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Galatea: A Representation of the Nature of the Goddess

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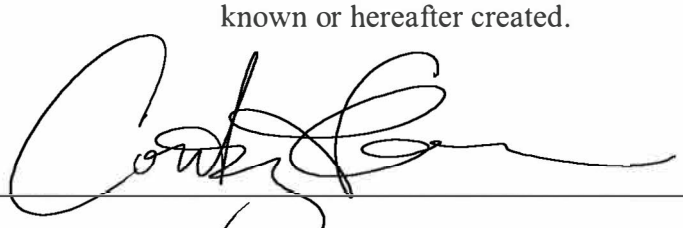
A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Art and Design Department

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Arts in Art History

at

Lindenwood University



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ABSTRACT

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Courtney Flamm, Master of Art History, 2019

Thesis Directed by: Dr. James Hutson, PhD

This paper analyzes the figure Galatea, including the original narratives of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the visual representations of her character. Examinations of these images and the circumstances that surround Galatea's character, including her association with Venus, provide an in-depth exploration of Galatea's relationship to the archetypal Mother Goddess and the role of feminine deities throughout history. As interpreted in the prehistoric past, the ancient Mother Goddess was worshipped as an all-encompassing deity in ancient Sumerian, Egyptian, Aztec, and Greek societies. Her duality as the source of life and death provided a superior nature to her surrounding male counterparts that was ultimately subjugated to a lesser status with the establishment of her powerful masculine counterparts, resulting in her image being transmuted into many lesser goddesses as smaller cults diffused among growing patriarchal societies. Galatea's own superiority as a divine female presence has been lessened to an inferior status as an object of the masculine gaze and control. By analyzing the writings of Ovid with the works of art they inspired and applying the feminist methodology to these ideals, this research argues that the dual nature of Galatea is a figure who is both superior and inferior to the men that surround her and acts as an accurate representation of the treatments of the archetypal goddess as she transitioned from a supreme deity to one subjugated to a lower status due to the circumstances of growing patriarchal ideals. This paper hopes to elevate Galatea's function from a minor character to one of more significance in identifying her image as a representation of the dual nature of the Mother Goddess. Applying the revisionist feminist methodology to Galatea's figure provides an awareness that her character should be recognized as an accurate representation of the nature of the goddess.

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Introduction

Ovid's most significant contribution to the literary and artistic world is his *Metamorphoses,* the collection of narratives chronicling the irrational and often incongruous mythological stories and involvements of various gods and goddesses. Many of the narratives in the epic have been the inspiration behind notable works of artists, playwrights, and poets. While a small excerpt from the epic collection, one presumedly minor character from his familiar tales embodies the essence of an entire history of the suppression of female power, primarily that of the goddess, throughout history: Galatea. A reappraisal of Galatea's character solicits a new perspective in regard to the importance of her role in art history. While she primarily exists in art historical study as a supporting character, one conditioned to conform to the masculine ideals that surround her, her nature provides her image one of larger importance. The imagery of Galatea provides her a more significant role as a representation of the influence of the masculine ideal on feminine power, namely that of the archetypal goddess. Many ancient cultures elevated a Mother Goddess as the supreme creator and originator. This superior female deity was ultimately subject to a demotion in which her all-powerful figure was subordinated and her nature denigrated, which coincided with the cultural preferences of later patriarchal societies. Early civilizations began prizing characteristically masculine attributes for adulation and emulation among their deities, which became reflected in their rulers. The clear superiority of male gods was spread via exchanges with neighboring civilizations. The Greco-Roman religion was no exception to this exchange and the advancing patriarchal ideals of antiquity subsequently affected the mythology and artwork that dominates Western art history, including the depictions of minor characters like Galatea.

This research will provide a new analysis of Galatea that promotes her character as an individualized example of the dual nature of the goddess in mythology. Even though her role in the mythological anthology is small, her character relates to a larger portrayal of gender disparity as a result of masculine influence that can be correlated as a representation of the archetypal goddess. It is important to reassess Galatea's character in these new contexts to continue the modern historical reevaluation of feminine nature after centuries of patriarchal suppression. Past interpretations recount that many prehistoric cultures, such as the Sumerians, Aztecs, Greeks, and Egyptians, elevated a Mother Goddess as the supreme creator and originator. This superior female deity was ultimately subject to a transition in which her all-powerful role and her nature was suppressed to coincide with the cultural preferences of later patriarchal societies. Like the ancient Mother Goddess, Galatea's figure is both exalted and hegemonized. While her nature is superior in its beauty and divine presence, she is also subjugated to an inferior status at the hands of her masculine counterparts as an object of male control. This duality supports Galatea's manifestation as a representation of the treatments of ancient Mother Goddesses. By analyzing the writings of Ovid and the works of art they inspired in terms of her femininity and the symbolic attributes surrounding her, the nature of Galatea can be elevated to one of more significance as an accurate representation of this dual nature that also afflicts the archetypal goddess, namely the Mother Goddess and other fertility deities. This idea creates a new identity for Galatea. Her figure represents a dual nature, which is superior in its beauty and femininity, but is diminished by the masculine ideals that surround her. This nature can be correlated to the same circumstances that subverted the authority of the Mother Goddess as a supreme deity to one hegemonized to the patriarchal ideals of governing societies.

The literary and artistic perception of Galatea's character has been most commonly interpreted as described in two narratives from Ovid's *Metamorphoses.* Ovid's text is generally acknowledged as one of the most influential works in Western culture, providing inspiration for many renowned works of art and literature. The portrayals of Galatea as described by Ovid provide the basis of her character description to be utilized by artists in their visual representations of her figure. The first of these mythological narratives, *Acis and Galatea*, involves the sea-nymph and her amorous struggle with the Cyclops, Polyphemus. The narrative recounts the monster's fruitless attempts to woo the beautiful Galatea in a comedic display of sweet talk and flattery. When the monster spied the resplendent Galatea in the arms of her lover, the river-nymph, Acis, he becomes enraged. In his vindictive fury, Polyphemus hurled a boulder at the couple, where it reached Acis and "crushed and smothered him."[1] This ill-fated mythological narrative fosters concerns pertaining to the archetypal dilemma of the goddess: she is both superior in her power, beauty, and divine presence, yet is subjected to a lesser status by the masculine hand, that of the embittered Polyphemus. Galatea's character is heavily dependent on the actions of the male characters, as her character is subject to the actions of the violent cyclops, Polyphemus, and yet, she has no control over his actions. The supremacy of her femininity is figuratively influenced by the male gaze under the literal stare of the cyclops' singular eye. Furthermore, the artworks that followed can be examined with the same connotations of masculine influence in theoretical studies of Galatea's appearance, compositional placement, and surrounding symbols. These concepts can and will be analyzed in various artworks throughout history, including works from Raphael, Annibale Carracci, and Gustave Moreau.

[1] Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* Trans. A.D. Melville. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986): 321.

In addition to the story of *Acis and Galatea*, Ovid's *Pygmalion* also includes Galatea as a sculpted ideal woman created at the hands of the titular character, Pygmalion. This story of Galatea also focuses on the idealization of women under the male gaze and initiates a deep debate concerning the feminine identity among scholars. Galatea undergoes treatments that construct opposing perspectives in relation to the female essence, or, physical beauty and ideal manners. Her identity is displayed as a woman to be both owned and revered. She is created as a paradigm of the Greek male's notions of what an ideal woman should be at the masculine hand of Pygmalion, as Ovid describes her as, "more beautiful than ever woman born."[2] She is exalted through circumstances of feminine ascendency through her beauty and her mythological association with the goddess, Venus. Although her creation is indebted to men, as both the sculpted object of Pygmalion and the subject of masculine control, her inferiority is circumstantially contrasted by her elevated superiority as a figure of reverence and unrivaled womanly perfection. Visual images of Galatea in the *Pygmalion* narrative, such as that of Edward Burne-Jones, Jean-Léon Gérôme, Agnolo Bronzino, and Francisco de Goya, depict Galatea under different semblances of masculine authority.

In general, Galatea has been primarily discussed amongst feminist scholars as a secondary figure who is influenced by the men that surround her. She presumably owes her foundation to the ideals of man, but her power and supremacy stems from her creation, femininity, and relationship to Venus. The visual parallels between Galatea's physical appearance with Venus' ideal beauty, along with symbolic imagery incorporated into many of the paintings, allow a direct correlation to Venus. In the following contextual analysis, this study will explore the visual works by various artists depicting Galatea and her masculine counterparts.

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[2] Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* 232.

Images that focus on her femininity and associations to Venus prompt a dialogue that centers on her authority as a preeminent female figure. Artworks that incorporate the male figures in the visual narrative, such as with the inclusions of Polyphemus and Pygmalion, challenge Galatea's dominance as a transcendent being and demote her character to one of lesser status. Corresponding with these analyses, the following research will utilize the revisionist feminist rhetoric that addresses the disparity experienced among the female gender alongside the patriarchal ideals that dominate Western civilization.

In utilizing the revisionist feminist methodology of Linda Nochlin, Mary Garrard, and Norma Broude, this research contributes a new idea to the field of art history that frames Galatea's character with a more enhanced position as a representation of the nature of the archetypal Goddess. Galatea's character can be connected to the archetypal Mother Goddess with the literal transmission of pagan goddesses from the East to the West. As an evolution of Eastern cult goddesses, Venus' relationship to Galatea is imperative to connecting her character to archetypal goddesses of fertility. The veneration showed toward Venus and her prior manifestations allows Galatea a figurative place of worship amongst the female deities. The Mother Goddess and smaller fertility deities from ancient civilizations are repeatedly demoted to an inferior status because of the power of the reigning patriarchal ideals of the men in societal power. The female deities' supremacy over their male counterparts as creators and nurturers of life are overthrown by masculine ideals that correlate with and transform the religious and social structure of gender imbalance across history. This research concludes that the connection between the gender imbalance of Galatea and the archetypal Mother Goddess, as a result of masculine influence throughout the history of Western art, ultimately exalts Galatea's minor character to one of more symbolic significance.

Contextual Analysis

To begin to understand Galatea's relationship with the archetypal goddess, it is important to understand the nature of the goddess as a supreme feminine deity. The following discussion of the archetypal Goddess is a contextualizing discourse that broadly examines goddess worship from prehistoric cultures and continuing through ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and the Aztec civilization. It is an analysis that will be essential in understanding the reevaluation of Galatea's figure as a representation of the Goddess and the influence of masculine authority that will proceed from the following examination. The archetypal Mother Goddess is reflected in the origins of many early civilizations; the genesis of the universe in these civilizations was ultimately attributed to a creator goddess. Baring and Cashford describe that "humanity's first image of life was the Mother."[3] The importance of the mother-figure is identified through the art and visual imagery dating back to the Paleolithic era, which portrays images of mothers, birth, breastfeeding, and fertility. Before the development of kingships, increased militarism, and the dominance of male gods, the Mother Goddess was preeminent in her power of creation and fertility. E.O James, professor emeritus of the History of Religion in the University of London, states that "the promotion and conservation of life have been a fundamental urge from Paleolithic times to the present day which has found magico-religious expression in a very deeply laid and highly developed cultus."[4] Evidence of these cults are apparent in the prevalence of sculpted figurines depicting the feminine figure. Female figurines, often called Venuses (Figure 1), "were introduced into Eastern and Central Europe at the beginning of the Upper Paleolithic by an Asiatic migration."[5] These Venuses demonstrate the significant role that the Mother Goddess had

[3] Anne Baring and Jules Cashford, *The Myth of the Goddess: Evolution of an Image*, (London: Penguin Publishers, 1993): 79.
[4] E.O. James, *The Cult of the Mother Goddess*, (New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1994), 13.
[5] James, *The Cult of the Mother Goddess*, 13.

in early societies. Historian Gerda Lerner reports that "approximately 30,000 miniature sculptures in clay, marble, bone, copper, and gold are presently known from a total of some 3,000 sites in southeastern Europe alone and these testify to the communal worship of the Mother Goddess."[6] These prehistoric figurines offer historical evidence that supports a universal mythology that was dominated by a Mother Goddess figure. Additionally, the carvings were most often designed "with the maternal organs grossly exaggerated,"[7] in order to focus on the woman's ability to procreate. Emphasis on the breasts as a source of nurturing and growth and the triangular configuration of the vagina provides emphasis on the importance of the female figure as the creator of life. While worship of feminine fecundity is emphasized by these accentuated images, Lerner acknowledges that although it "is likely that this speaks to earlier Great Goddess worship, it is not certain."[8] Archaeological evidence supports the predominance of the goddess, but it should be understood that the lack of written documentation makes it impractical for modern scholars to affirm the religious ideologies of those civilizations. However, even with the lack of simultaneous written evidence of goddess worship, Lerner delineates that a "profusion of female figurines with sexual features emphasizing maternity found in the Neolithic period corresponds with later mythological and literary material."[9] The veneration of these goddess figures in documented societies provide a likeliness that these earlier cultures shared the same form of worship.

In discussing the concept of women as the superior gender and connecting societal organization to religious ideals, Sue Blundell addresses that "the notion of a prehistoric Mother

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[6] Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986): 146.
[7] James, *The Cult of the Mother Goddess*, 13.
[8] Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, 148.
[9] Ibid.

Goddess has been linked by some people with the idea of matriarchy, or rule by women."[10] In a world where the majority of civilization has been ruled by men, the idea of a matriarchal generational line is subversive. Merlin Stone, an active scholar in feminist theology and the Goddess movement, points out that societies could possibly have "related the sexual identity of the supreme deity to the kinship system prevalent in each society."[11] E.O. James also supports the notion that "the female principle continued to predominate the cultus that had grown up around the mysterious process of birth and generation. Women being the mother of the race, she was essentially the life-producer"[12] and maintained a role of superiority because of her reproductive abilities and proprietor of the generational line.

This kinship system would define a structure in which the line of inheritance takes place through the female bloodline, ensuring that male family members gained "access to title and property only as the result of their relationship to the woman who is the legal owner."[13] The importance placed upon matrilineal descent and the woman's place at the head of the family, as in the patriarchal societies of later Western civilization, could likely reflect the woman's "position in community or state government as well."[14] Coupled with the prevalence of feminine figurines in relation to depictions of the male, this assumption could lead to an argument for feminine rule.

Among these justifications of feminine rule, the theory that women were a "dominant sex" in the time of the Goddess can also be viewed as an insubstantial claim, as Sue Blundell asserts that "as a theory, it relies heavily on those myths which describe the suppression of

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[10] Sue Blundell, *Women in Ancient Greece,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 38.
[11] Merlin Stone, *When God was a Woman,* (New York: Harcourt Press, 1976), 32.
[12] James, *The Cult of the Mother Goddess,* 22.
[13] Stone, *When God was a Woman,* 32.
[14] Ibid.

women's power…this reliance on myth makes the theory a very dubious one, since, as we have seen, the myths which we possess were the products of adaptations worked upon them by later patriarchal societies."[15] She furthers this conviction in addressing the reliability of myth and the relationship of the narratives and the interpretations of them:

> ...there is no clear evidence to prove that matriarchy ever existed as a historical reality. Many feminist scholars today, while accepting that some prehistoric societies were much more egalitarian than later historical ones, reject the notion of outright female dominance. As a feature of myth, rule by women can be best understood, not as a memory of historical events, but as a narrative providing justification for a present and perhaps permanent reality by giving an invented historical explanation of how this reality was created. In other words, the myth explains why men and not women rule, and hence helps to validate and reinforce male control.[16]

With the idea of a transfer of power from the female line to the male being prone to skepticism, the patriarchal power that documented societies maintain created a world which further subjugates the power of the female goddess in its evidence. However, the tangible evidence provided by the number of female figurines allows an unquestionable distinction to the importance of the female figure as an influence on society. Questioning the supreme rule of these great prehistoric Goddess figures, Joseph Campbell explains that the dominance of the female figure can be found in the

> ...hundreds of early European Neolithic figurines of the goddess, but hardly anything there of the male figure at all. The bull and certain other animals, such as the boar and the goat, may appear as symbolic of the male power, but the Goddess was the only visualized divinity at that time. And when you have the Goddess as the creator, it's her own body that is the universe.[17]

Focusing not only on the number of Venus figurines, but also the significance of the woman's role as creator, the authority of the female figure can be seen in the prehistoric figurine known as

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[15] Blundell, *Women in Ancient Greece,* 18.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth,* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 167.

the Venus of Willendorf (Figure 2). While the figure is under five inches tall, the carving has an impactful presence. Dated to around 25,000 B.C.E, the size of the sculpture played a role in portability, as the cultures of the time were nomadic and it was important for the figure to be easily transported. The rotund figure is visually weighed down with the size of her hips and breasts, emphasizing the significance of her fertility. The emphasis on her capacity to reproduce and provide nourishment correlates her image with that of the Earth's similar abilities. The relationship between the goddess and the Earth continued to dominate mythological theology for centuries. In relating a woman's fertility and nourishment to the Earth, the Mother Goddess embodies the bounty created by the Earth. Thus, "human beings experienced themselves as the children of Nature,"[18] and circumstantially, children of a Mother Goddess.

