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The Forbidden Fruit: How Peter Paul Rubens and Catholic Doctrine Shape the Iconography of Eve

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Abstract

The iconography of Eve has been greatly influenced by male-dominated religious and cultural institutions. As a biblical figure, her narrative has been interpreted through textual analysis and visual imagery throughout Western Europe, a society that is inherently patriarchal. Doctrines of the Catholic Church and the male gaze in visual culture have impacted interpretations of Eve, relating her sexuality to gender roles perpetuated by classical ideals of the female nude. Specifically, comparative analysis of 17th century painter Peter Paul Rubens works *Adam and Eve* (1597-1600) and *The Union of Earth and Water* (1618) demonstrates how representation of female sexuality differs in his compositions of a biblical Eve and the ancient goddess Cybele. The women in these paintings are depicted as classical notions of the female nude and represent origin myths, one pagan and one Christian. The compositions of both paintings are reflective of their respective narratives, however, it is the body language of the main figures that this paper critically analyzes. Eve's body is representative of the sexual deviance and tempting nature of women while Cybele's figure represents fertility and maternal nature. Eve has historically been subject to interpretation through a strictly patriarchal lens. By questioning Rubens' approaches to gendered portrayals and incorporating feminist scholarship, this inquiry provides a new lens to interpret Eve's iconography as representative of agency and power.

1. Introduction

The narrative of Adam and Eve, passed down for centuries through the sacred texts of the Abrahamic religions, provides an origin story for followers of these religions. The Book of Genesis presents creation myths for the natural world as well as the story of the first man and woman God created. Since this narrative has become so universally known, interpretations of the text vary greatly. However, interpretations of the narrative of Adam and Eve, especially within the Christian concept of The Fall and Original Sin, have traversed religious boundaries to inform gender roles. Specifically, with the influence of the Catholic Church, traditional teachings have shaped understandings of biblical ideas as they apply to a Judeo-Christian influenced perception of the globalized world. Because Judeo-Christian influenced societies are patriarchal, and the Church is a patriarchal institution that operates within these societal power dynamics, the role of Eve in particular has been utilized to justify misogynistic treatment and perception of women.

In Peter Paul Rubens' painting *Adam and Eve* (1597-1600) the Baroque painter utilizes classical renditions of the female nude to depict Eve as she corresponds with early Church leader's interpretation of her narrative. A later painting of Rubens, *The Union of Earth and Water* (1618) depicts another classical female figure, the ancient goddess Cybele. These paintings present a comparative model in which the two women both represent origin myths, one pagan and one Christian. The compositions of both paintings are reflective of their respective narratives; however, it is the body language of the main figures that this paper critically analyzes. While the physical form of Eve is representative of the sexual deviance and tempting nature of women, Cybele is portrayed as feminine and maternal. Doctrines of the Catholic Church and the male gaze in visual culture shape interpretations of Eve, relating her gender to narratives of

disobedience established in the Book of Genesis and her body to classical ideals of the female nude, originating in renditions of Aphrodite.

Religious interpretation of Eve's narrative has historically been presented through a patriarchal lens identifying the biblical figure as a seductive temptress. Full responsibility is placed on Eve for imparting sin to the future of humanity after falling victim to the serpent's manipulations. By exploring the iconography of Eve through the lens of a feminist perspective, her representation in text and visual culture is challenged. Specifically, in Rubens' depictions, the dual portrayals of female centered origin narratives provide a visual context for interpretations of female forms serving different agendas. With a feminist lens, her image is re-evaluated and re-interpreted as an icon of female agency and power. In comparing Eve's iconography, as established in Northern European visual culture, with that of Cybele, the intersection of patriarchal systems becomes evident in shaping gendered narratives.

2. Eve and Traditional Visual Representations

In the Book of Genesis, the serpent approaches Eve and convinces her that she will not die if she eats fruit from the forbidden tree but rather will gain knowledge of Good and Evil. This is appealing to her so she takes the fruit to eat and then shares with her husband who also eats the fruit. As punishment, God proclaims that women will forever feel pain during childbirth and will desire their husbands who will rule over them, and that men will have to forever labor over their land without rest.[1] This is a basic summary of the instance that Christians refer to as "The Fall," resulting in Adam and Eve's expulsion from Paradise as a consequence of giving into their temptation. The Fall also leads to the development of the concept of Original Sin, beginning with St. Augustine, in which all future generations carry the burden of Adam and Eve's sin of disobedience against God. Despite familiarity with the basic premise of the narrative of Adam and Eve, these verses have been subject to varying interpretations since their inception as part of the Hebrew Bible. Throughout Art History, depictions of The Fall have been produced through visual interpretations of Adam and Eve's temptation.

For example, artist Albrecht Dürer chose to portray Eve's temptation of Adam in his engraving *Adam and Eve*, 1504 (Fig. 1). The figures stand in contrapposto with symmetrically bent limbs and shifted weight. Dürer incorporated proportional measurements and a systematic approach for achieving the ideal human form in his engravings. The natural elements surrounding the two figures correlate to biblical symbolism, and Dürer's familiarity with Christian symbols commonly associated with Adam and Eve influenced his representation of the biblical characters.[2] The animals represent Paradise, with the cat, rabbit, elk and ox correlating to the medieval concept of the four temperaments.[3] The Tree of Knowledge separates the two figures, signifying the tension in the decision to sin against God. Most importantly, the connection between Eve and the serpent is portrayed through the exchange of the forbidden fruit.

Fig. 1 Albrecht Dürer, *Adam and Eve* 1504. Engraving. 25.1 cm x 20 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/336222

Often seen in depictions of the Temptation is some form of contact between Eve and the serpent, an animal commonly associated with the Devil in biblical symbolism.[4] This is a choice made by the artist to further connect the sinful act of Eve with devilish behavior, reinforcing the connotation that she conspired with evil. In Dürer's depiction, there is a direct exchange of the forbidden fruit between the serpent and Eve. In later Northern Renaissance artist Lucas Cranach the Elder's series of Adam and Eve paintings, he implies a connection with Eve and the serpent to show how she deceived an innocent Adam into committing the greatest sin of disobedience. The composition in *Adam and Eve*, 1526 (Fig. 2) portrays Eve with one hand wrapped around the Tree of Knowledge just as the serpent is wrapped around the branches. Her other hand extends the forbidden fruit to Adam, suggesting a transfer of sin not through a direct exchange like in Dürer's painting but with an inferred relationship between the conspiring serpent and Eve. Her body is serving as the medium for the transfer of sin, a key component of how artists associate Eve's body with evil and disobedience. Her body becomes representative of overt sexuality as implied through her outstretched pose and thus, a fuller view of her body, associating it with lust.

