Early Greece: The Origins of the Western Attitude Toward Women[1]

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The study of classical antiquity is unique in that it is quite clearly and self-consciously the study of the crucible in which the forms and the spirit of Western civilization were first mingled, and as such it has been throughout Western history notoriously susceptible to depiction alternatively as a barbarous crudity from which the further development of science and morality has fortunately delivered us, or as a primitive simplicity whose unique harmonization of the natural and physical with the rational and spiritual life, we can only seek in vain to recover. The matter of woman's position in antiquity, together with the question of slavery, have been focal points in this dispute, and have often been the bases on which the liberal-democratic ideal has fallen or risen. The question remains: can we seek to discover in classical antiquity an understanding of our present historical moment and a perspective on our own values, and yet remain both free from ideological compulsion and unburdened by the tyranny of raw data?

The impulse given to the study of woman's position throughout history by the recent women's liberation movement, invites us to do just that. In the following pages, we shall attempt to correlate various aspects of the political, socio-economic and cultural position of women in ancient Greece, in order to present an intelligible whole, and a picture which will not force us to choose whether women in ancient Greece were despised or revered, but will enable us to understand how they could seem to be both simultaneously. In order to do this, we must of course consider the position of women in relation to the particular historical moment in which they found themselves, and we must consequently be aware that any change in the status of women is always an *aspect* of a whole social movement. This article will therefore take the form of an abbreviated history of the emergence of the Greek city-state, with special emphasis on the position of women and with special attention to those cultural documents that are relevant to an assessment of the status of women. We shall focus primarily on the period between the ninth and sixth centuries (inclusive), as the era in which the basic framework of the polis was set down. It will be assumed that the period before the Dark-Age migrations was essentially irrelevant to the particular form that the polis took, and that political and social developments in the post-sixth-century polis were, for the most part, extensions or intensifications of already well-established patterns.

Our source for the Dark-Age period will naturally have to be the Homeric poems, which were composed in the eighth century and whose outlook reflects, at least in part, Dark-Age life. They are thus our only cultural documents for a period that was crucially important in the development of Greece. For it was the time when the political, social and cultural forms of Greece were first taking shape, and along with them everything that was later to become known as specifically and peculiarly "Greek." Hesiod will provide us with information about the seventh century which, when taken together with the Homeric evidence, will enable us to construct a fairly complete picture of social life just before the decisive transformations of the sixth century which brought the polis into being as a legal and political entity. For the period of sixth century, our primary historical focus will be on Athens, as our best-documented example of developments that were taking place all over Greece. For while Athens' development toward a democratic form of government took place fairly late (in comparison with the same movements elsewhere on the mainland and in the islands), it soon became evident during the sixth century that a peculiar combination of geographical, cultural and other factors was thrusting her forward into a position of economic and, later, political leadership of the entire Greek world. As such, her achievements, as well as her failures, can be fairly understood to represent the outer limits of development of the democratic Greek city-state. Only the states of Sparta and Crete developed in radically different ways from the rest of Greece, and as such offer an interesting commentary on certain aspects of Athenian life. These will not, however, be the subject of discussion in this paper.

For cultural documents in which we may find reflected the social developments of the sixth century, and in particular the attitude toward women, we shall be obliged to abandon Athens (except for the poems of Solon) and turn for evidence to the literary remains of the lyric poets of the Greek islands. Taken all together, our varied sources will enable us to construct a complex picture of the emergence of the Greek city-state in which various and sometimes contradictory forces were at work and in which the position of women and the social attitude towards her were correspondingly diverse. Our procedure will be to first define the historical characteristics of each period or era, and then to deduce from cultural documents the social attitudes of that period, especially the attitude towards women.

The Homeric poems were composed in the eighth century B.C., but the world which they portray both reflects

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[1] This article developed out of a lecture on the same subject delivered at Wesleyan University (Middletown, Conn.) for a course on Women in History in the Spring of 1971. To Sheila Tobias, who directed this course (the first of its kind at Wesleyan) I owe special thanks for both her inspiration and her sometimes much-needed encouragement to pursue my investigations in this area.

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backward on the age of great kingdoms, and looks forward to that form of social organization which Homer in the eighth century only just saw emerging about him—the polis. [1] The setting of the poems, in the heroic era of great wars and great kingdoms, ostensibly looks back to Mycenean times. But recent investigation has demonstrated that the social institutions in particular, as well as many other features of the poems, reflect Dark-Age culture. Although there is still considerable dispute as to which "background" predominates, it is still evident that the juxta-position of old and new afforded Homer an opportunity for making a complex and comprehensive statement about the meaning as well as the evolution of social forms. We shall examine these in some detail, paying particular attention to differences in social practice that have ramifications for the status of women.

In the view of those who defend the thesis that the background of the poems roughly reflects conditions as they would have been in Mycenean Greece, the political background is that of "a simple tribal monarchy,"[2] with a warrior aristocracy, and a highly cultured, highly commercialized bureaucracy centered around the palace of the king, to whom every member of society owed allegiance, and who presided over the dispensation of justice, religion, and material goods. The family of such a society was a loose conglomeration of husband, wife, children, close relatives, concubine's children (see V.70f., VIII.283 f., and 14.202 ff.), and incorporated strangers of various kinds (like Phoenix in IX.485 ff.). M. I. Finley, who is the main spokesman for the thesis that the action of the poems takes place against a background of primarily Dark-Age institutions, describes this world as follows:

> It was a world of petty kings and nobles, who possessed the best land and considerable flocks, and lived a seigniorial existence, in which raids and local wars were frequent. The noble household (*oikos*) was the centre of activity and power . . . The king with power was judge, lawgiver and commander, and there were accepted ceremonies, rituals, conventions and a code of honour by which nobles lived, including table fellowship, gift exchange, sacrifice to the gods and appropriate burial rites. But there was no bureaucratic apparatus, no formalized legal system or constitutional machinery. The power equilibrium was delicately balanced; tension between king and nobles was chronic, struggles for power frequent. [3]

On the whole, this is the view which will be followed in this paper, with the one exception that we shall treat the evidence for certain Mycenean practices not as mere "survivals," not as lifeless shells of long-dead customs, but as one half of a polarity which is presented in the poems as a dynamic tension out of which new social forms eventually break forth. So, for example, Homer's portrayal of Priam's palace, which houses his fifty sons and their wives as well as his twelve daughters with their husbands, suggests the large, loosely-knit type of family associated with the Mycenean age. In such a context, Homer's focus of interest on the relationship between Hector and Andromache emerges as something of an anachronism, more appropriate to an era of small families. Conversely, the heroic code by which the warriors fight in this poem is inconsistent with an emphasis upon the nuclear family, and more appropriate to the age when the warriors formed a class apart. As we shall see, the manner in which Homer has developed the character of Hector, as both a warrior and a family man, has enabled him to deal directly with this clash in social forms and cultural values between the old, heroic society, and the new world of pre-polis society. And an important aspect of this conflict is a striking difference in both the position and the attitude toward the women of the society in question.

As Sarpedon explains the heroic code to Glaucus in the famous passage in Book XII of the *Iliad*, he and Glaucus are honored above all others in Lycia with a position of preeminence and choice tracts of land, because they fight in the front ranks of the Lycians; they fight in the front ranks in turn, so that the Lycians will honor them (310–321). It is a circular argument in which the rewards of the heroic life are identified as its rationale. It contrasts quite strikingly with Achilles' refusal in Book IX to find in the traditional rewards of excellence a sufficient reason to rejoin his comrades on the battlefield; his rejection of the heroic code is never repudiated—when he does return to the fray he does so only to avenge the death of Patroclus, in the service, that is, of a close and personal friendship. The heroic code as Sarpedon defines it is implicitly rejected by Hector as well, who justifies his life as a warrior by a very different rationale; as he explains it to Andromache in the famous homilia of Book VI:

> But my concern is not so much for
> the suffering of the Trojans nor [of
> my mother and father and brother]
> but for your suffering, [on the day
> when some Achaean leads you
> away as his slave].
> VI.450–455 (abridged)

That is to say, Hector affirms himself as a warrior by recognizing the bond that he has with his family and with the city as a whole, and he claims that his activity as a warrior is on behalf of them all. In this, Hector is the prototype of a new type of Greek hero whom Werner Jaeger identified as "radically different from those truly aristocratic Greek heroes who fought not for their native land but only for their own personal glory. His personality is already an example of the

infiltration of the new ethics of the polis. . . ."[4] To put it differently, in the character of Hector Homer had attempted to present a more integrated and whole person, whose activity as a warrior was the expression of the totality of his human relations. This he achieved by developing an elaborate portrayal of Hector as a "family man" in Book VI. There Hector is shown in the company of friends and family, whom he approaches in the course of the book, in an "ascending scale of affections"[5] at the apex of which stands Andromache, his wife. Andromache, for her part, reciprocates with an assertion of Hector's primary importance to her, again presented in the form of an ascending scale of affections:

> But Hector, you are father
> and noble mother to me and
> brother as well, and you are
> my tender husband. VI.429–
> 430.

Such a code as Hector articulates is clearly more appropriate in a social milieu like the polis, in which social relationships begin with the central importance of the nuclear family and encompass, in successively larger concentric circles, the whole of society. The heroic code which Sarpedon espouses is better suited to a bureaucratic state of the Mycenean type, in which the warriors were a military aristocracy. And yet, as we have stated, such a world is not predominant in the poems; most of the warriors have, like Hector, a wife and child, and a household to which they will return. However, with the exception of Hector, the private lives of the Homeric heroes, and the great affection which they may have felt for their wives and children, have no place in their code as warriors. The explanation that the Greeks were fighting offensively and the Trojans were defending their homeland, is not sufficient: in the picture which Nestor presents in Book IX (705 ff.) of the attack on his homeland by the Epeians, it is still booty and the honor to be gained from fighting gloriously that is uppermost in the minds of the Pylians. And in Book V, Dione comforts her daughter Aphrodite, whom Diomedes has just wounded, by reminding her of the anguish which would await Diomedes' wife and children, should he meet death at Troy. Yet at no point is any of the heroes other than Hector said either to fight for the sake of the glory which would accrue to his family (in the manner of the career which Hector foresees for Astyanax in Book VI.479–481), or to fear death for their sakes. Booty and fame and honor (*geras* and *kleos* and *time*) are the only considerations which have a place in the heroic code.

The distinction which we have been delineating between the two types of warrior codes is obviously one of great consequence for the position of women. The traditional heroic code reflects a society whose ideal was exclusively and uniquely male, in which all of the socially relevant transactions took place between the males of the community. The "family" of such a community was, as we have noticed (see above, page 9), a loose conglomeration of persons related to one another in various ways. In the "new" code which Hector articulates, and which reflects the organization of society around small, nuclear families, the position of the wife is upgraded and the concubine fades or disappears.[6] Socially relevant transactions were still the province of the males of the community, but these men were increasingly defined as heads of families, and not as members of a class apart from the rest of society. The new heroic code therefore embodies a new type of humanism, in which man is defined as a total being, and not on the basis of one special function, and in which his rights as a member of society proceed from an acknowledgment of that which he has in common with the rest of society, rather than from his particular and special abilities.

The incorporation of the wife into the warrior's code involves as well a new attention to her social function, and a new concern to delineate its limits. This is evident from Hector's use of what was to later become the traditional male/female polarity, in his final words to Andromache in Book VI:

> But go into the house and
> attend to your own work,
> the loom and the distaff, and
> tell the servants
> to set to work; as for fighting, that will be the
> concern of all the men, especially myself,
> who are sons of Troy. VI.490–493

We should emphasize here that the distinction we are discussing does not involves any new social functions for the wife—but a revaluation of her traditional duties and an incorporation of her functions into a new social ideal. So the warrior went on fighting wars as before, but in the service of a different set of values. The women we see in the Homeric epics are performing all of the traditional duties: Helen is on call for Alexander's sexual needs, no less than any concubine; women's normal sphere is the home, which they leave freely, but only on unusual occasions (and

ordinarily in the company of attendants—see VI.388f., cf. 1.331); women are solicitous of their children as well as their husbands, and perform such domestic services as seeing that a hot bath is drawn when the man of the house comes home from "work," or urging on him food or drink. As was true in Athens of the fifth century, the performance of certain religious rites was reserved to the women of the city, and the goddess celebrated in both cases is Athena. The goddess is propitiated with a robe of the women's own handiwork; for from Mycenean times forward to the Hellenistic period spinning and weaving was the province of women, be they domestic slaves or royalty. [7]

Does this mean that we have to accept as substantially correct the statement of M. I. Finley to the effect that "there is no mistaking the fact that Homer fully reveals what remained true for the whole of antiquity, that women were held to be naturally inferior and therefore limited in their function to the production of offspring and the performance of household duties . . ."?[8] I do not think so. The first objection to Finley's statement is that it assumes a connection between women's social function and an active desire on the part of society as a whole to establish their inferiority. Yet nowhere in the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* do we find any disparaging remarks about women's role, nowhere do we encounter the expressions of misogyny which appear so frequently in later Greek literature. Although it may be true that the position of women in Homeric times was little different from that of later times in Greece, there *is* a difference in the Homeric attitude toward this social role. The Homeric poet focusses almost exclusively on the positive side of the position of women; it emphasizes women's *inclusion* in society as a whole, rather than her *exclusion* from certain roles; it celebrates the importance of the functions that women do perform, instead of drawing attention to their handicaps or inabilities. Of course, this is not to say that Homer was unaware of the negative side of this picture: certainly the use of the formulaic lines which distinguish the male and female spheres (quoted above, page 13) demonstrates this. For these lines appear at those points where the women involved (Andromache and Penelope) threaten to overstep the limits of their prerogatives as females, and in a context which makes it clear that they are being deliberately excluded from participating in decisions which affect them directly. In Book VI.431 ff., Andromache's advice on military matters may be unfeminine, [9] but, as she had made clear in the preceding lines of her speech, her life is as much involved as Hector's in the war which rages outside the walls. In the *Odyssey*, Penelope's tearful appeal to the bard not to remind her in his songs of the husband for whom she longs, is cut short by Telemachus' reminder (in 1.356–359) that *mythos* is the province of the men; and in 21.350–353 Telemachus prevents her from further participating in or even witnessing the contest of the bow which will decide her husband. Nevertheless, Homer does not seek to explore the implications of this negative side of the picture of women's status, or to condemn his society on account of it; in fact, the only extended treatment of the "war of the sexes," the marital squabbles of Zeus and Hera, is done with humorous wit. In the figure of the goddess Hera we have a clever and intelligent woman who is impatient with the restraints to which her position as Zeus' wife subject her. She is jealous of his love-affairs, and determined to use feminine and other wiles to get around him. Fourth-century New Comedy has hardly anything to add to Homer's picture of the nagging wife.