Not only are the reproductive abilities of a woman glorified in the times of their apparent worship, but her spiritual importance is expressed as well. Joseph Campbell mentions this with regard to the famous *Warka Vase* (Figure 3), found in the ancient city of Uruk, in which the priests are displayed in registers below their queen of heaven, naked and "carrying vessels up to the top of the pyramid or mountain temple…carrying the offering of the city for the king to the priestess, who might be called the incarnation of the Goddess [Inanna]."[19] Unlike the *Venus of Willendorf,* the *Warka Vase* is dated between 3200 and 3000 B.C.E. and weighs around six hundred pounds at a height of three feet. This places the goddess, Inanna, as a stable object of worship across ancient Mesopotamia, which translated into later societies' pantheons, including that of the Babylonians and Akkadians as the goddess Ishtar. In comparison to Paleolithic fertility figurines, in which an emphasis is placed upon breasts and reproduction, highlighting the

[18] Baring and Cashford. *The Myth of the Goddess.* 9.
[19] Joseph Campbell, *Goddesses: Mysteries of the Feminine Divine,* (Novato: New World Library, 2013), 78.

woman as birth and fertility goddess, Campbell notes that the Goddess represents a "kind of fertility of the spirit…not as the generator of physical life, but as the muse, as the transformer of the spirit."[20] It is true that the female figure was an object to inspire veneration and homage. As mentioned before, the magic of her body was related to that of nature, with its biological ability to produce, nourish, and provide growth. Joseph Campbell notes that "people often think of the Goddess as a fertility deity only. Not at all…she has three functions: one, to give us life; two, to be the one who receives us in death; and three, to inspire our spiritual poetic realization."[21] Thus, the woman's superiority covers the expanse of human existence in life, spirituality, and death. This superiority is seen in her hierarchy of size and placement in the registers on the *Warka Vase* (Figure 3). Many Indo-European societies know a threefold division of priests, a warrior class, and a class of peasants or husbandmen, in which the priests or god-like figures maintained dominance over the lower classes. With the religious entity, whether it be priest or godhead, being at the top, the *Warka Vase* (Figure 3) exemplifies the prominence of the goddess, Inanna, as the supreme being in the hierarchy while including their societal systems. Merlin Stone solidifies this reverent awareness of the "deification of the female as a symbol of fertility—by the male—the awe of the magic of her ability to produce a child supposedly making her the object of *his* worship."[22] Her elevation at the head of the class system translates through future civilizations and her role as a deity of creation, war, and fertility is carried through later societies' worship with female figures of similar power and smaller cults. Inanna also had spiritual influence over the institution of marriage, much like many other female deities in later societies, such as Juno or Venus in the Greco-Roman pantheon. The nuptials of

[20] Campbell, *Goddesses: Mysteries of the Feminine Divine,* 79.
[21] Ibid, 36.
[22] Stone, *When God was a Woman,* 31.

Inanna with Dumuzi-Tammuz "were celebrated annually at the spring festival to awaken the vital forces in nature."[23] Dumuzi was the son and spouse to Inanna-Ishtar and died annually "with the normal rotation of the seasons and passed into the land of the darkness and death."[24] Inanna would rescue her lover and son each year. Societies would mirror this union to ensure fecundity in the rotation of seasons in nature, tying her figure to one of death and rebirth. E.O. James describes a "hymn to Ishtar as the planet Venus written for the cult of the deified king of Isin-Dagan as Tammuz, the third king of the Amprite dynasty (c. 2258-2237 B.C.), and there are references to him enjoying the amours of the Mother-goddess at the season of her return from the land of the dead."[25] This concept promotes the goddess' importance not only as a mother, but as a powerful wife, capable of regulating the seasons and natural occurrences of life and death.

Aside from the goddess' dominance as a creator and giver of life, her correlations with death provides a dual nature in which she has the power to create and destroy. Many Mother goddesses in various cultures demonstrate a dual nature as both the giver of life and death. Furthermore, in countless creation origin stories, with the establishment of religions and myth, the addition of a male counterpart overthrew the sense of supremacy the goddess maintained with her role as the creator. Joseph Campbell notes that "the woman may find herself, consequently, in a competitive relationship with the male, and in this may lose the sense of her own nature."[26] This lost sense of nature occurs with the introduction of male deities, which created discord in the archetypal goddess' status as a being that maintained superiority.

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[23] James, *The Cult of the Mother Goddess,* 48.
[24] Ibid, 49.
[25] Ibid, 51.
[26] Campbell, *Goddesses: Mysteries of the Feminine Divine,* xiii.

One specific example of this duality is seen in the Aztec goddess, Coatlicue, the primordial mother from which all major Mesoamerican deities originate. The presence of this Mother Goddess is unique from the others in this analysis, which exist before the first century, as she exists in the sixteenth century. She demonstrates the dual qualities of an archetypal Mother Goddess, as her supremacy as a creator is recognized, yet she is overshadowed by her male counterparts in many ways. The Aztec religion and entire society were dominated by the patriarchal ideals of Christianity with the colonization by the Spanish led by Cortes in 1519. Coatlicue's origin story and the creation myth of Mesoamerica provides context for patriarchal dominance both in its mythological sense and in its eventual Western domination. As a mythological Mother, the story of Coatlicue's impregnation describes how she was ritually sweeping at the top of the shrine on Snake Mountain. A white feather fell from the sky which she placed in her breast. The unexplainable pregnancy angered her other children and the siblings planned to kill Coatlicue. As the army of Coatlicue's children approached her, her son, Huitzilopochti, burst forth from her womb, emerged as a full-grown and dressed warrior. His violent birth and immediate acts of combat resulted in his naming as the god of war. Jean Franco describes how Huitzilopochti wounded his sister, the moon goddess Coyolxauhqui, "who fell down the mountain and was shattered into fragments."[27] The warrior god continued to pursue the other siblings to their deaths as they scattered across the sky, resulting in their labelling as the stars. As a result, Coatlicue's death and the fall of the moon goddess and star gods exalt Huitzilopochtli's militaristic status as the enlightened path for the people to follow in society. Jean Franco directs attention to Coatlicue's purpose and central function when discussing her in relation to the discovery of her basalt statue (Figure 4) at the Templo Mayor.

[27] Jean Franco, "The Return of Coatlicue: Mexican Nationalism and the Aztec Past," *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 13, no. 2 (2004): 208.

He relates her status in correlation with "the economic benefits of tribute and the rituals of sacrifice; she was the progenitor of the warrior god, Huitzilopochti, to whom thousands of warriors were sacrificed."[28] The notion of duality is repeatedly prevalent in the Coatlicue statue's (Figure 4) aesthetic make-up. She has "two serpents around her waist, two feathers hanging, the two breasts, the two snakes of the head, all of which symbolize the dualism that is the axis of the Aztec universe."[29] These dualities exemplify Coatlicue's significance as a precise representation of the culture's fundamental principles. Specific attention to this at the top-most portion of the statue (Figure 4) show two serpents emerging from Coatlicue's severed neck. These two serpents correspond with the Aztec dual figure of Ometecuhtli and Omecihuatl, and promote the mother goddess as an object of dual structure. Elizabeth M. Brumfiel and Gary M. Feinman support the idea that these visual dual qualities equate that "duality was inscribed in the Aztec religion."[30] The complementary inclusion of each gender, Ometecuhtli, being the Lord of Duality, and Omecihuatl, being the Lady of Duality, indicates a consciousness of male and female interdependence. The interpretation of Coatlicue's decapitated head, birthing the dual deities of both genders encourages an understanding of the interconnection between men and women's role in society and the contribution of both genders in sex and procreation.

Furthermore, Coatlicue's narrative also promotes a being that is a paradox of both life and death. She was the mother and originator of hundreds of deities, yet, at the inexplicable conception of Huitzilopochtli, her children conspired to kill her. Her death resulted in the life of the primary god of one of the most influential Aztec cities, Tenochtitlan. As a primordial goddess, she reflects the Earth, giving "birth each morning to the sun, the source of energy for all

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[28] Franco, "The Return of Coatlicue: Mexican Nationalism and the Aztec Past," 208.
[29] Ibid, 209.
[30] Elizabeth M. Brumfiel and Gary M. Feinman, *The Aztec World* (New York: Abrams, 2008), 88.

living things, but...devoured the sun each night marking its death."[31] The Aztec women, while assigned gendered roles that subjected them to a lesser status in accordance to the masculine dominance in the warfare-based culture, are acknowledged to possess vital importance to the flourishing development of the society in running the household and raising children. The conflicting circumstances of Coatlicue's narrative is reflected in the gendered positions of women in the last great Mesoamerican culture. While primarily identified as mothers, weavers, and supporters, the women of the Aztec community were crucial in the economic and social development of their major ruling cities. Their domestic roles extended with influential impact on the social structure of the community in economic aid in warfare, trade, and medicine. These fundamental theories of political and economic influence on theological value can be evaluated in the dual nature of Coatlicue's existence as a female creator goddess and in her relationship to death and warfare under the Aztec militaristic and masculine perspective. Moreover, the significance of the mythological mother as the originator of the militarized society promotes a parallel interdependence to the Aztec women's far-reaching influence in the larger function of the Aztec empire, until the colonization led by the Spaniards.

As seen in Coatlicue's degradation, which occurred very late in the historical timeline, many other primal goddesses' roles were directly related to the societal positions of the actual women in that culture's society. Merlin Stone points out that the sex of the prominent deity "is determined by a previously existing dominance of one sex over the other—in the case of the Goddess, the higher position of women in the family and society."[32] When the woman was exalted to a rank of importance, because of her ability to produce offspring, the goddess reflected

[31] Brumfiel and. Feinman, *The Aztec World*, 94.
[32] Stone, *When God was a Woman*, 31.

that dominating status. The societal evolution in which the masculine gender maintained superiority in the culture translated into the spiritual belief system. The birth of Western civilization occurs in the great river valleys of the East, along "the Nile, the Tigris-Euphrates, the Indus, and later the Ganges."[33] These areas were ruled by the Goddess. Joseph Campbell points out that the invasions of the Semites from the north and south transformed these goddess worlds into an area ruled by the sword and death instead of growth and fertility. He states, "From the Aegean to the Indus, she is the dominant figure. Then you have the Indo-Europeans coming down from the north, into Persia, India, Greece, Italy, and you have a male-oriented mythology coming in."[34] The occupation of these nomadic hunters and herders swept in bringing "warrior gods, thunderbolt hurlers, like Zeus, or Yahweh."[35] These dominant masculine deities prevailed over the pantheons of gods and goddesses that influenced the future authority of Western theology, dispelling any power an archetypal goddess would maintain. Campbell further explains his reasoning in explaining the myth of the Babylonian goddess, Tiamat, as the "key archetypal event."[36] He explains:

> The Semetic people were invading the world of the Mother Goddess systems, and so the male-oriented mythologies became dominant…It was in the time of the rise of the city of Babylon. And each of these early cities had its own protective god or goddess. The characteristic of an imperialistic people is to try to have its own local god dubbed big boy of the whole universe…The way to bring this about is by annihilating the god or goddess who was there before.[37]

As also seen in the authority over the goddess, Coatlicue, by the birth of her son, the war god Huitzilipochtli, the reflection of the Aztec culture's values is seen in the domination over the woman as the powerful creator and the focus on the role of a more militarized importance.

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[33] Campbell, *The Power of Myth,* 169.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid, 170.

Similarly, and much earlier in history, the Babylonian creation epic, the *Enuma Elish,* dates back to the 7th century B.C.E., and destroys the image of the feminine originator with her defeat by a male counterpart Marduk. With his portrayal as a hero, the Joseph Campbell describes how after Marduk defeats Tiamat, he

> dismembers her and fashions the earth and heavens out of the parts of her body…Now, the mother goddess in the old mother-goddess mythologies was herself already the universe, so the great creative deed of Marduk was a supererogatory act. There was no need for him to cut her up and make the universe out of her, because she was already the universe. But the male-oriented myth takes over, and *he* becomes—apparently—the creator.[38]

The supremacy of this masculine deity, especially in the transition of his person becoming the creator, is taken further with the societal relationship, as he is the patron god of the city of Babylon, and the masculine principles of power and politics take their place in the forefront of cultural values. When Marduk replaced Tiamat as the central deity, the *Akidu* festival in Bablyon enacted the great battle between "Marduk and Tiamat…the king himself personifying the 'victorious prince' who had conquered the powers of evil."[39] While the female deity is still superior in her position as the origin, it is completely overshadowed by the young male god, now assumes the elevated role as supreme creator. The chaos of Tiamat's parentage in the universe is taken by Marduk and given a revision that includes order at the influence of the male hand. Marduk's victory and religious and political importance is later represented in the patriarchal system of laws that are developed in the Babylonian Law Code of Hammurabi in 1754 B.C.E, a writing which greatly restricts the power of women in society.

Continuing this displacement of female superiority, Gerda Lerner explains that the advancement of political and higher-level thinking in societies imposed a reasoning for

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[38] Campbell, *The Power of Myth,* 170.
[39] James, *The Cult of the Mother Goddess,* 53.

civilizations to transition from the observable origins of life in the woman's ability to procreate and develop into abstractions for an emphasis on a politically militarized society led by a kingship. The goddesses of Ancient Egypt, Nut and Isis, demonstrate the same traits as ancient Mother Goddesses. As one of the oldest Egyptian deities, Nut was the goddess of the sky, as seen in the ceiling relief (Figure 5) that displays her body arched over the land. Egyptian imagery like this depicts her swallowing the sun in the evening so she can give birth to it again in the morning, correlating her figure to a progenitor of life and death much like Coatlicue or Inanna. As in earlier civilizations, the unexplainable nature of the world is correlated with the magical ability of women to procreate. Just as depictions of Nut display her role as the goddess of the sky, images of Isis (Figure 6) are also demonstrative of her function in Egyptian society.

Isis' image is embodied in the social conditions of Egypt, in which the Pharaoh reigned as an embodiment of the gods and demonstrates a change on the pantheon of gods and goddesses. While Egypt boasts quite the numerous list of gods and goddesses, many of whom represent mothers, the most popular was Isis, the embodiment of motherhood, wives, and fidelity. While not an all-powerful originator goddess like Nut, Innana-Ishtar, or Coatlicue, Isis represents the throne. E.O. James points out that since her "name means 'seat' or 'throne' it is probable that "originally she was the deified throne."[40] As a female deity, her function as the deified throne seems rather out of place, with the majority of Egyptian power resting on the shoulder of the pharaoh, a position that was predominantly held by a man. E.O. James solidifies Isis' importance in this role in describing the imagery (Figure 6) that remains of the goddess, in which she is:

[40] James, *The Cult of the Mother Goddess,* 61.

> depicted in female form with the vulture-headdress, the horns of Hathor and the solar disk with two plumes surmounted by the hieroglyphic symbol of her name, and sometimes wearing the double crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt, adorned with the feather of truth (*maat*) and holding in her hands the papyrus scepter and the *crux ansata* (sign of life) with the uraeus over her forehead showing her divine origin, she was unquestionably the greatest and most beneficent goddess in Egypt, personifying all that was most vital in the maternal principle, its attributes, functions, and duties.[41]

By displaying Isis wearing the double crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt and showing her with *maat* and the *crux ansata*, it is an unmissable interconnection to correlate Isis with the throne. These political and societal connections between the goddess and the hierarchy of power relates the woman to a place of more respect.

While the male pharaoh maintains control of political power, it is under Isis' protection and guidance that he remains successful. Similarly, it is the preservation of the female line that directs the succession of the royal throne in Egypt. Archaeologists have known that the royal line descended throughout the female line. Nancy Broude and Mary Garrard suggest that although the queen is documented in art historical text as an insignificant figure in relation to the pharaoh, she is "in reality the possessor of important powers, both mystical and real, to which the king had access only through marriage to a member of the female royal line."[42] While the ruling male wielded the power of the throne, it is only through his relationship with his wife that he begets and maintains that role. The power of the female deity in Egyptian theology is unquestionable. Nut controls the night and day as a consummate mother. Isis, however, maintains her superiority in correlation to the matriarchal succession of the royal line. E.O. James connects Isis' connection to this royal succession and affirms that "she was equated with

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[41] James, *The Cult of the Mother Goddess*, 62.
[42] Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard. *Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany.* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982): 3.

the Great Mother of Western Asia, Greece, and Rome."[43] While Egyptian society was ruled by a male pharaoh, with the exception of some female pharaohs, the goddess Isis maintains her superiority as the controlling aspect of his power.

The supremacy of these ancient female deities, as both goddesses of creation and feminine power, and the transition to their lesser positions in the advent of patriarchal dominance is also translated into ancient Greek myth, a body of stories and practices that greatly influence later Western civilizations in art, literature, and cultural values. Many narratives in the Greek origin stories provide metaphorical imagery that correlates with societal ideals concerning the relationship between masculine and feminine power. In the classical Greek cosmogony, from a primordial being named Chaos sprung Gaea, who is credited as Mother Earth as the Greeks understood her as the Earth personified. Hesiod explains that Gaea asexually produces Uranus, or the Sky, and Pontus, the sea. Much like the goddesses previously discussed, she is credited as the originator of life and, as Barry B. Powell describes, represents the Earth as the "foundation of all that is."[44] Additionally, and reflective of the previous goddesses, Gaea is not the supreme dominator of her narrative. As with other originator goddesses, Gaea is subject to the actions of the men in her story. Gaea and her son, Uranus, were eternally locked in sexual union, producing all manner of deities, including the Titans, the last of which was Cronus. Uranus famously was a cruel partner to Gaea and loathed his children, devouring each of them at their birth. Unable to overpower Uranus, Gaea schemes with her children and it is Cronus who executes Uranus' defeat as described by Hesiod:

> So he spoke, and the heart of Gaea leaped up in delight.
> She hid him, couched in an ambush, and into his hands she delivered
> The sickle, toothed like a saw. Her plot worked out as she planned it.

[43] James, *The Cult of the Mother Goddess,* 62.
[44] Barry B. Powell, *Classical Myth*, (London: Pearson Education, Inc., 2008), 84.

> When Uranus came into her presence, bringing with him the darkness,
> And, panting with lust, embraced the mighty body of Gaea,
> From ambush Cronus' left hand seized the genitals of his own father.
> He reached out his right with the sickle, saw-toothed, deadly, and sharp.
> Like a reaper, he sliced away the genitals of his own father,
> Flinging them over his shoulder, to roll wherever chance sent them.[45]
> (lines 170-179)

The emasculation of Uranus and the separation of Gaea introduces the platform for which the story of generational unease repeats itself and makes way for Zeus to take his place as the dominating male god of Greek society. While Gaea maintains the recognition as a principle Mother Goddess, her nature is governed by the male gods in the creation story and is ultimately subject to their actions and influence.

An additional result of Gaea's narrative is the birth of another goddess, Aphrodite, who maintains a role of importance in the pantheon of deities, but is a result of masculine action. The prevalent discussion regarding this notion is depicted in Aphrodite's unsettling relationship with men and the circumstances of her birth. Aphrodite's birth, according the Hesiod, results from the castration of Uranus, as previously discussed. After Gaea gives her son, Cronos, a sickle and he harvests his father's genitals, his seed is scattered across the Earth and Sea. The Greek poet continues to describes the resulting circumstance in Aphrodite's birth:

> As for the genitals, slashed away by the sickle of steel,
> Their impetus carried them out from shore to the tide of the sea.
> For years the waters swirled them about, as white foam kept oozing
> From out the immortal flesh. Within it there grew up a maiden
> Who drifted first to holy Cythera then to Cyprus.
> There she emerged from the sea as a modest and beautiful goddess
> Around whose slim-ankled feet arose all the flowers of springtime.[46]
> (lines 190-196)

[45] Powell, *Classical Myth*, 83.
[46] Powell, *Classical Myth*, 84.

