Gender Dynamics in Classical Athens

By

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ABSTRACT

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To the modern reader, ancient Greece may seem like a highly male dominated

culture. The writings that come from this period suggest that men had authority over the

women in their lives and that women were subordinate to the men in their lives.

However, there were many ways that women could gain a substantial amount of power in

ancient Greece. In my thesis, I look particularly at the city of Athens during the classical

period and discuss how strict gender inequality was implemented. The first section of my

analysis deals with how young men and women were brought up in Athenian culture

during this period. I draw on modern anthropological gender theory to discuss how

young Athenian men and women learned their gender. My second section deals with

adult women and their lives within the home. I make use of female characters from

ancient Greek mythology to provide examples for honorable and shameful women. My

third section deals with women of all classes of society outside of the home and the ways

that these women had powers in public spaces. Through my analysis, I will show that the

lives of women in classical Athens were not as restricted as many may think.

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INTRODUCTION

In Aristophanes' comedic play, *Thesmophoriazusae*, the tragedian Euripides has

traveled, along with his father-in-law Mnesilochus, to visit Agathon, another playwright,

in order to ask for his help. The women of Athens have been plotting to kill Euripides

based on his portrayal of women in his tragedies. In an attempt to save his life, Euripides

asks Agathon if he will dress like a woman, go to the Thesmophoria, and convince the

women that Euripides should be spared. Agathon refuses this request, but Mnesilochus

agrees to do the deed. After donning the appearance of a woman, Mnesilochus moves

into the crowd of woman and listens to what they have to say. The women are quite

angry at Euripides for convincing men that they are an evil race. One woman in

particular expresses the concerns of the group, saying:

> τὰς μοιχοτρόπους, τὰς ἀνδρεραστίας καλῶν,
> τὰς οἰνοπότιδας, τὰς προδότιδας, τὰς λάλους,
> τὰς οὐδὲν ὑγιές, τὰς μέγ᾽ ἀνδράσιν κακόν·
> ὥστ᾽ εὐθὺς εἰσιόντες ἀπὸ τῶν ἰκρίων
> ὑποβλέπουσ᾽ ἡμᾶς σκοποῦνταί τ᾽ εὐθέως
> μὴ μοιχὸς ἔνδον ᾖ τις ἀποκεκρυμμένος. (Aristophanes
> *Thesmophoriazusae*: 392-397)

> Does he not style us adulterous, lecherous, bibulous, treacherous, and
> garrulous? Does he not repeat that we are all vice, that we are the curse of
> our husbands? So that, directly they come back from the theater, they
> look at us doubtfully and go searching every nook, fearing there may be
> some hidden lover. (TR. O'Neill)

All of the women are very concerned about the power that Euripides' tragedies have over

their husbands. Women become untrustworthy and dishonorable beings in these plays.

Men believe all that they see and hear. Hearing all this, Mnesilochus attempts to speak

on behalf of Euripides, saying that he has done no wrong and that he, in fact, has kept the

worst features of women hidden from the men. He says that there are thousands of faults

that women have and Euripides has only touched upon a few. Mnesilochus, still acting as

a woman, gives several examples where women hide secret affairs from their husbands

and makes up an example from his own character's life. The women are aghast that any

one of them would be speaking like this in the meeting and call for Mnesilochus to be

punished. The same woman says:

> οὐ γάρ σε δεῖ δοῦναι δίκην; ἥτις μόνη τέτληκας
> ὑπὲρ ἀνδρὸς ἀντειπεῖν, ὃς ἡμᾶς πολλὰ κακὰ δέδρακεν
> ἐπίτηδες εὑρίσκων λόγους, ὅπου γυνὴ πονηρὰ
> ἐγένετο, Μελανίππας ποιῶν Φαίδρας τε: Πηνελόπην δὲ
> οὐπώποτ᾽ ἐποίησ᾽, ὅτι γυνὴ σώφρων ἔδοξεν εἶναι. (Aristophanes
> *Thesmophoriazusae*: 544-548)
>
> What! We ought not to punish you, who alone have dared to defend the
> man who has done so much harm, whom it pleases to put all the vile
> women that ever were upon the stage, who only shows us Melanippes and
> Phaedras? But of Penelope he has never said a word, because she was
> reputed chaste and good. (TR. O'Neill)

Mnesilochus explains that this is because no women are like Penelope. Soon after,

Cleisthenes arrives and tells the women that he has heard that a man has come dressed as

a woman to the Thesmophoria. They begin to question the women and eventually

Mnesilochus is revealed as a man. This sends the women into an uproar and they go to

tell the magistrates that a man has infiltrated their sacred festival. As Mnesilochus

continues to argue with the women, the leader of the chorus turns to address the

spectators in the audience. She asks the audience why women are treated like pests and

why men want to have such pests around them, asking why men would forbid women to

show themselves in public and why men would take care of women if they are such pests.

In the end, Mnesilochus is saved by Euripides, who is able to free him from the captivity of the women.

Although this play is a comedy and meant to be humorous for the ancient Greek spectator, it provides many insights into the world of women in Athenian society. It suggests that women were viewed in a negative way by their male counterparts. Women have the ability to act like the less honorable characters from Greek mythology. Inequalities between men and women are also expressed in this text. The chorus says that women are kept in the home, secluded from society, by the men in their lives. It also suggests that this suppression of women within the home was for their own good and the good of society as a whole. When women leave the home, they have the ability to conspire and cause problems for society. In several respects, this was the view held by many ancient authors.

The tragic women, female deities, and other female characters in ancient Greek mythology often occupied the very extreme ends of the spectrum for females. As the woman in the *Thesmophoriazusae* said, there were characters like Penelope, who fell on the chaste and honorable end of the spectrum, and characters like Phaedra, who fell on the opposite and more dishonorable end of the spectrum. Since there is little evidence for women's lives in works other than mythology, it is easy to say that the ancient Greeks believed that women were a curse to humanity, citing many examples from mythology where women are the cause of the downfall of specific men. The evidence that is presented in other primary sources offers the ideals of society, which objectify women, rather than the reality of society. Many scholars have used these pieces of evidence to make a case about the subordination of women in ancient Athens. On the other hand,

there are others who say that this subordination was not as rigid as it is made out to be. There are many different thoughts about this issue, and in my thesis, I intend to develop my own position on this issue and answer some of my own questions that I have about women of the classical period in Athens. For instance, I want to discover what types of authority women could attain and which women in Athens had the ability to be more equal to men. Also, I want to determine what characteristics were important for women in classical Athenian culture.

I first became interested in this subject matter in high school. Stories of mythology fascinated me. I was especially drawn to ancient Greek mythology, whose characters I found to be most entertaining and unusual. My interests in ancient Greek mythology were furthered when I studied abroad in Greece during the fall of my junior year of College. While I was there, I had the opportunity to visit several of the sites where these men and women from mythology lived or visited. The stories were coming to life in front of my eyes. One of the classes that I took in Greece was about mythology and religion. We examined several aspects of mythology and one that I found most interesting was that relating to gender and, particularly, the lives of women. Their stories seemed to draw me in more than those of their male counterparts and the stories made me curious to learn more about real women. Therefore, I have decided to look more in depth at women during the classical period of Athens.

There are three parts to my analysis. In the first part of my analysis, I will examine the lives of young women and girls in the city of Athens. One particular issue that I wish to cover in this portion of the thesis is how young women were brought up in this society. If gender, just as culture, is something that is learned, how were these young

women taught to act and what were the social norms that pervaded their lifestyles? As part of this section, I will also show how gender was differentiated between young men and young women and search for the differences in their upbringing. The second piece of my analysis will deal with adult women who have been married, exploring the nature of their authority in the home. I will show the types of authority women had within the home and the ways women were meant to act in relation to their families.   Honor and shame were important oppositions in ancient Greece and in this section I will provide examples of honorable women and dishonorable women and show how these notions reflected the ideals of the city. In my third chapter, I will examine the ways in which women could gain power in the city of Athens outside of the home. I will first search for ways that women had power under the laws of the city and then provide examples of female power in different areas of life. With the use of examples from ancient Greek mythology in all three sections of my analysis, I intend to discover how women were valued in Athenian culture. I also intend to explore the notion of inequality of women that is perceived by many modern scholars and decide for myself how much freedom the different women in Athens possessed. Lastly, I will return to considering Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae*, offer some conclusions about all that I have analyzed in my chapters, and discuss how relevant this play may have been.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is difficult to completely understand all of the aspects of a given culture when just experiencing it for a short amount of time. Observing the surroundings and what people are doing may help in the analysis. Similarly, talking with members of that culture and asking certain questions about what they are doing, and why, can lead to a better understanding of the culture. This is the task of the anthropologist. However, when the culture is one that is no longer present in today's modern world, there are some problems with these methods of trying to understand that culture. There is no one to talk to and little material evidence to analyze. This is the problem that I, and many scholars, faced. There are several different ways that scholars have chosen to tackle this issue. In my own research, it was important that I look at the theme of women in ancient Greece from several different angles in order to create a more complete picture and to better complete my analysis. Three specific areas of scholarship were important in my research. These three areas of scholarship deal with the ethnography of ancient Greece, the art and mythology of ancient Greece, and the anthropological theory that encompasses reconstructing history, gender, art, and mythology.

Ethnography of Ancient Greece

The first area of scholarship that I employed in my analysis relates to reconstructing what life was like in ancient Greece. Scholars, both anthropologists and classicists, have a limited amount of sources to base their analysis on since the civilization that they are looking at is not a contemporary one. The only evidence that

can be analyzed comes in the form of archaeological, material remains and literary texts of many kinds. In order to construct a picture of what life in ancient Greece was like, scholars have combined what was written during that period with the archaeological remains to try and piece together the puzzle. There are several different methods that are used as well as certain issues that must be considered when creating the picture of ancient Greek society.

Mainly, scholars have taken two different approaches when analyzing ancient Greek society. The first approach is to try to look at every aspect of ancient Greek culture and create a whole picture during one time period. Using this type of approach, the scholar examines all different aspects of the culture and includes all members of that culture (Flaceliere 2002; Humphreys 1983). In the case of ancient Greece, a scholar would discuss the lives of men, women, children, slaves, and foreigners. He or she would also look at everything from the poor to the wealthy and from birth to death. Other things such as religion, warfare, professions, entertainment, dress, law, marriage, and education are also topics that the scholar would seek to analyze. An example of this can be found in the work, *Daily Life in Greece at the Time of Pericles*, written by Robert Flaceliere (2002). Flaceliere examined the classical period of Athens at the time of Pericles. He divided his work into different sections based on different aspects of Athenian culture.

One issue that can arise when dealing with this type of analysis is the differences in the regions of Greece. Ancient Greece was not a united state, but rather many small and independent cities. The daily lives of the people from Athens differed greatly from those of Sparta or the Ionian coast. Island life differed from mainland life. Although

archaeological evidence can be found in many of these areas, the majority of literary evidence comes directly from, and relates to, Athens. Thus, scholars such as Flaceliere, who have taken on the task of reconstructing the entirety of ancient Greek life, have focused their works mainly on Athens while drawing on evidence from other cities to create a comparison (Flaceliere 2002). In many instances, Flaceliere compares the way of life at Athens with the way of life at Sparta. Choosing a time frame is also of great importance when interpreting the past. Scholars choose a time period based on the relevant literary texts in most cases. This helps them narrow the scope of their research and analysis. For my research, I looked at the city of Athens in the classical period of ancient Greece, which spanned an approximately two hundred year period through the fifth and fourth centuries BC.

Another way in which scholars could choose to discuss ancient Greece is by taking one specific part of the culture and analyzing it in greater detail. In this way, a scholar may look at, for instance, the lives of a specific gender or a specific age group. All aspects of the specific gender or age group are covered. When analyzing men and women, scholars tend to look at the entire span of life, from birth to death. Other aspects that the scholar may look at are different professions that the men or women could attain, rights of the men and women, and how they were expected to act in daily life. Much of the information for these works comes from literary texts such as private inscriptions, law codes, plays, and many other sources as it is difficult to ascertain information about gender in archaeological evidence. In some cases, the archaeological evidence can be put to good use. The analysis of imagery on ancient remains such as pottery and the imagery of men and women in sculpture and architecture can be helpful to scholars. Other ways

in which scholars can make use of this second type of reconstruction are by discussing different institutions of the ancient Greeks. Scholars can look at everything from marriage to religion to the idea of the house. Similarly to the first approach of reconstruction, choosing a location and time period is important when analyzing a singular aspect of ancient Greek culture.

Along with the problems of location and time period, there are several other issues that scholars must be aware of when attempting to reconstruct history. The first major issue that comes up in discussion is ensuring that the ideas of the modern era are not being forced upon the ancient Greek writings and archaeology. It is important to be aware of certain biases that may exist. Our own cultural perspectives may tend to dominate our thought processes when thinking about certain aspects of ancient Greek culture. For instance, Janett Morgan discusses how this problem has occurred in prior works written about the idea of the house in ancient Greece. She discusses how ideas about the modern house being a place where a family unit lives tend to corrupt the ideas of the ancient Greek house. In her work, she sets out to show that the idea of the house to the ancient Greeks was quite different than our idea of the house in modern times (Morgan 2010). Definitions, thus, become very important. Modern definitions cannot be used when discussing ancient Greek culture. Scholars must think about how the Greek people defined the terms that they are dealing with and then analyze them from the Greek perspective (Schaps 1979).

One area in which recent scholarship has imposed modern ideas on the ancient Greek world is in feminism. Some feminist scholars of the twentieth century have looked back on ancient Greece and have labeled it a world full of female oppression (Winkler

1990). They take modern day issues and make assumptions about ancient domesticity. It is easy for these scholars to look at material from ancient Greece and say that it was a world full of female oppression. Although this would be the simplest response when analyzing ancient Greek culture, there are several scholars who do the opposite and look at gender in a more positive sense. The more recent works of anthropologists in Greece that deal with gender discuss how women have more power than one would generally assume they would. In this category are anthropologists such as Ernestine Friedl and Michael Herzfeld who have worked in the Mediterranean and have examined how gender works in the modern cultures that exist there (Friedl, 1962; Herzfeld, 1986). Still this issue of imposing modern thinking upon the past remains a concern and it is something that Morgan as well as other scholars are aware of and that they try to avoid when producing their own works.

A second problem that scholars may face is deciphering the archaeological evidence. Archaeological evidence, in general, may not always be very telling of what life was like in ancient Greece. Certain areas are very specific and straightforward. For instance, the Acropolis was clearly designated as a religious and sacred area in Athens. This can be seen in the architecture and the remains that were found at the site. The monumental temples signify a place of religion and the main entranceway proves that it was a closed off and sacred space. Only religious evidence was found in the remains on the Acropolis from the ancient Greeks. Not all archaeological evidence is as straight forward, however. Even in the city of Athens, there is controversy over what some of the remains may have been in the time of the ancient Greeks. In many cases, the buildings had been knocked down, reconstructed, or built over as time passed, so it is not always

easy to assign a specific function to a particular building (Morgan 2010). It is also difficult for scholars to come up with standards for buildings, key elements that define a specific building or specific rooms within a building. As discussed earlier, the ancient Greek society was racially united, but not politically united. This means that standards for buildings located in Athens may differ from the standards for buildings located in cities outside of Athens (Morgan 2010).

A third issue that may come up when reconstructing the time periods of ancient Greece is the relationship between the archaeological evidence and the literary evidence. In many ways, the literary texts and the archaeological remains that have been found tend to contradict one another. It is not always easy to connect the two. For instance, the literary texts can often describe what certain locations were like and how they were divided spatially, but the archaeology may tell us a different story. Often, these excerpts about daily life are mentioned in a larger narrative. They may be mentioned for specific reasons such as to make the character appear like an upstanding citizen in the eyes of the people of the courts (Schaps 1979). This then leads to a problem with the authorship of literary texts.

The majority of the literary texts that scholars draw from were written by men for an audience of mainly men. This being the case, people other than men are sometimes left out in certain descriptions in many different texts such as the histories written by Herodotus and Thucydides. There is also a question of whether what is being portrayed in literary works is actual reality or if it is an idealized account. For instance, there is a dilemma between the women that can be found in Greek tragedies versus the women that can be found in Greek prose (Sealey 1990). Scholars must decide whether either of these

representations is actually accurate or if there is a common ground between the two. A similar problem can occur with these texts in terms of wealth. The texts mainly deal with the lives of the wealthier class in the cities and not with the poor. Also, in order to set up private inscriptions, an ancient Greek individual needed to have more than mere subsistence (Sealey 1990). This means that the poorer members of society are often not represented and it is up to the scholar to look at the texts from different angles in order to decipher what life was really like.

This area of scholarship was very important for my research since I was not able to travel to Greece and study specific archaeology. In order to gain a better sense of the actual culture, I needed to utilize these different sources. It was also necessary for me to look at several primary sources in conjunction with these secondary pieces of scholarship. Some primary sources that were significant in my research were the works of historians like Herodotus and Thucydides, the works of the biographer Plutarch, preserved law codes, preserved orations made by influential Athenian leaders, and works of philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle. In order to grasp a full picture of the time period in question, I analyzed these primary sources alongside the secondary scholarship.

Art and Mythology of Ancient Greece

While reconstructing a general time period from ancient Greece or a specific notion about ancient Greek culture, scholars have drawn on many different sources that aided them in this process. When thinking about women and ideas about gender, scholars have looked at both literary and material evidence in order to analyze ideas and to come up with new theories about women in ancient Greece. Much of the evidence that scholars have used comes from the mythology and religion of the ancient Greeks, the tragedies,

comedies, and other poetries from that time, and artwork such as sculpture and vase-paintings. Scholars have sought to balance what they find in these sources with what others have said about women in ancient Greece. These materials are sometimes directly opposed to each other, however, and often can create a confusing picture of the period. It is interesting to look at these pieces of evidence as they were such a large part of ancient Greek life and they are better preserved than other forms of evidence that scholars may use.

The analysis of different art forms, such as sculpture and vase-painting, is a difficult task for scholars who may not be versed in things such as archaeology and art. In terms of research, there has been much written about the different styles employed in these art forms and how they changed over time in modern research (Sparkes 2011). Similarly, there has been much written in modern research about how certain techniques and innovations allowed for different art forms to be produced over time. Although these scholars do not necessarily analyze the material, they can provide other scholars with vital information that may aid in the analysis of things other than style and technique. The discussion is also not limited to vases and sculptures of men and women. Ancient Greek architecture often employs different forms of sculpture and representations of men and women. For instance, in temple architecture, the frieze is made up patterns of triglyphs and metopes, which could be left bare, but which often were adorned with sculptures that tell some sort of a story or depict a certain event. The Panathenaic procession is depicted on the frieze of the Parthenon for example.

When analyzing ancient Greek sculpture, there is one main problem that scholars encounter. Sculptures of men and women were conceived differently in the eyes of the

ancient Greeks. Over time, the male statue changed in terms of both technique and styling. At first, all male statues were constructed in the same ways and were also styled in the same ways so that no differences could be seen between statues. In time, different techniques allowed these forms to take on new positions. Not only did the construction techniques change the overall look of male statues, the styling became more personalized and individualized over time. The statues became more realistic because there was no longer a standard face and body type being used (Dillon 2010). Those ancient Greeks in the classical period who could afford to have a statue set up in their honor were able to have the statue created in their image. The female statue did not fare the same fate, though. Styling, and even technique in many ways, did not change over time (Dillon 2010). The faces were all the same on female statues and the clothing was mainly drapery so the only information that can be gained from these statues is the epigraphic information that may be found on the statue base. This restricts the amount of analysis that can be done by scholars. Similarly, trying to place these portraits into a larger, historical context is difficult. The limited style has not stopped modern research, however. For instance, Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones discusses ideas about the veiled women of ancient Greece and how the portrayal of these women in sculpture reveals something about the time period. He deals mainly with the head of the statue and the clothing in determining how the veil was used both to contain women and to allow them some freedoms (Llewellyn-Jones 2003).

