

Working 9 to 3 (because I have to pick up the kids)

AN EXPLORATION INTO THE VIEW OF WOMEN AND ART
THROUGH A CRITICAL READING OF ARISTOTLE AND FREUD

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Introduction

I begin this at around 2.30pm on a Tuesday afternoon, with not long to work as in half an hour I have to pick up my imaginary children from school. Little Susie and Jeremy won't be happy if I am late, and my hypothetical husband would not bring himself away from the office early to collect them (he, of course, can happily work until 5 without issue). And with me being a woman without a proper job (being an artist that is), I am left with no choice but to cut my working short and get them myself. I am sorry, Dolly, but you may have to change the lyrics to really encompass the reality of a woman.

This is exactly what I want to explore. How women have been perceived in terms of their place in community, which is mainly as a secondary to man. I will focus on Sigmund Freud and Aristotle, two well-known thinkers who had particularly strong views on women (particularly that of a passive being who acts as an empty vessel for the using of men), both who still have significant contemporary relevance. Aristotle has experienced success since his demise in a number of cultures and founded philosophical and scientific language which is still deemed to be useful. And while analysing the relevance of Greek philosophy now, we have to overcome the historicist approach and remember that although our views have been transformed by contemporary sciences, a lot of current concepts are rooted in ancient philosophy (Berti, 2011, p.23-24). Although a more controversial figure, Freud situates himself as being a creator of a perennial legacy through developing a whole branch of science. The repeat teaching of his work in schools and the concepts he set out which are still discussed now proves his relevance in contemporary society, regardless of whether you necessarily agree with him (Lothane, 2006, p.285-286). Although there is a quite large jump in timescales, Aristotle and Freud place themselves very similarly in their thinking in terms of women, which can be perceived as quite naïve and sexist.

Through more modern and feminist writers Christine Battersby, Karen Horney and Luce Irigaray. By looking at their texts and theories, I would like to use these as a lens of which to analyse artwork by the artists Praxiteles of Athens, Niki de Saint-Phalle, Salvador Dalí, Luis Buñuel and Leonor Fini. Although this may be coming across as more of a philosophical essay, ideas similar to Aristotle's and Freud's are what female and feminist artists are trying to destroy. It is important to critique them because if we do not, we are left with views which reduce women to objects of male desire and use.

It is also important to note that in this essay I will refer to only cisgender men and cisgender women. While I obviously acknowledge that the world is full of an abundance of genders, the theories I am looking at only specify cisgender men

and cisgender women. Using just cisgender men and cisgender women allows for some more clarity.

Chapter 1 – Woman as a cultural, biological flowerpot

When looking at writings surrounding women, particularly those based upon the place of women in society, it is clear to see that these are written by upper class, wealthy, white men. This fact is very apparent and important, as these people already situate themselves as 'better'. I believe that the fact that such well-established male writers have written about women has contributed to the negativity around women.

Take the works of Aristotle. Born in 384 BC in what is now Greek Macedonia, Aristotle studied under Plato and wrote about pretty much any subject you can think of: physics, biology, ethics, music, theatre and politics to name a few (Shields, 2013, p.18). Although he has always been regarded highly, there are many challenges provided by his surviving texts to the modern reader. There are issues surrounding dating, and in turn this impacts the authenticity (Shields, 2013, p.24). So, as much as I want to criticise Aristotle's writings, these issues must also be considered.

Aristotle had what I would call a very baffling view of women. Summed up best in Christine Battersby's 'Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics', 'Aristotle had argued that the superiority of males can be seen in their larger size, and in the fact that the reproductive organs have grown outwards, instead of remaining underdeveloped inside the body' (1994, p.28-29). Quite simply, having internal genitalia seems to be a very negative thing, maybe because the complexities are hidden from the man and cause him to feel extremely frustrated. Without external genitalia, woman is perceived as a lesser man. Women are seen as a kind of monster or abnormality due to their lack of heat. This lack of heat, which has no scientific backing, is what stops a human reaching their full potential during conception (with full potential here meaning being a male). As women lack heat, it appears as though their growth has been stunted, both in their size compared to men and in their genitalia. If a woman were to have heat, then she would be a man. This expands further through what is now called Aristotle's 'flower-pot' theory of reproduction. According to Aristotle, women simply cannot procreate and are the sterile sex. Imagine you want to grow a flower (the flower of course being a baby). The male semen is the seed and is the only active part of the process. Now women being sterile just provide the soil, container and environmental conditions. Again, according to Battersby: 'A woman is treated as a cultural, as well as biological flower-pot... The role of woman