As Aphrodite is born of Chronos' flesh and the sea, Anne Baring and Jules Cashford assert her importance as a figure "at the very beginning of the process of creation when heaven and earth are parted."[47] While her figure is not associated with the origin of all creation as the great Mother Goddess, her birth as the child of Heaven and the Sea credits her association as "the child of the beginning...she is the figure who, in the likeness of the original goddess, brings back together the separate forms of her creation. In this sense Aphrodite is "born" when people joyfully remember, as a distinct and sacred reality, the bonds that exist between human beings and animals and, indeed, the whole of nature."[48] The girl formed from the sea foam was named Aphrodite after the Greek term for foam, *aphros.*

Aphrodite's birth occurs at the moment Gaea and Uranus, or the earth and sky, are separated. She is born from the emasculation of Uranus. Blundell asserts that "the basic association implied between the act of love (symbolized by Aphrodite) and the act of castration points to a pervasive fear of female sexuality."[49] This fear would correlate to the angst of feminine temptation, causing men to stray and disrupt the straightforward family line with illegitimate children. A clear generational male line in Greek antiquity was imperative for the family's contribution to politics, the economy, and society. This notion is further justified in the fear of generational upheaval that plagues Uranus and Cronus in the Greek origin story. Blundell also describes Aphrodite's power as "disturbing but also essential"[50] in her ability to provide the irresistible urge of sexual attraction can be perceived as the origin of all reproduction and subsequently, creation. Powell describes the dual nature of the goddess' birth:

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[47] Baring and Cashford, *The Myth of the Goddess: Evolution of an Image,* 353.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Blundell, *Women in Ancient Greece,* 36.
[50] Blundell, *Women in Ancient Greece,* 37.

> It is from these gory events and viscous fluids emerged a figure that is in appearance the opposite: lovely and lithesome, the object of desire. Yet within remains the blood and the foam, a woman's deceptive nature, occluded by the irresistible sweetness of always destructive passion.[51]

Thus, Aphrodite's very nature is both feared and desired by men. The fear of feminine sexuality is symbolized in the act of castration, however, her beauty and femininity provides an ascendency that cannot be ignored.

The devotion and consternation that can be applied to the nature of the Greek goddess simultaneously correlates with physical transition of cultural ideals that evolved across developing civilizations. Most scholars relate the goddess' image as a derivative of the Eastern goddess of fertility previously analyzed, Inanna-Ishtar. Sue Blundell notes that "as a divine being, Aphrodite had close links with the Semitic goddess of love, Ishtar/Astarte, who was worshipped in Mesopotamia and Phoenicia."[52] The transmission of ancient goddesses to Western civilization did make sense geographically, as Cyprus is "a frequent point of transmission of Eastern culture to the West."[53] As a distortion of a prehistoric Eastern cult goddess, her origins can be literally and figuratively translated to make her the oldest Olympian, and essentially an assimilation of the ancient Mother Goddesses that dominated prehistoric pantheons. The transformation of this archetypal Eastern goddess into a Greek deity of influence also represents a domination over the ancient Mother Goddess' religious cults, another suppression of female supremacy with Western patriarchal ideals. She is both necessary for the cultural values of society and dangerous in her origins. Her Eastern conception creates a figure who is "treated with little respect,"[54] due to her relationship to Ishtar and association with male castration, which

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[51] Powell, *Classical Myth*, 669.
[52] Blundell, *Women in Ancient Greece*, 35.
[53] Powell, *Classical Myth*, 201.
[54] James, *The Cult of the Mother Goddess*, 147.

creates a character that is anti-Achaean, or anti-Greek, as Achaean is a collective name for the Greeks in Homeric writings.

The aspects of power that female deities maintained and ultimately lost with the developments of more patriarchal societies are reflected with a sense of duality. In viewing the visual representations of the ancient Mother Goddesses, which are generally understood as supreme deities in ancient civilizations, Venus figurines provide a focus aimed on the ability of the woman to reproduce and nurture life. This relationship as a creator generated a superiority among the female gender that provided confirmation of her dominance. This dominance, however, was ultimately disestablished with the inclusion of masculine influence. As depicted in multiple origin myths, Mother Goddesses, like Coatlicue, Tiamat, and Gaea, were overthrown by their younger male counterparts, displacing their superiority as women and creators. The relationships that this displacement developed in correlation with societal and political practice were reflected in the culture's values. While positions of political power were mostly upheld by men, some female deities maintained stations of influence in their relationship to the throne, like with Isis, or their connections to the highest level of rank, like with Inanna. As civilizations established areas of control and systems of government, the supremacy held by the Mother Goddess and other fertility goddesses was subjugated to a lesser status. The transition of these deities into Western culture established a basis of theological, political, and social influence that continued to develop in the centuries that followed. The artistic representations of women and female deities in the art world continued to reflect these ideals and inspired visual depictions and literary pieces that dominated the Western patriarchal systems. The Greco-Roman interpretations that followed, in particular, inspired artists in highly revered periods of artistic creation, which in turn, continued the patriarchal ideals of society.

The transition to a world dominated by patriarchy is reflected in the duality of the archetypal Goddess' lost sense of superiority in her nature. Much like the various Mother Goddesses discussed in the previous analysis, the sea nymph, Galatea, also demonstrates a dual nature that follows the interference of her male counterparts. Much like the Mother Goddess, her nature is both superior in its femininity and inferior to the masculine influence that surrounds her. In order to analyze these qualities of her nature and connect it as a representation of that of the archetypal goddess, it is important to first understand Galatea's role in literature. Galatea is described in two narratives from Ovid's *Metamorphoses.* The first of these mythological narratives, *Acis and Galatea*, is not exempt from the paradoxical dispositions applied to many of Ovid's characters. This story, in particular, involves the sea-nymph, Galatea, and her amorous struggle with the Cyclops, Polyphemus. The narrative of Polyphemus, as summarized previously, fosters concern pertaining to the archetypal dilemma of the goddess: she is both inferior in her subjugation to male action and superior in her femininity and beauty.

As with many of Ovid's characters from classical mythology, numerous significant works of art display not only the poet's narrative, but Galatea as a central character. To begin the analysis of her dual nature, discussion of her superiority begins with an examination of her image as an independent woman. Discounting the comedic tragedy of the love-scorned monster, Galatea's superiority remains unparalleled in the eminent visual narrative displaying the transcendence of Galatea in Raphael's *Triumph of Galatea* (Figure 7), painted in fresco under the patronage of Alexander Chigi in what is now the Villa Farnesina. As explained by Giorgio Vasari in the 1568 version of *Lives,* Agostino Chigi was very rich merchant from Siena and great patron to artists. He "commissioned Raphael to decorate a chapel; he did so because, shortly before, Raphael had painted in the loggia of his palace with the sweetest style a Galatea in a

chariot on the sea drawn by two dolphins and surrounded by Titons and many sea-gods."[55] Indeed, the image of Galatea displays her figure surrounded by other companions of the sea. The omission of the characters Polyphemus and Acis plays an important role in Raphael's artistic ambition. Without her masculine counterparts, Galatea is free to reign uninhibited by circumstances surrendered to by the effects of the male gaze.

Raphael's *Triumph of Galatea* portrays Galatea in a realm of her own. While Ovid's writing influenced many artists of the time, Frederick and Hartt comment that "very little of Ovid's text on Galatea seems to have interested Raphael. He omitted Galatea's sixteen-year-old lover, Acis, whom Polyphemus was soon to destroy, and showed her triumphant control of her own beauty, oblivious of the amorous gaze of the monster Polyphemus from the adjoining bay."[56] The character of Acis was not always included in the story and this is reflected in Raphael's fresco, as he omits the young lover's presence altogether. Alan H. F. Griffin, a leading authority on Ovid's writings, states that "the introduction of Acis into the story is an Ovidian innovation: he does not appear in any of Ovid's predecessors."[57] Similarly, Raphael chose to borrow loose inspiration from these mythological characters, as well as assimilate his own versions from his artistic predecessors.

Raphael's rejection of Ovid's narrative is also addressed by historian Kenneth Clark in his assertion that "Galatea leaves the realm of narrative and entertainment...and enters the world of philosophy."[58] This figurative world of transcendence can be related to the magico-religious

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[55] Giorgio Vasari. *The Lives of the Artists.* trans. Bondanella (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1998), 319.
[56] Frederick Hartt and David G. Wilkins, *History of Italian Renaissance Art,* (London: Prentice Hall, 2011), 535-536.
[57] Alan. H. F. Griffin, "Unrequited Love: Polyphemus and Galatea in Ovid's 'Metamorphoses,'" *Greece & Rome* 30, no. 2 (October 1983): 192.
[58] Kenneth Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form,* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1956), 389.

exaltation of the goddess and is clearly seen in the triangular composition of the work. Decidedly, the compositional treatment of Galatea advances her to a prominent position in Renaissance framework. Clark notes that "Galatea's head is the apex of a triangle."[59] The exuberant exaltation of the pagan figure, a common occurrence in the revival of antiquity, placed at the pinnacle of the triangular formation, provides an incomparable perception of Galatea as a figure of supreme revelation.

Furthermore, the classical treatment of her strong, graceful form astride a clam shell would immediately connect to the surveyor as a comparison to the figure of Venus from Botticelli's masterpiece, *The Birth of Venus* (Figure 8). Her superiority as an independent figure remains unyielding. Today, as in the sixteenth century, viewers would inevitably have made the comparison of Raphael's work (Figure 7) with that of Botticelli (Figure 8). The goddess displayed in both images maintains similar appearances that assimilate the goddess of love and beauty. With their long, flowing hair and soft, round curves, the Renaissance artists demonstrate ideals of that time period to visually create the perfect image of beauty that emanate the ideals of antiquity. Coupled with the inspiration of the female form taken from Greek antiquity, both women are accompanied by symbols that would have been immediately attributed to the deity born of the castration of Uranus, including an idealized feminine figure, long reddish hair, and her placement atop of a seashell as she is born from sea foam. The arrangement of her gesture is carefully positioned to exude a graceful attention to her modesty, and simultaneously, the enhancement of her sexuality and femininity.

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[59] Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form*, 389.

As the fresco focuses on Galatea's figure and omits any major plot-point in the narrative, the attention on Galatea alone can remain autonomously unconstrained. Charles Bigot, in his discourse on Raphael's *Triumph of Galatea* (Figure 7), presents the narrative as an esteemed myth of historical linguistic and visual representation. He combats suggestions of Galatea's coquettishness and the pity of Polyphemus and exalts Raphael's vision and talent to a spiritual and heightened degree. He explains that, "the ancient poets and painters...had seen in the legend a mere theme for graceful and delicate genre painting, an occasion of displaying their ingenious and subtle fancies, while Raphael saw in it a grand subject worthy of the highest inspiration."[60] In this light, Galatea is no longer just a minor sea-nymph, subject to the will of a lecherous beast, but is elevated to a paramountcy matching the likes of the goddess, Venus.

Bigot continues his adulation of the Raphael's treatment of Galatea in the fresco scene affirming,

> Galatea is a marvellous hymn sung by a great artist in honour of beauty, superb and radiant, of triumphant beauty, of the victorious Venus, from whom all that is force, and joy, and loves comes to earth. As she appears, the air is soft, the breeze light, the sky pure, the sea calm; all things here below celebrate her power, and smile as she passes; she shows herself, and her presence suffices to bring forth happiness, fertility, and life.[61]

As a figure of desire and pure beauty, Raphael's *Triumph of Galatea* (Figure 7) provides the vision of a woman with incomparable magnificence. Bigot notes that "his [Raphael's] instincts made him turn away from ugliness, from deformity. His imagination was at ease only among forms of beauty and elegance."[62] What such woman would bestow upon the artist a muse of such beauty? Kleinbub provides note that "in the *Signor Conte,* Raphael ostensibly

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[60] Charles Bigot, *Raphael and the Villa Farnesina,* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co. 1884), 67.

[61] Ibid,74.

[62] Ibid. 78.

writes...about how the model for his *Galatea* at the Farnesina is no real woman, for no real woman could be found who was beautiful enough to match the artist's ambitions."[63] Frederick and Hartt also assert that, based on "Raphael's own account, he based his image of the sea nymph not on any single beautiful woman but on an ideal of female perfection created by combining elements he had seen in previous women."[64] In providing such intangibility in juxtaposing that perception with the truth of a corporeal woman, Raphael's divine apotheosis of a female figure offers viewers a false consciousness of a genuine woman's nature. The woman we are presented with in the image, indeed, seems unattainable. The superiority of the figure, as imagined by Raphael, matches that of no woman of earthly means.

In addition, often lost in a mythological understanding that Galatea is the victim to the lust-fueled wrath of a monster is the notion that she is a woman bringing forth the promise of life and happiness, which promotes her being to one of supreme importance. However, it is a challenge to discount the presence of the Cyclops, Polyphemus, from the imagined plot that is associated with the image. The monstrous creature appears nowhere in the scene, but it would be remiss for the viewer to not presume that he is seated outside of the frame, regarding Galatea's jubilance with his one-eyed stare. Raphael commends the figure of Galatea at neglecting the additions of her male counterparts, Polyphemus and Acis. The fates of the two masculine characters tie her independence to weighty intentions attempting to restrain her sovereignty.

While Raphael's fresco displayed on its own promotes an air of superiority, it would be remiss to completely disregard Polyphemus' character from Raphael's *Triumph of Galatea*

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[63] Christian K. Kleinbub, *Vision and Visionary in Raphael.* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011), 104.

[64] Frederick Hartt and David G. Wilkins, *History of Italian Renaissance Art,* (London: Prentice Hall, 2011), 535.

(Figure 7). In fact, in the Villa de Farnesina, as Frederick Hartt and David G. Wilkins explain, "the walls of the Sala di Galatea were originally intended to be decorated by a variety of painters with frescoes representing divinities of earth and sea, but only Sebastian del Piombo's *Polyphemus* (Figure 9) and Raphael's *Galatea* (Figure 7) were ever painted."[65] The two artworks appear side by side on the walls (Figure 10). Sebastian del Piombo's *Polyphemus* (Figure 9) shows the monster seated and looking in Galatea's direction. However, while the two are placed next to each other, they seem distant. The scale of the images seem different, as both of the images sit on different horizon lines, and the artistic style of del Piombo's work is blatantly rejected by Raphael, an artist who was gaining more fame at the time. The superiority of Raphael's success over del Piombo's seems to enhance the supremacy of his Galatea over the lesser Polyphemus, furthering the woman's ascendancy in even the sense of its literal creation and aesthetic.

In observing the painting with the imagined presence of Polyphemus in Raphael's work, a symbolic remedy for her ascendance over the Cyclops' actions are noted in the scholarship of Kinkead. The author analyzes the symbolic representation of the left dolphin eating an octopus (Figure 11) as providing the following proposition:

> This detail is quite unusual considering the facts that dolphins are not prime natural enemies of the octopus, and that the octopus is not a major food source of the dolphin. Yet Raphael or Chigi had insisted upon the detail. The putto's action, as he indicates with both outstretched arms the dolphins attack, is called to one's attention by the Cupid's backward glance out of the fresco. Also, the reins of Galatea's dolphin steeds are crossed, an unexpected development which further directs one's eyes to the incident. Such emphasis is hardly consonant with the relatively minor compositional importance of the detail. It may accordingly be accepted that the octopus-dolphin feature is significant symbolically.[66]

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[65] Hartt and Wilkins, *History of Italian Renaissance Art*, 535.
[66] Duncan Kinkead. "An Iconographic Note on Raphael's Galatea." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtland Institutes* 33 (1970): 314.

In connecting the meaning to the poetical natural history as written in the *Halieutica* of Oppian, Kinkead argues that the "moral distinction between the two animals is accentuated by comparing their respective attitudes towards love. The dolphin mates 'after the manner of men'...The octopus, however, clearly exemplifies the opposite extreme attitude."[67] Kinkead further supports the important symbolism of the dolphin eating the octopus with the explanation:

> The detail of the dolphin killing the octopus in Raphael's *Galatea* is revealed as an emblematic amplification of the theme of the fresco, a symbolic reflection of the rejection of the amorous advances of the bestial suitor, Polyphemus, by the divine nymph, Galatea. The narrative development of the myth is here replaced by an iconographic representation of Love destroying Lust.[68]

If the message here is one of love destroying lust, with regard to the mating and familial habits of a dolphin and an octopus, the analogy creates a solid message that Galatea will overcome the quandary at the hands of the lustful Polyphemus. Indeed, the mythological tale provides solace for her situation, given that from the pool of crimson blood beneath Polyphemus' hurled boulder, Galatea, permitted by the Fates, resurrects Acis as a river-god. Although Galatea's circumstances are controlled by Polyphemus' lustful desires, Raphael symbolically inserts the message that she prevails with her love of Acis and his later resurrection.

Another spiritual image of Galatea as a woman of superiority is in an engraving created by Italian Baroque artist, Domenichino, titled *The Triumph of Galatea* (Figure 12). Also neglecting the depictions of Acis and Polyphemus, the sea nymph is also shown triumphantly in a shell, carried on the backs of dolphins. After the death of her lover, Acis, at the hand of Polyphemus' hurled boulder, Domenichino shows a rejoiceful display narrating the aftermath of the heart-rending tragedy. *The Art Journal* presents "Galatea, as we see here, is not mourning

[67] Kinkead. "An Iconographic Note on Raphael's Galatea," 315.
[68] Ibid.

the loss of Acis, but is riding proudly and joyously on the ocean, surrounded by mermaids and winged Cupids, and heralded by a merman blowing a conch."[69] The image is high-spirited, providing an animated enthusiasm to Galatea's nautical chariot ride, indulging the depiction of the nymph with an air of exalted effervescence. Like Raphael's Galatea, her contentment does not appear to be dependent on that of a man.