Fig. 2 Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Adam and Eve* 1526. Oil on panel. 117 cm x 80 cm. The Courtauld Gallery, London. https://courtauld.ac.uk/gallery/collection/renaissance/lucas-cranach-the-elder-adam-and-eve

Furthermore, a key characteristic of Cranach the Elder's *Adam and Eve* series, including his 1526, 1528, and 1538 versions (Figs. 3, 4) is a distinct emphasis on Adam's vulnerability to Eve's persistence. Cranach the Elder interprets Eve's temptation of Adam as being aggressive and utilizing her sexuality to manipulate her unassuming husband. The artist poses Eve sensually against the Tree of Knowledge as she forcefully shares the forbidden fruit. Adam is shown as hesitant, with his hand placed in a questioning manner on his head, further placing the blame of falling to temptation solely on Eve. This composition has become typical of the iconography of the Temptation of Adam and Eve: visually associating Eve with the serpent to denote her relationship with evil and utilizing the physical poses of both Adam and Eve to express his reservation versus her seduction. This representation has perpetuated notions of Eve as a lustful temptress which has driven both religious and secular interpretations to associate her committing the first sin within a visual language of seduction and danger.[5] The degree of fluidity related to varying religious interpretations of Eve can be seen in the transformation of the text of Genesis that contains the narrative of Adam and Eve through the history of the Catholic Church.

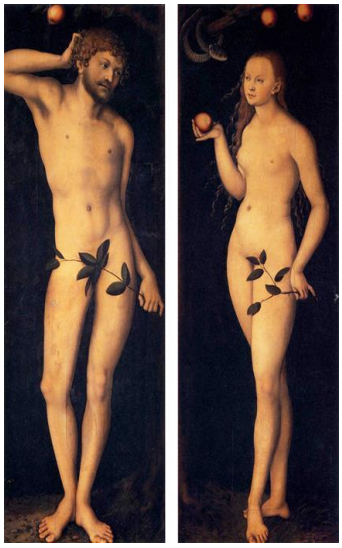

Fig. 3 Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Adam and Eve* 1528. Oil on panel. 172 cm x 124 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam_and_Eve_(Cranach)#/media/File:Cranach,_adamo_ed_eva,_uffizi.jpg

Fig. 4 Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Adam and Eve* 1538. Oil on panel. 49 cm x 39 cm. The National Gallery, Prague. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lucas_Cranach_d.%C3%84._-_Adam_und_Eva_(Praha).jpg

While these northern artists established a unique style within their interpretation of Eve, later artist Peter Paul Rubens would come to dominate the Baroque period. Rubens provided his own artistic interpretation of Eve early in his career. Rubens began his artistic career by the year 1591 at the age of fourteen, serving as an apprentice under various Flemish masters at the time. However, it was during the summer of 1600 that his burgeoning talents found a proper home in Italy, where he would spend the next eight years studying the works of Italian masters including Caravaggio, Tintoretto and Titian. It was during this time that Rubens developed a sense of his own style through his "exceptional assimilation of the Renaissance ideals of beauty and classical form."[6] While his initial training at the Flemish school focused on traditional naturalistic techniques, Rubens incorporated the classical and Renaissance ideals from the modern Italian school into various aspects of his own work. His return to Antwerp solidified the presence of the Baroque in Northern Europe.[7] Titian's female nudes, of which Rubens' meticulously studied and produced copies, would contribute to his understanding of the female form, resulting in his own reputation as a master of the female nude.

His years studying the masters in Italy resulted in the development of artistic expertise that he would cultivate throughout his career, earning distinction as an outstanding painter of historical, biblical, and mythological narrative. During his rise in the prominent Flemish art world, Rubens would primarily become recognized as a painter of

beautiful nude women within these visual narratives. Through his affinity for the classics, Rubens' approach to biblical and mythical figurative representations combined traditional conceptions of beauty with the training he had received in both Italian and Flemish practices. At the turn of the 17th century, Rubens' success could be credited with his ability to transform narrative figures into visually stimulating, naturalistic humans infused with emotive drama through light, color, and movement.[8]

3. Historical Context

With the more formalized institutionalization of Christianity in the 4th century CE, the adoption of the Hebrew Bible as the Old Testament placed these texts in new contexts especially when combined with the New Testament to become the sacred text of Christianity, The Holy Bible. While the story of Adam and Eve is also present in the holy texts of both Judaism and Islam, it is the Christian interpretation of the narrative that has been most influential on gender roles as they have historically been understood in Western art and society. Early Christians used this text to understand the Scripture in order to further develop the doctrines and ideas of this newly established religious canon. However, as Christianity developed, opposing views would lead to the divisions in the Church and the formation of various sects.[9] In the 16th century, the Protestant Reformation marked a crucial split from the Catholic Church. Reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin questioned practices they saw to be excessive and too far removed from their interpretation of Scripture, which they perceived to be of highest religious authority. Luther and Calvin would go on to establish their own denominations that would expand over time to branch into many more sects of Christianity.[10] The Catholic Church responded to the Protestant Reformation with their own (re)evaluation of their doctrines and practices, known as the Counter Reformation.[11]

Rubens grew up during this period of religious conflict in the Netherlands where his mother was Catholic but his father converted to Protestantism. His parents were forced to flee their longtime home of Antwerp in 1568 to escape religious persecution as the city was under Spanish rule at the time.[12] After his birth in Cologne in 1577, Rubens was initially baptized in the Protestant religion, but following his father's death ten years later, his mother returned to Antwerp with her children and re-confirmed their family's Catholic faith. Rubens' adolescence in Antwerp would be shaped by frequent conflict due to religious warring but his quest for knowledge and his Flemish pride led to a persistent interest in European politics.[13]

His political involvement began at the age of thirteen when he served as a page to a countess and became familiar with the ways of the court. In his early thirties, after his return from Italy and solidified presence in the art world, Rubens was appointed court painter by Archduke Albert and his wife Isabella. His prestigious position afforded him the means to build a luxurious home in Antwerp where he cultivated an impressive art collection and library reflecting his interest in topics from the classics, geography, law, philosophy, and religion.[14] Rubens soon found himself serving as a valuable resource for diplomacy and spent the majority of the years 1626-1630 assisting the Spanish Court in their political and religious conflicts. One of the most pressing concerns revolved around the division of the Netherlands into a Dutch controlled Protestant North and a Catholic Spanish ruled South. Rubens became a trusted confidante of the royal court and was often responsible for representing the Spanish Netherlands during mediation.[15]

Rubens' responsibilities in the mission of the Counter Reformation often overlapped as a diplomat and an artist, with visual culture greatly influencing how the public understood religious text. Artists illustrating biblical narratives contributed to the general understanding by applying a visual element to the text, which provided another interpretive lens. In terms of female representation, feminist scholar Nehama Aschkenasy argues "The Bible has been accused of having a major role in promoting and cultivating misogyny and in encouraging the suppression and degradation of women." [16] While the Bible did not necessarily create male supremacy, a patriarchal system reinforced the misogynistic messages present in biblical female narratives, which are then supported by objectified visual representations. Religious imagery played a significant role within Post-Reformation Catholicism with the narratives and iconography of biblical women like Eve constructed and perpetuated by Church teachings.