If we can generalize, then, from the examples which have been before us, we can say that the social position of women in Homeric times was roughly the same as in later times in Greece, but it is notable that Homer treats as part of the challenge of the new social system, and as part of the forward-moving element in society, the new importance of man's personal life, especially the life of the family. As a result, woman's position was upgraded *ideologically*; the everyday relations between man and wife especially were the subject of a romanticization which contrasted strongly with the epic emphasis on heroic exploits. Hector and Andromache were the great example in the *Iliad*, but the relation between Penelope and Odysseus is even more fully developed, mostly because Penelope is characterized in the *Odyssey* much more fully than Andromache had been. Now certainly the plot line is responsible for some of this: since Odysseus is absent from home, Penelope is thrown into a situation where her own resourcefulness and character not only count for a great deal, but are allowed their full scope of expression. In addition, since the focus in the *Odyssey* is on domesticity, our attention is drawn very naturally to the wife of Odysseus. However, the famous romanticization of Penelope's relationship with Odysseus stands out as a striking example of that mutual respect and affection which characterized the Homeric ideal of marriage. This is particularly demonstrated by the episode in Book 23 in which the secret of the marriage-bed is disclosed. Not only is Penelope's cleverness revealed by the trick she plays on Odysseus, but in making knowledge that is shared between them alone the basis of their reunion, Homer has celebrated not the institution of marriage, nor the social role of either husband and wife, but the peculiarly personal and intimate aspects of the relation between these two individual persons. It must be emphasized here again that there is no indication that Penelope suffered any less from the disability that came from being a woman in ancient Greece, than any other woman in these poems. We have mentioned Telemachus' rebuke to her, but we should note as well that her marriage was to be arranged between the men involved; the questions about her eligibility derived mainly from the confusion as to who her *kyrios* was. [10] And the consulting of her wishes was no more than the respect owed and characteristically paid to a mature and noble woman, and the presentation of a choice which, as it seems, it was later given to her to make in Attic law.[11] Homer does not seek to conceal Penelope's status, or to diminish its consequences for her freedom of action. However, in the case of Penelope, her desirability as a rich widow and her eligibility for remarriage is converted into the arena where her qualities of endurance and

perseverance can be tested. The feminine craft of weaving and her family obligations as the chief woman in the house are not presented as limitations for her, but become in her hands the devices for cheating the suitors and for demonstrating, at the same time, her considerable inventiveness and intelligence. The simile with which the poet describes Penelope's joy and relief at being reunited with Odysseus recalls in form both the simile and the description in 5.394 ff., where Odysseus finally reaches the land of the Phaeacians; it thus formally suggests a complementarity which Homer has developed throughout the poem between the trials of Penelope and those of Odysseus, and between the qualities of endurability and wiliness in Odysseus and the similar qualities of character in Penelope.

If we saw in the *Iliad* a new interest in the social role of women which portended a new upgrading of their position from the ideological point of view, then we are confronted in the *Odyssey* with a particular example of this new social ideal, with its separate but complementary spheres, in each of which the same human qualities are valued and in each of which they can find expression, albeit in different ways. The marriage of Penelope and Odysseus is an example of that partnership of husband and wife in the household which Odysseus had celebrated in Book 6 as the "best of all things":

> For nothing is stronger and better than this:
> when a man and a wife live together in their home,
> their thoughts of one accord—a
> great pain to their enemies but a
> joy to their friends, as they
> themselves especially know.
> 6.182–185

It was Homer, then, who was the first to formulate that promise of a position of worth and honor which even today is glorified by the defenders of the traditional separation between the sexes. Such hopes have been revealed as a sham for our own times, but for the Greeks of Homer's time the negative side of this ideal had not yet fully revealed itself.

For the sake of completeness in our discussion of women in the Homeric poems, we should include mention of the two Homeric women who are most often instanced as examples of Homeric women's "higher status," as compared with her fifth-century Athenian counterpart: Helen and Arete. It must of course first be remarked that both of these women are anomalous; that does not mean that they have nothing to tell us about the women of their society, but it does mean that not every aspect of their positions can be regarded as typical.

Helen, in both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, is a demi-goddess, and the special position that she occupies, and her special and magical powers, derive from this. Even Menelaus is given special treatment by the old man of the sea,

> since you have Helen as wife, and you are the son-in-law of Zeus

and is guaranteed immortality on the same account (4.569). In both poems Helen is notoriously free from the disgrace which later attaches to adulterous women. Although she certainly regards herself as blame-worthy (see III.173, VI.344 and 4.145), the Greek expedition is concerned only to exact retribution from Alexandros, and to recover Helen "and all her possessions," and not to punish Helen. Menelaos' hostility and his feelings of outrage are directed only at Alexandros:

> Lord Zeus, grant that I may avenge the evil
> which he did to me first, godlike
> Alexandros, and vanquish him at my
> hands,
> so that some man even of those who
> are yet to come may shudder to do
> wrong to a host who has extended
> kindness to him.
> 3.351–354

Such an attitude does not betray any recognition of sexual freedom for women, but rather proceeds from a social climate in which the moral code encompassed men alone. Chastity or faithfulness for women in such a period was not a moral obligation but a simple regulation which was ordinarily adhered to; when the rule was broken it was a matter between the men in whose power the women were understood to be and whose responsibility they were. Furthermore, in the context of the looser family structure which certainly characterized such a period these transgressions on the part of women had less consequence for society as a whole. Since heirs were freely bred from

concubines, or freely adopted, the child-bearing services of the wife were less critically essential than in an era when only the legitimate wife could produce a legitimate heir. Such a system doubtless prevailed in Mycenean times, but survived as well into later society when the small family was not as yet a legal entity, but only a cultural tendency. It is, however, the case that the Homeric poems contain also evidence of the disposition to call into account the wife in cases of adultery, a practice which is normally associated with the later, bourgeois state. This evidence is the condemnation of Clytemnestra by Agamemnon's shade:

> So nothing is more dreadful or
> disgraceful than a woman — at
> least the kind that devises such
> deeds in her mind, planning
> death for her wedded husband . .
> .
> But she, the deviser of such great sorrow,
> heaped disgrace upon herself and
> upon all the tribe of females that is
> yet to come, even upon those who
> do good deeds.
> 11.427–434 (abbreviated)

It is notable that only in Agamemnon's eyes, for whom Clytemnestra's betrayal had a personal rather than a social aspect, does Clytemnestra vengeance is from Aegisthus alone (1.30 ff., 1.193 ff., 3.255 ff.). In the case of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, then, Homer has anticipated a negative feature of the new emphasis on the husband-wife relationship, and has anticipated as well the misogynistic form in which this negative attitude is most often expressed. In the cases of Hector and Andromache, and of Penelope and Odysseus, as we have said, the positive features of this relationship predominate.

In the case of Arete, the honored position which she holds in Phaeacia is isolated by Athena as anomalous:

> [Alcinous] honored her as no other
> woman on earth is honored, of such
> women as now live and keep house
> for their husbands. 7.67–68

and in addition it is fairly clear that her participation in the life of Phaeacia is based upon her husband's willingness to share authority: although Odysseus supplicates Arete, it is Alcinous alone who has the power to accept him as a suppliant (7.167 ff.); and regardless of her respect for her mother's judgment and intelligence, Nausicaa is clear that Alcinous is the ruler of Phaeacia (6.195 ff.). Modest though Arete's participation is, it is still surprising to see the distortion to which it is so easily subject by modern commentators: Finley describes Arete as a figure with "strange, unwomanly claims to power and authority"! [12] Furthermore, even if Arete's position were not anomalous, we would not be justified in deducing from it a position of greater worth for the women of Phaeacia. However, since Phaeacia is the Homeric Utopia, the domestic harmony and high respect for Arete which are part of it may represent Homer's commentary on the traditional divisions, and on the usual exclusion of women from public life.

In the cases of both Helen and Arete, their presence in the *megaron* after the meal when the men are drinking has often been cited as evidence of a greater degree of incorporation of Homeric women into social life. However, aside from the fact that much of the evidence having to do with the "seclusion" of women in fifth-century Athens affords proof of a highly questionable kind,[13] and so offers a less striking contrast with the Homeric practice than might have been previously thought, the Homeric practice is to be attributed, at least in part, to the fact that the palaces in question were centres of the social and political activity of the ruling classes. In neither case is anything like a symposium suggested, but rather the scenes represent the reception of a *xenos*. Furthermore, a comparison with a similar scene in Nestor's palace at Pylos reveals that his wife does not join the men, although she was presumably available, since she later "sleeps at his side" (3.404). This leads us to suspect that the presence of Helen and Arete in the *megaron* does not reflect the usual practice, but is allowed by the poet on the grounds that a special interest attaches to each of these women.

The examples of Helen and Arete, then, do not provide us with any information which might cause us to modify our assertions about woman's place and role in Dark- Age Greece. And so we must conclude that where claims are made as to the "high" position of Homeric women vis-à-vis their later counterparts, scholars either illegitimately infer higher

social status for women on the basis of Homer's favorable attitude toward the marriage relationship, or depend upon an unfairly and incorrectly negative evaluation of women's position in later times. On the other hand, where it is maintained, as by Finley, that Homer's picture of women confirms the negative judgment of antiquity as a whole, then the difference between the positive emphasis in Homer's presentation of women and their role, and the misogynistic tendency in later literature, has not been given sufficient weight.

The poems of Hesiod, although from about a century later than those of Homer, provide us with enough evidence to allow us to infer some of the economic and political characteristics of the period which gave birth to the tendencies which Homer described. In Homer, as we noted, the ideological upgrading of women's position, and the romanticization of the marital relationship, was the outgrowth of an impulse to find fault with the values of the heroic age, and a search for a more humane basis on which to define social relationships. Homer, therefore, focusses on the importance of ideas and of changes in value in bringing about social change. Hesiod, in the *Works and Days*, at any rate, is explicitly concerned with the economics and politics of his day, and consequently provides a valuable complement to the Homeric evidence. In using these two poets in complementarity I am not ignoring the century or so which separates them from one another—but since the dating of Homer's outlook which I use makes his poems a reflection of Dark-Age life, and since the elements which especially concern us look forward to women's status in the polis, and since Hesiod's outlook is clearly that of early Archaic society, the evidence of the two sets of poems taken together probably provides us with the best possible coherent account of this crucially important transition phase in Greek history.

From Hesiod we learn that social conditions in the seventh century in Greece were close to those of the later polis. The picture that Hesiod presents is one in which the polis as a form is already well-established, with an urban nucleus but an agricultural base. The religious, military and political offices—and therefore the state itself— were controlled by an hereditary aristocracy, called Eupatridae in Athens. Clan ties were still strong, although the division of society into clan groups no longer reflected the real social divisions which were increasingly between the emerging "classes": the interests of of the upper, richer, aristocratic classes were reinforced and defended by traditional clan associations, but for the impoverished and exploited small peasant, and the enterprising and increasingly important group of prosperous farmers, craftsmen, merchants and traders, clan associations had ceased to be a meaningful source of support and influence. From the *Works and Days* of Hesiod we can derive a picture of the situation of this latter type. In this poem Hesiod emerges as an aggressive individualist, extolling the virtue of hard work and its ability to keep the farmer a free and self-sufficient person. The tutelary deity of the poem is what Hesiod calls the good strife:

> This Eris incites even a
> witless kind of man to work.
> For the lazy man studies the
> example of his neighbor who
> is richer, and who busily
> plows and plants
> and puts his house in order.
> And so the neighbor
> competes with his neighbor
> who is busy pursuing
> wealth. This is the Eris
> that is good for mortal
> men.
> *WD* 20–24

Although there are elements in such an attitude which we might call petit-bourgeois, in Hesiod's time such a philosophy was a statement of faith that men were viable without the supportive protection of the clan or tribe and without the protective paternalism of the upper classes. The spirit of the poem seems conservative, not revolutionary, to us, precisely because it is not the voice of the people who have become declassed, who live in serfdom or wander about as beggars (whose situation is an object lesson for Hesiod—*WD* 394–395). But it is the voice of those people who, in the unsettling and chaotic social situation which developed out of the breakdown of the great empires of the Mycenean ages and the Dark-Age resettlement in small towns and cities, could turn such a situation to their own use. The new widespread availability of metal (iron) for tools [14] and slaves for labor[15] meant, on the one hand, that the large landowning and ruling classes could consolidate their position and increase their wealth, but it meant, on the other hand, that those members of the lower classes who were not reduced to serfdom, extreme poverty, or forced to become beggars, could, by maximizing the efficiency of the land which they held or their small workshops in the cities, produce a surplus which would enable them to engage in trade both in the

marketplace in the city and overseas. Their position, however, was highly precarious, since all judicial and other authority was vested in the *basileis* of the upper classes (see the famous passage at *WD* 37 ff.), and at any moment an arbitrary decision by a covetous aristocrat could wrest their means of livelihood from them.

