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INTRODUCTION

A Name of One's Own

JUST AS Virginia Woolf recognized in *A Room of One's Own* that women need a place in which to write, so too women writers across the ages have been in need of a name to describe—and acknowledge—what it is they do.[1] We might think debates over what to call a woman who writes ("author" or "authoress," "poet" or "poetess") are a modern-day conundrum—but the gendering of poets has an antiquity to it, that reaches right back to Sappho. Yet strangely—in spite of producing one of the most famous female writers of all time—ancient Greece began with no word with which to describe its most illustrious female poet. When Sappho sang her songs, the only word which existed to describe a poet was a male one—*aoidos*, or "singer-man." This was a word that was gendered masculine in the grammar of ancient Greek, and—as this book will suggest—ring-fenced as the property of men alone in practice. For Sappho, this term carried with it the hallmark of male social convention, the weighty masculinizing of the genre and production of epic, and the formidable example of male poets like Homer and Hesiod, who had used it to describe themselves and poets like them.

So we begin with a troubling, yet fascinating, paradox: the most famous woman poet of ancient Greece, whose craft was, itself, a craft of words, had no words with which to talk about who she was, and what she did. She had no name of her own.

This book traces the story of the invention of that name. It explores and exposes the archaeology of the gendering of the poet, following ancient Greek poets, philosophers, and historians as they developed the vocabulary for poetic authorship in the crucible of gender. It begins with the first articulations of what it meant to be a "singer-man" in Homer in the eighth century BCE, before moving through the centuries-long story of associations of masculinity with poetic production—and the ways that men policed, and sometimes challenged, that masculinity. It describes how male writers attempted to articulate the rise of women poets—and particularly, the prominence of Sappho—by coming up with new ways of speaking about women who wrote. And it explores how women authors from Sappho to Nossis responded by developing their own vocabulary to describe their gendered identity in counterpoint to the language spoken by men. What emerges, I argue, is a history, not just of a word, but of the construction of the gendered self in, and through, literature—the development of a name of one's own.

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[1] Woolf [1929] 1989.

The problematic of all this—why it matters—is not only the inherent interest of uncovering the story of Sappho's naming as "poet" (though that is certainly interesting in its own right). This book, rather, aims to provide a new perspective on the history of Greek literature as a battleground of gender. It challenges traditional assumptions about the "canon" of Greek literature, highlighting the articulated construction of masculinity in Greek poetic texts, at the same time as it places ancient women poets back onto center stage as principal actors in the drama of the debate around what it means to create poetry. This rests, fundamentally, on a problematization of the ways that the culture and language of ancient Greece have influenced the terms we use to speak about literature and authorship, through a cultural heritage that, for thousands of years, was used to justify the linguistic and cultural hegemony of men.[2] The book thus—at the same time as it prizes open the gendering of ancient authorship—invites a reexamination of the language, the modes of thought, and the critical structures we use now as a way into rethinking the expectations and values that may be embedded in the words we speak today.

One very salient example of this is the fact that, so far, readings of ancient authorship have focused on the normative discourse—that is, the terms used by men for men in a very male world.[3] Jesper Svenbro's analysis of the genealogy of the word for "poet," and Andrew Ford's chapter on the same in *The Origins of Criticism* (2002), for example, are exclusively male focused (though neither makes mention of gender); Ford implicitly makes the same assumptions of male-gendering in ventriloquizing ancient Greek terms like "craftsman."[4] Yet there is, in fact, a whole range of vocabulary around authorship being invented, discussed, and debated in ancient texts by both male and female authors which actively engages with the gendering of the terms employed. Setting authorship terms in this context gives us a new view into ideas around gender and literary production in ancient Greece, and provides an important way into looking at the corpus of ancient literature through the lens of gender. Notions such as "canon" and ideas of authorial identity—previously studied largely through *sphragis*, or authors' "signatures"—can be reformulated in the words of ancient Greek authors, as they struggled to find a gendered vocabulary for what they did.[5] In short, this book challenges the assumption that the male canon was an inevitable aspect of Greek literature. It puts forward, instead, the argument that the maleness of Greek literature and authorship was something that had to be consistently negotiated: demonstrating how Greek authors constructed and debated their gendered sense of self through the words they used to describe themselves, each other, and their craft.[6]

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[2] Beard 2017: x–xi; cf. Morales 2020: xvi. On feminism and classics, see Rabinowitz and Richlin 1993, McManus 1997, Sharrock 1997, Zajko and Leonard 2006, Zajko 2008.

[3] See especially Ford 2002: 131–57, and also Weil 1884, Diehl 1940, Vicaire 1964: 1–9, Durante 1976, Svenbro 1984, Ford 1985, Morgan 1993, D. Bouvier 2003, Maslov 2009 (on which see further, chapter 9, n. 10). For more general studies, see Calame and Chartier 2004, Schmitzer 2007, Beecroft 2010, Marmodoro and Hill 2013, Fletcher and Hanink 2016, Bakker 2017, Hafner (forthcoming). On male-gendering going unnoticed in criticism, see Fögen 2004: 216, J. Gould 1980: 38, Kampen 1998: x.

A central part of this work, at the same time, lies in recovering the women writers of ancient Greece, both well known and marginal. Sappho is the best known and most influential of a line of ancient Greek female poets—and yet it has often been observed that women's voices were largely silenced in the ancient world, both literally and figuratively in their survival in the textual record.[7] From epics composed by male bards and recited by male rhapsodes, to tragedies and comedies written by men and performed by and for male audiences, the poetry that survives from ancient Greece is almost always male.[8] In a corpus that contains at least 3,200 male writers of Greek alone, we only have the names of under a hundred women writing in ancient Greek, many of whose work is lost to us. Of these, just over half were poets, and—although they cover a vast span of time between the archaic and Hellenistic periods—the poetry of a mere thirteen women writers survives.[9] The lack of female poets compared to male is a vivid testament to the prevailing culture of female silencing—both in the societal expectations of women's silence, as well as the erasure of their voices from the record through the vagaries of the male tradition.[10] This is in spite of the evidence for at least a certain degree of literacy among (some) women—for education was still, by and large, the preserve of men.[11] The ways in which Sappho, and other ancient female poets following her, discuss their authorship and identity is not only of value in recovering ancient women's voices and accessing attitudes to their poetics, then. It does not only serve as a reminder that poetic authorship in the ancient world was always set against a background of an assumption of gender—so that both male and female poets were always writing in terms of, or against, gender. It also plays a part in arguing for the centrality of women's role in defining and shaping ideas around authorship and literary production in Greek literature.

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[4] Svenbro 1984: 160–73, Ford 2002: 131–57. See, for example, Ford 2002: 142, where epinician poets are seen as "qualif[ying] the craftsmanly image of their art" (and note, in spite of an interesting opening example redolent with gender tensions, Ford's segregation of women's poetry as a "culture of their own" and therefore "mostly hidden from the historian" at p. 7). Note, too, that Svenbro mentions Sappho only in the context of her appearance in Herodotus (Svenbro 1984: 171); her own poetic terminology is confined to a footnote (208 n. 93).

