

Federalist Papers. We do know that he had access to Adam Smith's writings, and Smith expressed similar sentiments, though in a slightly different context. (Kant quotes from the *Wealth of Nations* in the *Metaphysics of Morals* [71], and makes the following "Smithian" statement in his "Idea for a Universal History": "individual men and even entire nations little imagine that, while they are pursuing their own ends, each in his own way and often in opposition to others, they are unwittingly guided in advance along a course intended by nature" [41].)

¹¹¹ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Avon Books, 1992).

¹¹² José Ortega y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1932), 76.

In Praise of Persuasion: Gorgias's *Encomium of Helen*

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Gorgias of Leontinoi was a fifth-century Sicilian rhetorician whose precise dates are unknown to us.¹ Considering the paucity of his extant writings, Gorgias has inspired an astonishingly large volume of criticism. Plato, after all, wrote a dialogue in his name, depicting him as a traveling salesman of rhetorical *technê*, casting him as a sophist. But the Platonic dialogue had already removed Gorgias from his own rhetorical and historical contexts. Through his critics, Gorgias has come to represent everything from sophism to an early rationalism. These interpretations, I suggest, over-psychologize Gorgias's rhetorical genius.

My reading of Gorgias's *Encomium of Helen* (hereafter *Helen*) challenges the traditional way of reading Gorgias that stretches back to Plato. How is persuasion produced? In the mind, perhaps; through the eyes, surely: but reading rational discourse (*logos*) and vision (*opsis*) through a Platonic or Cartesian lens is to miss Gorgias's seduction. In the *Helen*, reason is not pure, vision is not clear; instead, we are struck by a persuasion that impacts viscerally, through bodies, inducing pleasure and *eros*. Helen is ravaged, and so are we.

Helen's story is well known: she is a beautiful adulteress,

she causes the Trojan War—not exactly suitable material for an encomium, ostensibly to praise or eulogize her. Gorgias must thus redeem Helen’s honor, make her praiseworthy. Beginning his speech with the claim that he will rescue Helen from the undue blame ascribed to her, Gorgias’s rhetoric ends up being persuasive in ways that are not fully “translatable” into a *logos* as we understand it. Consequently, on our terms, his argument may fail logically, yet nevertheless succeed rhetorically. This paper discusses the visceral and often erotic persuasion behind Gorgias’s rhetorical success, claiming that this aspect of persuasion is frequently neglected in favor of logocentric interpretations.

Gorgias’s *Helen* is the earliest surviving substantial account of *logos*,² and is usually considered an epideictic piece of rhetoric, that is, a speech written as a “showpiece” or for “display.” Such a speech is meant to persuade the audience of the rhetorician’s skill by persuading them to believe something they normally would be disinclined to believe, say, “x is y.” But this is only true in theory. Ironically, perhaps, Gorgias could best advertise his craft through a strategic *failure* of sorts. Success would depend not upon *fully* convincing his audience to believe the unbelievable, but merely upon convincing them *enough*. Here is a critical difference. To fully convince a man that “x is y” is to convince him of just that, in other words, of a truth that now presents itself as self-evident, and that falls on the side of “being” rather than “seeming.” Following this conviction, he will see the world differently, see “x as y”—an ontological coup, rather than an epistemological one.

There is a subtle but vast difference between conviction and persuasion. To *fully* convince a man that “x is y” is to fail to produce the critical difference whereby he will recognize his having been persuaded as such: utter persuasion results in a logical conviction precisely because here persuasion has become invisible, operating in a language that effectively disappears. To the man who is fully convinced, the world just *is* this way, with the fullness and splendor of reality, and the rhetori-

cian vanishes along with his message. Moreover, full logical conviction is markedly sterile compared to the pleasures of persuasion, “for to tell those who know what they know,” Gorgias says, “carries conviction but does not give pleasure” (§5).³

To produce unshakeable conviction therefore could not have been Gorgias’s intention. Rather, in order to demonstrate the power of his persuasion, the operation must not be seamless and invisible; Gorgias calls specific attention to his argument that proceeds “by adding some reasoning to my speech . . .” (§2). While reason acts through speech, persuasive speech also accomplishes something else, to which reason is added. The “defense” of Helen is not unequivocally reasonable; logic is added to an already affective power of speech. Although the audience member in question will not wholeheartedly adopt the new belief that “x is y,” he does move *some of the way* toward this belief, recognizing the logic behind the arguments, feeling the movements of those arguments, and submitting in part to the entire play of words and the images they inspire.

While it appears that he does not believe anything new, he becomes convinced of the rhetorician’s power to persuade, which installs itself as an implicit belief, perhaps even unconsciously: he is persuaded of the persuasion itself, of the persuasiveness of the rhetorician’s words and imagery. If we consider that the rhetorician’s audience were members of the wealthy elite to whom he would sell his pedagogical services, he merely would have had to persuade this audience that his arguments (*logismoi*) wield a certain force over *most men*. In so doing, Gorgias flatters his audience, suggesting that they know the difference between knowledge and belief, that they are not like “most men [who] make belief their mind’s adviser” (§11).

Gorgias begins by giving a brief account of Helen’s life, coyly only alluding to the events surrounding the cuckolding of her husband, Menelaus. Reminding us of Helen’s divine lineage and her godlike beauty, Gorgias then enumerates four possible “reasonable causes” for Helen’s flight from home and hearth into the arms and bed of the Trojan prince, Paris:

“Chance and the purposes of the gods” (§6); “if she was seized by force” (§7); “speech that persuaded and deceived her mind” (§8); or “love that brought all this about” (§15).

Reasonable causes these may be, but, as I noted above, Gorgias is not concerned with full conviction. Moreover, full conviction on these counts would have been highly unlikely, given the Athenian man’s definition of women as fragile creatures by nature susceptible to wandering and concupiscence.⁴ To redeem Helen’s honor would thus be tantamount to abruptly and radically changing a masculinist worldview, since the arguments staged to redeem Helen would equally apply to all potentially adulterous women. The arguments therefore must somehow fail—and yet, persuade.

While the four causes have a parallel structure, each representing a force from which Helen’s actions ineluctably follow, they receive unequal treatment by Gorgias. Gods and chance are discussed in one paragraph (§6), as is force (§7), whereas *logos* receives seven paragraphs (§§8-14), and erotic passion five (§§15-19). *Logos* and *eros* receive extended treatment, and Gorgias discusses them as analogous structures, each influencing the *psyche* in similar ways, whether visually or aurally. Gorgias’s treatment of *logos* here gives us good evidence that persuasion, for him, does not follow a strictly rational model of reasoned speech. Instead, we find persuasion to be highly somatic, and vision as much in the service of the irrational, the visceral, and the erotic.