within the society is like the role of her womb: she provides a suitable environment within which the best individuals (free Greek males) can flourish and perfect human civilization.’ (1994, p.29). Here, Battersby is signaling that Aristotle only saw the importance of men, and that woman’s only role is to create more men. Simply put, women are infertile males, and if a man were to be castrated, he would revert to the female state.

It's not just genitalia that signals the weakness of women. Women also have high voices, just like children, as women are too weak for a deep voice and a noble nature. He also believed that some aspects of women are due to social conditioning. A woman need not be weak during pregnancy, as she could change this through exercise, breath control, and visiting the temple daily. She is more emotional, more jealous, more querulous, less hopeful, more void of self-respect and needs less food. She also spends part of each month being debilitated due to her expelling of blood (Clark, 1982, p.179-182). She does not really have that much going for her.

In short, according to Aristotle, a woman is nothing more than an empty vessel, able to do nothing but be a servant to her husband and to hold his children in her womb. A lack of a penis seems to serve as nothing but a hindrance to her life.

Chapter 2 – Woman as a temple of worship

Ideas like Aristotle’s can be seen in a lot of early artworks, and I believe the best way to show his ideas in action are through Ancient Greek sculptures, due to them being produced around the same time as Aristotle’s writings. As I researched the artwork of the Ancient Greeks, the piece ‘Aphrodite of Knidos’ by Praxiteles of Athens was one which instantly stood out to me. Aphrodite, the Goddess of love, is depicted here naked and holding her robe in her hand. Her hand covers her genitals and a vessel



Figure 1 – Praxiteles, 4th Century BC. Aphrodite Of Knidos. [Sculpture]

is situated next to her. Presented as one of the first free-standing female nude sculpture, it sits as a piece which clearly idealises the female body (Barrow, 2005, p.348-349).

What might be most noticeable about this piece is the pose Aphrodite is placed in. This pose, which was supposedly created by Praxiteles, is called the pudica pose. Very similarly used to that of the fig leaf, the hand is placed seemingly unconsciously across the pubic area as both a method of modesty and to point towards her source of power (Howard, 1986, p290-291). But this pose also brings attention to where the hand lies, which seems to make the attempt of modesty void. As the pose draws you to the female genitalia, it is evident that there is no detail there compared to the God-like depictions of men. When it comes to the statues created of men, a lot of care and attention is brought into the genitals, as though the heighten the importance of men.

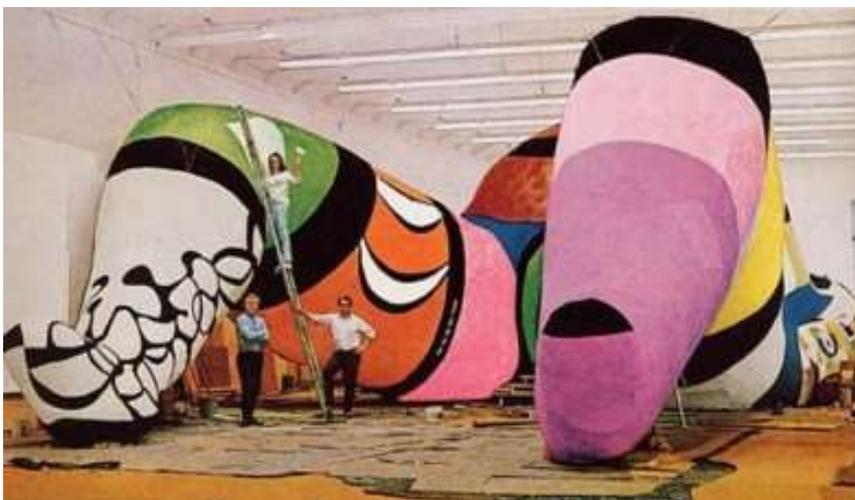
In the book 'Generations and Geographies in the Visual Arts: Feminist Readings' (edited by Griselda Pollock), Nanette Salomon the use of the pudica pose in this piece. She discussed the fact that when a survey was taken of sixth and fifth century Greek monumental figurative sculptures, it was clear that there were strong differences in gender depictions. The kouroi (athletic male youths) stood fully nude at the pinnacle of youth and heroism, while the korai (the female version), are always covered by drapery. The male body is revered as something important and beautiful, while the female remains simply something to be adorned by decoration. The penis isn't presented in any special way, similarly to how a foot or elbow would be presented, as it is not specifically about being sexually attractive. Although Aphrodite is covering herself, the drawing of her hand to her pubis reduces her to her sexuality. Even as a goddess, which you would imagine would put her above all human beings, she is left fearful of being seen and wants to hide herself, while the viewer becomes a voyeur. By covering her pubis, the area becomes the thing which the viewer wants to see most. The image of Aphrodite is both constructed and managed by a man and the centuries of repressed female nudity (2005, p.91-95). We are left at a place where even the highest form of woman is reduced to her naked body, held there by the male gaze.