[5] On *sphragis*, see Calame 2004a, Peirano 2014, and Prins 1999: 8–13 (on Sappho), Pratt 1995 and Woodbury 1952 (on Theognis), Race 1997: 297 n. 5 (on Pindar), etc. On proper names and reference in the context of gender, see McConnell-Ginet 2003: 74–76. This book is focused on looking specifically for the presence of substantive nouns describing authorship, which therefore means the exclusion of instances of *sphragis*, though see pp. 46–47 for discussion of Hesiod.

[6] On the construction of masculinity in ancient Greece, see, e.g., Foxhall and Salmon 1998a and 1998b, Arnold and Brady 2011, esp. Yarrow 2011, Rubarth 2014; see also chapter 4, n. 16.

[7] For general studies on ancient women writers, see Barnard 1978, Snyder 1989, De Martino 1991, Skinner 1993, Stehle 1997: 71–118, Bowman 2004, Greene 2005, Klinck 2008; for an anthology of women writers (in translation), see Plant 2004.

It was not just the social context and mechanisms of literary production that were prone to gendering: ancient Greek, like many other languages both ancient and modern, was grammatically gendered, meaning that gender was explicit in its authorship terms—*ho poiētēs* (the [male] poet-man), for example, and *hē poiētria* (the [female] poet-woman). This is a gendering that English—which has lost grammatical gender in most other respects—has retained. "Author" and "authoress," "poet" and "poetess" are well-known examples in English of explicitly gendered noun pairs, like the *poiētēs* and *poiētria* of ancient Greek—and they demonstrate just why these kinds of questions still matter.

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[8] See, e.g., Ford 2002: 7, Greene 2005: xi–xiii, West 2014a: 315–16.

[9] Plant 2004: 1 with n. 1. The count of female writers in Greek is mine, based on the list of attested women writers at Plant 2004: 243–49. The exact figures are: fifty-seven female poets writing in Greek, forty-two of those before the end of the Hellenistic period, and thirteen of those before the end of the Hellenistic period who have work extant. Cf. Stephanis 1988: 593–94.

[10] The paradigmatic examples from classical Athens are Thuc. 2.45.2 and Soph. *Aj.* 293; cf. Eur. *Tro.* 643–58, and, for a later example, Plut. *Mor.* 142c–d. See McClure 1999a: 19–24 on female silencing in classical Athens, also M. Lefkowitz 1981a: 1, R. Fowler 1983: 338, Fögen 2004: 223–24, Lefkowitz and Fant 2005: 65, 393, Beard 2017: 3–21.

[11] On female literacy, see Cole 1981, Glazebrook 2005, Dillon 2014; for the papyrological evidence, see Bagnall and Cribiore 2006. On women's education, see Pomeroy 1977, Wolicki 2015; see also Bundrick 2005: 92–102. On men's education, see F. Beck 1964, Marrou 1975, Griffith 2015: 45–47, and see also pp. 116–17 with chapter 4, n. 131, and p. 126 with chapter 5, nn. 20 and 27.

There continues to be a notable lack of consensus in contemporary English as to which form—generic masculine "poet," or marked feminine "poetess"—should be used, both to acknowledge women, and, at the same time, to foster equality with men. For the most part, gender neutrality (or "degendering") is favored through the use of the generic masculine, as in "poet."[12] Here Sappho, however, continues to cause division: known in the Victorian period as "the Poetess," she now appears most often in criticism as a "woman/female poet," but can still be found as "poetess," particularly in opposition to Homer (the "poet").[13] In French, on the other hand, a recent ruling in 2019 by the Académie française stipulated a global approach across all French-speaking countries known as "engendering": the use of feminine counterparts for all masculine nouns—*la poétesse* as the feminine of *le poète,* and so on (so that, in one example of a contemporary French translation from an English text, Sappho is *la poétesse,* in contrast to the English "poet").[14]

Yet even in grammatically gendered languages like French or Greek, where engendering might be perceived (as the French Académie clearly sees it) as the route to equality, it is not an unproblematic solution. We can see this particularly in the case of nouns like "author" in modern French (*l'auteur*), where different feminine forms have multiplied over the centuries—and it brings up a series of important questions.[15] What do we say is the "correct" form of feminization in a gendered language, and who decides what that is? Do we plump for continued usage of the masculine noun with the masculine definite article (*l'auteur*), following historical precedents that derive from periods where men created the social hierarchy? Do we go halfway, adding a feminine definite article to a masculine noun—*la auteur*, for instance? Or do we introduce a fully feminized form (*la auteure*)—and if so, how do we go about forming it, and which of the many versions that have proliferated in linguistic usage (*l'autoresse*, *l'autrice*, for example) do we choose?[16] Do some feminized terms have a history of being perceived as second-rate or degrading, in a way that would make an entirely new modern coinage preferable?[17] This brings up yet another issue: How do we trace and explain the ways in which women have adopted masculine terms in grammatically gendered languages in the past, "as a way to mark their equal competence to men"?[18] And how do we understand the changes that are occurring in women's self-naming today in both genderless, natural-gender, and grammatically gendered languages—where, at least according to the Académie's claims, "a new generation of women wants their professional titles to make gender difference explicit"?[19]

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[12] On nominal gender in English, see Cheshire 1985, Cheshire 2008, and Romaine 2001: 154–68; see also Wittig 1985: 3, Fögen 2004: 214.

[13] For an ancient example of this tendency, see Gal. *Quod animi mores* 4.771; for discussion, see pp. 214–15 with chapter 7, n. 85. On Victorian Sappho, see Prins 1999; for Sappho as "woman/female poet" in modern criticism, see, as only two examples, Finglass and Kelly 2021: 1, Lardinois 2021a. By contrast, a survey of "literary works" published in 2020 (which mentions Sappho only once), calls her a "love-poetess" (Reed 2020: 29); Melvyn Bragg introduced Sappho on Radio 4's *In Our Time* thus (echoing Galen's formulation): "Where Homer was the poet, Sappho was the poetess" (Bragg 2015).

[14] See, for example, Russell 2020: 168, where *poétesse* is used of Sappho as a translation of "poet" from the English (Russell 2019: 168). See Académie française 2019; on grammatical gender in French, see Burr 2003.

[15] Académie française 2019: 10.

All these questions matter, because what we call ourselves not only reveals ideas and assumptions about identity, gender, community; it also shapes how we think.[20] Language, and the labels we give ourselves and each other, help us to see where we fit in in society; to articulate our subjectivity as speaking individuals, what we understand our purpose, our role to be; to describe the kinds of activities we undertake.[21] In a history where women have been largely barred from higher-paying, traditionally male occupations, the ways in which women in particular use terminology to lay claim to skills and expertise in counterpoint to a generally male-dominant culture speak volumes about how women see themselves and their relationship to their work.[22] As Erica Jong puts it in her feminist essay, "The Artist as Housewife," "naming is a form of self-creation."[23]

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[16] Académie française 2019: 2.