Nevertheless, we are tempted to read Gorgias from within our own tradition, which—“postmodernist” insurrections notwithstanding—continues to be informed by a Platonic *psyche-soma* dualism that in modernity has been further underwritten by Cartesian metaphysics. Along these lines, we tend to think that force and persuasion are mutually exclusive terms, that coercion is either somatic (force) or psychic (persuasion), and that these phenomena are distinguishable. As the respected classicists Charles Segal and Edward Schiappa note, however, such binary logic belongs to our postclassical Western tradi-

tion. It would be highly anachronistic to read Gorgias in this light; we must instead learn to read in a “predisciplinary” manner.⁵

But reading in this way is not enough; we are also called upon to *see* in a predisciplinary manner. While it may be relatively easy to admit that logical interpretation is always already socio-historically “disciplined,” to understand one’s field of vision itself as not only inherently epistemic, but also subject to similar socio-historical biases, may be a greater source of contention.⁶ The “common sense” attitude is captured in the phrase, “seeing is believing.” Vision is privileged in modernity in ways that parallel, or perhaps even underwrite, a hypervaluation of reason. Descartes wrote extensively on optics, and the purported “clarity” and “distinctness” of vision are employed as metaphors for a perspicacious rationality, much as we find idealized as early as Plato.⁷

In contradistinction, I do not believe Gorgias particularly privileges vision in this manner, nor does he ascribe to it the indubitability by which it will later be made the metaphor for an abstract and sovereign reason. Gorgias says that persuasion “make[s] the incredible and obscure become clear to the *eyes of belief*” (§13, emphasis mine), suggesting that we are as liable to be deceived by sight as by the sophist’s words. The eyes, too, “believe”—not in the abstract, but in cooperation with a somatic unity. This is not “thought” in a Platonic or modern sense, but an embodied and enworlded thinking that, for the Greeks, takes place not in our heads, but in our entrails, the breast and stomach—or, as Gorgias’s teacher Empedocles asserts,⁸ around the heart: “Nourished in a sea of churning blood / where what men call thought is especially found— / for the blood about the heart is thought for men.”⁹

Cartesian tradition stands in stark contrast to a visceral Empedoclean somatology. Because our tradition considers persuasion to be predominantly psychic rather than somatic, somatological accounts of persuasion are rarely found; indeed, “somatic persuasion” offends our logic as an oxymoron. And

despite the patent anachronism of reading Gorgias through a Platonic or Cartesian lens, many accounts of pre-fourth-century Attic thought do just this, apparently unable to break free from traditional bias. Consider, for instance, a recent article by the classicist Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux. Her article is entitled “Le Sexe du regard,” and appears in *Les Mystères du gynécée*.¹⁰ In this article, Frontisi-Ducroux suggests that the gaze (*le regard*) is itself gendered as masculine, and that erotic relations are played out by way of a dominant masculinist gaze (both for heterosexual and homosexual liaisons). Before Plato, she asserts, vase painters captured the essence of the gaze as depicting a prior “linguistic” phenomenon:

the play of the look, subtended by that of gestures, has a double function: it graphically translates verbal exchanges, by giving, in this mute poetry that is painting, a pictorial equivalent of the *logos*, of the word [*parole*] that founds human relations.¹¹

For her, painting is parasitic on poetry, a mere pictorial translation of the foundational *logos*.

Frontisi-Ducroux’s assumption here is that human history began with the word, and human erotic relations somehow followed its law—as if the human race deferred sex until the moment sex was communicated and understood. For her, the word founds human relations, and vision translates this *logos*. In order to appreciate Gorgias’s persuasion, however, we must distance ourselves from such “ocularcentrism,” which I define as a logocentric worldview that takes vision as its central instrument of or metaphor for a sovereign rationality.¹² Instead, I am suggesting that Gorgias draws on an Empedoclean somatology that privileges a *psyche* understood as visceral, as bodily. In other words, the *logos* is not foundational, but is contingent upon an irrational, feeling body. Aristotle says of Empedocles: “Empedocles declares that it [soul] is formed out of all his elements, each of them also being soul; his words are:

‘For ’tis by Earth we see Earth, by Water Water, / By Ether Ether divine, by Fire destructive Fire, / By Love Love, and Hate by cruel Hate.’”¹³ Cause and effect are virtually indistinguishable; they are of the same substance. In this model, we find a synaesthetic body at one with its milieu.

This synaesthetic body is irrational, a body not fully under the conviction of rationality—a body with its urges, erotic tension, confusion, love, hate, fear, hunger, and pain—all of which downplay the sovereignty of vision and the ordering capacities of the human intellect. Both Empedocles and Gorgias acknowledge that we are at the behest of such excess and irrational forces—forces that human reason will attempt to domesticate, much in the way that mythic narratives attempt to assign order to an incomprehensible world, to control forces that appear to be supernatural or chaotic.

I shall argue below that, for the fifth-century Greeks, woman and her body in particular are figured as the site of just such irrational excess. Woman had to be domesticated, controlled, understood; and to the extent that she stood as a trope for irrational, inexplicable, and mysterious psychosomatic forces, woman came to be feared, loathed, revered, held as mysterious. At the risk of being incendiary, I must insist on this multifarious and, perhaps, endlessly contradictory list of attributes. I am arguing that on some level of experience that is *not* governed by reason, these attributes are neither as contradictory nor as discrete as reason would dictate. In the Greek imaginary, woman is one such locus of aesthetic complication.

Through the figure of Helen as woman, Gorgias deploys such tropes. While it is true that Gorgias discusses vision (*opsis*), I believe this is meant to help illustrate the persuasiveness of speech, and not to provide the sole key whereby speech is understood. Gorgias does not focus on a visual aesthetics, but rather, a *synaesthetics*, the commingling of all the senses in which neither one is discrete or unilaterally causal for the *psyche*. An example of synaesthesia is found in the frequent use of military metaphors invoked in accounts of *eros*, suggesting

that one is vanquished by one's lover in a way that far exceeds any purely rational—or visual—defeat.

For instance, the Chorus in Euripides's *Hippolytus* says: "Eros! Eros! You, who by the eyes distills desire, lead a soft grace into the souls upon which you wage war . . ."14 Love wages war upon the *psyche*, and although *eros* passes through the eyes, the metaphors are decidedly tactile—distilling desire, leading a soft grace. We are persuaded most exactly not by reason, but from within a synaesthetic nexus that seizes and manipulates the passions, colors vision, and often flies in the face of logic. Gorgias repeatedly tells us how easy it would be merely to "prove" that Helen eloped either through force or persuasive speech, etc., but he says that this proof would not be "pleasing"; to tell the audience what they already know "carries conviction but does not give pleasure" (§5). A logical "defense," while proof, is not yet persuasive. Rhetoric must also move the soul.

Pleasing beliefs appeal directly to our bodily will, engaging it in a way somewhat unmediated by reason,¹⁵ producing an image that is both personally and contextually significant. This is illustrated in the following passage where Gorgias discusses the "persuasion" that indistinguishably engages both mind and body when we spy a hostile army approaching: "So strong is the disregard of law which is implanted in them [men] because of the fear caused by the sight; when it befalls, it makes them disregard both the honour which is awarded for obeying the law and the benefit which accrues for doing right" (§16). We sometimes forget honorable conventions in the flight to save our skin. We might be so moved by what we experience that we, presumably like Helen, lose our "presence of mind" (§17); the images (icons) "unconventionally" impress themselves directly upon the *psyche-soma*, "And many have fallen into groundless distress and terrible illness and incurable madness; so deeply does sight engrave on the mind images of actions that are seen" (§17). These impressions are beyond convention, and, as Charles Segal notes, serve to overthrow "*nomos* itself a

kind of 'habit' or 'accustomation.'" For Gorgias, psychic impressions are the unique domain of belief (*doxa*), which is beyond convention (*nomos*), and equally beyond nature/reality (*physis*).