The male gaze is something which arises in the majority of artworks involving women, simply because women have been led to survey themselves. As they become aware by the gaze of man, they gaze upon themselves. How a woman appears is determined by man. And thus, she becomes the object. Praxiteles made Aphrodite nude for an 'ideal' viewer, which is assumed to be a man. This relationship is still ingrained into women now and so they examine their own femininity, just as men do. Aphrodite is not just naked, but nude. To be nude is to

be on display, to be placed in a way where everyone can look upon you and examine you. And as Aphrodite is aware of the spectator, which is known by the way she covers herself; she is not naked to herself but as the viewer sees her (Berger, 2008, p.45-64).

Luce Irigaray is a French writer known for her critiques of male philosophers, and she often critiqued Aristotle in her writing. In her book 'An Ethics of Sexual Difference', she discussed Aristotle's notion of the existence of the female gender: 'this absence of inscription of its causes and effects in the chain of casualties leads, for example, to Aristotle's notion that woman is engendered as if by accident' (1993, p.90). The existence of woman is no more than a genetic aberration or illness, with the gendering of the offspring coming from the male seed alone. Irigaray was confused by Aristotle's statement that the female seed is inactive and not necessary: 'Here is an indication that the female does not discharge semen of the same kind as the male, and that the offspring is not formed from a mixture of two semens.' (Aristotle and Peck, 1963). Here, the female is presented as something which is purely disposable.

If this view of women is true, then can it be possible for them to have a place without men and children. It appears to Irigaray that woman is the place, as some sort of vessel. But she also discussed the idea that men can also be a vessel, a place where he can receive her. In order for a man and a woman to engage in a meeting, each person must be a place or vessel. They must both have the capacity to accept each other (Freeland, 1998, p.77). The idea of women as an empty container solely designed for the penis and eventually a baby is not only harmful but reduces the female body to nothing but an object. Rather than being a subject, she is a piece of property with no basic right to autonomy or choices around sexuality and pregnancy (Freeland, 1998, p.81). This means that woman is left to be nothing. She is left to the use of man and then discarded aside.



We can also challenge the work of Aristotle through artwork, as many contemporary female artists have used their work to challenge ideas like this. Take Niki de Saint-Phalle's

Figure 2 – Saint-Phalle, N., Tinguely, J. and Ultveldt, P., 1966. Hon-En Katedral. [Plaster and Paint].

piece 'Hon – en katedral' (She – a cathedral), which was a collaboration with Jean Tinguely and Per Olof Ultvedt. Sitting at a total of eighty-two feet long, 'Hon' consisted of a female figure who lay on her back with her knees in the air and feet planted firmly on the ground (Chadwick, 1990, p.312). Visitors were encouraged to enter her body through her vagina. As they entered, they found an art gallery, a movie theatre playing a Greta Garbo film a planetarium and a milk bar in her right breast. There was even a terrace at the top of her pregnant stomach which visitors could use to view those entering (Dossin, 2010, p.33). The milk bar in the right breast feels very significant to me. Saint-Phalle does not deny the fact that women are expected to give birth and raise children, however, the addition of every other place of entertainment shows that this is not all women are able to do. Here, woman is no longer an empty vessel like Aristotle believed but a temple which honours female divinity and pleasure and moves from an object of voyeuristic viewing to a place of tactile pleasure.