[17] The Académie report gives the example of *doctoresse*, the older (pejoratively) feminine-marked term, which has been replaced in common usage with *docteure*, formed from the masculine (Académie française 2019: 9).

[18] "L'égalité de compétence et de mérite avec les hommes," Académie française 2019: 3.

[19] "Les nouvelles générations donnant souvent la préférence aux appellations qui font droit à la differénce," Académie française 2019: 3.

[20] On linguistic relativity, see the collected works of Benjamin Lee Whorf in Caroll, Levinson, and Lee 2012, esp. 173–204; see also Gentner and Goldin-Meadow 2003.

[21] On the connection between naming and identity, see Alford 1987, Dion 1983, Kaplan and Bernays 1999, Bucholtz and Hall 2005, Hall 2012. On language as a tool for performing gender identity, see West and Zimmerman 1987, Butler 1988, Butler 1990: 25–34, Baker 2008: 1–16, 63–89, Holmes and Wilson 2017: 167–93; see also introduction, nn. 49 and 50. On subjectivity in discourse, see Benveniste 1971, Baumgarten, Du Bois, and House 2012.

In light of these important and highly current debates around gendered naming, ancient Greek provides a fascinating comparison and contrast to modern languages, both naturally and grammatically gendered—as the example of Sappho shows. It is part of a much wider network of discussions and patterns around gender and authorship—continued into Latin, developed in subsequent periods, and hotly debated in modern-day English, as well as other languages—which intersect in fruitful ways.[24] It equips us with a way into thinking about how we respond to the challenge of gendered language—through exploring how ancient writers, both male and female, posed such questions themselves. In large part, this is helpful because the terms we use to describe poetic authorship themselves derive from ancient words. Our "author" derives from Latin *auctor* (author); our "poet," "poetry," "poetic" from Greek *poiētēs* (poet). These terms for poetry arose in the midst of a discussion around the craft of poetic making in the fifth century BCE and were passed on over centuries of debate around poetic authorship into our own languages, from Greek to Latin *poeta* to Old French *poete* (modern *poète*), and so into English, in a tradition which has—not unproblematically—formed the basis of much of Western literature. Systems of classification for poetry and aesthetic and interpretative values, too, have been drawn from ancient criticism, from the development of genres such as epic, lyric, tragedy, and comedy in Greek poetry, to influential treatises on poetry such as Aristotle's *Poetics*.[25] If we are to understand the complexities and situatedness of being a "poet," we need to do the work of examining, and examining our own assumptions about, the gendered naming strategies coded into ancient Greek poetic texts. We need to undertake an archaeology of the words for "poet," then and now, to investigate exactly what it is we say when we speak, to understand how language has been used and continues to be used to express gender and identity—and how everything we say has a layered, often fraught history in the performance of gendered poetic identities. Sappho's search for a name, in other words, is just one instance of the contest over gendered naming, and what it means to be a woman, or a man, who writes.

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[22] Black and Juhn 2000: 450. On occupations and professions in antiquity, see Stewart, Harris, and Lewis 2020.

[23] Jong 1980: 117.

[24] Corbett 1991 gives a survey of grammatical gender across languages: see further, introduction, n. 50. For an example of the current debate, see the guidelines issued in 2018 by the European Parliament; for controversies in German, see Johnson 2019, Shelton 2019, Loxton 2019; in Hebrew, Tobin 2001, Ghert-Zand 2018; in Swedish, Bas-Wohlert 2012. In English, there has been increasing recognition in recent years of new gender-neutral terms like "folx" or "womxn," and the gender-neutral pronouns "they/their," to refer in a gender-neutral way to the diverse and nonbinary members of the LGBTQ+ community (Zimman 2017).

[25] Ford 2002: x.

Sappho: Poet

One of the basic premises of this book is that any statement of the word "poet" is loaded with two intertwined arguments: first, an argument for gender identity (made explicit in Greek through the gendering of the definite article and the noun ending: *ho poiētēs* [the male poet] in the masculine, *hē poiētria* [the female poet] in the feminine), and second, a reference to notions of poetic authorship. Yet defining terms like "gender" and "authorship" in relation to Greek antiquity is notoriously difficult. Every language and cultural system, ancient and modern, has its own structures, references, and values—and these need to be put in context before we can start to unravel the ways in which speakers of that language manipulate, play with, and develop their own vocabularies and identity statements. If we begin with authorship—"Sappho as poet"—there is, to begin with, the issue of the definition of the author itself: whether we can (or should) label authorship on a continuum across literature in Greek, and across different literary genres and contexts. This is particularly the case in archaic Greek poetry, where the blurring of boundaries between composition, performance, and written text begs the question at which point we pin down the "author" (if at all). We also need to examine the possibility of any continuity of perceptions of authorship between—for example—the oral circulation of texts and performances in archaic Greece, the dramatic performances of classical Greek tragedy and comedy, and the highly literary productions of Hellenistic Greece.[26] Then there is the matter of the precise location of authorial identity: in the use of the first person, biographical information, self-naming (*sphragis*), self-referential terminology more broadly, or even the notoriously difficult "style."[27] And finally, there is the question of the way in which we interpret the author from a literary-critical perspective: whether we take authorial statements as biographical fact, or as constructions of a poetic persona.

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[26] On performance in ancient Greece, see Gentili 1988, Lardinois 1996, Calame 1997, Stehle 1997, Edmunds and Wallace 1997, Kurke 2000, Bakker 2009, Carey 2009, Athanassaki and Bowie 2011, Minchin 2011, Bakker 2017. For a useful discussion of how we might see authorship engaging with oral performance, see Nagy 1996: 207–25. Bing 1988 is the classic analysis of the transi-

Even—perhaps especially—in instances of the declaration of authorship, we have to exert caution in interpreting authorial identity. This is particularly the case in performed poetry, where the "I"-figure is just as likely to be a reflection of the poems' performance environment, or a persona projected by the poet.[28] Instead of pointing to the biographical elements of a poet's life, the ambiguity and openness of the lyric "I" seems to invite us to ask exactly what the function of statements of authorship might be within a text, and how we figure authorship in a communal and performance-based context. When Sappho says "I will sing these songs beautifully to delight my female companions" (fr. 160 L-P), is she speaking of herself performing to her companions, or ventriloquizing the voice of a female chorus collectively singing to one another?[29] How do we interpret the fragment given that it is almost certainly not what Sappho originally sang? (There is a problem of transmission in the second line.)[30] And to what extent can we take this "I"—even if it refers to Sappho—to reflect her "true" identity (inasmuch as that is ever recoverable), as opposed to a performed persona?