Persuasion, Gorgias suggests, is not fully rational, but takes place through a mysterious psychic and somatic interpenetration—in the invisible, hidden recesses of the body, in the *splanchna*, the viscera. Within an Empedoclean somatology, the innards are the seat of the soul, the locus of feeling and thought. Similarly, we can see the presumed coexistence of *soma* and *psyche* in the metaphors Gorgias employs. He speaks of the power of drugs to influence the body: "different drugs expel different humours from the body, and some stop it from being ill but others stop it from living" (§14). Similarly, he alludes to the power of magic, sorcery, and incantation as "inducers of pleasure and reducers of sorrow...deviations of mind and deceptions of belief" (§10). The mind, *psyche*, is quasiphysical: it "is moulded in its character" (§15) by a persuasive sight; "persuasion, when added to speech, also moulds the mind in the way it wishes" (§13). The converse is no less true, the magical power of speech is quasiphysical, even if its physical agency slips by my ordinary senses unnoticed, influencing my *psyche*: "Speech is a powerful ruler. Its substance is minute and invisible, but its achievements are superhuman" (§8). Froma Zeitlin sums this up eloquently: "By treating the *psyche* as a corporeal entity and in endowing *opsis* and *logos* with physical properties, Gorgias introduces a set of tactile relations that somatizes psychology as it psychologizes aesthetics."¹⁶ Words persuade psychically, but persuasion is also understood through recourse to physical models, thereby complicating domains that for strictly logical purposes appear to be distinct. *Psyche* and *soma* are complementary and mutually implicated in even the simplest of perceptions—a "superhuman achievement."

The promiscuous collusion of psychic, somatic, and rhetorical persuasion is purposely frustrating, making it impossible to assign priority to one over the other, to mark their bound-

aries, and to trace the vector of persuasion. Jacqueline de Romilly has written on this phenomenon at length in her book *Magic and Rhetoric in Ancient Greece*, noting, "Healing by incantations has always been important in Greece; it was honored even in the full glory of Hippocratic times."¹⁷ De Romilly makes much of Gorgias's reference both to drugs (*pharmâka*) and to witchcraft with its incantations and magic, saying: "the double analogy drawn by Gorgias may well turn out to be a program for rhetoric."¹⁸

The rhetorician as magician? De Romilly asserts, "Gorgias's magic is technical. He wants to emulate the power of the magician by a scientific analysis of language and its influence. He is the theoretician of the magic spell of words."¹⁹ This is further clarified if we consider the transition underway in the fifth century, often described as the shift from *mythos* to *logos*.²⁰ Very briefly, this characterizes the movement from an oral to a literate culture, from a consciousness informed by myth, to one that privileges reason. Such a transition would not have occurred all at once; instead, there would have been overlappings, shared opinions and influences. The *locus occultus* of divine power may very well have been preserved, but through a displacement, occupied by the rhetorician, reflecting the hidden power informing his words. If this is true, rhetoric would not have been the only such displacement.

By turning to a burgeoning fifth-century medical practice and discourse, we can further understand the shift that was underway from *mythos* to *logos*. The Hippocratic writings are testimony to this transition; moreover, they provide a clearer picture of how women figured in the popular (male) imagination. From *mythos* to *logos*, we can see that some of the magic and mythic awe of divine power was displaced onto an intractable and mysterious body epitomized by the figure of woman. Of course, it is the hidden interior of woman that is unknown, and remains unknown to Hippocrates.²¹ Given the religious ban on the dissection of human remains, the inner recesses of the body were the site of much speculation. Women were

thought to possess similar genitalia to men, only internalized; but menstruation also had to be explained, along with a woman's child-bearing capacities. The womb was thus a source of mystery, and was thought to roam freely around the interior of the body, its wanderings the cause of various female troubles.²²

In her book entitled *Heroines and Hysterics*, Mary Lefkowitz points out that "The term hysteria means 'wombiness'; *hysterai*, literally the 'latter parts', is the politely vague term for the uterus . . ." ²³ Lefkowitz also points out that this term is usually cited in the plural, since women were often assumed to have multiple uteri, an inference made from the dissection of cattle.²⁴ In retrospect, it is easy to say from these writings that knowledge of women's bodies was sparse. Knowledge was confined to women's own experience of their bodies, tactually, or felt from the inside. Unlike male genitalia, these regions were not open to a masculinist gaze, and therefore inherently resisted a rational explanation based on ocularcentric empiricism. As the unknown "other," woman could thus come to signify excess feeling, the irrational, the mysterious—exacerbated, perhaps, because it was perceived that women alone had access to this experience and knowledge.

Aline Rousselle is well known for making this argument concerning the Hippocratic texts. She contends that knowledge of the female body was in the hands of women—literally—and only passed on to male doctors through an oral tradition, from women and their midwives. One piece of evidence for this is that vaginal examination by a doctor is only mentioned twice in the entire Hippocratic corpus, and thus we may infer that it occurred infrequently. She says: "We know very well that ancient gynecology was established through the accounts of sagacious women [*sage-femmes*]."²⁵ It was assumed that women engaged in frequent self-examination, intimately knew the position of the uterus, the cervix, were vigilant concerning menstrual cycle and flow, and could themselves determine if the consultation of a specialist was needed, or if home remedies would suffice.²⁶

Hippocrates suggests that a woman frequently checked her menses for color and consistency, adding: "Sometimes they come full of phlegm and fibrous, full of bile, ichor and thin in consistency, or whitish and full of clots, and sometimes black and like coal, or dark-colored, acrid, salty, turbid, like pus. All these are the actual causes which must be alleviated, for they prevent pregnancy."²⁷ As one translator of *Diseases of Women* remarks, "Gynecological treatises are likely to close with lengthy collections of recipes,"²⁸ recipes for healing ointments and suppositories which women themselves would make and administer.

