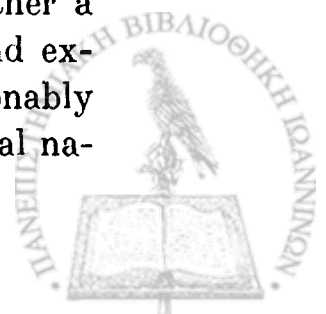


EMMANUEL M. PAPAMICHAEL

AVERSION TO AND HATRED OF WOMEN

In the *Theogony* as well as in the *Works and Days* of Hesiod we find some characteristic ideas that help us to understand why the attitude of a number of ancient Greeks towards women was not so favourable. What Hesiod tells us about woman's nature is presumably not so much his own view, which may well have been based on personal experience. Of greater importance is the fact that this view seems to have been more or less a general belief of the society in which he lived. The *Theogony* and the *Works and Days* are in reality conceptual systems which are intended to explain things beyond individual experience. At least they tacitly claim to offer objective explanations by means of *αἴτια* about the world and its *phaenomena*. The myth appears to be Hesiod's starting point, from which he sets out to reach his *τέλος* — that is to explain certain natural occurrences around him. However, behind his myth, as possibly happens with other myths as well, there are concrete empirical elements that make it plausible and practical. Many of those elements that the myth seeks to explain may well be the very same ones that led to its creation, even though they may have been rather isolated and undefined before their incorporation into the system. But looked upon as the first cause, it is they that led to the formation of the myth as a whole. On the one hand it is natural that some of the elements should have a metaphysical basis, thus making the myth generally relevant as well as enabling it to explain particular circumstances. On the other hand one should keep in mind that an *ἔπος* and especially didactic like the Hesiodic is not the work of an artist writing in isolation and does not bear only the seal of his originality and personal contribution. In other words it is not the product of an author who sat down and wrote something for the public, completely aware of what he meant to say. It is rather a stock of knowledge and beliefs of a sociocultural whole that found expression and representation in the person of Hesiod. We may reasonably believe that a great number of the ideas of didactic and genealogical na-

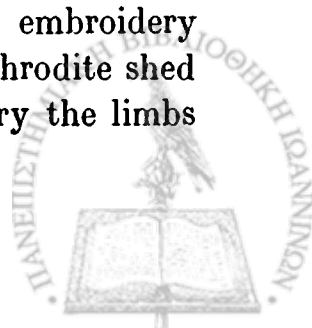


ture in his works were intended as advice and admonition for common people to consult and share. One can infer with a high degree of probability that Hesiod proclaimed social standards and ideas which reflected as well as influenced the views and attitudes of contemporaries and people of later generations, as did Homer—in spite of the fact that his ἦρος is heroic—to a greater extent in questions of religion, morality and social life.

Most of the time the myth gives the αἴτιον, the reason for a *phaenomenon*. Thus with reference to woman's nature, the myth does not simply explain the behaviour of a woman, but it attempts to offer an aetiology, why she behaves in that way, though these things are not very different. A good explanation is one that points to cogent or plausible reasons. We will have the opportunity to ascertain this in the account of the *Theogony* (537 ff.) that follows, and to some degree in the *Works and Days* (47ff). (In rendering these pieces of the text in English I have aimed at giving more the sense of the passage than a literal translation.)

<Zeus was cunningly deceived by Prometheus, who offered him as a portion white bones dressed up and covered with shining fat, while he offered the other gods flesh and inner parts on a hide covered with an ox paunch. Because of this Zeus was greatly vexed and did not want to give the power of fire to mankind. But Prometheus, the brave son of Iapetos, outwitted Zeus again and stole the inexhaustible fire in a hollow stalk of fennel. And Zeus, the thunderer on high, was deeply provoked and very angry in his heart when he saw among men the fire visible from afar. Straightaway he made an evil thing for people as the price of fire. Zeus then said to Prometheus: «You are glad that you have tricked me and stolen fire. A great plague will befall you yourself and the men who will come after you. For I will inflict upon them as the price for fire an evil thing from which all men will derive delight in their hearts, while they clasp their own doom.»

