Female Beauty and Male Attraction in Ancient Greece

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With Commentary on the Value of the Veil and Significance of the Voice

By

Preston T. Massey

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[1] The original title of the thesis was: *The Veil and the Voice: A Study of Female Beauty and Male Attraction in Ancient Greece.*

[2] However, in an ironical twist of publishing events, that chapter is no longer a part of this monograph. For those interested, that study may be

ninety minutes of giving him my best sales pitch, he said, “Count me in.” The relief I felt at that moment was enormous. When I left his office, I was drenched in sweat. As it turned out, all went well, and I could not have had a better advisor. He gave me direction, especially during the writing of the first chapter when I needed specific guidance. He asked questions, made suggestions, and insisted that I face certain issues. Invaluable to me, also, were the two years that we met in his office, sometimes at the steady pace of once a week, to read scholarly texts in German. Prof. Long moved me from a fear of the German language to actual enjoyment. For these many significant helps, I hereby acknowledge enduring gratitude to my *Doktor Faktor*.

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Preston T. Massey
Bloomington, Indiana
June 20, 2020

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found in Cambridge University’s *New Testament Studies* 53.4 (2007) 502-23.

ABBREVIATIONS

AC	*AncSocL'Antiquité classique*
AClass	*Acta Classica*
AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
AJAH	*American Journal of Ancient History*
AJP	*American Journal of Philology*
ALG	*Anthologia Lyrica Graeca*
AncPhil	*Ancient Philosophy*
AncSoc	*Ancient Society*
AncW	*Ancient World*
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*
Arethusa	*Arethusa*
BAR	*Biblical Archaeological Review*
BR	*Bucknell Review*
BICS	*Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*
C&M	*Classica et Mediaevalia*
CAF	*Comicorum Atticorum Fragmenta*
CB	*Classical Bulletin*
CFA	*Corpus Fabularum Aesopicarum*
CGITA	*Cahiers du groupe interdisciplinaire du thaeatre antique*
CJ	*Classical Journal*
ClAnt	*Classical Antiquity*
CML	*Classical and Modern Literature*
CompLit	*Comparative Literature*
CPh	*Classical Philology*
CQ	*Classical Quarterly*
CSCA	*California Studies in Classcial Antiquity*
CW	*Classical World*
EMC	*Échos du monde classique/Classical Review*
EtClass	*Études classiques*
FH	*Fragmenta Hesiodea*
Frag.	*Fragment*

G&R	*Greece & Rome*
HAR	*Humanities Association Review*
HR	*History of Religions*
HSCP	*Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*
HThR	*Harvard Theological Review*
ICS	*Illinois Classical Studies*
JFH	*Journal of Family History*
JGRChJ	*Journal of Greco-Roman Christanity and Judaism*
JHPh	*Journal of the History of Philosophy*
JHS	*Journal of Hellenic Studies*
Historia	*Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft, Kunst, und Literatur*
JS	*Journal des Savants*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
REL	*Revue des études latines*
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LXX	Septuagint
LSJ	Liddell, Scott, and Jones, eds. *A Greek-English Lexicon,* 9th edition.
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
OCD^{2}	*Oxford Classical Dictionary,* 2nd edition.
OCD^{3}	*Oxford Classical Dictionary,* 3rd edition.
OCT	Oxford Classical Texts
P&P	*Past and Present*
Ph&PA	*Philosophy and Public Affairs*
PCPS	*Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*
Rbi	*Review biblique*
RE	Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*
RhM	*Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*
RIDA	*Revue international des droits de l'antiquité*
RQ	*Restoration Quarterly*
SIFC	*Studi Italiani di Filologica Classica*
TAPA	*Transactions of the American Philological Association*
ThQ	*Theologische Quartalschrift*
TLG	*Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*
TrGR	*Tragicorum Graecrum Fragmenta.*

WS	*Wiener Studien*
YCIS	*Yale Classical Studies*
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentlich Wissenschaft*
ZPE	*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigrahik*
ZRG	*Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiffung für Rechtsgeschichte*

INTRODUCTION

In the last twenty years two books appeared in print that acknowledge the enduring influence of ancient Greece upon contemporary western culture. Both books, each written on the popular level, pay attention to a Greek fascination: the beauty of the human body. The more scholarly and recent of the two is *Love, Sex, and Tragedy: How the Ancient World Shapes Our Lives* (2004) by Cambridge professor Simon Goldhill. Goldhill's book, a general assessment of our indebtedness to Greek culture in matters pertaining to the erotic, does not focus upon any particular feature of feminine beauty, except the Greek practice of depilation.[1] The earlier work, Joanna Pitman's *On Blondes* (2003),[2] however, is focused upon a tighter thesis: the American obsession with a woman's blond hair. The particular interest of her book for my investigation is that Pitman documents her observations with an opening chapter entitled "Aphrodite Rising." She takes the reader quickly to ancient Greece (9):

> Aphrodite to the Greeks, Venus to the Romans, this divine figure, the life-size statue known as the Aphrodite of Knidos, was the first universal blonde, the world's original model of sexual fantasy and power. The statue itself has not survived, but it was lovingly fashioned by the sculptor Praxiteles in about 360 BC, carved from Parian marble and coloured with gold and other tints, a divine

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[1] See especially Goldhill's third chapter (114–127), "The Female Body–Soft and Spongy, Shaved and Coy."