Similarly, Lesley Dean-Jones, in her book *Women's Bodies in Classical Greek Science*, argues explicitly that the Hippocratic texts "contain privileged information available only from women."²⁹ And Nancy Demand's *Birth, Death and Motherhood in Classical Greece* supports the approach taken by Rousselle and Dean-Jones, although their critics are quick to say there is little evidence for such interpretations.³⁰ But it is absurd that we should require the same type of evidence we would expect from men who were writing. Distancing themselves from women's oral traditions, those men would themselves have had both a different relation to women's health, as well as different criteria for what would count as "scientific." Demand suggests that for this reason the Hippocratic texts, when read carefully, play an important role in women's history. Nevertheless, women's bodies were interpreted and written about from a male (and masculinist) perspective, and it is hard not to find a male presence behind many of these texts; for instance, a frequent cure for myriad female troubles was, perhaps not without coincidence, (more) sexual intercourse.³¹

The Hippocratic corpus reflects something akin to a shift from *mythos* to *logos*. Demand says:

The Hippocratic texts stand at the beginning of the transformation of Greek culture from predominantly oral to literate Although Plato deplores these developments—and also

deplores the increasing reliance on written texts—it was this move from an oral to a literate culture that made possible the creation of *logoi*, or scientific accounts, of medical knowledge in various fields, including the creation of gynecology (the science of women's illnesses) from the raw materials of women's traditional lore.³²

Nevertheless, the complete transition to a rational *logos* was not yet achieved. Demand points out, for instance, that shamanistic practices could be observed as late as the writing of the *Epidemics* texts of Hippocrates, between 410 and 350 B.C.E. We can also infer, with Demand, that these practices were more common apropos of women's illnesses, since women's genitalia were shrouded in mystery, referred to more commonly than men's as *to aidoion*—"shameful, hidden, secret parts." As Hippocrates notes, even if women had knowledge of their ailments, they would seldom speak out: "For women are ashamed to tell even if they know, and they suppose that it is a disgrace . . ." ³³ But as one Hippocratic writer remarks, a doctor should always listen to women: "We must not refuse to believe women concerning childbirth; for they are on every count and always correct, and nothing, neither word nor deed, can persuade them that they do not know what is going on in their bodies."³⁴ Women's bodies were still under the sway of an oral tradition that kept some of this knowledge—and power—literally in the hands of women.

And yet, men write these accounts with masculinist bias. Woman becomes defined by her body, and by what her body does—a source of mystery for men, accessible to her experience and touch alone. Woman becomes a mystical locus, occult, feared, revered, the matrix of all life, like the power of the gods. Her femininity is defined by the womb and its itinerant life: childbirth and menstruation.³⁵ Hippocrates remarks: "those women whose menstruation is less than three days or is meager are robust, with a healthy complexion and a masculine appearance; yet they are not concerned about bearing children nor do

they become pregnant.”³⁶ Menstruation is here the essence of femininity, and when it fails or diminishes, a woman becomes like a man in appearance, character, and (almost) biology, by her incapacity to bear children. It is menstruation that marks female inferiority.³⁷ If a woman’s knowledge of her body is based on tactual observation, and men’s knowledge dependent on women’s accounts of this, it seems that woman frustrates every logic that is ocularcentric. Woman is by nature hidden to the man, and like Helen, the place where magic and a male, imperious heterosexual desire meet.

For the Greeks, the magic and mystery of woman’s physiology contribute to her erotic ethos. Just as Gorgias’s rhetoric fails to produce the full conviction of his audience, so too is his Helen promised but not quite delivered over for an erotic conquest. Barbara Cassin, in her book *L’Effet sophistique*, undertakes a Lacanian reading of Helen, noting that Helen demonstrates the phantom character of sexual relations. To take pleasure from Helen is not only to take pleasure from a phantom, but Helen’s pleasure itself is equally phantasmatic; she argues, and concludes, “female pleasure, then, is the phantom of pleasure.”³⁸ Helen is mythic, and it is her very absence that counts for us, a trope for the shapeless, unlocatable, and uncertain pleasure/orgasm (*jouissance*) of woman. “To take pleasure in Helen is to take pleasure that she is not herself, that she is not there.”³⁹ That is the audience’s particular pleasure in contemplating her: She escapes any colonizing reason; her pleasure, like her, is failed (*ratée*) from both ocularcentric and logocentric perspectives if, indeed, these are separable.

There is a ready slippage between the erotic and the divine or the magical. Woman represents an uncontrollable excess on all these counts; in Attic tragedy she is often men’s nemesis. Because she is unable to be contained by male reason, she rises up as the irrational, as sorceress or as virago. Ruth Padel notes this recurrent theme in Attic tragedy: “Animate, chthonic, dangerous female multiplicity is the background for destructive

tragic passion, and underlines by gender tragedy’s general implication that the forces disturbing the tragic self, the male self, are not self, that human passion is nonhuman.”⁴⁰

Thus, like medicine, tragedy both offers a (masculinist) figuration of woman and points to the shift that was underway, from *mythos* to *logos*. Tragedy replaces the oral tradition associated with the ancient poets, and supplants it with a heavily psychologized tragic *mise-en-scène*, frequently portraying women’s oral affiliations as powerful and highly suspect. As Jacqueline de Romilly points out, the Greeks associated poetry with divine inspiration, with the Muses. De Romilly argues that over the course of time, a metonymic slippage took place: “from Homer to Hesiod and Pindar, this magical influence came to be more and more directly attributed to the poet.”⁴¹ Poets were able to affect emotions, “brush away fatigue, or persuade people, as with a *philtron*, a spell.”⁴² This is taken to be a step in the progression from irrational, magical poetry to a more logocentric and epistemologically concerned tragic theater. Tragedy intervenes between the poets and the sophists, addressing “animate, chthonic, dangerous female multiplicity” (Padel), and other such forces. Rhetoric owes much to the tragic tradition, using a persuasion that draws on these forces to elicit particular beliefs. “Rhetoric and tragedy have at least this [*apatê* = deception, trickery] in common. They have much more, if we consider what they aim at—namely, stirring varied emotions.”⁴³

There is a famous fragment ascribed to Gorgias concerning deception. This fragment is from Plutarch, and I cite it here at length in Mario Untersteiner’s translation, from his well-known text, *The Sophists*:

Tragedy, he [Gorgias] says, “with its myths and its emotions has created a deception (*apatê*) such that its successful practitioner is nearer to reality (*dikaioteros*) than the unsuccessful, and the man who lets himself be deceived is wiser than he who does not . . . whoever has allowed himself

to be deceived is wiser, for anyone not lacking in sensibility allows himself to be won by the pleasure of words.”⁴⁴

Untersteiner points out that it is “important to recognize that the false . . . has an affinity with the true.”⁴⁵ The wise man, then, will understand the truth in tragedy, will find his life reflected therein, and will allow himself to be deceived and won “by the pleasure of words”; in a certain respect, he is giving himself over to Necessity, and choosing not to ignore the deeper contradictions in his soul.

Untersteiner estimates Gorgias’s particular genius to consist in his synthesis of Pindar’s poetic handling of the irrational and a more cerebral Attic tragedy: “The tragic poets in their turn were able to feel in the plot of the myth all the insoluble conflicts of existence, the tragic elements in things vibrating with the higher problems of the intellect.”⁴⁶ Intellectual problems are dissolved, as it were, into the “plot of the myth” that the tragedian is “able to feel” vibrate. In such visceral vibrations, there is recourse to the body—or at least to its internal *aesthesis*—as the place where the forces of poetry and tragedy, myth and logic, resonate.