And famous Hephaestos mixed earth with water and fashioned the likeness of a shy maiden as Zeus willed. The limping god gave her then a human voice and strength, a beautiful figure with a face like the immortal goddesses. Athene taught her embroidery and weaving on the elaborate loom, while golden Aphrodite shed grace on her head, painful longing, and cares that weary the limbs



of men. And in accordance with the will of Zeus, Hermes put in her a dog's mind and a wily nature, lies and wheedling words.

And this woman received the name Pandora, for all the Olympians gave her each a present, and she came to be a plague to men. Yet all admired her, gods and mortals alike, in spite of the fact that what they saw was sheer deceit that could not be resisted by men.> Hesiod goes on to say that «it is great misfortune for men to have women living with them, no helpmates in bitter poverty, but only in wealth. They are like drones that stay in hives and enjoy the bees' toil. Well, Hermes brought Pandora to Epimetheus, who did not bear in mind what his brother Prometheus had advised him, namely not to accept any gift from Olympian Zeus, but to send it back, for he feared that a misfortune would come to mortals. But he (Epimetheus) accepted it, and only when the misfortune occurred did he understand.

Before this people lived remote and free from evils and toil and painful sickness that the Fates brought upon men. But the woman took off the lid of a clay vessel and scattered the gifts that the gods had bestowed on her; ἀνθρώποισι δ' ἐμήσατο κήδεα λυγρά: she then contrived distressing mischief against men. Only hope remained in the vessel¹ and did not fly out. All the rest, countless misfortunes, wander among men.»

Perhaps even more characteristic is the passage in the *Works and Days* (373 ff.) where the poet gives a piece of advice to Perseus, who in the poem appears as his brother. Right at the beginning (v. 10) one sees the good intention and eagerness of the writer: ἐγὼ δέ κ'ε Πέρση ἐτήτυμα μυθησαίμην· and (v. 286) σοὶ δ' ἐγὼ ἐσθλά νοέων ἐρέω. He promises to tell the truth and what he considers to be noble things in life. After a number of instructions and admonitions that derive from the general principle that virtue is the noble thing in life and one's efforts should be directed towards it, τῆς δ' ἀρετῆς ἰδρῶτα θεοὶ προπάροισιν ἔθηκ'αν / ἀθάνατοι, he says virtue is something that demands constant exertion; and then continues (373 ff.):

μηδὲ γυνή σε νόον πυγαστόλος ἐξαπατάτω
αἰμύλα κωτίλλουσα, τειήν διφῶσα καλήν·
ὅς δὲ γυναικὶ πέποιθε, πέποιθ' ὅ γε φιλήτησιν.

1. For contamination of two motives here, «der Behälter mit den Übeln...» und die «Elpis», see A. Lesky, *Wiener Studien* 55/1937, 24 f.



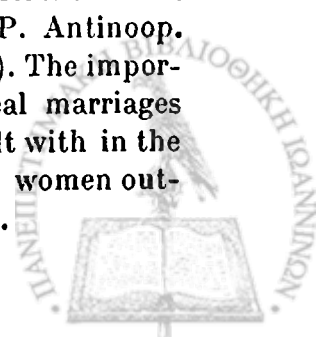
«Do not let a woman, who adorns her buttocks, deceive you, coaxing you with fair words. She has in mind to search after your granary. Whoever trusts women, trusts thieves.»

There is no doubt that such a view is part of the personal credo of the poet; it is equally certain that the way it is stated is rather general and covers a great number of cases, though the qualifying words *πηγοστόλος* and *αίμύλα κωτίλλουσα* play a limiting role and a number of women appear to be excluded from the admonition. One also comes to the same conclusion after considering the passage in the *Theogony* (603 ff.): «Whoever avoids marriage and the terrible deeds women cause and remains single, will reach a lonely old age in need of someone to look after him. And though he is not indigent while he is alive, yet, when he dies, his kinsmen will divide his property among themselves... Even if a man chooses marriage, however, and finds a noble wife suitable to his character, he will not avoid trouble and care. For if he acquires mischievous children, he will always be distressed and suffer from an evil for which there is no remedy.»

Hesiod's attitude towards women, although unfavourable, is not completely negative. One cannot look upon it as more or less idiosyncratic or as if it comes solely from personal experiences, for this view is frequently encountered in Greek philosophy and literature and was expressed by a number of representative minds of the Greek world.

