Mathematics 3810H – Ancient and Classical Mathematics
Trent University, Winter 2022

Assignment #3
Meno Meanders to Meaning?
Due on Friday, 18 February.

Read and consider (at least) the part of Plato's *Meno* from near the bottom of page 10 to the near the top of page 15 of the translation by Cathal Woods, which may be found at

papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1910945

and then answer the following questions as best you can:

1. Summarize the geometric problem and its solution that Socrates leads Meno's slave through. Is the solution complete and correct? *[7]*

2. What is Socrates trying to accomplish in this passage, besides obtaining the mathematical result? Is Socrates correct in his conclusions? Explain why you think he is or isn't correct, as the case may be. *[3]*

Sonnet xlv

Euclid alone has looked on Beauty bare.
Let all who prate of Beauty hold their peace,
And lay them prone upon the earth and cease
To ponder on themselves, the while they stare
At nothing, intricately drawn nowhere
In shapes of shifting lineage; let geese
Gabble and hiss, but heroes seek release
From dusty bondage into luminious air.
O blinding hour, O holy, terrible day,
When first the shaft into his vision shone
Of light anatomized! Euclid alone
Has looked on Beauty bare. Fortunate they
Who, though once only and then but far away,
Have heard her massive sandal set on stone.

Edna St. Vincent Millay