[2] Gloria Heidi in her book *Winning the Age Game* (1976) 61, has a chapter entitled, "Whatever Happened to your Crowning Glory," and she states the following: "Hair is sexy. . . .I'll repeat it again, hair, and lots of it, is sexy." Another example, more recent, also on the popular level is Allison Schwartz, "Ooh-la-la Hair," *Glamour Magazine* (March 2004) 196–99.

> goddess whose image was to fill the erotic imaginings of men and women for centuries to come . . .

Later in her book (183), Pitman gives the reader a glimpse of a modern day Aphrodite when she recaptures this magical moment from the silver screen:

> In 1931, *Platinum Blonde* opened in American cinemas, kicking off a capillary revolution. Jean Harlow, the star, had dyed her hair a dazzling shade of blonde. Her erotic glamour and salty delivery filled the cinemas of depression-hit America. She was astounding. Americans had never seen anything like it. Harlow slinked across the screen like some radiant hallucination draped in a series of voluptuous bias-cut satin dresses. But all eyes were fixed on her hair.

Pitman's conclusion, "But all eyes were fixed on her hair," encapsulates the focus of my own book: *Female Beauty and Male Attraction in Ancient Greece: With Commentary on the Veil and the Voice*. My overall purpose has been to demonstrate how ancient Greeks perceived the qualities of female hair as both alluring and attractive, and therefore seductive and dangerous. In this sense, ancient Greeks viewed feminine hair differently than moderns. While modern culture can identify with ancient culture by considering a woman's hair to be sexually attractive, ancient Greek culture took this issue one step further by placing an uncovered woman's hair on the same emotional level as a bare breast.[3]

Scope and Focus

This investigation may be compared to a target with three concentric rings. The direction of the rings moves from outer to inner with the configuration of rings becoming increasingly smaller.

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[3] The emotional and sexual equivalent can be assumed by the modesty attached to the wearing of a veil. The clearest classical text explicitly associating a married woman's uncovered head with bare breasts is Euripides' *Andromache* 820–878, which I treat in chapter 11.

The outer or first ring comprises the effects an attractive woman has upon a man. This first ring is a general investigation of the sexual attraction and tension that arise when a man looks at or listens to an attractive woman. It forms the basis of this inquiry and, as the outer encompassing circle, it serves as a boundary ring limiting the scope of the study to the aural and visual stimuli that attract a man. These matters of sexual attraction, the subject of chapters 1 and 2, initiate the investigation and are fundamental to all that follows.

The middle or second ring includes the various attempts at mitigating these sexual tensions from Homer to Flavius Philostratus–a period of approximately one thousand years. This ring takes the investigation from chapter 3 through 7. These middle chapters examine the issue of the house and they develop the thesis that not only is a male anxious over the prospect of his wife being outdoors, but this anxiety becomes heightened when another man enters the house–even as a guest. I explore the dynamics of guest-friendship in these middle chapters.

Within this second ring, chapter 3 initiates the topic by taking up the subject of male anxiety, its connection with the limitations on females appearing in public, and the current debate among classical scholars over the seclusion of women in antiquity. The German scholar Christine Schnurr-Redford has argued that the amount of time an ancient Greek woman spent in her home had nothing to do with emotional issues such as male jealousy but was rather the simple requirement of her domestic duties compelling her not to be absent from the house.[4] I present evidence to the contrary: male anxiety is not principally rooted in whether wives are neglecting household chores; rather, this male anxiety is centered in concerns over their women becoming entangled in sexual intrigues. In

[4] Schnurr-Redford, *Frauen im klassischen Athen: Sozialer Raum und reale Bewegungsfreiheit* (1996)75: "Hierbei wird aber genau erklärt, warum eine Hausfrau zu Hause bleiben und die Überwachung der Arbeit nicht vernachlässigen sollte. Bei der Aufforderung an die Frau, im Hause zu bleiben, geht es um eine völlig pragmatische Arbeitsaufteilung zwischen Mann und Frau, nicht aber um emotionale Kategorien wie 'Einsperren aufgrund von Eifersucht' oder gar um ein müssiges *dolce farniente* in der Gynaikonitis."

chapter 4 I continue the discussion of these same issues in the Hellenistic and Imperial periods. I will argue that, especially in a writer such as Plutarch, we find the exceptional attitude of wanting to protect women from overbearing husbands. These concerns of Plutarch serve as evidence that women are indeed confined to their homes, often against their own will. Although this entire investigation is larger than Plutarch, he has the clearest voice in the inquiry. Therefore, chapters 2 through 7, when taken as one of our concentric rings, are an examination of spatial issues involving both the inside and outside of the house.

We come now to the third and final concentric ring. Chapters 8 through 11 investigate the somewhat controversial issue of the veil. These chapters break down the subject into the following: veiling before Plutarch, veiling in the writings of Plutarch, and veiling after him. One of the fascinating discoveries of this study is how Plutarch has a completely different value system when it comes to describing women versus men.

The investigation will proceed through the genres of epic, lyric, history, drama, oratory, philosophy, letters, essays, fables, and the novel–with each genre presenting its own individual problems and special challenges.[5] None is without some kind of difficulty. The scope of the investigation will be broad; this study is not a study of a particular, isolated genre but a diachronic analysis of Greek culture over a period of approximately one thousand years.

[5] Robert Sutton, "On the Classical Athenian Wedding: Two Red-Figure Loutrophoroi in Boston," in *Daidalikon: Studies in Honor of Raymond V. Schoder* (1989) 359, laments the modern tendency to "fuse traditions of different periods and places." What I am seeking to do is establish a continuity of Greek attitudes. My purpose is not to violate genre and period but to show the whole cloth quality of Greek attitudes toward feminine beauty. When there are exceptions or apparent changes in attitudes or behavior I endeavor to recognize them and explore what they signify.