Turning away from the images of Galatea as a self-governing woman, excerpts directly from Ovid's poems, including the male characters, have also been visually represented in notable works of art. In considering the perspectives of the major characters in Ovid's narrative of *Acis and Galatea*, viewers can develop opposing sentiments in interpreting the sea nymph's nature when viewing artworks that more scrupulously follow Ovid's written accounts. The dual images perceived by Galatea's figure in the *Acis and Galatea* story can first be analyzed in her ascendancy over Polyphemus' desires. Under the pretense that Polyphemus is more than a savage monster, one can almost feel pity for the monster spurned by his most coveted inamorata. The superiority of Raphael's Galatea and his rejection of Polyphemus, even the one that is adjacent in the accompanying fresco, parallels Galatea's rejection of the cyclops. Alan Griffin explains the transformation of Polyphemus as this lonely, cast-off character. He states that, "in Homer Polyphemus is a horrific character. In Theocritus he is pathetic and love-lorn. In Ovid he is an example of violent and hopeless passion."[70] This progression demonstrates Polyphemus' transformation from a heinous monster, voraciously eating up Odysseus' men in Homer's *The Odyssey*, to one who is a slave to his lust for the beautiful Galatea. Theocritus promotes

[69] "Triumph of Galatea." *The Art Journal (1875-1887)* 1 (1875): 313.
[70] Griffin, "Unrequited Love: Polyphemus and Galatea in Ovid's 'Metamorphoses,'" 191.

Polyphemus in his powerlessness as he struggles with his lack of control over his love-scorned emotion in a verse from his point of view:

> Galatea, why do you treat your lover harshly?...
> When I set eyes on you lasts from that day to this.
> You slip away from me, girl, unreachably graceful.
> No need to say the reason: this shaggy eyebrow
> Which stretches from ear to ear across my forehead;
> This single eye and flattened nose, these lips...
> And if I seem shaggy, I keep in my heart's cave
> A fire of oaklogs glowing beneath the cinders.
> Let it blaze: I shall not mind how it sears my life.
> Or shrivels this treasure of treasures, my single eye.[71]

The beauty of Galatea is obviously noticed by Polyphemus and he becomes infatuated with her, in spite of his own monstrous appearance. Galatea proclaims surprise at such a brutal creature's ability to feel love. In Ovid's text, she proclaims, "Oh, how powerful, kind Venus, is thy reign! That savage creature...whom no wayfarer set eyes upon unscathed...now felt pangs of love!"[72] It is important to note Galatea's connection to Venus in the narrative. Venus, the Roman counterpart of the Greek goddess, Aphrodite, is the goddess of love, desire, and sex. The nymph blames Venus' propensity to create ill-fated love matches as the conflict in the narrative. Here, the monster is submissive to the goddess, Venus', influence. An unseen influence in the artworks, aside from Raphael's visual comparison with Botticelli's *Venus* (Figure 8), the goddess, too, has ascendancy over Polyphemus, placing the masculine monster in an inferior state of lesser status.

With compassion for Polyphemus' plight, Charles Bigot supports this interpretation of the story in his suggestion that "the adoration Polyphemus has for Galatea is the eternal and

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[71] Theocritus, *The Idylls*, trans. by Robert Wells (London: Penguin Classics Group, 1988), 91-92.
[72] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 318.

sorrowful tale of unrequited love. Ugliness does not prevent the heart from beating, nor the eye from being fascinated by the revelation of beauty."[73] Is it heedless to feel compassion for a creature of such ugliness, with his lumbering, hairy figure and one eye, to feel intense despondency at the rejection of his professed adoration for such a seductively beautiful creature? Alan H. F. Griffin asserts that Ovid's Galatea "tells us she hated him [Polyphemus] as much as she loved Acis."[74] Her feelings heed no sympathy for the cyclops. Griffin continues in supporting that "this calculated expression of hatred, coming as it does from her own mouth, adds a touch of cruelty to her attitude...This hate and mockery of Polyphemus which follows reveal no sympathy on her part for her admirer."[75] This idea can almost make a reader feel sympathy for the monster, if somewhat comically. After all, realizing his dismissal, Ovid amusingly explains:

> Lovelorn Polyphemus cared for his looks, cared earnestly to please; now with a rake he combed his matted hair, and with a sickle trimmed his shaggy beard, and studied his fierce features in a pool and practised and composed them. His wild urge to kill, his fierceness and his lust for blood ceased...[76]

The monster did try his untamed best to compete with the young Acis. Alan Griffin supports the hysterics of Polyphemus and the enjoyment readers would have procured from such a satirical situation. Acis and Galatea's narrative demonstrates the "emotional suffering of a spectacle."[77] Readers can almost feel pity for his attempts to woo his uninterested and unobtainable love interest.

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[73] Bigot. *Raphael and the Villa Farnesina,* 67.
[74] Griffin, "Unrequited Love: Polyphemus and Galatea in Ovid's 'Metamorphoses,'" 192.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ovid. *Metamorphoses*, 318.
[77] Griffin, "Unrequited Love: Polyphemus and Galatea in Ovid's 'Metamorphoses,'" 196.

Bigot's analysis of this notion in favor of Polyphemus continues with the presumption that Galatea

> is coquettish, both as a woman and as a daughter of the waves. She does not care for him, but she will not allow him to forget her...Did he not see Galatea, while he was playing on the syrinx, throw an apple in the midst of his flock? Did he not see her again throw a second apple to his dog that ran barking towards the sea while, graceful and airy, she glided near the shore? And Polyphemus replies: "Yes, certainly, he has seen and understood her coquetries without seeming to see them. He still adores her, and for her would give up life, would give up his one eye, all his joy; but he has learnt to know her; she flies from those who seek her, she seeks those who disdain her.[78]

Believing that Galatea used her beauty to tease, the question of Polyphemus' murderous rage in the homicide of Acis seems almost admissible with the understanding of his action as a compulsive response to a fetish, provoked by tantalizing provocation. Does Galatea's purpose stand as a woman of callous action, manipulating the male characters' timelines with her seductive perfection? Could Galatea have altered her circumstances if she had better hid her beauty from his gaze? Additionally, would a figure as radiant as she subject herself to concealing her beauty because of a man's inability to accept his helplessness to possess it?

Galatea's ascendancy over Polyphemus' attraction is reduced to inferiority with her inability to control his emotional reaction. Galatea's helplessness against the yearning of Polyphemus is, indeed, highlighted in Ovid's *Metamorphoses.* Galatea explains her plight in comparing the Cyclops' repugnant reaction at her refusals to Scylla's kind suitors. She recounts, "Your suitors after all are men and not unkind; You can reject them, as you do, unscathed...I could not foil Cyclops' love except in bitter grief."[79] Ovid continues with Galatea's tear-choked presentation of the death of Acis. The figure of Galatea, fair and beautiful, remains submissive

[78] Bigot. *Raphael and the Villa Farnesina*, 68.
[79] Ovid. *Metamorphoses*, 317.

to the nature of Polyphemus' inability to accept her denial. As such, the unreasonable creature refused to respect Galatea's choice and left her capitulated to his retaliation. The beauty of Galatea, as used as a major plot device in the narrative, can leave spectators with ideas that she is a woman subject to the actions of a man, inferior to Polyphemus' one-eyed gaze. While Bigot discusses that Polyphemus' murderous reactions are a result of his inability to possess her beauty, it remains a psychological fabrication imbued upon the situation by circumstance.

Furthermore, with the *Metamorphoses* being a primary source of Annibale Carracci's work on the ceiling of the Galleria Farnese (Figure 14 and Figure 15), the artist displays two excerpts from the narrative one either end of the fresco ceiling. Dominating either end of the gallery, Harris formally describes "in one the teasing Galatea on her dolphin shell-craft drifts by the one-eyed giant Cyclops...At the other end, having discovered her in the embrace of her lover, Acis, Cyclops hurls a boulder at the fleeing couple who will be killed."[80] Definitively illustrative of Ovid's story, and exceedingly different than Raphael's focal point in the *Triumph of Galatea* (Figure 7), Annibale Carracci's primary focus of the narrative is clearly the figure of Polyphemus. Bellori explains Annibale's treatment of Polyphemus' dominant form with historical reference. He says, "Polyphemus' impetus is animated with the grandest and most vehement style, in which the terrifying act is given form; but in addition to the grand manner, Annibale gave us an example of the movement with force described by Leonardo da Vinci."[81] Indeed, the pivoting, muscular form would be recognized by any viewer as a demonstration of enormous masculine physical strength, preparing to release his murderous weapon with formidable destruction.

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[80] Ann Sutherland Harris, *Seventeenth-Century Art and Architecture* (New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008), 28.
[81] Giovan Pietro Bellori, *The Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, trans. Alice Sedgwick Wohl, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 89.

Additionally, the projected visual connection to Polyphemus' muscular form to that of the Roman Belvedere (Figure 13) torso provides viewers with a mental connection to the highly influential figure as a source of inspiration for the ideal male. Again, Renaissance ideals of the human form are taken directly from antiquity, as the *Belvedere Torso* is dated to the 1st century B.C.E. The similarities of the classical ideal male form can be seen in both the sixteenth century artworks of *Polyphemus Inamorato* (Figure 14) and *Polyphemus Furioso* (Figure 15). In imposing this ideal, muscular anatomy upon the Cyclops, the connection can be made that he is faultless in his nature. His anger is spurned by the romantic rejection of Galatea, fraught with his vain attempts to woo her. Bellori describes the female figure's place in his lengthy analysis of *Polyphemus Furioso* (Figure 15):

> Farther away the terrified Galatea descends to the shore, but her beautiful body, besides being shaded by the cliff, is obscured from view by the body of Acis, who moves toward her and stands between her and the light. And it is clear to see from her face and outstretched arm that she is running to escape; and her legs are not entirely visible either as she goes down to the shore to submerge herself in the bosom of her mother, Doris.[82]

By hiding Galatea's authoritative beauty behind the figure of Acis, particularly in the *Polyphemus Furioso* (Figure 15), Annibale gives Polyphemus power and acknowledges his strength over Galatea and Acis in the treatment of the Cyclops's form. If the only power Galatea holds is her feminine beauty, then the concealment of it in the midst of Polyphemus' rage enhances the inferiority of her place in the narrative circumstances outside of her control. Any supremacy of the happiness and life brought on by Galatea's beauty, as highlighted in Raphael's *Triumph of Galatea* (Figure 7), is rejected amid the circumstance of Polyphemus' power.

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[82] Bellori. *The Lives of the Modern Painters,* 89.

Furthering the distinct effects of Polyphemus' gaze over Galatea's beauty, the viewer is confronted with a situational dilemma. In admiring Galatea's alluring figure, one is faced with the worrisome circumstance of relating to the superior gaze of Polyphemus. With a merging likeness between the poetic and the visual image, Gustave Moreau depicts Galatea and Polyphemus (Figure 16) under a Symbolist interest of dreamlike mythological sense comparative to Ovid's lyricism. The painting, titled *Galatea* (Figure 16), displays the radiant Galatea, reclining as a traditional nude, seemingly ethereal in a pale white glow, perfectly matching Polyphemus' idealized vision of her. Cooke asserts that, "*Galatea* is a celebration of beauty in which the idealised female body is displayed like a jewel surrounded by the jewels, it is also a meditation on the theme of lust, strikingly represented by the staring eye of the tormented Cyclops."[83] Again, we are presented with the combative theme of Galatea as a figure of supremacy in her beauty, subjugated by the male gaze outside of her own control. We can see the yearning Cyclops' head is visible emerging from the tangle of leaves behind her, which rationally matches his wild temper and longing. Adams describes that "Polyphemus' power over Galatea is conveyed by his giant size and alert gaze of his single eye- uncannily juxtaposed with her two closed eyes."[84] The spectator remains relative to Polyphemus in viewing the diverted eyesight of Galatea. Cooke surmises that, "the spectator, to whom Galatea offers a full view of her resplendent nudity, is placed in a position of the voyeur Cyclops."[85] The viewers are faced with the dilemma of placing themselves in the guise of Polyphemus. The captivating glow of Galatea's body welcomes the spectator's gaze, superior in the notions of its idealized form.

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[83] Peter Cooke. "Symbolism, Decadence and Gustave Moreau." *Burlington Magazine* 151, no. 1274 (May 2009): 316.

[84] Laurie Schneider Adams. *A History of Western Art.* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2011), 463.

[85] Cooke. "Symbolism, Decadence and Gustave Moreau," 316.

However, matched with the looming eye of Polyphemus in the background, we are presented with the understanding that we are subjecting Galatea to inferiority with our stare, as well.

In continuing the discussion of Galatea as a figure with this dual nature of superiority and subjection, the focus on Ovid's works needs to also be inclusive of his second narrative involving Galatea, *Pygmalion.* The analysis of the idealization of women under the male perspective furthers a contentious viewpoint toward the female figure in the story. The story continues to initiate the deep debate concerning the feminine identity in relation to Galatea. As in *Acis and Galatea,* Galatea undergoes artistic treatment that construct opposing perspectives in relation to the female essence. Her identity is again displayed as a woman to be both owned and revered. She is, again, a paradigm of the male ideals, and is exalted through circumstances of feminine ascendancy and her mythological association with the goddess, Venus. Although her creation is indebted to men, her inferiority is circumstantially contrasted by her elevated superiority as a figure of reverence and unrivaled perfection, much like the sea nymph in Raphael's *Triumph of Galatea* (Figure 7). She is a being that beholds her foundation to the ideals of man, but her power and supremacy stems from her birth, relationship to Venus, and femininity.

In order to develop an understanding of Galatea's character here, one must understand the story of *Pygmalion*. The narrative recounts the exploits of the artist, Pygmalion, and begins with the man being weary of the depravities of the women around him as prostitutes and shameful women without virtue. The sculptor is described as, "horrified at all the countless vices nature gives to womankind;"[86] specifically, the Proepetides. His disdainful opinion of the women available to him leads him to be without companionship in marriage. The man works as an artist

[86] Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* 232.

and carves himself an ivory figure "with marvelous artistry and gave it the most perfect shape, more beautiful than ever woman born."[87] Pygmalion manifests desire toward his creation in ecstatic gratitude as his kiss is met with real lips and the eyes of his ideal woman meet his, as she transforms into a real woman.

As with *Acis and Galatea,* artistic representations of the *Pygmalion* narrative delineate from Ovid's story, providing visual representations of Galatea that continue to portray her physical feminine figure with an important role. It is Pygmalion's purpose to create his ideal woman, both in appearance and demeanor. In analyzing the perfect proportions of the exemplary female form, devotion to the classical Greek nude prevails in visual depictions of Pygmalion's Galatea. Kenneth Clark refers to these predispositions of figural perfection as the "plastic essentials of the female body."[88] These standards of beauty in the female form progress from the fifth century BCE throughout the Classical age of Greek fundamentals. The primary model for Greek beauty is most unquestionably apotheosized in the figure of the Roman goddess, Venus. Venus' role in Pygmalion's story is crucial to the humanization of Galatea. The fundamental standards of beauty that construct the most widely accepted archetype of the female form can be seen in many artistic representations of Galatea.

By looking at the progression of the ideal female nude, from the *Aphrodite of Knidos* (Figure 17) to the classical Greek nude, the viewer can more deeply analyze Galatea's homogeneity to Venus. Clark describes the fundamental construction of the female figure as having fuller breasts, a narrower waist, and hips with "a more generous arc."[89] Clark continues that these ideals "will control the observations of classically minded artists till the end of the

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[87] Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* 233.
[88] Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form,* 119.
[89] Ibid.

nineteenth century."[90] Indeed, the progression of the feminine form enhances the female figure with more slender attributes and perfecting the stance of the female sculpture. Clark analyzes Polykleitos's perfection of the "ideal of equilibrium"[91] in his creation of the *Statue of the Aphrodite of Knidos* (Figure 17), in which the sculptor shows the "weight resting on the right leg, the left bent as if to move."[92] The stance in which the female figure displays, however, is behled to the minds and ideals of man. Clark analyzes the use of the male pose in comparison to the perfection of the women's stance by stating:

> The pose was invented for the male figure, but by one of those happy accidents which often accompany the discoveries of genius, the female figure has drawn from it a more lasting profit; for this disposition of balance has automatically created a contrast between the arc of one hip, sweeping up till it approaches the sphere of the breast, and the long, gentle undulation of the side that is relaxed; and it is to this beautiful balance of form that the female nude owes its plastic authority to the present day.[93]

While the pose was originally utilized in artistic representations of the ideal male figure, the employment of the stance in the female figure proves superior in its visual effectiveness. The idealized beauty of the feminine figure was designed by and progressively established by men, based on masculine forms that were previously dominant in creation. However, the reproduction of this masculine *contropossto* in retrospect to the female form creates a visual impact that is paramount and unsurpassed and is utilized by artists throughout history.

One of the ekphrastic artists who demonstrated Galatea's portrayal under the classical figure of the Venus-like sculpture was Edward Burne-Jones. Burne-Jones' depictions of Pygmalion and Galatea cycles different works that chronicle the narrative in four visually

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[90] Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form*, 119.
[91] Ibid, 123.
[92] Ibid, 123-126.
[93] Ibid, 126.

descriptive acts. The cycle narrates the story of Pygmalion in *The Heart Desires* (Figure 18), *The Hand Refrains* (Figure 19), *The Godhead Fires* (Figure 20), and *The Soul Attains* (Figure 21). The female figures in the images of the Pygmalion cycle mimic the recognizable features of Venus' form. The artist was part of the late Pre-Raphaelite movement in the late nineteenth century that focused on a return to Renaissance ideals. Edward Burne-Jones' representations of the female form were reliant on the ideals of the Early Renaissance and the classical Greek fundamentals of the feminine body. The physical likenesses to the Greek ideals that inspired the artists of the Renaissance and the nineteenth-century European artists of academia all reflect the influence of Aphrodite's physical transformations through history as a goddess of beauty.