The questions raised by the authorial persona in ancient lyric anticipate Foucault's twentieth-century theory of the "author-function"—the construction of

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tion from oral performance to the written texts of Hellenistic Alexandria. On the relationship of women to oral performance, see Snyder 1989: xi–xii, Stehle 1997: 71–118, Klinck 2008.

[27] On the poetic *Lives*, see M. Lefkowitz 1981b, Farrell 2002, and Fletcher and Hanink 2016. Beecroft 2010: 17 summarizes the categories of authorship attribution in ancient Greek literature; on the first-person construction of gender in ancient literature, see Fuhrer and Cordes 2022. See further, introduction, nn. 3 and 5.

[28] See Gentili 1990, Calame 1995: 3–26, Mayer 2003, Kurke 2007: 143, and, on the interpretation of "Sappho" in fr. 1, Purves 2014; see, for further discussion, pp. 235–44, and on Pindar, see Hauser 2022. See also introduction, n. 32.

[29] τάδε νῦν ἐταίραις ταὶς ἔμαις τέρπνα κάλως ἀείσω, Sappho fr. 160 L-P = Ath. 13.571d. See Lardinois 1996: 154–55 and chapter 8, pp. 235–44 with n. 14 for discussion. For the first-person plural, see fr. 140a L-P, where the speaker asks "What should we do?" followed by an instruction to a group of "girls" (τί κε θεῖμεν; / καττύπτεσθε, κόραι), fr. 140a.1–2 L-P. Lardinois 1996: 165 argues that we may have παρθένοι mentioned at fr. 17.14 L-P (Lobel and Page give π]αρθ[εν-), but see contra Stehle 1997: 268.

[30] τέρπνα in line 2 does not fit the meter: see Lobel-Page 1963 ad loc.

the authorial persona and its value for interpreting a text.[31] Shifting the biographical emphasis of previous work on ancient authors, scholarship on authorship in the ancient world has now taken a turn to look at the function or persona played by the author as a literary construction and an important element in the interpretation of the text.[32] This is the approach which will be followed in this book. Rather than searching for the "actual" authors and poets of ancient Greece, or a "real" Sappho, I look instead at the "masks" and "figures" of authorship, how they are deployed within the context of a text, and how they relate to the social construction of gender.[33] Throughout the book, I use nouns like "author," proper names like "Sappho," and gendered pronouns "s/he" as placeholders for the *function* which these names, or gendered labels, perform.

This also brings up the question of the location of authorial identity. Almost all critical studies of ancient authors and authorship focus on moments of self-naming or *sphragis*—as in the case of Sappho's use of her proper name, *Psapph'*, at fr. 1.20 L-P.[34] But in ancient Greek, a "name" (*onoma*)—used in English for proper names like Sappho and Homer—in fact referred to common nouns and proper names, and even "words" in general, too.[35] Thus, in Greek, a word like *aoidos* (bard) or *poiētēs* (poet) was an *onoma*, the same as a proper name. The importance of these "names" for poets is shored up by the fact that ancient Greek critics had much to say about the labeling of poets. Two examples will suffice (though there are many to choose from).[36] Plato's Socrates is found in one of the dialogues investigating the most appropriate "name" (*onoma*) for Protagoras—the philosopher who was credited in antiquity with dividing nouns (*onomata*) into grammatical genders—by making a comparison to other well-known figures.[37] "What name [*onoma*] do we hear Protagoras being called?" he asks. "Like we hear the name 'sculptor' for Pheidias, or 'poet' [*poiētēs*] for Homer—what do people say about Protagoras?" (Pl. *Prt.* 311e).[38] In the context of exploring naming practices for professions, and in a meta-examination of the nature of names by applying a "name" to the very philosopher who first classified them, it is the example of the word "poet" which, tellingly, first comes to mind. Aristotle picks up this interest in using "poet" as an example of naming—with Homer, the paramount poet, as his exemplar—in *On Interpretation*, asking what it means to say that someone "is" something.[39] "Let's say, Homer is something—say, a poet. Does that mean he 'is,' or not? The verb 'is' applies to Homer here only incidentally. It means that he 'is' a poet, not that he 'is' in and of itself" (Arist. *Int.* 21a).[40] Aristotle's question here is not only what it means to say that someone "is" something. It also asks what it means to be a poet. When we say the word "poet," what is implicit in the term?[41] How does it relate to the identity of the person being named as a poet? In the close link through predication of the proper name and the word "poet," Aristotle demonstrates the proximity between poetic naming and identity *as* a poet. This is particularly the case with the prototypical poet Homer, where to say one was, to all intents and purposes, to say the other: Homer's name became so synonymous with poetry in antiquity that he was often termed simply "the poet" (*ho poiētēs*).[42]

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[31] Foucault 1977; for summary and discussion of Barthes and Foucault, see Burke 1992, During 1992: 118–22, A. Wilson 2004, and cf. Searle 1969: 169.

[32] See, by way of examples of this shift in perspective, Calame 1995: 14–15, Clay 1998, Steiner 2015, Beecroft 2010: 2.

[33] I take authorship to mean the ascription of the production of discourse (including self-ascription): cf. Behme 2007: 10, and, for another definition of authorship, see Beecroft 2010: 16. For the language of "masks" and "figures" see Steiner 2015: 31.

[34] τίς σ᾽, ὦ / Ψάπφ᾽, ἀδικήει; (who wrongs you, Sappho?), Sappho fr. 1.19–20 L-P. On *sphragis*, see introduction, n. 5.

[35] Brunschwig 1984: 4; the absence of a distinction between "names" and "nouns" is common to most languages: see Anderson 2007: 16. For an overview of ancient grammatical theory and philosophy of language, see Taylor 1995, Blank 2000, Swiggers and Wouters 2002. For a history of the ancient study of names/nouns, see Anderson 2007: 132, Householder 1995a and 1995b.

[36] For more examples, see pp. 122–26.

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[37] τί ὄνομα ἄλλο γε λεγόμενον περὶ Πρωταγόρου ἀκούομεν, Pl. *Prt.* 311e1–2. On Protagoras's three grammatical genders, see pp. 13–16.

[38] τί ὄνομα ἄλλο γε λεγόμενον περὶ Πρωταγόρου ἀκούομεν; ὥσπερ περὶ Φειδίου ἀγαλματοποιὸν καὶ περὶ Ὁμήρου ποιητήν, τί τοιοῦτον περὶ Πρωταγόρου ἀκούομεν, *Prt.* 311e1–4. On this passage, see Nagy 2009a: 519–23.

[39] On Aristotle's *On Interpretation*, see Whitaker 2002: 35–70.

[40] ὥσπερ Ὅμηρός ἐστί τι, οἷον ποιητής· ἆρ' οὖν καὶ ἔστιν, ἢ οὔ; κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς γὰρ κατηγορεῖται τὸ ἔστιν τοῦ Ὁμήρου· ὅτι γὰρ ποιητής ἐστιν, ἀλλ' οὐ καθ' αὑτό, κατηγορεῖται κατὰ τοῦ Ὁμήρου τὸ ἔστιν, Arist. *Int.* 21a25–28.