Limitations

A caveat is appropriate here. This study make no claim for discovering the real world of feminine experience. Although this study is about both men and women, I make no claim to be able to see the ancient world through a woman's eyes.[6] Secondly, this study is a historical study of a particular period and its people in ancient Greece. Therefore, this study may be faulted for documenting the way in which ancient Greek males objectified a woman as a sexual object to behold or gaze at. While this study in no way can be considered pornographic, a modern woman may find ancient male observations of a women's physical appearance to be off-putting. Unless she can step out of her personal emotional context and try to understand the great Grecian male fascination with a woman's voice and hair, she may find this study objectionable.[7] Alternatively, today's woman may find Plutarch's

[6] The number of studies dealing with women in ancient Greece and Rome is probably beyond reading by one scholar. A modest starting point is hereby suggested: the groundbreaking book by Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves* (1975). See also the collection of essays in *Among Women: From the Homosocial to the Homoerotic in the Ancient World* (2002), edited by Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz and Lisa Auanger. See also Mary R. Lefkowitz's, "Writing about Women in Greek Literature," in *Classics: A Discipline and Profession in Crisis,* edited by Phyllis Culham and Lowell Edmunds (1989) 251–56. For texts on women's experience, see Jane McIntosh Snyder's *The Woman and the Lyre* (1991) and Margaret Williamson's *Sappho's Immortal Daughters* (1995). For religious activity, see Joan Breton Connelly, *Portrait of a Priestess* (2007).

[7] A blog posted on Sept 22, 2017 by Natasha Devon entitled, *You are your looks: that's what society tells girls. No wonder they're depressed*, states the modern woman's frustration: "A study published by *Girlguiding* this week has revealed that half of girls feel stifled by gender stereotyping, with children as young as seven believing they are valued more for their appearance than for their achievements or character. It is not, I believe, a coincidence that in the same week a government-funded study has shown a quarter of girls exhibit symptoms of depression by the age of 14." It would be interesting to learn who comments more about young girls and their physical appearance. Do men reinforce these views or do women?

great reserve in describing a woman's personal appearance very refreshing. In this striking demeanor of reticence, Plutarch offers an alternate view to the classical past by focusing upon a woman's inner qualities of beauty, virtue, and intelligence, rather than the outwardly physical.[8]

One of the peripheral elements of this study is that this is strictly a historical investigation of how ancient Greek men tried to deal with the danger and delight of women. In one sense, this study is, therefore, a focus upon male coping mechanisms for dealing with their attraction to female beauty.

A further disclaimer is in order: there is no attempt to assign any practical or moral application to modern life by making value judgments on how men and women should live today based upon how ancients lived. For example, a modern reader may find certain statements as found in an ancient writer as sexist or male chauvinistic. That kind of value judgment is not an objective in my study. In this investigation, I am not looking for alleged ancient roots of modern misogyny.[9] My purpose, rather, is to interpret these ancient texts in light of that culture—not in light of ours. This book is not a sociological study about current American male fantasies or male illnesses,[10] but about ancient Greek male/female attractions and tensions. That being said, the life of ancient Greeks is of enduring interest because it is a study of how humans lived and wrote about themselves within the context of the sexual dynamics of that culturally conditioned male/female relationship. From a human point—not just from a purely historical one—this dynamic is a fascinating subject, one that is not likely to end.[11]

Perhaps it does not matter. At any rate, Plutarch is an exception who clearly does not engage in such depictions.

[8] Plutarch refers to this inner quality as ἀρετή or "virtue" (242E).

[9] See Alvin J. Schmidt, *Veiled and Silenced: How Culture Shaped Sexist Theology* (1989) for such a study.

[10] See Philip E. Slater, *The Glory of Hera: Greek Mythology and the Greek Family* (1968).

[11] It is interesting how blond female hair has a certain mystique about it not only for ancient Greeks but also modern men. For example, see David W. Johnston, "Physical Appearance and Wages," *Economic Letters* 108

This book documents how, in the masculine world of ancient Greece, men found certain female characteristics more attractive than others. The findings of this study narrate ancient gender stereotyping. Thus, this study articulates how female beauty can have a mesmerizing hypnotic effect upon a male. As a historical study this research has a legitimate right to help us understand one aspect of the world of ancient Greece.[12] Even though this study is a historical investigation of an ancient culture, few things have greater human interest than how a woman can affect a man.

All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

(2010) 10–12, who reports the results of a survey from the Queensland University of Technology in Australia of nearly 13,000 women. The survey shows the following results: having blond hair for a woman is worth "the wage premium equivalent" of an extra year of schooling.

[12] Additionally, this work may provide New Testament scholars and professors of the history of religion the necessary background for penetrating further into such biblical texts as 1 Corinthians 11:2–16 and 14:34.