Christian doctrine as interpreted straight from the text becomes problematic when one acknowledges the history of the text itself. At the time the Church began re-evaluating their doctrines during the Counter Reformation, the Bible had been translated from Hebrew to Greek to Latin to dialects of English and other European languages. Translations of the Bible over time have drastically impacted the ways in which readers interpret the text. During the Reformation, increased emphasis on the Scripture ignited issues of translation. The power of language lies in the issues surrounding biblical translations as literal or sense-for-sense, with readers beginning to question how removed the Scripture may be from the original.[17] Education through Scripture required knowledge of Latin, a language far removed from the vernacular by the early 16th century. During this time, the Vulgate[18] was still the only translation endorsed by the

Catholic Church. While the general public would not necessarily have reading knowledge of Latin, the male-only clergy were well versed as part of their practice.

The Church strictly enforced their patriarchal authority especially through the clergy, where priests who already understood themselves to be the superior gender were deemed the only appropriate resources for interpreting Scripture. The Bible was used to uphold the lack of women in the Church and justified misogynistic treatment of women because it had been deemed through God's word.[19] Church authorities throughout Europe disagreed on whether or not translation of the Bible into the vernacular was necessary. Early Church fathers especially feared women's accessibility to the Bible because it was "believed that women's intellectual inferiority and sensuality make them especially susceptible to deception by false prophets."[20] Women having access to Scripture was believed to be immensely detrimental to the Church because it was argued that interpretation of the divine word was a men's issue. It was believed women were incapable of correctly interpreting Scripture for themselves, even if they attempted to read the Vulgate, and were even less capable of explaining the meaning of Scripture to men.[21]

Carranza de Mendoza, a Spanish representative at multiple Council of Trent meetings, actively participated in discussions surrounding the translation of the Vulgate. He even published a Christian catechism[22] in 1558 with the intention of correcting interpretative errors he believed were being spread by Luther's Protestant followers as a result of their new vernacular texts. He famously stated: "No matter how much women demand this fruit [the Scripture] with insatiable appetite, it is necessary to forbid it to them, and apply a knife of fire so that the common people cannot get at it."[23] The clear reference here alludes to Eve and the Temptation scene, revealing another instance of her perception as a threatening force. Often used as justification for female subordination, Eve serves to promote lack of inclusivity within the Church, reinforcing the desire to maintain patriarchal authority. The prominent role women had begun to find themselves in provided further justification for the Church to strictly enforce "ecclesiastical misogyny."[24]

The language of the Bible cannot be ignored when it comes to understanding the text, particularly the male-dominated language present in the English translations of what becomes Christianity's Holy Bible. This language is one of the most important factors that contributes to the understanding of women in the Bible and the roles of Christian women. Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza argues:

> Such masculinized God language has communicated for centuries to women that they are nonentities, subspecies of men, subordinated and inferior to men not only on a cultural but also on a religious plane. The combination of male language for God with the stress on the sovereignty and absolute authority of the patriarchal God has sanctioned men's drive for power and domination in the church as well as in society. [25]

This masculine language present in the Bible combined with the predominantly male interpretations of God's commands for women greatly impacted the early Christian understanding of Eve and her relationship to Adam. This in turn influenced visual depictions of Eve as artists illustrated the first woman as she was understood within Christian doctrine: a seductive, weak minded, and manipulative woman, whose foolish sin resulted in eternal subordination of women to their husbands.

Eve has been associated with misogynist imagery and writings by some of the earliest Church theologians such as Tertullian in the 2nd century CE and St. Jerome in the 4th century CE, whose negative conceptions of the role of women would come to shape sermons and doctrines throughout Church history. Acts of sin were directly affiliated with Eve as it was understood that women sin because they are women, whereas men sin because they are human. Because Eve has always been to blame for the fall of humanity, her femininity is associated with being a direct cause of "sinly" behavior.[26] The nature of woman is thus understood through the lineage of Eve. Feminist scholar and theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether summarizes these views of female nature stating that, "She is inferior in body (weaker), inferior in mind (less capable of reason), and inferior morally (less capable of will and moral self-control)."[27]

With female voices having already faced censorship within the Church, the issue of interpretation becomes especially prevalent in relation to female narratives in the Bible. This would be a major point of contention for later feminist religious scholars as a shift in gender roles and certain aspects of the Bible would no longer be applied, like the presence of women as practioners in the church. The goal of approaching the Bible from a feminist perspective is to offer a new interpretation on the texts that remained unquestioned for hundreds of years that resulted in the patriarchal notions of gender and sexuality as they were understood in post-Reformation Western society.

4. Peter Paul Rubens and the Female Nude

In his painting *Adam and Eve*, 1597-1600 (Fig. 5), Rubens visually interprets the scene of Eve tempting Adam from the Book of Genesis. Both figures stand facing each other in the nude, with fig leaves providing a natural covering of

modesty extending from the forest. This foreshadows Adam and Eve's later decision to cover themselves out of shame after eating the forbidden fruit and becoming aware of their nakedness. Rubens depicts aspects of the ideal male in Adam by emphasizing his muscular form as he leans in a slight contrapposto pose with his arms and legs bent. Adam's gaze is focused on Eve and he holds up his left hand towards her, with his index finger extended. This gesture may be implicative of a critique of Eve's temptation or even reaching towards the fruit himself. His body rests against a rock-like structure but he leans in towards her, showing his level of interest in the matter. He is fully engaged in the action of this scene with his stature, gaze, and gestures all deferring to Eve. His hand pointing at her could also allude to his later reaction after being confronted by God in Paradise in which he places full blame on Eve for the sins they have committed.