In the *Odyssey*, we encounter a similar social situation, but from the perspective of the aristocratic nobleman, rather than the well-to-do peasant. There we find, in the persons of Odysseus and Penelope, as we noted earlier, the same emphasis on individual resourcefulness and self-reliance. But here the arena of struggle is the ruling class, the wealthy landowners. Although Odysseus seems to have held the kingship among them, there are several indications that it was as *primus inter pares*, not as king in the Mycenean sense, [16] and that his prominent position nevertheless made him subject to envy and so to constant attempts to undermine his authority or to seize his property.[17] In this struggle, the people (the *demos*) had little interest or stake, but were nevertheless available as a force which one or the other side could try to manipulate: in 16.375 ff. Amphinous fears that the *demos* might be incited by Telemachus to rise up against him and his cohorts, if report of their attempt on Telemachus' life gets abroad; in 1.239 ff., Mentor rebukes the *demos* for not coming to the aid of Telemachus against the suitors. But perhaps the most eloquent commentary on the constant strife and petty quarreling of this class is the picture that Homer presents of an analogous situation in Phaeacia. There the aristocratic class is filled with spirited and competitive young men: Nausicaa speaks of the reproaches to which she might be subject from one of the "haughty" men of her community, were she to accompany Odysseus to the palace herself (6.274 ff.); and Euryalus clearly speaks for his whole circle in 8.158, when he attempts to goad Odysseus into competition. In Phaeacia, however, the unquestioned authority of Alcinous is able to keep this group in check (in 8.396 he forces Euryalus to apologize to Odysseus), and so to guarantee for Phaeacia that political stability and freedom from constant shifts in the balance of power that was so notably absent from the early polis.

The conclusions that we can draw about early polis- and prepolis-society from juxtaposing Homer and Hesiod, then, are as follows. This was a world of fairly small and independent communities, whose social and political structure was fluid, and in which power and authority were decentralized. The ruling aristocratic class was subject, not only to internal strife and power struggles, but to the increasing hostility and opposition of the lower classes, who still retained some vestige of political authority through their participation in the assembly. In addition, a "middle" class of enterprising and prosperous farmers, composed of men like Hesiod himself, were increasingly dissatisfied with their exclusion from all social and political privilege. They were shortly to develop enough economic leverage in the society to challenge this exclusion, but in Hesiod's time the focus is still on their weakness and subjection to the authority of the aristocratic class. In both the upper and lower classes, however, individual family units were increasingly emerging as the principal social nucleus, although clan ties still existed and were still strong. In particular, there were some significant restrictions on the right to dispose of land. Early Greek land tenure is, of course, a very complex question, and the rules which governed it have been for a long time the subject of considerable scholarly debate. However, it seems clear from references in both Homer and Hesiod [18] that there was some family property which was obliged to be returned to the clan in default of male heirs. And of course the legislation of Solon and other early lawgivers which instituted the practice of making wills (see below, page 28) would have been superfluous, had complete freedom of disposition existed prior to these reforms.

But even though it was not until Solon's time that the primacy of the individual family unit was established in the state, Solon's reforms themselves were only the consolidation of a trend that had its beginnings centuries before. We saw in Homer the idealization of the family, and especially of the relations of husband and wife. We see in Hesiod a picture of the everyday functioning of a family farm very much like the *oikos* of classical times. In addition, however, we come up against the earliest and most extensive formulation of the misogynistic attitude that was to become a veritable *topos* in Greek life and literature of later periods. What accounts for this, and what accounts for the absence of this type of misogyny in the Homeric poems, which also foreshadow, as we saw, household life?

We have discussed how, in Homer, the emphasis on the warrior as a family man entailed a new importance for his wife as well. The domestic functions which she performs are celebrated as an integral and valuable part of a society increasingly inclined to incorporate the private side of man's existence into its cultural ideals. The other side of this picture is, of course, that the failure of the wife to fulfill her functions takes on a correspondingly greater importance, and represents a more significant threat. From the aristocratic point of view which the Homeric poems represent, however, and which is especially reflected in the treatment of Helen, such a threat is not altogether serious. In the context of large and loosely structured families, and of a secure class position, women's philandering is an aspect of the internal strife among the families and clans that characterized this period. As we saw, it represents an insult to the woman's husband rather than a threat to social stability, and since social status involved only the men of the community, women's faithlessness initiates a quarrel only between the men involved (whether mortals, as Alexander and Menelaus, or divine, as Hephaestus and Ares). We saw as well that in the one case which did involve reproach for the wife in question, Clytemnestra was rebuked by Agamemnon alone, for whom her adultery was a personal betrayal.

Yet the fact that Agamemnon indicted the whole female sex on the basis of his own wife's crime, is an indication of the negative side of the incorporation of the social role of women into the cultural ideal: for there is a new insistence on strict adherence to a "type," and a corresponding disposition to construe moral failings as deviations from that type. But the Homeric picture does not focus on this aspect of women's position, as we have said, but where it treats the marital relationship it concentrates upon domestic harmony and the romantic aspects of the husband/wife relation, and where it reflects the mores of society at large (as in the matter of adultery) it takes advantage of the insignificance of women in the heroic or aristocratic codes of honor, in order to exonerate them of blame or reproach.

In the rising "middle" class which Hesiod represents, on the other hand, there was far greater fragmentation and far deeper divisions between class members. For these people a policy of aggressive individualism and fierce competition was dictated; the nuclear family was a necessity of life for this group, and the wife was part of a corporate effort which made possible her husband's ascent up to the economic and social scale. In particular, the most important function of women, that of providing an heir, was crucial to the survival and countinuance of the family in an era when availability of land was increasingly restricted, and continuance of rights over family land dependent upon the existence of an heir (see above, note 18). From the point of view of this class, women's sexuality emerges as a threat and as a potentiality which required regulation and supervision. In the classic expression of misogyny in the Hesiodic poems, for example, Pandora's attractiveness, her sexiness, makes her

> an evil thing, in which all men
> may rejoice in their hearts as they welcome their own destruction.
> *WD* 57–58

Apart from their sexuality, hostility to women was a product of the perception that women had no concrete stake in any particular social or political order, or even any particular family. The liability of women to be transferred from one family to another, and their freedom from any of the major social and political responsibilities, caused fears about the fickleness of their allegiances. This is a point which is made even in the *Odyssey*, and even about Penelope herself (Athena is urging Telemachus on his way, reminding him that his mother is beset with pressure from all sides to marry one of the suitors):

> For you know the kind of sentiments
> that woman has in her heart— she
> wants to increase the house of
> whomever she marries,
> but of her former children and of her dead husband
> she takes not a thought after he is dead,
> nor does she long for him. 15.20–23

Just such an attitude toward women informs the whole of Hesiod's *Theogony*, and determines its structure as well as the content of the ideology which it, as one of the principal cultural documents of the Greeks, presented to the Greek peoples of its own and succeeding eras. Hesiod makes a polar tension between male and female a primary fact of his cosmogony. The succession-myth provides the structure on which the whole poem is built, with the stories and other genealogies sandwiched between the three stages of the master-myth. In that succession-myth the female and her progeny are allied against the male, and are locked into a cycle of victory and defeat. It is only Zeus who finally succeeds in escaping from the cycle, and he does so by learning to assimilate, rather than simply repress, the forces which threaten him. Zeus' other children (Dike, Eunomia, Eirene, etc.) are not only tokens of his sponsorship of a moral order which brings peace and progress, but since they are nearly all female, they signify the beneficence of the female principle when it is subjected to regulation by the patriarchal authority of the male. In the light of the Hesiodic model for the cosmos, then, the female appears not only as hostile to civilization, in that she is allied with the monsters and beasts who wreak chaos, but she appears as well as a being without moral dimension, as a force which needs direction and control to become truly human. Such a sentiment lies behind the truism about women which is frequently encountered in Greek literature—that she is both a great good and a great evil:

> For a man carries off as his prize no better thing
> than a good wife, and nothing to chill him to the bone like a bad one.
> *WD* 702–703

In the story of Pandora in the *Works and Days*, Hesiod makes the same point, both in the comment quoted above (page 24), and in his description of her creation. For in describing the positive aspects of this creature, Hesiod focusses upon those qualities which make her a useful partner for men in the household (beauty, skill in handiwork—63 ff.), and regards as negative those qualities which involve open or secret assertiveness of her own will (a shameless

mind and a deceitful character— 67).

The Hesiodic attitude toward women and their social role, then, is part and parcel of the developing trend toward a society made up of individual, small families, but an attitude formulated from the perspective of that class for whom the small family was an economic and political necessity and for whom, consequently, woman's enforced participation in a society in which she had no concrete stake posed a problem. From the Homeric or aristocratic point of view, this evolution was part of a promising movement toward a new humanism, and no immediate threat to a class for whom the small family was only part of a larger network of clan affiliations which assured the security of their political positions.

Perhaps we should pause briefly here and emphasize the point that the relation of the attitudes which we have been discussing to the particular realities of the historical era in which they appear is far from simple or direct. We have noticed how the economic and political situations of the day affected class outlook, but we should be wary of assuming that the fears or the ambitions of any one class or social group represented anything more than the recognition of the *limits of possible progress or decline*. That is to say, it is not necessary for 51% or more of women in eighth and seventh century Greece to have betrayed their husbands or families, for there to have existed the perception that, since women were regularly transferred from family to family, their allegiances were not necessarily steadfast. The well-known *topos* in Greek literature, whereby a woman betrays her family or state for love of a visiting stranger (Medea or Ariadne) did not represent a simple truth about Greek society;. it was rather a rendering of the typical Greek ambivalence about woman's position: the awareness of her potentiality coupled with fears about her allegiances. And the realization that women were an element in the society whose participation had to be regulated or controlled by the patriarchal authority of the male, need not presuppose a majority of recalcitrant females. One needs only presume an increasing awareness of the paradox of a social order in which women's role was crucial and integral, but in which women's rights, in either the family or the state, were minimal. And as we shall see especially in the poetry of Solon, the Greeks were highly conscious of their polis as an artificial, or man-made creation, consciously embodying certain rational and universally valid principles. They were from earliest times sensitive both to women's new position in the city-state, and the need to justify her exclusion from public life. We need not therefore infer any kind of "agitation" on behalf of women in this period, in order to realize that the concern with women in Greek literature, both to idealize and to depreciate her, to celebrate and to deplore her position in society, was part and parcel of a whole sphere of philosophical speculation which sought to understand and to justify the particular features of the Greek city-state.

In the century after Hesiod a series of developments which took place nearly simultaneously all over the Mediterranean produced the cluster of small, independent city- states which was to be "Greece." Beginning in the late seventh century or even earlier, a wave of colonizations which swept east and west across the Mediterranean established a network of Greek cities around the entire basin. There was a tremendous resurgence of commercial activity, and by the sixth century several cities like Miletus were established as mercantile centers. The class tensions which we saw reflected in Hesiod's poems were intensified as the growing importance of the urban centers fostered an increasingly strong middle class. Control of the state by an aristocratic nobility defined by birth no longer served the interests of the state as a whole, and the polis underwent a long period of class strife followed by political reorganization. The outcome was the middle-class city state which Aristotle in the fourth century described as the ideal form of association:

> It is therefore clear both that the best kind of political association is that which is administered by the middle class, and that those states are capable of being well governed in which the middle class is more numerous and stronger than the other two . . . .
> *Pol.* 1295b35

This middle class had developed out of a broad spectrum of interests representing all social and economic groups: wealthy landowners interested in trade, younger or illegitimate sons of the nobility who had become involved in maritime ventures and other kinds of commercial enterprise, the growing number of craftsmen and other specialists, and peasants like Hesiod of Boeotia. In some cities, like Athens, a catalyst was provided by the agitation of the increasingly desperate poor peasants, whose exploitation had gone so far as to resemble slavery. In the final stages of progress toward the middle-class city state, one or both of two figures usually appeared: the tyrant and/or the lawgiver. They appeared at a time when civil strife had reached a critical point, and they were conciliators of social factions. The tyrants especially are associated with the sponsorship of arts and crafts, the promotion of industry and commerce, the minting or revaluation of coinage, and the first programs of public works. The effect of their rule was therefore to strengthen the economic position of the middle class and to promote the development of their cities into centers of commerce and industry. By their interest in the arts and through their public works the tyrants both opened

new avenues of employment and helped to foster a sense of pride among the people as well as a new basis on which to identify with each other—as citizens (*politeis*).