CHAPTER 1

FEMALE BEAUTY AND MALE ATTRACTION IN THE EPIC AND ARCHAIC TRADITION

Both Homer and Hesiod identify Greece with beautiful women by poetically referring to Hellas as καλλιγύναικα (land "of beautiful women").[1] But how do Homer and Hesiod, as well as others, conceptualize the beauty of a woman? The purpose of these first two chapters is to develop an index for understanding two dimensions of Greek feminine beauty. We begin in chapter 1 by describing the external dimensions of a woman's physical attributes. Within the epic and archaic tradition, the poetics of texts concerning male attraction to female beauty will follow two specific cultural notions and definite literary criteria. This first chapter will show that within the early tradition of epic and archaic poetry Greek males do not focus upon attractive feminine curves. Rather, evidence will indicate that the center of attention is the twofold allurement of a woman's long hair and her voice. In chapter 2 we follow up this assessment by focusing upon the emotional dimensions of danger and delight. This Greek understanding, in turn, gives rise to the male need for a woman to wear a veil, remain silent, and be secluded from general society. Hesiod's Pandora, serving as a guide, will be used to demonstrate how others of epic and archaic poetry follow this pioneering lead.[2]

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[1] *Iliad* 2.683 and 9.447 refer to Greece as a land "of beautiful women." The singular καλλιγύναικα is poetically translated as a plural. It is not a land of one individual woman, such as Helen, but of many beautiful women. Hesiod, too, uses the same epithet (*Works and Days* 653).

[2] For elegiac poetry, see Theognis 457–460; Archilochus 49; for iambic, see Semonides 7.1–118, esp. 7.96: Ζεὺς γὰρ μέγιστον τοῦτ' ἐποίσεν κακόν, γυναῖκας. For lyric, see Alcman 3.70, especially 1.51–55. For the

Tangential to the above is the significant finding that within the early epic and archaic traditions it is not necessary to represent women as outwardly seductive or flirtatious in order to portray them as dangerous.[3] In fact, as Homer shows in the *Iliad* (6.162), when lovely Anteia tries to seduce Bellerophon, she fails. Attempted seduction does not always succeed. A principal conclusion will emerge that in order to attract a male's attention all a woman has to do is walk into a room. Thus, the mere innocent physical presence of a woman creates the double combination of danger and delight. This is further illustrated in the *Odyssey* (18.210–212) when Penelope appears before the suitors. Although veiled and in the company of two handmaids, her very appearance before these men causes their knees to shake.

This leads, consequently, to three additional social aspects of women as viewed and understood by men: 1) sexually vulnerable, 2) its counterpart: sexually irresistible, and 3) their potential as troublemakers. These three aspects all connect in some way to the concept of beauty and, subsequently, they all affect future literary generations, going forward all the way to Plutarch and beyond to Athenaeus. Consequently, an extended diachronic approach will be adopted, arguing for a long and sustained continuity beginning with the archaic period and reaching all the way down to the Roman Imperial Age.

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argument that archaic epic remained the cornerstone of education and Hellenization throughout antiquity, holding true for Greek civilization at all periods, see Marilyn B. Skinner's comment in the *Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies* (2009) 690. In a similar vein, see Ronald Hock, "Homer in Greco-Roman Education," in *Mimesis and Intertextuality in Antiquity and Christianity* (2001) 56–77; and Cristiana Franco, "Women in Homer," in *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World* (2012) 54–65.

[3] Even Hera's seduction of Zeus cannot be considered a success. When Zeus awakens after having sex with Hera, he is angry for he realizes that she had ulterior motives (*Iliad* 15.17). Peter Smith, *Nursling of Mortality* (1981) 41, aptly comments: "A woman in the epic does not arouse a man's desire by overtly seductive behavior; in fact, if she said openly what was on her mind, she invariably failed of her purpose." Actually, she fails even if she does not openly speak her mind.

The view that women are potential troublemakers is one of the oldest stereotypes in Greek literature, connecting back to the earliest work in European literature–to Homer himself. Rather than beginning with Homer, however, I lead off with Hesiod. Although some argue that Hesiod's epic even precedes Homer in date of composition,[4] there is no question that Hesiod's myth of Pandora, taking us imaginatively back to the formation of the very first woman,[5] predates in dramatic time any myth in Homer. Since Homer contains no such creation scenes, I start with Hesiod. The two most famous women in archaic Greece are Hesiod's Pandora and Homer's Helen,[6] with Phaedra perhaps a close third.[7] I will use

[4] For the argument that Hesiod precedes Homer, see Peter Mason's "Patterns of Sexual Asymmetry in the *Theogony* of Hesiodos" in *Sexual Asymmetry* (1987) 147–67; and also M.L. West's commentary *Theogony* (1966) 46–47, in which West says: "That Hesiod is earlier than Homer is no revolutionary view, but as the reverse is taken as axiomatic by most writers, it may be worth recalling that until the latter part of the fourth century B.C., Hesiod's priority was widely accepted." Albin Lesky, *A History of Greek Literature* (1971) 91, simply states that no one, so far, has been able to overthrow the generally held view that Hesiod borrows from Homer. For a speculative yet plausible comparison of the historical and social background to Homer and Hesiod, see Marilyn B. Arthur's "Early Greece: The Origins of the Western Attitude toward Women," in *Women in the Ancient World* (1984) 9–26. The issue of who precedes whom is immaterial to this study. Richard Lattimore, who in his *Hesiod* (1959) 12, adds a note of levity to calm the controversial waters of chronology and dating by concluding that "nothing can be proved." For a balanced discussion of the dating issue, see Ralph Rosen, "Homer and Hesiod" in *A New Companion to Homer* (1996) 462–88.

[5] The history of the Pandora myth before Hesiod is hopelessly lost in obscurity. It seems most likely that this myth is not indigenous to Hellenic soil. Similarities with Genesis 2–3 have been noted by many. For such similarities, see Peter Walcot's *Hesiod and the Near East* (1966); M.L. West's introduction to Hesiod's *Theogony* (1966); and more recently Froma I. Zeitlin's "Signifying Difference: the Myth of Pandora," in *Women in Antiquity* (1995) 58–74, notes some major differences between Pandora and the Eve of Genesis.