Fig. 5 Peter Paul Rubens, *Adam and Eve* 1597-1600. Oil on panel. 182.5 x 140.7 cm. Collection of Rubenshuis, Antwerp. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5f/Rubens_Painting_Adam_Eve.jpg

In his depiction of Eve, Rubens chooses to place her leaning against the Tree of Knowledge from which they are forbidden to eat. Her pose appears contrived, her raised arm accentuates the natural curvature of her torso and her crossed leg with a slight bend highlights her feminine attributes. While her head is turned to face Adam, her body faces the viewer. She passively reclines against the tree, with her breast pressed into the trunk, in an unnatural pose that displays her fully to the viewer. She has one arm wrapped around a branch of the trunk while she holds a piece of forbidden fruit up to her mouth with the other hand. It is unclear to the viewer whether or not she has taken a bite of the fruit yet, but holding it in the vicinity of her mouth is suggestive of her sin. Also wrapped around the same branch, the viewer can see the bottom half of the serpent. Eve and the serpent do not directly engage but her relationship with evil is implied with the position and proximity of the serpent to her hand. Her gaze faces Adam but looks downwards, in which the artist creates a line of sight that could be interpreted as directly leading to Adam's genitals. Rubens may have chosen this angle to further emphasize Eve's sexually deviant nature.

Well-versed in techniques producing naturalistic effects, Rubens' nudes were revered in part for his ability to construct realistic flesh, in form and tone. In creating the masculine and feminine form, Rubens utilizes gentle and contoured lines combined with flesh toned hues to create subtle shadows and curvatures to humanize his subject matter. In using aspects of light and shadow, the skin pigmentations highlight the differences between the sexes, as seen in *Adam and Eve*. His technique of painting Eve's skin noticeably lighter than Adam's was meant to intentionally emphasize a desirous power of the female body. Rubens' style of skin texture also contributed to the realistic nature of his nude subject matter as he preferred to depict men with tense muscles and visible veins and women's soft skin with round fleshy bulges. He emphasized the flexibility of female skin particularly in areas physically identifiable as female, constructing supple hips, abdomen, and thighs.[28]

Eve's temptation of Adam is perceived as sexual in nature not only through her pose and gaze, but in the symbolism presented in the surrounding composition. Rubens places a rabbit in the foreground sitting at the foot of Eve. The hare is considered to be a defenseless animal, sometimes symbolic of mankind's vulnerability in the eyes of God.[29] The location of the hare as being in the foreground of Eve's plane is purposeful- to illustrate Adam's susceptibility to Eve's sexuality. Rubens also alludes to the consequence of their decision to commit sin with the luscious portrayal of Paradise in the background. Green trees, flowing water, and cranes become pushed almost out of view, much like the

loss of Paradise Adam and Eve face as punishment. The crane in particular is another symbol present throughout Christian art meant to represent vigilance, loyalty, and good life and works.[30] An ironic choice to depict this particular bird, Rubens is again referring to the sins Adam and Eve both commit by giving into temptation.

In comparing *Adam and Eve* to Rubens' *The Union of Earth and Water*, 1618 (Fig. 6), the similarities in body language between the two main female figures, Eve and Cybele, become even more striking when placed in their respective narrative contexts. Cybele is an ancient goddess with a rich history in Phrygian, Greek, and Roman religious traditions. Rubens' painting depicts a scene of unity between Cybele and Neptune, the Roman god of the sea. Neptune faces away from the viewer and grasps Cybele's hand while holding his trident in the other. His face is aged with a long gray beard. A white cloth wraps around his backside, offering a sheath of modesty as he leans against a water jug sitting on a boulder to face Cybele. She is also slightly leaning, crossing one leg over the other at the knee allowing a slight curvature at the hip. She places one hand gently on top of Neptune's and holds the Horn of Plenty, symbolic of the earth, in the other.

Fig. 6 Peter Paul Rubens, *Union of Earth and Water* c. 1618. Oil on canvas. 222.5 x 180.5 cm. The State Hermitage Museum Collection, St. Petersburg. https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/01.+Paintings/48135/?lng=en

Surrounding the two main figures is the goddess Victory, whose wings and red cloak provide a bold color to the otherwise neutral tones of the landscape. Victory descends onto the scene to place a laurel wreath on the heads of Cybele and Neptune in support of their union. With half his body submerged in the water bank below, Triton rises to blow his conch shell also in support.[31] Two young children float next to him, one looking up at Cybele and one looking at the viewer. The surrounding environment is rich with natural components including seashells, rocky surfaces, and a tiger reaching for the Horn of Plenty, overflowing with fruit and vegetation. Even though this scene is representative of a mythological narrative, it also had contemporary significance to Rubens. *The Union of Earth and Water* is believed to be an allegory for Dutch control of the River Scheldt port in Antwerp, Rubens' hometown.[32] This occupancy was due to the ongoing war in the Netherlands between the Spanish and the Dutch. Rubens is utilizing ancient myth to convey his hope for peace and accessibility to the natural world.

The comparison of these two images is relevant in Rubens' interpretation of Eve as both paintings depict origin narratives that directly situate male and female figures performing their conventional gender roles. The relationship between Adam and Eve and Cybele and Neptune contrast in their textual symbolism, with one representing the betrayal of a divine union and the other alluding to the creation of such. Visually, however, these paintings display the female figures with similar body language, and yet are understood to reflect the contradictory nature of women. Rubens represents both women as models of his ideal nude but with contrasting interactions with their male counterparts. The conception and understanding of their differing natures are shown in Rubens' interpretations.

Rubens would have understood the iconography of ancient mythological figures because of his passion for the classics during the rise of humanistic ideologies in the 17th century. The myth of Cybele, first presented in Phrygian inscriptions as far back as the 7th century BCE, invoked human devotion and a cult in the Greek pantheon until

reaching her final home as a deity of the Roman state in the late 3rd century BCE. Throughout her history in ancient cultures, she is worshipped as the "Mother," "Mother Goddess," "Mother of the Earth," "Mother of the Gods", and "Great Mother." Her frequent mention in ancient literature and association with the natural and divine world created an enormously popular cult among the common people. While she is associated with maternal qualities and feminine nature, child-bearing is never mentioned in her narrative. Her role as "Great Mother" alludes to her protective nature, of both man and earth that would, in certain situations, result in the powerful destruction of those disloyal to her.[33] While Cybele has a multitude of maternal attributes, Eve, the first woman and therefore first mother of the world in Judeo-Christian cosmology, is not granted such gracious interpretations.

Even in Cybele's perceived acts of evil, exacting vengeance against opposing forces, she is considered almighty and an embodiment of Nature's power. In her original Phrygian context, from which the Greek and Roman myths adopted, it was her connection to natural landscapes that created a sense of divine space on earth.[34] Cybele as "Mother" relates more to pagan cosmology with the natural environment fulfilling the role of child. She is powerful, audacious, and protective. Her union with Neptune in Rubens' painting is marked by a disinterested facial expression and reluctant hand-holding. Her other arm propping up the Horn of Plenty reminds the viewer of her commitment to her role as "Mother of the Earth" regardless of her relationship with her male counterpart.