I chose this piece specifically because it is a sculptural representation of a woman which is not made by a man. Unlike Praxiteles' 'Aphrodite of Knidos', this piece may not be medically realistic, but it is a more accurate to what women are actually like (which is the complete opposite of what Aristotle wrote about). Hon sits in a position opposite to Aphrodite. She lies on her back with her legs spread apart, welcoming people to the area that Aphrodite hides. It becomes something which is not shameful because Hon decides to show that part of herself. While Aphrodite was reduced to nothing more than an object of male desire, Hon used her body as a weapon, by shifting from just a body to a temple to worship women (Antille, 2013, p.76-77).

Hon being compared to a cathedral is something that differs herself from most artworks. While man has God to compare himself to, woman has nothing to mirror herself against. The phallogocentric structures that are in place means that man creates the representation of woman and projects it upon her. To Irigaray, woman has rarely ever used her body as a spiritual weapon (Robinson, 2006, p/170-171). In her essay *Divine Woman*, Irigaray wrote, 'the only diabolical thing about woman is their lack of a God and the fact that, deprived of God, they are forced to comply with models that do not match them, that exile, double, mask them, cut them off from themselves and from one another.' (2015). So, to become divine, they must make themselves into the image of God, which due to the lack of a female God is a man (with a man being Aristotle's ideal human being). Not only does Hon remove herself from the model set out for her, which is a body simply to be gazed upon, but she becomes divine in her own terms. As a cathedral, she is brought closer to God without becoming him.

Hon is an example of how woman being a vessel is not necessarily negative. Rather than presenting herself as empty and at the will of man, she is full and focused on pleasure. Even when she has children she is not simply just a container for them to grow but a 'womb, earth, factory, bank' (Irigaray, 1985, p.18). According to Irigaray, woman is a place, but not for herself: 'She is supposed only to be a container for the child, according to one moral position. She may be a container for the man. But not for herself' (1993, p.37). While she is a vessel, the definition doesn't fit the complexities she holds. She must contain the child and the man in different ways: the child is held within her, the man in a sense enters to aim towards the first place. But there is no way she can be a container for herself. While the child is in the womb, and the penis in the woman as long as she allows, the woman is in the house. This is different to living in a body as the real place is inside of her. Place exists as both bodily organs and a vessel, meaning she is both woman and mother (1993, p.37-45).

This is why Hon is so fascinating. As well as being a vessel full of people and pleasure, she also has no place for herself. Even though she is in a gallery space, she is not contained in the same way. In a sense she is above the space, existing in her own sense.

Chapter 3 – Woman as a passive secondary

Although they may seem like worlds apart, Aristotle and Freud are actually very similar in their views. The jump in time period is something which almost put me off talking about the two of them in the same text, but it clearly shows a lack in advancement in the understanding of women. And, like Aristotle, I do not agree with a single word Freud writes. While he is problematic, his contribution to psychoanalytic sciences have been very important.

For those not familiar with the work of Sigmund Freud I will provide a brief summary. Born in 1856, Freud has become one of the most notable names in the science of psychoanalysis (Tansley, 1941, p.247). Psychoanalysis, quite simply put, places all humans as controlled by unconscious thoughts and memories, and focuses on ideas of 'patriarchal power, repression, resistance, knowledge, sex and castration.' (Sayers, 1992, p.3).

I believe that the most accurate depiction of Freud's opinion of women comes from his lecture 'Femininity' (1932). As a man, Freud feels the need to comment on what women are and similar to Aristotle, refers to femininity as 'passive' and masculinity as 'active': 'the male sex-cell is actively mobile and searches out the female one, and the latter, the ovum, is immobile and waits passively.' (Freud et

al., 1964, p.114). Although he does go on to explain that women can 'display great activity in various directions' (Freud et al., 1964, p.115), this seems to only be in terms of nursing a child. From the start, little girls are expected to be passive, and have total control of herself (such as her faeces), which is why this leniency Freud has leaves me confused. How could a woman be perceived as active when she is expected to be so passive? Maybe, activeness can only be achieved post the penetration of men and the loss of virginity. As little girls are always expected to be passive and mature, they could never surely reach a state of activeness. Or perhaps, women only lack activeness in the eyes of Freud because that's what they are told to be.