[6] Dio Chrysostom (*On Distrust* 74.13) claims that Paris became the most

one poet to interpret the other and one woman to compare and contrast with the other.

Pandora as a Problem

From *Works and Days* 50–80 we have the mythical account of the following series of events: first, crafty Prometheus deceives Zeus.[8] Because of this deceit, Zeus retaliates by hiding fire. Next comes the second deceit (αὖτις): Prometheus tricks Zeus by stealing fire.[9]

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wretched of all men (πάντων ἀθλιώτατος) because of his lack of self-control. Equally wretched among all women would be Helen. Charles Segal in *Euripides and the Poetics of Sorrow* (1993) 11, writes of Helen as "the most notorious defiance of marital authority in Greek myth." Although the word κακόν is commonplace when applied to women, Plutarch does not use it in that manner. Plutarch refers to Pandora only once (*Consolation to Apollonius* 105D) in which he is quoting from Hesiod's *Works and Days.* Pandora opens the jar of evils, but Plutarch does not construct from this poetic picture a rhetoric of recrimination. Pandora functions in the same manner as Zeus; both open an urn of troubles. Plutarch does not imply that woman is the source of all trouble any more than Zeus is.

[7] Pausanias 1.22.1–2 mentions that anyone who knows Greek also knows about Phaedra. David Noy, "Wicked Stepmothers in Roman Society and Imagination," *JFH* 16 (1991) 347, adds that it is not even necessary to know Greek since Phaedra is often mentioned by Latin writers as well. See also William Hansen's *Ariadne's Thread: A Guide to International Tales Found in Classical Literature* (2002) 332–52, for Phaedra's connection to Greek and non-Greek literature. Homer (*Odyssey* 24.202) says that it is Clytaemnestra who brings a bad reputation upon "all women." This includes even upon a good woman.

[8] The text at line 48 does not make clear what Prometheus has done, only that some deception is involved. The first deceit is recorded in Hesiod's *Theogony* 535–565 in which Prometheus tricks Zeus into choosing the less desirable portion of meat. For an interpretive history of this first offense by Prometheus, see Emma Stafford, "Visualizing Creation in Ancient Greece," *RelArts* 13.4 (2009) 419–47, esp. 433–34.

[9] The verb that Hesiod uses at line 55 is ἠπεροπέυω–the very same verb that Homer employs to describe Paris' seduction of Helen.

Zeus has now been hoodwinked twice. He then contrives the following mischief: he will give to men a gift with a double nature. He will create a beautiful woman with the power to provide delight as well as cause κακόν or "trouble" (57–66):

> ". . .τοῖς δ' ἐγὼ ἀντὶ πυρὸς δώσω κακόν, ᾧ κεν ἅπαντες
> τέρπωνται κατὰ θυμόν, ἑὸν κακὸν ἀμφαγαπῶντες."
> ὣς ἔφατ' ἐκ δ' ἐγέλασσε πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε.
> Ἥφαιστον δ' ἐκέλευσε περικλυτὸν ὅττι τάχιστα
> γαῖαν ὕδει φύρειν, ἐν ἀνθρώπου θέμεν αὐδὴν καὶ σθένος,
> ἀθανάτῃς δὲ θεῇς εἰς ὦπα ἐίσκειν παρθενικῆς καλόν εἶδος
> ἐπήρατον· αὐτὰρ Ἀθήνην ἔργα διδασκῆσαι, πολυδαίδαλον
> ἱστὸν ὑφαίνειν· καὶ χάριν ἀμφιχέαι κεφαλῇ χρυσῆν Ἀφροδίτην,
> καὶ πόθον ἀργαλέον καὶ γυιοκόρους μελεδώνας· ἐν θέμεν
> κύνεόν τε νόον ἐπίκλοπον ἤθος Ἑρμείην ἤνωγε, διάκτορον
> ἀργειφόντην.

> ". . . I will give trouble as the price for fire, in which may all men
> take delight, while they embrace their own undoing."
> So said the father of men and gods, and laughed aloud.
> And he ordered famous Hephaestus, as quickly as possible,
> to mix earth with water and to put in it the voice and strength of humans, in the eye of the beholder like the immortal goddess;
> and fashion a maiden, lovely to look at, and Athena
> to teach her needlework and the weaving of the web;
> and golden Aphrodite to shed grace upon her head,
> difficult desire, and cares that loosen the limbs.
> And he charged Hermes, intermediary, the killer of Argus,
> to put in her a shameless mind and a deceitful nature.

This poetic image pictures Zeus laughing at man's expense. What enables Zeus to have this laugh is attributed to his design of woman as he gives her a double nature. On one side, she will have the power to delight (τέρπειν) the heart of men, a subtle reference to the potential for both physical pleasure and sexual temptation. The verb τέρπειν is a word of considerable importance in this study. It can apply to the enjoyment of the simple pleasures of life, such as a cup of wine. But in our study it mainly applies implicitly or subtly

to sexual satisfaction.[10] The plural noun "all" (ἅπαντες) and the plural verb (τέρπωνται) indicate that this is not an individual woman for a particular man, but the universal essence of women for all men. On the other side, though, like a fish hook hidden within the worm,[11] she will introduce turmoil into his life and compound his existence with trouble.[12] The ensnaring power of woman is clearly stated in the naive nature of the male: τέρπωνται κατὰ θυμόν, ἐὸν κακὸν ἀμφαγαπῶντες ("feeling delight while embracing trouble"). The participle ἀμφαγαπῶντες is an equivalent for the Homeric ἀμφαφάω,[13] meaning, "to feel or touch all around with

[10] This is clearly its meaning in a text such as *Odyssey* 5.227. For τέρψις as the "*mot juste*" for sensual and sexual delight, see Elizabeth Craik, "Review and Reinterpretation," *JHS* 113 (1993) 52.