Cybele's persona as "Mother of Earth" directly contrasts Eve's image as the "Mother of Sin." Eve's legacy does not acknowledge qualities of maternal instinct or powerful protection, but rather situates her within the misogynist narrative of woman as temptress. In their composition within the two paintings by Rubens, their bodies are similar in pose, proportion, and tone. While the context of their narrative is quite different, it is imperative to understand what brought these two women to where they currently stand. Eve, with the promise of divine knowledge at her fingertips, endures blame for the sufferings of all humanity, only to have been manipulated herself by evil all along. Cybele, surrounded by her fellow gods and goddesses in this promise of union, symbolizing strength and power as the Earth unites with the Sea.

Where Cybele's body represents power, Eve's represents shame. In her naked form, Cybele is Earth: creator and sustainer. The body of Eve, however, has historically been representative of complete failure and womanly incompetence. Power lies in Cybele's body through her relationship to the natural world, and with this her provision to mankind. Conversely, Eve's body contains only the power of seduction, also enacted upon man. While Cybele gazes directly into Neptune's eyes, with pure indifference, Eve's downcast gaze towards Adam's lower body reflects shameful naivety. The use of their bodies within the context of their visual narratives correlates to the male presence found in Neptune and Adam as well as the male gaze through which Rubens frames his techniques and perceptions of the female form.

5. The Ideal Body and the Male Gaze

Known as a master of the female nude, Rubens' intensive studies of the classics informed his gendered approach to the human form. According to scholar Karolien De Clippel, Rubens' notebook contained details of his theories of physical harmony as they relate to a gendered hierarchy of shapes. He believed man to be the perfect form, perhaps through his religious understanding of man created in God's image as well as his classical education in the arts. Composed of the three perfect shapes of the triangle, square, and circle, the ideal man embodies strength and power. Contrarily, the shapes of the female form are considered weaker as she is visualized through the rectangle, pyramid, and oval. These shapes define the feminine proportions as elegant and statuesque. In fact, the evidence for these theories derived from measurements of ancient Greco-Roman sculpture with Rubens believing that the bodies represented in ancient sculpture were closer than anything else to divine perfection.[35]

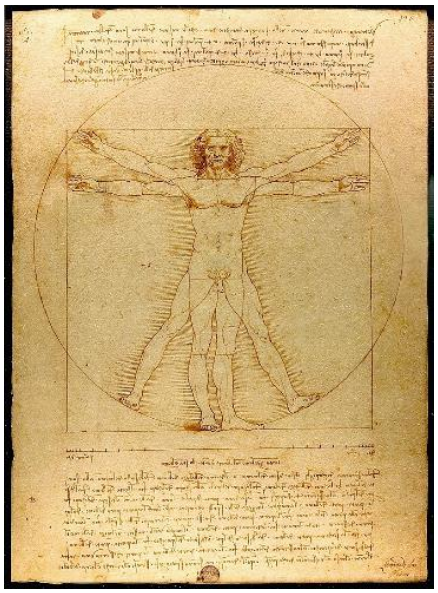

Fig. 7 Leonardo da Vinci, *Vitruvian Man* c.1490. Pen and ink on paper. 34.6 cm x 25.5 cm. Gallerie dell' Accademia, Venice. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vitruvian_Man#/media/File:Da_Vinci_Vitruve_Luc_Viatour.jpg

Greek formation of the perfect "Western man" lies within a passion for mathematics, specifically geometry, and the development of an ideal set of proportions and measurements. Leonardo da Vinci's famed *Vitruvian Man* (Fig. 7) sketches exemplify the philosophy that the male body is the model for correct proportions as the arms and legs extend to fit within the perfect geometrical shapes that comprise divine proportions. The Greek philosophy on the body begins with these fundamental ideals and transforms through imitations, with rhythm and proportions contributing to an overall harmonious form.[36] They relate divinity and beauty through their conception of the Pantheon taking human form, which assumes the gods have ideal bodies as a result of their divine nature. It is through this combination of faith, physicality, and passion for rational proportion that the Greek perception of the balanced and complete physical body is established.[37]

These perceptions would later come to fruition within female sculpture in ancient Greece, where traditional depictions of Aphrodite displayed the ultimate female form in contrapposto and was partially covered by cloth or her own hands. The balance of form found in the contrapposto pose, originally intended for male figures, and the draping of 5th-6th c. BCE Aphrodite figures was meant to accentuate the natural curvature of the female torso, a symbol of desire. Praxiteles' *Knidian Aphrodite* (Fig. 8) embodied the culmination of Greek ideals as the figure's gestures both reveal and conceal, and her relaxed pose with a slight tilt in the shoulders pushes her chest towards the viewer. This evenly distributed weight creates harmonious proportions and a beautiful form.[38] The original Praxiteles creation did not survive, but in establishing the canon for the female nude, many copies were produced with Aphrodite, or her counterpart Venus, becoming the equivalent to the perfect model for ideal beauty in later Roman sculpture.

Fig. 8 Ludovisi Cnidian Aphrodite, Roman copy of Praxiteles, *Knidian Aphrodite* 4th century BCE. Marble. 205 cm. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aphrodite_of_Knidos#/media/File:Cnidus_Aphrodite_Altemps_Inv8619.jpg

The spread of Christianity and rejection of portrayals of the human form culminated in the lack of acceptance towards any sexualized expression of the female body. However, in depicting biblical scenes, artists were forced to show the naked form. In doing so, the aim of representation was to neutralize, reduce to abstract symbols, and strip them of desirable qualities. Beginning in the 13th century, there was a shift in the repressive approach to images within the Church and a new acceptance of nature and life's pleasures.[39] With the rise of Renaissance ideals, the female nude became an established art form, which led to the reimagining of Eve's body.[40] This presents an opportunity for artistic representation to reflect aspects of a nude Eve as visually stimulating while aligning her emblematic body with the narrative of the first woman.

