



HELLENIC REPUBLIC

**National and Kapodistrian
University of Athens**

— EST. 1837 —

BA Program in the Archaeology, History, and Literature of Ancient Greece

Course: 75403 Studying Greek History through Inscriptions

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2021-2022, *Spring semester*

WOMEN IN ANCIENT GREEK INSCRIPTIONS

BASIC LITERATURE ABOUT ANCIENT GREEK WOMEN

Connelly, J. B., *Portrait of a Priestess: Women and Ritual in Ancient Greece*, 2007

Pomeroy, S. B., *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity*, 1976

van Bremen, R. 1996. *The Limits of Participation. Women and Civic Life in the Greek East*. Amsterdam

A. DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY IN DIVORCE

1. Excerpts from the Gortyn Law Code

***I.Creticae* IV 72, Crete, before 450 BC**

(ii.45-iii.16) If a husband and wife divorce, she is to keep her property, whatever she brought to the marriage, and one-half the produce (if there is any) from her own property, and half of whatever she has woven within the house; also she is to have 5 staters if her husband is the cause of the divorce. If the husband swears that he is not the cause of the divorce, the judge is to take an oath and decide. If the wife carries away anything else belonging to the husband, she must pay five staters and whatever she carries away from him, and whatever she has stolen she must return to him. About what she denies [having taken], the judge is to order that she must swear by Artemis before the statue of [Artemis] Archeress in the Amyclean temple. If anyone takes anything from her after she has made her denial, he is to pay 5 staters and return the thing itself. If a stranger helps her to carry anything away, he must pay 10 staters and double the amount of whatever the judge swears that he helped her to take away.

B. PRIESTESSES AND OTHER CULT OFFICES

2. Funerary inscription

IG II² 6288, Athens, after the middle of the 4th c. BC

[Chairestrate]

[wife Men]ekr[ates] from the deme of Ikarion.

A reverent and august priestess of the Mother of All Offspring, Chairestrate, lies in this grave, whom her husband loved when alive, and lamented when she died. She left the light blest, since she had seen her children's children.

3. Decrees relating to the temple of Athena Nike

3a. *IG I³ 35 = ML 44 = OR 137, Acropolis, c. 450 or c. 438 BC?*

[The Council and People decided.?] . . . -kos proposed: [to install] a priestess for Athena Nike to be [allotted?] from all Athenian [women], and that the sanctuary be provided with gates in whatever way Kallikrates may specify; and the official sellers are to place the contract within the prytany of Leontis; the priestess is to receive fifty drachmas and to receive the backlegs and skins of the public sacrifices; and that a temple be built in whatever way Kallikrates may specify and a stone altar. Hestiaios proposed: that three men be selected from the Council; and they shall make the specifications with Kallikrates and [show them to?] [the Council?] in accordance with [the contracts?]

3b. *IG I³ 36 = ML 71 = OR 156, Acropolis, 424/3 BC?*

The Council and the People decided. Aigeis held the prytany. Neokleides was secretary. Hagnodemos was chairman. Kallias proposed: for the priestess of Athena Nike the fifty drachmas written on the stele, the payment officers in office in the month Thargelion shall pay (them) to the priestess of Athena Nike . . .

4. Decree relating to the sanctuary of Aphrodite Pandemos

IG II³ 879, Acropolis, 283/2 BC

When Hegesipyle was priestess. In the archonship of Euthios, in the twelfth prytany, of Aiantis, for which Nausimenes son of Nausikydes of Cholargos was secretary. On the old and new day of Skirophorion. Kallias son of Lysimachos of Hermos proposed: so that those who at any time are allotted city guardians may carry out their management of the sanctuary of Aphrodite Pandemos according to ancestral custom, for good fortune, the Council shall decide that the presiding committee who are allotted to preside at the forthcoming Assembly shall present the member of the priestess's household and shall put the matter on the agenda and submit the opinion of the Council to the People, that it seems good to the Council that those who at any time are allotted city guardians, whenever there is the procession to Aphrodite Pandemos, shall prepare for the purification of the shrine a dove, and shall whitewash the altars and put pitch over the [doorways] and wash the statues; and they shall prepare purple of weight (\geq) 4 drachmas . . .
...

5. Honorific decree for the father of a bracket bearer

IG II³ 1 1284, south slope of the Acropolis, 186/5 BC

Gods. In the archonship of Zopyros, in the tenth prytany, of Ptolemais, for which Megaristos son of Pyrrhos of Aixone was secretary. The twenty-first of Elaphebolion, the fourth of the prytany. Assembly in the theatre of Dionysos. Of the presiding committee Sopatros son of Philagros of Hybadai was putting to the vote, and his fellow presiding committee members. The People decided. Xenon

son of Asklepiades of Phyle proposed: since the archon Zopyros declares that Zopyros, the father of the selected basket bearer, sent his own daughter, -, to carry the sacred basket for the god according to tradition, and that he also led as beautiful a sacrificial victim as he could, and took care also of the other things proper to himself for the procession beautifully and with love of honour, for good fortune, the People shall decide: to praise the father of the basket bearer, Zopyros son of Dikaïos of Melite, and crown him with an ivy crown for his piety towards the gods and his love of honour towards the People of the Athenians; and the prytany secretary shall inscribe this decree on a stone stele and stand it in the sanctuary of Dionysos. and the treasurer of the stratiotic funds shall allocate the expense accrued.

In ivy crown The People (crown) the father of the basket bearer Zopyros son of Dikaïos of Melite.

C. POETESSES

6. Honorific decree

IG IX 2, 62, Lamia, 218/7 BC

In the year when Agetas of Kallipolis was general of the Aetolians; with good fortune it was resolved by the city of Lamia: since Aristodama of Smyrna in Ionia, the daughter of Amyntas, being a composer of epic poetry, has visited our city and has given many [performances] of her own poetry, in which she has made honourable mention of the Aetolian race and the ancestors of our people, and she given these performances with great enthusiasm, *therefore* she shall have the status of proxenos and benefactor of the city, and she shall be granted citizenship, the right to own land and buildings, grazing rights, inviolability, security by land and by sea in war and in peacetime, both for herself and for her descendants and her property for all time, and all the other rights which are granted to other proxenoi and benefactors. Let there also be given . . . to her brother and his descendants: proxeny, citizenship, [and inviolability]. When the archons were (?) Python, Neon and Antigenes; the general was (?) Epigenes; and the hipparch was Kylos. Python son of Athanaïos acted as guarantor of the proxeny.

D. DOCTORS

7. Funerary inscription

IG II² 6873, Acharnai/Athens, ca. mid-4th BC

Midwife and doctor Phanostrate lies here,
she caused pain to no-one and, having died, is missed by all

E. BENEFACTRESSES

8. Dedication of land by Arete to Poseidonios and the community of Aigosthenitai for the cult of Poseidonios

IG VII 43, Aigosthena/Attika, second half of 3rd c.

With Good Fortune. Arete, daughter of Aristarchos, dedicates Poseidon and the community of the Aigosthenitans half of the garden which lies by the sea, having purchased it from the Aigosthenitans for 1,000 drachmas and she makes it into a *temenos* called *Poseidonion*. Let the Aigosthenitans, after getting the income from this *temenos*, add it to the money that is spent on the sacrifice which they decided to offer to Poseidon and onto the contest held at the sacrifice for Poseidonios and let them make both sacrifice and contest more splendid.