[41] Cf. the *Poetics*, where the first occurrence of the word ποιητής is, interestingly, with reference to the problem of naming poets (*Poet.* 1447b13–16); see Janko 2011: 271 n. 14. Aristotle uses the generalizing masculine ὁ ποιητής throughout the *Poetics*; see, e.g., *Poet.* 1451b1, 1451b27, 1460a7, 1460b1, and 1449b3 in the plural. Note also Aristotle's lost treatise on poets, *Peri poiētōn*: see Janko 2011: 317–539, M. Heath 2013.

[42] On Homer as a universal authority see Graziosi 2002: 57–58, Nagy 2009a. Cf. Xenophanes DK 21 B 10, ἐξ ἀρχῆς καθ' Ὅμηρον ἐπει μεμαθήκασι πάντες (since from the beginning everyone learned from Homer); see also Pl. *Prt.* 311e3, Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 667f. The examples of Homer as ὁ ποιητής are too numerous to detail: see, e.g., Pl. *Grg.* 485d, Arist. *Rh.*

The final consideration in terms of ancient authorship is the performance context of much of archaic and classical Greek poetry—and it brings us closer to the question of gender, or "Sappho as woman." From the oral tradition of epic poetry to the rhapsodic recitals of Homer, the dramatic contests of fifth-century Athens, sympotic poems, choral lyric, hymns, and victory odes, Greek poetry was rooted in a culture of performance.[43] Even later poetry, written for literate readers and no longer performed, often contained reflections and refractions of poetry's performative beginnings.[44] And then there are the lost, but no less important, oral traditions of everyday sung poetry—many of which included women's genres, like lament (of which we see glimmers in surviving poetry), maiden songs, wedding songs, weaving songs, and lullabies.[45] These—because ancient (male) critics deemed them unworthy of preservation or comment—are often hidden behind the self-referential, literary, male poetry of the Greek canon in discussions of authorship and authorial persona. It is a function both of the extant evidence and the focus on the construction of poets within the literary tradition that these hidden voices can only be heard in the echoes behind some of our surviving texts. And yet, at the same time, these traditions linger suggestively in many of the women's voices analyzed in this book: the laments of the women in *Iliad* 24, for example; the weaving songs of Calypso and Circe in *Odyssey* 5 and 10 (chapter 1); the public lament at the women's festival in Theocritus's fifteenth *Idyll* (chapter 7); and Sappho's shared lamentation with her daughter at fr. 150 L-P (chapter 8). Indeed, the power—and danger—of women's lament, in particular, as the most culturally validated form of women's song, is a theme which recurs throughout this book, and appears again and again, both in male poets' attempts to appropriate women's voices in lament—thereby, of course, as we will see, acknowledging its significance—as well as in women's own voicing of their poetry.[46]

The performance context of Greek poetry implicates gender inextricably in constructions of poetic authorship, because claims of authorship made in real-time performance would have been intricately linked with the process of enacting gender. As Eva Stehle points out, "Since gender is an inevitable part

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1365a11, 1380b28, *Poet.* 1460b2, Polyb. 9.16, schol. ad Aesch. PV 436, Phld. *Po.* 1, 87 and 93 Janko, Strabo 1.1.4, 1.1.10, 1.1.20, etc., Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 667f, Gal. *Quod animi mores* 4.771. For examples of Homer's association with the verb ποιεῖν, see Nagy 2004a: 44–45 n. 9. See further pp. 116–19.

[43] See introduction, n. 26, chapter 8, n. 36.

[44] See, e.g., Bing 1993 on Callim. *Hymn* 2 and its impersonation of performance.

[45] For a fascinating attempt to trace a lost genre of women's work songs, see Karanika 2014; on lullabies, see chapter 5, n. 64.

[46] See pp. 36–40, 57–61, 130–35, 204–7.

of self-presentation in the flesh and cultural assumptions about gender attach themselves to speakers prior to any speech and inform its reception, oral texts must be read as gendered speech."[47] The same holds true for the written "voice" in later Greek texts, where the authorial voice staged and created figures for identity, thus enabling the poet, as a gendered body, to enact and perform themselves.[48] Authorship and gender in ancient Greek poetry are thus not only performative acts (to draw on Judith Butler's theorization of the performativity of gender) in and of themselves.[49] Their performativity informs each other, where the voice of the poet and the construction of gender interplay in subtle and complex ways. Rather than attempting to recover an "authentic" or "original" Homer or Sappho, or suggesting a fixed continuity in notions of authorship, this book, then, takes the more nuanced position of assessing the construction of the gendered voice in and through the shifting, performed articulation of notions of authorship—as they meet in the performativity of the self through words.

Sappho: Woman

The performance of the self in words naturally leads to a discussion of gender and language in ancient Greece. To a speaker of ancient Greek, the world was structured through gender.[50] A poet was male (*ho aoidos* or *ho poiētēs*); so was a lamp (*ho luchnos*) or a stone (*ho lithos*). A water-jar was female (*hē hudria*). A cloak was neuter (*to himation*). Indeed, our term for "gender" itself goes back to the Greek word *genos* ("kind," via Latin *genus*).[51] The centrality of gender in structuring both the social world and the language of ancient Greek thought is revealed by the early distinction between the categories of names (*onomata*) by the philosopher Protagoras—the same one Socrates tried to find a name for—as "male, female and objects" (*arrena kai thēlea kai skeuē*, DK 80 A 27).[52] It is uncertain whether Protagoras was referring to general classification by sex, or the more specific classes of grammatical gender—but, either way, this is probably the first attempt in Greek literature to distinguish between the three major gender classes which became the foundations of the grammar of the language.[53] Not only that, but the order set up by Protagoras—masculine first, then feminine, then neuter—established the traditional hierarchical order of the genders. Of course, the placing of male before female in Protagoras was a reflection of a world view which set men above women in every respect, from citizenship to authorship. But it also, as I will argue throughout the chapters that follow, came to be used as a resource which could be manipulated both to reinforce and to challenge the norms of gender identity structured into language.[54]

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[47] Stehle 1997: 11; cf. Murray and Rowland 2007: 211.

[48] J. L. Austin introduced the theory of the "performative utterance" in 1962; on the performativity of authorship, see Railton 1991: 3–22.

[49] Judith Butler's understanding of gender as a continuous series of "constituting acts" (1988: 519–20) maps onto the performativity of authorship and gender in archaic oral poetry. See further Case 1990: 251–330, Parker and Sedgwick 1995: 5–6; for further discussion, see pp. 260–61.