Inspired by both the conception and proportions of Venus imagery in Greco-Roman sculpture, Rubens' approach to the bodies of Eve and Cybele derives from this prototype of the female nude. Eve serves as the natural model for the revival of the Aphrodite-Venus application as nudity in Christian art became tolerated through naturalistic representations of biblical scenes. Her nakedness is essential to her narrative and offered artists an acceptable outlet for the practice of perfecting the post-classical nude. As a product of the male gaze, the body of Eve in Rubens' painting assumes the same physical ideals as the Aphrodites before her. Her body is meant to arouse desire, and in encompassing reproduction and lust, illustrates the shame in her newfound awareness of her own nakedness.[41] With such a heavy emphasis on her physical attributes, the misogynist tropes associated with women persist through Eve's body. While the Aphrodite-Venus model may have been utilized by artists purely for their aesthetic value, the symbolism inherently present in a naked Eve presents an ironic display of a woman to be simultaneously desired and feared.

The iconography of Eve relies solely on the verses provided in Chapters 1-4 of the Book of Genesis as a means of creating visual context. Within the text, Eve is symbolic of the first woman and mother but is also critically understood as a symbol of "subordination… and the moral inferiority as the cause of the Fall."[42] As historian John Phillips notes, The Fall, a Christian reading of the act of Original Sin, perpetuates Eve as sexual temptress as a result of the Christian theme of salvation outlined by Paul in the New Testament, in order to fulfill the void of a singular introduction of sin into the world.[43] The power of Eve's image is perpetuated by Church doctrine, limiting her interpretation to the few verses of the Temptation and constructing her symbolism around her perceived qualities of foolishness, ignorance, and seduction. Eve's punishment is subordination as a wife and mother, and through the visual telling of her narrative she is equally reduced in her role as an object of the male gaze.

Through his representation, Rubens' establishes power dynamics in the relationship between Adam and Eve and between Eve and the viewer. Adam is shown expressing mental and physical strength in his body language and action whereas Eve is portrayed as passive and sensual, presenting her front facing body to the viewer. The male gaze can be understood through this display as "Woman is the image; man is the bearer of the look. Power is on his side."[44] The power dynamics of the male gaze are further magnified by the viewer, who, either male or female, and part of

Western civilization, also sees through this pervasive lens. Rubens' representation of Eve relies on the classical and harmonious forms that construct the ideal female body as well as the interpretation of her character as established within the Church. Both her narrative and image have been reserved for male interpretation and consumption, as these practices continue to inform each other within patriarchal structures.

6. Re-Interpretations

Throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, a rise in extensive feminist re-readings of Genesis 1-4 has led to new critical analysis of established interpretations of Eve, including her role within the Temptation and the Fall, with the intention to provide counter interpretations. Scholar Whitney Chadwick acknowledges, "The historical texts need constant rereading as we attempt to understand better the problematic of femininity and the role of images in the social production of meaning."[45] Most scholars have approached Eve from within the context of her narrative in Genesis, exploring the impact language, translation, and gender roles have within traditional interpretations of Eve and the potential for re-interpretation.

Feminist interpretations of Eve have taken the scene of the Temptation and analysis of Adam's role within this narrative as one of the main points of contention with traditional interpretations, such as the painting by Rubens. Rather than seeing her as sexually driven and devious, scholars who wish to re-evaluate Eve's image analyze the narrative of the Temptation by distinguishing between Adam and Eve's reaction. Compared to Adam's passivity in accepting the fruit from Eve, when the fruit is first presented to her by the serpent she engages in a dialogue with the creature. She is eventually tempted, but not until she has been convinced the fruit will give her wisdom of the gods.[46]

Nehama Aschkenasy argues, "The biblical Eve, then, may be seen as epitomizing the human predicament in her wish to transcend her limitations and expand her horizons."[47] Within the few lines of dialogue with the serpent, Eve's inner motivations are revealed as being driven by both physical satisfaction but more importantly, by intellectual nature.[48] After assessing the situation without any external guidance, she expresses her own innate wisdom in judging a situation before purposefully executing a decision. Eve chooses to gain knowledge instead of obey God, a bold decision that exemplifies her capacity for questioning authority and ability to make a moral choice.[49] Mieke Bal describes Eve as a "character of great power" interpreting her decision to sin as the "first act of human independence" and asserts Eve's act was not one of sin but of a deliberate choice to experience reality.[50] Eve contemplates all that the Tree of Knowledge presents and identifies it to be fulfilling to her physical senses, aesthetically pleasing, and emotionally stimulating.[51] This thought process directly contradicts Adam's lack of envisioning the full possibilities as a consequence for his actions.[52]

Rubens' choice in portraying Adam as actively engaged and critical of Eve contradicts what some scholars have interpreted from the text itself. Feminist scholars argue the direct text is evidence enough of Eve's agency and power compared to Adam's passivity in his "temptation" to sin. When observing the actual text, there is no evidence of Eve using her sexuality to convince Adam to eat the forbidden fruit, in fact he takes it willingly without question. Scholar Phyllis Trible argues in regards to Adam's role in the scene of the Temptation, "The man is not dominant; he is not aggressive; he is not a decision maker… He follows his wife without question or comment, thereby denying his own individuality."[53] Trible identifies characteristics traditionally associated with men, especially in the context of a male-female relationship dynamic, and questions Adam's role within this scene.

Nowhere in these verses from Genesis do readers see any course of action taken by Adam to prevent his wife from committing this sin. Scholar Henry Vollam Morton goes so far as to suggest that this is a result of man exemplifying the weaker sex. He argues that Adam's lack of resistance or questioning shows he will follow Eve willingly even if it is a result of evil temptation. Adam waits until it is evident that Eve will not die from eating the forbidden fruit before also eating of it and his indifferent attitude during this scene is critical in understanding their relationship.[54] Adam expresses a passive compliance and lack of agency by not arguing with the serpent or Eve. When given fruit he knows he is forbidden from eating, he simply eats.

Another key component to re-interpretation of Genesis focuses not only on the reactions of Adam and Eve to their temptation, but their responses when confronted by God. When questioned, Adam first blames Eve for tempting him, then God for creating her. Eve, however, acknowledges she sinned as a result of the serpents' temptations, but does not blame God for creating the source of her temptation.[55] Even though Eve would carry the burden of this sin, she did not consider God as a figure to implicate in the situation and rather had the moral capacity to recognize her own faults. She accepts her role in falling victim to the serpent's manipulations whereas Adam immediately places blame on everyone but himself. This lack of culpability is prevalent in defining the relationships between Adam and Eve, and with God, with some re-interpretations also implicating God's role.