The earliest lawgivers, such as Draco of Athens, were associated with the first setting down of that elaborate complex of rules and customs by which men lived. The fixing of these regulations in the form of a code accessible to everyone was the first step in freeing the population from the arbitrariness of the aristocratic nobility in whose hands the administration of justice still rested at this early period; codification of the laws was thus also the first step toward the abstraction of the laws and toward the conversion of them into that *nomos* which later was famous as "the master" of the Greeks. Later lawgivers, like Solon of Athens or Andromedas of Rhegium, were responsible for instituting a constitution, and for setting up the legal machinery which allowed the city to transform itself from a mere agricultural center into a hub of commerce and mercantilism. Although Athens had its tyrants as well as its lawgivers, Solon performed the functions of both, though holding the office of only one (but the story that he was offered the tyranny indicates that some of the changes he was expected to accomplish were associated with the rule of a *tyrannos*). We can therefore achieve a more exact notion of how the classical polis arose if we examine his program in some detail. Although some of its features were peculiarly Athenian, like the Seisachtheia, even this was only the Athenian program for coping with a problem that had arisen all over the Greek world: inequality of land distribution. Pheidon of Corinth, for example, suggested keeping the number of family plots and the number of citizens equal to one another. [19]

The Seisachtheia (as Aristotle called it)[20] or the freeing of the debtors and their land, and the laws forbidding debt-enslavement, were a brake on the power of the wealthy classes, as well as a revolutionary proclamation of the right of every citizen to be free. For debt-enslavement was the primary method by which the estates of the rich had been enlarged.[21] Solon liberalized the laws of succession to allow for the making of wills, and this was a first step towards private property in that it freed the individual *oikos*, or family holding, from the obligation to be returned to the clan in default of male heirs.[22] Such is the importance attributed to these laws by Plutarch:

> But [Solon], by allowing a man who had no children to give his property to whomsoever he wished, ranked friendship above kinship and freedom of choice (*charin*) above necessity, and made property the possession of those who held it.
> *Sol.* 21.2

Solon was thus the first to institute "ownership" of property in the Aristotelian sense: Aristotle defines ownership as the right of alienation (*apallotriosis*) which consisted in gift (*dosis*) and sale (*prasis*).[23] However, at the same time Solon limited this right of alienation of property to fathers without sons and to one generation[24] to prevent this new freedom from being used as a new method of accumulating estates. These limitations were probably unpopular with the large landowners, who had in all likelihood agitated for loosening of the restrictions on buying and selling family property, but who certainly did not have in mind the plurality of smallholders which Solon's restrictions produced. The rulers in an oligarchy, says Plato, when he is discussing the transition to democracy,

> do not want those of the youth who would become wild (*akolastoi*) to be held back by law so that it is not allowed for them to waste and ruin their property; for the rulers want, by buying the property of such men and lending money on the security of it, to become even richer and more honored.
> *Pol.* 555c

Solon's laws about property were instead primarily of benefit to peasant and middle class landowners, and a first step in providing for these classes a measure of the individual freedom which the wealth of the upper classes had always guaranteed that group.

The reforms which concerned themselves with trade and manufacture were equally important in determining the course of the future development of Athens and in ensuring the increasing dominance of middle class interests. According to Plutarch, "[Solon] allowed for the export of oil alone of natural produce, and he prohibited the export of other products" (*Sol.* 24.1). This restriction is generally understood to have been aimed against the export of grain, one of the chief means by which the large farmers had enriched themselves and created misery for the poor (by driving up the price of grain at home). [25] Others of Solon's new laws encouraged the development of craft-industry:

> [Solon] did not allow citizenship to be granted except to those who left their own countries by a decree of permanent exile (*aeiphygia*) or to those who fled with their whole families and settled in Athens to practice a trade. He is said to have done this not so much with the intention of driving away others as of inducing the above-mentioned to come to Athens by offering the assurance of participation in the state.
> Plut., *Sol.* 24.2

Another law mentions a penalty which a father who does not teach his son a trade is liable to incur.[26] By such laws

Solon forged a new alliance between the producers of oil and wine and the rising class of craftsmen, mostly potters. Shortly thereafter Athenian pottery achieved a dominance of the market which soon developed into a monopoly which drove all competitors from the field.[27]

Bullion and coinage were in use in Attica prior to Solon's monetary reforms, and had in fact been a factor in accelerating the process of enslavement of the poor by the rich.[28] But under Solon the first general issue of Athenian coinage took place, and his adoption of the Corinthian or Euboic standard [29] and his abandonment of the Aeginetan or Pheidonian standard[30] meant that there would be "increased contact with the rich Corinthian trade with the Greek settlements in Italy and Sicily."[31]

The constitution was reformed under Solon so as to have an economic basis: "in using the four property groups for his work on the constitution, Solon clearly intended to base his constitutional reform on the facts of Athenian agrarian economy. Landed property and its income, not birth, was to be the basic principle."[32] The assembly was now open to *thetes*, the lowest property-class, and there was some loosening of the rules of eligibility for public office which had been altered as well by the new definition of the classes. But the features of his constitution which were most influential in initiating a move toward the democratic principle of judicial equality among all citizens (Solon's reforms were far from ensuring any other kind of equality) were those which Aristotle himself termed "most democratic":[33] (1) the law forbidding loans on personal security, which effectively guaranteed that no citizen was in danger of enslavement; (2) the right of every citizen to go to law on behalf on anyone who had been wronged, which established the principle that the state as a whole was involved in an assault on any one of its members: "for force belongs to the few, but the laws to all,"[34] Demosthenes commented in referring to this law. And (3) the right of appeal from the decision of the magistrates to the popular courts, which Aristotle identifies as the most important reform in terms of increasing the power of the people, for, as he says, "when the people have a right to vote in the courts, they become masters of the state" (*Ath. Pol.* 9.1.).[35] Although the establishment of the courts of law was probably the work of Cleisthenes, the increased importance of the assembly after Solon (a result, not so much of alterations in its power and composition but of the substantiation of its powers by the new rule of law) caused him to be regarded as their originator.

In all areas, then, it was the work of Solon which was decisive in establishing the foundations for the development of a full democracy. Although the constitution as he had set it up was immediately challenged, neither the tyranny of Peisistratus nor the reforms of Cleisthenes did more than perfect and elaborate the system which Solon had conceived. It was his economic and legislative reforms which had ensured the viability of a state composed of a plurality of independent smallholders. It was Solon's *eunomia* which had designated the victory of a constitutional state after the arbitrary rule of the aristocratic period, and which had first established the principle that every citizen in the state had certain inalienable, if minimal, rights and freedoms. Solon had thus paved the way for the Cleisthenian principle of equality under the law—*isonomia*—under which all citizens, rich and poor, shared equally in political office. And it was this principle which was understood to express par excellence the democratic spirit. As Theseus explains it to the Theban messenger in Euripides' *Suppliants*:

> For there is no rule
> by one man here, but the city is free.
> The people rules, taking turns
> in yearly succession, not giving to the rich
> the most power, but with the poor man having an equal share.
> . . . . . .
> At the very beginning, when
> there are no common laws,
> one man rules, having
> himself set down the law
> according to himself—this is
> no kind of equality.
> But when the laws are written
> down and the weak and the
> rich have the same equality of
> justice . . .
> [then the one with right
> on his side wins out].
> 404–407; 430–437

It was Solon who had written down the laws, Cleisthenes who had established equal justice for all.

The other area in which Solon legislated extensively was the family. Here too, the names of several others of the early

lawgivers (such as Philolaus of Thebes, Andromedas of Rhegium, Charondas of Catana) are associated with family law, and so indicate to us the importance of family relations in the formation of the Greek polis. And it was these laws especially which were instrumental in establishing for women that position in Greek society which appeared to later generations especially as degraded or demeaning. The recent book by W. K. Lacey, *The Family in Classical Greece* (Oxford, 1968) has set forth in some detail the complex of laws and customs governing the operation of the family and family relations in Greece. Lacey follows Aristotle in defining the *oikos*, the household, as the smallest unit of the state and in affirming its primary importance in the organization of the Greek city-state, but he does not sufficiently emphasize the fact that all aspects of women's position in antiquity followed directly from this essential truth: that the state was conceived as a union of *oikoi*, each of which was an association of husband, wife, children and slaves, together with the property which supported them and whose growth their association was designed to promote. [36] A. R. W. Harrison, in *The Law of Athens: the Family and Property* (Oxford, 1968), more consistently attributes the "rights" as well as the restrictions on women to her primary function, that of perpetuating her father's or husband's *oikos*.[37] Most of his observations in this regard, however, are derived from the work of Hans Julius Wolff[38] who, in several articles on Greek marriage law, has demonstrated that the fundamental principle which governed the legal relations between individual, family and state in the Greek polis was that which defined the polis as an aggregation of *oikoi*. Wolff has, in other words, demonstrated that this truth about the polis is not a mere *fact*, but a *principle* of law. Laws governing marriage therefore focus exclusively on the procreative function of the woman, and reserve that function as a duty owed ultimately to the *oikos* into which the woman was born. It was the laws of Solon which, as they regulated every other aspect of Greek life for the benefit of the middle class, assured the continuation and the perpetuity of that system through laws which systematized the succession to the headship of the *oikoi* which were its base. Although our greatest amount of evidence derives from the extensive litigation involving inheritance of the fourth century, and although the laws which governed inheritance changed from time to time, the basic principles on which they were based, as well as the most important of the laws themselves, were always understood to derive from Solon. And since the codification of the laws which began shortly after the first restoration of the democracy following the oligarchic revolution of 411, and continued throughout the fourth century, emphasized the legislation of Solon as the basic code and insisted on continuity with it,[39] it is altogether likely that we do have preserved, in spirit if not in letter, the most significant provisions of Solon's laws.[40]

The most famous of Solon's laws on women had to do with *epikleroi*, heiresses, and were a subdivision of his general program for revolutionizing the laws of succession (see above, page 28f.). As a result of Solon's reforms, brotherless daughters now had an enforceable right to inherit their father's property: "Whenever a man dies without making a will, if he leaves female children [his estate will go] with them" (Dem. 43.51).[41] They, in turn, are to be married or dowered by the next-of- kin on the father's side:

> let it be necessary for the next-of-kin to give [the heiress] in marriage or marry her himself. If he fails to do this, let the archon compel him to do it. Dem. 43.54

The rights over property which a woman thus acquired were, therefore, strictly limited: according to the Aristotelian definition (see above, page 28) they did not entail ownership at all. Strictly speaking, *epikleroi* only transmitted ownership of the property which they "inherited," and only to a male child related through his father to the same family from which his mother came. For all women, including *epikleroi*, were limited by Athenian law in their right to dispose of property to that valued at no more than one *medimnos*. [42] Therefore, even the limited rights over property of an *epikleros* were not so much an affirmation of her, as of her father's, rights. Lévi- Strauss has explained an analogous situation in kinship terminology: "Matrilineal filiation is but the authority of the woman's father or brother rather than husband which extends back to the brother's village."[43] The right, indeed duty, of an *epikleros* to inherit her father's property was the assertion of the primacy of the father's family over that of the husband, and expressed itself as a principle according to which a woman never passed out of the family into which she had been born. Through marriage, she was only "loaned out" to another family. Wolff, in his work on Athenian marriage laws,[44] has demonstrated that *ekdidonai*, the legal term for "to give in marriage,"

> always implies that someone gives up power over a person or thing for a specific purpose, and its effect is the transfer of rights insofar as this is required by the purpose. But it is at the same time understood that no definite severance of the relationship between the transferor and the object will take place.[45]

The duty of *epikleroi* to inherit, dictated as it was by the necessity to keep the father's *oikos* in his family, coupled with their inability to actually own the property, required in addition legislation that would assure the speedy production of an heir to the *oikos*. Hence the law which Plutarch called strange (*atopos*) and ridiculous (*geloios*): the law which "allows an *epikleros*, if the man who has power over her and who is her legal kyrios is unable to have intercourse with her, to be married by one of her husband's kinsmen" (*Sol.* 20.2). This man in turn is required "to have intercourse with her at least three times a month" (*Sol.* 20.3).

Adopted sons were subject to similar limitations: they could not make wills,[46] they could not return to their own families without leaving behind a legitimate son,[47] and they could not be registered as *kyrios* of the *oikos* until they had produced a legitimate son.[48] The restrictions on *epikleroi* and on adopted sons had a common object: to ensure a descendant for any one *oikos*, and to prevent that *oikos* from being absorbed by inheritance into that of another family (that of the *epikleros'* husband, if she had one, or of the adopted son).

The only other form of property which needed similar protection was the dowry. Here, too, the laws benefitted women, but only incidentally, since the intention was to protect the interest of the father against that of the husband. The dowry was not required by law (except in the case of *epikleroi*, for whom the father's next-of-kin were required to provide a dowry, the amount of which was specified by law and was determined in accordance with the father's property qualification (see the law quoted above on p. 32, Dem. 43.54), but it was a customary contribution to the estate of the husband. It was not an outright gift, however, since the husband's rights over it were limited by a law which reflects the principle that the dowry continued to belong to the woman's family, and which incidentally protected the woman against divorce. For a husband was required by law "if he divorces his wife to give back the dowry, and, failing that, to pay interest on it at the rate of [eighteen
percent]" (Dem. 59.52).