In looking at Galatea's physique in Burne-Jones' *The Hand Refrains* (Figure 19), the viewer can see correlations between the sculpture's body with favored likenesses of Venus. The marble statue's pose is highly comparable to figural positions of the goddess. For example, if analyzing the pose of Burne-Jones' Galatea to the *Statue of the Aphrodite of Knidos* (Figure 17), both figures are standing with the left knee slightly bent in *contrapposto.* Her waist, hips, and breasts all fit the plastic ideals that are generally correlated with classical representations of Venus or Aphrodite. The dependence of Venus' influence in the Pygmalion narrative, much as with Raphael's *Galatea* (Figure 7), is unequivocally discernible. The relationship between the goddess and Galatea is unquestionably apparent in most depictions of the statuesque woman. When turning attention to the third image in Burne-Jones' Pygmalion cycle, *The Godhead Fires* (Figure 20), literally shows Venus and Galatea intertwined. The figures' arms are interlaced with one another, displaying a physical connection between the two women. Importantly, Venus' presence also brings the gifts of birth and life to Pygmalion's studio, with the water below her feet reminding viewers of the goddess' birth from the sea, and the doves giving life to the studio

in their flight. Furthering the comparisons between the goddess and Galatea, the figure of the statue is referential to the ideal form of Venus. The creation of the statue's physical presence is credited to the man, Pygmalion. Likewise, the creation of Venus' physique and posture is credited to the hand of the male sculptor and taken from the stance of the idealized masculine pose, as previously mentioned by Clark. While the creation of the female form derives from the male frame of reference, it is the influence of feminine nature that constitutes the superiority and more effective use of the pose. Similarly, the attribution to the creation of Galatea can be credited to the masculine hand and mind of the sculptor, Pygmalion. As the creator, Galatea owes her own nature to his superiority. Kathryn McKinley addresses this positionality on Galatea's subjectivity to Pygmalion as her creator in her discourse discussing the women of Ovid's writing:

> Even their final union, however blessed by Venus, in some sense never transcends the physical—or fairy tale—realm. Ultimately the possibility of the living "Galatea's" subjectivity is foreclosed by the fact that the sculptor has created her, "flesh and bone," entirely from his own creative conscious and for the satisfaction of his own sexual and emotional desires.[94]

The argument here is that, with Pygmalion being the male creator, "Ovid begins to provide a voice for male subjectivity and emotion."[95] His ideals of beauty and feminine perfection are imposed upon Galatea's very birth, demoting her own image to one of masculine perspective and control. However, while her nature is subject to his vision, Pygmalion's supremacy is threatened by his own subservience to her assumed perfection. It is here that the supremacy of Galatea as an ascendant being is not reliant on her creation; it is consummated by her birth. Finally, in Burne-Jones' cycle, the viewer can see a grateful Pygmalion in *The Soul Attains* (Figure 21),

[94] McKinley, Kathryn L. *Reading the Ovidian Heroine.* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 32.
[95] Ibid, 33.

showing his submission to Galatea's beauty and Venus' gift with his kneeling form. He is exalting her to a higher status than his own and literally displays his surrender to her beauty.

Continuing with the standards discussed by Clark, the idealizations of feminine beauty as influenced by the classical Greek sculpted form continues to impact the standards of the archetypal woman throughout history up to the nineteenth century. As one of the many Renaissance artists that presented Ovid's narratives in their artwork, Agnolo Bronzino also painted the Pygmalion myth. As an alternative to the blatant inclusion of Venus' role in Edward Burne-Jones' Pygmalion cycle, Bronzino includes the goddess with complexity. In the center of the painting, *Pygmalion and Galatea* (Figure 22), separating the standing figure of Galatea and the kneeling figure of Pygmalion is a sacrificial altar. This altar shows a relief of Venus paired with Mars. Venus plays a very different role in Bronzino's artwork than in Burne-Jones' works and even in Ovid's *Pygmalion*. In the Ovidian myth, Venus is the vindicated purpose for Galatea's sentience and the Pre-Raphaelite depiction of her birth, as it is because of her divine hand that Pygmalion's statue attains consciousness. Without the goddess' interference, Pygmalion would be left with an enduring longing for his lifeless ivory statue. The intertwining relationship between the goddess and the Galatea's triumphant birth is less clear in Bronzino's work. Moreover, the coupling of Venus and Mars, instead of focusing on Venus' association to Galatea, changes the goddess' influence. The relationship between Venus and Mars is a tumultuous one throughout Greek mythology. As sung by Demodocus in Homer's *The Odyssey*, the couple's relationship begins with adultery against Venus' husband, Vulcan. The infidelity of Venus as described in mythology is comparable to the actions of the women that Pygmalion found so revolting outside of his studio. The Venus portrayed in Bronzino's center altar is paired with Mars, ultimately symbolizing the adulterous actions of the pair. This presentation

more purposefully directs Venus' presence with the inferiority of the women that so insulted Pygmalion. Venus' attribution to the superiority of Galatea's birth holding power over the woman's creation is absent from this visual narrative. The Galatea in Bronzino's narrative is not a circumstance of Venus' influence, but one solely created by man.

Additionally, in Bronzino's representation of Galatea, she still holds superiority over Pygmalion's pleading form, as previously discussed in the Burne-Jones' *The Soul Attains* (Figure 21). However, Venus' coupling with Mars at the altar reduces the goddess' influence to that of an immoral woman. In other artworks, however, Venus' presence creates visions of Galatea as a woman of independence and preeminence. It is necessary to understand Bronzino's artistic biography and influences to analyze his depiction of the Pygmalion narrative. The artist is introduced as an apprentice of Jacopo da Pontormo in Vasari's *Lives.* The level of talent that initiated Bronzino's career is described by Vasari in recounting an instance where Pontormo allowed the young Florentine to paint one the Four Evangelists on the ceiling of the Santa Felicita "all by himself."[96] Bronzino's level of talent is highlighted by Vasari with his association to his master, albeit casting Bronzino's skill beneath the shadow of Pontormo's tutelage. The Mannerist movement intended to "concern formal beauty for its own sake, rather than the idealized nature according to Renaissance conventions."[97] This "distortion of accepted conventions"[98] provides an image of Galatea with an exaggeration of the classical Greek form. When associating the ideals of the Manneristic style, Bronzino's concerns are focused on beauty for its own sake. This precise focus on beauty and elegance can correlate directly with Pygmalion's intentions to create his perfectly faultless woman, essentially equating Bronzino as

[96] Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists,* 408.
[97] Marilyn Stokstad, *Art History,* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1995), 714.
[98] Ibid, 715.

an artist to the sculptor, Pygmalion. Galatea is again subject to the hand of a man, her literal creator: the artist.

Rowland and Charney ascertain that, as an artist, "Bronzino wished to make his *Allegory* difficult to decipher, inserting layers of interpretation."[99] *An Allegory with Venus and Cupid* (Figure 23) utilizes this notion to create reason to examine Bronzino's *Pygmalion and Galatea* (Figure 22) with deeper intentions than the Ovidian narrative. With the assumption that Bronzino did, in fact, have deeper intentions in the interpretations of his works, Girolami suggests that perhaps the narrative was used to parallel "the theme of artistic creativity,"[100] and the "anxiety associated with artistic inspiration."[101] This could be true considering many aspects of Bronzino's work were taken from past artworks of his predecessors, and the artist desired to set himself apart in his creativity, continuing with his complex meanings and Mannerist style of painting. Moreover, Lingo highlights Galatea's gaze, which is not looking at Pygmalion, her lover, for the first time, but directly at the viewer or at Bronzino. Thus, the artist "makes himself a new Pygmalion, enamored of his creation."[102] As the focus of Galatea's gaze, Bronzino asserts that he is the ultimate creator, while Pygmalion is left begging on his knees for Galatea's attention, separating his originality apart from his teacher, Pontormo, and historical influences.

The interpretations in Bronzino's representation of Galatea still ascertain her superiority in beauty and perfection, while holding superiority over Pygmalion's pleading form. However,

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[99] Ingrid Rowland and Noah Charney, *The Collector of Lives: Giorgio Vasari and the Invention of Art,* (London: W. W. Norton and Company, 2017), 221.
[100] Liana de Girolami Cheney and Sonia Michelotti Bonetti, "Bronzino's Pygmalion and Galatea: l' antica bella maniera," *Discoveries* 24, no. 1 (2007): <http://cstlcla.semo.edu/reinheimer/discoveries/archives/241/cheney241pf.htm>.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Stuart Lingo, "Agnolo Bronzino's Pygmalion and the Statue and the Dawn of Art," *Art History* 39, no. 5 (November 2016): 872.

she is subject to a lesser status in owing her creation to the hand of a man, both literally with Bronzino's, and figuratively, with Pygmalion's. The influence of Venus in Bronzino's work offers a certain degree of harm to her nature, in reducing the influence of Venus' coupling with Mars at the altar to that of an immoral woman. In Greek mythology, Aphrodite's infidelity against Hephaestus with Mars is well-known and the sexual love she was the patron goddess of would have caused many men a certain degree of fear. This partnership in Bronzino's artwork lessens Venus' standing to one of inferior moral status. This lack of virtue correlates Venus among the Propoetides, whom she had punished to a life of immorality to begin with, which leads Pygmalion to his initial disgust with the real women in his environment.

The recognition of Venus' influence in the superiority and inferiority of Galatea to the ideals of man is also portrayed in Jean-Leon Gérôme's *Pygmalion and Galatea* (Figure 24). In the painting, the figure of Cupid appears, pointing an arrow at the sculptor and the transfiguring woman. Interestingly, Cupid is most acceptably understood in Greek mythology as the son of Venus and Mars, the couple shown in relief on Bronzino's sacrificial altar. While the inclusion of Venus' presence in Bronzino's altar can be interpreted as an allusion toward her unfaithfulness, Cupid's presence in the work of represents the goddess' power in the narrative. By sending her son to perpetrate Galatea's transformation, Venus is demonstrating her power over Pygmalion, for without her interference, Galatea would forever remain an ivory figure. Additionally, Cupid's flying form has an arrow directly pointed at the pair. Cupid's arrow is notorious for instigating uncontrollable emotions of love and ardor. As mentioned in Ovid's tale, "his masterwork fired him with love,"[103] and incited passionate acts of kissing and caressing, before adorning his ivory woman with gifts. It is clear that the sculptor's passion was

[103] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 232.

vehement, overpowering his life with the desire for his perfect woman. By inserting Cupid into the image, Gérôme's work acknowledges the influence of Venus' power in the narrative. Ovid's acknowledgement of Venus' divinity corresponds with his rejection of the Propoetides, not in her relationship with them and their immoral actions. The *Metamorphoses* describes:

> The obscene Propoetides had dared
> Deny Venus' divinity. For that
> The goddess' rage, it's said, made them the first
> Strumpets to prostitute their bodies' charms.
> As shame retreated and their cheeks grew hard,
> They turned with little change to stones of flint. [104]

Hollander elucidates the importance of this happenstance between Venus and the Propoetides. He states that, "by having shamed the Goddess, they were caused to behave shamefully in another way: having heaped *infamia* on Venus, they lost all *pudor* (signaled by their inability to blush) and they turned out to be...shameless."[105] Venus' loss of social standing at the rejection of the Propoetides led the goddess to allocate a punishment that brought on further degradation to the sect of women under her rule. With a transformation into flesh symbolizing the loss of a sense of immodesty, the cheeks turning to stone during the misfortune bestowed upon the Proepetides demonstrates a reversal of Galatea's nature. The relationship between Venus and prostitutes is an old connection, as "sacred prostitution, one of the best-publicized aspects of the cults of Ishtar/Astarte, was also found in some centers of Aphrodite's worship."[100] Additionally, while the Propoetides were transformed into hardened forms, Galatea is alternatively antithetical; her stone body transforms into warm, human flesh. This transformation creates a woman of scruples, alternatively providing a human being with the morality to feel dishonor at the thought of any indignities. Thus, Galatea is a figure of dual purpose when considering the Propoetides;

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[104] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 232.
[105] John Hollander, "Honor Dishonorable: Shameful Shame," *Social Research* 70, no. 4 (Winter 2003): 1067.

she is Pygmalion's solution to avoiding the shameless women and Venus' remedy to the punishment bestowed upon them.

While the hint of Venus' influence is displayed in the inclusion of Cupid, another notable mythological woman, albeit somewhat more infamous, also appears in Gérôme's painting. Wittmann explains that, "in *Pygmalion and Galatea,* the shield of Perseus (and of Athena) decorated with the Medusa's head appears behind the unequal lovers—at once an apotropaic and a threat, recalling the moment of rigidification that made the production of Galatea as a sculpture possible."[106] The inclusion of the Medusa (Figure 25) alludes to the gorgon's ability to transform onlookers into stone with her fierce gaze. The reversals of narratives, in which Galatea's stone form is created by man and metamorphosed into human form with the aid of the goddess, and Medusa is a grotesquely beautiful woman with the ability to transform men into stone, provides an interesting metaphorical interpretation of power and creation. Mary Beard describes Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as an "extraordinary mythological epic about people changing shape."[107] It is remiss to deny that Pygmalion shaped Galatea with his own hand, founded by the masculine perspective of what constitutes the female figure in its most desirable form of beauty. However, Beard notates that Ovid "repeatedly returns to the idea of the silencing of women in the process of their transformation."[108] This may be the truth in other Ovidian narratives, but in Galatea's situation, she is character who is given life, birthed by the intervening hand of Venus' sovereignty. Galatea's birth provides her with consciousness. It is worth reiterating that past literary works named Pygmalion's statue as Venus or her Roman name, Aphrodite, before that

[106] Barbara Wittmann, "The Spectacular Art of Jean-Leon Gérôme (1824-1904) Reconsidering Gérôme," *The Art Bulletin* 94 no. 2 (June 2012): 313.
[107] Mary Beard, *Women & Power* (London: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2017), 9.
[108] Ibid.

naming of Galatea in later centuries. Thus, this enforces that Galatea's correspondence with Venus gives her power. Medusa's power, opposingly, silences men, forcing their voices to be forever silenced behind a transformation of stone. This transformation ironically connects back to the act of Venus turning the Propoetides into stone as punishment for upsetting her. Again, Venus' power in relation to Galatea's nature promotes an all-powerful association.

The theme of creation in visual representations of the Pygmalion narrative have thus far been discussed in works that insinuate Pygmalion's hand as the architect of Galatea's creation. The evidence of this is seen in the sculptor's chisels and tools that reside dormant amongst the dust of Galatea's unwanted pieces. In both Burne-Jones' *The Hand Refrains* (Figure 19) and Gérôme's *Pygmalion and Galatea* (Figure 24), the artist's creative hand is merely insinuated by the discarded tools in the scene. Coupled with the implications of Venus' authoritative hand, Galatea retains superiority as a woman of influence and transcendence amidst her physical scrutiny subject to the male perspective. When her beauty and feminine power is stripped away, her creation is solely reliant on Pygmalion, and she becomes an object of inferior ownership. Focusing on Pygmalion as her creator, Francisco de Goya blatantly portrays Galatea's creation at the hand of a man. In the sepia wash, *Pygmalion and Galatea* (Figure 26), viewers are presented with the image of the seated Pygmalion clutching a hammer mid-swing in the process of driving the chisel into Galatea's body. Ciofalo describes Pygmalion in the scene as an "intense artist, in the guise of a young Goya."[109] Ciofalo continues to analyze Goya's true intent in the interpretation of the work and explains that it "is revealed in the process of creation, as his legs are provocatively spread in a machismo declaration of sexual possession. He is about to deliver a firm and steady blow with a mallet and chisel to the genital region of the clothed female

[109] John J. Ciofalo, "Unveiling Goya's *Rape of Galatea," Art History* 18 no. 4 (December 1995): 480.

subject."[110] Indeed, the viewer can clearly see the artist intentionally chiseling at Galatea's genitals, displaying his own masculinity with unabashed assertiveness. Additionally, the superiority of supreme beauty held by Galatea in her usually perfectly proportioned nude form is completely concealed by clothing in Goya's work. Any power that Galatea's physical form holds is completely concealed in the sepia toned drapery. Furthermore, unlike the ocular connection between Bronzino's Galatea (Figure 22) and the viewer in Bronzino's painting, in which the artist uses the gaze to solidify his own designation as the creator, Goya's Galatea (Figure 26) seems to be rightly perturbed by her vigorously sexualized creation. The viewer is forced to interact with the objectification of the woman's "pathetic, almost pleading gaze"[111] as she looks directly outward toward the viewer. The decisions made by Goya to completely strip the image of any correlation to Venus' role in the narrative constitutes a portrayal that reduces Galatea to an object of sex and possession. The mythological interventions and ascendency of the statue's radiant form are completely rejected, thus leaving Galatea subjugated to the rejection of her triumphal circumstances.

If viewers are forced to take into consideration the dismissal of circumstantially decisive characters in the Pygmalion narrative, then Galatea becomes an object to be owned, and is solely reliant upon the male perspective. Goya's portrayal inaccurately repudiates the truth of Ovid's narrative by blatantly ignoring the women's authority in the story. Without the rejection of Venus' divinity by the Propoetides, Venus would never have paralleled the reversal of the Propoetides' female nature that so disgusted Pygmalion. Thus, Venus' power as a divine female being instigated the purpose behind the sculptor's hand as the creator. Subsequently,

[110] Ciofalo, "Unveiling Goya's *Rape of Galatea,"* 480.
[111] Ibid.

Pygmalion's dependency on Venus' dominance to consign life to Galatea leaves him inferior to a woman's power. Galatea's association with the goddess, in birth and in physical form, exalts her to a position of superiority. This exaltation can be seen in Anne-Louis Girodet de Roucy-Trioson's *Pygmalion and Galatea* (Figure 27), embracing the inclusion of the divine influence of Venus with the inclusion of Cupid. As mirrored in many artistic representations, Galatea is literally exalted in position atop a pedestal, leaving Pygmalion to marvel at her being from a lowly position. Pygmalion's desperation to be recognized by his newly born creation is seen in his facial expressions, gestures, and pleading stance in many works, also including Burne-Jones' *The Soul Attains* (Figure 21) and Bronzino's *Pygmalion and Galatea* (Figure 22).