Another writer who shares similar² views with respect to woman's nature is Simonides of Samos, called Amorginos because of his connection with Amorgos. In his satire 7. (8.) he describes various types of women and compares them to animals—One can possibly discern behind this satire rudiments of popular fables, which again point to a rather general view and attitude towards women. Of course one could object that in a

2. See Mary R. Lefkowitz, «Wives and Husbands», *Greece & Rome*, vol. XXX, No 1, April 1983, p. 32: «The poet leaves the impression that a good woman is (to say the least) exceptional, because she occupies only 11 of the surviving 118 lines of his poem.» In her article we can see more the other side of the coin, that is to say the close attachment and love that partners seem to have displayed at different times. Apart from literary sources, grave inscriptions are the only evidence (P. Antinoop. 15, a fragment of a lost comedy, Turia - *ILS* 8393, op. cit., pp. 37, 42). The important outcome is that such devotion existed in the context of the ideal marriages as well as in the ordinary ones, which differentiates the question dealt with in the present paper; it has to do with the feelings and inclination towards women outside marriage and particularly from the point of view of intellectuals.



satire one cannot expect to discover the writer's opinions on a subject. On the other hand, a satire is successful and achieves the writer's purpose only if it approaches what others think is true. It presupposes some bitter truths which are presented in exaggerated form. The satiric character lies not so much, if at all, in arguing about the truth of the subject as in the exaggeration with which the satirist treats it — Simonides says something like this:

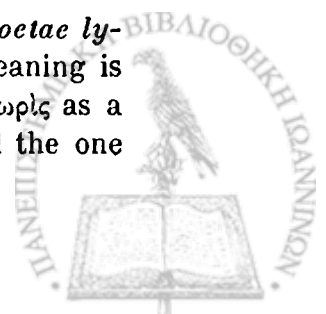
<God created at first the rational mind without taking into consideration womankind.³ One of a group of women he made from the species of a long-bristled sow. Her things at home lie covered with mud. She is untidy and wallows on the ground. Unbathed and with unwashed clothes, she fattens herself, sitting in dung.

Another woman he made from the species of a mischievous fox. She knows everything; neither has evil nor anything good escaped her attention. Sometimes she says good things, other times bad. Her anger is sometimes of one sort and at other times of another.

Another woman he made from a type of bitch, a swift-footed, genuine daughter of her mother, who wants to hear and know everything. Everywhere she looks with wide-open eyes, roams and barks, even when she does not see anyone. And there is no way that a man can stop her, even if he threatens her or in his anger breaks her teeth with a stone, or if he uses gentle words. She is so shameless that even if she happens to be seated among guests, she will behave this way. She insists on useless shouting.

The Olympians fashioned another woman of earth, and feeble-minded as she was, they gave her to a man. This kind of woman does not know what is good or bad, and the only thing that she knows well is how to eat. If it happens that a god sends a bad winter and she shivers from cold, she does not even have the sense to pull her chair closer to the fire.

3. Or at first god created woman with her own logic, which amounts more or less to the same thing. The difficulty occurs in *χωρίς*: is it to be taken as an adverb and *γυναῖκός* as qualifying *νόον*, that is *θεός ἐποίησεν γυναῖκός νόον χωρίς τὰ πρῶτα*, or as a preposition with the genitive, *θεός ἐποίησεν νόον χωρίς γυναῖκός τὰ πρῶτα*? If the line is corrupted, which Meineke's correction suggests, *χωρίς γυναῖκας θ. ἐπ. νόου*, *ut sit deus mulieres mente destitutas creavit*, «sed hoc a proposito abhorret» Th. Bergk, *Poetae lyrici graeci*, Leipzig (Teubner) 1915 - «Iambographi», p. 446; then the meaning is somewhat different. It stands, however, closer to the view that takes *χωρίς* as a preposition with the genitive (*χωρίς γυναῖκός*), which is the one adopted and the one that suits Simonides' ideas in the context.