[50] For grammatical gender in language, see Corbett 1991; on the application of grammatical gender in ancient Greek, see Janse 2020, and in Latin, Corbeill 2015; see Fögen 2004: 237–74 for further bibliography. For introductions to the field of language and gender studies, see Hellinger and Bußmann 2001–2003, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2013, Ehrlich, Meyerhoff, and Holmes 2017.

[51] See Varro's definition of *genus* as derived from *generare* because "genders alone give birth" (*genera tantum illa esse quae generant*, Varro fr. 245 Funaioli). On Latin grammar and gender see Corbeill 2015, also Vaahtera 2008.

Aristotle—who maintained Protagoras's hierarchical order of the genders—also recorded another concern of Protagoras's: the proper assignment of gender to words.[55] He gives the example of *mēnis* (wrath) and *pēlēx* (helmet) in Homer (as always, the prototypical poet). Protagoras argued that, in classifying *mēnis* and *pēlēx* as feminine, Homer committed a grammatical mistake: they should, in fact, be masculine.[56] But while *pēlēx* could be argued to fit a third-declension masculine paradigm (like *phulax*), *mēnis* looks morphologically feminine—and, as an abstract concept like justice (*themis*), seems much more likely to fit the feminine gender.[57] What is interesting is that Protagoras's idea of "proper" gender assignment here does not seem to accord with noun declensions—but rather, with the semantic properties of the word. Stereotypically male qualities, like Achilles's anger, or a battle helmet, are seen as requiring masculine gender, to fit with the "maleness" of their meaning. In other words, to the earliest theorist of grammatical gender in Greek, the grammatical gender of words was not simply arbitrary, assigned according to form:

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[52] Πρωταγόρας τὰ γένη τῶν ὀνομάτων διῄρει, ἄρρενα καὶ θήλεα καὶ σκεύη, DK 80 A 27 = Arist. *Rh*. 1407b7–8.

[53] Taylor 1995: 84, Janse 2020: 25–26. Corbeill 2015: 17 seems to take the passage as referring to grammatical gender; see, by contrast, Rademaker 2013: 89.

[54] Corbeill 2015: 1 makes a similar argument for Latin grammar; cf. Janse 2020.

[55] See Sluiter 1990: 7–8, also Ibrahim 1973: 15, Corbeill 2015: 17–18.

[56] ὁ μῆνις καὶ ὁ πήληξ ἄρρεν ἐστίν, Arist. *Soph. el*. 173b = DK 80 A 28.

[57] Corbeill 2015: 18, following Wackernagel 1926–1928: 2.4–5.

it needed to have a semantic grounding, too.[58] It helps to give words their meaning, and it also aligns with that meaning, associating them with qualities that are stereotypically connected to "male" and "female" attributes. The fifth-century BCE comic playwright Aristophanes famously lampoons contemporary debates over grammatical gender in his satire of Socrates's "Thinkery" in the *Clouds*, where Strepsiades goes to learn about the proper gender of nouns: "You still need to learn about names [*onomatōn*]," Aristophanes's Socrates tells him, "which are male, and which ones are female" (*Clouds* 681–82).[59] Protagoras's early association of gender qualities with grammatical gender is exploited in "Socrates's" gender lesson to create juxtapositions, subversions, and fluidities between "masculine" and "feminine" categories: females, with common-gender nouns, that look the same as males (*Clouds* 661–64); newly coined feminine terms that generate a new vocabulary for females (666); males like Cleonymus with effeminate qualities that turn them into women (Cleonyme, 680); and men like Amynias whose masculine gender is undermined by the very grammar of their names (Amynia—a feminine-looking word—in the vocative, 689–92). Later, in the fourth century, Plato goes beyond Protagoras's determination that the gendered semantic qualities of a word match its grammatical gender, to suggest that the etymologies of the words used for "male" and "female" themselves in fact describe and delineate gender roles. In the *Cratylus*, during a discussion of the origins of words—which makes it the first surviving attempt in Greek literature to construct a history of language—Socrates draws a direct parallel between the words for "man," "woman," "male," and "female" and the semantic qualities of masculinity and femininity.[60] "Masculinity" (*to arren*) and "man" (*ho anēr*) are connected to *andreia*, "courage" (but also, through its etymology, "manliness").[61]

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[58] On semantic gender assignment, see Corbett 1991: 7–32.

[59] ἔτι δή γε περὶ τῶν ὀνομάτων μαθεῖν σε δεῖ, / ἅττ᾽ ἄρρεν᾽ ἐστίν, ἅττα δ᾽ αὐτῶν θήλεα, Ar. *Nub*. 681–82. On this scene, see Wackernagel 1926–1928: 2.1, Fögen 2004: 226–28, and Willi 2003: 98–100 with further bibliography.

[60] Ademollo 2011: 1–22 gives an excellent introduction to the dialogue; see also Denyer 1991: 68–82, Sedley 2003. There has long been a debate on whether we should take the etymological practice represented in the *Cratylus* seriously; for an argument toward a serious reading of the dialogue, see Sedley 2003, esp. pp. 147–73. On the *Cratylus* as the first study of etymology in Greek, see Dion. Hal. *Comp*. 16.20–24; see also Partee 1972. For further discussion, see pp. 124–25.

[61] On the definition and concept of ἀνδρεία, see Rosen and Sluiter 2003, esp. Bassi 2003: 25–26, 32–56, and, on the concept of courage generally, Smoes 1995. See further, on Aristophanes and ἀνδρεία, chapter 4, n. 15; on Plato, p. 128 and chapter 5, n. 26.

"Woman" (*gunē*), on the other hand, and "femininity" (*to thēlu*) are assimilated to "birth" (*gonē*) and "nipple" (*thēlē*) respectively.[62] The term for "man," then, connects men to the "masculine" quality of bravery, while women are deemed by the very fabric of the word that describes them to be associated only with birth and breastfeeding.