Vase-painting is a second area where scholars have worked to analyze more than just the different forms of pottery. Vases are the most recovered artifacts in archaeological digs, next to coins. They were both practical and ornamental and

thousands were manufactured for the ancient Greek people. One of the things that scholars are interested in with these vase-paintings is finding out who was looking at the depictions on the pottery (Huddilston 1902). It is interesting to think about the vases in this context because we can ascertain what types of pictures ancient Greek people wanted to see most. Another way to think about these vase-paintings is from the viewpoint of the artist (Shapiro 1994). Painters drew inspiration from mythological stories and religion. The story was very important to the painter and what he chose as a depiction of the story can describe ideas of the period and what was popular at the time. Authors and painters may have had different opinions about what people wanted to hear and see. These are the types of evidence that scholars have looked at in order to gain a sense of the ancient Greek world beyond literary evidence.

Some of the images that were popular to draw on vases and pottery dealt with the mythology of the ancient Greek people. The ancient Greek people were highly religious and were polytheistic, believing in many deities. Their mythology was vast and incredibly intricate. There are many primary sources that scholars can draw upon in order to recreate the religion and mythology of the ancient Greek people. Two of the major sources of ancient Greek mythology are the works of Homer and the works of Hesiod. Both Homer and Hesiod dealt with some of the main issues of ancient Greek mythology. In order to develop the complete story of these figures of myth, scholars use evidence from many different sources, both literary ones and material ones. For instance, scholars can take evidence from Hesiod about a specific deity and can also take evidence from the archaeological remains of that deity's temple to form a full story about that deity. Many of these works mostly relate evidence from the primary sources and

combine them together in a way that makes it more accessible to the modern reader (Graf 1993; Kerenyi 1974)

The scholarly work that is done based on the mythology of the ancient Greek people relies heavily on these primary sources. Scholars may choose to focus their work on a specific deity, hero, or subject of myth, such as the Amazons, or pick a certain theme in myth that they would like to delve into further. One major theme that will be important to my work is that of women in myth. The ancient Greeks believed in both male and female deities and also had female figures that could be viewed as heroes. In many parts of myth, these female characters played a large role. A part of the Athenian mythology dealt with the powerful goddess Athena becoming the protector of the city of Athens after providing the people with an olive tree. Scholars have looked at female characters in ancient Greek mythology, such as Athena, in order to analyze what their religion was like and draw other, more societal, conclusions. In their analysis, scholars try to determine how these myths affected the ancient Greek population and if the myths were meant to enforce social norms or challenge them (Lefkowitz 2007). The same can be said for the male characters that are found in the compendium of Greek mythology (Van Nortwick 2008).

Some other important themes that can be found in scholarly literature deal with the family. For instance, Philip Slater examines the structure of humans and, more specifically, the structure of the family in relation to children. He looks at the mother-son relationship as well as other themes and discusses how they are reflected in ancient Greek mythology. Slater goes on to analyze the different myths in a more general sense and comes up with certain conclusions about the relationship between myth and culture

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(Slater 1992). Similarly, Page DuBois uses mythology to show how there was a shift from mythic to rational thought in ancient Greece. She maps out the pattern of the 'other' and focuses on how the shifts affected the culture of Athens in order to justify the social order (DuBois 1982).

Other primary works that involve the mythology of the ancient Greek people are the plays that were written during the classical period in Greece. These plays drew largely on stories from myth. In classical Greece, Athens was the central location for theatrical shows of comedy and tragedy. Competitions were held to see who could write and perform the best work of either genre. Playwrights such as Euripides, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Aristophanes all came to Athens to enter these contests and display their literary skills. They became such a big part of ancient Greek culture that men like Herodotus and Aristotle made mention of them in their own works. Luckily for scholars, these sources have been well preserved and translated into other languages so there is the capability of more in depth analysis based on these plays. Probably one of the most important things to remember when reading and analyzing these tragedies and comedies is that their first purpose was to entertain. The playwrights wanted to entertain their audience and people came to these competitions to be entertained. Secondly, it is important to remember that the relationship between the characters in the play and actual society is not always straight-forward.

This second fact is one of the biggest issues that scholars face when they are analyzing the tragedies and comedies. Edith Hall discusses how it is important for scholars to remember that this relationship is not like a mirror reflection. She says that the plays cannot be read as historical or social documents even though they are a special

kind of social practice (Hall 2006). It is hard to treat these works as historical fact because all we have are the texts of these works. We do not know what the playwrights were thinking when they were presenting certain situations to their audience and when they were creating certain characters. There is some mention of the ideas behind plays found in other sources, but there are not many. For instance, Plato discusses some of the ideas behind several of Aristophanes' comedies and offers up his own views on the issues that Aristophanes deals with. The question then comes down to how big the gap is between the fictional and the real. It can also lead to a question that deals with how the gap was used in the plays to discuss or explain certain social issues (Foley 2001). Ideas about gender and female identity are one of the main topics that scholars discuss in terms of these plays and how they relate to the actual social system. Women were a vital and intriguing part of the tragedies and comedies. They were quite often the central figures and they had the same, or sometimes even more, rhetorical and political powers than the men in the play. This has led many scholars to analyze the ways in which these women act in the plays and to assess how these representations fit in with reality.

Scholars have looked at this issue of women in plays in several different ways. They either looked at specific female characters individually or at themes relating to women that can be found in these plays. The female character's actions as well as the way they speak are important in scholars' analysis of the material. It is interesting to think about how women's speech was interpreted by male authors (Lardinois and McClure 2001). In this case, scholars have borrowed from work done in linguistics in order to analyze how women's speech can be distinguished from men's speech and what types of constraints were placed on women's speech in these comedies and tragedies.

With the exception of these plays and female poets like Sappho, the female voice is missing from the literary corpus of the ancient Greek people, which includes works done in history, philosophy, politics, religion, biography, geography, and science. Therefore, the study of their speech, including what they chose to talk about, where their speeches occurred, and who they directed their speech to, in these plays is important to scholars (Lardinois and McClure 2001).

By looking at specific characters in tragedy and comedy, scholars are able to think about whether or not each was individually representative of real people. There were a wide variety of women represented in ancient Greek tragedy and comedy. In this case, scholars seek to discover whether theater goers longed for reality or for entertainment (Young 1953). Many scholars also look at broader themes dealing with the women in ancient Greek plays. Scholars that deal with these women must avoid modern assumptions about ancient periods of history just like those scholars that deal with reconstructing the culture of the ancient Greek people (Foley 2001). One unique theme that is discussed in the literature is based on the idea that these plays left a mark on the human psyche of those people who were watching them. Since these plays were a specific, and almost religious, type of social practice, scholars argue that ancient Greek culture came to be shaped and reshaped in theatrical ways (Hall 2006). This brings scholars back to the question about the nature of the relationship between Athenian and Greek reality and these different tragedies and comedies.

In my own research, I looked at different scenes depicted on pottery that dealt with women. These scenes often represented ways in which women could act within society. Through examining ancient Greek sculpture, I was able to come up with ideas

about the veiling of women and its relation to modesty and freedom of movement. I also looked at specific characters in ancient Greek myth from the epic poems, tragedies, and comedies to see how well these depictions related to real women or if these characters were completely opposed to real women in ancient Greece. These characters helped me deduce what it was like to be a proper woman in ancient Greece and what it was like to be considered a dishonorable woman.

Anthropological Theory

The final area of scholarship that was pertinent to my research is based on anthropological theory. Specifically, there were four main regions of anthropological theory that I dealt with in my research. These four regions of theory dealt with historical anthropology theory, gender theory, art theory, and mythology theory. All four were relevant in my work since I was dealing with all four areas in my research.

The first area of scholarship that was relevant in this section deals with the idea of historical anthropology. This involves a combination of history and anthropology. In the opening chapter to the work, *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination* (1992), John and Jean Comaroff discuss how this relationship works in ethnography. It is something that involves looking at the past with a more critical eye. Instead of acting like the historian who simply relates events and connects those events together, the historical anthropologist looks more at the practices that people in the past went through and how the society was structured (Comaroff 1992). The historical anthropologist also looks more at the society as a whole, rather than specific individuals. Social structures are not defined in simple terms in this case. They are looked at more in depth and explanations for why a practice is like it is are sought after (Comaroff 1992). For instance, in their

work, John and Jean Comaroff examine how conceptions of things such as agriculture, fashion, and property changed over time in relation to the colonial encounter in Southern Africa. They delve into the reasons behind the different social practices and how the people's perception of them changed over time. It was, therefore, not enough in my own research to relate a series of events, but to delve into a larger issue in which I sought to explain a social practice. In my research, it was important for me to analyze the practices of women and the practices of art and mythology by looking for meanings behind these practices. I could not just label them with simple definitions.

With the start of the feminist movements in the 1950's, gender became something of interest to many anthropologists, both men and women. Prior to this time, there was not much work done in the field of anthropology that dealt with women. Anthropologists began to be concerned with looking at the differences between men and women in different cultures and why these differences existed. They started to challenge gender norms which generally elevated men to a higher position in society over women. Different cultures from around the world were studied in order to learn how gender was perceived in certain regions. Instead of saying that the men were dominant in all of these cultures, anthropologists became interested in learning what roles each gender performs and how these roles affect the person's place in society. In some cases, the women in these cultures were viewed to be of a higher, or at least relatively equal, status. For instance, Bronislaw Malinowski discussed how women of the Trobriand Islands are held in a good position and have considerable amount of influence in that culture in his work, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922). Work within advanced societies such as the

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United States and Europe was also very important to feminist anthropology. Many works of gender anthropology have been based on research done within our own country.

Early work in gender anthropology can be derived from the ideas of Claude Levi-Strauss in his works on myth (Levi-Strauss 1963). Levi-Strauss was a structural anthropologist who looked at the myths of Native Americans. He came up with a theory that had to do with universal oppositions within culture and how there is a mediatory force between them. Levi-Strauss argued that there were certain binary opposites that were present in every culture. For instance, he looked at the oppositions between life and death and agriculture and hunting in Native American culture. Each pair is opposite in every way. In the myth, the first in each pair can be related with herbivores, animals that eat plants, and the latter can be associated with carnivores, beasts of prey. There is always a trickster in these Native American myths, usually a raven, which is an omnivore. It is the mediator between the herbivores and carnivores and thus between life and death and agriculture and hunting. Levi-Strauss proposes that this is why the raven in Native American myths has a contradictory personality (Levi-Strauss 1963). It is contradictory because it is mediating two opposites.

This work on binary opposites has led anthropologists to come up with other oppositions that occur in our daily lives. An important opposition that occurs in the Mediterranean context is that of honor and shame. There is a code of honor that persists in rural villages of the Mediterranean to this day (Blok 1981; Campbell 1964). These concepts of honor and shame deal with how people perceive themselves and with how people are perceived by society. A man's honor deals with his authority in his family and his ability to protect the members of his family as well as the property he owns. For men,

honor is also related to masculinity and virility. If a man shows signs of weakness and is unable to protect his household and family members, then his honor is questioned. Of great importance to men is the honor of the female members of his household (Blok 1981). Female chastity and sexual shame are the basis for female honor in the Mediterranean. Virginity before marriage and fertility after marriage are of utmost importance for determining a woman's honor (Campbell 1964). Women are expected to stay at home and deal with the inner workings of the home and raising the children. If a woman loses her honor, she gains the negative associations of shame, which portray her shameless nature. When women lose their honor in Mediterranean culture through promiscuity or neglecting her role within the home, it is a direct reflection on the honor of the household and the men of the household (Campbell 1964). The men, in these situations, have not done their proper job in protecting the women.

Anthropological work in the second half of the twentieth century in Greece has gained further insights into the way gender is discussed. These scholars set out to find ways that women have more authority and power in Greek culture than many presume. In her work, *Vasilika: A Village in Modern Greece* (1962), Ernestine Friedl looks at a small village in Greece called Vasilika. Two of the main things that she discusses are the struggle of the lives of men while they work in nature and the economics of the household. Her first point deals with the opposition between men and nature. As men leave the household, they are in a constant struggle with nature which breaks them down. They need to return to the home, the place where women are in charge, in order to be rejuvenated (Friedl 1962). The men have to come back to the women who can help to empower them to go back out into nature the next day. In her second argument, she

discusses the economics of the household. She describes how women have more power in terms of economics than is generally thought to be true in Greece. Friedl also describes how women who have more power in terms of economics in a society are then held in a higher position in that society (Friedl 1962).

Lastly, in her work, *Undoing Gender*, Judith Butler (2004) explains how there are gender norms in every society and how these norms shape our daily lives. Butler's work offers a new way of thinking about gender in our everyday lives. She discusses how society attempts to place everyone into one of two boxes, male or female and that there are no other options. People want to have stable identities and are concerned with being part of a group, she continues. These norms can hold society together, but when a person does not fit into one of these boxes, they are generally excluded from society and sometimes labeled as inhuman (Butler 2004). It comes down to what people believe is natural and unnatural. Butler then discusses how gender becomes a type of performance. There are certain characteristics, gender norms, that males and females are expected to display in every culture. If culture is something that is learned, then gender also becomes something that is learned. Sherry Ortner, writing about thirty years before Butler, also came to a similar conclusion about gender. She wrote that girls are taught to act like women from their mothers (Ortner 1972). They are taught to be nurturing where as boys are taught more physical tasks. Women are caretakers and part of the domestic and private spheres of life. Their power is limited to inside the home. Men, on the other hand, deal more with the public spheres of life outside of the home and are viewed as creating culture (Ortner 1972). People, therefore, learn to be male or female when they are young from the males and females that are around them. This teaching is based on

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the cultural norms of the society and carries over into children's adult lives. In many

societies, there are certain rituals that celebrate or mark when a child becomes fully male

or fully female. She goes on to say that all people perform gender because there is no

natural way of being a male or female (Butler 2004). It is all based on a set of rules that

society and culture have created.

Just like other scholars have mentioned previously, it was important for me during

my research to utilize modern gender theory in an appropriate manner. It was important

to understand these concepts and think about them when analyzing the ancient sources,

but it was also important to use these theories in a critical way. For instance, it would not

have been highly analytical to simply apply certain theories directly and not look to find

meanings behind social customs and practices like John and Jean Comaroff described

(Comaroff 1992). It was better to use this theory in helping to think about the issues in

my own research. Like Friedl, it was relevant for me to look for places, such as in

economics, where women had more power than is generally assumed. The theories

relating to honor and shame in the Mediterranean culture were important to my

development of characteristics for honorable and dishonorable women. I looked at what

traits were related to female honor in classical Athens and what traits were accompanied

with the negative aspects of shame. Using Butler's research, I looked at how young

Athenians were taught to act and to perform their gender and the stereotypes that

revolved around each gender. This training was an important stage in a young

Athenian's life as it prepared them for their adult lives.

Like gender, art is a product of culture and thus becomes a crucial element in

understanding a culture. It is not enough for the anthropologist to simply look at a work

of art and say if it is pleasing or displeasing to them. There is much more that the anthropologist wants to understand about the specific work of art. Questions that are asked about the object may be simple such as, 'how was it made?', or they may be more complex such as, 'how does this object relate to human life?'. In her work, *Art as Culture: An Introduction to the Anthropology of Art* (1999), Evelyn Payne Hatcher says that anthropologists must use the same theories that they would use in the study of other aspects of culture when they are studying art. She says that art must be considered as an aspect of culture and studied within its cultural context. There are several important questions that the anthropologist must ask about each piece of art (Hatcher 1999). These questions deal with the identification of where the piece is from, who created the piece, how it was made, the social contexts of the time period in which the piece was made, the social functions of the piece, what values are being expressed through the piece, changes made over time, esthetic quality, and how the piece is perceived by viewers. Using this theory on art, I was able to address certain issues with ancient Greek vase-painting and sculpture. For instance, it was important for me to place these art forms in a larger social and cultural context. It was also important for me to decipher what cultural values were being expressed through these different art forms.

Theory about myth has been based on the ideas of Levi-Strauss and Bronislaw Malinowski. Malinowski has become known as one of the fathers of functionalist anthropology. In his form of functionalism, Malinowski was concerned with how cultural and social institutions serve essential human needs. Malinowski discusses mythology in a slightly different way than Levi-Strauss does as he challenges ideas of universality. In his essay, "Myth in Primitive Psychology" (1926), Malinowski argues

that myth provides justification for rituals by creating stories that deal with the origin of these rituals. Besides ritual, there are many other aspects of culture that can be derived from myth such as funerary practices, Malinowski says. He continues by saying that myths help to create culture in a sense. Malinowski argues in his work that mythology endorses social cohesion and also serves to teach social behaviors. These myths, thus, legitimize human tendencies and practices (Malinowski 1926).

Levi-Strauss, as discussed earlier, believed that there is a certain structural logic present in any given myth, revealed in the existence of recurring structural oppositions (Levi-Strauss 1963). He took an approach of structuralism when analyzing mythology and deduced that myths can reveal ways in which the human mind works. Levi-Strauss also believed that there was a basic paradox surrounding myth. Myths are unpredictable and fantastic, containing often arbitrary content, but, at the same time, myths from different cultures contain similarities. He proposes that there are universal laws that govern mythical thought. These universal laws affect the myths that are produced in each culture. This allows for myths to be unique and, at the same time, to have some of the same ideas and values present within them (Levi-Strauss 1963). Along with this comes Levi-Strauss' ideas about binary opposites. He believed that the oppositions, such as life and death, were universal and that each culture represented these oppositions in different ways. Levi-Strauss goes on to say that if universal laws govern myths, which are widely unpredictable then human thought must also be governed by these universal laws (Levi-Strauss 1963).

I used these theories from Malinowski and Levi-Strauss in order to better analyze the myths of the ancient Greek people. Thinking about mythology in the way of

Malinowski, I inquired as to whether or not the myths were meant to teach the ancient Greek people how to act and to legitimize the social practices that were in place. Using the ideas of Levi-Strauss, I tried to find oppositions in these myths that can also be found in the daily lives of the ancient Greek people. It was interesting to consider how this may reveal what the men who composed these mythologies were thinking.

Conclusion

Using these three different areas of scholarship, I examined the lives of women in ancient Greece. First I provide an ethnography of classical Athens that creates a picture of the backdrop for my research. Then I look at the lives of women by separating their lives into childhood and motherhood. Marriage was the factor that divided these two distinct areas of women's lives. These two chapters deal mainly with the lives of citizen-girls and citizen-women within the city. I draw on comparisons to their male counterparts to better explain their position in society. These chapters also deal with how women were meant to act within the home. My final chapter of analysis deals with women outside of the home and I analyze the ways that women could attain certain levels of power and authority within the city of Athens. Through all of these chapters, I make use of primary sources from mythology, history, biography, and philosophy to provide examples of women. Lastly, I offer some conclusions on the issues that I have discussed in my chapters and show how women could gain a sense of equality in classical Athens.

ETHNOGRAPHY OF CLASSICAL ATHENS

In his work, *Daily Life in Greece at the Time of Pericles*, Robert Flaceliere provides a detailed analysis of what life was like in ancient Athens during the classical period. Although it was written several decades ago when archaeological sites were just beginning to be examined, it provides us with a picture of Athens through analysis of primary sources and archaeological remains. Despite the fact that more material evidence has been accrued at these archaeological sites since its publication, Flaceliere's work continues to be regarded as an integral work of classical studies.

Athens was one of many city-states located in the Aegean. It was situated in the region known as Attica and it was surrounded by mountains and hills. To the south of the city lay the port of Athens, known as the Piraeus. The roads of Greece were not as sophisticated as the later highways of the Romans so travel by sea was far easier than the more dangerous travel by road (Flaceliere 2002: 1). Located in the Mediterranean, the climate varied from dry and warm periods in the spring through the fall and mild and wet winters. Drought was common and there were not many rivers and streams to offer a consistent flow of water in Athens. During the winter, rain came scantly or as sudden and torrential storms that could produce more trouble for the native Athenians (Flaceliere 2002: 2). The landscape was not particularly fertile due to the climate and the mountainous land. The only fertile soil was located in the plains and there were not many plains located in Attica. Grape vines and olive trees flourished in these small areas, though. Olives and wine became the biggest exports of the city.

The city of Athens was made up of several different villages which were all centered around the Acropolis. These villages grew outward from the Acropolis, without any deliberate plan (Flaceliere 2002: 6). Urban life developed around the Acropolis and contained Athens' public place of assembly, the Agora, which held religious, political, and economic functions. Workers' quarters also developed in this area. Other structures that sprang up in this area over time were residential quarters, lower-class quarters, and an ex-urban area known as Agryle. Unlike the unplanned city, the Acropolis was planned and contained magnificent architecture. The Agora as well contained large architectural structures. It was believed that these large structures could only be made for the gods and the municipal buildings of the city. For men to have grand houses was viewed as over-sumptuous and even sacrilegious (Flaceliere 2002: 10). Therefore, housing was not very extravagant. Lower-class houses consisted of one floor with two or three small rooms. Some had an upper floor with a few bedrooms which could be accessed by an outside staircase. Houses with more than one floor dedicated one floor as a woman's space and another as a man's space. Cooking was mainly done outside unless there was a kitchen in the house. Even if there were a kitchen, the fire needed to be started outside before bringing it into the house in order to avoid smoke filling the house (Flaceliere 2002: 15). The city was surrounded by walls that extended all the way down to the Piraeus so that the connection to the sea would never be broken. This made it easy for Athens to trade and gain supplies during times of war. After leaving the city walls through the Dipylon Gate, the main cemetery of the city could be found. Further out was the Academy, which held religious, athletic, and education functions. Out in the countryside, there were larger

residences and estates for middle-class and aristocratic citizens as well as smaller plots of land where peasants provided for their own families (Flaceliere 2002: 24).

Politics and law changed greatly during the classical period in Athens, which began when democracy was established in 508 BC by Cleisthenes and lasted until 322 BC. It changed from dictatorial leadership to a form of government that was more democratic in nature. It allowed for all male citizens to take part in politics and to participate in the Assembly, which was the source of all legislative, executive, and judicial authority. Men could participate in the Assembly after they had been accepted into their father's phratry on their eighteenth birthday and completed their two years of military service (Flaceliere 2002: 31). Meetings were announced in advance so that men from the countryside would have time to come into the city if they chose to partake in the Assembly. Even so, many did not come and the Assembly became a thing for the middle-class and wealthier citizens, needing only a quorum of six thousand voters to make pertinent decisions for the city (Flaceliere 2002: 32). The citizens were divided into tribes, demes, and phratries by Cleisthenes during his reforms in 508 BC. There were ten tribes and each tribe possessed land and elected officials to administer that land (Flaceliere 2002: 33). The ten tribes were further divided into demes. Each tribe was made up of ten demes so there were one hundred demes all together (Flaceliere 2002: 33). The chief official of the deme was the *demarchos* and was similar to a mayor. Phratries were sub-divisions of the demes (Flaceliere 2002: 33). These were groups of men linked by blood-relationships. There were many public offices that were organized in a way so that there would be an equal amount of members from each tribe. Athens also had a council made up of five hundred members, fifty from each tribe. Most of these

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offices were filled by drawing lots (Flaceliere 2002: 38). Members of certain offices, such as the ten *strategoi*, were elected by the members of the council or by the Assembly. Justice was exercised by the people of Athens with the exception of certain cases which reverted back to the Court of the Areopagus, a more ancient judicial system. One institution that was completely Athenian in nature was that of ostracism (Flaceliere 2002: 226). It occurred annually and the people had the power to vote one person into temporary banishment for ten years without bringing him to trial and without any formal charge against him. Ostracism was a preventative measure against tyranny. This form of judicial action was exercised against politically active and wealthy men within Athens that were potential threats to the State. It was often used as a way for Athenian politicians to eliminate opposing competition for a short period of time.

In ancient Greece, there were no city boundaries that defined each individual state. Rather, the cities were identified with the men who occupied them. There were three distinct types of people who lived within the city of Athens. The first group was composed of free male citizens. In the city, there were approximately forty thousand free male citizens during the classical period (Flaceliere 2002: 52). A citizen was defined through the laws of Pericles as someone whose parents were both citizens. There was a wide range of social classes from the homeless to the very wealthy. These social classes were defined by the income of the individual and how well he could provide for his own family without working for others. For the ancient Greeks, peasant life was not looked down upon (Flaceliere 2002: 117). A peasant had the ability to provide for himself and his family the food and clothes necessary to satisfy their day to day needs. Peasants did not need to rely on working for others and, in fact, any type of profession where one

worked for a salary was considered to be slavery. Slaves generally received payment

from their master for their work in ancient Athens. Having the freedom to provide for

oneself was very important in ancient Athens. For wealthier citizens, they did not need to

work on their land by themselves. Middle-class citizens often had several slaves that

worked with them in the fields while wealthier citizens could often hire a man to oversee

the production on their estate outside of the city so that they could remain inside the walls

(Flaceliere 2002: 124). Pericles had his own agricultural estate, but he hired someone to

oversee the slaves working on it so that he could remain in the city and continue serving

the city. While men worked in agriculture and craft work, women baked bread and wove

clothing within the home. Citizens, who were involved in industry, commerce, and trade,

had the same rights as other citizens who could provide for themselves (Flaceliere 2002:

135).

The second group in the city of Athens was the metics (Flaceliere 2002: 41).

These were foreigners who were allowed to live within the boundaries of Athens, but

they did not possess political rights. They dealt extensively in business, industry, trade,

and craft-making. Metics were able to make a good amount of money in these industries

and could thus afford to have their children educated. During the fifth century, there

were about twenty thousand male metics living within the city (Flaceliere 2002: 41).

These foreigners added heavily to the economy of Athens, as well as to intellectual life

and to artistry. The third group was the slaves, the labor force of the city (Flaceliere

2002: 45). Slaves could be metics who failed to pay the *metoikion*, a special tax for

metics. The main source of slave labor came from war. Those captured in war became

slaves of Athens. An Athenian could also sell himself into slavery or sell his children

into slavery if he needed or wanted to. There was also a slave market that would come to the Agora in Athens. Most slaves were put to work in the different industries of the city, such as at the silver mines at Laurium and at the farms of estate owners. Besides industry, the majority of the domestic work within the city was handled by slaves (Flaceliere 2002: 49). Lastly, the state and the temple sanctuaries owned their own slaves. Under the law, slaves were objects and they had no legal rights. Even though they had no rights, the condition of slaves within the city was rather tolerable. There may have been approximately three hundred thousand slaves, male and female, in the city of Athens during this period (Flaceliere 2002: 52). When women and children were added to the numbers of free citizens and metics, the population in Athens during the classical period came to approximately a half million (Flaceliere 2002: 52).

Women in classical Athens were limited in their rights in a similar way as the Athenian slaves (Flaceliere 2002: 55). Daughters and wives of citizens, a minority of the females within the city, were more or less confined to the home. Young girls learned how to act from their mothers and their fathers were the ones who chose a husband for them when they reached puberty. Citizens married primarily to have children, who were meant to look after their parents in their old age and to provide them with the proper burial rights. There were also religious reasons behind marriage. Men wanted to have a male child who could continue his line and also to guarantee that the honors performed for his ancestry would continue to be performed (Flaceliere 2002: 57). These were important for the well-being of the dead in the underworld. Therefore, personal choice did not really play a part in marriage. Incest was not against the law, but unions between parents and children and between brothers and sisters of the same mother were taboo

(Flaceliere 2002: 59). Legal marriage was characterized by a pact, or agreement, made

between the suitor and the father of the bride. This pact, the *engyesis*, was a binding

promise of marriage (Flaceliere 2002: 61). The bride moved from her home with her

parents into her new husband's home. A dowry was provided for her upkeep in her new

home. Her ties to her old family were not completely cut off as evidenced by women's

ability to return to her parent's home in case of a divorce, which was legal in ancient

Athens (Flaceliere 2002: 65). After marriage, women were mainly supposed to deal with

things inside the home. Generally, there were separate quarters for women within the

home and women remained inside the home, but these cultural norms varied between the

social classes. There were certain times that women were allowed to leave the home,

such as during certain public festivals. However, public space outside the home was

mainly considered to be a man's world and had no place for women. This was the ideal

often presented in ancient Athenian sources, but in reality, there was much more social

mobility of women. Slave women and female metics, who made up a larger population

than free Athenian citizen women, had the ability to move outside of the home and to

operate in the public world of men.

Mothers, and their nurses, took care of the male and female children after they

were born (Flaceliere 2002: 88). This phase of life consisted of the mother caring for her

children. Young children were allowed to play games and had toys that they could use in

their play. When they were able to begin attending school, young boys of wealthy

citizens would be sent to a master who would educate them within his own home. Boys

of the lower-classes would receive education within the home. Girls, for the most part,

remained at home with their mothers and did not receive much formal education at all.

Education for young men became more widespread in the classical period (Flaceliere 2002: 92). Although education became more common, there remained differences in the amount of education that wealthier children received in relation to the children of the lower-classes. Parents had to pay for their son's individual education so it was more common for wealthier boys to continue their education until the age of eighteen, while parents of boys from the lower-class would not have been able to pay for their son's education past a certain age (Flaceliere 2002: 93). The type of education that the sons of citizens received consisted of reading, writing, basic arithmetic, music, which included singing and playing instruments, and physical or gymnastics training, which included wrestling, running, jumping, discus, and javelin. Later on in the classical period in Athens, higher education became available under the heading of philosophy (Flaceliere 2002: 112). This included education in geometry, physics, astronomy, medicine, arts and crafts, philosophy, and rhetoric. Higher education was a result of the Sophist movement which took over Athens during this period. Many wealthy and young Athenians sought out this education so that they could become more knowledgeable. Slave and metic women had the opportunity to partake in Sophist education. This new movement was often at odds with the older system that also taught athletics and music (Flaceliere 2002: 115). Both were criticized by leaders from either side.

Religion was an important and interesting subject in Athens during the classical period. Ancient Greek religion was polytheistic, containing many divine beings in the universe that were both benevolent and fearful. There was a wide range of gods and goddesses from the Olympian deities who lived on Mt. Olympus to the rivers that flowed through ancient Greece. There were also other beings, such as nymphs, Titans, and

mythical creatures that were said to roam throughout the world. The gods and goddesses of ancient Greece played a large part in the daily lives of the men and women who lived in Athens. For instance, failures of agriculture were often a result of not offering the proper honors to a god or goddess. Angry with the individual or group who did not offer the correct sacrifice or praise, the god or goddess would cause their crops to be less bountiful. There were many state festivals that the people of Athens took part in as well as smaller sacrifices and honors that Athenians gave to their individual gods or goddesses in their home or at the god or goddess' sanctuary (Flaceliere 2002: 197). Notably, the Panathenaea was celebrated annually with a special ceremony every four years to the goddess Athena, the guardian of the city. It included a procession to the Acropolis, a sacrifice of oxen to the goddess, and a creation of a peplos, or robe, for the statue of the goddess (Flaceliere 2002: 198). Certain festivals called for all citizens, male and female, to be present, while others called for only men or only women. Metics were allowed to practice their own religion within the city if they chose to do so. Public religion was an important aspect of the culture to the state as it brought citizens together and impiety was a punishable crime (Flaceliere 2002: 193). In conjunction with religion came many other events, such as athletic competitions and theatre. As part of the Dionysia, the festival to Dionysus, there was a competition for playwrights of tragedy and comedy (Flaceliere 2002: 205). These plays were performed in front of the Athenian audience and the judges chose the best plays as the winners.

This period in Athens was also notable for the wars that surrounded it. After the classical period in Athens began, the Greek states united together against a common Persian enemy and went to war with the Persian nation. The Persian Wars took place

between 499 BC and 449 BC. Athens played a large role in the war and the Persians were eventually expelled from the Aegean. After this, there was a time of peace where the city of Athens flourished, mainly thanks to the prestige that it acquired during the war as well as the treasury that it acquired during the war. Athens became a maritime power and created a sphere of influence over parts of ancient Greece (Flaceliere 2002: 245). Later in the classical period, Athens began a lengthy war with the powerful city-state of Sparta, which was located in the Peloponnese and which had also created a sphere of influence after the Persian Wars. They were the two strongest city-states in the Aegean and they vied for political influence and power over the entire area of Greece. The wars that ensued between the two powers from 431 BC to 404 BC weakened both sides and the civilizations that were growing after the Persian Wars (Flaceliere 2002: 270). All of Greece was affected negatively by the war between these two great city-states. The degradation of the Greek powers that ensued allowed for a growing Macedonian Empire from northern Greece to conquer all of Greece by the 338 BC. This was the framework for civilization during the classical period of Athens.

THE SOCIALIZATION OF YOUNG ATHENIANS

Just as in cultures today, gender was an important concept in ancient Athens. Young boys and girls were taught how to act as proper men and women in society by the adult men and women in their lives. This socialization began not too long after birth and helped separate the young boys and girls into two different categories of people within the ancient society. Within our own culture, we can find many examples of this type of training. Stereotypes about each gender often drive this training and process of socialization. A young boy's room will be painted blue while a young girl's room will be painted pink. Young boys will be given soldiers and cars to play with while young girls will be given Barbie dolls and Easy Bake ovens as toys. These stereotypes have the ability to change and transform over time within a given culture. In the second half of the twentieth century, modern concepts about gender and gender equality came under scrutiny by scholars in many different fields. This recent literature on gender theory has provided scholars with new approaches to gender concepts when examining cultures. I will use this modern gender theory to interpret the process of socialization that took place in ancient Athens and to examine the characteristics, and stereotypes, of men and women from an ancient Athenian perspective.

Modern Gender Theory

With the feminist movements beginning in the 1950's, people began to question gender norms and examine the differences between men and women. Women began to challenge the idea that men were superior to women. Anthropologists and other scholars

joined in the discussion and began to look at gender as something that is acquired over an individual's life time and not as something that is simply biological. Basing gender theory on biology and genetics would mean that it is natural for males to act in a certain way and for females to act in another way. However, when culture becomes an ingredient in this process, gender leaves the realm of biology. Gender norms exist in every culture and these gender norms tend to differentiate people into one of two categories, male or female. Each culture has its own way of defining how a male is meant to act and how a female is meant to act. There are certain cultural traits that belong to each group and several expectations of each group by society. These cultural and gender norms help to bind people within the society closer together. If someone is outside of these main two groups, problems will often arise. Those who do not comply with the specific gender norms are sometimes excluded from society. It comes down to how the given culture believes males and females should act within the society. There is no natural way to be a male or female, but society likes to set boundaries for each gender category.

These differentiations between men and women may have stemmed from cultural ideas relating to the family. Claude Levi-Strauss says that there is some notion of family in every culture (Levi-Strauss 1960: 261). The definition of family and kinship systems varies from culture to culture. In his work, he looks for universals between cultures and finds three. The first universal is the idea of family. Second, marriage is a universal. Lastly, the incest taboo is universal. These three universals help to create society. Without them, families would become self-sufficient groups. Marriage, therefore, has several functions in society. In Levi-Strauss' opinion, this exchange of women is used

for political and economic reasons (Levi-Strauss 1960: 274). It helps to create alliances between two families and can offer families economic and social gains. In patrilineal societies, the sexuality of women is policed. Men want to ensure that their child is their own, especially in cases where inheritance is passed on to the first born male. The men exchange women amongst one another. Marriage is not a contract between a man and a woman, but between a father and a son-in-law. This differs in matrilineal societies where the mother' lineage gives status to the son or daughter (Levi-Strauss 1960: 282). There is more sexual freedom for women and, in some cases, paternity is not even an issue because the father may not even raise the child. The mother's brother plays the role of father and provides for the children of his sister. Even if he has his own children, his strongest ties will remain with his sister's children. Gayle Rubin uses Levi-Strauss' ideas and says there is more to the issue. She is interested in ideas of power and says that in patrilineal societies, women are powerless (Rubin 1975: 204-210). Women are always exchanged whereas men never are. She says there is a wider gender system based on the incest taboo. This taboo forces women to be exchanged (Rubin 1975: 204-210). She believes that it is also a way for men to assert power over women. In society, Rubin argues that girls learn that power cannot belong to them because they are not the biological sex that is associated with power. She believes that this is not inevitable and that women have to learn that they will never have the power to exchange (Rubin 1975: 204-210). Both Levi-Strauss and Rubin note that ideas about family and kinship help to set boundaries between men and women in society.

Judith Butler suggests that gender is a type of performance (Butler 2004: 212-213). There are specific ways in which men and women perform their gender to make it

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known that they are part of a specific gender group. Since culture is something that is learned, it makes sense that gender would also be something that is learned. Although everyone is born with a certain biological sex, the norms and characteristics that define males and females in a given culture are not universal (Butler 2004: 1). In this way, cultures have imposed social aspects on simple biology. At a certain point within every culture, males and females are separated out by giving each group its own specific characteristics. Some traits may be similar, but there are others that are only attributed to one group or the other. In general, many cultures have certain rituals that children go through in order to become a part of a certain gender group. For instance, in Jewish culture, young boys will have a Bar Mitzvah which celebrates their coming of age and their transition into manhood. This ritual binds them to the adult community of men. Jewish girls take part in a different ritual, a Bat Mitzvah, to celebrate their transition into womanhood. Therefore, gender is something that people begin acquiring at a young age. All that we learn when we are younger helps to establish a specific gender identity within us. As we grow older, our gender becomes a performance to others. In order to remain inside the cultural norms of our gender, we put on a display of how we believe our gender is meant to act (Butler 2004: 216; 219). This keeps our identity stable and does not allow others to ridicule and criticize us. If people within a culture do not fit in with these norms, they are often placed on the margins of society and are often ridiculed by others within the society (Butler 2004: 221).

Gender Training in Ancient Athens

In ancient Greece, childhood was viewed in a unique way. Children were viewed as less human than adult men in ancient Greece (Golden 1990: 3). They were regarded as

more similar to animals than their parents. Plato grouped children with women, slaves, and animals in ancient Athens. Children were physically weak, morally incompetent, and mentally incapable (Golden 1990: 5). Since they were viewed in this manner, they were also grouped with the sick, the drunk, the insane, and the wicked. They were unstable, but they had the potential to grow out of this phase of life (Golden 1990: 7). From a scientific perspective, children were moister and hotter than adults, making them more passionate and less disciplined (Golden 1990: 9). Along with these negative characterizations of children, there were also some positive physical characteristics that the ancient Greeks noted. There was a sweet smell to their breath and skin and they were very soft (Golden 1990: 8). They were also much more innocent than adults. Their innocent nature connected children with both nature and the gods (Golden 1990: 10). In ancient Athens, boys under the age of eighteen and girls prior to marriage, which could take place anytime after puberty, were considered to be children. Both Plato and Aristotle stressed the difference between children and adult men and said that it was important that children be educated in the proper ways from the moment of birth so that they would develop into good citizens (Golden 1990: 1). This included proper training for young boys and young girls. This training needed to take place in the proper environment as well. There were three areas that were stressed in childhood education. These areas were physical fitness, moral development, and intelligence (Golden 1990: 3). They were meant to counteract their natural way of being. It was important that the children of Athenian citizens grew to uphold the same values that Athenian men and women had.

There is not much written about the infant stages of children's lives from this period. Infants were left mainly in the hands of women and these women did not leave any written evidence behind about the things that they did (Dasen 2011: 291). The lives of infant children that were recorded come from the upper and elite classes in ancient Athens. Therefore, little is known about the lives of lower-class and slave infants. Birthing rituals were recorded and we can trace the steps that families took to accept a newborn child into the family. After a baby was born in ancient Athens, he or she was inspected by the male guardian, or *kyrios*, of the household, usually the father. If the baby was not accepted by the *kyrios*, he or she could be left outside of the household to die, sometimes being taken by a passerby, or sold into slavery. Girls were rejected much more often than boys because they could not continue on the paternal name of the household (Golden 1990: 23). If the child was accepted by the *kyrios* of the household, the umbilical cord was then cut and the first bathing of the child took place (Dasen 2011: 298; 300). This was the first rite of passage that a newborn child went through in ancient Athens. There was then a second rite of passage that took place in the form of an official celebration either five or ten days later. These ceremonies were called the *Amphidromia* and the *Dekate* (Dasen 2011: 297). This celebration occurred in the household, but the family announced the birth of a baby to the community by decorating their doorway. If it was a baby boy, the doorway was decorated in an olive wreath and if it was a baby girl, the doorway was decorated in wool to represent the female activity of spinning (Golden 1990: 23). Inside the household, the newborn was carried around the hearth and sacrifices were made to the family gods. Those who were in attendance at the delivery, the mother and her nurses, were purified at this ceremony (Dasen 2011: 303). Childbirth

was viewed as a form of pollution in ancient Greece and, therefore, those present at the birth needed to be purified. The name was given to the child during this ceremony or on the tenth day after the birth if the initial ceremony was held on the fifth day. Girls were often given the female version of male names (Golden 1990: 24). Some girls were given abstract nouns as names while others received diminutives as names. The next rite of passage occurred within a year after the birth of the child. At the autumn festival, the *Apatouria*, male children were registered into their father's phratry (Dasen 2011: 303).

Initially, the children of wealthy citizens were entrusted to a wet nurse. This wet nurse was generally a slave woman or a lower-class citizen woman and she normally lived with the family (Dasen 2011: 307). It was important for the family to choose the right woman to be the wet nurse for their children. The ancient Greeks believed that a woman's milk could transmit both physical and moral properties (Dasen 2011: 308). Therefore, it was important for the family to choose a woman who was in the correct physical shape and had a good moral code. These wet nurses often became lifelong companions to the family and the children who they helped to raise (Dasen 2011: 309). There is evidence for this in Homer's *Odyssey*. Odysseus and his son Telemachus both had the same wet nurse, Eurykleia. She became a part of the family when Odysseus was a young newborn and remained in his life until he was an adult man beginning his own family. When his son, Telemachus was born, she again became a wet nurse and cared for the boy. When the epic poem begins, she is still a part of the household and cares for Penelope, Odysseus' wife, and Telemachus. She has been a part of Odysseus' life and family for the majority of her life. One of the main concerns of the wet nurse was to swaddle the young child (Dasen 2011: 302). Swaddling was viewed as a way to shape

the newborn child. It prevented distortions in the limbs and aided in the transformation

from animal to human. They wanted to make sure that the infant grew as straight as

possible. Young children were given amulets to wear that would avert disease and other

evil influences (Dasen 2011: 310). This makes sense considering that the ancient Greeks

were concerned that young children were more susceptible to evil since they were not

fully human. At the approximate age of three, infancy ended. The spring festival, the

Anthesteria, marked the first time that young children were allowed to participate in a

public religious festival (Dasen 2011: 312). Boys and girls took part in this ceremony,

which consisted of a drinking contest for the young children. The festival was in honor

of Dionysus, who was an intriguing god in ancient Greek mythology. His worship often

included female and children worshipers and some of his festivals allowed for the

inclusion of slaves. During the three day event, the wine that had been maturing from

last year's vintage was opened. I believe that this is how the 'coming out' of children

relates to the festival. They had matured enough, just like the wine, to be presented to the

community.

Ritual and sacrifice were very important within the household and each individual

household had its own family gods. At a young age, the young children in the family

were able to participate in the family rituals (Golden 1990: 31). This helped to bind them

with the adults in their lives. It also helped to create a sense of identity for the children.

They came to learn the very important religious culture of their family at a young age.

After they were introduced to the community, they could take part in the rituals of the

community as well as continue to learn the rituals that their own family had. Religion

was the main way that children could enter into the life of the city (Golden 1990: 41). It

could also lead them to places outside of the city. I will discuss the role of religion with young girls more in Chapter Four. This connection between young children and religion suggests that they were able to attend the theater during religious festivals in Athens (Golden 1990: 44). The satyr play was used for educational purposes to teach children about dramatic conventions. It would seem likely that children would, thus, be permitted to view the performances at the theater of Dionysus, considering his festivals often allowed the majority of the community to participate rather than just adult males. If young girls as well as young boys were allowed to be present at the performances of tragedy, comedy, and satyr, then they would have been bombarded with many cultural norms and stereotypes through the performances. These performances may also have taught the young boys and girls how to act in both their childhood and their later adult life. Tragedy, comedy, and satyr presented the children with many characters that were less than honorable. These characters may have helped to socialize the young children of Athens by showing them how to act and how not to act.

Young children had the ability to contribute in many secular activities within the household (Golden 1990: 33). They could run errands for their family such as collecting firewood for the house and could help clean the house. There are images of young girls painted on pottery performing certain tasks for their family, such as fetching water from the spring and washing clothes. Children, as they grew older, could also care for animals and younger children in the family. These activities that children could take part in helped to free adults within the family to do more skilled tasks. Childcare was one of the main chores for young Athenian girls (Golden 1990: 33). By caring for their younger siblings, girls were taught how to act as mothers in their future households. It prepared

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them for their future role as a mother. Young girls also learned how to spin wool and

prepare food. It would have been common for women of all social classes to acquire

these skills. Often in tragedy, allusions are made of upper-class women weaving. All of

these tasks would aid them in their new households after marriage. Children could also

take part in agriculture. Since the ancient Athenian society was an agricultural society, it

was important for children to learn and take part in different agricultural activities. This

not only prepared them for their adult lives, but also gave them an opportunity to aid their

adult family members. Children were useful in families because they could often replace

slave labor (Golden 1990: 35). It was important for lower-class families to have children,

especially if they could not afford to own any slaves. Young children were as capable as

slaves to perform some common tasks inside and outside of the household.

Young boys were allowed to play outside of the house and made friends with

other boys at a young age (Golden 1990: 51). Making friends was important for young

boys and their families. These friendships were often between the children of adult male

friends. Their friendship bonded the two families closer together and strengthened their

social network because the friendship would continue into adulthood. Young boys also

had the opportunity to create bonds with families not in their direct social network by

befriending young boys from families that their own family was not necessarily

connected to. Their play was intertwined with many different games. A popular game

among young boys was knucklebones (Golden 1990: 54). This was a game similar to

throwing dice. The children threw five small objects, originally the ankle bones of a

sheep, into the air and different points were given for the way in which they landed.

Young boys also played many games that reflected adult life and social reality. They

would pretend to be teachers, warriors, or craftsmen. These friendships that young men had sometimes became homosexual relationships. It was important for young boys to attract their peers (Golden 1990: 57). In these types of relationships, both boys may be children, but one was always older than the other. The relationship could also take place between an older adult male in the community and a young boy. The younger boy played a passive role while it was up to the older boy to court the younger one. Older boys became like mentors to their young companions. They were a source of wisdom and a model of appropriate behaviors and attitudes (Golden 1990: 59). It was very similar to a rite of passage and it prepared them for their life as a husband. They first took the role as the passive younger boy and then they had the opportunity to become the older companion of a younger boy. This then transitioned them into becoming husbands later in their life. These relationships were beneficial to young Athenian boys. It provided them with an example of how to act and helped them to become more ingrained in the culture of the city.

The world of young girls was different than that of their male counterparts. Plato said that at age six, girls and boys should be separated. Prior to this, both young boys and young girls were under the guidance of their mother. They would eat with her and the other women of the household. At a certain stage, young boys were brought to meals and drinking parties with their fathers instead of remaining with their mothers. Young girls remained with the women of the household until marriage when they left their house for another. Sexuality was a factor in this separation (Golden 1990: 72). It was important that young girls remained pure and virgin prior to marriage. Therefore, their interactions with both young and adult men not from their own family were limited. Unlike boys,

their contacts were mainly with kin and neighbors (Golden 1990: 74). They were part of a much smaller social network. Young girls who were past the weaning stage were given dolls to play with. These dolls helped them acquire a gender identity (Dasen 2011: 311). They also gave girls the opportunity to imitate their mothers and pretend to care for a young child. These dolls also expressed their future hopes as some were dressed like brides (Golden 1990: 74). While young men had the opportunity to fully take part in the community after they passed the age of eighteen, girls continued to deal with matters of the family and the connections of the family.

One expectation of young girls was for them to remain pure and virgin prior to marriage. This was a large concern of the males in the household. One way in which women in ancient Greece could present themselves as honorable and pure was by veiling their faces. There are statues of women that have been found from ancient Greece that show veils covering their faces carved into the stone. There were many different veil styles in the ancient world. They ranged from full-length veils that could be wrapped around the whole body to veils that were simply meant for the face (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 41-67). In Homeric epic, the high social rank of women was stressed by veiling. The female characters that are veiled in Homer's poems range from the wives and daughters of kings to some of the goddesses. Andromache and Hecuba both remove their veil when they hear of Hector's death in the battle. This is a symbol of the grief that has overcome them due to this loss (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 130-132). It denotes their loss of social status and also alludes to the violation of the city that will come later. Unveiling also opens women up to defilement by making them exposed and vulnerable. By the classical period in ancient Greece, there may have been many women of all classes

veiling (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 121). Thus, veiling could move beyond the ideas of

respectability and purity and become symbols of status. Lower-class women may have

veiled themselves to act like upper-class women. Through the use of a veil, a woman's

respectability amongst her male compatriots was announced. Status and respectability

are linked through the symbol of the veil (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 121). Citizen women

and girls were protected with the aid of the veil. There is debate over whether or not

female slaves wore veils in ancient Athens. If they did not wear veils, then the veils were

a way to differentiate between free citizen women and slave women. If they were able to

veil themselves, social status becomes more blurred and attempts at upward social

mobility seem plausible (Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 141).

　　　　Education varied between young boys and young girls. In either case, education

was a way to teach children how to function in society. Education in ancient Athens was

both cultural and academic. Young boys received education both inside and outside of

the home. For the children of wealthy citizens, education began early on in their life.

Athletics was one of the first areas that young boys came together in structured

communal activities (Morgan 2011: 506). Boys were able to go to the *gymnasia* and train

with other boys in different forms of athletics like running and wrestling. This athletic

training was very important in ancient Athens. Philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle

discussed how physical fitness was an important characteristic for Athenians to possess.

Athletics also offered a highly social atmosphere for these young boys. They learned

important values during their lessons such as trust, obedience, loyalty, and co-operation

(Morgan 2011: 507). These traits were essential to their later lives as Athenian citizens.

A second form of education that young men received was in music (Morgan 2011: 508).

They learned to sing and play musical instruments. There were several musical schools in Athens and the skills that boys learned at these schools would serve them in life as ways to spend leisure time with friends. The Symposium served as another form of education for young men (Morgan 2011: 509). It was a large drinking party for men. Fathers brought their sons along with them to these parties after they reached a certain age. The young boys were introduced to the pastimes, culture, and concerns of adults at the Symposium (Morgan 2011: 509). Education in the form of schooling could take place within the boy's household or he could travel to another home to receive his schooling. There are vase paintings that represent young boys walking to school with their belongings and their slaves. As literacy became more widespread, education adapted to include it and then use it as the primary medium through which all other subjects were taught (Morgan 2011: 510). Young boys learned how to read and write poetry and prose, arithmetic and geometry, rhetoric, and philosophy. Often the values that were taught in school did not match those in reality. They often presented the ideal views on things such as marriage and the family in ancient Greek morality (Morgan 2011: 514). Not every situation was ideal in Athens, though, and there was room for interpretation of these values. Parents played an essential role in the education of their children. They shaped them for future roles within Athenian society.

Education for young girls differed from that of young boys. In classical Athens, it did not include athletic training. Musical education was also limited for young girls. Their education took place inside the home and the main purpose of their education was to prepare them for their future social roles as mothers and wives (Morgan 2011: 518). They were taught how to run the household, a skill that would become very useful after

their marriage. Skills were passed on from mothers to daughters and from female relatives to the young girls within the family. It is not out of the question to say that women were taught skills other than how to run the household. Young girls, especially in lower-class families, may have learned the same trade as their father so that they could help him in his business ventures (Morgan 2011: 518). Girls also may have received schooling. Plato said that women were just as capable of receiving an education as were men. He believed that they had the same range of intellectual qualities as men and, therefore, accepted women into his Academy. Although this is mentioned in his works, there is no direct evidence that women were studying at the Academy. It is also unlikely that any women who were studying at the Academy came from the upper or wealthier classes of Athenian society as their families may not have considered education necessary for women. There were far fewer women educated in reading and writing than men, but some upper-class women may have received a small education. In general, Athenians did not think it necessary for women to have an education. It became more acceptable if that education was kept within the family, though. Education for women could be useful in running the household (Morgan 2011: 518). They could pass on any knowledge that they had obtained to their young sons and could use their education in order to entertain their husband. For instance, musical training may have been used by women to entertain their husbands and his guests. Slave women and metic women were often educated in the fields of music and dance and provided entertainments at the drinking parties of men. These were proper uses of an education for women.

In terms of their relation to their family, young boys and young girls were viewed in an emotional context by their parents (Golden 1990: 89). They were loved by their

parents. This is evidenced by the many dedications to the gods made by parents for their children. There were also elaborate burial rituals for young children which suggest that children were important to their family (Golden 1990: 89). Fathers did tend to care a little more for their son rather than their daughters because their sons were the ones who could continue on the lineage. Mothers were much closer to their children than fathers were since they raised them during the early stages of their life (Golden 1990: 97). There was a special bond between children and their mothers. Children owed their mother, as well as their father, great honor. This honor continued on through their lives as children became the care-takers of their parents in their old age (Golden 1990: 92). There was also a great amount of respect and loyalty that children had to their parents. If they acted in a disrespectful way in public, it reflected poorly on the family. It was important for them to be obedient to their parents and take note of the lessons that they were teaching them.

A family with more than one son or more than one daughter was not the ideal in ancient Athens. It was ideal for families with one child to have one son. In families with two children, it was ideal for one to be male and the other to be female. If there were two sons, they would be close and they would look out for each other's interests. While the oldest son had claims to the family name and first choice in the division of property, all sons had rights to the property of their father (Golden 1990: 119). This meant that the land was generally divided equally among sons, which could sometimes impoverish families. Generally, this was done to avoid rivalry and bad feelings among siblings (Golden 1990: 136). In a similar way, there is not much mention of sisters in a family by ancient authors. If this was the case, their *kyrios* would be sure to provide them both with

equivalent dowries so that they would not squabble amongst one another (Golden 1990: 135).

There were strong ties between brothers and sisters that began in childhood and continued on into their later lives (Golden 1990: 122). Their relationship was quite different than any other male-female relationships in ancient Greece. Brothers and sisters would play together as young children and older sisters would often care for their younger brothers. They developed a close link at this stage of life. Brothers had the ability to provide assistance for their sisters later on in life if it was needed (Golden 1990: 129). They had the ability to act as her *kyrios* in the absence of their father. He could find his sister a husband and could also take his sister in if her marriage ended in a divorce or death. If there were problems in marriage, a brother could come in and help his sister. Girls had the opportunity to reciprocate this help if need be. They could not aid their brothers in the same material ways that their brothers could aid them, but they had their own ways to help their brothers. In Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone*, Antigone's brothers, Eteocles and Polyneices, have just died. They were involved in a civil war, each leading one side. The new ruler of Thebes, Creon, only chose to bury Eteocles in the proper and honorable manner while he decreed that no one bury the body of Polyneices. This was a great punishment and by doing this he declared that Polyneices was in the wrong in this situation. As the play opens, Antigone and her sister, Ismene, discuss what they should do about what has happened. Antigone asks Ismene if she will help her in burying their brother. Ismene refuses because the penalty is death, but Antigone knows that she must honor her brother in death and says,

> τὸν γοῦν ἐμὸν καὶ τὸν σόν ἢν σὺ μὴ θέλῃς
> ἀδελφόν: οὐ γὰρ δὴ προδοῦσ᾽ ἁλώσομαι. (Sophocles *Antigone*: 45-46)

Yes, he is my brother, and yours too, even if you wish it otherwise. I will never be convicted of betraying him. (TR. Jebb)

She goes out in the night and buries her brother. It is eventually found out that Antigone has done this and Creon punishes her by burying her alive. The tragedy ends with a number of deaths in the household including Antigone, Creon's son Haemon, and Creon's wife Eurydice. Antigone hanged herself and upon finding her, Haemon, who is betrothed to Antigone, takes his own life. Hearing that her son has died, Eurydice takes her life as well. At the end of the play, Creon realizes that he has caused destruction in the household. The play tells us a good deal about the importance of proper burial and the love between a brother and sister. Ismene is not being a good sister by following Creon's orders and not honoring Polyneices. Antigone, on the other hand, feels that her honor to her brother is more important than her honor to the State. Another instance of a sister aiding a brother is presented in Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris*. Before being sacrificed by her father Agamemnon, Iphigenia was replaced on the altar by a deer thanks to the goddess Artemis. She was brought to Tauris and serves there as a priestess to Artemis, sacrificing any foreigners who arrive there. When the play begins, Orestes, her brother, has arrived in Tauris to steal a sacred statue of Artemis and bring it back to Athens. He was told to do this by the god Apollo in order to be freed of the Erinyes who continually haunt him for his killing of his mother, Clytemnestra. After they become aware that they are siblings, Iphigenia helps Orestes steal the statue and he, essentially, frees her from her captivity in Tauris by bringing her back home with him. She devises a plan to escape with the statue. Iphigenia tells the King of the land, Thoas, that Orestes must be cleansed in the sea because he has been polluted by murder (Sophocles *Iphigenia in Tauris*: 1171-1175). She also says that she must bring the statue to be cleansed

because they have polluted the statue by entering the sanctuary (Sophocles *Iphigenia in Tauris*: 1176-1177). When they go to the sea, they board Orestes' ship and sail for Argos. Iphigenia is able to use her role as a priestess to help her brother escape the spirits that are haunting him and he in return helps her by bringing her home.

The end of childhood was marked by different rites of passage for boys and girls. At the age of eighteen, boys became registered as full citizens of Athens (Morgan 2011: 504). This also marked the beginning of an intense military training. Young men served in the military of Athens for two years. At the age of thirty, they came into full adulthood when they gained the ability to stand for democratic office (Morgan 2011: 504). When they reached this age, they were fully involved in the culture and democracy of Athens. Upper-class men sometimes continued their education for another decade after their military service was over. As more forms of education became available to men, more men wanted to learn different subjects such as higher levels of mathematics. This was mostly available to the upper-class men who had time to spend away from other agricultural tasks. Athletics also continued in the lives of adult men. They had the opportunity to take part in the Pan-Hellenic Games. Men trained for the games year round in order to win the honor of the gods and the community.

Young girls transitioned into women through the institution of marriage (Golden 1990: 48). This transition often took place much younger than when boys became young men. Marriage was an option for young girls anytime after they reached puberty. This could happen around the age of twelve or thirteen. They were often married to men who were much older than they. Men were often in their thirties when they took a bride. Thus girls reached adulthood while young boys at the same age were still considered

children. Reaching the age of eighteen did not afford young girls the same changes in political standing as young men did when they became eighteen. In a way, girls remained minors for their whole life under the law even though they transitioned to women (Golden 1990: 38). The main thing that changed for young girls during this transition was their household. They moved from the household of their family to that of their new husband. In this transition, they gained a new authority over the household that was previously filled by their own mother.

Conclusion

Based on this evidence, the socialization of young Athenians was very important in classical Athens. Fathers and mothers wanted their children to act in ways that would provide the household with honor. The cultural norms of the city played a large role in this socialization process. Young boys had more opportunities than young girls in classical Athens in terms of the type of education that they were able to receive as well as the level of education that they were able to receive. The training that young boys received helped them to become adult citizens that could take part in the democracy of Athens. Young girls received varying amounts of formal education. Their socialization mainly had to do with teaching them how to become respectable women, wives of Athenian citizen men, and mothers of citizen children. These cultural norms helped to contain citizen women in a specific place within the community. Since our information mainly comes from wealthier families, I suggest that this was the ideal process that occurred in classical Athens. In order for middle and lower-class families to gain a higher social status, parents from these households may have raised their children in similar ways as the elites did for as long as they could afford to do so. There was,

however, a large group of slave and metic children who I think were part of a different socialization process that allowed them more freedom in education. These groups may have had separate cultural norms that regulated the lives of their sons and daughters. Young girls from these groups may have been held to different standards as compared to the daughters of citizens. This freedom allowed them to take on different roles in their adult life than the cultural norms. It was important in Athens for these roles to be filled. Therefore, I believe that the ideal form of socialization that took place within the city of Athens was undertaken by a minority of the families within the city while the majority may have opted for different ways to educate and socialize their children.

HONORABLE AND DISHONORABLE WOMEN IN THE HOME

One of the main purposes in life for young Athenian citizen women was to marry an Athenian citizen man. This way they could provide their husband with his own children and the State could continue to grow. After young women left the homes of their family and moved into the home of their new husband, this new household became the main space where they could have control and a sense of authority. Women were most associated with the household in ancient Greece and many of the activities that occurred within the household were associated with women and the female gender. While women were associated with interior and private space inside the home, men's activities were associated with public space, outside of the home. The mobility of women in public areas was limited by these cultural norms. The gender distinctions that were taught to children extended to concepts about the household. These distinctions dealt with the modesty, chastity, and faithfulness of women. The female moral code focused on these norms and on female activities inside the home. In ancient Greek mythology, several female characters were presented to the public that reinforced these boundaries and that showed how honorable women were meant to act and how shameful women acted.

Women and the Home

In the city of Athens, space was divided between private and public. There were specific zones that were public and open to the population of the city. For instance, the Agora and the Acropolis were both public places where religion, politics, industry and

commerce took place (Morgan 2010: 20). Religion was an extremely public feature of

society, as temples, altars, and shrines were set up all around the city (Morgan 2010: 18).

The main distinction between these public buildings and private buildings was their size,

decoration, and materials used in their production. For instance, the Parthenon clearly

stood out, not only because of its location on the Acropolis, but because of its large size,

decoration in its frieze, and the composition of marble. This makes sense considering the

emphasis that was placed on the people as a political body in the new democracy of

classical Athens. Public and religious buildings were, thus, quite important (Morgan

2010: 41). Residential areas were not separated or monumentalized, which suggests that

they were very much integrated into urban life (Morgan 2010: 22). There was a mutual

dependence between resident and community. The relationship between the home and

the city was reinforced through participation in community festivals (Morgan 2010: 23).

Different festivals incorporated rites within the home and rites in public with the entire

community. These festivals, as I will discuss in more detail in my fourth chapter, were

an important arena in which women were allowed to take part in the public rites of the

community. When women came out of the house, spatial and gender boundaries became

blurred (Morgan 2010: 25). Thus, the public domain of the city became like a house

when the women participated in these festivals. Private rituals that took place within the

home, such as birth rites, marriage rites, and funerary rites, were also connected to the

larger community. These stages of life changed the composition of the citizen body

within the city and thus affected the whole community (Morgan 2010: 26). Parts of these

rites were private ones that took place within the home that the immediate family took

part in, while other parts of these rites were advertised in the public sphere.

The types of dwellings within the city of Athens ranged from cramped dwellings of the poor to more elaborate living spaces of the upper class. In comparison to the monumental architecture of the public buildings, these houses were all relatively small in size. Much of the fragmentary information that we have available to reconstruct the houses of Athens comes from the upper-classes and is therefore only representative of middle-class and wealthier citizens. Although there are many inconsistencies in the fragmentary bits of information that we are able to piece together from ancient authors that happen to mention households in their works, there are some consistencies (Morgan 2010: 46). Households may have been made of one story or may have had a second story as well. They had flat roofs. A hearth was a major component of the household in classical Athens. The hearth inside the home was related to the family gods and the paternal ancestors, defining the building as a family home (Morgan 2010: 54). Homes frequently opened to the main street and had courtyards, big or small. There was a staggered entry system which prevented people walking by from looking inside the home. The interior of the house was also divided and often dedicated certain spaces for men and for women. There were high walls and small windows to further keep internal spaces private. These basic features of the home revealed the gender ideology that structured Athenian homes (Morgan 2010: 47). A woman's honor was related to her life in the home and her chaste nature. The home served as a boundary between women and the outside world so that her honor would remain intact. This ideology restricted people who did not live within the home from having access to it and what was happening inside. The private nature of households placed restrictions on women. Men wanted to keep their wives and daughters safe and chaste and, in order to do this, there were

restrictions placed on the mobility of women outside of the home. Similarly, guests were restricted from private family rooms, while certain rooms were only used for entertaining guests.

A range of people could comprise a family and a household. The typical Athenian family included a husband and wife, their children, and their slaves, if they owned any. With the exception of slaves, the Athenian model family was very much like our own modern conception of the family (Morgan 2010: 68). However, this was not always the norm. There were several instances where families are described by ancient authors that did not consist just of this nuclear group. Families could be made up of a mixture of genders, age groups, and social groups. The home provided shelter for the family group and was a place where the family could meet its basic needs of eating, drinking, and sleeping (Morgan 2010: 71). It was also a place of sexual activity, both marital and extra-marital. Sexuality was considered a private matter, and not often spoken about or written about (Morgan 2010: 73). It was discussed in comedy where it could be viewed in a humorous manner and in law cases that dealt with scandalous stories of adultery. Children were raised by the family within the home and the house protected the children in their younger years (Morgan 2010: 73). The family took part in rituals within the household, often around the hearth or altars that the family had in honor of the family god or goddess. Homes in classical Athens could also be quite different than our modern conception of the home. A household could have consisted of spaces where the family lived, but it also could have consisted of workplaces. Many craft workers and school instructors worked out of their own home. The household became a work shop or class room when it was being used for those purposes and then transformed

back into a home when those activities were finished. Although the archaeology can provide us with evidence about what sort of activities took place within the home, it cannot tell us whether men or women performed these activities or whether the work was done by citizens or slaves (Morgan 2010: 104). Based on evidence from ancient authors, these tasks were most likely done by men and potentially by both citizen men and slave men.

In order to survive, the family of a household needed to reach a certain level of self-sufficiency (Morgan 2010: 97). Family members needed to be clothed and fed. The act most commonly associated with the household and with women in classical Athens was the production of textiles. This was one of the primary responsibilities of women in the household (Morgan 2010: 97). Women in the epics and tragedies were often pictured weaving or their weaving came up in discussion. The majority of this production went to household needs, but if a surplus was produced, those textiles could be sold. This female industry had a commercial aspect as well then. Athenian citizens also had lands outside of the city walls in the countryside of Attica. These lands were used for agricultural production and were worked on by members of the family and by slaves for wealthier families (Morgan 2010: 98). Food was also sold in the market places inside the city. Wealthier citizens avoided buying food and produced their own food on land that they owned outside of the city. The wealthy aristocratic families of Athens owned large, agricultural estates that could produce for their own family needs and that could produce extra materials to be sold. Many of these families had built up their wealth and prestige through war over time. War allowed men to take prizes from an opponent after they were

defeated. Some of the wealthiest citizens in Athens had the ability to rent out slaves to other citizens. This provided them with a large income.

The classical home can also provide us with information on gender relations and gender ideology in Athens. Textual evidence indicates that men and women used separate areas within the household (Morgan 2010: 117). The *andron* was the men's place in the home and the *gunaikon* was the women's place in the home. In a society where the legitimacy of children and producing citizen children was important, families took measures to make sure that their women remained pure (Morgan 2010 118). By keeping their citizen wives and daughters inside the home, men ensured that they did not have relations with any non-citizens and thereby produce illegitimate heirs to the family. It was correct behavior for women to remain separated from men within the home. Their modesty and purity was of utmost importance to the family. For the ancient Greek citizenry, it was natural for women to be restricted in these ways. Thucydides writes:

> τῆς τε γὰρ ὑπαρχούσης φύσεως μὴ χείροσι γενέσθαι ὑμῖν μεγάλη ἡ δόξα
> καὶ ἧς ἂν ἐπ᾽ ἐλάχιστον ἀρετῆς πέρι ἢ ψόγου ἐν τοῖς ἄρσεσι κλέος ᾖ.
> (Thucydides *The Peloponnesian War*: 2.45.2)

> Great will be your glory in not falling short of your natural character; and
> greatest will be hers who is least talked of among the men whether for
> good or for bad. (TR. Dent)

This gender separation was both an ideological construct and had an architectural basis (Morgan 2010: 118). There were separate women rooms and the women of the family were ideally restricted to those rooms. For houses with a second story, the women's space was often delegated to the upper portion. Penelope in the *Odyssey* remains in her quarters upstairs and rarely descends the stairs to speak to the suitors in her house. There is no substantial evidence that says women were meant to remain in the *gunaikon* and

were not allowed to leave (Morgan 2010: 120). Also, there was flexibility in the

separation between male and female space. They were interchangeable. If it was

necessary that the wife be on the ground floor, the men could move to the upper level and

the women could move down to the lower level (Morgan 2010: 120). This shows that the

gender ideology of the period could be manipulated by particular families. It also shows

that there was a difference between general ideology and practice. Many texts describe

how women had their own female space in the home and how that space was cut off from

men, but in reality, female space was less confined and more fluid within the home.

Home, Female Space, and the Theater

The ways that space is divided on stage in tragedy and comedy related to how

space was separated within the home. Located beneath the Acropolis, the theater of

Dionysus is important in the understanding of male and female space because it

represented a free space of largely male activity (Segal 1986: 39). It was an open space

in the public arena and was, therefore, more related to men than it was to women.

Separation of public and private, outside and inside, was critical for the theater. Women,

as I have discussed, were represented through their association with the home. The home

was where biological functions such as reproduction, nurturing, and death, all related

with women, took place (Segal 1986: 39). In a similar way, the stage of the theater was

separated between public space and private space. Offstage space in tragedy was often

portrayed as the interior space of a home that was hidden from view of the audience. It

could also relate to female space in general, as it was a place where men did not belong.

More severely, in tragedy, offstage space was often equivalent to negative aspects of a

female's character (Segal 1986: 184-185).

Staging was divided into two spaces. The orchestra was a semi-circular performance space for the chorus and for the characters of the play. Characters entered and exited the stage through doorways, which could serve as the entrance to homes or other buildings or simply as ways for the actors to enter the scene. The second space, located behind the orchestra, was the *skene*, which served as a backdrop and a place where actors could call out from or change their clothes in preparation for a new scene. All deaths were performed behind the *skene* as it was inappropriate to perform a killing in view of the audience.

The theater offered a place where the true identities of men and women could be revealed. In Athens, theater became related with the god Dionysus because he was the god in whom boundaries dissolve and opposites are manifested (Segal 1986: 76). The exposure of hidden identities is also related to Dionysus. In theater, the hidden secrets of women could be brought from out behind the *skene* and presented to the audience, which was mostly male. This is an important aspect of the theater because the plays that were performed were all written by male playwrights who intended for their plays to be presented to a predominantly male audience. Similarly, all of the roles in these plays were acted by male performers. Thus, women in these plays were products of a masculine system. Women were held to certain ideals and standards within the community and the playwrights and actors generally presented the audience with ideas about these standards. The difference between honor and shame for women's lives became a central theme in ancient Greek theater. Playwrights drew upon ancient Greek mythology for characters and situations for their plays. They presented the audience with lessons of how women and men should act. This allowed the audience to consider their

own lives, the women in their lives, and the ways in which their family exuded honor. Similarly, as I mentioned in the previous chapter, if children were allowed to be present at these performances, the plays served as a lesson to teach young Athenians how to act in their adult life.

Depictions of Honorable Women

In ancient Greek mythology, there were certain women who expressed honor in an ideal fashion and certain women who were the opposite and expressed different variations of shame. Penelope has often been viewed as the paradigm of the moral and honorable wife in ancient Greek mythology. In Homer's *Odyssey*, the moments in the epic where Penelope is featured explain much about her character as a wife and mother and her place in the home. When the epic begins, Penelope and Telemachus have been awaiting the return of Odysseus. After taking part in the Trojan War for ten years, Odysseus was delayed for another ten years in his return to his homeland, Ithaca, where he is the king, or strong man. By this point, many Ithacans believe that Odysseus is dead and that Penelope needs to remarry. Her parents have been asking her to remarry and a number of potential suitors have moved into Odysseus's house. For three years, these suitors have been using up the resources of Odysseus' household, sleeping with his female servants, and calling on Penelope's hand in marriage. Neither she nor Telemachus can remove the suitors from the house.

One question that is central to the beginning of the epic is that of Telemachus' paternity (Brann 2002: 148). His birth is never really mentioned in the epic, but many scholars assume that he was born before Odysseus had left for Troy. If he had been born after Odysseus left for Troy, though, it would make sense that Telemachus may be

concerned about his descent. Other women in Greek mythology, like Clytemnestra, entered into adulterous relationships after their husbands had left for Troy. It is conceivable that Penelope may have followed suit and entered into a relationship of that sort, implying that Telemachus' father was a suitor and not Odysseus (Brann 2002: 148). This argument would undermine the faithfulness of Penelope. However, Telemachus finds an answer to this question after traveling to Sparta. In Sparta, Telemachus speaks to Menelaus and Helen, who has been brought back from Troy. He does not initially reveal who he is and where he has come from. When Helen enters, she almost immediately recognizes Telemachus as Odysseus's son, telling Menelaus that he looks very much like the son of Odysseus. Helen does not say that he must be Odysseus' son, but that he looks like a son of Odysseus if Odysseus had a son (Brann 2002: 163). This news is very helpful for Telemachus in his question about his own lineage. It also confirms that Penelope did not have a relationship with another man while Odysseus was away.

Helen, rather than a cause for sorrow, is a cause for joy for Telemachus. Her life, and the life of her twin sister Clytemnestra, though, was not the most reputable in ancient Greek mythology. These two women are important comparisons to Penelope in the epic. They are especially relevant because they are Penelope's cousins (Brann 2002: 154). In the *Odyssey*, Penelope fears that she will succumb to the temptations of the suitors just like her cousin Helen had done when she left Sparta for Troy with the young Trojan prince, Paris. She views what Helen had done as a shameful act. Penelope has empathy for Helen and says if Helen knew that her actions would result in ten years of war, she would not have fallen for Paris. She goes on to say that perhaps it was the will of some

god that Helen left with Paris. This speech that Penelope gives to Odysseus also suggests

that women often do not think about what they are doing and fall victim to their emotions

and sexual desire. They are weak in the presence of men and gods. Considering this epic

was composed by a man, it makes sense that women would be portrayed as weak in

comparison to men. Homer believes that women are not trustworthy and that this can

cause problems within the household. This speech also suggests that she was struggling

with the same issue in her own home, but that she had not conceded to the suitors yet.

For Homer, Penelope is a woman who honors her marriage vows in the appropriate way.

This honor leads to good things for the household rather than negative consequences.

Similarly, Penelope is also compared to her other cousin, Clytemnestra. As

Odysseus is traveling through the underworld, he comes across the spirit of Agamemnon,

who tells him of the treachery of his wife. Upon his return home, Agamemnon is killed

by Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, her lover. Agamemnon compares the shame of his wife

to the honor of Penelope. He says of Clytemnestra:

> ὣς οὐκ αἰνότερον καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο γυναικός,
> ἥ τις δὴ τοιαῦτα μετὰ φρεσὶν ἔργα βάληται:
> οἷον δὴ καὶ κείνη ἐμήσατο ἔργον ἀεικές,
> κουριδίῳ τεύξασα πόσει φόνον. (Homer *Odyssey*: 11.427-430)

> So true is it that there is nothing more dread or more shameless than a
> woman who puts into her heart such deeds, even as she too devised a
> monstrous thing, contriving death for her wedded husband. (TR. Murray)

He views her as far less virtuous than Penelope and goes on to say that she has defiled all

of womankind through her actions. Women who cheat become the bane of society in his

opinion (Felson-Rubin 1994: 93). Agamemnon warns Odysseus to never trust a woman,

but at the same time, Agamemnon says that Odysseus does not need to fear these things.

He praises Penelope while he admonishes the actions of his own wife. This excerpt from

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Odysseus' experiences in the underworld can be read in several different ways. In one way, it allows the audience to agree with Agamemnon and rant about the women in their own lives and, more generally, women as the cause of men's downfall (Felson-Rubin 1994: 93). This story may also have been an invention of Odysseus in order to elicit support from the Phaiakians, the people who he is stranded amongst. He needs a ship and a crew in order to return home to Ithaca. This story of encountering Agamemnon in the underworld shows that there is really no way for Odysseus to know whether or not Penelope has remained faithful. She may have been as treacherous as Clytemnestra and taken a lover. This possibility of adultery makes the Phaiakians worry about the state of Odysseus' home and gives them a reason to help him (Felson-Rubin 1994: 100). Considering Odysseus' wise and deceitful nature, it is not farfetched that he would come up with a stratagem like this in order to garner support.

As much of the epic is focused on when Odysseus will return, it is also focused on whether Penelope will wait for Odysseus to return. As I have said, she was under pressure from both her parents and the suitors to remarry. She continued to believe that Odysseus was still alive, though, and on his way home to her. Penelope has had much to do these past twenty years. Odysseus left the household to her while he was gone. As his wife and Telemachus' mother, she has many concerns (Brann 2002: 257). She is in charge of the household and is queen to the island of Ithaca. Penelope cares for Odysseus' parents in their old age and raises her son, Telemachus. She also has many servants to supervise within the household. Many of these servants, especially the female servants, have become unruly with the arrival of the suitors. The suitors' presence in the house adds more pressure on Penelope. She makes a habit of remaining in her upper

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room and weaving (Felson-Rubin 1994: 22). This is consistent with the image of a good wife in ancient Greece. Wives would have remained in their own quarters, generally in the upstairs of the household. Weaving was associated with women. It was women's work to weave. When Penelope has to address the suitors, which occurs rarely in the epic, she descends the staircase and is veiled (Felson-Rubin 1994: 22). This is a sign of her modesty and chastity. She does not want to reveal herself to the suitors and so she remains veiled when addressing them. Likewise, to remain chaste, she does not communicate with the suitors on a daily basis. It is a rare occasion when they are able to see and listen to her.

Penelope and Odysseus are partners in fame and they complement one another (Brann 2002: 181). Her courage in the face of this struggle has reached other parts of Greece, as well as the underworld. In the *Odyssey*, the epithet, 'thoughtful' or 'mindful' is used only twice. Once it is used to describe Odysseus and the other time it is used to describe Penelope (Brann 2002: 263). This epithet signifies that they are in complete control of their mental powers. They are both clever in their actions. Penelope is able to hold off the suitors with a scheme. She tells them that when she has finished weaving a shroud for her father-in-law, Laertes, she will take a husband. However, every night she unweaves what she wove that day, thus delaying this proposed marriage. She resists so that she may protect her husband's kingship and her son's patrimony (Brann 2002: 259). It is a purposeful procrastination. If she were to remarry, another man would become the king of Ithaca and Telemachus would lose inheritance to the house. When Odysseus returns, he appears to Penelope as a beggar. There is a debate over whether or not Penelope recognized her husband right away even though he was in disguise or if she was

fooled by this ploy. If she recognized him, Penelope becomes a co-conspirator in the demise of the suitors because she chooses not to let on that she knows it is him (Brann 2002: 275). The test of the bow can be seen as her attempt to see if she was right in her initial notions then (Brann 2002: 282). If she does not recognize Odysseus, the test of the bow determines a deadline for the return of Odysseus. It is a calculated risk on the part of Penelope. She hopes that Odysseus will return home in time to win the competition and her hand (Felson-Rubin 1994: 16-17). In other instances, Penelope exhibits a level of cleverness that is not seen in other mythological women. She replenishes the house by asking for gifts from all of the suitors and tests Odysseus several times in order to make sure that it is really her husband returned from his long journey.

The use of Penelope in this epic can affect the audience in particular ways. It teaches the audience about women. The attitude of the audience is meant to change over time. At first, the men in the audience would identify with the suitors (Felson-Rubin 1994: 109). Just like Agamemnon, they will rant over the possibility that their wives have been adulterous and the treachery that can come along with such a thing. Over the course of the epic, though, the evaluation of the actions of the suitors will fluctuate as will the evaluation of Penelope. The audience will come to distance themselves from the suitors (Felson-Rubin 1994: 109). At the beginning of the epic, Penelope is just another woman to the audience. She can even be viewed as very deceitful and like a temptress when she appears to the suitors. As the audience's view of the suitors becomes worse, its view about Penelope becomes better. The audience matures and the men in the audience abandon their own suitor-like qualities (Felson-Rubin 1994: 109). Not all women are

treacherous and adulterous. Penelope and, by extension, the women in the lives of the audience, can be viewed as faithful and honorable by the conclusion of the epic.

Another example of a faithful and honorable wife is Alcestis. In the *Alcestis*, a tragedy written by Euripides, King Admetus has been offered freedom from Death by the god Apollo. However, he must find someone else to take his place before Death comes to claim him. He cannot find any person willing to take his place. Even his parents are unwilling to save their child. In the end, Alcestis, his wife, chooses to take his place for him. When the play begins, Alcestis has already made this choice and Death has already begun to overtake her. While Alcestis is living, she deals with the interior and female spaces of the household. The audience perceives her traveling from the hearth to the bedchamber, lamenting over the course her life has taken. She travels to the storage rooms, which contain chests full of fabric. These rooms are associated with women in classical Athens as they provided women with the products they required for food production and weaving. Alcestis prays at the household altars as a final farewell to the house and for her children's security after she dies. All of her action takes place in the interior spaces of the house. As a mother, she is concerned for her children. She knows that Admetus may remarry after her death. If he remarries, her children may become secondary to the children that he has with his new wife. Alcestis is not concerned with this remarriage, but she does want Admetus to promise that their children will remain important to him and provided for by him. Admetus agrees to look after them and also says that he will never be able to remarry because he loves his wife so much. Her modesty and chastity is also featured after Heracles brings her back from the underworld.

She is veiled and Admetus cannot see her face. Due to her self-sacrificing act, her youth

and beauty were replenished (Segal 1986: 53).

The chorus sings praises of Alcestis as the wife of Admetus. She, unlike all

others, was willing to sacrifice herself for her husband. Alcestis becomes a symbol for

the ideal wife. The leader of the chorus refers to her in the beginning of the tragedy as,

> Ἄλκηστις, ἐμοὶ πᾶσί τ᾿ ἀρίστη
> δόξασα γυνὴ
> πόσιν εἰς αὐτῆς γεγενῆσθαι. (Euripides *Alcestis*: 83-85)

> Alcestis, the best of wives to her husband, as I and everyone regard her.
> (TR. Kovacs)

She dies in a very feminine way. Alcestis remains in private and the only time that she

enters public is when she is being carried to the grave (Segal 1986: 77). She was a

devoted wife and mother when she was alive and Admetus says that he will provide her

with the proper honor in death. The members of the chorus wish that all women were

like Alcestis. They proclaim,

> τοιαύτας εἴη μοι κῦρσαι
> συνδυάδος φιλίας ἀλόχου, τὸ γὰρ
> ἐν βιότῳ σπάνιον μέρος· ἦ γὰρ ἂν
> ἔμοιγ᾿ ἄλυπος δι᾿ αἰ-
> ῶνος ἂν ξυνείη. (Euripides *Alcestis*: 472-476)

> Be it my fate to find such a dear wife, since the time of our life is short!
> Truly, such a woman, living with me my whole life, would bring me no
> grief. (TR. Kovacs)

The death of Alcestis can be viewed as similar to the honorific burial of a heroic warrior

(Segal 1986: 82). In many ways she is the ideal female and she also embodies several

elements of male heroism. She is far more honorable in this play then her own husband,

Admetus. Gender becomes reversed in her death. She receives the honors of men and

Admetus becomes attached to the house, viewed as the domain of women (Segal 1986:

82). He takes on the roles that Alcestis had in the beginning of the tragedy. Admetus

laments over their marriage bed and the children come to lament at his feet. When

Heracles arrives at his home, though, Admetus does not reveal why he is so distraught

and says that Alcestis is still alive. He is concerned with the rules of hospitality that say

he must accept men into his household as guests and provide them with gifts and

resources. Admetus is concerned about the reputation of his house. In return for

Admetus' hospitality during his time of grieving, Heracles retrieves Alcestis from the

underworld. When Alcestis returns to Admetus, the house is restored to wholeness. It

contains both the female and male identity once more (Segal 1986: 86). This is an

important aspect of the tragedy because it suggests that it is important for men and

women to work together in the house. The reputation of the house is perpetuated through

the honor of Alcestis through her death as well as the honor that Admetus received by

admitting Heracles into his home.

Depictions of Shameful Women

There are far more shameful female characters in ancient Greek mythology than

there are honorable ones. Probably the most infamous of these women is Clytemnestra,

the wife of Agamemnon. This story must have been of great interest to the ancient

Greeks as it was related over and over again. Agamemnon's death at the hands of his

wife is first foreshadowed in Homer's *Iliad*. It is then brought up again, as I have

discussed earlier, in Homer's *Odyssey*. All three of the great tragedians wrote plays

involving this act of violence. Aeschylus' three part trilogy, the *Oresteia* portrays the

killing of Agamemnon by Clytemnestra, the killing of Clytemnestra and her lover,

Aegisthus, by her son Orestes, and the trial of Orestes after the killing of his mother.

Euripides and Sophocles both composed works entitled *Electra*, in which Orestes' sister Electra, aids him in killing their mother. Considering that there is a substantial amount of literature based on this instance in ancient Greek mythology, it must have been of great concern to the ancient Greek people. Although there are no records of women being placed on trial for murder, this possibility that it could occur must have been prevalent in ancient Greek society.

Aeschylus' *Oresteia* presents the ancient Greek audience with a conflict between men and women (Foley 2001: 203). It offers a female challenge to the male-run, public world. Clytemnestra takes over the masculine justice system and her language and ethics become like that of a man in the first play of this series, the *Agamemnon* (Foley 2001: 203). Prior to sailing for Troy, the Greek fleet was forced to remain at harbor at Aulis because the winds were unfavorable. In order to appease the gods, the Greeks asked Agamemnon to sacrifice his virgin daughter, Iphigenia. Agamemnon, distressed over this matter, called for his daughter to be brought to Aulis under the false pretenses of marriage to Achilles. When Iphigenia and Clytemnestra arrived at Aulis, his scheme was revealed. In the end, Iphigenia chose to die for Greece. The false pretenses that led the women to Aulis and the sacrifice of Iphigenia upset Clytemnestra. While battle raged at Troy, Clytemnestra effectively took over control of the Argive kingdom and assumed the role of her husband. She also began an adulterous relationship with Aegisthus, the cousin of Agamemnon and Menelaus. Together, they planned to kill Agamemnon upon his return to Argos so that they would have full control over the kingdom.

Clytemnestra does not struggle with the decision to kill her husband, the father of her children, unlike Orestes who struggles with the idea of killing his mother (Foley

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2001: 205). She chooses to commit a crime against her husband first by taking part in an adulterous relationship and second by killing her husband. Orestes, on the other hand, struggles with what he must do in this situation (Foley 2001: 205). He owes honor to both his mother and his father. In this instance, the honor to his father and the need to avenge his death is more important than his honor to his mother. This is why Orestes is freed from any charges when he is put on trial in the third play of the trilogy.

Clytemnestra is consistently viewed as masculine. In the opening of the *Agamemnon*, this masculine characterization of Clytemnestra begins with the watchman, who describes how she has ordered him to alert her of Agamemnon's return, saying,

ὧδε γὰρ κρατεῖ
γυναικὸς ἀνδρόβουλον ἐλπίζον κέαρ. (Aeschylus *Agamemnon*: 10-11)

For thus commands my queen, woman in passionate heart and man in strength of purpose. (TR. Smyth)

When Agamemnon returns to his palace at Argos, Clytemnestra exits the palace and has a conversation with him. This conversation that they have places Clytemnestra in a more masculine position than Agamemnon. She compares the two of them in these new positions, her as the conqueror and him as the conquered, saying,

τοῖς δ᾽ ὀλβίοις γε καὶ τὸ νικᾶσθαι πρέπει. (Aeschylus *Agamemnon*: 941)

True, but it is right for the happy victor to yield the victory. (TR. Smyth)

During this conversation, she says that she has suffered greatly due to this war. She, like other women, has been waiting for her husband to return. Clytemnestra announces that she has remained virtuous. Her speech dominates the return of the king which should be a time dominated by the king (Foley 2001: 209). The language she uses is very masculine and her complete control over her husband in this situation can be seen in her

forcing him to walk along the tapestries to his impending death. It may have been

important for the Athenian audience in this period surrounded by war to know what their

wives were capable of while they were away. The play presents the possible dangers that

can come along with women acting in public realms rather than remaining in the private

spaces of the home. It warns the audience to not give too much power to the women in

their lives.

Hecuba represents a woman who has gone through a different type of

transformation. In ancient Greek mythology, she was the wife of King Priam of Troy and

mother of Hector, Paris, and many other Trojans. After the fall of Troy, like most Trojan

women, she became a slave. The tragedy *Hecuba*, written by Euripides, describes her

metamorphosis from a devoted mother to a vengeful monster. As the tragedy begins, we

see Hecuba begging for her daughter Polyxena to be spared from being sacrificed.

Already, she has lost almost all of her children during the war. Her other daughter,

Cassandra, has become the prize of Agamemnon and the fate of her son, Polydorus, is

unknown to her at the beginning of the play. Polyxena chooses to be sacrificed in honor

of Achilles. Through her actions, though, Polyxena does preserve her nobility and does

not join the ranks of the other Trojan women who have become slaves of the Greeks.

After the death of her daughter, Hecuba comes to find out that her last living son,

Polydorus, has been killed by hi guardian, the Thracian King Polymestor. This

realization that she has lost all of her children drives Hecuba into madness.

The change in Hecuba's character questions whether or not a stable definition of

the female character is possible (Segal 1986: 158). There are two reversals that take

place in the play. The first reversal is from victim to agent. Hecuba was a victim during

the war, but she becomes a predator and attacker after the death of her son is revealed.

The second reversal deals with the violence that takes place in the play. It moves from

the outside to the women's interior space (Segal 1986: 174). Hecuba avenges the death

of her children by taking revenge on Polymestor. In order to enact her violence, she first

needed to win the support of Agamemnon. Hecuba and Agamemnon discuss her plans

and they discuss the role of women in this action:

> Ἑκάβη: στέγαι κεκεύθασ᾽ αἵδε Τρῳάδων ὄχλον.
> Ἀγαμέμνων: τὰς αἰχμαλώτους εἶπας, Ἑλλήνων ἄγραν;
> Ἑκάβη: σὺν ταῖσδε τὸν ἐμὸν φονέα τιμωρήσομαι.
> Ἀγαμέμνων: καὶ πῶς γυναιξὶν ἀρσένων ἔσται κράτος;
> Ἑκάβη: δεινὸν τὸ πλῆθος σὺν δόλῳ τε δύσμαχον. (Euripides *Hecuba*: 880-884)
>
> Hecuba: Sheltered beneath these tents is a crowd of Trojan women.
> Agamemnon: Do you mean the captives, the booty of the Hellenes?
> Hecuba: With their help I will punish my murderous foe.
> Agamemnon: How are women to master men?
> Hecuba: Numbers are a fearful thing, and joined to craft a desperate foe.
> (TR. Coleridge)

Agamemnon is curious how Hecuba will exact her revenge and does not quite understand

the full potential of the slave women in the camps. Hecuba leads Polymestor and his

sons into the tents, a private place, filled with Trojan women. The women are in the tents

weaving, as women are meant to do. They take his sons in their arms in an act of

motherly affection. Hidden in their garments are daggers. When the time is right, the

women murder the sons of Polymestor and Hecuba gauges out the eyes of Polymestor.

This expresses a change from the ultimate female act, weaving, to murder, making them

powerful agents in their own lives. They use their female traits as weavers to disguise

their true nature. Underneath these false pretences of female modesty is the hidden

intensity of female violence (Segal 1986: 180). Thus, Hecuba embodies a concern for

men. She loses control over her body, her hatred and her violence, and her humanity

(Segal 1986: 186). Hecuba becomes like a man in the public arena of war, but brings it in

to the private spaces of the tent.

A third women who was viewed as shameful by the ancient Greek citizenry was

Phaedra. She was the wife of Theseus and step-mother to his son Hippolytus. In

Euripides' tragedy, *Hippolytus*, Phaedra has fallen in love with her step-son. This kind of

relationship was viewed as taboo in the ancient Greek culture. The play also deals with

the relationship between the women's quarters in the household and the public space that

men occupy. Artemis, the virgin goddess, and Aphrodite, the goddess of sex and desire,

are both worshipped by the members of the household. However, Hippolytus chooses

only to worship Artemis and considers Aphrodite to be shameful. Angry with

Hippolytus, Aphrodite makes Phaedra fall in love with him. Phaedra cannot conquer the

feelings that she now has for her son and expresses her sorrows and concerns to her nurse

saying,

> δύστηνος ἐγώ, τί ποτ᾽ εἰργασάμην;
> ποῖ παρεπλάγχθην γνώμης ἀγαθῆς;
> ἐμάνην, ἔπεσον δαίμονος ἄτῃ.
> φεῦ φεῦ, τλήμων.
> μαῖα, πάλιν μου κρύψον κεφαλήν,
> αἰδούμεθα γὰρ τὰ λελεγμένα μοι. (Euripides *Hippolytus*: 239-244)

> Dear luckless me, what have I done? Where have I wandered from the
> path of good sense? I was mad, I fell by the stroke of some divinity. Oh,
> how unhappy I am. Nurse, cover my head up again. For I am ashamed of
> my words. (TR. Kovacs)

She asks the nurse to veil her so that she may hide from the world. Phaedra does not

want word of her shame getting out to the public areas of the household. She and her

nurse discuss these matters in the privacy of their own quarters. This play is bringing

forth some of the hidden secrets from within the women's quarters (Segal 1986: 92). It

may have been a concern of the men in the audience to wonder what occurs within

women's private space within the home. Worried for her mistress, the nurse says that she

will try to find a remedy for Phaedra. While the nurse is around the house, she reveals

Phaedra's love for her son to Hippolytus. He voices his disgust in this news saying that

women are a curse to mankind. Phaedra overhears this conversation. In ancient Greece,

if shame touched the women of a man's household, he also lost honor and social standing

within the community (Segal 1986: 91). Concerned that her feelings will be revealed and

that they will undermine the prestige of the men of the household, she plans to kill

herself. She is also concerned with her own reputation in this matter and before she

hangs herself, Phaedra writes a note that explains how Hippolytus lusted for her and she

killed herself because she was so ashamed of this matter. This deceitful letter convinces

Theseus that his son has brought shame to his household and so he banishes Hippolytus

and places a curse on him. Soon after Hippolytus leaves, he is trampled and almost

killed. He is brought back into the palace and Artemis comes to Theseus and tells him all

that has transpired here. As his son dies in his arms, Theseus is ashamed that he believed

the words of his wife. It placed false emotions in Theseus and persuaded him of

something other than the truth. This is the danger of women who are more susceptible to

their emotions than men. Female language destroys the truthful discourse that takes place

between two men (Segal 1986: 99). At the same time, communication between males

and females does not often represent the true hidden feelings of women. Men need to be

wary in this case.

My final example of a dishonorable woman deals with Medea. Her story as told by Euripides in his *Medea* is a revenge plot. Medea is facing a critical stage in her life when the play begins (Foley 2001: 243). Jason, her husband, has betrayed their marital vows by taking the daughter of Creon in marriage. Jason has failed to recognize her grievances in this matter and she contemplates how she should avenge her own honor in this instance. Medea refers to herself as cunning and mischievous like other women. The speeches that she gives are also done outside of the house in the public space. This makes Medea seem more masculine in her actions than feminine. Medea concludes her lengthy monologue by saying,

> ἐπίστασαι δέ: πρὸς δὲ καὶ πεφύκαμεν
> γυναῖκες, ἐς μὲν ἔσθλ᾽ ἀμηχανώταται,
> κακῶν δὲ πάντων τέκτονες σοφώταται. (Euripides *Medea*: 407-409)

> And furthermore we are women, unable to perform great deeds of valor,
> but most skillful architects of every evil. (TR. Kovacs)

She is concerned over the well being of her children that she has had with Jason as well as herself. There is a division that occurs in Medea's monologue. Two distinct characters come forth as she plans what actions to take (Foley 2001: 245). One character is masculine, heroic, and public and urges Medea to kill her children. When speaking with the nurse, she displays a proud and dangerous temperament. As the play continues, she becomes more high-spirited and angry against Jason (Foley 2001: 257). She shrugs off her mask of subservience and reveals her more heroic and masculine side in order to enact her revenge as the play goes on (Foley 2001: 261). The other character is more feminine, maternal, and private and urges Medea to spare the lives of her children. This side of Medea appeals to the chorus of women (Foley 2001: 257). She presents herself to them as a helpless victim of her husband's abandonment. They feel sorry for her

situation and approve of her revenge because, at first, she is speaking with a clear mind (Foley 2001: 258). The protection of her children from harm that they may incur after Jason remarries is on Medea's mind and it is also something that the maternal chorus can relate to. Another way that this internal dialogue can be explained is through reason and passion (Foley 2001: 246). Her irrational passion for revenge is provoked by the betrayal of Jason and this battles her reason and rational side. In the end, her passion and her more masculine side prevail over her feminine and rational side. She decides that it is time for her to take action and to not be seen as a weak bystander in this action. Medea says that from now on she will no longer be viewed as weak and contemptible. She equates the actions that she is about to undertake as deserving of a male, heroic glory. Medea poisons a cloak that Jason's new bride, Glauce, puts on. She dies from the poison and as Creon, her father, comes to her rescue, he is also killed by the poison. Then, driven to madness, Medea kills her children so that Jason will have no sons to continue his line. She destroys Jason in the areas of his life that are most important to him. He no longer has children to continue his lineage and no longer has a bride to provide him with more children.