[11] The word ἀμφαγαπῶντες suggests a double meaning. As men (plural) embrace women in their arms, they also take them emotionally into their own psyche. Although Hesiod does not use the metaphor of a worm on a fishhook, he does use the word δόλος to describe Pandora at *Theogony* 589. Aristotle uses δόλος as a means to catch fish (*Analytica Priora* 215). Bait as a metaphor is implied in the expression ψεύδεά θ' αἱμυλίους τε λόγους (*Works and Days* 78).

[12] The combination of τέρπωνται κατὰ θυμόν, ἐὸν κακὸν ἀμφαγαπῶντες (feeling delight while embracing trouble) anticipates the γλυκύπικρος ("bittersweet") of Sappho's lyric poetry, as well as the Hellenistic epic of Apollonius of Rhodes in his *Argonautica* (3.290) who mentions the "sweet pain" (γλυκερῇ . . . ἀνίῃ) when the soul is melted with passion. Plutarch explicates the meaning of γλυκύπικρος as a bittersweet emotion that is caused more as a result of looking than by either touching or hearing (*Table Talk V* 681B).

[13] LSJ, s.v. ἀμφαφάω, equates these two verbs with essentially the same meaning. J.H. Heinrich Schmidt, *Synonymik der griechischen Sprache* (1876) 1.235, disclaims the connection between these two words: "Aber man darf aus dieser Stelle in keinem Falle auf eine nähere Sinnverwandtschaft des Wortes mit ψηλαφᾶν schliessen: denn es wird sonst immer gebraucht von dem prüfenden Anfassen derer, die durchaus geschärfte Sinne haben." Neither Pierre Chantraine's *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue Grecque*, Bruno Snell's *Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos*, nor the recent study by Robert Beekes, *Etymological Dictionary of Greek* (2010) treat this word. The scholia on

the hands." This is really what Hesiod is warning about: external appearances alone can be misleading. In this context the word is most likely a *double-entendre* suggesting that when man embraces a woman (has sex with her), he will also be bringing trouble on himself. The text of *Odyssey* 8.196 is illuminating–a blind man can figure out what an object is by feeling or touching it all around. But his discernment is limited to external, surface touching. Further reinforcing the point, though, is the text of *Odyssey* 19.475 in which Penelope does not fully recognize Odysseus until she touches him all around (πρὶν πάντα ἄνακτ᾽ ἐμὸν ἀμφαφάσθαι).

Twice in the first two lines woman is called a κακόν ("trouble" or "evil"). At this point, though, it is unclear exactly what this κακόν involves. The adjective κακός is an elastic word capable of stretching over a wide range of meanings.[14] As a working definition, I prefer the milder translation "trouble," instead of the more caustic "evil."[15] My main reason for adopting the less offensive definition

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Hesiod's *Works and Days* (50), however, provide a helpful link: ἀμφαγαπῶντες . . . περιθάλποντες. περιθάλπω means to "warm all around." Clinching the case is the text of *Odyssey* 19.475, mentioned in the text above, in which Penelope does not fully recognize Odysseus until she touches him all around (ἀμφαφάσθαι). I disagree, therefore, with Schmidt and follow LSJ.

[14] The parallel passage in Hesiod's *Theogony* 565–580 refers to woman four times as a *kakon.* His language is harsh and offensive, and, in fact, it is hard to imagine his words being worse. Among other things, Hesiod says that woman is "a beautiful evil . . . sheer guile, not to be withstood by men . . . and this evil cannot be healed." In his two major works Hesiod uses the word *kakon* a total of forty times. In his *Works and Days* a *kakon* can refer to something dreadful or terrible as in war (14), something harmful or dangerous as a rough sea (123), hardships, burdens or problems (178), and moral evil such as injustice (193). Hesiod refers to an "evil man" only once (239). When applying this word to woman, Hesiod is implying that she is a burden, a hardship, a problem, a disappointment which disillusions, yet a necessity which is difficult to ignore (*Theogony* 600–609).

[15] I note, however, that Glenn W. Most in the more recent Loeb edition (2006) prefers the translation "evil" as well. See also Jeffrey M. Hurwit, "Beautiful Evil: Pandora and the Athena Parthenos," *AJA* 99 (1995) 171–

of "trouble" is that man, upon embracing this κακόν, does not thereby become evil. Rather, his life becomes more difficult, more troublesome. This is not to deny that some Greek writers think of women as morally evil by nature–especially if these writers themselves are suffering from the pain of adultery. This may be the situation in the case of Euripides. The text before us, however, does not require the harsh translation of "evil." Principally, though, this is a pejorative tag which becomes the single most defining label of woman's inner person for the next one thousand years. During the next millennium, women collectively will not succeed in throwing off this stereotype.[16] For example, Aristophanes in the *Thesmophoriazusae* (785–800) uses κακόν eight times in these fifteen lines as an attribute of women.[17] Centuries later, Athenaeus will state his conviction: "What need is there to tell of a woman's evil/κακόν? It is enough to simply say the word 'woman'."[18] That women are a *kakon* thus becomes proverbial.[19] With the possible

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86, esp. 173, who calls Pandora "the cause of evil in the world." As a counter to these two translations, I cite Theognis 571 which mentions that δόξα is a κακὸν μέγα for humans. This does not mean that glory, fame, or reputation is an evil; rather, it presents difficulties to humans.

[16] For a study of how woman as "evil" has spread beyond the ancient soil of Greece up to recent times, see Alvin John Schmidt's *Veiled and Silenced: How Culture Shaped Sexist Theology* (1990).

[17] As the play reveals, however, Euripides is the scapegoat for this social stigma, not Hesiod.

[18] *Deipnosophistae* 13.570c. See also Semonides (7.96) who calls woman the "greatest evil" (μέγιστον . . . κακόν) three times. Semonides, in fact, is obsessed with the idea that woman is evil, using this word nine different times in a single short poem. Sophocles in his *Antigone* (572) has Creon say: κακὰς ἐγὼ γυναῖκας υἱέσι στυγῶ ("I hate evil wives for my sons"). Achilles Tatius (1.8.2) actually quotes the full lines from Hesiod: ἐγὼ ἀντὶ πυρὸς δώσω κακόν, ᾧ κεν ἅπαντες τέρπωνται κατὰ θυμόν, ἑὸν κακὸν ἀμφαγαπῶντες. His spirit, though, is tongue-in-cheek.

[19] Dio Chrysostom in his essay *Distrust* (74.20) quotes from the *Hippolytus* (616) of Euripides: "O Zeus, why have you made women–so evil (κακόν) and deceitful . . . to live among men?" This single statement, so misogynist in nature, almost summarizes classical male literary

exception of Penelope,[20] no individual woman will arise to replace the model of Pandora (or Helen) in the Greek male imagination. Thus, it would not be an exaggeration to say that this single Hesiodic mythical representation of woman equips male authors, for centuries to come,[21] with both concepts and vocabulary to describe the tensions between men and women.

This κακόν is given ἀντὶ πυρός.[22] Although ἀντί with the genitive often conveys the notion of substitution, it would make no sense to describe woman as taking the place of fire. Rather, this is a genitive of price and it indicates that woman is a consequence or the "price" for the stealing of fire. As fire made the life of man more comfortable, woman is now given to counter-balance or offset whatever good fire could provide. Woman, with a double nature (delight and deception), seems adequate compensation for the twofold deceit. In the myth this supposedly evens the score.

Woman's Attraction: Hair and Voice

In quick succession, the following sequence takes place unfolding how this twin combination of delight and deceit will work: Zeus first orders Hephaestus, after mixing together earth and water,[23] to

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attitudes toward women. The quote has become proverbial. The quote, however, needs to be balanced by the fact that Dio views both men and women as capable of deceit. Yet in his essay *On Envy* (78.25) it is clear that Dio does hold to the traditional view of Pandora as a κακόν.

[20] Alcestis also merits inclusion in a list of good women.

[21] For example, Plato in the *Timaeus* (91A) states the "most likely report" (κατὰ λόγον τὸν εἰκότα) that women are reincarnated men who were evil (ἀδίκος) and cowardly during their first life on earth. Plato says this with no fear of contradiction. He is likely citing a popular view current in his time but perhaps traceable back to Hesiod.

[22] The parallel text in Hesiod's *Theogony* (585) gives: καλὸν κακὸν ἀντ' ἀγαθοῖο ("the beautiful evil as the price for the good"). Woman does not take the place of fire; she is the price for stealing fire.

[23] I will return to the significance of the woman's mixture of earth and water in chapter 2 when I conclude with an interpretation of the meaning of this myth.

place in woman a human *voice* (αὐδή). This αὐδή is further supplemented by the addition of φωνή at line 79. What is the difference, if any, between these two words?[24] Aside from the distinction of power versus actual speech, there may be one other way of viewing these two words. φωνή can mean almost anything in Greek having to do with speech or sound.[25] Aristotle defines φωνή simply as the "sound" made by a living being,[26] but αὐδή is more precise: this describes real or actual speech contrasted with mere sound or noise.[27] In other words, αὐδή can describe speech but not tonal quality; by contrast, φωνή can describe tone or resonance.[28] Thus the tone and timber of her voice as well as her actual words form an intrinsic part of her captivating charm.[29] Yet, as Robert Beekes argues, αὐδή can mean not only human speech but also "beautiful" speech.[30] This suggestion is worth pursuing.

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[24] W.J. Verdenius, "Aufbau und Absicht der Erga," in *Hésiode et son influence* (1960) 123, says: "Die Tatsache, dass zuerst (61) Hephaistos den Auftrag erhält, Pandora eine αὐδή zu geben, während später (79) Hermes ihr eine φωνή gibt, hat vielen Anstoss gegeben. Aber αὐδή ist hier das Sprachvermögen und φωνή die Aktualisierung dieses Vermögens in der konkreten Sprache" Verdenius cites as evidence for his observation *Iliad* 3.161 and 4.430. The comparison is convincing. The authenticity of this Hesiodic line, however, has been questioned. See M.L. West's commentary (1978) 163, for arguments on both sides of the question. West is not persuaded the line should be rejected.

[25] LSJ, s.v. φωνή, lists nine definitions.