Solon is credited with some other legislation affecting women which does not have to do directly with the *oikos*, but reflects the need to regularize the marriage procedure, in view of the new importance of the household headed by a legally married husband and wife. Solon is recorded by Plutarch as the author of a regulation which called for "a bride to be shut up together with her husband after having eaten a quince" (*Sol.* 20.3); there was also a regulation that "a bride carry a vessel for roasting barley as a symbol of her household duties (*alphitourgias*)" (Pollux, I.246). Furthermore, it was Solon who regularized, even if he did not introduce, a different status for men and women in the matter of sexual freedom. He did, it is true, introduce strict laws against homosexuality, [49] but otherwise the double standard was not only tolerated by Solon, but encouraged, since it was he, according to tradition, who first set up brothels and even founded a temple of Aphrodite Pandemos using the profits collected by the madams.[50] Adultery in a free Athenian woman made her liable to exclusion from participation in religious ceremonies and festivals, and her husband was compelled to divorce her.[51] The adulterer, according to Solonian law, could be killed with impunity.[52] Both rape and seduction of free women Solon punished with a fine, and an unmarried daughter was allowed to be sold if she was caught having intercourse with a man.[53] It was only, however, under the latter circumstances that a woman could be sold by her *kyrios*, and so the law actually represented a step in the direction of freedom from the complete discretionary power which, prior to this legislation, a man had exercised over the women under his *kyrieia*.

The rest of Solon's legislation on women comes under the heading of sumptuary laws: he supposedly introduced a restriction on bridal gifts (*phernai*) and a limitation to "three pieces of clothing and household items of small value" [54] (i.e. the traditional *himatia kai chrusia*) on the property that a woman could bring with her when she married. He further

> regulated by law the public appearances of women and their mourning and their festivals, prohibiting disorderly (*atakton*) and intemperate (*akolaston*) conduct. He ordered that a woman going outdoors not have on more than three garments, nor carry more than an obol's worth of food or drink, nor a basket larger than a cubit, and that a woman not go abroad at night unless she travelled in a wagon with a lamp shining before it. Plut., *Sol.* 21.4

Such legislation, characteristic of the early lawgivers, was primarily intended to put a check on display and extravagance among the wealthy families, which was occasioned primarily by marriage celebrations, funeral solemnities or parties of various kinds. Solon consequently regulated the conduct of men as well as of women at funerals;[55] he specified the time and manner in which boys were to go to school or to the gymnasium;[56] and he prohibited unemployment (*argia*) among citizens.[57] It was in all likelihood the conservative spirit of such laws that encouraged the growth of that bourgeois morality which later thought it unfitting for Athenian matrons to appear in public at all.

It is necessary to emphasize that all of the laws which we have been considering applied only to middle class women, to that group in other words who, together with their husbands and children, were intended to be the bastion of the new state. As the state increased in size, there arose a very large number of metics, freedmen and slaves who were excluded in varying degrees from citizen rights. None of this group could, except by special dispensation, own land, and so the regulation of their marriages would have been superfluous, except when they married Athenian citizens. Yet the fact that there were laws governing marriage, succession and related matters among metics and freedmen (administered by the polemarch rather than the archon), and that these laws seem to have duplicated those governing

full-fledged Athenian citizens, is an indication that the laws and customs of the middle class citizens, while applying directly to only a fraction of the population of city-state, provided nevertheless the dominant cultural pattern. [58] This is further demonstrated from the fact that informal unions between men and women in Athens, whether citizens or not, seemed to have mimicked, in several important respects, the arrangements of legitimate marriage.[59]

Let us now attempt to draw out some of the implications for women of the Solonian program of legislative and constitutional reform. It is clear that the program as a whole was a progressive one, and women derived some particular benefits from it. The social role which women had always played, that of wives and mothers, was now legally established as their right as well as duty, and was recognized, through various festivals,59*a* as a vital and honored contribution to the state. However, Solon's re-introduction into society of the distinction between public and private, albeit in a new form, had some important ramifications for women. In Dark-Age society, as we remarked, the heroic code reflected a culture which conceived of the female and male spheres of activity as two separate entities, existing of necessity side by side, but fundamentally unrelated to each other. In the city-state, the private side of man's existence, his headship of an *oikos*, is the condition for his incorporation into the state as a citizen. The distinction between public and private is therefore maintained, only now the private life of man is a sub-category of the public sphere. Insofar as women continued to be associated with the private side of life alone, they now appear as a sub-species of humanity. That is to say, women had before been conceived as an aspect of life in general; now they are seen as an aspect of men's existence. The difference is an important one, for it means that the inferiority of women, their subservience to men, has to be explicitly recognized. Formerly, women's inferiority was merely implied by the fact that the cultural ideal (the hero) was male. Now, the social and legal structure of the state specifically endorses and prescribes the subservience of women to men. The difference, as we see, is not one of quality of life—for women's social role and function did not undergo any fundamental transformation. Rather, the difference in status has to do with the *manner* in which women's function is incorporated into the state. The Greek city-state gave women status as an aspect of men's existence, rather than as existants in their own right. That this was necessary is a commentary on the limited and partial nature of Athenian democracy.

For the social and political history of Athens, as of every pre-capitalist state, is a history of constant trade-offs of prerequisites and rights. Where the early aristocracy had ensured a free and leisured life for itself by the concentration in its hands of all economic and social privilege, the democracies of ancient Greece secured liberty for all of its citizens by inventing a system of private property 59*b* which required women to legitimate it and slaves to work it. However, such considerations must not blind us to the fact that, insofar as the polis was founded on the ideal of guaranteed rights and freedoms for all its citizens, it was a progressive step forward from the arbitrary rule by a nobility of birth which had characterized the aristocratic state. The principle of freedom and equality, once adopted for some, strives by the necessity of logic to incorporate all under its aegis, and the history of the Greek state from the time of Solon is one of an ever-expanding citizen body.

When we turn to the poetry which arose in the democratic citystate, we find that the challenge which women's exclusion from public life posed, is immediately taken up. There emerges as well a clear division between the aristocratic and the "bourgeois" outlooks. On the whole, the trends which we discovered in Homer and Hesiod continue in evidence throughout the archaic and classical periods—but the differences which we noted between their outlooks harden into a real division between the aristocratic and the bourgeois poets. Now although we noted that in Homer's poems, and in the *Odyssey* especially, the particular features of aristocratic culture and life-style were represented, Homer's point of view did not represent that class alone. Rather, he concerned himself with changes in social forms and in cultural values that affected society as a whole, and that represented a whole social transformation, not the interests of a particular class. Similarly, in Hesiod, although his point of view in the *Works and Days* may have been more demonstrably class-determined, his *Theogony* voiced the beliefs and the values of society as a whole. However, in the next great era of literary production after the age of the epic, that is to say the lyric age, the intense class conflict of this period finds expression in a marked difference of outlook between the poets whose sentiments express the views of the rapidly-declining rich nobility, and those poets whom we have called "bourgeois," who seem to voice, in one way or another, the aspirations as well as the doubts, the hopes as well as the fears, of that emerging middle class whose economic and political interests were soon to dominate the state, and whose ideals were shortly to become identified with the spirit of the polis itself. In aristocratic poetry the romantic attitude toward women continued to prevail; it is a wholly different kind of romanticization, however, from what we found in Homer. For it focusses neither upon women's position in society (as in the *Iliad*) nor on individual women (as in the *Odyssey*). Here the love-relationship (rather than the marriage-relation) is prominent, and the attitude toward them has to be deduced from their portrayal as love-partners. In the bourgeois poetry of this same period, as we shall see, the love-relationship is prominent also, but it has a completely different character; and in bourgeois poetry we have as well direct comments (or attacks) on both individual women and on women seen as a class apart.

Among the aristocratic poets of the lyric age are Alcaeus, Sappho, Ibycus and Anacreon. [60] Although we have direct

evidence about the political views of Alcaeus alone of this group, we can infer from indirect evidence the typically conservative outlook of the aristocrat in the cases of the other poets. Alcaeus was an outspoken opponent of Pittacus and other political leaders of Lesbos. Since Pittacus' tyranny was, like the archonship of Solon, distinguished by its fair-mindedness and sympathy toward the widespread demand for a fairer distribution of power and privilege, Alcaeus' opposition to it marks him as a die-hard aristocrat, utterly opposed to any concessions to the agitators, and bitterly resentful of Pittacus' popular appeal.[61] There is very little indeed in Sappho's poems to indicate her perspective on the burning political questions of the day, but what little there is certainly suggests that her sympathies were similar to those of Alcaeus.[62] Ibycus and Anacreon were court poets to the tyrant Polycrates of Samos in the second half of the sixth century. Now we have already identified, in the cases of Athens, Mytilene and other cities, the period of the rule by tyrants as an era of great progress for the middle class, and in the case of Alcaeus his opposition to the Mytilenean tyrants marked him as an aristocrat. Polycrates was no exception to this rule, for he sponsored many public works, encouraged industry, and promoted trade, in the usual manner. But he also maintained his court as a bastion of the old aristocratic way of life, conspicuous for its elegance and luxury, and famous for its cultivation of the fine arts. A short-lived but immensely powerful piratical thassalocracy, for which Polycrates was single-handedly responsible, was the background against which there flourished side by side in Samos this unique combination of aristocratic elegance and solid bourgeois accomplishment.

The works of these aristocratic poets are especially distinguished by their portrayal of a world of youthfulness, beauty and grace, peopled by gods, heroes, or luxuriating aristocrats, and characterized especially by the absence of conflict. There are hymns to deities, stories of the old heroes, celebrations of the pleasures of love and wine. It is a world, and a way of life, which contrasts quite strikingly with the struggle—social, political and economic—that was going on all around these poets, and as such it represents something of an anachronism. For it looks back to an era when aristocratic manners dominated the culture, and when the aristocratic class ruled society. This is nowhere more clearly demonstrated than by Alcaeus' poem on Lesbian armor (Z34), in which the epic type of armature, is described in admiring detail, rather than the hoplite type of arms which were current in Alcaeus' own day, and whose advent had betokened an important advance for those non-aristocratic members of society who were increasingly demanding the right to fulfill major social functions.

Otherwise, the fact that sumptuary laws were a significant feature of the legislation of the early lawgivers (see above, page 35) leads us to suspect that the style of life celebrated by the aristocratic poets was just that which promoted resentment and bitterness among the rest of society, and so the aristocratic poets' insistence upon glorifying the habits and manners of their class emerges as something of a polemic against the increasing "vulgarization" of political and social life. Pittacus, for example, the tyrant of Mytilene, was especially remembered as the sponsor of laws against drunkenness; [63] Alcaeus was equally famous as a lover of wine. Now we must believe that it was not the drinking of wine, as such, which was objectionable in the early polis, but the extravagant and sometimes raucous gatherings of young aristocrats at which wine flowed especially freely. It is just such elegant parties which Alcaeus' poems on wine suggest, which emphasize the luxuriousness of the occasions: Alcaeus drinks from large ornamented cups (Z22), and with his head resting on a soft pillow (Z14).

The pursuit of love by these poets is equally refined and voluptuous. In the first place, there is quite an emphasis on homosexual love, of which both the practice and the subject were especially associated with the aristocratic way of life in this period. The tradition of Solon's legislation prohibiting pederasty among citizens (see above, page 34) may have been part of his effort to restrict aristocratic display. Some at least of the extant fragments of each of the poets under discussion refer to a homosexual love. The love-affairs of these poets, whether heterosexual or homosexual, are invariably pursued in cultivated gardens or rural sanctuaries, in an atmosphere of refined beauty and elegance:

> The Cyprian goddess [has found you] in good season, Damoanactidas; . . . beside the lovely olive-trees, . . . delights; when the gates of spring are opened . . . with ambrosia scented . . . . Alcaeus, P 26 (trans. D. L. Page)

A similar delicacy and elegance characterize Sappho's Fr. 94 (addressed to an absent girl) and Fr. 2, in which Aphrodite is summoned to appear in "a pleasant grove of apple-trees." The aristocratic outlook of Ibycus and Anacreon is reflected mostly in an exaggeration and amplification of the Lesbian emphasis on refinement and delicacy, which expresses itself in these two poets as highly-wrought artifice. Ibycus, for example, consistently employs the opening of blossoms in a carefully cultivated garden as a metaphor for the love-experience, and Anacreon's characterization of a young girl as a Thracian filly whom he wishes to "mount" is particularly famous as an example of risqué metaphor.

The attitude toward passion in the aristocratic poets especially distinguishes them from their bourgeois counterparts. For the idea of love as suffering, and, especially, of passion as dangerous, is entirely absent from these poets. This is

not to say that the aristocratic poets, and especially Sappho, do not flirt with such ideas — but in the end they are revealed as only one move in what is essentially a game of love. The famous *phainetai moi*, (Fr. 31), for example, which is the archetype for all subsequent expressions of the physical manifestations of *eros* in love-poetry, is structured around a tension between passion and control which has often been obscured by the omission of the last line of the poem: "But all must be endured, since . . ."(ἀλλὰ πᾶν τόλματον, ἐπεὶ . . .). [64] There is a playful tension in this poem between the passions aroused by love and the decorous restraint of aristocratic *eros*. The poem opens with a scene of lovers' dalliance, in which the tenderness of the girl and the fascination of the boy are the central elements of the picture: the boy sits and listens closely to the sweet voice and pleasant laughter of the girl; then the force of Sappho's passion, with its extreme physical manifestations, suddenly intrudes, but only to be checked by her a few lines later. Clearly, Sapphic love, famous though it was, was not the stormy violence of that destructive *eros* which we encounter in other Greek poetry. Its passion, though hyperbolically exaggerated, was always controlled. Similarly, in Sappho's first fragment the anguish of the poetess is regarded by Aphrodite (and hence by the poetess herself) with tender and amused indulgence (13–16). Her ability to smile at her own extremes of emotion reveal an attitude toward the pursuit of love which regards it as something of an amusement or diversion, and which is wholly consistent with other aspects of the aristocratic outlook which we have discussed. A short fragment of Anacreon reveals a similarly light-hearted attitude:

> Once more I am in love and not in love and
> both maddened and not mad. Fr. 428

For the aristocrats, then, love is a game, but it is a sport which is to be played only among the aristocrats themselves. Anacreon, as well as Sappho and Alcaeus, condemn love with whores (*pornai*). In Anacreon's satire on the ostentatious Artemon (Fr. 388), it is a mark of the latter's vulgarity and lower-class origins that he associated "with bread-sellers and volunteer prostitutes." Sappho disapproved of her brother's emancipation of an Egyptian courtesan; according to Herodotus, she "railed at him in a poem." [65] And we have a fragment of Alcaeus which claims that "anything given to a whore might just as well be tossed into the waves of the grey sea'' (F3 [b] 26 f.)

