



The Hublic Sphere Podcast

Show notes

Episode 6: Women in Classical Athens

Classical Athens excluded groups of people from political power – enslaved people, metics (non-Athenian residents) and women. This episode focuses on women in Classical Athens in the context and question of “power” and through a selection of material and literary sources discusses how women experienced and engaged with their society despite political powerlessness.

Dr. Carrie Sawtell holds an MA and PhD from the University of Sheffield. Carrie recently held the Macmillan-Rodewald Studentship at the British School at Athens, and is currently training to teach secondary history

Dr. Katherine Backler is an Examination Fellow at All Souls College at the University of Oxford where she recently defended her doctoral thesis.

Host, **Elizabeth Foley**, is a PhD candidate (Irish Research Council Postgraduate Scholar) in Classics at Trinity College Dublin.

Below you will find details on works mentioned in the episode. *This is not a bibliography for the study of women in ancient Greece but is designed to provide further context to and accompany the podcast episode.*

For more on Josine Blok’s work on citizenship see especially *Citizenship in Classical Athens* published in 2017 by Cambridge University Press.

For a thorough discussion on one particular word’s usage on funerary monuments in classical Athens see Carrie’s lecture at the British School at Athens entitled “Χρηστός / χρηστή in 4th and 3rd century BC Attic Epitaphs” [Χρηστός χρηστή in 4th and 3rd century BC Attic Epitaphs](#)

Rebecca Futo Kennedy’s book mentioned by Carrie is *Immigrant Women in Athens: Gender, Ethnicity, and Citizenship in the Classical City* published in 2014 by Routledge.

See Katherine’s article for the London Review of Books entitled [Athens/Riyadh](#) which further explores the role of male guardians in these two societies.

The dissertation Katherine mentions is Helen McClees' *A Study of Women in Attic Inscriptions* (1920) Columbia University Press.

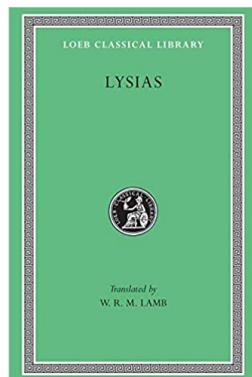
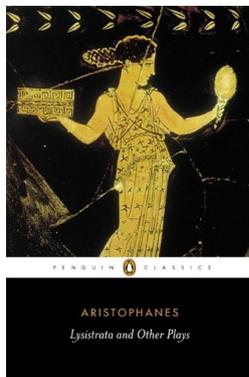
[Decree](#) about the first Priestess of Athena Nike at Athens and [a funerary epigram](#) for Myrrhine, first priestess of Athena Nike (translations from Attic Inscriptions Online). For more on priestesses in ancient Greece see Joan Breton Connelly (2007) *Portrait of a priestess : women and ritual in ancient Greece*, Princeton University Press. See also Juliane Zachhuber's article on priestesses on Hellenistic Rhodes for detail on this role outside of Classical Athens. [The Lost Priestesses of Rhodes? Female Religious Offices and Social Standing in Hellenistic Rhodes](#)

Carrie and Katherine gave some suggestions for further readings for listeners:

From ancient texts, Katherine suggests three of Aristophanes' plays – *Assemblywomen*, *Women at the Thesmophoria* and *Lysistrata*. Aristophanes' plays are available in translation in Penguin and Oxford World's Classics collections.

From law court speeches she suggests Lysias 1 and 32 which can be accessed through [Perseus Digital Library](#) (a repository of Greek and Latin texts in English translation and also in their original languages.)

These texts are also available in English translation with accompanying Greek in the Loeb Classical Library series.



From modern scholarship, Carrie suggests:

