

SEMONIDES, FR. 7.62

DOUGLAS E. GERBER

THIS VERSE, ἀνάγκη δ' ἄνδρα ποιεῖται φίλον, has been generally explained in one of two diametrically opposed ways, namely "she forces a man (or her husband) to love her" and "only when forced does she get married (or show love for her husband)." Both interpretations have had a long history, but it is the former which has prevailed among the majority of scholars who have translated or discussed the passage, and this will be examined first.¹

The entire description of the mare-woman up to this point has been in negative terms which list the menial tasks she refuses to perform. Then after v. 62 we have several lines which describe the care she gives to her body and a final statement that, although she is a καλὸν θέημα to others, to her husband she is a κακόν, unless he happens to be a τύραννος or σκηπτοῦχος. The question, then, is whether v. 62 refers back, and thus continues the list of activities she dislikes, or refers ahead to those which she enjoys. The latter seems more natural on stylistic grounds, since it will indicate that the thought of the οὔτε clauses is complete and that a new series of δέ clauses is beginning. As such it would be better to follow West, who prints a period after ἔζουτ' and a high point after φίλον, rather than the reverse, which is the general practice of editors. Vv. 63-66 will, therefore, contain an explanation of how she is able to exercise such power over her husband.

The main issue, however, is not so much the sequence of thought as the interpretation of the expression ἄνδρα ποιεῖται φίλον. Landfester² argues that in early Greek poetry *philos* is almost always possessive and that here the meaning of *philon* would be the same as, for example, in *Il.* 9.397, τῶν ἦν κ' ἐθέλωμι φίλην ποιήσομ' ἄκουιν. But although the possessive force of *philos* predominates in the early period, Landfester gives no examples of its being used predicatively without a following noun, and I doubt whether any can be found.³ The same general sense, however, which Landfester sees in the passage can be obtained if we interpret *philon* to mean "loving," and for this usage there is a very close parallel in Antiphon 1.15, ἐφη ἱκανὴ εἶναι ἐκείνη τε τὸν Φιλόνεων φίλον ποιῆσαι καὶ αὐτὴ τὸν ἐμὸν

¹I am most grateful to Leonard Woodbury for helpful discussions of this passage.

²M. Landfester, *Das griechische Nomen "philos" und seine Ableitungen* (Hildesheim 1966) 41. He translates: "sie macht sich einen Mann zu dem Ihnen."

³In an example such as Hes. *Op.* 713-714, δειλὸς τοι ἀνὴρ φίλον ἄλλοτε ἄλλον ποιεῖται, *philon* can hardly be possessive.

πατέρα.⁴ Semonides' mare-woman⁵ makes a man show love to her, and ἀνάγκη is added simply to emphasize the power she has over him. Men are captivated by her appearance, and even though they may feel disgust at her laziness and excessive primping they are powerless to resist her charms. The only kind of man who can have such a wife without encountering *kakon* is a *tyrannos* (v. 69), since he alone can afford to have a wife who does not work and who spends all her time making herself look as attractive as possible.⁶

Recently, however, Verdenius⁷ has argued for the meaning "only when forced does she get married," and he takes issue with Marg's⁸ explanation of the sequence of thought: "Marg, 24 vermisst bei dieser Auffassung den gedanklichen Zusammenhang: 'zuerst ist ausdrücklich nur von Knechtsarbeit und Plakerei die Rede—und das allein passt aufs Pferd—während die Liebesarbeit demgegenüber nicht als ganz so unerfreulich gelten dürfte.' Aber der entscheidende Gesichtspunkt ist nicht die Erfreulichkeit, sondern die Vornehmheit: sie fühlt sich zu vornehm, nicht nur für die Hausarbeit, sondern auch für das Ehejoch." Verdenius is right in stressing her "Vornehmheit" rather than her "Erfreulichkeit," but the former need not imply that she is opposed to the "Ehejoch." Her concern for "Vornehmheit" could just as easily be directed, in part at least, towards securing the man's attention. Verdenius also objects to Schrecken-berg,⁹ who sees an erotic significance in ἀνάγκη, and supports Wooley,¹⁰ who in his review of Schrecken-berg's book argues that "the *ananke* is better understood by comparing the *ananke* in line 44 (μόγισ) and by seeing this statement about the Mare-woman as in responson to that about the immediately preceding Cat-woman (line 53), who is man-crazy." Semonides' classification of women, however, is not given in any particular order, and it is not his habit to make a specific contrast between one class of women and another. Verdenius feels that the parallels adduced

⁴The middle voice of ποιῆσαι is to be understood in the καί clause.

⁵For the lustfulness of mares cf. Ael. *NA* 4.11, μόνας ἀκούω τῶν ζῴων τὰς ἵππους καὶ κυούσας ὑπομένειν τὴν τῶν ἀρρένων μίξιν· εἶναι γὰρ λαγνιστάτας. διὰ ταῦτά τοι καὶ τῶν γυναικῶν τὰς ἀκολάστους ὑπὸ τῶν σεμνοτέρως αὐτὰς εὐθύνοντων καλεῖσθαι ἵππους.

⁶Although Semonides need not have had any particular *tyrannos* in mind, it is at least possible that he was thinking of the Candaules-Gyges story. There is no evidence that Candaules' wife had the same characteristics as the mare-woman, but Candaules certainly thought of her as a καλὸν θέημα (cf. Hdt. 1.8, ἐρασθεὶς δὲ ἐνόμιξέ οἱ εἶναι γυναῖκα πολλὸν πασέων καλλίστην), and v. 70 of Semonides would be an appropriate statement to make concerning the Lydian.

⁷W. J. Verdenius, "Semonides über die Frauen," *Mnemosyne* 4.21 (1968) 146–147.

⁸W. Marg, *Der Charakter in der Sprache der frühgriechischen Dichtung* (Würzburg 1938) 23–24.

⁹H. Schrecken-berg, *Ananke. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Wortgebrauchs* (Munich 1964) 59–60.

¹⁰A. Wooley, *AJP* 88 (1967) 230.

by Schreckenberg are not sufficient, since the erotic significance of *ananke* is made explicitly clear in them. But if *philon* means "loving" here, as I have argued, the context is obviously erotic. The main objection, however, to Verdenius' interpretation is that *ἄνδρα ποιεῖται φίλον* cannot mean "she gets married." In all the examples from Homer, Hesiod, and the Homeric Hymns the word for wife or husband is in apposition to a preceding noun or pronoun, and in the present passage there is no such apposition.¹¹

Finally, it remains to consider some other interpretations which have been put forward. Lattimore¹² offered the translation, "she makes her husband intimate with hard times," a version which might suggest that only a *tyrannos* can afford such a wife. Verdenius clearly understands "hard times" in this way, since he argues that "es ist unwahrscheinlich, dass der Dichter hier der Frage der finanziellen Folgen vorgreift," but "hard times" need not imply financial difficulty. In any event the main question is whether satisfactory syntax and sense can be seen in "she makes a man friendly with necessity." The sense is not impossible in the context, and the dative after *philos* is used elsewhere in Semonides in a passage which requires the same degree of semi-personification as would be required here,¹³ but if this is the meaning Semonides intended he would more probably have used the active than the middle voice. With the interpretation I have proposed the middle is normal, as the examples in *LSJ* s.v. *ποιέω* A. III make clear.

Radermacher¹⁴ translates: "Not ist's, durch die sie einen Mann zu eigen gewinnt," and in a note explains: "Man nimmt sie nur, wenn man selber des Geldes bedarf." This seems to me to be forced and unnatural. Malusa¹⁵ gives essentially the same explanation as Verdenius, except that he believes *ποιεῖται φίλον* = *φιλεῖ*, an equation which, as far as I can determine, is unexampled.

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO, LONDON

¹¹Cf. *Il.* 3.409, 9.397, *Od.* 5.120, 7.66, Hes. *Theog.* 921, 946, 948, frs 23a.31, 33a.7 M-W, *HAp* 313, *HAp* 44. In *Od.* 5.120 the apposition results from *ἄνδρα* being understood from the preceding verse, and similarly in *HAp* 44 *Ἥρην* is understood from the context.

¹²R. Lattimore, "Notes on Greek Poetry," *AJP* 65 (1944) 173.

¹³Cf. Sem. fr. 1.10 and my note in *Euterpe* (Amsterdam 1970) 55.

¹⁴L. Radermacher, *Weinen und Lachen* (Vienna 1947) 164.

¹⁵P. Malusa, *Simonide Amorgino* (Venice 1900) 89–90. L. von Sybel, "Zu Simonides von Amorgos," *Hermes* 7 (1873) 338–340, finds humour in the passage. "Mühle oder Sieb mag sie nicht anrühren, Besen und Backofen sind ihr zu gemeiner Hausrath; es hat Noth, dass sie sich herbeilässt, mit ihrem Manne, der doch immerhin das oberste Hausmöbel ist, sich nur zu befassen. Ganz vermeiden kann sie es nicht, wie die Umstände einmal sind; aber so lange es irgend angeht, ist er Nebensache. Simonides ist Humorist trotz einem." Malusa rightly comments that this interpretation "pecca di ricercatezza."