If one relies on the visual representations of Galatea that most closely depicts Ovid's *Pygmalion* narrative, it is irrefutable that her dual nature is heavily reliant on the forces surrounding her creation. The power of her flawless feminine figure, though idealized by the masculine perspective, also strengthens her authority over Pygmalion in its association with Venus and her seductive beauty. While the sculptor is given credence as the creator of Galatea's form, it is the mythological interference of Venus' divine hand that provides supremacy over Pygmalion's artistic creation, giving life to his ivory model. Galatea's connections, both in her idealized physical form, her naming, and her consciousness, are accomplished by her affiliation with Venus. It is an undeniable truth that the dichotomy of Galatea as a figure of inferiority and superiority is reliant on dramatic circumstance, which cultivates a recurrent juxtaposition of fortuitous association.

While credit can be attributed to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* for remaining the primary account of the story of Pygmalion and his statue, the artist's statue was never actually named Galatea in Ovid's verses. Law explains that "the name Galatea does not appear in any Greek or

Roman version of the myth."[112] That being said, other references given to Pygmalion and the statue can be found in other early literary works. Pygmalion is described in works "by Apollodorus as a king of Cyprus"[113] and "an ancestor of Adonis,"[114] a favorite inamorato of Venus, and an ancestral lineage is also mentioned by Ovid. Both narratives, however, do not refer to Pygmalion's statue by any name. Law provides evidence that "two late Christian writers of the second and third centuries, Arnobius and Clement of Alexandria also refer to Pygmalion,"[115] but they name his statue as Aphrodite, the Greek title given to Venus. Once again, Galatea's relationship with Aphrodite/Venus remains constant. These Christian writers do not give tell to whom the sculptor of the named Aphrodite sculpture is and what phenomenon led to its animation, while the Ovidian tale relies on Venus' power. The account in which Pygmalion is the creator of the idealized statue is specific to Ovid's narrative. While Pygmalion's inanimate love object was previously referred to by Venus' name in other works, all statues are brought to life in correspondence with the feast of Venus. Comparatively, all of these narratives highlight the most important aspect of Pygmalion's story: Galatea's association with the goddess, Venus.

Law's investigation of this omission of the statue's named identity leads to the naming as an occasion of later modern literature. While it isn't viable to determine which writer applied the name, the first uses of the name, Galatea, appear in either plays or literary works from France and England during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Law concludes that her investigations led to the notion that Galatea was first named as such in the drama *Pygmalion* by

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[112] Helen H. Law, "The Name Galatea in the Pygmalion Myth," *The Classical Journal* 27, no. 5 (February 1932): 337.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.

Rousseau in 1770. Without any earlier references to Galatea in the Pygmalion narrative, Law surmises that the name "was chosen simply because it was familiar and euphonious."[116] Reference to Pygmalion's statue as Galatea has become the accepted designation in popular discussion today. In furthering Law's analysis of the naming of Galatea, Reinhold adds to the scholarship, noting the discovery that Thémiseul de Saint-Hyacinthe de Cordonier wrote a version of the myth that appears to contain "for the first time the name Galatea for Pygmalion's statue."[117] Regardless of the author or playwright who can claims credit for the official naming of Galatea, Reinhold divulges that the name "has imbedded itself deeply in popular consciousness,"[118] allowing readers to expectedly associate her name with Pygmalion's statue. Further association to previous accounts of Galatea's birth and its relationship to Venus' feast day, her interfering hand, and earlier manifestations of Aphrodite herself provides a more definite confirmation of Galatea's embodiment of the goddess.

[116] Law, "The Name Galatea in the Pygmalion Myth," 342.
[117] Meyer Reinhold, "The Naming of Pygmalion's Animated Statue," *The Classical Journal* 66, no. 4 (April-May, 1971): 317, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3296568.
[118] Ibid.

Methodology

As in all disciplines, the study of art history has developed and expanded in its frame of reference with the evolving methods of approaching the subjects. The continually widening perspective on human nature, behavior, and interactions have influenced the way that art historians approach the past and present. The reevaluation of the woman's place throughout history, raised by the discipline of the feminist methodology, has redefined the historical perspectives of Western civilization. With the understandings that institutions have narrowed historical study to civilizations as constructed by the accounts of the men in a class of power, the attitudes toward the creation and interpretation of women in art can be rewritten with a more unbiased awareness. The revisionist feminist methodology is appropriate to utilize in studying Galatea's role as one of more importance. This same idea of reevaluating art and its history with more awareness toward the feminine figure provides an innovative argument that supports the discussion of Galatea as a figure of more significance. Similar to the treatments of the archetypal goddess, the lesser status of Galatea can also be described with a dual nature under the subjectivity of the female form, as influenced by the domination of patriarchal societies. Not only can the dual nature of her figure be evaluated, based on her relationship to patriarchal ideals, but she is exalted to become a representation that is comparable to the similar treatments of the dual nature of the Mother Goddess. This comparison creates a more significant characterization to Galatea's figurative importance as a woman who has undergone a reverent idealization by men. Norma Broude and Mary Garrard address these attitudes and the lesser status that has been applied to women in the history of art with regard to femininity. The two historians address that much of the evidence from past archaeological and anthropological studies confirms the actuality of Goddess worship amongst prehistoric civilizations. In fact, they assert that there is evidence of "Goddess worship for a period of at least 20,000 years prior

to the beginnings of Egyptian civilization."[119] Broude and Garrard contend that among the awareness of this evidence, "art historians often ignore the existence of the Goddess culture."[120] With a now prevalent awareness of the mistreatment and ignorance of the feminine gender throughout history, it is understandable that there has been an academic misunderstanding of these cultures, in which the patriarchal world has applied its values to the images that are known.

In following the revisionist feminist ideals of Broude and Garrard, the term "patriarchal" is used to describe the last five thousand years of the political, social, and religious systems in Western culture, in which the structural authority of civilization is maintained by the male gender. The authors clarify that they "are not suggesting that what preceded it was its mirror opposite, a matriarchy, in which roles were reversed, with social power and authority held by the females."[121] However, they are emphasizing that the women in the early cultures that created these goddess figurines and worshipped a Mother Goddess figure maintained a more superior or equal role, in comparison to the men in their societies.

In addition to the discussion of Goddess worship in early civilizations, Linda Nochlin continues to investigate the women's role in art and its history. The author places scrutiny upon the situation of women in the arts as being "a 'problem' to be viewed through the eyes of the dominant male power elite."[122] Rather, Nochlin challenges women and historians to view their gender as equal subjects. She states that women "must view their situation with that high degree of emotional and intellectual commitment necessary to create a world in which equal

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[119] Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard. *Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany.* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), 3.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Ibid.

[122] Linda Nochlin. *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays.* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1988), 151.

achievement will be not only made possible but actively encouraged by social institutions."[123] The neglect of past institutions to acknowledge the equality of the women's role, both in association to the Mother Goddess and the implications upon her character by the masculine gaze, provides a basis for a new awareness that viewers of art and historians need to maintain when thinking about the women involved in the works. Nochlin addresses this:

> The question of women's equality—in art as in any other realm—devolves not upon the relative benevolence or ill-will of individual men, not the self-confidence or abjectness of individual women, but rather on the very nature of our institutional structures themselves and the view of reality which they impose on the human beings who are part of them.[124]

Humans as historians, scholars, students and thinkers shape their views according to the awareness given to them from their own experiences. The patriarchal nature of Western politics, religion, and social institutions have ultimately shaped civilizations' understandings of the woman's subordinate role as something natural. Furthering this notion of masculine dominance over women, Mary Garrard discusses this subjugation with an analysis of the male gaze. In her discourse addressing the female Renaissance painter, Sofonisba Anguissola, Garrard deepens the conversation concerning the strength and power of the gaze. Garrard's analysis of the Sofinisba Anguissola's painting, *Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola* (Figure 28), looks at the role of creator and the objectifying role assumed by the created. The feminist rhetoric applied to investigation provides insight to the strength of the male gaze and the control obtained by women when ideas are represented with their own feminine perspective. Nochlin furthers this idea in affirming that women are "unlike other oppressed groups or castes, men demand of them not only submission but unqualified affection

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[123] Nochlin. *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays*, 151.

[124] Ibid, 152.

as well; thus women are often weakened by the internalized demands of the male-dominated society itself."[125] It is here that scholars can reinvestigate history with more awareness and understanding of women and their figures as represented in art history. Using the ideals provided by revisionist feminist scholars in traditional art history, this research reinvestigates Galatea's character as one of more significance with her associations of her nature, which is both superior in its feminine ascendency and inferior in its subjugation to the masculine influence that surrounds her, and to the same duality that is seen in the nature of the goddess throughout history. Using the analysis provided by this feminist scholarship, the prominence and displacement that the Mother Goddess has as a creator and supreme deity is reassessed using Galatea's own nature as a newly examined representation of the Goddess. The dual nature of Galatea's character and her associations to Venus perpetuate a manner of prominence in the history of feminine repression. Galatea's role has a larger significance in the history of art based on her position as a female figure with circumstantial rank, according to the ideals of the men that surround her. These same patriarchal implications applied to her figure are also demonstrated in the supremacy and lessening status of the archetypal Mother Goddess.

[125] Nochlin. *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays,* 152.

Results

The contemporary emphasis that the female figure maintained a more superior or equal role in relation to the men in their societies can be seen in the artworks that have been analyzed in the previous sections of this essay. With a feminist reevaluation of the female figure, the essential nature of the portable paleolithic Venus figurines and the extreme attention to female fertility in the exaggerated breasts and hips provide a sense of authority in feminine devotion. This devotion is further considered in the worship of goddesses by Egyptian rulers who acknowledged their kingship with reverence given to Isis as an embodiment of the throne. Similarly, the hierarchal dominance that is given to Inanna in the celebration of her power with her prominent placement on the *Warka Vase* (Figure 3) translates into the political and agricultural importance that kings and priests would recognize. The recognition of the goddess that continued with the transfer from the Near East to the Greek origins of myth and the pantheon of gods and goddesses impacted the artworks of antiquity and the major artistic movements that followed throughout Europe. The Greek ideals of beauty that were personified in the visualization of Aphrodite and subsequently the Roman Venus is obviously a source of inspiration for the painted imagery of Galatea. While current research does identify that Galatea's figure is physically inspired by the goddess and is even temporarily named Venus, it has neglected to identify Galatea as a representation of the goddess. Not only does the physical description of the goddess arise in Galatea, but this research brings a new objective to the field of art history by identifying the nature of the archetypal goddess that figuratively transpires in Galatea's identity, as well.

Galatea's character is elevated to one of higher supremacy, not only based on her ascendancy as a beautiful woman, but with her new authority as an accurate representation of the

nature of the goddess. The transition of the archetypal Mother Goddess as a supreme deity to one demoted to a lesser status with the influence of masculine ideals with growing patriarchal societies is reflected in the dual nature and transitional identity of Galatea. Aside from the obvious correlations with Venus that have been previously addressed, the inferiority that she faces due to the masculine ideals that are forced upon her mirror the treatments that devalued the archetypal goddess over the centuries. The feminist analysis of Galatea addresses the ways that women have been portrayed and discriminated against throughout the history of art. Rather than being portrayed as objects of reverence and awe in their roles as creators and nurturers, women have come to be acknowledged as simply a desirable subject of art. Laurie Schneider Adams supports this analysis in providing that "feminists argue that women have consistently been depicted in a passive or negative light."[126] The subject of Galatea as a minor character with a lesser status suspect to the demands of the masculine ideal can now be modified in the existing visual depictions and written literature to one of more importance.

The revisionist feminist methodology in the study of art and its history has sought to address the influence that the masculine ideal has had upon women as a subject by reanalyzing history. It is with this recognition that the depiction of women, whether it be as an all-powerful Mother Goddess or beautiful Greek sea nymph, is scrutinized as an object of a man's influence. Galatea's figure has been depicted both literally and visually with an acquiescent disposition. As in Ovid's story of *Acis and Galatea,* she has no choice but to surrender to the lust of the cyclops, Polyphemus. Galatea has no control over the singular eye that gazes upon her beauty and the actions that provoke her character's misfortunes. Unlike the transcendence she displays as an independent figure in Raphael's *Triumph of Galatea* (Figure 7), aspects of this suppression can

[126] Laurie Schneider Adams. *The Methodologies of Art*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 80.

be seen in artworks that include her masculine counterparts, as previously analyzed in the works of art by Annibale Carracci and Gustave Moreau. The inclusion of Polyphemus, as in Carracci's *Polyphemus Furioso* (Figure 15), provides circumstances that not only visually lessens Galatea's superiority as a focal point in the artwork, but figuratively demotes her character to an inferior role. Similarly, in Ovid's *Pygmalion*, Galatea's character is fundamentally conditioned to conform to the mold of the masculine ideals of what a woman should be. Her physical figure is subjected to the masculine ideals of feminine beauty that have been set from Greek antiquity and translated through the Renaissance and Neoclassical periods that followed.

Furthermore, the power of the Mother Goddess stems from her role as a creator. Galatea's nature is often understood as one of a lesser status because of her creator being the sculptor, Pygmalion. However, in revisiting Galatea's nature both physically and cognitively she assumes a dominant role in Pygmalion's worship of her feminine transcendence, as she is often displayed literally exalted above the sculptor on a pedestal. This same hierarchal dominance is also displayed in the goddess, Inanna's, elevated position on the *Warka Vase* (Figure 3). This ascendency is further addressed with a new application of the feminist rhetoric of Mary Garrard, which investigates the power of the male influence in the Pygmalion narrative. Mary Garrard discusses the effect of the male gaze in her discourse addressing Sofonisba Anguissola, with an analysis of the role of the female artist identified as both painter and model. As Galatea is both the model of female perfection and is physically created from a masculine hand, the conversation proceeds with relevance. In Anguissola's *Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola* (Figure 28), the artwork includes not only the artist herself as the subject and the model, but contains her teacher, Bernardino Campi as an additional figure. However, in viewing the painting, the inclusion of Anguissola's teacher, Bernardino Campi, as a subject of the painting

reveals his person as an objectified image created by a literal artist's hand. Just as Pygmalion assumes the powerful role as creator, Anguissola assumes that authority as well, as the artist. The superiority given to a creator, as earlier reflected upon in the power of the Mother Goddess' ability to create and sustain life, is imbued upon Anguissola's character. When thinking about the nature of the Mother Goddess, the dominating aspect of the character stems from her role as woman and a creator. In relating this ascendency to the character of Galatea, the role of creator, as discussed in the *Pygmalion* narrative, provides a new context with regard to female representation. While Anguissola assumes the literal power as the artist and creator outside of the canvas, she simultaneously depicts her own role as the object of creation at Campi's hand. In looking at Anguissola's *Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola* (Figure 28), the viewer can identify an image in which a man, Campi, is painting the image a woman, Anguissola. The question here remarks upon the woman's character as it is subject to one of a lesser status as an object of masculine influence. Garrard addresses this Pygmalion conceit by questioning Anguissola's own self-defeating inclusion of objectifying her own role as creator in the image Anguissola herself created. Garrard ultimately argues that it is clear that this mimicry of the masculine ideology of the feminine role is most definitely in favor of female ascendency. While Campi is visually shown as a creator, his presence is subservient to the woman artist's literal hand. Although the viewer sees Campi as the artistic creator in the image, Garrard notes that it is in fact he who is diminished. "The image of Anguissola is larger than his own, something fairly rare in pictures that show artists painting or displaying paintings."[127] This hierarchy of size, coupled with her higher placement on the picture, promotes Anguissola's

[127] Mary D. Garrard, "Here's Looking at Me: Sofonisba Anguissola and the Problem of the Woman Artist." *Renaissance Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (Autumn 1994): 562.

painted image as one of more importance similar to Inanna in the *Warka Vase* (Figure 3). The viewer is faced not only with a noticeable size and placement difference in Anguissola as the focal point of the painting, but her gaze also dominates the image.

The comparison of Galatea with Anguissola can be related to the elevation of Anguissola's painted figure, just as Raphael's *Galatea* (Figure 7) dominates in her compositional placement and the archetypal goddess prevails as a creator, as seen in Inanna's hierarchal placement on the *Warka Vase*. Just as Anguissola asserts her role as the dominant character with visual compositional placement, Galatea's role is superior to her male counterpart, because of her prominent placement as a reverent being above the lesser, pleading form of Pygmalion. The compositional placement of Galatea as a focal point in her visual representations can be seen in the work of Jean-Léon Gérôme's (Figure 24) and Anne-Louis Girodet de Roucy-Trioson's *Pygmalion and Galatea* (Figure 27). As noted previously, Anguissola's prominent placement in the image shows her figure with more superiority over the man in the image. In artworks that focus on Galatea as the priority, her nature maintains a figurative dominance in relation to the others in her narrative. On the other hand, artworks that portray Galatea as a lesser area of interest, such as in Annibale Carracci's *Polyphemus Inamorato* (Figure 14) and *Polyphemus Furioso* (Figure 15), lessen her status visually and figuratively as a figure controlled by the men in her narrative. Galatea's dual nature is circumstantial to the viewpoints placed upon her in relation to the men that surround her.

Similarly, the effects of the male gaze, whether it be the gaze of the viewer, artist, or lustful cyclops, upholds significance in the discussion of an artwork. The masculine gaze, affecting the image and lessening the status of the female figure throughout the history of patriarchal society, is here subverted to promote the elevation of the woman. In Garrard's

analysis of Anguissola's painting, the woman overcomes the effects of this gaze. While both Campi and Anguissola are staring out at the viewer, Anguissola's gaze maintains a more imposing presence, as she stares intently out of the painting with an air of distinction. Anguissola becomes to focus of the image, which leads to Garrard's conclusion that Campi "becomes the unnecessary element, not Pygmalion but pseudo-Pygmalion, presenting himself as the creator of an artistic persona that is actually the creation of the artist herself."[128] If this same concept is applied to Galatea's character in visual representation, Gérôme's *Pygmalion and Galatea* (Figure 24), the image supports the female figure as a focal point that is superior to all else in the image. Anguissola ultimately constructs an image that overturns the role of the woman as a subject constrained to be resigned to masculine ideals. While Pygmalion is Galatea's creator, Galatea is often exalted to a higher importance quite literally on a pedestal, as seen in the work of Jean-Léon Gérôme's (Figure 24) and Anne-Louis Girodet de Roucy-Trioson's *Pygmalion and Galatea* (Figure 27). While Pygmalion assumes the physical role as her creator, Galatea's allegorical role is exalted to more visual significance, supporting her nature as a being of superiority.

