as they are stationed before Troy. This scene has attracted close scrutiny among scholars, in that it seems strange that, after nine years of war, Priam would not know the names of his opponents. [you can talk about scrutiny, perplexity, doubts etc.]
- **SCHOLARSHIP:** Recently, Jamison (199X) has explained the scene as part of an inherited Indo-European counter-abduction theme. Still, the question as to whether the scene makes sense in the ninth year of the war remains open. [When discussing previous literature, always claim that some question remains open – so as to suggest that there's room for your work].
- **SOLUTION:** This paper argues that the scene does not belong within the original plan of the *Iliad*, but is to be taken as a later addition to the poem. [you could say “this paper will argue” or “I will argue” – but writing in the future gives your reader the impression that you have not written your paper yet; which may be true, but you want to pretend you have written it already!]
- **ARGUMENT:** First, the scene shows a characterization of Helen close to the one in the *Odyssey*: she is remorseful about her actions and willing to return to her previous husband, unlike elsewhere in the poem [Always give citations!]. Second, the scene closes on a striking portrait of Odysseus and his powers of speech, where his words are said to resemble “Snow flakes in a storm” (221-2): this theme too is more at home in the *Odyssey* than in the *Iliad*, where Odysseus’ speech to Achilles (Book IX) proves ineffective. The paper will further analyze the characterization of Menelaus and Ajax to support the argument. [this part should be longer in your abstract]
- **SIGNIFICANCE:** The problem at hand ties in with the larger question of how the *Iliad* was composed, and whether it was the work of one or more poets. Following the theory of oral composition (Foley 200X), this paper concludes that the quest for a single author is misguided given the nature of the poems, and that we should recognise that several layers of traditional material are present in the epics –whether we owe our current version of the story to a single poet or not.

PROBLEM (scholarship-based): In his 1998 paper *Troia, an Ancient Anatolian Palatial Trading Center*, Manfred Korfmann states “In its nucleus, the *Iliad* may reflect historical reality”. Though several scholars side with Korfmann (Scholar 2, Scholar 3), the question of the historicity of the *Iliad* remains fiercely debated to this day. [this combines PROBLEM and SCHOLARSHIP]