The body is the Archimedean point upon which rhetoric turns. “This explains why Gorgias when asked: ‘Why are the Thessalians the only people you do not deceive?’ replied: ‘Because they are too lacking in sound feeling to be deceived by me.’”⁴⁷ It is “sound feeling” that will guarantee the success or felicity of rhetorical speech. While deception is a game, a plaything—a *paignion* (§21)—it is one whose art is not exclusively intellectual; to have “sound feelings” means in part being at home in the irrational, knowing that I, too, am the plaything of the gods, at the behest of nature, disease, and death. It is both metaphysical and aesthetic (sensual). There is a certain wisdom that stays within the body, and points to something beyond rationality, even if it is as simple as living one’s life through actions informed by “fate.”

Tragedy’s eye is forever fixed on the vicissitudes of fate, and living the tragic life is never simple. While authors like Padel wish to distinguish the more emotional and divine characteristics of earlier poetry from an epistemological tragedy, they are quick to note that this distinction cannot be hard and fast. Tragedy employs many of the tricks (*apatê*) of poetry to move an audience, just as rhetoric does. Not only is this the rhetorician’s program, but both rhetoric’s and tragedy’s narratives respond, in their turn, to the experience of poetry and of irrational forces in general—from *mythos* to *logos*. The shift toward reason, however, does not fully supplant the raw experience of the irrational body, enrapt by excessive urges, erotic tension, confusion, love, hate, fear, hunger, and pain. Full “translation” of *mythos* to *logos* is never achieved, and instead the untranslatable excess is available to be redeployed in the service of persuasion.

At this point it might be useful to map the progression I see occurring, from *mythos* to *logos*, and where Gorgias’s visceral or somatological persuasion fits in this scheme. As I see it, there are three roughly chronological moments or persuasive “fields”:

- 1) the sensual (*aesthesis*)/poetic/*mythos*
- 2) the visual (*opsis*)/tragic/*logos*
- 3) full conviction, logocentrism, ocularcentrism, complete narrativization of the sensual and the visual.

The first field is the largest, encompassing anything that can be presented within sensual experience, regardless of our ability to understand it. Consciousness at this level is mythic, not yet logical. The logic of the second field maps onto the first, but is smaller; while it offers a “visual,” “tragic,” or “logical” translation of the sensual, its understanding will be incomplete precisely because it is a smaller field and leaves something of the first unmapped. I picture these moments as progressively narrower and more refined “epistemic” fields. Any rational translation of the sensual will be partial, leaving a remainder—something that exceeds the limits of rationality, of vision, of

tragic theater; in some discourses this unmapped excess is referred to as the sublime. It is in this respect that woman stands as a spectral figure, the trope for an irrational body, that which is never fully contained by a rational, masculinist discourse.

I have been arguing that most accounts of rhetoric neglect the somatic, sensual, poetic, or mythic elements of persuasion (the first field). Instead, they usually begin with the full givenness of *logos* as their foundational moment, much in the way I showed Frontisi-Ducroux doing, earlier in this paper. Proceeding from a fully constructed *logos* is to cast Helen's body as narrative or logical, and to downplay how this body is also visceral, and persuasive in its viscosity.⁴⁸ It is just such a persuasion that Gorgias understands and exploits.

While the three moments/fields themselves are not clearly distinguishable, for my purposes, I am more concerned with what is missed as these fields become narrower and more refined. That which persists beyond the horizon of a particular rhetorical field is what I have been referring to as excessive and irrational, untheorized, hidden, and often eroticized, magical, superhuman—all of which remain as a spectre to haunt us and to move our soul, much like Helen and her shadow.

Gorgias's rhetorical pleasure turns on Helen's visceral body, at once hidden, unlocatable, untheorizable—what stands as the unassimilated remainder within *logos* itself. This is evidenced in Gorgias's discussion of *logos* and vision (*opsis*) in terms that are sensual and synaesthetic. Speaking of the painters and sculptors who “complete out of many colours and objects a single object and form” (§18), Gorgias says first how these “please the sight” (§18). Most scholars stop here, at a visual reading. What provides “a pleasant disease for the eyes” (§18), however, is not the finished product, but “[t]he making of figures and the creation [*poiesis*] of statues” (§18). It is the poetic *act* of creation that pleases the “eye”—here certainly a metaphor for one's entire body in motion, a reversal of the traditional reading that sees the body through the workings of the eye. Just as we must turn the painted cup or

bowl to reveal its pictorial narrative unfolding in time, it is the eye that “sculpts” the statuary, the eye that travels around and over the contours, builds up a larger image, invoking memories and desire, here cool, there warm, a sharp edge on the side, “seeing” with the fullness and color of innumerable social codes that preordain any visual motif.

Gorgias says simply: “Many things create in many people love and desire of many actions and bodies” (§18). This passage privileges a movement, a *becoming*, over a static Platonic *being*; its visceral element is most striking, since we are clearly not speaking of a premeditated, functional, or intensional activity by this “becoming.” *Opsis* is but a middle term; what concerns Gorgias is persuasion in both senses, as belief *and* obedience (action). As MacDowell remarks, “No sharp distinction is made between getting someone to believe something and getting him to do something. The verb *peithomai* means both ‘believe’ and ‘obey.’”⁴⁹ There is a slippage between belief and action, standing in opposition to the contemplative reason that characterizes an ocularcentric *logos*. Language itself shows persuasion to be psychosomatic, and we might be justified in speaking of a “bodily belief” just as we spoke of “doxic proof”: If my body is under strong enough persuasion, “I” seem to be victim to my autonomic responses. Successful rhetoric elicits an action that somehow bypasses the censorship and mastery of a reasoning mind.

If Helen represents such excess for Gorgias, it is also because she is able to solicit a similar passionate excess in her admirers. Helen is pleasurable because her hidden pleasures resonate with a body that resists full colonization by *logos*. This power to move the soul is therefore not rational, but visceral, striking us with the extranarrative force of magic and the divine. Persuasion is supernatural, and persuasion's effects partly erotic. It is not surprising that the Greeks personified such things as Persuasion, Chance, and Necessity as female deities, with men the victim of their caprice. In *Persuasion in Greek Tragedy: A Study of Peitho*, R.G.A. Buxton says: “Peitho

was a divinity whose province was the alluring power of sexual love.”⁵⁰ This mythic history certainly adds depth to our rather monocular notions of “belief” and “obedience,” dragging them into the domain of the bodily, the erotic. While Gorgias does not specifically refer to the goddess Persuasion, he enlists her power to charm, just as rhetoric and tragedy draw on poetry (and *poiesis*). Buxton continues: “*Peitho* is a continuum within which divine and secular, erotic and non-erotic come together.”⁵¹

Thus, we read Gorgias, “So if Helen’s eye, pleased by Alexander’s body, transmitted an eagerness and striving of love to her mind, what is surprising?” (§18). Gorgias’s rhetorical question shows that eagerness and striving are not visual properties. Gorgias’s audience equally succumbs to an eagerness and striving of its own, motivated by words and images that do not unequivocally belong either to a verbal or to a visual domain. Words and images invoke the sensual, the poetic, the mythical—an uncontainable excess that strikes one overwhelmingly, synaesthetically, viscerally. It is Helen’s body that desires, compulsively and unintentionally, and she obeys a sight in the same way one’s body obeys a drug (§14). Like Helen, the audience’s agency is only fictive; they think they are acting reasonably, but their desire is roused and their persuasion orchestrated by words and images. There is a poetic, sensual excess in the “sight” that resists logical narrativization, and which gets taken up performatively by the other senses. It is Helen whose “godlike beauty . . . created very strong amorous desires” (§4), and a generation of men who would gladly die for her.