[26] Aristotle, *On the Soul* 420b: ἡ δὲ φωνὴ ψόφος τίς ἐστιν ἐμψύχου ("voice is a kind of sound of a living being").

[27] Circe at 12.150 and Calypso at 12.449 are both described as having "beautiful hair" (εὐπλόκαμος) and being a dread goddess of "human speech" (αὐδήεσσα).

[28] R. Beekes, (2010) φωνή: "tone." See also Hjalmar Frisk, *Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (1970) φωνή: "Ton."

[29] Plutarch's *Life of Antony* (25.1) begins to describe the manner in which Antony is "captured" by Cleopatra (ἁλίσκεται δὲ τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον). There is, to be sure, her physical beauty (25.3; 27.1), but Plutarch pays special attention to her ὁμιλία or her *conversation.*

[30] R. Beekes, *s.v.* αὐδή, (2010).

Homer employs this word to describe Nestor who is "sweet of speech . . . from whose tongue flowed speech (αὐδή) sweeter than honey."[31] Homer also uses αὐδή to describe a voice that is analogous or like that of the gods (θεοῖς ἐναλίγκιος αὐδήν).[32] Hence, αὐδή, when compared to the voice of the gods, can possess unusual qualities to attract attention and influence behavior. This is the gift given to Woman. In Greek thought, a woman's voice often gives her an unfair advantage over a man.[33] The dynamics of this advantage of female speech upon the male can be seen in the encounter between golden Aphrodite and Anchises. The hymn tells us that when she had finished speaking to Anchises, the words of the goddess "put sweet desire in his heart."[34] A similar text is that of *Odyssey* 1.56 in which it is stated that the daughter of Atlas, in an attempt to keep Odysseus from proceeding on to Ithaca, beguiles him with "sweet and wily words" (μαλακοῖσι καὶ αἰμυλίοισι λόγοισιν).[35]

In the Hesiodic version Hephaestus makes the voice, although normally it is the province of Aphrodite to do so. Marilyn B. Arthur observes, "she masters the male through deceit and concealment.

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[31] *Iliad* 1.247–249.

[32] *Odyssey* 1.371. See also 4.160.

[33] Raphael Sealey, *Women and Law in Classical Greece* (1990) 166, provides documentation showing that if a man could prove in a court of law that he had been persuaded by a woman or wife, a will could be declared invalid. Richard Garner, *Law & Society in Classical Athens* (1987) 87, makes the same point: "The apprehension over a woman's power in inheritance was explicitly codified by including among grounds for invalidating a will the persuasion of a woman." Obviously a woman's power of persuasion can take more than one form, but her voice must be listed among her charming assets.

[34] *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 142.

[35] Michael Weiss, "Erotica: On the Prehistory of Greek Desire," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, 98 (1998) 31-61, esp. 56, comments: "αἰμύλος is an adjective used to describe the 'spellbinding' words by which one gets someone to do something he/she doesn't or shouldn't want to do. A particularly fine example of this is *Od.* 1.56: αἰμυλίοισι λόγοισιν θέλγει."

Like the Muses, she exerts her power through the charm of language and honey-sweetness."[36] In the *Hymn to Aphrodite* (249) Aphrodite herself elaborates on her lures by which she subjugates all living things to her power: ὀάρους καὶ μήτιας/μήτιδας ("lover's talk and plots").[37] The noun ὀάρος can mean "word" or "conversation" as in Apollonius of Rhodes' *Argonautica* (3.1103). In the *Iliad* at 22.127, however, the verb is found twice (ὀαριζέμεναι, ἅ τε παρθένος ἠΐθεός τε, παρθένος ἠΐθεός τ' ὀαρίζετον ἀλλήοιν). Both bear the same meaning: "to have sex." This is confirmed also in the *Palatine Anthology* (10.68): οὗ κείναις κυπιδίους ὀάρους πότνα δέδωκα φύσις ("nature has given to them [women] the gift of amorous conversation"). Finally, but not unimportantly, as a noun ὄαρ means "wife" (*Iliad* 5.486).[38] There is a connection between verbal and sexual intercourse.[39]

Similarly, Book XV of the *Iliad* opens with Zeus suddenly waking from sleep after having had sex with Hera (14.350). He beholds the routing of the Achaeans and puts two and two together: Hera has tricked him into having sex with her in order to put him to sleep. The text is quite clear that Zeus perceives Hera's seduction as deceitful. Hera is skilled in κακία, not easy to deal with, and is deceitful.[40] Both her eye-catching physical beauty and her voice by which she offers herself to Zeus prove irresistible. At 14.329–340 Hera is described as causing trouble through her manipulative powers of a charming voice and subsequent of love-making.[41] The famous female "Sirens," notorious for their charming eloquence but a danger to man, also deserve mention here. When Odysseus

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[36] M.B. Arthur, "Cultural Strategies in Hesiod's *Theogony*: Law, Family, Society," in *Arethusa: Texts and Contexts* (1982) 67.

[37] Peter Smith translates ὀάρους as "lover's talk;"Olson has "whispering."

[38] Gisela Wickert-Micknat, *Die Frau* (1982) 81, suggests: "ὄαρ, nur pluralisch und formelhaft gebraucht, nimmt vielleicht Bezug auf das familiäre zwischen Ehefrau und Ehemann."

[39] I develop this further in chapter 4.

[40] At 15.31–33 the theme of deception is resumed.

[41] This is clear from *Iliad* 14.340 when she suggests they go to bed: ἐπεί νύ εὖαδεν εὐνή.