



Women in Ancient Greece

Susan Blundell

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To read the history of ancient Greece as it has been written for centuries is to enter a thoroughly male world. This book, a comprehensive history of women in the Archaic and Classical Ages, completes our picture of ancient Greek society.

Largely excluded from any public role, the women of ancient Greece nonetheless appear in various guises in the art and writing of the period, and in legal documents. These representations, in Sue Blundell's analysis, reveal a great deal about women's day-to-day experience as well as their legal and economic position--and how they were regarded by men. Here are women as portrayed in Homer, in Greek lyric poetry, and by the playwrights; the female nature as depicted in medical writings and by Aristotle; representations of women in sculpture and vase paintings. This is evidence filtered through a male view: Sappho is the only female writer of antiquity much of whose work survives. Yet these sources and others such as regulations and law court speeches reveal a great deal about women's lives and about their status as defined by law and by custom.

By examining the roles that men assigned to women, the ideals they constructed for them, and the anxieties they expressed about them, Blundell sheds light on the cultural dynamics of a male-dominated society. Lively and richly illustrated, her work offers a fresh look at women in the ancient world.

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