Conclusion

The home was a place where most scholars believe women were confined to certain quarters and their mobility was limited. In general, women's honor and modesty was protected because they remained in the home. However, based on this evidence, I believe that the home was a place that was less strict in terms of its gender boundaries. Here again, there is a difference between the ideal and what really happened in the city. The ideal for Athenian citizen households was to have separate quarters that designated

male and female space. These spaces did not intermingle in this ideal form of the household. In reality, I believe that this was not the case. Many households within Athens during this time period may not have been able to afford to distinguish between male space and female space. These spaces were also not designated in the same area in every household and they had the ability to be interchangeable if need be.

Women were more associated with the home and the activities that took place within the home as evidenced by characters from mythology. These characters also suggest that there was a proper way for a woman to act within the home. Women should remain modest and faithful to their husbands. They should not challenge their husband's, or any male in their lives, authority. Women should remain in private spaces and deal only with the matters of women. They should not lose control over their passions and emotions. When these norms are challenged by women, the social fabric of society falls apart and it often leads to the destruction of a household. These characters advise men to keep a watchful eye over the women in their lives. I think that these characters represent extreme conditions that would not necessarily occur in everyday life, though. After hearing stories about these adulterous and murderous women, I think that men may have come to appreciate the women in their own lives more. Women in reality were not like their mythological counterparts and this may have been a sense of relief for men in classical Athens.

THE FEMALE PRESENCE OUTSIDE OF THE HOME

In the democracy of Athens, women had varying amounts of power. The men held political office and controlled the laws of the city. As I have showed in the previous chapter, women were generally confined to life within the home during the classical period. This is not the only realm in which women were present, but it is the one that they are most associated with when one thinks of women in ancient Athens. There were, however, some ways for women to gain power and authority outside of home life. In some of these instances, women created their own type of authority over men, while, in other cases, women were given more power by the men to perform in certain ways. The social class of the woman plays an important part in the discussion of power. There was a difference in the type of power that citizen wives, young maidens, and non-Athenian women could gain within the city. Many examples of female authority come from ancient Greek mythology, but it is difficult to find comparisons in everyday Athenian life. In this chapter, I will begin my exploration of female power in classical Athens by examining how women were valued within the laws of Athens and what rights, and political powers, were given to women under the laws of the city. Then, I will discuss where women who lived in the city of Athens could attain power outside of the home and whether or not these attempts were reasonable and successful. I will be looking at power in several different forms, from the physical in terms of war and athletics to power in terms of freedom of movement and education. I will end my discussion by dealing with female religious authority.

Women in the Laws of Athens

During the classical period in Athens, Pericles proposed a law that better defined who was a citizen of the city and who was not a citizen of the city. The law stated that a child should be a citizen if both of his or her parents were citizens (Sealey 1990: 12). This demonstrates that women had the ability to be citizens. Pericles' citizenship law had several implications within the city of Athens for men and women. It meant that if men wished to have children who were citizens, then he had to marry a female citizen (Sealey 1990: 13). Proof of citizenship became very important for men in classical Athens after this law was passed. Since women did not have membership in a phratry or in a deme, it became important for men to advertise that their mothers and wives were indeed citizens (Osborne 1997: 4). This caused men to view the women in their lives in a new way. One way that men could show their wives and mothers as citizens was by including depictions of women in funerary monuments. Prior to the classical period, funerary architecture had become less monumental and ornate. After Pericles' law was passed, funerary monuments began to appear again. These monuments included men, as they had, and women, which they had not before. This became a way that men could publicly acknowledge that that their wives and mothers were citizens (Osborne 1997: 11). Female status in society became a contradictory feature of society after this law was passed. Women received status from the men in their lives, but they also provided status for their children (Gould 1980: 46). Based on this evidence, women seemed to have gained a new important place in society after their citizenship became a concern for men.

Along with Pericles' citizenship laws were laws dealing with illegitimate unions between men and women. Some of these provisions dealt with the type of union either

between a male citizen and a female alien or between a male alien and a female citizen (Sealey 1990: 16). In the latter case, the female citizen was not punished for marrying a male alien while, in the former case, the male was punished for his actions. This places the blame all on the men and not on the women. It implies that these types of relations are only the doing of men and that the women involved in these situations are not the ones that begin these types of relationships. By placing the blame on the men, the law is admonishing men for not acting in an honorable fashion. Women are not at fault under the law because it is implied that they do not know better and are not held to the same standards as men are. The children of a citizen and an alien became illegitimates under the laws of Pericles. During times of war, these citizenship laws were relaxed to allow for more types of unions to occur and more citizens to be born since only male citizens were allowed to participate in the Athenian military.

As I have discussed in the first two chapters, marriage was something over which the women did not have much control. She was given away in marriage by her father, brother, or closest male relative. Men controlled the marriages to ensure that the children who were born from the marriage were legitimate and citizens of Athens. Having both male and female children was important in Athenian families. Male children had the ability to perpetuate the line of the family. Female children could help make alliances with other families. They were passed from one guardian or *kyrios*, usually their father, to another, their new husband (Sealey 1990: 27). This is similar to the way that Levi-Strauss described the family. He believed that women were exchanged in patrilineal societies in order to create alliances between family groups. These alliances could

provide the families with social and political gains. This guardian was the person who took care of a woman and represented her under the law.

Many laws surrounded marriage. In cases of adultery, where a man sleeps with the wife of an Athenian citizen, the wishes of the woman in the matter were not taken into account under the law. She was simply corrupted by the adulterer. Her husband is the one who loses honor in this instance. This is similar to modern conceptions of honor and shame in the Mediterranean where men are considered less honorable if they allow their wives and daughters to enter into adulterous relationships. These conceptions allowed for a bit more freedom on the part of the woman. She had the ability to take part in an adulterous relationship without the fear of being punished. Women were not placed on trial in these cases. The husband was required to divorce his wife after winning a case against the adulterer. After the divorce, she would be sent back to her parent's home and she would not be allowed to enter temples because she was no longer pure (Sealey 1990: 29). Other laws deal with the death of a male guardian before a young girl has been given in marriage. Again in this case, the young girl has no say in the matter. The law spells out certain options for the family. After the death of her *kyrios*, young girls were passed to the closest male relative in her family. If there were no male relatives on her father's side of the family, she would then gain a male guardian from her mother's side of the family.

A dowry was provided by the family of the young girl, which was intended to support her with her new husband. It could have consisted of money, valuables, and property. This only happened in families that could afford to provide some form of a dowry. Families who could not offer a dowry were less likely to marry their daughters as

the dowry was meant to take care of their daughter in her new marriage. If a family was less fortunate, they would sometimes give their daughters into concubinage instead (Sealey 1990: 31). The practice of providing a dowry is important in the analysis of ancient Athenian culture. In a culture that provides dowries rather than bride wealth, women are often more valued and less objectified by the male population. A dowry is provided by the family of the bride and it moves with the bride into her new home. It can be used by the bride and the husband if they need resources. The relationship between the bride and her old family remains intact and she has a place to return if the marriage ends in divorce. Bride wealth, on the other hand, is provided by the son-in-law to the family of the bride as a way to repay them for the loss of labor in their own family and to legitimize the father's lineage's claim to her offspring. In cultures that practice bride wealth, the relationship between the bride and her old family is weakened and sometimes completely cut off. Her parents do not want to return the bride wealth to her husband in the case of a divorce. This forces the bride to remain in the marriage.

Divorce was available to both men and women in classical Athens. Either the man or the woman could dissolve the marriage at anytime and no cause needed to be stated (Sealey 1990: 36). Men simply had to send the woman out of their house and back to the house of her family. He also had to return the dowry. If women wanted to dissolve the marriage, they simply needed to return to their family's house. This indicates that the connection between a woman and her natal family remained intact even after she was given in marriage. Along with this remained connection comes a sense of authority in the marriage for women because they had the option to leave if they chose to do so. In societies that practice bride wealth, the connection between the woman and her

natal family is often diminished, thus not providing her with the option of leaving her husband. It was important for these dissolutions to be recorded because the guardianship over the divorced women changed from her husband back to her father or nearest male relative just as if her husband had died. The decision for a woman to initiate the divorce was not always her own in practice (Sealey 1990: 36). Plans of divorce were often a collaboration between her and her male relatives. Thus, the women of Athens had the ability to express their desire to leave a marriage, but they would need the assistance of their relatives to represent them and aid them in the transition.

Similarly, women in Athens during the classical period could not make large transactions (Sealey 1990: 37). Their guardians were the ones who handled large transactions dealing with immovable property and most of what the family owned. Records suggest that, with the consent of the guardian, women could take part in small transactions, which included making offerings to the gods and buying and selling small trinkets (Sealey 1990: 37). Although women did not handle these transactions, they were interrelated with these transactions. Women's relation to property is a somewhat contradictory situation (Gould 1980: 46). They were important transmitters of property, yet they generally did not own property. Women often brought property with them into their new households when they were married. They also bore children who would become the inheritors of property.

There were several rights that women had under the law. Women were able to take action in law and to assert certain rights over property. If a man had died without children, the property was first passed on to his brothers. In cases where he had no male siblings, the property would then be passed on to his sisters. The chain continues on so

that property would then be passed to cousins on his father's side and then to relatives on

his mother's side. Both the sisters of the deceased and the female cousins of the deceased

could receive the property under the guidance of their *kyrios* (Sealey 1990: 44).

Similarly, women could inherit property in a will and could sue relatives over issues

dealing with inheritance. Using the evidence from inheritance of property, Sealey argues

that Athenian women who acquired any sort of property through inheritance were the

owners of that property. Other members of society, with the exception of her *kyrios*,

were not allowed access to her property (Sealey 1990: 48). This is similar to how a

minor would be treated in classical Athens. If a minor inherited property of some kind,

he would be the owner of that property, but his male guardian would be able to access it

and be responsible for taking care of it. Based on this, the same can then be true of

Athenian women's dowry. She owns her dowry, but her *kyrios* has the authority to

access it in the protection of her interests and for the purpose of her upkeep (Sealey 1990:

48). In legal proceedings, women had several of the same abilities as men so long as they

were represented by a guardian. Women were able to sue and be sued in the legal system

of Athens. They were also allowed to testify for or against people in the court system.

Lastly, they could be charged with crimes, such as murder, and punished for those

crimes. Since Athenian women had the ability to do all of these things under the law

systems of the city, it shows that the law recognized women as persons and that women

were more than bystanders in society.

Women in War and Athletics

        Considering women were somewhat limited in power based on the laws of

classical Athens, it is important to examine certain aspects of life where women could

gain a sense of authority and power. The first part of life in which male authority was

challenged was in the physical arenas of war and athletics. In ancient Greek mythology,

there are female characters that gain a certain level of prestige in war and athletics, areas

that were often designated for men. These two parts of ancient Greek culture were arenas

for men to show off their power over other men. Two myths in particular, the first

concerning the tribe of female warriors, the Amazons, and the second concerning the

female athlete, Atalanta, show that ancient Athenians had notions of strong females. As,

I will show, however, these female characters who do not fit into female norms in

Athenian society do not necessarily represent real life women.

   During times of war, the only soldiers that Athens would send out were male.

Women had no place in war and stayed at home while the men went off to defend the city

or to expand the Athenian sphere of influence. Although the wives and daughters of men

did not take part directly in the fighting, there are examples of females present during

times of war. These females were women who had been captured by the Athenians and

had become their slaves and prizes of war. For instance, in Homer's *Iliad*, there are

glimpses of women throughout the epic on both sides. The Trojan women remain behind

the walls of Troy during the fighting and do not go out beyond the walls to be with the

warriors. They do not take part in the war actively, but they are seen taking part

passively in the war by praying to the gods for assistance and by mourning those who

have died (Homer *Iliad*: 6.311-327). In the Greek camps, there are women present who

have been captured by the Greek troops as they have conquered many cities prior to

arriving at Troy. They were prizes for the leaders of the Greek army. Notably, Briseis,

one of Achilles' prizes, was taken by Agamemnon after he had to return his own prize,

Chryseis (Homer *Iliad*: 1.182-197). This action is what drives the rest of the plot.

Therefore, women would have been present at times of war, but they would not have

been on the field partaking in battle. If women had no place in the fighting of wars, why

were there stories of the Amazons, female warriors?

The Amazons were strong female warriors from the east who appeared almost

suddenly into ancient Greek mythology. Their status as great warriors changed over time

as they became more uncivilized and less strong (Fantham 1995: 129). They first

appeared in ancient Greek mythology as the opponents of Heracles. The expedition for

the Amazon queen's girdle is known as Heracles' Ninth Labor (Tyrrell 1984: 2). Prior to

this, the Amazons had no place in the mythology of the ancient Greeks. They return

again in mythology pertaining to Theseus. There are several different versions of this

story. One suggests that he stole an Amazonian woman and took her as his wife, while

others say that she came of her own free will. In any case, she came to Athens as

Theseus' wife and in order to retrieve her, the Amazons planned an invasion of Attica

(Tyrrell 1984: 9). In some versions of the myth, Theseus' wife intervenes and stops the

invasion, but in other versions the Amazons are defeated by the Athenians in battle. This

scene, known as the Amazonomachy, is depicted on the Parthenon. Eventually, the

Amazons were tamed by the Scythians, who were able to devise a plan in order to make

love to them. Herodotus recalls that:

> ἐποίευν δὲ αἱ Ἀμαζόνες ἐς τὴν μεσαμβρίην τοιόνδε: ἐγίνοντο σποράδες
> κατὰ μίαν τε καὶ δύο, πρόσω δὴ ἀπ᾽ ἀλληλέων ἐς εὐμαρείην
> ἀποσκιδνάμεναι. μαθόντες δὲ καὶ οἱ Σκύθαι ἐποίευν τὠυτὸ τοῦτο. καί τις
> μουνωθεισέων τινὶ αὐτέων ἐνεχρίμπτετο…οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ νεηνίσκοι ὡς
> ἐπύθοντο ταῦτα, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐκτιλώσαντο τὰς λοιπὰς τῶν Ἀμαζόνων.
> (Herodotus *The Histories*: 4.113.1, 4.113.3)

> At midday the Amazons would scatter and go apart from each other singly
> or in pairs, roaming apart for greater comfort. The Scythians noticed this
> and did likewise; and as the women wandered alone, a young man laid
> hold of one of them, and the woman did not resist but let him do his
> will…When the rest of the young men learned of this, they had intercourse
> with the rest of the Amazons. (TR. Godley)

There were no examples of these types of women in Athenian culture and it cannot be

proved that the Amazons either existed or did not exist in reality. Examples of women

who could ride horses and fight in wars have been found in what was Scythia so it is a

possibility that the Greek people may have known of these women when deriving the

myths about the Amazons (Fantham 1995: 134).

The myths about the Amazons were used in several ways. They were continually

changed in order to relate to the changing attitudes in Athenian culture (Fantham 1995:

128). One use of the myth was the relation of the Amazons to the Persians who had just

been defeated in the Persian Wars. In this case, the Amazons were viewed as eastern

barbarians just as the Persians were. More related to the current topic, the Amazons

provided the Athenians with an image of female challenge to order (Fantham 1995: 128).

Just as the centaurs provided the Athenians with an example of masculinity out of

control, the Amazons were meant to represent a form of femininity that was out of

control due to the lack of male authority. The whole Amazonian culture was a complete

inversion of the Greek culture. They were the complete opposite of the Greeks. Amazon

women did not transition from the stage of childhood to adulthood through marriage

(Fantham 1995: 134). They failed to mature and were consistently in an androgynous

state, half female and half male. These myths, therefore explain "the necessity of the

daughter to marry by portraying the consequences of her not marrying" (Tyrrell 1984:

127). The myths of the Amazons also provide an explanation for why Athena was not

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viewed as a threat to male authority. Athena was the founder of the city of Athens and one of the strongest gods on Mt. Olympus. She was a virgin goddess who refused to marry and was also a warrior goddess. These characteristics make Athena seem like a god that the Athenians would not have cared too much for based on their culture. "The Amazon myth explained Athena as a warrior-virgin who was not threatening" (Tyrrell 1984: 125). The potential chaos of her liminality was removed through the destruction of the Amazons by the Athenians.

Similarly, the realm of athletics was not one where women were expected to take part. This can be evidenced through vase painting. One of the criteria for distinguishing an athletic competition from other acts in vase painting is the nudity of the athletes (Miller 2004: 150). Images of nude females were never found in an athletic context. Women of marriageable age were also not allowed to attend the Olympic Games. Pausanias recounts a story about Kallipateira, a widow who disguised herself as a male trainer and took her son to compete in the Olympic Games. After he won, she revealed herself as a woman, but was not thrown off the cliffs for being present, as was required by law, out of respect to her male relatives who had all been victors at the Olympic Games. After this, Pausanias says that they passed a law saying that all trainers would have to attend the competition in the nude. The Athenian view on athletics changed over time from something that was acceptable for both men and women participants to something that only men could partake in (Miller 2004: 157). This may have something to do with distinguishing Athenian women from Spartan women, especially with the Peloponnesian War beginning. In Sparta, it was not uncommon for women to take part in athletics. Young Spartan women were trained to be just as strong as their male

counterparts. Over time, women in athletics were generally looked down upon by the Athenians. They considered Spartan women unappealing because they were more 'Dorian' than Athenian women (Miller 2004: 157). The Dorian women were associated with loose morals in ancient Greek literature. Spartan women fell into this category because their dress exposed their thighs and they were thought not to be chaste, running around naked with men.

Atalanta is the exception to the rule (Miller 2004: 151). In ancient Greek mythology, Atalanta was a great female athlete, who was a skilled hunter, wrestler, and runner. She was, however, brought back to the world of women after losing a race to a young man (Miller 2004: 152). She announced that she would marry anyone who could beat her in a race, but kill any who lost. A young man eventually comes along who distracts Atalanta during the race with golden apples that were given to him by the goddess Aphrodite. By distracting her with these baubles, he was able to win the race and tame Atalanta. Although ancient views of female athletes changed over time, there are records of women taking part in the non-nude competitions, like the equestrian races. Notably, Kyniska of Sparta was the first female victor at the Olympics because the horses that she entered won the equestrian race (Miller 2004: 153). It was unacceptable for women to view men naked, which is a reason that women were excluded from the Olympic Games. In the equestrian races, though, she did not have to be present at the Olympic Games in order for her team, the horses and their rider, to win. Even within Athens, there is controversy over some sites and their relation to female athletics. At Brauron, a sanctuary to Artemis outside of the city of Athens, what is thought to be a wrestling school for girls and women was discovered along with pottery depicting girls

running (Miller 2004: 158). This could mean that women were engaging in athletics in places where men could not intervene. Also, there is a possibility that female athletics took place on the Acropolis. This shows that women's athletics continued to play a role in Athenian and Greek culture even though the ideas about female athletics had changed over time.