Women in these poems are beautiful goddesses and heroines, the wives, mothers and daughters of the gods and heroes, or else they are the idealizations of the aristocratic female "type": tall and stately, proud, slightly haughty, and cultured. In aristocratic as well as bourgeois poetry this type is symbolized by the mare. We have already referred to Anacreon's address to the Thracian filly; we should mention as well the comparison of the choral leaders in Alcman's *Partheneion* to thoroughbred and prizewinning mares. And Alcman too is very much an aristocratic poet, for he was associated with Sparta in that brief period in the seventh century when it was a flourishing and highly cultured aristocracy, and when there was a great influx of foreign poets and musicians. The women, like the men in these poems, appear exclusively at aristocratic feasts, in religious celebrations and in the dance; they inhabit a dreamlike world much like some of the fantasy lands in the *Odyssey*, where, as on the island of Aiolos,

> [The sons and daughters of
> Aiolos and their consorts]
> evermore beside their dear
> father and noble mother
> sit feasting; and beside them are
> lain assorted delicacies, and the
> house is fragrant with sacrifice
> and resounds with
> the echo of their celebrations in
> the courtyard all day long.
> But at night they lie down once
> more beside their wedded wives in
> beds strewn with coverlets and with
> bored bedsteads.
> 10.8–12

This idealization of aristocratic manners and the creation of a fantasy-world of peace and harmony, was the aristocratic counter to the progressive spirit of the times; their world of sensuality and beauty was an answer to the stark political realities of the day. In such a context the emphasis on women's beauty and sexual appeal, and the lack of any expression of misogyny, cannot legitimately be construed as either an indication of women's favorable position or of the aristocratic poets' favorable attitude toward them. For it is evident that women's social role was of no concern to these poets. Although we may perhaps infer from the interest in romantic love a certain greater degree of sexual freedom for women, there is no indication anywhere in lyric poetry that aristocratic women participated any

more (or less) in public life than their later counterparts. And certainly any liberties which they were allowed were a bonus deriving from the prominence and wealth of their fathers, brothers or husbands. Only to the extent, then, that we say that women were limited in their social function to the sexual partners of men, can we say that they were honored in aristocratic society. And since even this deference is paid to them as part of a program of idealizing the aristocratic way of life, it cannot be interpreted as a true representation of the mores or the values of the times.

If we consider briefly the circle of Sappho, whose existence has suggested to many that women in aristocratic society occupied a "higher" position than their later counterparts in Athenian society, I do not think that we shall find anything to contradict the assertions we have just made. It is difficult to define the exact nature of this circle, but since it was frequented by girls only during a brief interval between childhood and marriage, it is perhaps most analogous to a finishing school. Its existence is nevertheless testimony to the high degree of culture and independence in the life of aristocratic women, and suggests a favorable contrast with the largely uncultured and home-keeping life of the fifth-century Athenian woman. We should be wary, however, of making inferences like that of Rostovtzeff: [66] "Women did not play that part in the life of Athens in the fifth century which they had played when Greece and Ionia were ruled by aristocracies." For aside from the fact that such contrasts depend upon an overly and incorrectly negative evaluation of the fifth-century woman's status, the existence of Sappho's circle does not imply a larger role in the public life of Mytilene for its members. Quite the contrary, Sappho's group is quite self-consciously outside of ordinary political and social life. And we should not forget that the disapproval of intelligent women which we find voiced by characters in fifth-century literature [67] is part of a general hostility to intellectual sophistication.[68] What we can infer from the existence of a group like that of Sappho in seventh-century Mytilene is evidence of an atmosphere in which the pursuit of culture and the leisured life which the wealth and prestige of their families allowed women, was not only tolerated but encouraged. This has been a feature of aristocratic life and mores in all cultures in every era, and carries no implication that aristocratic society either consciously or unconsciously accepted the principle of women's basic equality with men. We do not lack a voice enjoining women from competition with men even among antiquity's female practitioners of the "masculine" art of poetry:

> I myself reproach
> Myrtis, lovely-voiced
> though she is, because
> she entered into
> rivalry with Pindar, though
> she was born a woman.
> Corinna of Boeotia, 664 (a)

On the other hand, it is the case that in just the conditions of aristocratic life, in which all members of the upper class are freed from the burden of daily toil, a radically different style of life for men and women seems least rational and least necessary. In such circles, therefore, life styles of men and women are likely to gravitate toward one another; and it is no accident that the basis for Plato's equality of men and women in the *Republic* was a division of labor in society as a whole much like that which prevailed in the early aristocracy.

Aristocratic poetry, then, romanticizes women and the love-relationship as part of its idealization of an age prior to the one of chaos and struggle in which aristocratic domination of society was swept away. It is a kind of propaganda which associates peace and harmony between the classes and sexes with a period when the aristocratic monopoly of society assured the stability of values and customs. Similarly, the seemingly higher status of the women of this period was, in the first place, an incidental benefit accruing to them from their class position and, in the second place, consisted not in a greater role in public life but in the freedom to lead a more civilized and cultured private life.

The "bourgeois" poets (as we have designated those figures whose life or whose work reflected the problems of the emerging middle-class state) were acutely aware of their society as an order born out of chaos and struggle. Their response to the turbulence of their times was not to oppose to it a fantasy world of peace and harmony, in the manner of the aristocratic lyric poets, but to see in the social and political upheaval which surrounded them the model of the world itself, in which struggle was constant and success never sure. This group includes philosophers as well as poets, in whose works there is represented a great diversity of themes, as well as a variety of genres. In our discussion, we shall concentrate primarily on those poets whose works have direct relevance to an evaluation of the attitude toward women. We shall therefore just briefly characterize some of the other aspects of the bourgeois outlook.

The mutability of fate, the caprice of fortune, life's frustrations and the constant necessity of toil are the themes of these bourgeois poets. A spirit of pessimism, which runs as an undercurrent throughout all of this poetry, especially distinguishes the bourgeois from the aristocratic attitude. This is not to say that the poets whose basic outlook was

aristocratic were not deeply disturbed by the turmoil of their times, and that they did not acutely feel the need for struggle and conflict. On the contrary, we saw in Alcaeus a hostility to certain political developments of his time that was certainly heartfelt, and the poem of his often called "the ship of state" clearly expresses a genuine concern and feeling of helplessness. But what especially characterizes the aristocratic attitude is the tendency to turn one's back on the troubled world of reality, and find in the world of aristocratic manners and ideals an "answer" to the problems of the day. The bourgeois poets deliberately focus on the chaos of their times, and derive from it a philosophy which defines the world itself as hostile, its gods as inscrutable, and the only safe course one of moderation and compromise. Solon of Athens was, of course, the great example of the thinker who combined a deep sense of pessimism with an ability to see in a policy of moderation and balance the possibility of ultimate redemption. As his poetry expresses this conviction, so his constitution was the concrete realization of these ideals. Hesiod's *Theogony* celebrated the final emergence of order and peace out of strife and chaos by means of Zeus' policy of compromise. Other philosophers of this period like Anaximander and Anaximenes sought to explain the dynamics of the world order; the world for them was not a static and unchanging harmony, like the magical realm of the gods and heroes, but a system which was constantly being transformed, in which stability was only an ultimate fact, invisible in the constant whirl of the cycles of nature. [69] The warring of opposites is a particularly prominent feature in the poetry as well as the philosophy of this period. Both Anaximander and the later Empedocles made pairs of opposites a feature of their cosmologies; and in the Pythagoreans this tendency evolved into a fundamental dualism which produced, among other ideas, the Table of Opposites.

The biographies of these poets and philosophers are as diverse as their works; some of them, like Solon or Archilochus, were aristocrats by birth, but found themselves, by choice or necessity, casting their lot with the émigrés, colonists, peasants or other social groups who together made up the new middle class. Simonides of Ceos was a "court poet," but rendered his services not to a tyrant whose court was a preserve of aristocratic mores, like that of Polycrates, but to the Peisistratids, one of the most progressive tyrannies in a city-state which was at that time the most progressive in the Greek world. In contrast to the aristocrats like Alcaeus and Theognis who deplored the new power of money and lamented the debasement of the nobility by the influx of *nouveaux riches*, Simonides (in the famous Fr. 4, discussed by Socrates in the *Protagoras*) gave a new definition to the ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός which recognized nobility as a moral virtue rather than the prerogative of a single social class acquired by birth; and so far from lamenting the new power of money, Simonides was quick to turn the situation to his own profit, and became famous as the first poet to write for money.[70] In the case of another poet such as Archilochus, the details of his biography themselves make up an anti-aristocratic polemic. His famous boasting claim to have saved his skin at the expense of his shield (Fr. 6) has a parallel in Alcaeus (Z105b) but, according to what we can determine from the corrupt fragment, Alcaeus forewent Archilochus' defiant inversion of the warrior's code. Archilochus' small and bandy-legged general, whom he prefers (in Fr. 60) to the conventional aristocratic type, expresses similar scorn for traditional values, as does his dismissal (in Fr. 64) of the hero's ideal of the noble and glorious death.

As we might expect, the attitude toward women in the bourgeois poets is quite different from what we found to be the aristocratic view. For one thing, it is far more complex. The portrayal of women in aristocratic lyric can be summarized simply as an idealization of the sexual and procreative aspects of woman, whether on the divine or the human level. Bourgeois poetry both praises and condemns women, and for a variety of reasons. The picture of women which this poetry offers is full of contradictions—but they are contradictions which correspond with ambivalences in the world view and in the social philosophy of the bourgeois poets.

The willingness of the bourgeois poets to relate directly to the realities of the world around them results in a kind of poetry which is altogether realistic, whether on a somewhat mundane or elevated level. Satire and lampoon appear as a genre of bourgeois poetry, and one of its earliest targets is woman—individual women and women seen as a class apart. Archilochus and Hipponax, like the aristocratic poets, portray love-affairs in their poetry; but Archilochus and Hipponax are both involved with real women, who have names (Neobule and Arete), and who involve the poets in conflicts which have to do directly with the everyday realities of social life. [71] The aristocratic poets, we recall, were in love with nameless, godlike beauties, whose favors they courted in a dreamlike world of peace and luxury.

Semonides of Amorgos was also an iambic poet, and according to tradition turned his art to the service of his personal hostilities. But he is most famous to us as the author of a long diatribe against women. This tirade against women divides them into types, each associated with a particular animal. The poem has obvious affinities with Hesiod's elaborate simile in the *Theogony* (592–599), which compares women to the drones in a beehive, and men to the busy bees, and which is our earliest example of misogynistic poetry. In Semonides, however, the bee is associated with the good woman:

> To her alone no blame is attached,
> but life flourishes and

prospers under her care.
Fr. 7, 84–85

As in Hesiod, woman's sexuality is maligned; an interest in sex appears as part of the complaint against two of the ten types: the donkey-woman "who'll sleep with anyone" (48–49) and the weasel-woman "who is always crazy to make love" (53). Furthermore, one of the distinguishing features of the good woman, descended from the bee, is that she

does not take pleasure in
sitting among the women
when they are discussing
sex.
Fr. 7, 90–91

Another prominent complaint against women in Semonides' poem, and one which figures importantly in Hesiod's condemnation of women, is their laziness. This complaint is voiced against several types, the mud-woman, the donkey-woman, and especially the mare-woman. The latter animal, as we mentioned in our discussion of aristocratic poetry, is the bestial representative of the type of the aristocratic woman. Her laziness is not so much a matter of a slothful character, as of a contemptuous disdain for household drudgery:

She maneuvers her way
around the slavish and
troublesome housework,
and wouldn't put a finger to
the mill, or so much as lift the
sieve, or sweep the dirt out of
the house,
or go into the kitchen,
for fear she'll get dirty.
Fr. 7, 58–61

The prominence of this type of complaint against women is certainly part of the bourgeois polemic against aristocratic luxury (and the legislation against such extravagance is testimony to the importance of the issue), and indicates as well a tendency to associate the participation of women in social life and their freedom from daily household chores with the prodigality of the aristocratic class rather than to view it as a neutral issue. Not only, therefore, is misogyny itself a *topos* peculiar to bourgeois poetry, but certain ways in which it is expressed are specifically class-determined.