Throughout this essay I have been discussing the power of what is hidden, whether it is divine, has to do with woman’s physiology, woman’s pleasure, seduction, or the magical efficacy of drugs, words, or images. I have suggested that Gorgias’s Helen is the sublime place where these trajectories intersect. She represents the unrepresentable, the ineffable, that which is hidden and refuses the light of reason or the penetration of the

eye. Instead, this excess washes over us in an erotic synaesthesia. Although Helen is portrayed visually, I have argued that vision is an inadequate metaphor by which to understand her. Vision is one of many aspects; I have mentioned the sensuality of *touch* as another, but one might equally investigate how *sound* also operates within the model I have been building.

Gorgias’s *epideixis* is ostensibly a manly, oral display of what the poet and classicist Anne Carson dubs “verbal continence.” Her essay, “The Gender of Sound,” discusses the use and reception of the voice along gender lines. We find a by now familiar set of polar oppositions and valuations, of the kind with which I began this paper: the *logos* of men’s “continence” is described as “straight, light, honest, good, stable, self-contained and firmly bounded,” whereas women are essentialized as being “curving, dark, secret, evil, ever-moving, not self-contained and lacking [their] own boundaries.”

The “verbal continence” of manly speech is considered an important part of the Greek virtue *sophrosyne*, drawing on “prudence, soundness of mind, moderation, temperance, self-control.”⁵² Curiously, this term, when applied to woman, does not primarily characterize her speech; instead, “*Female sophrosyne* is coextensive with female obedience to male direction and rarely means more than chastity.”⁵³ This strongly suggests not only the threat men perceive in female desire and “loquacity,” but the association between female sexuality and male speech as kindred powers of persuasion.

A woman’s lack of “continence” renders her a nuisance or a whore (often both), whereas if a man should prove incontinent, he is treated as a “woman,” a *kinaidos* (catamite).⁵⁴ Female *sophrosyne*, as Carson illustrates, is the counterpart, the effect of a masculine *logos*, when she is “persuaded” by it—recall that *peithomai* means both “believe” and “obey.” And in those few instances where female *sophrosyne* signifies something other than her chastity, “the allusion is often to sound,” since women are believed to be given over to uncontrollable outbursts of “shrieking, wailing, sobbing, shrill lament, loud

laughter, screams of pain or of pleasure,” all of which bear some relation to invisible “insides” coming out, “[m]adness and witchery.”

Carson cites the “dangerous ventriloquism of Helen”⁵⁵ in the *Odyssey* as an example. Helen’s sexuality is something other than it appears, and it is in two places at once (Sparta and Troy). “Woman is that creature who puts the inside on the outside. By projections and leakages of all kinds—somatic, vocal, emotional, sexual.” In Plato’s *Gorgias* (493–494), the metaphor of the leaky vessel lends itself to such a gendered reading of incontinence. A leaky vessel will frustrate any attempt to fill, fulfill, and contain our desires. Thirst, hunger, an itch, or, in the last analysis, the desires of the catamite will never be satiated; these are thus “dreadful and shameful and wretched,” Socrates says, and particularly the latter, because it represents the desire to be feminized.

Socrates is clear under what conditions, however, it is permissible to indulge one’s desires: “As far as satisfying one’s appetites is concerned, eating when one is hungry or drinking when one is thirsty is generally allowed by doctors to a person in health.” Health implies continence, and woman, by definition—whether she speaks, emotes, expresses sexual urges, menstruates, etc.—is a leaky vessel, unhealthy, the potential ruin of man. Woman is said to have two mouths (*stomata*), both of which, presumably, ingest and expel without discretion. The difference between what issues from a woman and what from a man is the vast difference between mere sounds and, in the man’s case, words (*logoi*)—nonsensical ejaculation versus argument.

Ruth Padel also makes similar remarks in her article, “Women: Model for Possession by Greek Daemons.” There she argues that “women can threaten male order, male life and sanity,”⁵⁶ since masculinist Greek societies “generally assigned to women ritual presidency over the transitional experiences, dying and birth, which are perceived as passages into and out of darkness”⁵⁷—from the darknesses of the womb to the tomb.

Again, woman is associated with what is chthonic, dark, hidden, unknown. In the Panathenaic festival at Athens, for instance, women guarded the sacred objects—the *arrheta*, “unspeakable things.” Padel recounts one story where the babble of women priestesses is “translated” by men into *logoi*: Women, she says, “can reveal and bring forth, but only under male control; as the male priests at Delphi patterned into hexameters the sounds that came from the mouth of the priestess, the Pythia”⁵⁸

Men were able to dissociate themselves from these irrational forces, whereas a woman was at the behest of her inferior physiology, a wandering womb, entrails that cause incomprehensible movements and sounds. “The *splanchna* ‘speak,’”⁵⁹ Padel tells us, because “The biology and demonology of emotion overlap in Greek belief.”⁶⁰ And thus, Padel argues, women were thought to be more susceptible to possession by daemons, since women are by nature already hiding something “otherworldly,” and the visceral mind is figured as “a womb-like receptacle for divine intrusion and inner pain.”⁶¹ Drawing on the association I made above concerning that which is hidden and that which is eroticized, it will hardly be surprising to find that “Erotic penetration becomes one of the main images for any possessing deity in relation to the human soul.”⁶²

Carson illustrates the Greek male stereotype: “a man in his proper condition of *sophrosyne* should be able to dissociate himself from his own emotions and so control their sound.”⁶³ But, in this respect, how far has modern thought strayed from the ancient? Very little, I suspect. Self-mastery takes the ideal form of *logos*, exemplified by the virile rhetorician who turns sound into word and reason to elicit conviction. Male “continence,” defining itself in opposition to “the feminine,” involves a clean and vigilant separation of inner from outer—a verbal (physical, moral, etc.) hygiene. As we have seen, however, *peithô* suggests their promiscuous intercourse; persuasion is the phenomenon that couples *mythos* and *logos*, *psyche* and *soma*, inner and outer, female and male, self and other,

frustrating the host of binarisms we rely upon to impose order on an irrational world.

We are told that Helen is carried off by chance and the gods, by force, by erotic passion, or by *logoi*. While Gorgias's rhetoric is ostensibly logocentric, his *Helen* succeeds by installing the feminine at the heart of *logos*, almost despite the maleness of *logos* itself. While the masculine ideal is meant to be upheld in the phallic *logos*, Gorgias acknowledges that persuasive speech draws nourishment from the body of dark and irrational forces, the erotic, the feminine, the divine. Reasoned speech alone cannot thoroughly construct a sight and move the soul without also touching and pleasing the body synaesthetically, alluding to the power of hidden things, invoking fear, distilling desire, inducing persuasion rather than conviction. Gorgias's rhetoric works through Helen.