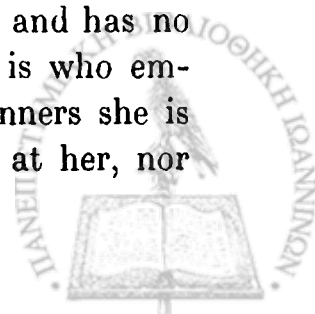
Another they made like the sea. She has a double way of thinking. One day she is all smiles and glad, and if a guest happened to see her in her house, he would praise her, saying: «there's no nobler nor prettier woman in the world.» But some other day one cannot bear even to see her before one's eyes, nor to come nearer, for she is then unapproachable in her fury, like a bitch with her puppies. She then becomes unbearable and hateful equally towards enemies as well as friends. She is just like the sea that often stands calm and harmless, a great joy to seamen in summer, and as she is at other times rages during a storm. This sort of woman changes her temper as frequently as the sea.

Still another woman they made from the species of a grey and obstinate she-ass, that only under force and angry threats agrees to do work that is pleasant. She eats in the inmost part of the house all night and all day long; she stuffs herself sitting by the fire-place and as she is indifferent to other things, any friend who comes is welcome to her for her sexual satisfaction.

Another the gods made from the species of a cat, an unhappy and miserable creature because for her there is nothing that is either pretty or desirable, pleasant or lovely. She is mad for love's bed but is insatiable and drives the man who is with her to aversion. In secret she does a lot of mischief to her neighbours and often devours animals not fit for sacrifice.

Another woman was created from the species of a graceful horse with rich mane. She avoids menial work and misery and would not be willing to touch the mill-stone or lift the sieve nor to throw the dirt out of the house or to sit by the kitchen fire-place, since she dislikes smoke. It is necessity that forces her to look upon a man as her friend. Twice every day and sometimes three times she bathes and anoints herself with perfume. She always has abundant, well-combed, lustrous hair crowned with flowers. Such a woman is a beautiful spectacle for others, but she comes to be a bad one for him who has her, if he is not a tyrant or king, who rejoices in his heart over such things.

Another they made from the species of a monkey. This evil is by far the worst of those Zeus inflicted upon men. She is very ugly. A woman of this sort, when she goes through the city, is laughed at by all people. She has a short neck, moves with great difficulty, and has no buttocks. She is skin and bones. How wretched that man is who embraces such a hideous creature! In all her gestures and manners she is just like a monkey, and she does not care if others laugh at her, nor



has she any wish to help anybody, but all day long she plots and contrives to do as much mischief as possible.

But another they made from the species of a bee.*Whoever gets her, is happy, for only she is in no way blameworthy. Wealth accrues under her keeping of the house and, dear to her husband, she reaches old age with him, after she has given birth to beautiful and famous offspring. And she is held up as an example among women, and divine grace accompanies her. She does not derive pleasure from sitting with other women, where the talk is about sex.

Such wonderful and very wise women Zeus bestows upon men. The other kinds of women are according to the will of Zeus a misfortune that remains with men. For woman is the greatest evil that Zeus made. Even if they somehow appear to be of some good, they usually become an evil for him who has one of them, for the whole day never passes cheerfully for him who is in the company of such a woman, nor will he be able to keep famine, an ever present enemy and unfriendly god, away from his home. And when a man seems to be in particularly good humour, while he is at home, either because of some good luck from the hand of a god or some favour on the part of man, his wife finds something for which to blame him and arms herself for a quarrel. Where there is a woman, one cannot kindly receive a guest, even at home. And surely the woman who seems particularly σώφρων is the one who happens to hurt him most. For the man is a complete fool—and his neighbours get pleasure from seeing that he too has fallen into the trap. When one happens to mention his own wife, one will praise her, but one will reproach the wife of another, because he does not realize that all share an equal lot. Zeus made the woman the greatest evil and the tying of the marriage bond is so impossible to break that Hades often receives those who fight for a woman.>

Simonides very succinctly summarizes his view in fr. 6. (7.):

Γυναικὸς οὐδὲν χρῆμα' ἀνὴρ ληϊζέται
ἐσθλιῆς ἄμεινον οὐδὲ ῥέγιον κακῆς.

«There is no better possession for a man to acquire than a noble woman and nothing more horrible than a bad one.»

Thus Simonides' attitude is not completely negative either. He admits that good women, although rare, can be found and that they contribute to a man's happiness. «He who finds such a one ought to consider himself very fortunate.»