Furthermore, by including the imagery of Cupid, as in Jean-Léon Gérôme's *Pygmalion and Galatea* (Figure 24), artists are supporting Galatea's supremacy by addressing the relationship between Galatea's nature and Venus' influence in her creation. While Pygmalion maintains the literal role as creator in being the sculptor of Galatea's ivory figure, her consciousness is only possible because of Venus' power. The Mother Goddess maintained much of her superiority in her role as a creator and in her fertility. Under the feminist analysis of her character, the inclusion Venus imagery symbolically exalts her status to match that of the

[128] Garrard, "Here's Looking at Me: Sofonisba Anguissola and the Problem of the Woman Artist," 565.

previously refashioned fertility goddesses. Remembering that the ivory statue was not officially documented with the name Galatea until the nineteenth century, her figurative birth on Venus' name day, and occasional reference to her actually being the goddess herself preceding her naming, the relationship to Venus is paramount to Galatea's ascendance. Galatea's associations to Venus and her visual paramountcy in the imagery allows her nature to be connected directly to the archetypal Mother Goddess. Galatea's ascendency as a woman is advanced to a role as a creator through the interconnection of Venus' name, iconography, and literal transition as a fertility deity through Crete to antiquity. By reading Gérôme's *Pygmalion and Galatea* (Figure 24) and Anne-Louis Girodet de Roucy-Trioson's *Pygmalion and Galatea* (Figure 27) with the feminist rhetoric and pseudo-Pygmalion ideas supported by Garrard's discourse, Galatea is no longer objectified by the masculine gaze. His gaze upon her is one of reverence and awe, indebted to Venus' ability to create and nurture life in Galatea. The associations of her birth with the inclusion of Venus in the works rejects Pygmalion's position as the creator, lessoning the position of his own mastery to literally create Galatea's beautiful physical form. Moreover, the duality in the Mother Goddess' superior role as a creator and the inferiority of her status based on patriarchal influence is now advocated in Galatea's essence.

Analysis of Results

With the application of the revisionist feminist rhetoric to the character of Galatea, the essence of her character is elevated to one of more importance with the implementation of the methodology. Her relationship to the archetypal Mother Goddess, through the transmission of pagan fertility goddesses and her relationship to the Venus, provides a definitive correspondence with the lessening status of the female sex. As discussed in the previous analysis of her character, Galatea's nature is both superior and inferior to the male counterparts that surround her figure. The results of this thorough analysis on the regressive nature of the Mother Goddess and the examination of Galatea's dual nature in relation to masculine interference delivers a new awareness of Galatea's figure as an emulation of the archetypal goddess. Along with the ignorance of the Mother Goddess' supremacy as a dominating divinity, Galatea's character provides a historical context in which she is subject to the standards of the patriarchy over the last five thousand years and can be rewritten under new feminist ideology as a dominant figure. This research contributes to the art historical field by foregrounding a new formulation of Galatea's importance in visual imagery. With modern reevaluations of art history, Galatea's role as a minor figure of a lesser status at the influence of her male counterparts is fundamentally inaccurate. The revisionist feminist methodology's design allows for viewers and scholars to reevaluate Galatea as not just a minor character to be objectified, but one with an elevated significance concerning her relationship with the Goddess and masculine ideal. In reassessing her metaphorical associations with the archetypal Goddess as a creator and her hierarchical importance as a focal point deserving of awe and veneration, Galatea's image is elevated to new significance in her representation of the nature of the goddess.

Conclusion

With an understanding of the effects of the male influence on the Mother Goddess' and Galatea's reputations, the emphasis of masculine consequence is highly influential in the classification of feminine power. The battling ideals of Galatea as a figure of superiority and inferiority is emphasized in the spiritual and logical representations of her prominence regarding her beauty and femininity. In primarily focusing on her as an independent figure, Galatea is exalted as a figure of unattainable prominence, as seen in Raphael's *Triumph of Galatea* (Figure 7), rejoicing in the feminine ascendency as a symbol of fertility and life. Even in the idealized form, her feminine nature is comparable to that of an everyday woman, exalted as a character of worship in her radiance as a female. It is only under the circumstance of the masculine influence that Galatea is reduced to inferiority. Her inability to control the events of Ovid's tragic narrative is subject to the power of her masculine counterparts, as highlighted with the inclusion of Polyphemus in Carracci's ceiling (Figure 14 and Figure 15). In the shadow of Polyphemus' gaze, also seen in Moreau's *Galatea* (Figure 16), her character is powerless to his lustful rage. These treatments of her visual representations create presumptive interpretations for the viewer, furthering this withstanding dilemma of Galatea's superiority and inferiority. Similarly, the Mother Goddess maintains dominance in her ability to procreate and nurture life. As with many of the archetypal goddesses that have been discussed, it is with the interference of a masculine counterpart, as told in the narratives of Coatlicue, Tiamat, and Gaea, that the patriarchal ideals of civilizations were imposed upon her character.

The transmutation of these supreme Mother Goddesses into lesser beings of masculine subjugation were even further transmitted to the West through the reinventions of religions as transferred from the East and adapted to reflect the cultural and social values of the men in

power. Specifically, the female deity in the form of Aphrodite, demonstrates this fear of emasculation and cult-like worship among the developing Greek civilization. As later reconstructed into her Roman counterpart, Venus, Aphrodite's feminine power is translated to conform to masculine ideals of beauty and morals. In visual depictions that reject Venus' influence in Galatea's narrative, like that of Francisco de Goya's *Pygmalion and Galatea* (Figure 27), her nature is objectified by the masculine ideal. Galatea's connections to Aphrodite, in her physical appearance, her naming, and symbolic association in visual representations of art provides her character one of more significance. While previous research has provided the groundwork to make these connections, scholars have neglected to investigate the level at which Galatea figure represents the archetypal goddess. This research demonstrates the strength of an original concept in redefining Galatea's nature. The importance of Venus' relationship to Galatea promotes a figurative and literal progression of the Mother Goddess' evolution from supreme deity to an inferior being at the authority of patriarchal ideals. Her nature, one of which is both superior in its feminine ascendency and inferior in its subjugation to the masculine influence that surrounds her, reflects the same duality that is seen in the nature of the goddess throughout history.

This research provides a contribution to the field of art history in not only expanding the discourse on the Mother Goddess, but also promotes a strong feminist reevaluation of Galatea's figure. The attention given to the archetypal goddess by historians such as Joseph Campbell, Gerda Lerner, and E.O. James has provided a basis for a feminist reanalysis of Galatea's nature in a patriarchal world. In addition, this research has unearthed a relationship between the Mother Goddess and Galatea which expands the feminist discussion of female suppression and analyzes their figures in a new context. The objectives that have been investigated in this

research through the evaluations of Galatea as depicted in works of art allow for feminist scholars to reevaluate her character with more consequence. No longer should Galatea be perceived as a minor character in myth and artistic creation. The connections of Galatea's nature through Venus to the archetypal goddess allows this research to provide a new appraisal of her figure's importance. She ultimately perpetuates a manner of prominence in the history of feminine repression in her dual nature that responds to the masculine influence surrounding her. Future iterations of her character can further develop the analysis of goddess worship and the effects of masculine authority over the female gender through the transitional effects that progress throughout history in the visual arts. This investigation of Galatea's figure emphatically provides a larger significance in her role as a representation of the nature of the goddess.

Figure 1

Venus of Willendorf Ref.: Venuses of Willendorf, Lespuge, Bolni Vestonice

Circa 30,000 BCE -

Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria

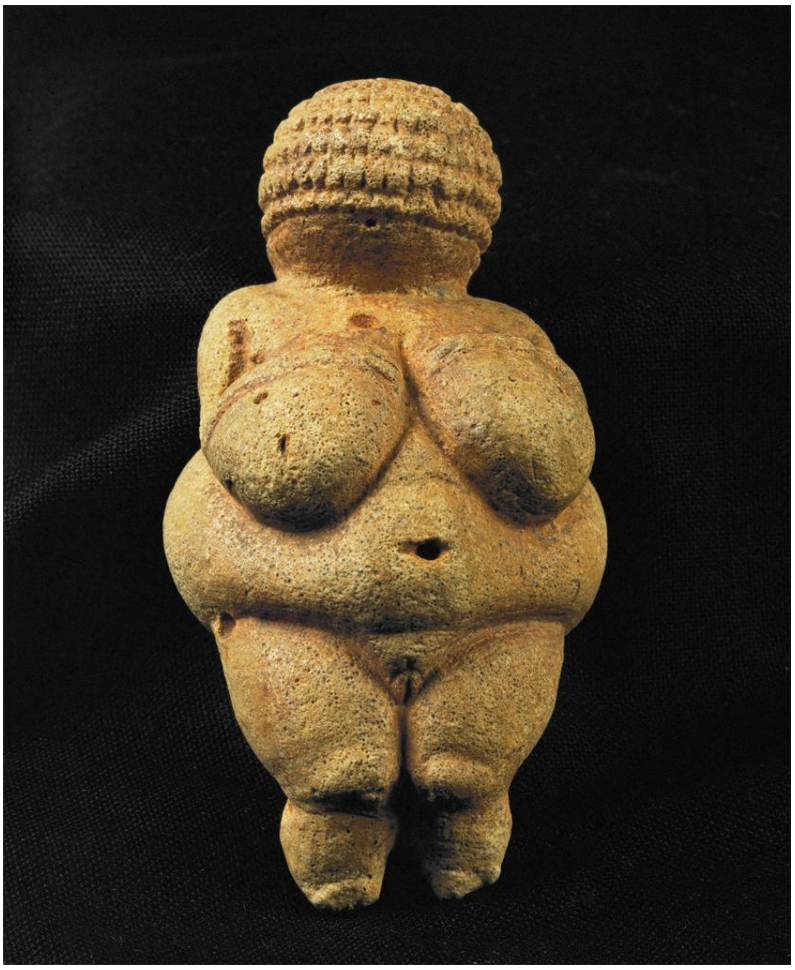

Figure 2

Venus of Willendorf

Circa 30,000-25,000 BCE

Limestone

Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria

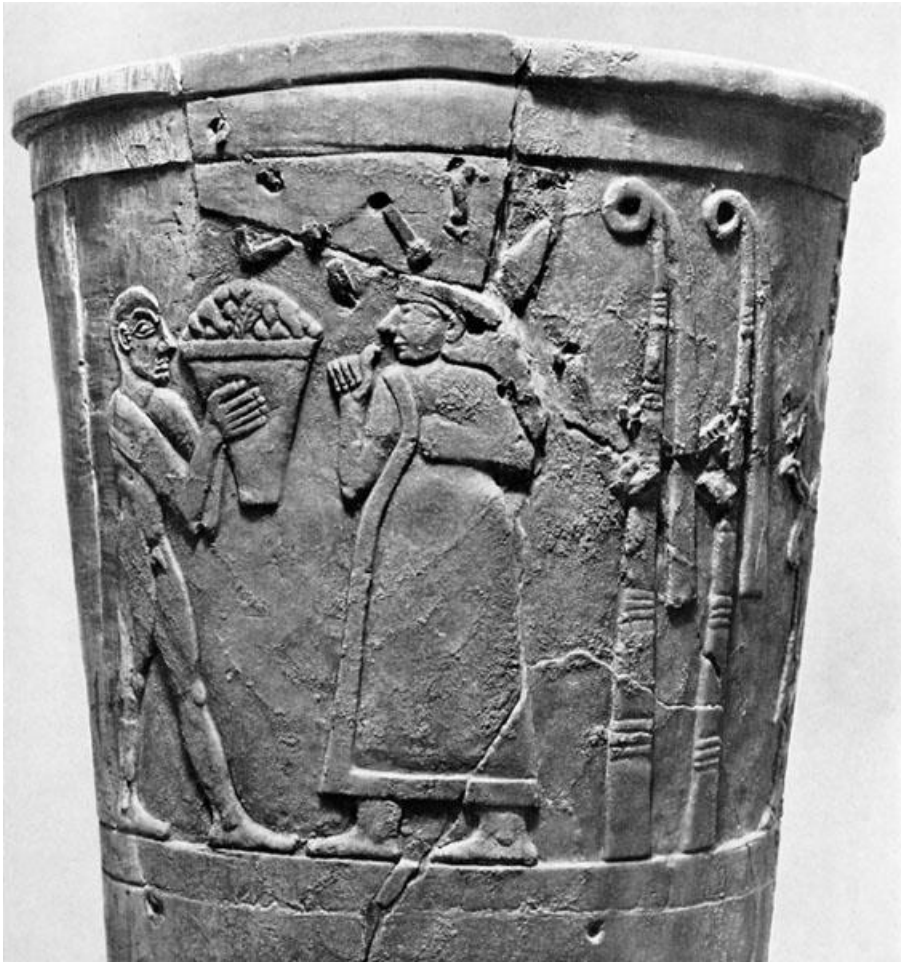

Figure 3

Uruk (Warka) Vase, with Scenes of Agriculture and Honoring the Goddess Inanna

detail, top register: Inanna Receiving an Offering

c. 3300-3000 BCE

Alabaster

Mesopotamian, Uruk, Late Uruk Period

Iraq Museum, Baghdad, Iraq

Figure 4

Unknown

Coatlicue

Circa late 15th century CE

Basalt

Museo Nacional de Anthropologia, Mexico

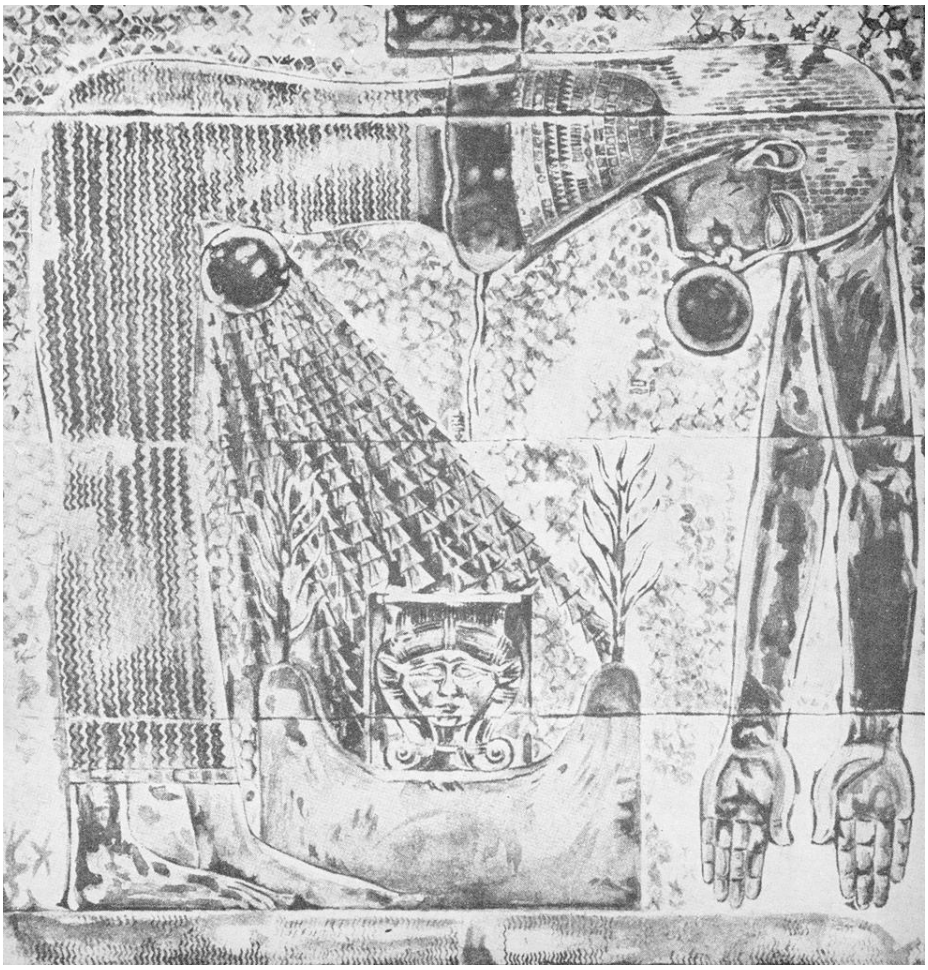

Figure 5

Ceiling (relief; painted).

Ptolemaic Period

The Ancient World, Egypt, Ptolemaic Period

Dendera: Temple of Hathor; Chapel "L" in Chapel of the New Year.