The rhetorical implications of Gorgias's program for our own exceedingly visual culture are far reaching: Gorgias demonstrates a highly effective rhetoric that undermines the primacy of vision, while not altogether occluding sight; similarly, he deposes the sovereignty of rational logic, while not altogether disposing of argument. Our own tradition tends to ignore the visceral components of persuasion, since they do not readily fall within our purview or answer to our logic—and yet, these hidden but living forces continue to animate us, persuasively.

I have argued that the failure of *logos* to elicit full conviction opens a space for rhetoric and persuasion. Although his audience may not be fully convinced of Helen's innocence, Gorgias is praising persuasion, not Helen. Persuasion relies in part on the pleasurable submission to an irrational body, enrapt by excessive urges, erotic tension, confusion, love, hate, fear, hunger, and pain—a submission that could never be sanctioned by a rational *logos*, nor count as a "reason" to believe or to act. Ironically, the submission to excess and irrational forces is explicitly disavowed through an ostensible commitment to logical argument. The audience is only too eager to read

feminine submission onto Helen's body, because it is she who will stand as the displaced site of *their own* pleasurable submission to Gorgias's words and images. The visceral pleasure of Helen and Helen's visceral pleasure are not in the end clearly distinguishable. Helen is ravaged, but Gorgias does no less to his audience, seducing them, feminizing them by a polymorphous *logos*.

In this paper I have argued that Gorgias's rhetoric is persuasive in ways that are not fully "translatable" into a *logos* as we understand it. I have therefore been operating under a serious methodological constraint, one that frustrates all efforts to explicate Gorgias's rhetoric in logical terms. Consequently, my paper must fail to produce a logical conviction in much the same way that Gorgias's argument "fails." Instead, the threads of my argument must persuade rhetorically, and so resist a fully constructed logical payoff. But persuasion, as Gorgias illustrates, is not always formulaic; just as there is no blueprint for a successful *ethos*, nor can there be a fully "logical" rhetoric.

Notes

I would like to thank Nancy Rabinowitz, Masha Raskolnikov, and Darien Shanske for their comments on earlier drafts of this essay.

¹Gorgias lived for the majority, if not all, of the fifth century B.C.E., and very likely into the fourth. Most accounts of Gorgias's life say that he lived a remarkable 108 years. Whether this biographical morsel is truth or fiction, it is impossible to say—at the very least, we may infer from these accounts that by the fourth century, Gorgias had already won significant renown. His first book, *On What is Not, or On Nature*, of which only detailed accounts survive, dates from the eighty-fourth Olympiad (444-441). We can also be certain that in 427 he visited Athens as an

ambassador, and was successful in obtaining Athenian military reinforcements after Syracuse attacked Leontinoi; this is mentioned by Diodoros (12.53), Thucydides (3.86), and Plato (*Hippias* 282b), among others. Nevertheless, we still cannot accurately date his *Encomium of Helen*, since there seems to be little consensus whether it was written before or after Gorgias's 427 ambassadorial journey. (On this point, see MacDowell, *infra* note 3, Introduction, 9). We do know that the speech is written in Attic dialect—the “least provincial” of the dialects, suggesting that this speech might have been performed in any number of venues, not just in Athens. (See, for instance, Edward Schiappa, “Gorgias’s *Helen* Revisited,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 81 [1995], 311). However, MacDowell (17) notes that even this guarantees nothing, since the speech as we know it might have been Atticized by a later editor.

² Schiappa, *op. cit.*, 319.

³ I use D. M. MacDowell’s translation throughout, citing the standard paragraph numbers, rather than MacDowell’s page numbers. See *Encomium of Helen*, ed., trans., with introduction and notes, D. M. MacDowell (Bristol, U.K.: Bristol Classics Press, 1982).

⁴ These attitudes are well-documented and taken for granted almost ubiquitously. For a particularly clear treatment of male attitudes, see K. J. Dover’s well-known essay, “Classical Greek Attitudes to Sexual Behaviour,” recently reprinted in *Women in the Ancient World: The Arethusa Papers*, ed. John Peradotto and J. P. Sullivan (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1984), 146: “A certain tendency to regard women as irresponsible and ever ready to yield to sexual temptation relieved a cuckolded husband of a sense of shame or inadequacy and made him willing to seek the co-operation of his friends in apprehending an adulterer, just as he would seek their co-operation to defend himself against fraud, encroachment, breach of contract, or any other threat to his property.”

⁵ “Predisciplinary” is Schiappa’s term; see Schiappa, *op. cit.*, 320, and Charles P. Segal’s seminal article, “Gorgias and the Psychology of the Logos,” *HSCP* 66 (1965), 102. Segal is especially wary of reading Gorgias as a fourth-century philosopher, although I suspect that his “psychologization” of Gorgias is attendant upon an overly rationalized *psyche*.

⁶ For a discussion of how our field of vision is imbued with, for example, a racial (and often racist) *episteme*, see Judith Butler, “Endangered/Endangering: Schematic Racism and White Paranoia,” in *Reading Rodney King/Reading Urban Uprising*, ed. Robert Gooding-Williams (New York: Routledge, 1993), 15-22.

⁷ A dramatic example can be found in Plato’s *Phaedrus*, in the role of vision assigned to the *psyche* in its mythic journey to the heavens.

⁸ On Empedocles as Gorgias’s teacher, see MacDowell, *op. cit.*, 9, and Segal, *op. cit.*, 99 and 135, n. 3, who gives sources for Suidas, Diogenes, and Quintilian.

⁹ Empedocles, frag. B. 105, cited in Jonathan Barnes, *Early Greek Philosophy* (London: Penguin, 1987), 191.

¹⁰ Ironically perhaps, although Frontisi-Ducroux presents her argument as supremely logical, the exquisite glossy photos of Greek artifacts in this handsomely illustrated volume do much of the persuasive “work,” pleasing the eye, while convincing the mind.

¹¹ Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux, “Le Sexe du regard,” in *Les Mystères du gynécée*, ed. Paul Veyne, François Lissarrague, Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux, (Paris: Gallimard, 1998), 203, translation mine.

¹² Martin Jay employs this term in his discussion of twentieth-century French theory that “denigrates” the role of vision. Whereas I see an ocularcentrism becoming popular roughly around the time of Plato, and not yet in Gorgias’s time, Jay sees it beginning much sooner. Jay figures the quest for truth, from Anaxagoras on, as a quest driven by sight: “Truth, it was assumed, could be as ‘naked’ as the undraped body” (24). See Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

¹³ Aristotle, *De Anima*, 404b, 11-15.

¹⁴ Euripides, *Hyppolytus*, 525.

¹⁵ This leaves open the possibility that our response is a habit, a social convention or construct. Indeed, much social behavior relies on “doxic proof,” and we find that sometimes doing the right thing or acting in accordance with social norms is entirely without—or contrary to—reason. In the case of Helen, I think gender stereotypes are engaged, as well as a host of other

unreflected normative and performative responses.

¹⁶ Segal, *op. cit.*, 103.