For us today, the binary between male and female, reflected in the masculine/feminine opposition in grammar and the enshrinement of stereotypical "masculine" and "feminine" qualities in words, is an uncomfortable one. So too is the uncompromising conflation of sex and gender: the idea that a biological male must also exhibit (and will only exhibit) socially and culturally defined "masculine" traits, and a biological female "feminine" ones, even in—among other things—the language they use.[63] This opposition between male and female, and the conflation of sex and gender, were assumptions which structured the ancient Greek world, thought, literature, and—as we have seen—even grammar.[64] And yet it is also not true to say that we do not see important moments where the boundaries of this structure are being challenged. We find depictions of women, like Helen and Andromache in the *Iliad*, Clytemnestra in Aeschylus's *Agamemnon*, Sophocles's Antigone or Diotima in Plato's *Symposium*, who attempt to take on masculine roles and speech, challenge male hierarchies, or even subvert the biology of the male body (chapters 1 and 5). We find male poets sketching male characters (indeed, other male poets) that cross gender binaries in both their language and their dress, like Aristophanes's Agathon in *Women at the Thesmophoria* (chapter 4). We see Euripides using the masculine word *aoidos*, "singer-man," for women, to explore what a world would look like in which women could appropriate culturally masculine spheres of activity (chapter 6). And we come across women poets like Sappho, Eurydice, Corinna, and Nossis who, simply through the act of speaking, defy the cultural conventions of the "public" sphere as male, and, in their poetry, rewrite the tradition of male-authored literature (as we will see in chapters 8 and 9). These moments of gendered rupture are not outliers, I suggest: they are precisely the crucibles in which gender is both constructed and contested. In this sense, I am interested, not in gender as some kind of "fixed" or "essential" category, but in the resistances, breakages, and slippages in gendered language, where the so-called "fixed" categories that appear to structure Greek language, literature, and society are called into question.[65] This book, then, traces the constant tension between the construction of gender in language by men in ways that enforced (and reinforced) the gender opposition and binary—and the ways in which those gender norms were challenged, tested, broken down, and rewritten by women and (sometimes) men. Bonnie McElhinny asks of gender and language theorists, "When is gender relevant?"[66] The answer is that, when it comes to poetic authorship in the ancient world, gender is always relevant: because it is always implicated in the contexts of poetic production, in the performance of the gendered voice, and in the very word for "poet" itself.

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[62] καὶ τὸ ἄρρεν καὶ ὁ ἀνὴρ ἐπὶ παραπλησίῳ τινὶ τούτῳ ἐστί, τῇ ἄνω ῥοῇ. γυνὴ δὲ γονή μοι φαίνεται βούλεσθαι εἶναι. τὸ δὲ θῆλυ ἀπὸ τῆς θηλῆς τι φαίνεται ἐπωνομάσθαι, Pl. *Cra*. 414a1–5; cf. Arist. *Poet*. 1454a22–4.

[63] Note, on men and women speaking differently, Ar. fr. 706 K-A; cf. chapter 4, n. 34. Compare Pl. *Cra*. 392c–d (on men's and women's naming of Astyanax/Scamandrius) and 418b7–419b4, where women are envisioned as preserving an older form of language (see McDonald 2016: 166, Clackson 2015: 129, Fögen 2004: 221–22); cf. *Ion* 540b10–11. See also Arist. *De poet*. fr. 63 Janko, Arist. *Poet*. 1454a31. For an overview of gender-specific language in antiquity, see Fögen 2004; on women's language in the ancient world, see Gilleland 1980, McClure 1999a, Willi 2003: 157–97, Kruschwitz 2012.

[64] For an introduction to gender in the ancient world, see Holmes 2012: 1–13; see also Winkler 1990, Zeitlin 1996, Wyke 1998, McClure 2002.

What's in a Name?

Over the course of this book, I construct a history of the gendering of poets in Greek literature, from the beginnings of archaic poetry to the end of the Hellenistic period. Part I explores the earliest Greek term for poet, *aoidos*, as a "singer-man" who safeguarded poetic production as a male undertaking in counterpoint to the power of women's voices. Opening with Homer, I explore in chapter 1 how the Homeric epics forged a new vocabulary for the male poet, which would have an immense and lasting impact on the gendering of authorship across ancient Greek literature. The role of the poet, and the words he uses, are defined in Homer as "a concern for men" alone, particularly in the *Odyssey*—yet, at the same time, women's powerful voices (like that of Helen, who defines herself as *aoidimos*, "sung of") pose a distinct, and challenging, provocation to the masculinity of the bard which remains in tension, particularly in the triple female lament which closes the *Iliad*. Chapter 2 shows how Hesiod draws on this exploration of women's voices to develop the gendered relationship between the poet and the Muses, as a pathway to the appropriation of the female voice. The poet of the *Theogony*, as *Mousaōn therapōn* (servant of the Muses), is able both to take possession of the female creative power of the Muse and to exclude her from poetic production. Meanwhile, in the *Works and Days*, we encounter a metaphorical female voice in the fable of the hawk and the nightingale, *aēdōn* (cognate with *aeidein*, "to sing"), whose identity as a singing female and potential *aoidos* culminates in her silencing by the male hawk. Moving to the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* in chapter 3, Hermes's evisceration of the tortoise to create the first instrument of song, the lyre, is read as a prolonged rape analogy that powerfully demonstrates the male cooption of the feminine apparatus of song.

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[65] See Kern 1961, Livia 2003: 142–48 against inherent male/female "styles," in contrast to the influential discussion of *écriture féminine* in Cixous 1976; for a summary of the debate over the existence of "feminine" types of language, see Moi 1985, Lanser 1992: 3–24.

[66] McElhinny 2003: 33.

Part II continues the thread of male poetic self-definition, but moves to the new term for poet, *poiētēs*, which emerged in the fifth century BCE. This word, I suggest, demonstrates novel ways of demarcating the masculinity of the poet, that connects the poet's role as "maker" with the "making" of men in the state—creating a new, civic vision of a male *poiētēs*, from Aristophanes's exploration of the role of the "poet-man" (*anēr poiētēs*) in shaping the men of the Athenian state (chapter 4), to Plato's insistence on the erasure of female speech and prescription of the right kind of poet in the ideal republic (chapter 5). Yet there are hints of resistance to this vision—for example, with Diotima in Plato's *Symposium*, the (ventriloquized) woman who appears to challenge the imagery of gendered poets to argue for a radical understanding of *poiētēs* as a uniquely female form of generativity and creativity.

The figure of Diotima, and her argument for a gendered interpretation of the *poiētēs*, provides the turning point to explore the possibility of a language to describe female poets. Part III charts the struggle for words as male poets attempted to come up with new terms to describe women who wrote, in a language that (as yet) had no words to do so. In chapter 6, I show how Euripides, who gives voice to a multiplicity of female experiences in his plays, explores different "othered" contexts in which the term *aoidos* might be gendered feminine. And yet, as the chorus of the *Medea* tells us, this attempt to rewrite the tradition from a female perspective in the end simply reinforces male stereotypes regarding women's speech and characterization. A pivotal moment is Herodotus's treatment of Sappho (chapter 7), whom he calls a *mousopoios* (music-maker), despite using the term *poiētēs* several times of male poets. By creating a variation on a term from Sappho's poetry—*mousopolos*, or "one who serves the Muses" (fr. 150 L-P)—Herodotus refuses to use Sappho's own vocabulary for herself, undercuts the gendered and poetic power of the Sapphic term, and, instead, signals a form of gender segregation that subordinates her to the male poetic community. This approach paves the way for later depictions of Sappho (and other female poets) as first a woman, second a poet: while Antipater of Sidon calls Sappho an *aoidos* (three hundred years after Herodotus), these two instances form the only moments where Sappho is termed "poet" in all extant male-authored Greek literature to the end of the Hellenistic period. But there is another side to the story: the chapter ends with inscriptional evidence for a historical *poiētria* (female poet), Aristodama of Smyrna, which indicates that women could, in certain contexts and genres, earn praise and public memorialization for their songs in their own right, to be acknowledged as a *poiētria*.