The second fragment of Phocylides, in which women are divided into types associated with animals, in the manner of Semonides' diatribe, with the bee-type outstanding for her virtue, makes it clear that by the sixth century not only was misogyny established as a *topos* of Greek poetry, but that it already had associated with it a particular set of conventions. It contrasts with the romanticism of aristocratic Greek lyric in the same way that the Medieval Romances, written by court poets, were opposed to the "writings of bourgeois inspiration, which attacked women with malignancy: fables, comedies and lays charged them with laziness, coquetry and lewdness."[72] Such satire and lampoon in the Middle Ages were, however, the merest superficial manifestation of an altogether serious debate concerning the Christian life, in which the demands of the spirit are opposed to those of the flesh, and woman is associated with the seductive enticements of the latter. This debate took the form especially of a controversy over the value and place of marriage in the Christian life.[73]

A similar contrast can be observed in the Greek literature of our period, in which the misogyny of Hesiod, Semonides or Phocylides reflects a far more serious strain of thought which assimilated the differentiation of the social roles of male and female to the polarities whose opposition defined the world-order. So, in the Pythagorean Table of Opposites, the female is associated with the boundless, dark, and bad, etc., and the male with limit, light, and good, etc. Such a dichotomy is already visible in Hesiod's *Theogony*, which presented the progress of history and civilization in terms of a triumph of the male over the female forces. But this was only the first example of a long tradition which persists throughout the history of Greek literature. In the Homeric Hymn to Delphian Apollo, for example, the successful establishment of Apollo's oracle depends upon his defeat of the Pytho, by which he establishes his preeminence over the spring Telphousa, the older, female, and more established deity of the region, who had sent Apollo to meet the dragon. The story of the foundation of Apollo's oracle has within it another tale of conflict between god and goddess, a tale which displays suggestive affinities with the succession-myth in the *Theogony*. This story of strife between male and female deities reverses the Hesiodic succession, since it presumes the successful

establishment of the kingship of Zeus, and is initiated by Hera's anger at the birth of Athena, which occurred in the last part of the *Theogony*. This birth represents, in the Homeric Hymn as in Hesiod, an interruption of the normal procreative relationship between the male and female, and the male god's assumption of the female's potency. Also as in Hesiod, the female goddess is identified with the impulse to destruction and with the chthonic powers. The male deity is victorious over the theriomorphic symbol of chaos and disorder which is called into being by the female. An era of peace and prosperity is immediately consequent upon the final victory of the male god—the reign of Zeus itself which is the background for the sub-story in the Hymn, or the establishment of Apollo's oracle in the main story. The fact that, as we have mentioned already, the female is represented as beneficent when her creative potential is subjected to the regulatory power of the male, is highly important. For it forms the basis of another tradition in Greek literature—one which commends the faithful wife and mother, and finds in her an outstanding example of moral virtue. To understand the meaning of this tradition, we must discuss it in the context of the bourgeois poets' attitude toward love, *eros*.

We have mentioned in connection with our discussion of aristocratic love-poetry the fact that what especially differentiates this poetry from the bourgeois type is a concentration in the latter on the suffering which love involves, and on the violent and destructive character of *eros*. We mentioned that the aristocratic poets, and especially Sappho, flirted, as it were, with the idea of love as suffering. But the idea of love as anguish, and, especially, as violent and dangerous, especially dominates bourgeois love-poetry and mythology. And just as we discovered in the aristocratic poets' romanticization of the love-relationship a tendency to idealize women, so do we find in the stories of violent and destructive love of the bourgeois poets an inclination to associate women with this passion. Part of Stesichorus' famous innovatory treatment of the old myths, for example, consisted in a retelling of the stories of Helen and Clytemnestra which stressed the immorality of these women, and which called them a curse to their father (Tyndareus—the story of Helen's divine birth is suppressed), "married twice and three times, and husband-deserters all" (Fr. 223). In his story of the Trojan War Aphrodite was apparently far more prominent as the originator of the strife than in the *Iliad* (which only alludes to the judgment of Paris at XXIV.25 ff. and otherwise focusses on Alexander's violation of the guest-friend relation as the cause of the war). Stesichorus was probably the originator of the tradition which made Clytemnestra alone responsible for the death of Agamemnon (a treatment of the myth which similarly contrasts with the Homeric exoneration of Clytemnestra).

The converse of this disposition to condemn women for adulterous transgressions was a corresponding tendency to use faithful women as examples of moral probity. We saw the beginning of this trend in Homer, in his romanticization of the relationship between Hector and Andromache, and in his presentation of Penelope's character. One of the few long fragments of the poet Simonides portrays Danae afloat at sea in a chest with her infant son Perseus (Fr. 12). There is evident in Simonides' description a real appreciation of the tender love of mother for child, and in addition, Danae's apology in the final lines of the fragment, for possible presumptuousness in her prayer to Zeus, is intended to commend her to us as a model of endurance and moral probity in the face of possible disaster.

It is evident, then, that the view of love as destructive, and the association of women with the violence of passion, is an aspect of the bourgeois world-view which focussed on chaos and associated women with the destructive forces in the universe. But as in the world at large the presentation of the goddesses who regulate the seasons (Horai) and who betoken social stability (Dike, Eunomia), as the daughters of Zeus, signified the beneficence of the female potency when it was regulated by the male principle of order, so in the everyday world of social reality did the ideal of the virtuous wife and mother represent the potentially destructive and violent power of *eros* (which is associated with the woman) subordinated to the regulatory agency of the family structure.

The attitude of the bourgeois poets toward women, then, was profoundly affected by their tendency to accept the reality of the struggle and chaos of their world, and to generalize it into a condition of existence. For the polarity of the male and female roles in their culture, which assigned to the female the office of procreation and nourishment, and to the male that of achievement and ambition, led these poets to assimilate this opposition, in an exaggerated form, to the metaphysical polarities which governed the world order.

This ideological polarity, which identified women with passion in the love-relationship, with the family in all social relationships, and with the chaotic in the world-order, was a product of the social and political structure of the polis, in which women were recognized as an aspect of men's existence rather than as existants in their own right. However, just as we discovered that the polis did in fact accomplish some movement toward the acceptance of women as full human beings, and as such represented an advance over the aristocratic state, so do we find in bourgeois poetry, even of the misogynistic variety, a recognition of women's claim to full human status. For the perception of women as a threat, and the hostility toward them as sexual beings, implicitly expects them to assert their claims in these regards, and implicitly understands the need to justify the prevailing order against such claims. In the Homeric Hymn

to Delphian Apollo, Hera appears as a powerful and formidable foe to Zeus, conscious of her own prerogatives, jealous of their usurpation by Zeus, and altogether capable of retaliation. Only the most thoroughgoing romantic will oppose to this portrait the ideal of aristocratic womanhood, with its dream-like perfection, its glorification of the submissive, yielding aspect of the female, and claim that the latter betokens a greater respect for women. For in fact, the favorable portrait of woman's role which we find in aristocratic poetry is no more than an idealization of her sexual and procreative function in which she remains, as she was in bourgeois poetry, an aspect of life in general—in this case of the luxurious life of the aristocrat. The bourgeois attitude, insofar as it perceives women as a powerful political threat, recognizes their reality as a social and political force. By its very resistance to the idea of women's full incorporation into political and social life, bourgeois ideology undermines its own ideal of human dignity—that of a legally and socially free and independent individual. The very heights of the aspirations toward human freedom and dignity which were first given expression in the middle-class democracy of the city-state there collided most violently with the reality of the partial and incomplete emancipation of the majority of the population. And to the extent that, in any given society, the nature of the relation of man to woman especially reveals the most basic truths about the level of human and social development, then the inferior position of woman in the Greek city-state, for all that it was a vast improvement over what had been, must be understood as the great stumbling-block to the true realization of the democratic ideal. We need look no further than the early fourth century, to the *Ecclesiazusae* of Aristophanes and the *Republic* of Plato, to understand that the Greeks themselves were conscious of the disparity between the ideal of human freedom and the reality of women's inferior status in the city-state. And yet it is unfortunately true that, as Plato and Aristophanes perceived, the only solution possible at that relatively primitive level of economic and historical development, was to purchase freedom for some at the expense of the enslavement of others. Praxagora's revolutionary program includes leaving all labor to "the slaves" (hoi douloi-651), and ensuring as well that sexual intercourse ceases to cross class lines:

> no - let [the slave girls]
> sleep only beside slaves.
> 723

The new gynokratic state will realize the fantasy world of the Aeolians (described above, page 41 f.), for

> [the citizen's] only concern will be
> to arrive on time for
> luxuriating at the
> dinner-table. 651–652

In Plato's *Republic*, as we have already remarked, the division of labor and the class structure approximated closely the social and political arrangements of the early aristocracy. The basic humanism of Plato's impulses has been distorted into a totalitarian program which most tragically betrays that which is most noble and enduring the heritage of ancient Greece — the longing for a freedom that is grounded in social relationships, a freedom which is no mere libertinism or anarchism, but which finds its expression in the constitution of society as a union of free, yet mutually interdependent, individuals.

We have sought in this article to demonstrate that the study of women's position especially offers a most searching and most profound commentary on the nature of social and political life in ancient Greece. Since, as Aristotle perceived, the relation of man to woman is at once the most natural and the most elementary form of association, it is therefore a paradigm of all social relationships. It follows that, whenever the nature of man as a social being is under consideration, the position of women will be directly relevant. Women's role will be justified or repudiated, idealized or depreciated—in each case something of the thinker's basic attitude about social life in general will be revealed. This is true for our own time no less than it was for the Greeks. And if the understanding of the past is truly, as is claimed, the revelation of the present, then we may hope that such efforts as this have, in some small way, increased our understanding of our own historical moment.

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Notes

1 Victor Ehrenberg, in "When did the *Polis* rise?", JHS 57 (1937), 147–159, discusses especially' the inscriptions dealing with the constitution of the Chians, and dates the appearance of the polis in the Greek world to the eighth century.

2 George Calhoun, "The Homeric Picture," *A Companion to Homer* (ed. Wace and Stubbins), New York (1963), 431–452; appended to this article is a piece by T.
B. L. Webster, "Historical Commentary," which attempts to rebut some of the claims of Finley regarding the "outlook" of the poems (see below, note 3).

3 M. I. Finley, *Early Greece: the Bronze and Archaic Ages* (London, 1970), 84–85. Finley recapitulates in this work (and elsewhere) the view which he first set forth in *The World of Odysseus* (New York, 1954), to wit, that a comparison of the evidence offered by the Linear B tablets with that in the Homeric poems demonstrates that the outlook of the poems is early Dark-Age, not Mycenean.

4 Werner Jaeger, "Tyrtaeus on True Arete," *Five Essays* (Montreal, 1966), 121.

5 J. T. Kakridis, *"Meleagria," Philologus* 90 (1935), 1–25, where he first discusses the "scale of affections," and *"Hectoreia," Hermes* 72 (1937), 171–189, where it is applied to the scene between Hector and Andromache.

6 We note that although the poems contain ample evidence of the incorporation of concubines and their children into the same household with the "wedded wife," at several points it is admitted that such a practice is not consistent with marital love and with a husband's respect for his wife: Phoenix reports that his father, by loving a concubine, "dishonored his wife" (IX.450); and we are told that Laertes did not sleep with Eurykleia, "and so avoided the wrath of his wife" (1.433).

7 Arete recognizes Odysseus' clothes in 7.234–235 as the ones which "she herself with her serving-women had fashioned." And the Linear B tablets, which provide us with evidence of the significant number of female slaves, indicate as well that carding, spinning and weaving were the women's occupations.

8 Finley, *The World of Odysseus*, rev. ed. (London, 1956), 149.

9 This passage was athetized by Aristarchus on the grounds that it is unfitting for Andromache "to compete with Hector's generalship" (antistrategein).

10 See W. K. Lacey, "Homeric *HEDNA* and Penelope's *KYRIOS*," JHS 86 (1966), 55–68, and M. I. Finley, "Marriage Sale and Gift in the Homeric World," *Révue int. des droits de l'antiquité*, ser. 3 vol. II (Brussels, 1955), 167–194.

11 Dem. 42.27 and the note *ad loc.* in Murray's (Loeb) edition: "After the death of her husband a woman might return to the house of her kyrios . . . or, if there were children, she might live with them in her husband's house. In this case the marriage portion became the property of the son. In return he was bound to give his mother maintenance."

12 *World,* 150.

13 Donald Richter, in "The Position of Women in Classical Athens," *Classical Journal of the Midwestern States*, (1971), 1–8 has made a thorough review of most of the evidence. He has corrected the erroneous picture of the Athenian wife as a harem prisoner, although in this he has done little more than Gomme and Kitto, who in 1925 and 1951 (respectively) composed polemics against the view that women were held in contempt by Athenians of the fifth century. From a modern vantage point, we would hardly consider decisive the arguments of Gomme and Kitto that the position of Athenian women differed but little from that of women in modern times. For, as women and men have become newly aware in recent years, such a claim hardly argues for a very high position of woman in the classical era in Athens. But these scholars were countering a tendency to sentimentalize terribly the Homeric and aristocratic periods, and to wax indignant over the shortcomings of Athenian democracy. It is somewhat more surprising to find a scholar of our own period making a statement such as the following: "There is, of course, a healthy strain of misogyny and misogamy running through Greek literature, especially that of the Lyric age." Richter seems to feel that hostility toward women, when it is not so extreme as to strain the limits of gentility, is not only normal, but altogether acceptable. Clearly, the whole question still awaits analysis by a scholar who is free, not only of Victorian taste, but of simple prejudice.