* See p. 178, n. 2.



The exposition of the misogynist's dilemma may be further compared with Antiphon fr. 49 D-K= 131 Blass; Posidippos AP IX 359= Stob. 98, 57.⁴ His views about women are somewhat more negative, but they must be considered in relation to his world philosophy, which is very pessimistic, depressing, and in theory at least nihilistic. I do not think one should explain here his argument in detail. It is enough to state one or two essential points. In the first fragment we read:

ἐγὼ γάρ, εἴ μοι γένοιτο σῶμα ἕτερον τοιοῦτον οἷον ἐγὼ ἐμαυτῶ, οὐκ ἂν δυναί-
μην ζῆν, οὕτως ἐμαυτῶ πολλὰ πράγματα παρέχων ὑπέρ τε τῆς ὑγείας τοῦ σώ-
ματος ὑπέρ τε τοῦ καθ' ἡμέραν βίου ἐς τὴν ζυλλογὴν ὑπέρ τε δόξης καὶ σωφρο-
σύνης καὶ εὐκλείας καὶ τοῦ εὖ ἀκούειν. τί οὖν, εἴ μοι γένοιτο σῶμα ἕτερον τοι-
οῦτον, ὃ γὰ μοι οὕτως ἐπιμ-λέες εἶη; οὐκοῦν δῆλον, ὅτι γυνὴ ἀνδρὶ, ἐὰν ᾗ κατα-
θυμία, οὐδὲν ἐλάσσους τὰς φιλότητας παρέχεται καὶ τὰς ὀδύνας ἢ αὐτὸς αὐτῶ
ὑπέρ τε τῆς ὑγείας δισσοῖν σωμάτων ὑπέρ τε τοῦ βίου τῆς συλλογῆς ὑπέρ τε
τῆς σωφροσύνης καὶ τῆς εὐκλείας. φέρει δὴ καὶ παῖδες γενέσθωσαν φροντίδων
ἤδη πάντα πλέα καὶ ἐξοίχεται τὸ νεοτήσιον σκίρτημα ἐκ τῆς γνώμης καὶ <τὸ>
πρόσωπον οὐκέτι τὸ αὐτό.

Its meaning is: «If I had another body such as I would like to possess, I could not live in the way I do, that is, having to go to great pains for the sake of my bodily health and of my daily living, for the sake of glory and self-control, of renown and of good name ... It seems obvious that a woman, suited to a man's feelings, offers him no less pleasure and pain than what he would offer to himself for the sake of two bodies and of getting his living, for the sake of self-control and of renown

And in the second argument we have:

... Ἐχεις γάμον· οὐκ ἀμέριμνος
Ἔσσειαι· Οὐ γαμέεις· ζῆς ἔτ' ἐρημότερος.
Τέκνα πόνοι· πλήρωσις ἄπαις βίος· αἱ νεότητες
Ἄφρονες· αἱ πολλαὶ δ' ἔμπαλιν ἀδρανέες.
Ἦν ἄρα τοῖν δισσοῖν ἐνὸς αἴρεσις ἢ τὸ γενέσθαι
Μηδέποτ' ἢ τὸ θανεῖν αὐτίκα τικτόμενον.⁵

«You get married; you will not be without cares. You do not get married; then you live even lonelier. You have children, then you get trouble; you live without them, then you are disabled.....

Between the two things there is, therefore, the choice either never to have been born or, if born, to die immediately.»

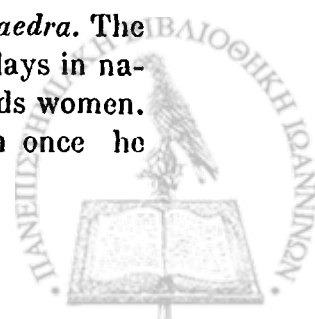
4. *Antiphontis orationes et fragmenta*, ed. Fr. Blass, Leipzig, Teubner, 1881.

5. *Posidippi epigr.*, diss., ed. P. Schott, 1905.