This passivity, which also manifests itself as a characteristic of being secondary to men, is not the only way women are placed as being lower. As Freud himself put it: 'girls hold their mother responsible for their lack of penis and do not forgive her for their bring thus put at a disadvantage' (Freud et al., 1964, p.124). As little girls begin to notice those around them, particularly the genitalia of others, it becomes clear to them that something must be wrong. This leads to penis envy, along with a belief she has been castrated. She believes that her mother refused her of a penis, and now she expects this from her father. So, not only is the male father figure being put at a higher position due to his ability to in what I can only explain as to 'give a penis', but the female mother figure is reduced to a symbol of dissatisfaction (1964, p.126-128). As the girl grows up and has her own children, she herself becomes that symbol.

So where does this leave women in the community? Envious of men, angry at their mothers, desperate for a penis-baby and doomed to be eternally house bound.



Figure 3 – Buñuel, L. and Dalí, S., 1929. Un Chien Andalou. [Silent Film].

Chapter 4 – Woman as a strong, powerful entity of envy

One piece heavily influenced by the writings of Freud is 'Un Chien Andalou' (Salvador Dalí and Luis Buñuel, 1928), which is often referred to as 'one of the most universally acclaimed films

in cinema history' (Lopez, 2001, p.35).

When watching the film, it is apparent that the symbolism of hands is something pivotal, especially the fact that all of the hands belong to men. These hands, whether wounded or severed, speak to Freud's theory surrounding castration and the unconscious fear of it (Stent, 2011, p.38). This phobia of castration is one which emerges during childhood. Little boys discover their penis and determine that it is a source of pleasure, as well as assuming that everyone has one. Once they realise what castration is, they see the little girls around them and are faced with a fear of what can happen to them. Little girls, on the other hand, see their clitoris and it becomes a symbol of inferiority (Stafford-Clark, 1967, p.94-95). From the get-go, there feels as though there is such a strong emphasis on the unimportance and undesirable nature of the female genitalia, which ultimately becomes a lack of penis (Stent, 2011, p.39).

The death of the androgynous figure by car becomes a key event in the film. The man watching from the window seems to be turned on by this event, and so lunges at the woman next to him and gropes her breast. This act of sexual assault is a result of convention and society. The act of androgyny is prevented and destroyed by society (in place of the policeman and the car) and awakens heterosexual desire. When his advances are rejected and he is shut out of the room, we enter a rather maternal section of the film. As the mother figure sees her son in bed, 'the room becomes the symbolical representation of the maternal womb from which the child is removed by the violence of the father' (Lopez, 2001, p.45). We are faced with a state where sexual force is not currently under control and is opposed to the norm, as the son is presented in female and male clothing. This changes however when the father punishes him and introduces him to education. The education symbolises societal norms which are pushed upon everyone, and the apparent need for hierarchy among men and women. With the influence of society, it is not feasible that the son should wear both male and female attire and should establish himself as a man.

Throughout the film, women are placed in the community as a threat towards men. This is particularly evident in the final still of the film, where a couple is half-buried in the sand. They appear motionless and are covered in ants. We appear to have come to the final stage of procreation and enter into an inescapable cycle. Not only does the child become a new husband, but he is left to face the same dangers as his father before him. As the male succumbs to the seductions of the female, his identity is taken away and he enters the cycle which ends in his death (Lopez, 2002, p.47).

Sometimes I feel as though there is far too much respect for Freud. Although that may seem harsh, he helped to establish a branch of psychology that relies too

heavy on data which is not even there. Although I do not feel a particular affinity to psychoanalysis, I do resonate somewhat with the ideas of Karen Horney, and her constant criticism of Freud's work. I was brought to the attention of the work of Horney through Janet Sayer's 'Mothering Psychoanalysis'. This text focuses on the revolution of psychoanalysis: 'once patriarchal and phallogocentric, it is now almost entirely mother-centred' (1992, p.3). Horney came from a place which completely debunked Freud's theory: she loved her mother. This may not seem like such an abstract concept, but it allowed Horney to discuss Freud's work and 'abandon Freud's theory of the unconscious and infantile sexuality altogether' (1992, p.85).