Slave, Metic, and Lower-Class Prostitution

Beyond the world of physical strength and power, women could attain a degree of power through prostitution. Prostitution was lawful and was greatly intertwined into the democracy in Athens. Both female and male prostitution took place in the city and it took place in different forms. Female prostitution gained social legitimacy through its relation to the goddess Aphrodite, who aided prostitutes and had sacred prostitutes in her own sanctuaries (Cohen 2006: 99). For women, there were two different types of sex workers. There were the *pornos* and the *hetaeras* (Cohen 2006: 97). In ancient sources, both words were used to describe sex workers and the distinction between the two words is sometimes blurred. There are several ways that the two were differentiated. The main ways to differentiate the two forms of prostitution was through economic functions and concerns about being free versus being a slave (Cohen 2006: 99).

Pornos were considered a form of slave prostitution. The women who made up this group were predominantly slaves that had been taken in war (Cohen 2006: 102). In Athens during the classical period, there was also a common idea that any type of hired work was considered slavery (Cohen 2006: 100). Athenian citizens did not want to work for people for long terms because they would have been referred to as a slave then. Working for others for a short period of time, like doing commission work, was better,

but still had slave connotations associated with it. The majority of workers in Athenian society that performed long term jobs were slaves. These slaves, after being brought to Athens, received more education than the ordinary citizen so that they could perform certain skills well (Cohen 2006: 103). In the same way that many slave women were taught the skills to weave wool, they were also taught other skills to become a good prostitute. There were brothels throughout the city run by older women, former *pornos* who had acquired a certain degree of prestige and wealth, who gave the younger slave women the skills that they would need in the business. It was quite a lucrative business in Athens. There are records of high earning prostitutes within the city as well as dedications to Aphrodite and Athena made by female slaves who wished to leave the wool-working business in order to become prostitutes (Cohen 2006: 106). By working as a prostitute, women were able to live a more pleasured life, full of festivals and drinking parties. They also had the ability to obtain their freedom if they made enough money (Cohen 2006: 107). *Pornos* did not have much say in the choice of men that they were having relationships with, though. They were simply workers in the booming sex industry in Athens.

On the other hand, slave women who had bought their freedom from their work as a *porne* could continue on in the prostitution industry as a *hetaera*. The *hetaeras* were more like the courtesans of Europe. They were more independent than the *pornos* and are described to have better circumstances (Cohen 2006: 114). Having been slaves, they received much more education than the ordinary female citizens. They received both intellectual education and artistic education, such as dance and music. Being a slave had also allowed them to move freely through society without any type of negative stigma

attached to them. This freedom of movement allowed them to attend events throughout

the city that the regular citizen woman could not. Their movement only increased after

they were no longer a slave (Cohen 2006: 112). They could be present at political

orations and philosophical speeches and were free to deliver their own opinions at these

gatherings. After gaining her independence from a brothel, the *hetaera* could choose

whom she wanted to court. They had control over their own actions and did not have to

be exploited by men if they chose not to be. Contractual relationships were the norm for

the *hetaeras* (Cohen 2006: 109). These contracts were serious matters and were often

brought up in court cases during the classical period in Athens.

One of the most famous *hetaera* of the period was Aspasia. She was a woman

from Miletus who came to become a prominent member of Pericles' philosophic circle

(Waithe 1987: 75). Plutarch describes the relationship between Pericles and Aspasia in

his *Pericles*. He says:

> τὴν δ᾽ Ἀσπασίαν οἱ μὲν ὡς σοφήν τινα καὶ πολιτικὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ Περικλέους
> σπουδασθῆναι λέγουσι: καὶ γὰρ Σωκράτης ἔστιν ὅτε μετὰ τῶν γνωρίμων
> ἐφοίτα, καὶ τὰς γυναῖκας ἀκροασομένας οἱ συνήθεις ἦγον ὡς αὐτήν,
> καίπερ οὐ κοσμίου προεστῶσαν ἐργασίας οὐδὲ σεμνῆς, ἀλλὰ παιδίσκας
> ἑταιρούσας τρέφουσαν. (Plutarch *Pericles*: 24.3)

> And so Aspasia, as some say was held in high favor by Pericles because of
> her rare political wisdom. Socrates sometimes came to see her with his
> disciples, and his intimate friends brought their wives to her to hear her
> discourse, although she presided over a business that was any-thing but
> honest or even reputable, since she kept a house of young courtesans. (TR.
> Perrin)

He goes on to describe how Pericles left his wife and took Aspasia as his wife (Plutarch

Pericles: 24.5). Plutarch says that the couple is in love, but also notes that others

described their relationship in negative terms. She came to be very influential in

Pericles' life. It is thought that he collaborated with Aspasia over many issues of the city

and that she helped him organize his speeches (Waithe 1987: 79). Plato and others

disapproved of this union between Pericles and Aspasia. Those Greeks who were not on

her side claimed that she had too much influence over Athens and that she aided Pericles

in making the Athenian public believe that its history was something other than it truly

was (Waithe 1987: 79). Pericles was admonished for having a bastard son with Aspasia

and she was labeled Pericles' Hera (Plutarch *Pericles*: 24.6). Later in her life, Aspasia

was put on trial for impiety, just as many political and intellectual leaders, but was

acquitted after Pericles came to aid her publicly. She continued to play a part in the inner

circles of Athenian politics and philosophy after this. Aspasia came to be valued by

many, but also perceived as a threat by others (Waithe 1987: 80).

Thus, being a *hetaera* could be beneficial for these freed slaves, but it also came

with certain downfalls. For as much as they may have acted like Athenian citizens, they

were still not citizens legally, as evidenced in the case of Aspasia. Her son with Pericles

was illegitimate because she was not an Athenian citizen. In many court cases, *hetaeras*

were debased in order to paint a negative picture of the accused man. These cases dealt

with such things as inheritance and questioning the status of an individual. Through

associating the image of the *hetaera* with the accused, the prosecutor could prove a man's

extravagance and corrupt nature (Glazebrook 2006: 126). The orators also present an

image of the individual *hetaera* that is "extravagant, promiscuous, available to anyone,

requiring payment, excessive in her behavior, scheming, and arrogant" (Glazebrook

2006: 127). They present the court with the antithesis of the ideal housewife. In order to

make their use of the *hetaera* successful, it was necessary to degrade her because

prostitution was an accepted practice (Glazebrook 2006: 130). Many court cases were

won by introducing the *hetaera* to prove the accused was dishonest. Witnesses were brought in to ensure that the women who were used as examples of the accused man's opulence were verified. This had a negative effect on these women even if the accused man was acquitted. Her reputation was ruined through the trial and this new reputation was the one that stayed with her for the rest of her life (Glazebrook 2006: 135). Lastly, it was difficult to leave the business. These women could not do much else with their lives except continue to work as a *hetaera* or train others to work for them. This can be seen in images on pottery that depict older *hetaeras*, who were no longer thin, pleasuring men (Fantham 1995: 118).

Women in Religion

An area of the Athenian culture that citizen wives and daughters could partake in and gain a certain level of power was in the different life ceremonies and religious festivals. We know that women took part in the ancient Greek religion because there are records of women taking part in religious festivals and there have been many dedications to the gods that have been shown to be made by women. Dedications were mainly made by men, but there is a decent percentage that was made by women. Women were able to dedicate objects to the gods and goddesses on their own and were allowed to dedicate with the acceptance and, often, monetary aid of the men in their lives. These dedications often took the form of *korai*, life-size or larger female figures or goddesses (Dillon 2002: 9). Other women's objects such as mirrors and pins were dedicated and all dedications were recorded so there are lists of temple possessions available to the modern scholar. Dedications advertised the individual's piety and their wealth or poverty (Dillon 2002: 35). The dedications that were made on the Acropolis suggest a shift in the status of

women after the conclusion of the Persian Wars (Dillon 2002: 15). Prior to the Persian Wars, dedications were made by women and these dedications gave only the woman's first name, not mentioning her husband or her father. After the Persian Wars, it became normal to find dedications made by women that included one or two male names as well, being her husband and or father. By about 450 BC, public dedications by women had stopped appearing on the Acropolis (Dillon 2002: 17). Dedications made by women became more private after this and less grand in nature. Their dedications moved inside the temples and sanctuaries from the public spaces of the Acropolis and items, such as libation bowls and jewelry, were more likely to be found.

Parthenoi, unmarried virgins, played important roles in ancient Greek religion (Dillon 2002: 37). Public roles of religion were thought to be inappropriate for the wives of Athenian citizens. The virgin status of young women as well as their freedom from responsibilities allowed them to fill the various religious roles available for women. Young maidens held particular importance in the religious cults of Athena and Artemis as they were both virgin goddesses. They often carried the various articles needed for religious cults (Dillon 2002: 37). Most young girls who participated in the various cults served as basket-bearers or tray-bearers. Others ground the corn that was used at sacrifices (Dillon 2002: 60). There were also four arrephoroi, who commenced the weaving of the peplos for the statue of Athena for the Panathenaia (Dillon 2002: 57). They lived on the Acropolis for their period of service and were young girls between the ages of seven and eleven. Since they were so young, they did not do the majority of the weaving (Dillon 2002: 58). That job was left to other Athenian women. The arrephoroi did, however, perform the nocturnal rites, the transportation of secret items (Dillon 2002:

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59). The young girls and the female priests of Athena who gave them these baskets did not know what was inside. The importance of unmarried women in religion can be evidenced by the women represented on the frieze on the Parthenon and the Erechtheon *parthenoi* that hold up the porch of the sanctuary (Dillon 2002: 43; 50). Women in procession on the frieze of the Parthenon and the *korai* that comprise the porch of the Erechtheon are both an older type of woman. These were older unmarried women. They are more developed and have gone through puberty unlike the majority of younger maidens who took part in religious festivals. This shows that women of all ages could participate in these ceremonies and play important religious roles.

Women had the ability to further honor the gods through becoming a priest of a specific deity. These female priests were not the same as male priests and they generally served female deities, such as Athena, Artemis, Demeter, and Hera. There were cases, like that of the cult of Apollo at Delphi, where female priests were employed and more desirable than male priests (Dillon 2002: 73). Female priests at Delphi, notably the Pythia, offered prophecies for all of the people of Greece. This was a position available for adult women that allowed them to fulfill a public role in ancient Athens. In Athens, the positions for female priests needed to be filled by female citizens (Dillon 2002: 79). Some of these positions like the priest of Athena Nike were filled democratically, drawing names by lots, while others who served Athena Polias were drawn from specific aristocratic groups or clans (Dillon 2002: 84). These female priests had more public roles than other Athenian citizen-women since they dealt with the interactions between citizens and the gods. When a priestess died, it appears that the eldest daughter of the eldest male relative of the priestess would assume the position (Dillon 2002: 87). The most

important priest in all of Athens was the female priest of Athena Polias, Athena of the City. She presided over all of the sacrifices that took place in Athens and she held this position for life. This position was filled by a member of the Eteoboutadai genos. Female priests were not paid for their work by the state with the exception of the priest of Athena Nike since she was chosen from among the citizen women. Instead, they received items such as meat, oil, and firewood as a reward for being present at sacrifices. These female priests may have even handled some of the dedications and other items that went into the treasury at the sanctuaries.

There were certain religious festivals in which women were allowed to participate with men and some in which only women were allowed to participate. Worshipping the goddess Demeter and her daughter Persephone became a female cult (Dillon 2002: 109). Some of the rites involved in worshipping these goddesses dealt with agricultural fertility. The city was very concerned with making sure that these festivals to Demeter continued and that the appropriate materials were available for the women to conduct these ceremonies. The Thesmophoria, honoring Demeter Thesmophoros, was widely celebrated throughout the ancient Greek world and became one of the most important festivals for the city of Athens. It was strictly meant for women celebrants. There were myths of men who would sneak into these festivals and who would, in turn, be castrated or stabbed by the women performing the secret and sacred rites (Dillon 2002: 110). The festival was three days long and was celebrated throughout all of the demes of Athens. Citizen wives were probably the only women who made up the population at the Thesmophoria. Young women were ineligible to attend this festival because they had not yet proven their fertility in marriage (Dillon 2002: 112). On the first day of the festival,

the women ascended to the Thesmophorian shrine at Athens, most likely located on the Acropolis. Contrary to other theories which suggest that the women celebrated the Thesmophoria on the Pynx, celebrating on the Acropolis would allow for fewer women to participate. This indicates that it was a handful of citizen women who took part in this celebration instead of the possible thousand that could have participated if it was held on the Pynx (Dillon 2002: 119). The women fasted on the second day of the festival just as Demeter fasted after her daughter was taken to the underworld by Hades. This was not simply abstinence from food, but also abstinence from sex (Dillon 2002: 113). On the final day of the Thesmophoria, known as the day of the beautiful birth, they ask the goddess for fertility of the crops and also fertility of their own wombs. The festival was a very secret affair and there are not many complete descriptions of the events that took place during those three days as men were excluded.

Conclusion

Outside of the home, there were many opportunities for women of all social classes to gain some authority and power in the city of Athens. In the arenas of physical power, men continued to be the dominant figures. Women did not take part in war and there was a diminishing athletic arena for women to take part in. Aristotle suggested, however, that women should take part in physical fitness training. If Athens was once again over run by an enemy force, there would be no men in the city who could protect it or its people. He suggested that women have some background in physical fitness so that they could protect themselves in this situation. It was, therefore, not out of the question that women may have received some form of physical education.

For slave and metic women, there was more opportunity to gain an education and become ingrained in the public world of men. This advantage to these classes of women often came in the form of prostitution. They were able to have control over their lives and be present at social functions that citizen-women were banned from. This allowed them to take in higher levels of education and play a role in philosophical and political discussions during the classical period.

For citizen-women, the main way to gain a sense of authority and power was through religion. Young girls and adult women played important roles in many festivals and these festivals often marked the only time that they were allowed to leave the home and participate in the culture of the city of Athens. It also gave them opportunities to preside over important religious festivities that were important to the entire community. I believe that these religious roles gave women more authority within their own lives within the home. As well as taking part in public festivals, women may also have transitioned some of these rites to within the household. For instance, I believe that women may have set up their own types of fertility celebrations and customs within the home that related to the family rather than the community. Religion was thus a force that bound women to the male members of their households and also brought the whole community of free citizens together as a united culture.

CONCLUSION

Taking a look back at the *Thesmophoriazusae*, composed by Aristophanes, the passage that I began my thesis with, I can now appreciate the play for its aspects of female authority. During the religious festival of the Thesmophoria, the women were able to leave the confines of their homes and celebrate together. It was important that women were in charge of this festival as I have discussed in the previous chapter since the festival was important for fertility within Athens. This festival also gave free citizen-women of Athens an opportunity to gather together, something that generally did not take place in classical Athens. They remained together for three days and they conducted many religious rites during that time. However, there were also times where they were not taking part in religious activity. Since there is no well-documented source for the events that took place at the Thesmphoria, its activities can be speculated about based on the nature of other festivals that took place within Athens and other cities in the Aegean. I believe that this festival was very important for the women of the city of Athens to attend. It gave them the opportunity to meet with and talk to other women from their community who they would not be able to convene with under normal circumstances. At the festival, the women may have discussed their lives within their homes and their lives with their husbands. They may have shared secrets to running the household better and discussed events that were taking place in the community. The Thesmophoria may have provided women with the opportunity to learn more about what was happening in the community through other women. If they were sharing information about the community

together at this festival, the women must have been receiving information about the community from non-female sources. This suggests that the men in their lives were telling them about what was happening in the public areas of the city. Therefore, the public sphere was a place where only free-citizen men could congregate, but the topics that were discussed in these areas were not restricted to men. They may have returned home and told the female members of their household about what was being discussed. If women were not receiving information about the public world from the men in their lives, then I think that there was more freedom of mobility than is portrayed in ancient Athenian texts. In order for women to discuss what was happening within the community, they would need to understand what was happening in the public arenas. If the mobility of women was not as limited as texts portray and certain scholars assume, then women could gain information about the community on their own. They would be able to travel around in public, possibly with the aid of veiling, and view some of the public discussions that took place. More freedom of movement for women would also give them greater equality within the community. Contrary to some sources that suggest women remained in the home and did not leave, I believe that women were more equal within classical Athenian society. Aristophanes' play suggests that women had more political freedom than some may necessarily think.

Overall, I believe that women in classical Athens had more freedom than generally assumed and that there was more of a sense of equality between men and women in the city. Ancient Athenian authors stressed ideals for citizen-men and citizen-women in society. From a young age, Athenian boys and girls were raised to fill social roles that they would occupy in their adult lives. Under this ideal system, boys received

formal education outside of the home as well as social education from their fathers.

Girls, on the other hand, received almost no formal education. The education that girls received came from their mothers and it taught them how to run the household and to oversee the activities that occur there. Ideal adult lives began for young men after the age of eighteen and for young women after marriage. Adult men had the ability to be a part of both the private household and the public spaces outside of the home. They could take part in the public functions of the city, which consisted of both politics and philosophy. Adult women were meant to remain in the home under this ideal system and were restricted to specific female quarters within the home. Women were not offered much mobility under this ideal system.

Although this ideal structure of society was often cited in texts that came out of the classical period, the cultural reality did not often match it. Based on the evidence that I have presented, women had much more authority over their lives than ancient authors gave them credit for. Girls had more opportunities in some cases than only being educated within the home. They could receive minimal or larger amounts of education that they could use in their adult lives. Adult women were restricted far less both within the home and outside of the home. The household was a place where both genders could come together and the boundaries between these genders were not strictly limited. Women's space within the home sometimes overlapped with male space and women's quarters were not segregated to a specific portion of the household. Laws of Athens suggest that women had far more authority over their lives as well. Women had the opportunity to divorce their husbands and receive property in a will. There were also opportunities for women to enter public spaces within Athens. By veiling themselves,

women had the opportunity to leave the household and also preserve their modesty. Veiling could allow wealthy citizen-women to act like other women that were held to fewer standards within society. They did not need to fear bringing shame upon their household because they were hidden by the veil. Religious festivals also allowed women to leave the vicinity of the household and venture into public realms alongside other women.

Myths involving women from this time period often portrayed women who would not be labeled as honorable. They were adulterous and entered public realms within society. Thinking about the reasons behind these characterizations in the way that Malinowski perceives myth, they would be meant to teach Greek people how to act and to legitimize certain social practices. If these myths were meant to instruct, then the role that these female characters play in the lives of the Greeks becomes an important issue. It can be seen as a way to instruct men. In this way, the plays instruct men to not give too much power to women and to not let women have too much control over important situations as this will lead to the downfall of the household. If young girls were, as some scholars suggest, able to be in the audience during these plays, then they would have been presented with examples of ways not to act in their adult life. By presenting the extremes of shameful women, the audience would be able to become more appreciative of the women in their own lives. Men would also want to protect the women in their lives from the same fate as some of these female characters from mythology.

The writings that come out of the classical period also mostly deal with the wealthy and elite classes of society and only with Athenian citizens. They do not deal with the middle and lower-classes or the overwhelming slave and metic populations that

were present in the city of Athens. The women from these social classes far outnumbered the wives and daughters of wealthy citizen-men. These women were also not held to the same ideals that elite women were held to. Therefore, they had more freedom in their movements in the community's public arenas and had more access to education. They could also serve as another source of information about public activities for citizen-women. Slave women often had to be highly educated so that they could perform skills that wealthy citizens did not want to do. Metic women had the unique opportunity to travel in the public spaces of men's world and participate in the political and philosophical discourses that were occurring during the classical period in Athens. This produced a class of women, similar to Aspasia of Miletus, who were renowned for their education and activity in the public spheres.

Taking into consideration all of these different types of women from the classical period, it would be incorrect to label the period as oppressive towards women. Rather, the classical period can be noted for the growth of freedom for women in the city of Athens.

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