These views, particularly those stated above specifically with regard to women, are very interesting. We may take them, as we have mentioned already, as more or less indicative, if not of the average man's attitude at least of that of a considerable number of intellectuals of the time, among whom one might perhaps include Euripides, although with regard to him one should be more careful; what he often brings up is not necessarily what he himself believed. These views, and one expects attitudes as well, were not very extreme, if one considers that they were also shared by men at other times and are still shared by some men today, if not expressly at least tacitly. Of course in our time women contribute financially to the maintenance of their families, besides performing other duties, and peoples' views and attitudes have been changing. The result is that both sexes tend to be looked upon as equal on a broad basis. Yet now and then one comes across men who express themselves about women not very differently from the way Hesiod and Simonides did. Such men are very likely influenced by their own experience with women and find reasons to complain about their frailty, their self-centredness, their jealousy and so forth — No doubt women on their side find reasons to complain about men's insensibility, which in general points to cases of incompatibility of the two sexes —. But even these men do not exclude the possibility that there are some really good, virtuous women. For some this possibility seems remote and for others even remoter, but nevertheless it does exist. In these cases, as in those of Hesiod and Simonides, one cannot appropriately speak of misogyny, in spite of the rather negative attitude towards the majority of women. On the contrary, views like those of Hippolytos, Melanion, and Agathion, as we shall see further on, are quite radical and therefore different, for they exclude women completely from their lives. And they truly follow ascetism, though mainly for other than strictly religious reasons. Yet the misogynist's view, when pushed to its extreme, is a utopia. If it were put into practice, it would mean the extinction of mankind.⁶ And this negative attitude is not due to external causes, but to some assumed imperfection in women themselves, for the misogynist finds an imperfect nature in woman, whether this appears as evil character, impurity or some kind of

6. This point of view is stressed in rather general terms in Seneca's *Phaedra*. The Nurse there tries to make the young Hippolytos understand the role love plays in nature (469 ff.). She thinks that in this way he will change his attitude towards women. If he does so, then he may positively respond to her lady's feelings for him once he knows about them.

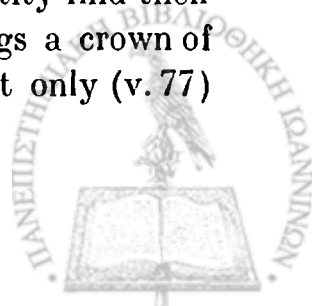


malice. Such an extreme view is by no means healthy, and one would never expect to find a significant number of adherents to it. At any rate those who would advocate living according to this theory would be relatively very few. But, apart from the weakness of their position with regard to its application, the theoretical side of their case is very interesting, the more so because these persons are different and express themselves in their own individual ways. On the other hand psychology applies a good number of concepts and forms complicated theories to explain such rare cases as abnormalities mainly on account of bad experiences and traumas, false generalizations and maladjustment, but I think that the problem with the characters we are interested in here is rather peculiar, and psychology would not help us to understand them. They are heroic, very young, and their views and attitudes are possibly not so much based on personal experience as on their ideology. Prejudices or misconceptions may have played some role in its formation. Misogyny is only one, although a fundamental side of their personalities. One must keep well in mind that their hatred of women is only a result of an inclination towards a sort of living or ideal to which they are one-sidedly attracted. This ideal is a sort of purity or chastity of life. Whatever is against it is their enemy. They do not see a way of compromise. They reject anything that might force them to do so. To them woman's nature is irreconcilable with their chaste and pure way of life. She is somehow impure in mind or cannot think and live in the way they do. They hate women because women distract them from their standards. This concept of chastity and of purity is nearly always incorporated in Artemis, the deity of hunting, of wild nature and related occupations. As one would expect, her devotees also pursue these things. They are and feel free and unattached. No wonder Aphrodite as the personification of love and sexual attachment to a woman is strange to them. If such love comes at all in the myth once in one's life, it is accidental and brings no good.

Hippolytos (v. 1003) says,

λέγους γὰρ εἰς τὸδ' ἡμέρας ἀγνὸν δέμας,

and (v. 1006) παρθένον ψυχὴν: «He has to this day a pure body and a chaste soul.» He is presented to us at the beginning of the play to pay honour to Artemis, in whom the concepts of purity and chastity find their concrete expression. It is to this deity alone that he brings a crown of flowers, picked from an undefiled, untouched meadow that only (v. 77)



μέλισσα...ήρινή διέρχεται⁷

«a bee in spring passes through

Αιδώς δὲ ποταμίαισι κηπεύει δρόσοις,

and Reverence makes it grow with pure water from the river.»