Various scholars and Enlightenment thinkers acknowledge The Fall as being reflective of human development and capability to make ethical decisions by choosing reason over instinct.[56] Claus Westermann argues that with humans having been created in God's image, The Fall is a natural consequence of creation. The act of sin results in making them like God because they have obtained the knowledge of good and evil.[57] Just as God found freedom to create and categorize His creations, so do Adam and Eve. David Gunn explains, "We see the first human categorizing and naming the animals. We see the man labelling the woman, declaring her likeness and yet her difference. We see the woman's curiosity and love of discovery, her desire to be 'like' God, to know good and evil."[58] In placing God within the narrative, further insight is provided into Eve's actions, offering a new, perhaps more accepting, approach to her decision to sin. This concept of a "misinterpreted Eve"[59] is a direct consequence of translation issues and ill-informed biblical commentaries intending to shape female narratives within the context of a patriarchal understanding.

A significant debate has emerged regarding translations of the verses of the Temptation. Some versions of the text, including earlier Hebrew translations, provide the phrase in Genesis 3:6 "And the woman saw that the tree was good to eat, and fair to the eyes, and delightful to behold: And she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave to her husband, *who was with her,* and he ate."[60] If Adam is understood to have been with Eve, he appears more as "a willing participant than an unsuspecting victim."[61] Most ancient translations include this phrase in the verse, however, the Vulgate and therefore most English translations, frequently omit the phrase that would place Adam in the presence of Eve during her temptation.[62] This is pertinent to the established interpretations that "excuse the man and condemn the woman"[63] and the resulting visual productions that place Adam in the scene with Eve. Since there is no consensus on whether Adam actually was physically present with Eve and the serpent in the text, the iconography of the Temptation may also be inaccurate in depicting him as such. Notably, it is not clear in the text that Adam is even with Eve let alone actively engaged in preventing her actions during the Temptation, which contradicts what has been visually presented to viewers on multiple levels.

The significance of Eve in shaping gender roles has manifested in the historical subjugation of women as a "reflection of her inferior nature and the punishment for her responsibility for sin."[64] This is a direct result of Church doctrine, considering the first creation story presented in the Genesis 1: 26-30 implies God created "mankind," clarified as both man and woman, to govern the earthly creations with equal share in the work. In accepting the second creation story over the first, Jewish and later Christian followers inevitably affected the conception and understanding of gender roles within religious practice and social order. Eve would then be understood as "religiously, socially, politically, and sexually under the control of her husband."[65]

Religious interpretation as outlined within Church doctrine naturally impacts gender roles within society by utilizing Scripture to justify misogynist treatment of women in and out of the Church, placing them within a gendered hierarchy. Because the Scripture is a sacred text, its authoritative power perpetuates these ideas of the nature of women, particularly through biblical female narratives. Scholar Pamela Milnes argues one must either accept the text as sacred, even within its inherent patriarchal nature, or expose the patriarchy and reject its authority as sacred. Having been written and interpreted within a patriarchal structure prevents women in the Bible from being anything besides constructed as the "other."[66] Feminist theologians and scholars struggle with this question, debating the sacred authority innately present in the text and the implications of establishing rigid gender roles. Re-interpretation is therefore not an easy task, as the original context of the text must still be acknowledged.

Visual association between the Devil and women came from a viewpoint that women were the descendants of Eve and therefore carried the burden of responsibility, as Eve was "the original cause of all evil, whose disgrace has come down to all other women."[67] The Fall was believed to be sexual in nature through the physical exchange of sin from the serpent (Devil) to Eve and consequently Adam, an interpretation that Rubens' version accurately follows. [68] This further promotes the idea that procreation results in inherent guilt, therefore naturally implicating women's bodies fundamentally as bodies of sin.

7. Conclusion

The body of Eve as presented by Rubens, inherently symbolizes the negative associations with her character through her body language, action, and relation to the serpent's temptations. With Rubens having more than enough familiarity with Eve's narrative, he portrays her in the way the Church intended. Her body is one of sinful lust, alluding to her interaction with Adam without displaying any direct exchange. It is not clear in Rubens' painting whether Eve herself has even taken a bite yet, but she embodies sin regardless. This one dimensional approach presents Eve as a model of beauty and sin, reinforcing the immorality in her flesh.

His approach does differ slightly from previous artistic representations by depicting Adam as more active and less reserved, as seen in the depictions by Dürer and Cranach the Elder. Rubens' Adam more clearly contains movement

and engagement with Eve rather than passively accepting the fruit, as described in the narrative. Rubens' engaged Adam could even be interpreted as asking for the fruit, if viewers set aside biblical interpretation and accept certain feminist approaches. In the body language of their interaction, Eve holds the fruit close to her mouth while Adam reaches out to her. This provides an alternative visual lens to interpret their relationship and role in The Fall, as it is unclear what Rubens' intentions were with this depiction.

In choosing to evaluate Adam and Eve's interaction like this, Rubens' Eve is consequently limited to just a body. Her seduction and manipulation are displayed only through her physical form, compared to other depictions in which she is the more active character that tempts Adam. Without any explicit contact with Adam, she serves to represent her sin purely through her own body. Rubens does not represent her as forceful or aggressive, but rather places this power in the seduction that is still implied within the body of Eve, a body that, by extension, references the Aphrodite-Venus figure. Her passivity and sensuality are exemplified through her proportions and pose; therefore, her seduction is not represented in her action but perhaps more powerfully, in her lack thereof. The placement of her body and its implications are proof enough of her manipulations, as she is understood to be the personification of sin.

Rubens' representation of Eve is based upon patriarchal interpretation of "woman," as defined by doctrinal conceptions of gender roles, rather than the biblical narrative. When observing the great artistic liberties artists like Rubens have taken with portraying this scene, Eve's perceived temptation of Adam encompasses much more than is provided in the biblical verses. Rubens' composition in *Adam and Eve* heavily relies on the established canon of the classical female nude, applying these aspects to depict an Eve that is simultaneously beautiful and morally evil. His representation also reinforces the influence of the Church on shaping the iconography of religious figures like Eve. By providing alternative lenses to the narrative of Adam and Eve, the first woman can be framed within a more positive context that recognizes her role as the first woman and mother. Adam names his female counterpart Eve, signifying her as the "Mother of All Living"[69] but this characteristic rarely informs patriarchal interpretations of Eve. Re-interpretation can offer new perspectives of Eve, resulting in the recognition and understanding of her female body as containing strength and power.

8. Endnotes

1 Genesis 3:1-20. Douay-Rheims Bible Online www.drbo.org

2 Dr. Bonnie J. Noble, "Durer, Adam and Eve", Khan Academy https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/early-europe-and-colonial-americas/renaissance-art-europe-ap/a/drer-adam-and-eve

3 Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Adam and Eve*, 1504. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/336222

4 George Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), 16-17.

5 Anne W. Stewart, "Eve and Her Interpreters," *Women's Bible Commentary* (Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 49.