What Horney particularly disagreed with was Freud's idea of 'penis envy', and instead formed her own theory around 'womb envy'. Men, as a group, have forced an inferiority upon women by making themselves the enviable sex. This inferiority is placed on them as men do not want to show their envy of women for having a womb. Horney learnt this through analysing men and was surprised by 'the intensity of this envy of pregnancy, childbirth, and motherhood, as well as of the breasts of the act of suckling' (Horney, 1976, p.60-61). From when they are young, men have the perfect idea of what a woman and a mother should be. She should not only be nurturing and self-sacrificing but should also fulfil man's every need and expectation. When the man cannot become this himself, he is left bitter and turns to give birth to a culture where women are excluded. The envy of motherhood is lessened by the overvaluing of male genitalia. And from there, penis envy is forced upon women. Not only does man undervalue the place of woman, but also creates a sense of fear around her. A boy's mother is the first woman he will see naked and it is probably one of the first times he will acknowledge the existence of the female genitalia. According to Horney, the young boy judges his penis and sees it as too small for his mother. From then on, a sense of fear is created around the vagina as it caused such ridicule and rejection. This fear of rejection follows them into later life (Sayers, 1992, p.101-104). So, in turn, penis envy has been fabricated and culturally ingrained into women to raise the status of men and increase the value of the penis.

While women can take part in masculine activities without losing their female identity, this is not the same for men. Men are the norm while women are the deviance. By devaluing the vagina and womb, men are able to protect themselves from losing their sense of masculinity and so both motherhood and womanhood becomes a feature of the secondary nature of woman (Bayne, 2011, p.151-160).

Female surrealist Leonor Fini was known for her powerful and erotic depictions of women. In the piece, Fini is presented as ruling over a group of sphinxes in her role as the shepherdess, set in an apocalyptic landscape. The myth of the sphinx is something which was often depicted by surrealists, as she channeled ideas of forbidden desire, self-questioning and the fantasy of femme fatale. It is also something which Freud had discussed in his work. The sphinx to him symbolised forbidden sexuality and threatening femininity. Fini's sphinx took on a different meaning to the male surrealists, who traditionally

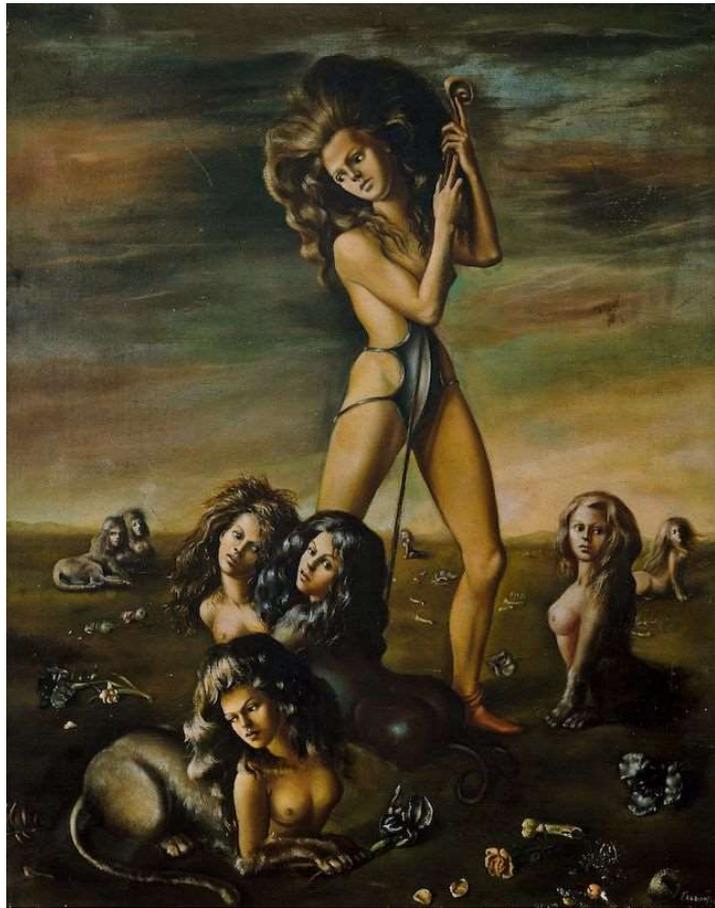


Figure 4 – Fini, L., 1941. La Bergère Des Sphinx. [Oil on Canvas].

followed Freud's logic. The Egyptian sphinx she presented in her works was not only a mistress of riddles but a guardian of life, rather than just a threat of death. This depiction of the sphinx is a proto-feminist icon (Mahon, 2013, p.1-6). By placing them in the apocalyptic landscape surrounded by decay, they are linked to the idea of new life springing from the deterioration (Grew, 2015, p.8).