We understand well that this ideal for Hippolytos is honoured for its own sake, and at the end of this hymn he makes a wish (v. 87)

τέλος δὲ κάμψαιμ' ὡσπερ ἤρξάμην βίου,

«May I end my life just in the way I started.»

Aversion to or rather hatred of women is a result of his exclusive, one-sided pursuit or strengthening of a natural inclination. The idea expressed in Hippol. fr. 428 N.²; Stob. 4. 20. 3, Plut. mor. 778 b)

οἱ γὰρ Κύπριν φεύγοντες ἀνθρώπων ἄγαν

νοσοῦσ' ὁμοίως τοῖς ἄγαν θηρωμένοις

is also voiced in one way or another by the old Attendant, who warns Hippolytos against ignoring Cypris, another part of his nature (v. 101). Hippolytos does not listen to this advice and replies (v. 102)

πρόσωθεν αὐτὴν ἀγνός ὦν ἀσπάζομαι,

«Being chaste, I greet her from afar.»

We will examine here two other characters who are closely related to Hippolytos. The evidence we have is rather limited, and the scanty information we obtain refers only to few aspects of their personalities, but even so we can very clearly discern traits remarkably similar to Hippolytos' qualities. One of these characters is Melanion. We learn of him from the song of the Chorus-leader in *Lysistrata* of Aristophanes (v. 781 ff.):

μῦθον βούλομαι λέξαι τιν' ὑμῖν, ὃν ποτ' ἤκουσ'

αὐτὸς ἔτι παῖς ὦν.

οὕτως ἦν νεανίσκος Μελανίων τις,

ὃς φεύγων γάμον ἀφίκετ' ἐς ἐρημίαν,

κὰν τοῖς ὄρεσιν ὤκει·

κατ' ἐλαγοθήρει

πλεζάμενος ἄρκυς,

καὶ κύναι τιν' εἶχεν,

κούκέτι κατῆλθε πάλιν οἴκαδ' ὑπὸ μίσους.

οὕτω τὰς γυναῖκας ἐβδελύχθη

'κεῖνος· ἡμεῖς δ' οὐδὲν ἤττον

τοῦ Μελανίωνος οἱ σὺφρονες.⁸

7. N. B. the asexual nature of this peculiar living being.

8. *Aristophanis comoediae*, rec. F.W. - W. M. Hall - Geldart, Oxf. 1907², repr. 1970.



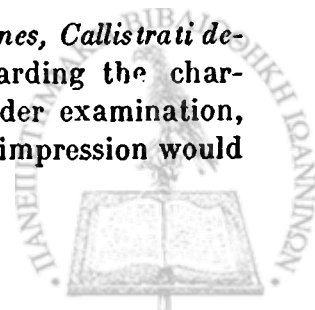
«I will tell you a story which I myself heard while I was still a child: Once upon a time there was a young man called Melanion, who, fleeing from marriage, came to solitude and lived in the mountains. There he hunted hares, weaving nets and keeping a dog. And out of hatred he never returned home. So greatly did he detest women...»

Of such a Melanion we know nothing else. He appears different enough from that Melanion who is presented as a suitor of Atalante. We hear of this from the author of the prooemium to Xenophon's hunting book (*Xen. De Ven.* 1 and 7) where Melanion is mentioned among others who were pupils *κυνηγισίων τε καὶ ἐτέρων καλῶν* of Cheiron and that Melanion *τοσοῦτον ὑπερέσχε φιλοπονία, ὥστε ὧν αὐτῷ ἀντερασταὶ ἐγένοντο οἱ τότε ἄριστοι τῶν τότε μεγίστων γάμων μόνος ἔτυχεν Ἀταλάντης.*

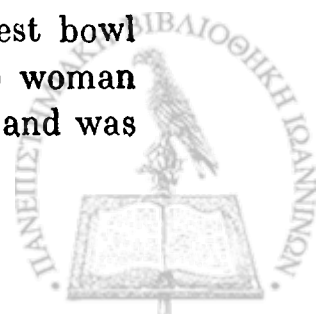
Another peculiar and interesting personality belonging to this group is a certain Agathion, whom we meet in the «*Βίοι Σοφιστῶν*» of Philostratos. He is a strange person whose qualities are of great interest for the study of character and physiognomy. It is fortunate that we get a good sketch of his figure and character,⁹ which we will try to portray here (552 VII):