Part IV takes up the example of Aristodama to give voice to how women poets came up with a name of their own, through their knowing, intertextual engagement with canonical moments of male poets' gendered self-definition. It reveals how women poets demonstrated their ability to generate new, supple terms to express their gendered identities in their own words, and suggests that they lay claim to a special association with the Muses through their gender, involving aspects of maternity, community, and authorial identity. In chapter 8, I explore the metaphor of mother and daughter as a figure for women's poetic creation and intertextual relationships between women poets—from Sappho's *mousopolos*, which suggests an involved relationship with the Muses as well as a participation in a close-knit community characterized by the mother-daughter bond, to an oracle on Homer's mother and an epigram by Eurydice that rewrites motherhood into notions of authorship. Finally, chapter 9 looks back to the term *aoidos* with which the book began, showing how women contest the masculinity of poet-terms which had become canonically male. I explore how women poets from Sappho to Corinna to the Delphic oracles reject male poet-terms, and instead critique and stage the systems through which women are compared to men—as well as, in an epigram of Nossis, coming up with a new, allusive vocabulary of the female nightingale (*aēdonis*) to lay claim to a powerful, yet subversively masked, connection between female gender and song.

It is a reflection both of the norms of male authorship in antiquity, and the amount of evidence we have, that there should be more chapters analyzing texts by male poets than female. This is an unfortunate, but unavoidable, limitation, due to the fact that women were far less likely than men to be writers in the ancient world, and that what they wrote was far less likely to survive—and it reflects the systematic male-gendering of poetic authorship in ancient Greece, which makes up much of the story of this book. And yet, by looking at gendering across the board, and incorporating female-authored sources (some of them unusual and little known) alongside male, I hope not only to draw attention to the concerted strategies that led to norms of male authorship in Greece and beyond—but also to point us toward the resourceful, inventive women authors of the ancient world who wrote back against these strategies, to come up with new words for themselves. In balancing two parts of the book on men with two parts on women, then—even if only one of those is women writing in their own voices—I aim to do justice to the women poets of the ancient world, whose extradition from norms of male authorship and resultant rewriting of their gendered identity in words this book attempts to trace.

The power of the words we use for ourselves and each other—the power of names, in other words—is a central theme. As such, each part of the book has been given a single word which brings into play the powerful signifiers and metaphors which are often used by poets in their self-identity, signposting the power of the words we use not only for ourselves, but to describe the world around us. Part I, "Lyre," draws on the image of the poet's instrument—gendered feminine in Greek—to symbolize the gender struggles of the archaic bard, and the appropriation of the lyre to the male poet's cause. In part II, "Tool" becomes a link between the advent of the new "maker," *poiētēs,* and the vision of poetry as a means for educating men in the state. The "Wreath" of part III gestures to the symbolic appropriation of women poets by men; while part IV, "Bird," calls on the figure of the nightingale as a reconceptualization of women's voices and relationship to poetry.

This book, then, is not simply about reading individual poets, but addresses multiple themes in the performance of gender—the manifold ways in which each poet engages with gendering. The ultimate aim is an exploration of the gender strategies of Greek literature, not simply a new way of reading Homer, Plato, or Sappho—though it is my hope that looking at gender strategies will feed back into our understanding of these texts in new and interesting ways, and shed new light on familiar texts. In so doing, many themes recur throughout the book, crossing between the different linguistic and gender strategies of the poets analyzed. A particularly frequent topic is that of the Muses, and the way in which the gendered relationship between the (mostly male) poet and the female Muses frames the gender of the poet. Another is the conceptualization of mother/fatherhood as a gendered model of literary lineage—

either in the relationship between poet as mother/father and poem as child, or in the sequence of the literary tradition with previous poetic forebears modeled as "parents." Other themes include the voice, agency (particularly in relation to women characters and poets), community, gender-bending, imitation, performance, and the body; cross-references are included throughout the text as much as possible, to facilitate interactions between the different genres, texts, and periods covered. This book can therefore be read in two ways—front-to-back, as a diachronic history of the gendering of Greek poets; or crossing between different themes to make connections and relationships between different texts and intertexts. My hope is that this enables the survey of Greek poets to be accessible to a reader who might not be familiar with the source material, while those who are can feel free to jump between the texts to take stock of the overarching thematic connections. It is, then—to borrow a metaphor from the economist Colin Camerer—a book for both snorkeling and diving: snorkeling for those who want to get an overview of the way gender and poetics interact in Greek literature without the need for an intimate knowledge of ancient philology, or those who might be interested in applying the same general methodologies to other areas, time periods, or texts; and diving for those who want to go deep into the text, and perhaps draw their own conclusions or take further the initial thoughts advanced here.[67]

In a project such as this, it is impossible to cover everything. Precedence has therefore been given to tracing the wider story of the gendering of the poet in Greek literature, rather than to a comprehensive account of every occurrence of each term in every genre and time period. In other words, this is a narrative, not a concordance. The focus here is on a new and interactive understanding, bridging across different texts and time periods, rather than encyclopedism. At the same time, by narrowing my scope to the terms for poetic authorship (rather than the many adjectives, verbal periphrases, metaphors, and mechanisms surrounding literary production) and instituting the chronological end point of 31 BCE, I have done my best to be able to include here the most important instances of gendered poet-terms in Greek literature up to the end of the Hellenistic period.[68] Meanwhile, the focus on gendered naming means that other aspects of poetry which are clearly relevant to the construction of gender—such as the social function of poetry, its composition and performance contexts, trends in musical developments, and so on—have necessarily had to take a sideline, though I have done my best to incorporate them as and when I could, and to point the reader to the important work that is being done on gender in these different areas. In some sense, the need to impose boundaries shows just how rich this area is as a line of inquiry—the sheer volume of evidence for poet-terms, and the continuation of the topic as a central line of thought well beyond the periods and language covered here. This inevitably means I cannot say everything—and I see that as a good thing. I am not, nor do I claim to be, an expert on all the authors I treat; rather, I am taking a particular lens to these texts and using my interest in gender and poetic authorship as a way into interpreting them in what are hopefully new and thought-provoking ways.

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[67] Camerer 2003: xiv.

[68] Although it should be noted that—though beyond the scope of this study—Greek literature of the imperial period has many interesting things to say on both gender and the figure of the poet; see Dihle 1994: 312, Whitmarsh 2004: 161–76.

This book has an ambitious goal. It proposes that we can read the story of Greek literature as a continuously negotiated contest of gender. At the same time, it asks us to think about the ways that we use language today, and the power of words to shore up, and bring down, gender hierarchies. If it succeeds in challenging its readers to see old texts in new ways, if it encourages them to come to the study of the past as a site of gender negotiation, and makes them reflect on the importance of thinking through how we use words to describe ourselves and others—then it will have achieved its aims.

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