The positioning of Fini as the guardian is also important. As the shepherdess, she wears armour which barely covers her abdomen. Although it resembles a chastity belt, the manner in which she straddles the crook creates a sense of sexual prowess. What is also apparent is the appearance of sterility. Not only is the armour acting as a barrier to her vagina, but she is also surrounded by symbols of destruction: the bones, the eggshells and the severed flower heads, as well as the sphinxes. Although the sphinxes represent both life and death, and the other symbols have been ruined for the result of renewal, there is a sense that the creation is not through procreation. As the shepherdess is not involved in reproduction in the traditional sense, she becomes a symbol of ambiguity to traditional society (Grew, 2015, p.7) Through this work, Fini is reversing the gender roles and making women active rather than passive. The shepherdess is

becoming an active member of the reproduction process, which is something that Freud was against.

The female figures depicted in this piece mirror the ideas that Horney tried to convey. The shepherdess, who mirrors a mother-like figure, is strong, powerful and could also be perceived as scary, just like how the mother appears to the young boy. And, just like men have devalued women, the sphinx has been reduced to a symbol of feminine sexuality, which is often looked down upon. Unlike 'Un Chien Andalou', especially the scene where the woman is sexually assaulted, the female figures in this piece are choosing to express their bodies and allow people to look upon them. Similarly, to Saint-Phalle's piece, the characters remove themselves from the male gaze and allow themselves to be viewed on their own terms.

Conclusion

Both Aristotle and Freud act as voices for devaluation of the female body and even though many other men have expressed their opinions on women, their status as prominent historical figures pushes them to be more visible and ultimately more respected in their views. However, despite my disagreement, they were products of their time and will still always be prevalent, even if society seems to have moved passed the ideal view of woman.

Both thinkers sit at a place where their views are held quite high, along with the everyday sexism still experienced by women. Aristotle being one of the ancient philosophers and Freud being the founder of psychoanalysis means that their ideas are still being taught regularly.

I feel as though female thinkers should be taught more, to break down the ideas of binaries and the structure of being a woman. Luce Irigaray in my eyes has the perfect ideas. She acknowledges that women will inevitably be a place for men and children but that she must also find a place for herself. Her ideas don't discredit those who want to follow the traditional ideas of motherhood, as well as those who want to forge a less out-of-date path. Although imperfect, Karen Horney is able to destroy Freud's ideas of femininity so that you see that the superiority of men has been fabricated by men to hide their own envy. The overvaluing of the male genitalia comes from fear and lower self-worth.

What I also struggled with was the lack of information surrounding Niki de Saint-Phalle and Leonor Fini. While there were plentiful writings on Praxiteles, Dalí and Buñuel, very few had written about the female artists which seems to be a regular occurrence. This reinforces exactly what I have been discussing: that

women are a secondary to men. Praxiteles presented woman as nothing more than the subject of the male gaze, fully aware of her sexual prowess but desperate to shield it from oncoming glances. Dalí and Buñuel were very similar in their thinking. Woman was still presented as an object to be looked at and touched but she was also a threat to man through her seductive power. I find Saint-Phalle's work much more compelling because she acknowledges that women will have children, but this doesn't have to be her only function. Her body is not simply an empty vessel to be filled with a penis and a foetus. She is much more focused on pleasure. Rather than being purely a symbol of threat, Fini's woman is more centered around being powerful and bringing life from deterioration, a symbol of activeness.

So, now I leave you. I must remind you that picking up my fictional children from school has to take priority and although sitting here and writing has been fun, it seems to have removed me from the reality of womanhood. Maybe Aristotle and Freud were right. Perhaps I am an empty vessel whose only personality trait is being a fictional mother under the rule of my fictional husband. But maybe one day the constraints will be broken down and being a woman won't depend on having a womb fit for the planting of the male seed.

Word Count: 5605

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