Found at Carchemish

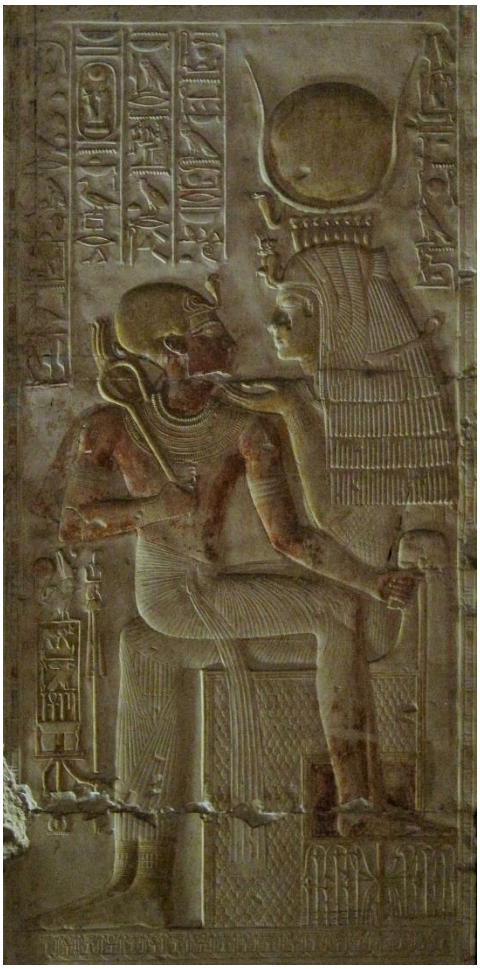

Figure 6

Isis with the Pharaoh

Temple of Seti I, Abydos

19th Dynasty

Figure 7

Raphael

Triumph of Galatea

Circa 1512

Villa della Farnesina, Rome

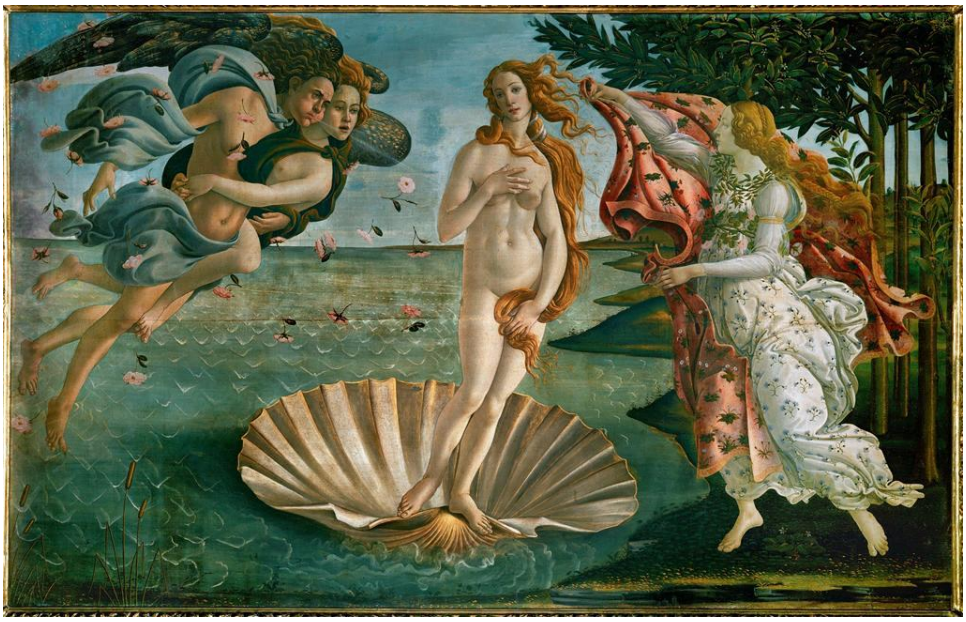

Figure 8

Sandro Botticelli

The Birth of Venus

Circa 1484-86

Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence

Figure 9

Sebastian del Piombo

Polphemus

Circa 1512

Villa della Farnesina, Rome

Figure 10

Loggia di Galatea

Circa 1512

Villa della Farnesina, Rome

Figure 11

Raphael

Triumph of Galatea (detail)

Circa 1512

Villa della Farnesina, Rome

Figure 12

The Triumph of Galatea after Domenichino

Engraving by Blanchard

Figure 13

Apollonius of Athens

Belvedere Torso

Circa 1st century B.C.

Vatican Museum, Rome

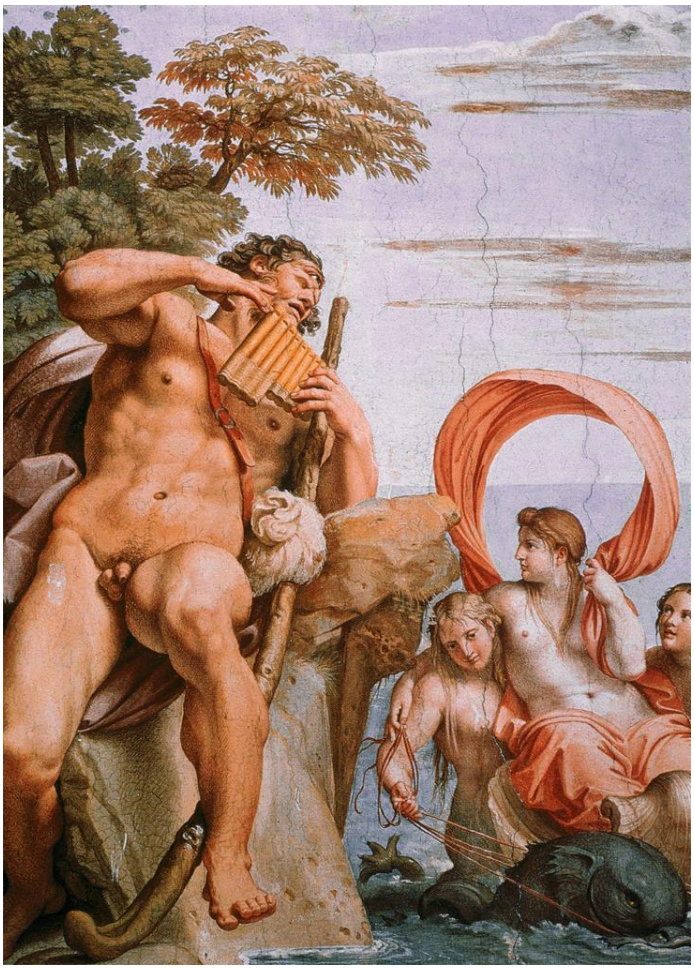

Figure 14

Annibale Carracci

Polyphemus Inamorato

Circa 1597-1604

Galleria Farnese, Rome

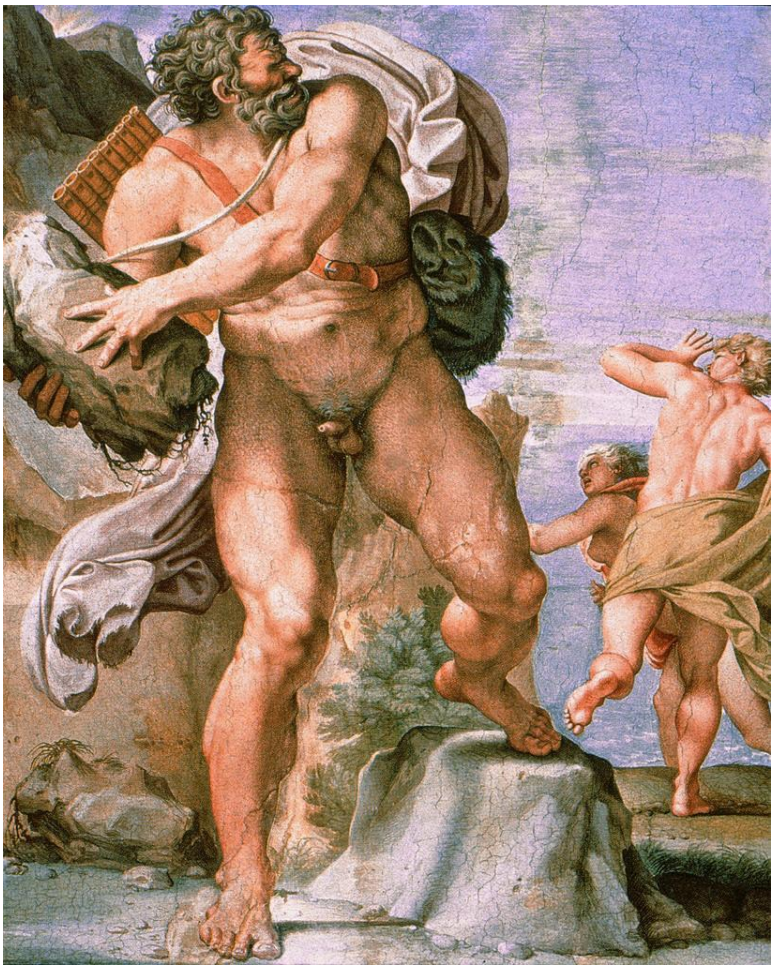

Figure 15

Annibale Carracci

Polyphemus Furioso

Circa 1597-1604

Galleria Farnese, Rome

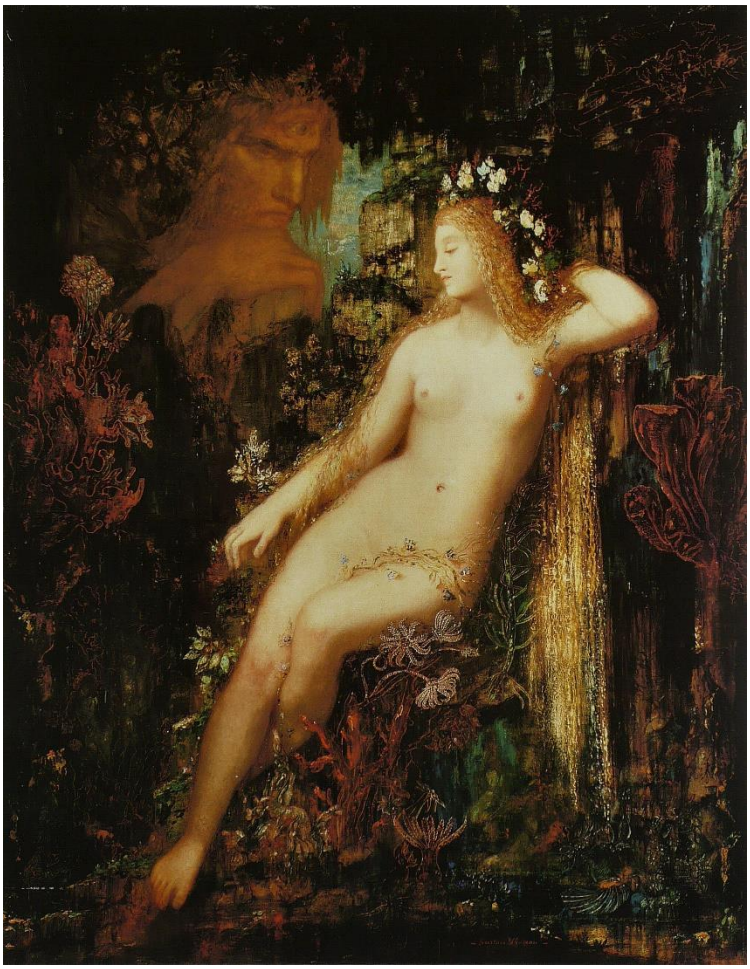

Figure 16

Gustave Moreau

Galatea

Circa 1880

Musée d'Orsay, Paris

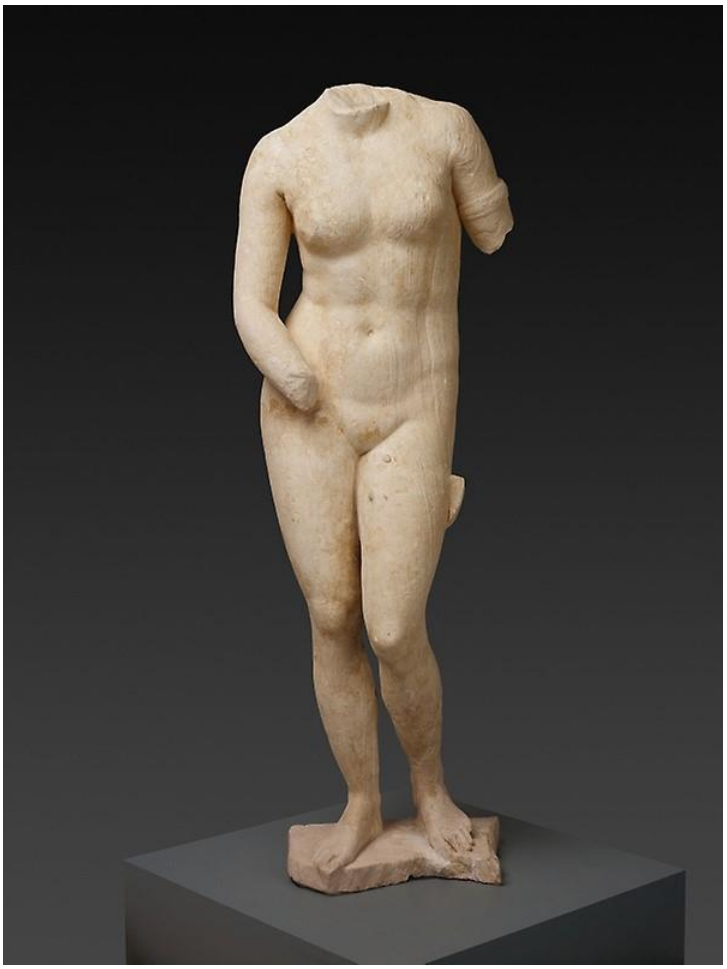

Figure 17

Praxiteles

Statue of the Aphrodite of Knidos

Circa 2nd century AD

Marble

The Art Institute, Chicago

Figure 18

Edward Burne-Jones

The Heart Desires

Circa 1875–78

Oil on canvas

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham

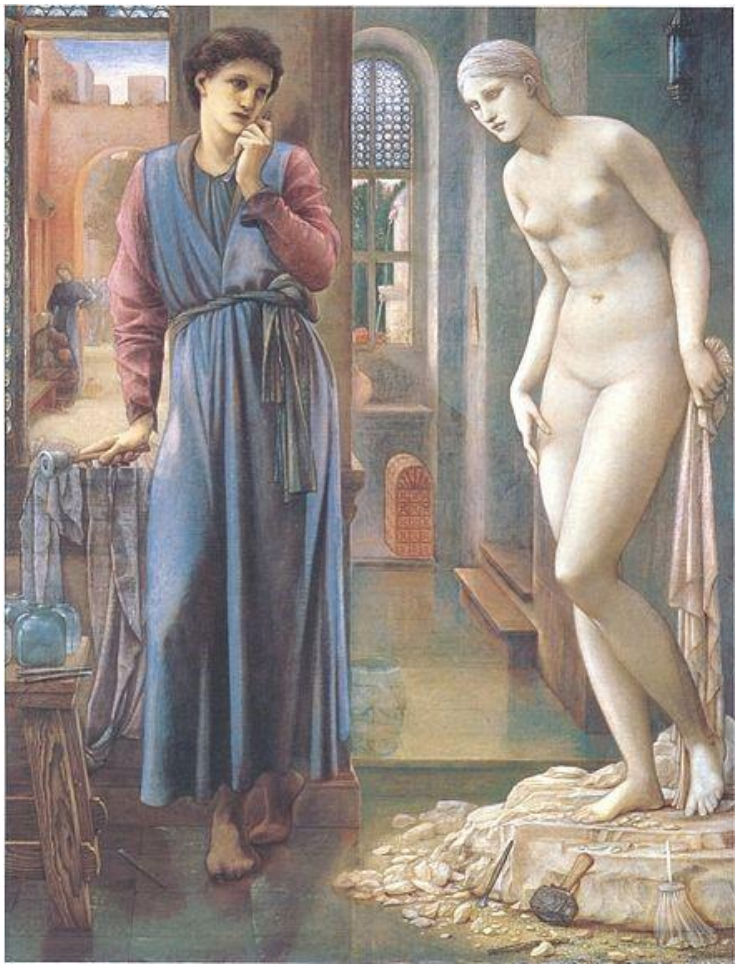

Figure 19

Edward Burne-Jones

The Hand Refrains

Circa 1878

Oil on canvas

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham

Figure 20

Edward Burne-Jones

The Godhead Fires

Circa 1878

Oil on canvas

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham

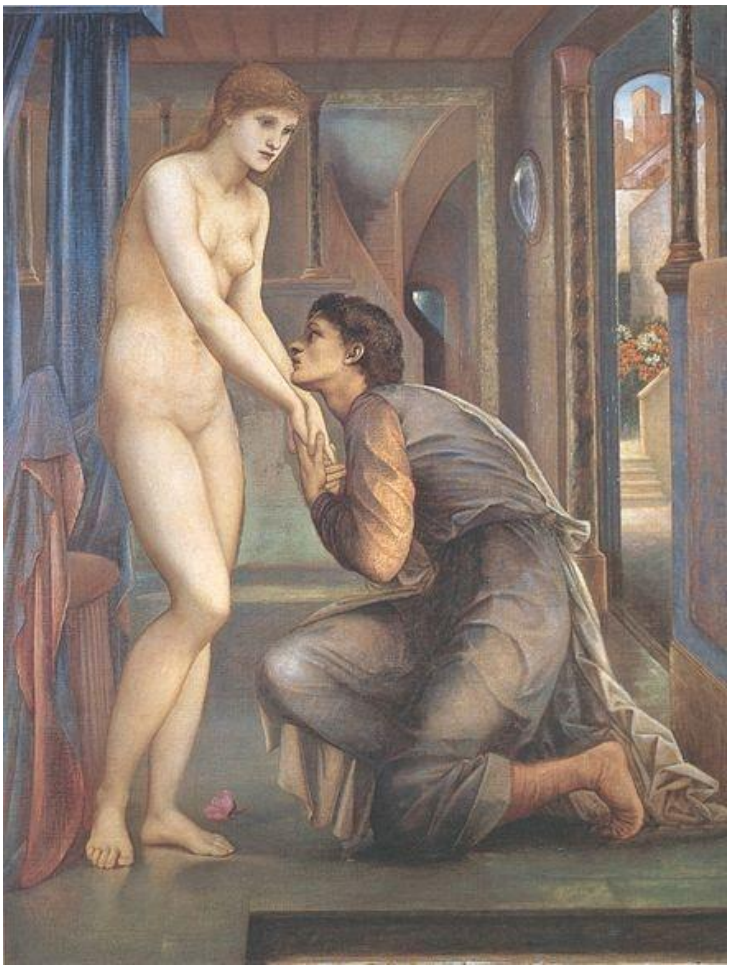

Figure 21

Edward Burne-Jones

The Soul Attains

Circa 1878

Oil on canvas

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham

Figure 22

Agnolo Bronzino

Pygmalion and Galatea

Circa 1525 – 1530

Oil on panel

Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence

Figure 23

Agnolo Bronzino

An Allegory with Venus and Cupid

Circa 1545

Oil on wood

The National Gallery, London

Figure 24

Jean-Léon Gérôme

Pygmalion and Galatea

Circa 1890

Oil on canvas

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

Figure 25

Jean-Léon Gérôme

Enlargement from *Pygmalion and Galatea*

Circa 1890

Oil on canvas

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

Figure 26

Francisco de Goya

Pygmalion and Galatea

Circa 1812-1820

Sepia wash

The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

Figure 27

Anne-Louis Girodet de Roucy-Trioson

Pygmalion and Galatea

Circa 1813-19

Oil on canvas

Musée du Louvre, Paris

Figure 28

Sofonisba Anguissola

Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola

Circa late 1550s

oil on canvas

Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena, Siena, Italy

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