¹⁷ Froma Zeitlin, "Travesties of Gender and Genre in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousae*," *Reflections on Women in Antiquity*, ed. Helene P. Foley (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1991), 209.

¹⁸ Jacqueline de Romilly, *Magic and Rhetoric in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), 14.

¹⁹ De Romilly, *op. cit.*, 3.

²⁰ De Romilly, *op. cit.*, 16.

²¹ See, for instance, Wilhelm Nestle's seminal text, *Vom Mythos zum Logos: die Selbstenfaltung des griechischen Denkens von Homer bis auf die Sophistik und Sokrates*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: A. Kroner, 1975). I also have in mind numerous of Paul Ricoeur's books and essays, as well as Hans Blumenberg's *Arbeit am Mythos* (1975), translated by Robert M. Wallace as *Work on Myth* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985). Current scholars take much of this work for granted; see, especially, De Romilly.

²² I acknowledge that the Hippocratic corpus was written by more than just one man, but for simplicity and elegance, I shall refer to this collective as "Hippocrates."

²³ For instance, see Mary R. Lefkowitz, *Heroines and Hysterics*, (London: Duckworth Press, 1981), Chapter 2, "The Wandering Womb," 12-25.

²⁴ Lefkowitz, *op. cit.*, 13.

²⁵ This is also mentioned by Aline Rousselle, in *Porneia: On Desire and the Body in Antiquity*, trans. Felicia Pheasant (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), 25, and by Lesley Dean-Jones, "The Cultural Construct of the Female Body in Classical Greek Science," in *Women's History and Ancient History*, ed. S. Pomeroy (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 123.

²⁶ Aline Rousselle, "Observation féminine et idéologie masculine: le corps de la femme d'après les médecins grecs," *Annales: Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 5 (1980), 1091, translation mine; see also her *Porneia*, *op. cit.*, 25. Her source for this claim is the same in both texts: Louis Bourgey, *Observation et expérience chez les médecins de la collection hippocratique*, (Paris, 1953), 177, n. 6.

²⁷ Rousselle, "Observation féminine," *op. cit.*, 1095.

²⁸ Hippocrates, *Diseases of Women 1*, trans. and with a headnote,

Ann Ellis Hanson, in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 1.2 (1975), 577.

²⁹ Hanson, in Hippocrates, *op. cit.*, 568.

³⁰ Lesley Dean-Jones, *Women's Bodies in Classical Greek Science*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 27.

³¹ Thomas Laqueur, for instance, criticizes Rousselle's position, saying that he wishes it were true, but there is no evidence. See his *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990). For an account of the debate surrounding gender bias, and the literature following Rousselle's 1980 article, see Nancy Demand, *Birth, Death, and Motherhood in Classical Greece*, (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 63-64. In this section, entitled "Doctors and Midwives," Demand also gives a very clear account of women's involvement in the Hippocratic corpus, with what I take to be substantial evidence (63-70).

³² This is not entirely without logic: if we assume the problem to be "blockage," intercourse might be one way to remove it. See, for example, Dean-Jones, "The Cultural Construct," *op. cit.* 121-22.

³³ Nancy Demand, *op. cit.*, 47. For a comparison of Nancy Demand and Lesley Dean-Jones, see Helen King, "Reading the Female Body," in *Gender & History* 9.3 (1997), 620-24.

³⁴ Hippocrates, *op. cit.*, 582.

³⁵ Hippocrates, *Seven Months' Child*, 4, cited in Rousselle, "Observation féminine," *op. cit.*, 1089, translation mine.

³⁶ According to Hippocrates, the menses are unused nourishment from the stomach, absorbed by the flesh, and passed into the womb.

³⁷ Hippocrates, *Diseases of Women 1*, *op. cit.*, 575-76.

³⁸ This is noted by Dean-Jones, "The Cultural Construct," *op. cit.*, 119.

³⁹ Barbara Cassin, *L'Effet sophistique*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1995), 401, translation mine: "jouir d'Hélène, c'est jouir d'un fantôme; et la jouissance d'Hélène, au génitif subjectif, la jouissance féminine donc, est un fantôme de jouissance."

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, "Jouir d'Hélène, c'est jouir qu'elle ne soit pas elle, qu'elle ne soit pas là."

⁴¹ Ruth Padel, *In and Out of the Mind: Greek Images of the Tragic Self* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), 161.

⁴² De Romilly, *op. cit.*, 4.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ De Romilly, *op. cit.*, 5.

⁴⁵ Mario Untersteiner, *The Sophists*, trans. Kathleen Freeman, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1954), 113-14.

⁴⁶ Untersteiner, *op. cit.*, 109.

⁴⁷ Untersteiner, *op. cit.*, 102.

⁴⁸ Untersteiner, *op. cit.*, 114.

⁴⁹ Euripides understands that Helen frustrates any "fully constructed" *logos*. Here is a part of the dialogue between Helen and Menelaus, when he arrives in Troy, and Helen attempts to defend her actions:

Helen: Is it possible to respond with *logos* that if I shall die, it will be unjustly?

Menelaus: It was not for *logos* that I came, but to kill you.

Ironically, Hecuba responds with the following line:

Hecuba: . . . the *logos* fully constructed will kill her. (*Trojan Women*, 903-5, 910)

Of course, the audience already knows from Homer that, despite Menelaus's logical conviction of Helen's guilt, she nevertheless returns with him to Sparta.

⁵⁰ MacDowell, *op. cit.*, 15.

⁵¹ R.G.A. Buxton, *Persuasion in Greek Tragedy: A Study of Peitho* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 31.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Anne Carson, "The Gender of Sound," in *Glass, Irony, and God* (New York: New Directions, 1992), 124. These terms are Aristotle's, from his Pythagorean Table of Opposites in the *Metaphysics*.

⁵⁴ Carson, *op. cit.*, 126.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Carson, *op. cit.*, 119.

⁵⁷ Carson, *op. cit.*, 126.

⁵⁸ Carson, *op. cit.*, 120.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* The passage is from the *Odyssey*, Book 4. Menelaus is here describing how Helen walked around the Trojan Horse imitating the voices of the wives of the Greek soldiers who were hiding inside. It was Odysseus who kept the Greeks from answering. Helen is "everywoman," and, as such, is deadly.

⁶⁰ Carson, *op. cit.*, 129.

⁶¹ Plato, *Gorgias*, 505.

⁶² Ruth Padel, "Women: Model for Possession by Greek Daemons," in *Images of Women in Antiquity*, ed. Averil Cameron and Amélie Kuhrt, (Detroit, Mich.: Wayne State University Press, 1983), 3.

⁶³ Padel, "Women," *op. cit.*, 5.

⁶⁴ Padel, "Women," *op. cit.*, 6.

⁶⁵ Padel, "Women," *op. cit.*, 10.

⁶⁶ Padel, "Woman," *op. cit.*, 11.

⁶⁷ Padel, "Woman," *op. cit.*, 17.

⁶⁸ Padel, "Woman," *op. cit.*, 14.

⁶⁹ Carson, *op. cit.*, 127.