14 See Margaret O. Wason, *Class Struggles in Ancient Greece* (London, 1947) for a discussion of the development of iron in antiquity from both a sociological and metallurgical point of view. She concludes that "the importance of iron was not its superiority to other metals. Its fundamental importance was this. It revolutionized productive methods. For the first time metal was available in considerable quantities and at a low cost, and without long, laborious and expensive transport." (28).

15 The employment of slaves on a large scale in this period is much debated; the reader is referred to M. I. Finley, *Slavery in Classical Antiquity: Views and Controversies* (London, 1960).

16 In 1.394 ff. Telemachus admits that there are many other men in Ithaca besides himself who might be entitled to the kingship.

17 See especially Leocritus' threats in 2.245 ff.

18 Hesiod depicts the sad fate of the man who has no children:

He doesn't lack for livelihood while he lives, but when he dies remote kinsmen *(cherestai)* divide up his property.
Th. 605–607

And Homer confirms this picture; for when the only sons of the old man Phainops are slain by Diomedes, the poet remarks:

To their father was left mourning and bitter sorrows, since he did not welcome them home alive from the battle; and remote kinsmen (*cherestai*) divided up his property.
V.156–158

Plutarch reports that "before the time of Solon it was not allowed [to dispose of property by will], but it was necessary for the *chremata* and the *oikos* to remain in the clan (*genos*) of the deceased" (*Sol.* 21.2).

19 *Politics* 1265b 13.

20 *Ath. Pol.* 6.2.

21 See Aristotle *Ath. Pol.* 2 and Plutarch *Sol.* 13. The precise mechanics of this process have been discovered by Woodhouse, *Solon the Liberator* (London, 1938). Woodhouse there proposes the thesis that a form of contract called "sale with option of redemption . . . came into use in Attika before the time of Solon, and that it was in fact by this means that the noble families of early Attika had by Solon's time succeeded in bringing under their control perhaps the majority of the holdings of the peasantry of their day, and not the holdings alone, but also, by the operation of the law of personal security for loans, the bodies of a large number of the peasants themselves" (97). This practice, Woodhouse says, applied only to family allotments in the seventh century. Woodhouse's interpretation is accepted by, among others, Gregory Vlastos in his article "Solonian Justice," *CP* 41 (1946), 65–83; see note 57, p. 73, where the article by Napthali Lewis ("Solon's Agrarian Legislation," *AJP* 62 [1941], 144–156) is also mentioned.

22 See above, note 18.

23 *Rhet.* 1361a 21–22; G. de Ste. Croix's article, "Some Observations on the Property Rights of Athenian Women," *CR* 20 no. 3 n.s. (1970) has corrected the misleading assertion of A. R. W. Harrison (in *The Law of Athens: the Family and Property* [Oxford, 1968]) that "a woman's capacity . . . to own either chattels or land was on all fours with that of a man who was of age [subject to certain unimportant limitations"] (236).

24 This law is quoted, explained, and attributed to Solon in Dem. 44.64 and 67–68.

25 Starting with this period, Athens was an importer of grain. See G. Calhoun, *The Business Life of Ancient Athens* (Chicago, 1926), 21 ff. and 43 ff., and A. R. Burn, *The Lyric Age of Greece* (New York, 1960), 294: "Corn for sale must therefore be sold in Attica at a price which Attic consumers could pay, no matter what higher price might have been obtained oversea."

26 Plut., *Sol.* 22.1., cf. Michell, *Economics of Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, 1940): "So marked was the superiority of Attic pottery that craftsmen from Ionia and the islands betook themselves to Athens, and it is more than probable that most of the Attic potters were in reality Metics." (296–297).

27 "The victory of the Athenian potters was overwhelming. . . Not long after 600 Attic products began to appear in Naucratis, etc. ..... and by the middle of the sixth
century they had penetrated everywhere, and the great Etrurian market was in the hands of a monopoly which they held undisputed for a century," Michell, *op. cit.*, 296.

28 "The burden of indebtedness was of course no new or recent experience of men in the Attika of those years But the situation had been aggravated within the
two or three generations immediately before Solon's time by the transition from natural economy to money economy based on a metal currency," Woodhouse, *op. cit.*, 136.

29 In which the mina = 100 drachmas.

30 In which the mina = 70 drachmas.

31 A. French, *The Growth of the Athenian Economy* (London, 1965), 25. And further: "The sudden appearance of Athenian pottery in western sites which had hitherto shown only Corinthian ware suggests that the pots were taken along the usual trade-routes by Corinthian shippers, and the implied increase in commercial cooperation between Corinth and Athens is consistent with Solon's measure to put out an Athenian coinage on the Corinthian standard."

32 V. Ehrenberg, *From Solon to Socrates* (London, 1968), 64.

33 *Ath. Pol.* 9.1

34 Dem. 21.45.

35 It should be remarked that a great deal of controversy surrounds the question of the exact meaning of the word *ephesis*, here translated as "appeal": see esp. H. J. Wolff, "The Origin of Judicial Legislation Among the Greeks," *Traditio* 4 (1946), 31–87.

36 *Oikos* included the land and buildings on which family life took place.

37 As in his discussion of the laws on adultery (p. 38) or on the dowry (p. 46).

38 "Marriage Law and Family Organization in Ancient Athens," *Traditio* 2 (1944), 43–95; "Die Grundlagen des Griechischen Eherechts," *Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis* 20 (1952), 1–29, 157–163.

39 See Lysias 30 (against Nichomachus).

40 The recent edition of the fragments of Solon's laws by Eberhard Ruschenbusch, *SOLONOS NOMOI* (Wiesbaden, 1966), argues, especially against the contrary assertions by C. A. Hignett (in *An History of the Athenian Constitution* (Oxford, 1952), that "the ancient tradition regarding the laws of the axones is relatively trustworthy" (58). Ruschenbusch is especially cautious in his use of the orators and the comic poets as evidence for the tradition of Solonian laws, although he does accept in some cases the testimony of Demosthenes. In the following pages, we shall be somewhat less restrictive in our application of the designation "Solonian" to laws which, as they are transmitted to us, must date from a later period than that of the Solonian codification, but nevertheless represent provisions that clearly accord with the intent of Solon's reforms.

41 This law is attributed to "the lawgiver" *(nomothetes)* and some parts of its provisions are late (especially that which completely excludes illegitimate children, explicitly dated to the archonship of Eucleides in 403), but it is in the main the law of Solon, who was traditionally understood to be the originator of the "laws about inheritances *(kleroi)* and heiresses *(epikleroi),*" as Aristotle calls them in the *Ath. Pol.* (9.2).

42 The rule about the limitation on women's and minors' ability to make legally valid contracts above the value of one *medimnos* is actually introduced by way of an explanation for a minor's (and hence a woman's) inability to make a will: "For it is not possible for a minor to make a will. For the law explicitly forbids a minor or a woman to make a contract for more than one *medimnos* of barley" (Isaeus 10.10).

43 Lévi-Strauss, *Les Structures élémentaires de la parenté,* quoted in de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York, 1953), 65.

44 See note 38.

45 *Ibid.*, 49.

46 See above, note 24.

47 Isaeus 6.44.

48 Dem. 44.33–42.

49 Aeschines 1.14: "[The lawgiver] has imposed the heaviest penalties if anyone procures a free-born boy or a woman."

50 Athenaeus in the *Deipnosophistae* 569d–e reports this and quotes a fragment of Philemon, a comic poet of the late fourth century: But you discovered a universal law:
For they say that you, Solon, were the first to perceive
this democratic principle and safeguard, by Zeus —
and it "fits in well" for me to say this,
Solon — when you saw that the city was
full of young men and that they were
under nature's compulsion and so
were doing wrong in prohibited
quarters,
you brought women and set them up in
various areas, so that they were all
prepared and ready for all comers.
2.479 (Kock)

51 Dem. 59.87: "Whenever a man has caught the adulterer, let it not be allowed for the man who has caught him to continue living with his wife; if he does so, let him be disbarred from citizenship (*atimos*). And let it not be permitted for the wife with whom the adulterer was caught to enter into the public sacrifices; if she does, let her suffer whatever she might suffer, except death, with impunity." Aeschines 1.183–185 attributes the law to Solon.

52 Plut., *Sol.* 23.1.

53 *Ibid.*

54 There is a question as to whether a restriction on the dowry proper (*proix*) is meant: while Plutarch mentions *phernai*, which can mean either dowry or bridal gift (see Eur. *Med.* 956) rather than *proix* which always means dowry after Homer, he also uses the term *epipheresthai* which is regularly applied to the dowry (see Dem. 40.19). Erdmann, in *Die Ehe im alten Griechenland* (Munich, 1934), 223–224, thinks that this restriction "stands in such complete contradiction to the just-cited principles [about dowries] that we do not make any mistake if we see in this regulation an order about funeral gifts." Wolff (*op. cit.* 58) insists that bridal gifts, as opposed to the dowry proper, must be meant, especially since Plutarch mentions in 21.4 restrictions on funeral gifts: "a suppression of the *proix* in the true sense would have been contrary to its social function."

55 Plut., *Sol.* 21.4–5 and Dem. 43.62.

56 Aeschines 1.6–12.

57 Plut. *Sol.* 22.3: "[Solon] arranged for the council of the Areopagus to look into the source of each man's livelihood (*epitedeia*) and to punish the unemployed (*tous argous*)."

58 See Harrison, *op. cit.,* 148–149 and 184 ff. for succession- and marriage-laws governing metics; see 196, 199 for marriage laws applying to freedmen.

59 See Harrison, *op. cit.,* 13 ff. and Wolff, "Marriage Law," 69ff; the details are too complex to present here, since they involve an elaborate web of inferences based on a good deal of indirect evidence.

59*a* The Panathenaic Procession, especially, which was instituted in all likelihood during the sixth century, recognized and celebrated the importance to the state of the contributions of those groups—women and metics above all—who did not participate in the state as full citizens.

59*b* It should be remarked that the terms "private property" and "bourgeois class" are, strictly speaking, only applicable to certain institutions which exist under that economic form known as capitalism. It is only by analogy that such terms can be applied to the ancient world, in which capitalism did not exist. Marx discusses the economic forms of the ancient world (Greek, Roman and Oriental) in a section of the *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen*

Okonomie * (written in 1857–8, but only first published in Moscow in 1939–41) which is entitled "Formen die der Kapitalistischen Production vorhergehen." This section is published separately in English as *Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations*, trans. J. Cohen, ed. and intro. E. J. Hobsbawn (International Publishers, 1965). In this work, Marx mentions the "error of "philologists who speak of the existence of *capital* in classical antiquity, and of Greek and Roman capitalists. ..... Were the term capital to be applicable to classical
antiquity—though the word does not actually occur among the ancients—then the nomadic hordes with their flocks on the steppes of Central Asia would be the greatest capitalists, for the original meaning of the word capital is cattle." *op. cit.,* 118–119. A more modern scholar who discusses the inapplicability of the term "capitalism" to the ancient world is H. Bolkestein, *Economic Life in Greece's Golden Age*, rev. and annot. E. J. Jonkers (Leiden, 1958). I shall make use of the terms "private property" and "bourgeois" nonetheless, since as applied to the ancient world they do properly designate certain institutions or developments which, when they occurred at a later historical period (namely, that of the late feudal era), did result in the creation of private property, the bourgeois class, and capitalism.

60 Sappho and Alcaeus are cited according to the numbering of the fragments in Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus* (Oxford, 1959); the rest of the Greek lyric poets are cited from D. L. Page, *Poeti Melici Graeci* (Oxford, 1962); the elegiac and iambic poets are quoted from Diehl; *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca,* rev. Beutler (Leipzig, 1949, 1952).

61 Limitations of space prohibit a full discussion of Alcaeus' political views, or the citation of poems illustrating his outlook. Readers are referred to Page, *S & A* (see note above), for this information, and to A. Andrewes, *The Greek Tyrants* (New York, 1963) for a discussion of the political situation in Mytilene at this time.

62 Page, *S & A*, 130 ff.

63 Aristotle reports that he instituted a severer penalty for crimes committed while drunk (*Pol.* 1274b 4).

64 On the translation as well as the transmission of this incomplete line, see Page's commentary in *S & A ad loc.* The line just before this one has been recently completed by the discovery of a new papyrus fragment: see D. A. Campbell, *Greek Lyric Poetry* (New York, 1967) for the text and notes.

65 2.135.

66 In *Greece* (New York, 1963), 176.

67 E.g. by Hippolytus in Euripides' play (640 ff.).

68 See Euripides' *Bacchae*, 395 ff. and *passim*.

69 See G. Vlastos, "Equality and Justice in Early Greek Cosmologies," *CP* 42 (1947), 156–178.

70 Pindar, in *Isth.* 2.10, speaks of a time when the Muse was not yet "a money-grubbing professional" (οὐδ' ἐργάτις) and the scholiast refers this to Simonides who, he says, "began the practice of composing epinicians for wages."

71 Note that it matters not at all whether Neobule or Arete *actually* existed and were amorously involved with the respective poets; the important fact is that the beloved, whether real or imagined, is portrayed realistically by both poets.

72 De Beauvoir, *op. cit.,* 96.

73 E.g. the *dissuasio Valerii ad Rufinum philosophum ne uxorem ducat* (ca. 1190), in Walter Map's collection of anecdotes *De nugis curialium*.