6 Claudia Lyn Cahan, *Rubens* (New York: Avenel Books, 1980), 4.

7 Ibid, 4-5.

8 C. V. Wedgewood, *The World of Rubens, 1577-1640* (New York: Time, Inc., 1967), 8.

9 The first major split occurred in the 11th century with the division of Eastern Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Church over disagreements surrounding the interpretation of the Holy Spirit.

10 Leona M. Anderson and Pamela Dickey Young, *Women & Religious Traditions* (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press. Second Edition, 2010), 164-189.

11 Leaders within the Catholic Church would embark on major reforms to doctrine during the first meeting of the Council of Trent in 1545 including the establishment of equal authority within doctrine and the Holy Bible itself, establishing a framework for male-dominated priesthood, and the role of religious images and iconography.

12 By 1525 the Spanish Inquisition would begin strictly and violently reinforcing traditional Church doctrine, fueled by a fear of Protestantism and a new religiously informed laity. Spain would establish control over the Netherlands in 1555 and impose rigid Catholic rule.

13 Wedgwood, *The World of Rubens, 1577-1640*, 7-12.

14 Cahan, *Rubens*, 5.

15 "Peter Paul Rubens." The National Gallery. London, UK. https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/artists/peter-paul-rubens

16 Nehama Aschkenasy, *Eve's Journey: Feminine Images in Hebraic Literary Tradition* (University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia, 1986), 9.

17 Susan Bassnett, *Translation Studies* (Routledge: New York, 2014).

18 The Vulgate is the Latin translation of the Bible. Translated from Greek in 405 BCE by St. Jerome.

19 See 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, 2 Corinthians 11:3, 1 Timothy 2:11-15, 1 Corinthians 14: 33-36 for a few examples.

20 Alison Weber, "Little Women: Counter Reformation Misogyny" excerpt from *The Counter-Reformation: The Essential Readings* Edited by David M. Luebke (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999), 145.

21 Ibid, 153.

22 catechism, *n.* "An elementary treatise for instruction in the principles of the Christian religion, in the form of question and answer; such a book accepted and issued by a church as an authoritative exposition of its teaching" Oxford English Dictionary www.oed.com

23 Ibid, 155. / *Censura de Carranza*, ed. Jośe I. Tellechea Idígoras, vol. 33. (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1981), 238.

24 Ibid, 149.

25 Elisabeth Fiorenza, "Feminist Spirituality, Christian Identity, and Catholic Vision" excerpt from *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion* edited by Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), 139.

26 Christa Grössinger, *Picturing Women in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), 97-98.

27 Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-talk: Toward a Feminist Theology.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1983), 96.

28 Karolien De Clippel, "Defining Beauty: Rubens's Female Nudes" (*Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek (NKJ) / Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 58, 2007), 125-128; Most of these techniques were not perfected until after his studies in Italy, resulting in his later paintings (ie. *The Union of Earth and Water*) more clearly utilizing these methods.

29 In Christian art, the hare is symbolic of lust and fertility. Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, 20.

30 Ibid, 14.

31 The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia. https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/01.+Paintings/48135/?lng=en

32 Ibid.

33 Lynn E. Roller, *In Search of God the Mother: The Cult of Anatolian Cybele* (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1999), 1-6.

34 Ibid.

35 De Clippel, "Defining Beauty: Rubens's Female Nudes," 119-120.

36 The importance of physical perfection in Greek culture derives from a sense of pride in their nakedness, based on their philosophy of human wholeness in which the spirit and body are one.

37 Kenneth Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.: Princeton University Press, 1956), 15- 36.

38 Ibid, 72- 84.

39 Fresco murals by Giotto c. 1305 on the walls of the Scrovegni Chapel, Padua are considered the first sensuous nudes in European painting.

40 Michelle Perrot and Georges Duby, *Power and Beauty: Images of Women in Art* (London: Tauris Parke Books, 1992), 22-24.

41 Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form*, 95.

42 Deirdre Keenan McChrystal, "Redeeming Eve" (*English Literary Renaissance* 23, no. 3., 1993), 490-91.

43 John A. Phillips, *Eve: The History of an Idea* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984), 45.

44 Margaret Olin, "Gaze" from Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, *Critical Terms for Art History* (Second Edition: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 322.

45 Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art and Society* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1990), 31.

46 "Now the serpent was more subtle than any of the beasts of the earth which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman: Why hath God commanded you, that you should not eat of every tree of paradise? / And the woman answered him, saying: Of the fruit of the trees that are in paradise we do eat: / But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of paradise, God hath commanded us that we should not eat; and that we should not touch it, lest perhaps we die./ And the serpent said to the woman: No, you shall not die the death./ For God doth know that in what day soever you shall eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened: and you shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil." (Gen. 3: 1-5)

47 Aschkenasy, *Eve's Journey*, 45.

48 Ibid.

49 Anne Lapidus Lerner, *Eternally Eve: Images of Eve in the Hebrew Bible, Midrash, and Modern Jewish Poetry* (Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis University Press, 2007), 94-116.

50 D. M. Gunn and Danna Nolan Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 195.

51 "And the woman saw that the tree was good to eat, and fair to the eyes, and delightful to behold: And she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave to her husband, who did eat." (Gen. 3: 6)

52 Phyllis Trible, "Eve and Adam: Genesis 2-3 Reread", *Women's Bible Commentary* (Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 79.

53 Ibid.

54 Henry Vollam Morton, *Women of the Bible* (Dodd, Mead & Company. New York, 1963), 13.

55 "And Adam said: The woman, whom thou gavest me to be my companion, gave me of the tree, and I did eat./ And the Lord God said to the woman: Why hast thou done this? And she answered: The serpent deceived me, and I did eat." Gen. 3: 12-13

56 Phillips, *Eve: The History of an Idea*, 80.

57 Ibid, 14.

58 Gunn and Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, 203.

59 Phillips, *Eve,* xiv.

60 Kristen E. Kvam, Linda S. Schearing, and Valarie H. Ziegler, *Eve and Adam: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Readings on Genesis and Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 31-33.

61 Ibid, 34.

62 Julie Faith Parker, "Blaming Eve Alone: Translation, Omission, and Implications of עמה in Genesis 3:6b" (*Journal of Biblical Literature* 132, no. 4, 2013), 729. https://www.jstor.org/stable/42912464

63 Ibid.

64 Ruether, *Sexism and God-talk*, 95.

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67 Henry Kraus, "Eve and Mary: Conflicting Images of Medieval Women," 80.

68 Phillips, *Eve,* 64.

69 Kvam, Schearing, and Ziegler, *Eve and Adam*, 36.