<The story is about a young man whom many called Heracles. He was about 17 or 18 years of age when he grew his first beard. He was of very big stature, eight feet tall like a Celt. Herodes describes him in one of his letters to Ioulianos. Heracles, Herodes' bodyguard as it were, had his hair long and symmetrically combed, and his thick eyebrows met and intermingled. He had bright eyes that betrayed some quickness of his manners, a hooked nose, and a thick neck, a result of hard work rather than of much eating. His chest was solidly built and hardened, and his legs bent a little, enabling him to stand fast and walk at ease. His clothes were of wolves' hides sewn together. He set himself the task of hunting wild boars, jackals, and wolves and of fighting bulls. He used to show the wounds he had received from his struggles with these beasts. Some said that this new Heracles was a native of the Boeotian Delion, but Herodes maintains that he heard him say that his mother was a woman tending kine of which she was proud, while his father was Marathon, a hero

9. *Flavii Philostrati quae supersunt, Philostrati Junioris Imagines, Callistrati descriptiones*, ed. C.L. Kayser, Turici 1844. A number of details regarding the character of the hero are not strictly relevant to the point under examination, but if they were omitted, an incomplete and possibly false impression would in all likelihood have resulted.



farmer, whose statue stood at Marathon. When Herodes asked this Heracles, whether he was immortal, he replied he was going to live longer than a mortal. Herodes asked him also what he ate, and he answered he lived most of the time on milk which was given to him by goats, cows and mares that had recently given birth, or by shepherds who looked after these animals. He also said that from the teat of a she-ass was yielded milk pleasant to drink and easy to digest. When he sat down to eat bread, he used ten men's daily rations which peasants of Marathon and Boeotia gave him. They called him Agathion, the «Good hearted», because he appeared to them upright in his dealings with them. Herodes questioned him also how and by whom he had learnt to use the language, as he did not seem uneducated. And Agathion answered that the interior of Attica was a good school for him who wanted to learn how to speak. For the Athenians who lived in the city received as paying pupils young men from Thrace and Pontos and other non-Greek speaking nations. The foreigners corrupted the language of the Athenians more than they promoted fluency of speech. While the interior of the country, uncontaminated by barbarian influences, kept its language pure. Then Herodes asked him if he had ever been present at a festival and Agathion said he had been at Delphi. Not that he had mixed with the crowd, but from a place on Parnasos with a good view he had heard the music of the competitors at the performance when Pammenes was acclaimed for his tragic play. He was of the opinion that the wise Greeks were wrong to listen with pleasure to the evils of the house of Pelops and Labdacos. Because myths that were not discredited influenced their hearers to commit wicked deeds. As Herodes saw that he was inclined to philosophize, and wishing to know Agathion's opinion of gymnastics contests, he asked him about this sport, and Agathion replied that he laughed rather at the men he saw who competed in the *παγκράτιον* and boxing, races and wrestling, and won a crown in such contests. The athlete in the race should be crowned because he surpassed a deer or a horse, and he who trained for more difficult contests, should win the crown. He himself fought a bull or a bear every day because luck had deprived him a chance to win by fighting lions of which there were no longer any living in Acarnania. Herodes admired him and asked him to join him for a meal and Agathion accepted and said he would come the next day at noon to Canovos' shrine. He ordered the biggest bowl of those that were in the shrine to be filled with milk that no woman had milked. The next day he went at the time he had promised and was



about to drink. But he smelled the milk and said, «The milk is not clean, the smell of a woman's hand comes to me», and after saying this he went away without having taken a sip of the milk. Herodes listened attentively to his words about the woman and sent men to the farm to examine the matter. When he was informed that the milk had indeed been touched by a woman, he understood that the man had a deamonic nature.>

These men are only few of those who belong to the group as a whole. They take up the entire range that begins with a sort of discordance or antipathy and extends to declared aversion and hatred up to the utmost limits of rejection and exlusion of the female sex.



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